

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

## EL IKHWA ISLANDS ISRA

### Western Indian Ocean Region

#### SUMMARY

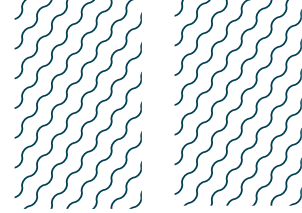
El Ikhwa Islands consists of two offshore islands (individually known as Big- and Little-Brother) found ~70 km off the Red Sea coast of Egypt. They are characterised by shallow flats, deep plateaus, reef walls, and open waters. El Ikhwa Islands is a marine protectorate. Within this area there are: **threatened species** and **undefined aggregations** (Oceanic Whitetip Shark *Carcharhinus longimanus*).

#### CRITERIA

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

—	—
<b>EGYPT</b>	—
—	—
<b>0-200 metres</b>	—
—	—
<b>15.18 km<sup>2</sup></b>	—
—	—





## DESCRIPTION OF HABITAT

El Ikhwa Islands consists of a pair of offshore islands (named Big- and Little- Brother) surrounded by deep water. The islands are located ~67 km from shore, and ~1 km from each other (MDUP 2018). This area includes shallow flats, deep plateaus, reef walls, and open waters (E Bojanowski pers. obs. 2023).

El Ikhwa Islands is a marine protectorate, a preserve of the Egyptian Environmental Affairs Agency.

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

## ISRA CRITERIA

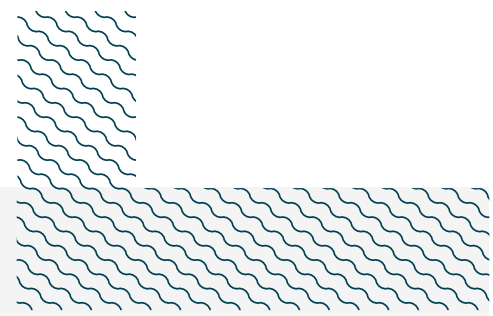
### CRITERION A - VULNERABILITY

The one Qualifying Species within the area is considered threatened with extinction according to the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species<sup>TM</sup>. The Oceanic Whitetip Shark is assessed as Critically Endangered (Rigby et al. 2019).

### SUB-CRITERION C5 - UNDEFINED AGGREGATIONS

El Ikhwa Islands is important for undefined aggregations of one shark species.

Oceanic Whitetip Sharks are regularly and predictably observed in aggregations of up to 25 individuals at El Ikhwa Islands (E Bojanowski unpubl. data 2023). This area has the second largest known aggregations of Oceanic Whitetip Sharks in the Red Sea (the largest area is also in Egyptian waters). The high abundances of Oceanic Whitetip Sharks at this Egyptian site have been documented for more than 15 years (2003-2019) (E Bojanowski unpubl. data 2023) with 469 individuals (163 males, 214 females, and 92 undefined sex) identified at El Ikhwa Islands. Encounter rates peak in October and November. Further information is required to define the nature and function of these aggregations.



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Elke Bojanowski (Red Sea Shark Trust), Jesse EM Cochran (King Abdullah University of Science and Technology), Eloise Richardson (King Abdullah University of Science and Technology), Andrew Temple (King Abdullah University of Science and Technology), Michael Berumen (King Abdullah University of Science and Technology), 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 7 - Western Indian Ocean workshop for their contributions to this process.

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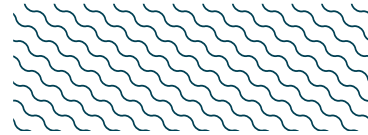
### **Suggested citation**

**IUCN SSC Shark Specialist Group. 2023.** El Ikhwa Islands ISRA Factsheet. Dubai: IUCN SSC Shark Specialist Group.

## QUALIFYING SPECIES

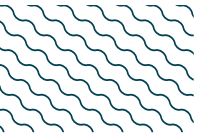
Scientific Name	Common Name	IUCN Red List Category	Global Depth Range (m)	ISRA Criteria/Sub-criteria Met								
				A	B	C1	C2	C3	C4	C5	D1	D2
<b>SHARKS</b>												
<i>Carcharhinus longimanus</i>	Oceanic Whitetip Shark	CR	0-1,082	X						X		

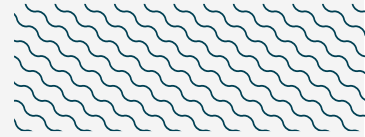
## SUPPORTING SPECIES



Scientific Name	Common Name	IUCN Red List Category
<b>SHARKS</b>		
<i>Alopias pelagicus</i>	Pelagic Thresher	EN
<i>Carcharhinus amblyrhynchos</i>	Grey Reef Shark	EN
<i>Carcharhinus falciformis</i>	Silky Shark	VU
<i>Sphyrna lewini</i>	Scalloped Hammerhead	CR
<i>Triaenodon obesus</i>	Whitetip Reef Shark	VU

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





## REFERENCES

**Marko Dragoljevic Underwater Photography (MDUP). 2018.** The Red Sea - Home of the Oceanic Whitetips. Available at <https://www.markodragoljevic.com/blog/the-red-sea-home-of-the-oceanic-whitetips> Accessed October 2023.

**Rigby CL, Barreto R, Carlson J, Fernando D, Fordham S, Francis MP, Herman K, Jabado RW, Liu KM, Marshall A, et al. 2019.** *Carcharhinus longimanus*. *The IUCN Red List of Threatened Species* 2019: e.T39374A2911619. <https://dx.doi.org/10.2305/IUCN.UK.2019-3.RLTS.T39374A2911619.en>