

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

LATAROA ISRA

New Zealand & Pacific Islands Region

SUMMARY

Lataroa is located on the eastern side of Espiritu Santo Island in Vanuatu. The area extends around the northern coastline of Lataroa Island, following the prominent reef features. Lataroa is known locally as 'Shark Point'. Within this area there are: **threatened species** and **undefined aggregations** (Silvertip Shark *Carcharhinus albimarginatus*).

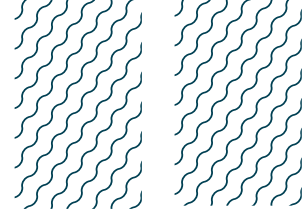
CRITERIA

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

VANUATU

0-40 metres

0.37 km²



DESCRIPTION OF HABITAT

Lataroa is located on the eastern side of Espiritu Santo Island in Vanuatu. The area extends around the northern coastline of Lataroa Island, following the prominent reef features. Lataroa is known locally as 'Shark Point'. The climate in Vanuatu is characterised by high rainfall and high temperatures throughout the year, and experiences severe tropical cyclones during the austral summer months of December to February (Walshe et al. 2017).

This Important Shark and Ray Area is benthic and pelagic and is delineated from inshore and surface waters (0 m) to 40 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 Vulnerable Silvertip Shark (Rigby et al. 2024).

SUB-CRITERION C5 – UNDEFINED AGGREGATIONS

Lataroa is an important area for undefined aggregations of one shark species.

Between January 2023 to August 2024, Silvertip Sharks were observed aggregating in the area (M Burbeary pers. obs. 2024). Dive trips are conducted in the area approximately once per month, with Silvertip Sharks observed during one in every three dives (33%). Normally 1-2 sharks are encountered at a time, but on occasion larger numbers can be seen (>10 individuals). Silvertip Sharks are encountered during each dive in April and May, suggesting a seasonal aspect to the aggregation in the area. Encounters are generally between 10-25 m depth. The average shark size is sub-adult to adult (visually estimated at ~140-190 cm total length [TL]). Size-at-maturity for this species is 160-209 cm TL for females and 160-200 cm TL for males (Ebert et al. 2021). This area may serve as a reproductive area for smaller size classes of this species, however, more information is required to determine the nature and function of Silvertip Shark aggregations in the area.



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Mick Burbeary (Turtle Bay Lodge) and Asia O Armstrong (IUCN SSC Shark Specialist Group - ISRA Project) contributed and consolidated information included in this factsheet. We thank all participants of the 2024 ISRA Region 10 - New Zealand and Pacific Islands workshop for their contributions to this process.

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Suggested citation

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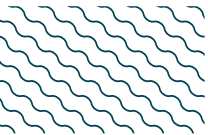
QUALIFYING SPECIES

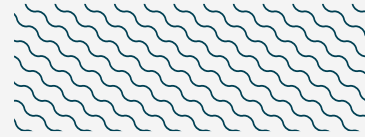
Scientific Name	Common Name	IUCN Red List Category	Global Depth Range (m)	ISRA Criteria/Sub-criteria Met								
				A	B	C1	C2	C3	C4	C5	D1	D2
SHARKS												
<i>Carcharhinus albimarginatus</i>	Silvertip Shark	VU	0-800	X						X		

SUPPORTING SPECIES

Scientific Name	Common Name	IUCN Red List Category
SHARKS		
<i>Carcharhinus amblyrhynchos</i>	Grey Reef Shark	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.

Rigby CL, Charles R, Espinoza M, Finucci B, Jabado RW, Simpfendorfer C, Simeon B. 2024. *Carcharhinus albidmarginatus*. *The IUCN Red List of Threatened Species* 2024: e.T161526A124499982.

Walshe RA, Chang Seng D, Bumpus A, Auffray J. 2018. Perceptions of adaptation, resilience and climate knowledge in the Pacific: The cases of Samoa, Fiji and Vanuatu. *International Journal of Climate Change Strategies and Management* 10(2): 303–322. <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJCCSM-03-2017-0060>