

Spot-Tail Shark, *Carcharhinus sorrah*

Report Card assessment	Sustainable		
IUCN Red List Australian Assessment	Least Concern	IUCN Red List Global Assessment	Near Threatened
Assessors	Simpfendorfer, C., Derrick, D., Tanay, D., Seyha, L., Fahmi, Haque, A.B., Bin Ali, A., Maung, A., D., Bineesh, K.K., Vo, V.Q., Utzurum, J.A.T., Yuneni, R.R. & Fernando, D.		
Australian Assessors	Kyne, P.M., Heupel, M.R., White, W.T. & Simpfendorfer, C.A. (Shark Action Plan)		
Report Card Remarks	Australian stock is stable with sustainable catches.		

Summary

The Spot-Tail Shark is a common whaler shark found in continental and insular shelf waters throughout the tropical Indo-Pacific. It is a productive shark, making it resilient to



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fishing pressure. However, both adult and juvenile Spot-tail Sharks are heavily exploited by fisheries throughout their range due to their coastal distribution. Australia contains a distinct genetic stock of Spot-tail Shark with current catches lower than historical catches and recovery of the population estimated to have occurred following depletion by foreign vessels in the 1980s. Current Australia catches are considered sustainable. Therefore, globally the Spot-tail Shark is assessed as Least Concern (IUCN) in Australia and Sustainable (SAFS). From November 2023, the species will be listed on Appendix II of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Flora and Fauna (CITES).

Distribution

The Spot-Tail Shark is distributed throughout the tropical Indo-Pacific. Globally, its range extends from South Africa to the Red Sea and across the northern Indian Ocean to Australia and New Caledonia in the Pacific Ocean. Within Australia, it is found from Carnarvon (Western Australia) through the Northern Territory and to Gladstone (Queensland) (Last and Stevens 2009).

Stock structure and status

The Spot-Tail Shark is composed of four separate stocks including Australia, northern Indian Ocean, Southeast Asia, and New Caledonia (Ovendon et al. 2007, Naylor et al. 2012, Giles et al. 2014). Movement between these stocks is likely to be minimal (Stevens et al. 2000). Globally, declines in Spot-tail Shark abundance have likely occurred due to overfishing. Within Australia, the population is currently considered stable.

Fisheries

Within Australia, Spot-Tail Shark are targeted in Queensland and the Northern Territory waters by gillnet and longline, and is currently not harvested in Western Australia (Johnson et al. 2014). Within the Northern Territory, population levels are healthy and harvest levels sustainable (Bradshaw et al. 2013, Grubert et al. 2013). Historically, this species was heavily fished by foreign vessels, but these departed Australian waters in 1986 and given the productivity of this species the population is likely to have recovered to healthy levels (Grubert et al. 2013).

Habitat and biology

The Spot-Tail Shark is found in continental and insular shelf waters occurring from the intertidal to depths of 140 m (Compagno 1984, White et al. 2006, Last and Stevens 2009). Tagging studies show it remains localised, but is capable of moving large distances (1,116 km) (Stevens et al. 2000). It reaches a maximum size of at least 160 cm total length (TL) (Compagno 1984, White et al. 2006). Maximum age is estimated to be 9 years for males and 14 years for females (Harry et al. 2011, Harry et al. 2013).

Longevity and maximum size	Longevity: estimated males 9 years, females 14 years Max size: 160 cm TL
Age and/or size at maturity (50%)	Both sexes: 90–95 cm TL

CAAB Code: 37 018013

Link to IUCN Page: <https://www.iucnredlist.org/species/161376/173434793>

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

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