

Richardson's Skate, *Bathyraja richardsoni*

Report Card assessment	Negligible		
IUCN Red List Australian Assessment	Least Concern	IUCN Red List Global Assessment	Least Concern
Global Assessors	Kulka, D.W., Orlov, A. & Barker, A.S.		
Australian Assessors	Kyne, P.M., Heupel, M.R., White, W.T., Simpfendorfer, C.A. (Shark Action Plan) & Rigby, C.L.		
Report Card Remarks	Deepwater species not currently fished in Australia.		

Summary

Richardson's Skate is a large deepwater bathydemersal skate known from temperate waters of Australasia and the North Atlantic but rarely observed and probably more widespread. It is caught incidentally in deepwater fisheries but with a depth range of 500–3,055 m, most of its range is below depths fished. In Australia, it is only known from the South Tasman Rise and is currently not taken in any commercial fisheries. It may have previously been caught in the South Tasman Rise Trawl Fishery (STRTF) that operated from 1997–2007 when it was closed to protect the depleted target Orange Roughy stocks. If fishing recommences in that fishery, Richardson's Skate would have some refuge in the South Tasman Rise Commonwealth Marine Reserve which prohibits commercial fishing and covers part of the South Tasman Rise (STR). The species may still be taken in waters of the STR adjacent to the Australian Fishing Zone under the competence of the South Pacific Regional Fisheries Management Organisation (SPRFMO); it has been found to be at low-medium risk from SPRFMO fisheries. Given that the species mostly occurs beyond fished depths and is currently not fished in Australia, it is assessed as Least Concern (IUCN) (Kyne et al. 2021) and in Australia, Negligible (SAFS).



Distribution

Richardson's Skate has been recorded from temperate waters of Australia and New Zealand and the North Atlantic but is rarely observed, likely given its deep habitat, and is probably circumglobally distributed (Last et al. 2016). In Australia, it is only known from a single specimen on the South Tasman Rise, Tasmania, but may be more common in waters beyond trawl depths (Last and Stevens 2009).

Stock structure and status

There is currently no information on population size, structure, or trend for the species.

Fisheries

Richardson's Skate is caught incidentally in deepwater longline and trawl fisheries but not known to be retained and traded and most of its known range occurs beyond the depth of deepwater fisheries (Kulka et al. 2015). In Australia, it is not currently caught by any commercial fisheries but may have been taken previously in the South Tasman Rise Trawl Fishery (STRTF). That fishery operated at average depths of 900–1,000 m from 1997–2007 using demersal trawls (Clark and O'Driscoll 2002). The fishery was closed within the Australian Fishing Zone (AFZ) in 2007 to protect the depleted target stocks of Orange Roughy (*Hoplostethus atlanticus*) (Emery 2020, Patterson et al. 2021). Richardson's Skate may still be captured in high-seas waters of the South Tasman Rise adjacent to the AFZ under the competence of the South Pacific Regional Fisheries Management Organisation (SPRFMO) and has been assessed as at low-medium risk from fishing in SPRFMO (Georgeson et al. 2020, Patterson et al. 2022). The South Tasman Rise Commonwealth Marine Reserve implemented in 2007 prohibits commercial fishing, partly overlaps the STRTF, and would provide some refuge for Richardson's Skate if deepwater fishing recommences in the STRTF (Patterson et al. 2022).

Habitat and biology

Richardson's Skate is benthopelagic on continental and insular slopes, submarine rises, and abyssal plains at depths of 500–3,055 m (Last et al. 2016). Maximum size is at least 175 cm total length (TL) with males mature by 157 cm TL (Last et al. 2016, Weigmann 2016). Little else is known of its biology.

Longevity and maximum size	Longevity: unknown Max size: at least 175 cm TL
Age and/or size at maturity (50%)	Males: 157 cm TL Females: unknown

CAAB Code: 37 031046

Link to IUCN Page: <https://www.iucnredlist.org/species/63127/70709214>

Link to page at Shark References: <https://shark-references.com/species/view/Bathyraja-richardsoni>

References

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