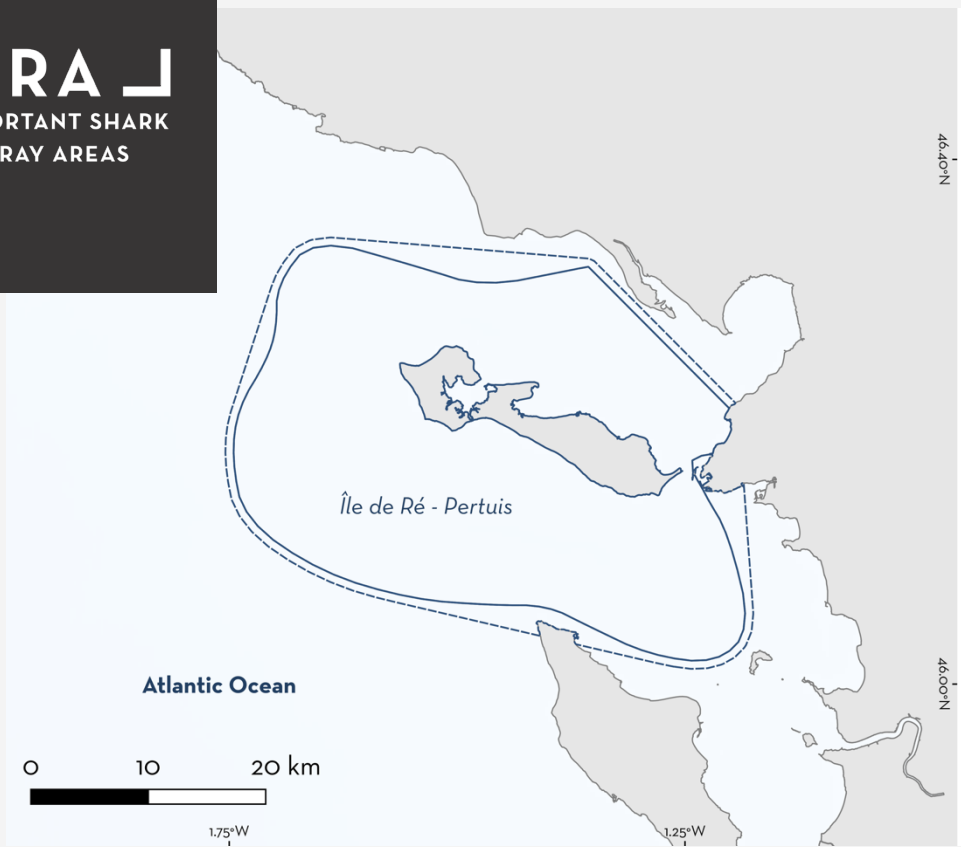
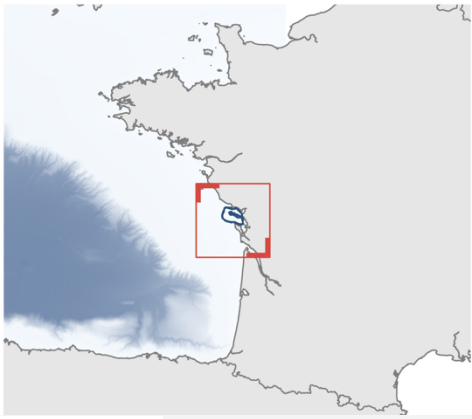
ISRA
IMPORTANT SHARK AND RAY AREAS





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

ÎLE DE RÉ – PERTUIS ISRA

European Atlantic Region

FRANCE

0–60 metres

994.5 km²

SUMMARY

Île de Ré – Pertuis is located off La Rochelle on the Atlantic coast of western France. The habitat is characterised by rocky substrates in the south and fine sand and mud in the north. It is influenced by large tides and tidal currents. It overlaps with the Marais du Fier d'Ars Ramsar Site. Within this area there are: **threatened species** and **reproductive areas** (Marbled Torpedo Ray *Torpedo marmorata*).

