

Blue lines indicate the area meeting the ISRA Criteria; dashed lines indicate the suggested buffer for use in the development of appropriate place-based conservation measures

BENIDORM ISLAND ISRA

Mediterranean and Black Seas Region

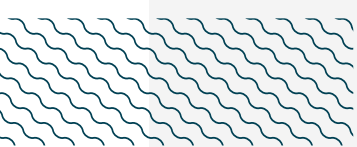
SUMMARY

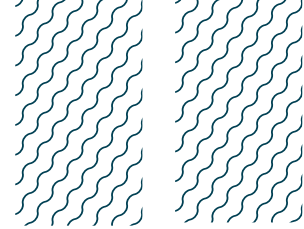
Benidorm Island is located off the southeastern coast of the Iberian Peninsula, Spain, in the western Mediterranean Sea. The area is dominated by sandy areas with meadows of Neptune Grass *Posidonia oceanica* and Slender Seagrass *Cymodocea nodosa*. This area overlaps with one Natural Park, an Ecologically or Biologically Significant Marine Area, and one Key Biodiversity Area. Within this area there are: **threatened species** and **undefined aggregations** (Common Eagle Ray *Myliobatis aquila*).

CRITERIA

Criterion A - Vulnerability; Sub-criterion C5 - Undefined Aggregations

—	—
SPAIN	—
—	—
0-30 metres	—
—	—
0.21 km²	—
—	—





DESCRIPTION OF HABITAT

Benidorm Island is located off the southeastern coast of the Iberian Peninsula, Spain, in the western Mediterranean Sea. This area surrounds a small island (0.07 km²) located off the coast of the Valencian town of Benidorm (Alicante). The area experiences a diurnal tide with a maximum tidal range of 1 m (Abramic et al. 2015). The area is dominated by sandy areas and, meadows of Neptune Grass *Posidonia oceanica* and Slender Seagrass *Cymodocea nodosa* can be found in shallow waters (Maimi Checa 2022). In general, river inflow is scarce, but with abundant periods of rain. Sea surface temperature ranges from 13°C in the boreal winter to 30°C in the summer (Abramic et al. 2015).

The area overlaps with the Natural Park of Serra Gelada, the Islotes de Alicante Key Biodiversity Area (KBA 2023), and the North-western Mediterranean Benthic Ecosystems Ecologically or Biologically Significant Marine Area (CBD 2023).

This Important Shark and Ray Area is benthopelagic and is delineated from inshore and surface waters (0 m) to 30 m based on the bathymetry of the area and the known depth range of the Qualifying Species.

ISRA CRITERIA

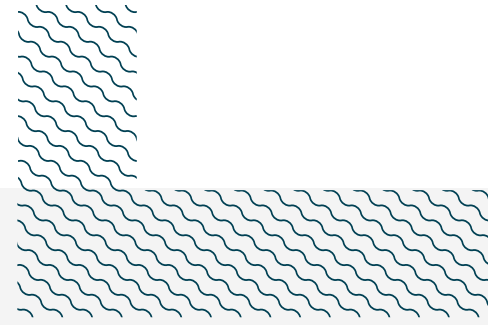
CRITERION A - VULNERABILITY

The one Qualifying Species within the area is considered threatened with extinction according to the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species™. The Common Eagle Ray is assessed as Critically Endangered (Jabado et al. 2021).

SUB-CRITERION C5 - UNDEFINED AGGREGATIONS

Benidorm Island is an important area for undefined aggregations of one ray species.

Between 2018 and 2022, the Common Eagle Ray was recorded aggregating in groups of up to 30 individuals. These aggregations may be for reproduction since the presence of potential pregnant females (distended abdomens) and small individuals (potentially neonates and/or young-of-the-year) are regularly observed during the summer. However, more evidence is needed to confirm the reason behind the aggregations. This information has been recorded through a citizen science platform (Observadores del Mar 2023).



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Suggested citation

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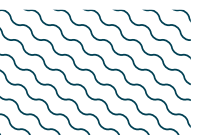
QUALIFYING SPECIES

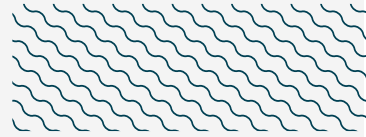
Scientific Name	Common Name	IUCN Red List Category	Global Depth Range (m)	ISRA Criteria/Sub-criteria Met							
				A	B	C1	C2	C3	C4	C5	D1
RAYS											
<i>Myliobatis aquila</i>	Common Eagle Ray	CR	0-537	X						X	

SUPPORTING SPECIES

Scientific Name	Common Name	IUCN Red List Category
RAYS		
<i>Aetomylaeus bovinus</i>	Duckbill Eagle Ray	CR
<i>Dasyatis pastinaca</i>	Common Stingray	VU
<i>Gymnura altavela</i>	Spiny Butterfly Ray	CR
<i>Pteroplatytrygon violacea</i>	Pelagic Stingray	LC
<i>Raja radula</i>	Rough Skate	EN
<i>Raja undulata</i>	Undulate Skate	EN
<i>Torpedo marmorata</i>	Marbled Torpedo Ray	VU

IUCN Red List of Threatened Species Categories are available by searching species names at www.iucnredlist.org. Abbreviations refer to: CR, Critically Endangered; EN, Endangered; VU, Vulnerable; NT, Near Threatened; LC, Least Concern; DD, Data Deficient.





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