

Oceanic Whitetip Shark, *Carcharhinus longimanus*

Report Card assessment	Depleted		
IUCN Red List Australian Assessment	Critically Endangered	IUCN Red List Global Assessment	Critically Endangered
Assessors	Rigby, C.L., Barreto, R., Carlson, J., Fernando, D., Fordham, S., Francis, M.P., Herman, K., Jabado, R.W., Liu, K.M., Marshall, A., Pacoureau, N., Romanov, E., Sherley, R.B. & Winker, H.		
Australian Assessors	Kyne, P.M., Heupel, M.R., White, W.T. & Simpfendorfer, C.A. (Shark Action Plan)		
Report Card Remarks	Declines of over 90% recorded around the world. Listed on CITES Appendix II and CMS Appendix I.		

Summary

The Oceanic Whitetip Shark is a widespread pelagic species that has been subject to overfishing throughout much of its distribution. It is targeted and taken as bycatch in numerous pelagic fisheries. Their fins are highly prized in international trade. Declines of >90% over three generations are reported from various regions around the world. In Australia, the Oceanic Whitetip Shark is rarely encountered and is often released alive from pelagic longline fisheries.



However, the Oceanic Whitetip is a highly migratory species that crosses Australia's Exclusive Economic Zone and is connected regionally. As such the Australian status is reflective of regional status. This species is a no retention species in pelagic fisheries world-wide. Therefore, it is assessed as globally, and in Australia as Critically Endangered (IUCN) (Kyne et al. 2021) and Depleted (SAFS). The species is listed on CITES Appendix II and CMS Appendix I.

Distribution

The Oceanic Whitetip Shark is widespread throughout tropical and subtropical pelagic waters of the world (30°N to 35°S). Within Australian waters, it is found in from Cape Leeuwin (Western Australia) through parts of the Northern Territory, down the east coast of Queensland and New South Wales to Sydney (Last and Stevens 2009). It has not been recorded within the Gulf of Carpentaria or the Arafura Sea, preferring pelagic waters. A single specimen has been recorded in South Australia (Last and Stevens 2009).

Stock structure and status

The Oceanic Whitetip Shark was once considered one of three most abundant pelagic shark species (Compagno 1984, Bonfil 1994, Oceanic Fisheries Program 2010). Now, it is only occasionally recorded (Domingo 2004, Clarke et al. 2013). Declines of >90% have been recorded in the Atlantic (Baum et al. 2003), Indian (Romanov et al. 2006) and Pacific Oceans (Clarke et al. 2013). Oceanic Whitetip Sharks in Australian waters are part of broader Pacific and Indian stocks, and so have seen the same levels of declines despite limited effects from Australian fisheries.

Fisheries

In Australia, it is taken in low levels in the pelagic tuna fisheries (AFMA, 2010, 2015). Although Australian commercial fisheries are strictly managed, it is declining due to high fishing pressure throughout the rest of its distribution.

Habitat and biology

Oceanic Whitetip Sharks are found in pelagic waters throughout the tropics and subtropics (Last and Stevens 2009). It prefers waters above 20°C and can reach depths of >180 m (Castro et al. 1999). The maximum size is estimated at 350–395 cm total length (TL) (Stevens 1984, Seki et al. 1998, Ebert et al. 2013). Maximum age is not known.

Longevity and maximum size	Longevity: unknown Max size: estimated 395 cm TL
Age and/or size at maturity (50%)	Males: 4–5 years, 175 cm TL Females: 4–5 years, 180 cm TL

CAAB Code: 37 018032

Link to IUCN Page: <https://www.iucnredlist.org/species/39374/2911619>

Link to page at Shark References: <http://shark-references.com/species/view/Carcharhinus-longimanus>

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