CRITERIA

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

DESCRIPTION OF HABITAT

Île de Ré – Pertuis is located on the continental shelf near La Rochelle in western France. This area includes coastal waters around the island of Île de Ré and the two straits: Pertuis Breton in the north (between the island and the mainland) and Pertuis d'Antioche in the south (between the island and Île d'Oléron). The habitat is characterised by rocky substrates along the south coast of Île de Ré and by soft substrates, such as sand and mud, and sandbanks (Garlan & Marchès 2010). This area is mainly influenced by large tides and strong tidal currents, with a tidal amplitude of ~6 m (Le Cann 1990).

This area overlaps with the Marais du Fier d'Ars Ramsar Site (Wetland of International Importance; Ramsar 2025).

This Important Shark and Ray Area is benthic and is delineated from inshore and surface waters (0 m) to 60 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 Marbled Torpedo Ray (Finucci et al. 2021).

SUB-CRITERION C1 – REPRODUCTIVE AREAS

Île de Ré – Pertuis is an important reproductive area for one ray species.

Marbled Torpedo Ray neonates and young-of-the-year (YOY), as well as pregnant females, are regularly captured in this area, based on (1) data from the French fisheries on-board observer program (ObsMer; IFREMER SIH 2022), (2) the International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES) Database on Trawl Surveys (ICES 2025) between 2010–2021, and (3) landing surveys (T Barreau unpubl. data 2025). These surveys and observations cover a wide region and differences in effort were considered in the analysis because of the heterogeneity in the number of fishing operations per sector. For fisheries-dependent data (i.e., ObsMer), only data from fishing gear suitable for catching neonates and YOY were used (i.e., defined as gear types that captured at least one neonate/YOY; mostly trammel nets and demersal trawls).

Marbled Torpedo Ray neonates and YOY were defined as being <17 cm total length (TL), considering a size-at-birth of 10–14 cm TL for the species and a slow growth coefficient of 0.175 (Last et al. 2016; Bellodi et al. 2024). Neonates and YOY were captured in 7 of the 12 survey years (2010–2021) within this area. A total of 24 neonate and YOY individuals were captured, with the proportion of occurrence in the area representing >9% of all occurrences of neonates and YOY (n = 177) in the survey region spanning from northern Spain to northeastern France (IFREMER SIH 2022; ICES 2025). The area represents the second hotspot of neonate and YOY Marbled Torpedo Ray captures in these surveys after Belle Île, highlighting its importance for early life stages of the species.

The landing survey 'Elasmobranch-On-Shore' has been operating since 2012, with up to 10 auctions visited monthly since 2018 from the Eastern English Channel to the southern Bay of Biscay (T Barreau unpubl. data 2025). The main purpose of this survey is to collect length data on landed sharks and rays, and females displaying neonates or eggs emerging from the cloaca are also recorded opportunistically. Records are available grouped by ICES statistical areas, which includes 21E8 in this

area. In rectangle 21E8, among the 326 whole female Marbled Torpedo Rays measured between 2018–2024, 18 presented neonates emerging from the cloaca (5.5%). Records are spread throughout the time-series, indicating that pregnant Marbled Torpedo Rays are regularly captured in this area. Pregnant Marbled Torpedo Rays were mostly recorded from this area (n = 18), with the only other records coming from two adjoining ICES rectangles to the west and northwest (21E7, n = 11; 22E7, n = 5). Although the Belle Île area had a higher catch-per-unit-effort of neonate and YOY Marbled Torpedo Rays than this area, Île de Ré – Pertuis includes the only hotspot for pregnant females of the species in the survey region, indicating its importance for the species.

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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
RAYS												
Torpedo marmorata	Marbled Torpedo Ray	VU	0–1,480	X		X						

SUPPORTING SPECIES

Scientific Name	Common Name	IUCN Red List Category
SHARKS		
Cetorhinus maximus	Basking Shark	EN
Mustelus asterias	Starry Smoothhound	NT
Scyliorhinus canicula	Smallspotted Catshark	LC
RAYS		
Raja undulata	Undulate Skate	NT

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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