

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

DAUAHK BRIDGE ISRA

New Zealand & Pacific Islands Region

SUMMARY

Dauahk Bridge is located on the western side of Pohnpei Island in the Federated States of Micronesia. The area provides a passage from the barrier reef surrounding Pohnpei to the lagoon. The passage has a unique reef bridge across the mouth, joining one side of the channel to the other. Within this area there are: **threatened species** and **reproductive areas** (Grey Reef Shark *Carcharhinus amblyrhynchos*).

CRITERIA

Criterion A - Vulnerability; Sub-criterion C1 - Reproductive Areas

FEDERATED
 STATES OF
 MICRONESIA

0-100 metres

0.78 km²





DESCRIPTION OF HABITAT

Dauahk Bridge is located on the western side of Pohnpei island in the Federated States of Micronesia. Pohnpei is surrounded by a lagoon, enclosed by a discontinuous barrier reef (Rowley et al. 2019), and Dauahk Bridge provides a passage from the reef to the lagoon. The passage has a unique reef bridge across the mouth, joining one side of the channel to the other. Pohnpei is a volcanic island with high elevation and dense vegetation, resulting in high annual precipitation levels (Rowley et al. 2019), with runoff influencing the surrounding reefs and lagoon.

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

ISRA CRITERIA

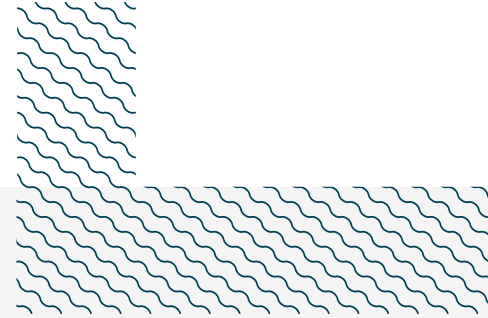
CRITERION A - VULNERABILITY

One Qualifying Species considered threatened with extinction according to the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species regularly occurs in the area. This is the Endangered Grey Reef Shark (Simpfendorfer et al. 2020).

SUB-CRITERION C₁ - REPRODUCTIVE AREAS

Dauahk Bridge is an important reproductive area for one shark species.

Young-of-the-year (YOY) Grey Reef Sharks are regularly and predictably observed aggregating in the area on the incoming tide when currents are strong (J Hartup pers. obs. 2024). Between 2014-2023, in each of the ~18 recreational dive surveys conducted in the area, aggregations of Grey Reef Sharks have been encountered. Aggregations consist of 10-25 YOY individuals (<75 cm total length [TL]), 8-10 juveniles (~100 cm TL), and 3-5 adults (~180 cm TL). All sizes were estimated visually, and the size-at-birth for this species is 45-64 cm TL (Ebert et al. 2021), indicating that the majority of individuals in the area would be classified as neonates or YOY (62.5% out of a maximum 40 sharks observed per encounter; J Hartup pers. obs. 2024). This is the only area around the island of Pohnpei where higher numbers of YOY Grey Reef Sharks have been recorded. Sharks are observed hanging in the current and at times hunting reef fish, however more information is required to determine if the area serves as an important feeding area. The large proportion of YOY individuals observed in aggregations highlight the importance of this area for reproductive purposes for Grey Reef Sharks.



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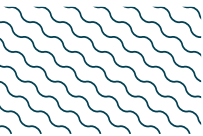
QUALIFYING SPECIES

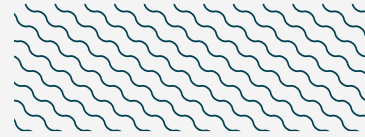
Scientific Name	Common Name	IUCN Red List Category	Global Depth Range (m)	ISRA Criteria/Sub-criteria Met									
				A	B	C1	C2	C3	C4	C5	D1	D2	
SHARKS													
<i>Carcharhinus amblyrhynchos</i>	Grey Reef Shark	EN	0-280	X		X							

SUPPORTING SPECIES

Scientific Name	Common Name	IUCN Red List Category
RAYS		
<i>Aetobatus ocellatus</i>	Spotted Eagle Ray	EN

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.





REFERENCES

Ebert DA, Dando M, Fowler S. 2021. *Sharks of the world: A complete guide*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Rowley SJ, Roberts TE, Coleman RR, Spalding HL, Joseph E, Dorricott MK. 2019. Pohnpei, Federated States of Micronesia. In: Loya Y, Puglise K, Bridge T. eds. *Mesophotic Coral Ecosystems. Coral Reefs of the World, Volume 12*. Switzerland: Springer. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-92735-0_17

Simpfendorfer C, Fahmi, Bin Ali A, Dharmadi, Utzurrum JAT, Seyha L, Maung A, Bineesh KK, Yuneni RR, Sianipar A, et al. 2020. *Carcharhinus amblyrhynchos*. *The IUCN Red List of Threatened Species* 2020: e.T39365A173433550. <https://dx.doi.org/10.2305/IUCN.UK.2020-3.RLTS.T39365A173433550.en>