

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

## STRAIT OF HORMUZ CORRIDOR ISRA

### Western Indian Ocean Region

#### SUMMARY

Strait of Hormuz Corridor spans part of the Arabian/Persian Gulf, across the Strait of Hormuz, and into the Gulf of Oman. The area is relatively shallow, characterised by high variations in environmental conditions. The area overlaps with several Key Biodiversity Areas and three Ecologically or Biologically Significant Marine Areas. Within this area there are: **threatened species** and areas important for **movement** (Whale Shark *Rhincodon typus*).

#### CRITERIA

**Criterion A - Vulnerability; Sub-criterion C4 - Movement**

— —  
**BAHRAIN**  
**IRAN**  
**OMAN**  
**QATAR**  
**SAUDI ARABIA**  
**UNITED ARAB**  
**EMIRATES**

— —  
**0-100 metres**

— —  
**91,217.43 km<sup>2</sup>**





## DESCRIPTION OF HABITAT

Strait of Hormuz Corridor spans part of the Arabian/Persian Gulf (hereafter referred to as 'The Gulf'), extending across the Strait of Hormuz and into the Gulf of Oman. The area is relatively shallow, characterised by high variations in environmental conditions (Sheppard et al. 2010). The maximum depth of the Gulf is 120 m near the Strait of Hormuz, with an average depth of 40 m (Pous et al. 2015). There is low water exchange between the Gulf and Gulf of Oman. The salinity in the Gulf is higher than in the Indian Ocean due to high levels of evaporation, with currents supplying lower salinity waters across the Strait of Hormuz (Pous et al. 2015). The area is home to numerous islands.

The area overlaps with three Key Biodiversity Areas (KBAs): Daymaniyat Islands (KBA 2023a), Faror Islands (KBA 2023b), and Musandam Islands (KBA 2023c). The area also overlaps with three Ecologically or Biologically Significant Marine Areas (EBSAs): Arabian Sea Oxygen Minimum Zone (CBD 2023a), Daymaniyat Islands (CBD 2023b), and Qeshm Island and Adjacent Marine and Coastal Areas (CBD 2023c).

This Important Shark and Ray Area is pelagic and is delineated from inshore and surface waters (0 m) to 100 m based on the bathymetry of the area and the depth use of the Qualifying Species.

## ISRA CRITERIA

### CRITERION A – VULNERABILITY

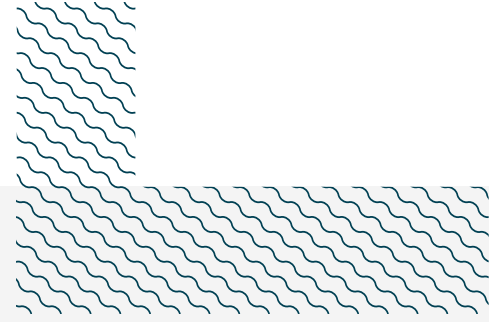
The one Qualifying Species within the area is considered threatened with extinction according to the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species™. The Whale Shark is assessed as Endangered (Pierce & Norman 2016).

### SUB-CRITERION C4 – MOVEMENT AREAS

Strait of Hormuz Corridor is an important area for the movement of one shark species.

Whale Sharks use the Strait of Hormuz to move between the Gulf and the Gulf of Oman. This movement has been recorded regularly and predictably since 2011, beginning in the boreal summer months when annual feeding aggregations of up to 100 Whale Shark per km<sup>2</sup> occur in the Qatari waters of Al Shaheen (Robinson et al. 2013, 2016). In the winter months, Whale Sharks disperse into the Gulf of Oman via the Strait of Hormuz (Robinson et al. 2017).

Between 2011–2014, 59 Whale Sharks were satellite tagged in the Al Shaheen area, and nine individuals subsequently dispersed through the Strait of Hormuz into the Gulf of Oman (Robinson et al. 2017). Additionally, 422 individuals were photo-identified in the Gulf (81% of which were encountered in the Al Shaheen area; Robinson et al. 2016). Thirteen of these individuals were resighted in other locations across this body of water, including into and out of the Gulf through the Strait of Hormuz (Robinson et al. 2016).



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This factsheet has undergone review by the ISRA Independent Review Panel prior to its publication.

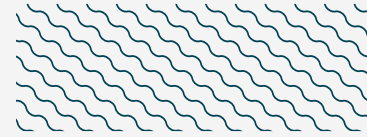
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## **Suggested citation**

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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	
<b>SHARKS</b>													
<i>Rhincodon typus</i>	Whale Shark	EN	0-1,928	X						X			



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