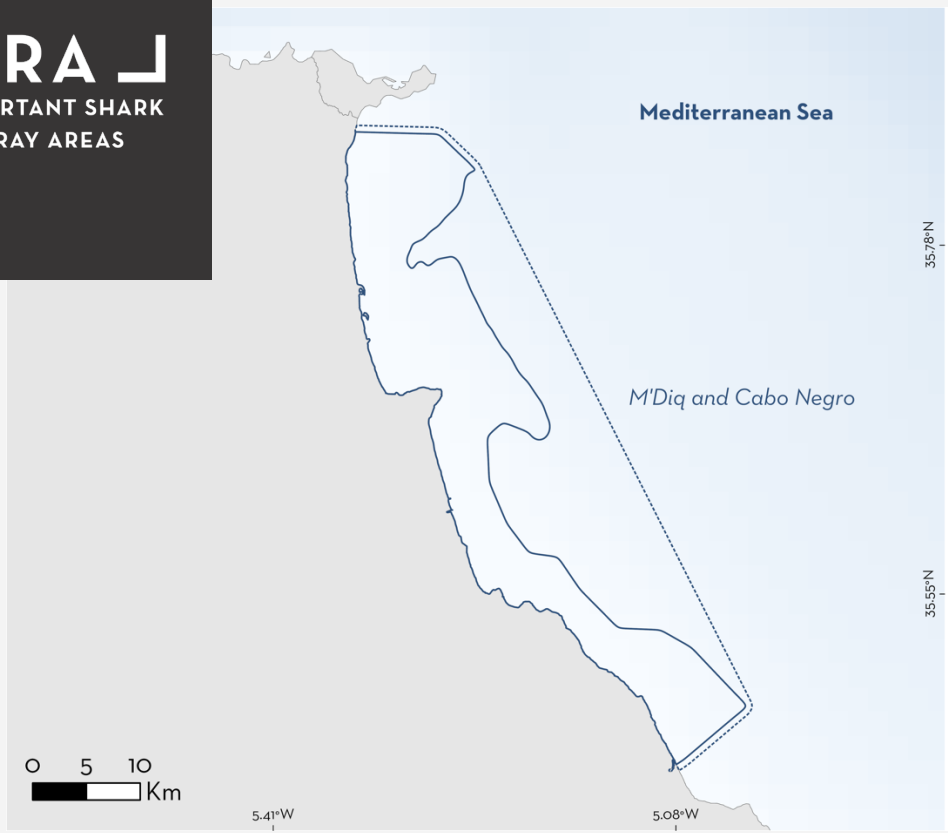
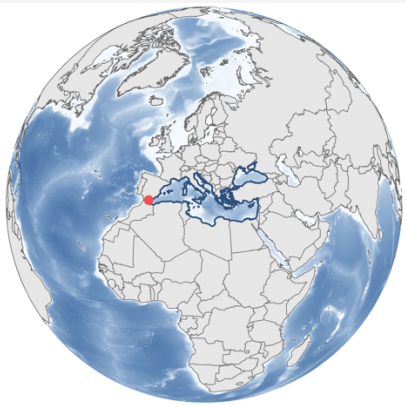
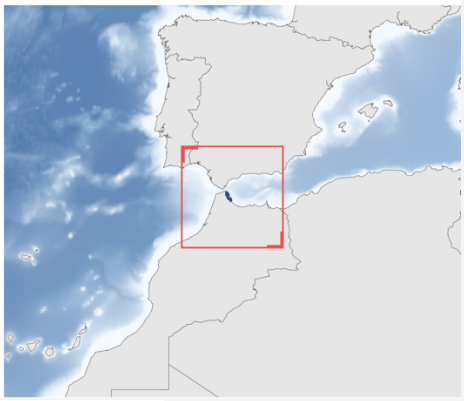
ISRA
IMPORTANT SHARK AND RAY AREAS







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

M'DIQ AND CABO NEGRO ISRA

Mediterranean and Black Seas Region

MOROCCO

0–200 metres

323.3 km²

SUMMARY

M'Diq and Cabo Negro is located in northern Morocco in the Alboran Sea (western Mediterranean Sea). The area is characterised by muddy and sandy substrates, made of quartz sediments, which make up wide spreading beaches. There are various soft substrate communities in the area, interspersed with gravel and rocky outcrops. Within this area there are **range-restricted** species (Starry Skate *Raja asterias*).

CRITERIA

Criterion B – Range-restricted

DESCRIPTION OF HABITAT

M'Diq and Cabo Negro is located on the Tetouan coast of northern Morocco in the Alboran Sea (western Mediterranean Sea). It is characterised by muddy and sandy substrates, made of quartz sediments, which make up wide spreading beaches. There are various soft substrate communities in the area, which are broken up by gravel and rocky outcrops (from depths of ~20 m), particularly around Cabo Negro. In front of Cabo Negro, the rocky bottoms extend the cape underwater to a depth of ~30 m. The area is interspersed with coastal plains, dunes, and cliffs (Anfuso et al. 2007; Benkhattab et al. 2020). The Tetouan coast has limited influence from minor fluvial input from six small rivers (Satta et al. 2016).

This Important Shark and Ray Area is benthopelagic and is delineated from inshore and surface waters (0 m) to a depth of 200 m based on the bathymetry of the area.

ISRA CRITERIA

CRITERION B – RANGE RESTRICTED

This area holds the regular presence of the Starry Skate as a resident range-restricted species. This species occurs year-round in the area and is regularly encountered and caught in local fisheries (Fatimetou et al. 2015, Fatimetou & Younes 2016). It was the dominant species caught from a coastal fleet of trawlers, sardine, and longliner boats between 2006–2010. Large quantities of individuals were caught in June to October, with a slight decrease in the middle of October to early November (Fatimetou et al. 2015). Additionally, 367 individuals were caught in artisanal fisheries (using trawls, longlines, and gillnets) between April 2013 and April 2014 (Fatimetou & Younes 2016). Starry Skate is distributed primarily in the Mediterranean Sea Large Marine Ecosystem (LME) and only very marginally in the Canary Current LME and Iberian Coastal LME.

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Javier Guallart (Independent Researcher), Jorge Sáez (SOLDECOCOS), and Ryan Charles (IUCN SSC Shark Specialist Group - ISRA Project) contributed and consolidated information included in this factsheet. We thank all participants of the 2023 ISRA Region 3 – Mediterranean and Black Seas workshop for their contributions to this process.

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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	D2
RAYS												
Raja asterias	Starry Skate	NT	0–700		X							

SUPPORTING SPECIES

Scientific Name	Common Name	IUCN Red List Category
SHARKS		
Galeorhinus galeus	Tope	CR
Scyliorhinus canicula	Smallspotted Catshark	LC
Scyliorhinus stellaris	Nursehound	VU
RAYS		
Aetomylaeus bovinus	Duckbill Eagle Ray	CR
Gymnura altavela	Spiny Butterfly Ray	EN
Leucoraja circularis	Sandy Skate	EN
Leucoraja naevus	Cuckoo Skate	LC
Myliobatis aquila	Common Eagle Ray	CR
Raja brachyura	Blonde Skate	NT
Raja clavata	Thornback Skate	NT
Raja undulata	Undulate Skate	EN
Torpedo marmorata	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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