

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

## INFERNO BAY ISRA

### European Atlantic Region

#### SUMMARY

Inferno Bay is located on the southwestern coast of Santiago Island, Cabo Verde. The area is characterised by a steep slope, hard substrate, rocky reefs, and black coral forests. From November to June, colder waters reach Cabo Verde, transporting nutrients from upwelling zones off northwest Africa. Within this area there are: **threatened species** and **undefined aggregations** (Sicklefin Devil Ray *Mobula tarapacana*).

#### CRITERIA

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

—	—
<b>CABO VERDE</b>	—
—	—
<b>0-750 metres</b>	—
—	—
<b>85.54 km<sup>2</sup></b>	—
—	—





## DESCRIPTION OF HABITAT

Inferno Bay is located on Santiago Island, Cabo Verde. It lies on the southwestern coast of the island, which is the largest in the archipelago. The area is characterised by a steep slope, hard substrate, rocky reefs, and black coral forests (Koivunen et al. 2024).

Between July and November, the intensity and position of the St. Helena and Azores anticyclones result in a predominantly south-westerly current along the southern islands. This brings warmer waters (24-27°C) to the region. From November to June, colder waters ( $\leq 23^\circ\text{C}$ ) reach Cabo Verde, transporting nutrients from upwelling zones off northwest Africa. These nutrient-rich waters create favourable conditions for primary productivity around the islands (Almada 1994).

This Important Shark and Ray Area is pelagic and is delineated from surface waters (0 m) to 750 m based on the bathymetry of the area.

## ISRA CRITERIA

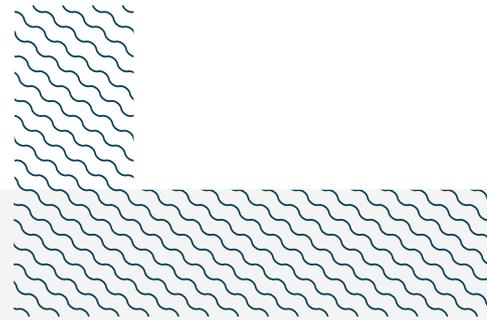
### CRITERION A – VULNERABILITY

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 Sicklefin Devil Ray (Marshall et al. 2022).

### SUB-CRITERION C5 – UNDEFINED AGGREGATIONS

Inferno Bay is an important area for undefined aggregations of one ray species.

Based on records from weekly recreational dives undertaken year-round in 1985 and 2008, twice weekly between November 2008–April 2015, and daily between November 2018–April 2019 (weather permitting), aggregations of 20–30 Sicklefin Devil Rays are regularly and predictably observed between November–April within this area. Aggregations of >100 individuals have also been observed during the same period (JS Pinto pers. obs. 1985–2019; AF Sobral & P Afonso pers. comm. 2018). Additionally, in May 2023, one Baited Remote Underwater Video Survey deployment within this area opportunistically recorded an aggregation of >70 individuals (Lantuna Association unpubl. data 2023). This is the only area across the Cabo Verde archipelago where regular aggregations of Sicklefin Devil Ray have been reported (SJ Delgado Pires pers. obs. 2025).



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### **Suggested citation**

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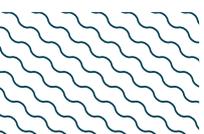
## QUALIFYING SPECIES

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	
RAYS													
<i>Mobula tarapacana</i>	Sicklefin Devil Ray	EN	0-1,896	X							X		

## SUPPORTING SPECIES

Scientific Name	Common Name	IUCN Red List Category
<b>SHARKS</b>		
<i>Carcharhinus limbatus</i>	Blacktip Shark	VU
<i>Carcharhinus longimanus</i>	Oceanic Whitetip Shark	CR
<i>Ginglymostoma cirratum</i>	Atlantic Nurse shark	VU
<i>Hexanchus griseus</i>	Bluntnose Sixgill Shark	NT
<i>Isurus oxyrinchus</i>	Shortfin Mako	EN
<i>Sphyrna lewini</i>	Scalloped Hammerhead	CR

*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

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