

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

NORTH CYCLADES ISRA

Mediterranean and Black Seas Region

SUMMARY

North Cyclades sits within the Cyclades Archipelago, a group of around 220 islands in the Aegean Sea, southeast of mainland Greece. Situated in the northwest part of the archipelago, it consists of a deeper area of the Cyclades plateau, between the islands of Kea, Gyaros, Kithnos, and Ermoupoli. The northern edge of the archipelago is under the influence of the warm Levantine current which splits into the Evvoia current in the northwest and feeds into a permanent gyre in the Myrtoan Sea to the west. The area is characterised by deep calcareous sandy mud to muddy sand habitats. Within this area there are **reproductive areas** (Longnose Spurdog *Squalus blainville*).

CRITERIA

Sub-criterion C1 - Reproductive Areas

— GREECE —

— 250–300 metres —

— 472.9 km² —





DESCRIPTION OF HABITAT

North Cyclades is located in Greece within the Cyclades Archipelago, a group of over 200 islands located on a plateau (<200 m) in the Central Aegean Sea (Giakoumi & Kokkoris 2013; Sini et al. 2017). Situated in the northwest part of the archipelago, it consists of a deeper area of the Cyclades plateau, between the islands of Kea, Gyaros, Kithnos, and Ermoupoli, which reaches maximum depths of 300 m (Giakoumi & Kokkoris 2013; Sini et al. 2017). The northern edge of the archipelago is under the influence of the warm Levantine current which splits into the Evvoia current in the northwest and feeds into a permanent gyre in the Myrtoon Sea to the west (Nittis & Perivoliotis 2002). The west edge of the archipelago is influenced by less-saline Black Sea waters. Deep habitats in the area are defined by calcareous muddy sands to sandy mud (Peristeraki et al. 2017).

This area overlaps with the Central Aegean Sea Ecologically or Biologically Significant Marine Area (CBD 2023).

This Important Shark and Ray Area is subsurface benthopelagic and is delineated from 250 m to 300 m based on the bathymetry of the area and the depth range of the Qualifying Species in the area.

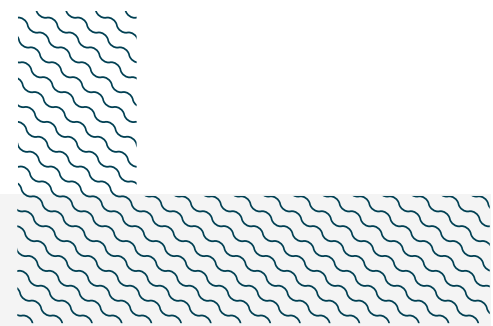
ISRA CRITERIA

SUB-CRITERION C1 – REPRODUCTIVE AREAS

North Cyclades is an important reproductive area for one shark species.

Higher abundance of Longnose Spurdog young-of-the-year and immature specimens have been found in this area compared to surrounding areas (Kousteni et al. 2017; V. Kousteni pers. comms 2023). Of 41 specimens collected in one study in 2005, 2006, and 2009, 24 were female, with an average size of 24 ± 1 cm total length (TL \pm SD) (Kousteni et al. 2017), close to its known size-at-birth (18–21 cm TL; Kousteni & Megalofonou 2011). Based on 19 of those female individuals, mean age was estimated to be 1.32 ± 0.67 (yrs \pm SD). In contrast, Longnose Spurdog in locations outside the area measured >40 cm TL (Kousteni et al. 2017). Young-of-the-year individuals were the most frequently encountered age class for both males and females in the study, and the North Cyclades area (Central Aegean Sea) was the only area where they were encountered (Kousteni et al. 2017). This species has been reported in the area in recent years, though information about the size of these more recent records is unavailable (Kousteni 2015; Damalas et al. 2022).





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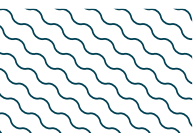
QUALIFYING SPECIES

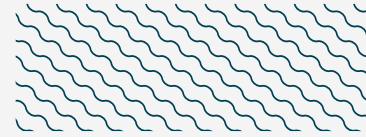
Scientific Name	Common Name	IUCN Red List Category	Global Depth Range (m)	ISRA Criteria/Sub-criteria Met							
				A	B	C1	C2	C3	C4	C5	D1
SHARKS											
<i>Squalus blainville</i>	Longnose Spurdog	DD	15-1,500			X					

SUPPORTING SPECIES

Scientific Name	Common Name	IUCN Red List Category
SHARKS		
<i>Heptranchias perlo</i>	Sharpnose Sevengill Shark	NT
<i>Mustelus mustelus</i>	Common Smoothhound	EN
<i>Oxynotus centrina</i>	Angular Roughshark	EN
<i>Scyliorhinus canicula</i>	Smallspotted Catshark	LC
RAYS		
<i>Dasyatis pastinaca</i>	Common Stingray	VU
<i>Dasyatis tortonesei</i>	Tortonese's Stingray	DD
<i>Dipturus oxyrinchus</i>	Longnosed Skate	NT
<i>Raja brachyura</i>	Blonde Skate	NT
<i>Raja clavata</i>	Thornback Skate	NT
<i>Raja miraletus</i>	Brown Skate	LC
<i>Rhinobatos rhinobatos</i>	Common Guitarfish	CR
<i>Torpedo marmorata</i>	Marbled Torpedo Ray	VU
<i>Torpedo torpedo</i>	Ocellate 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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