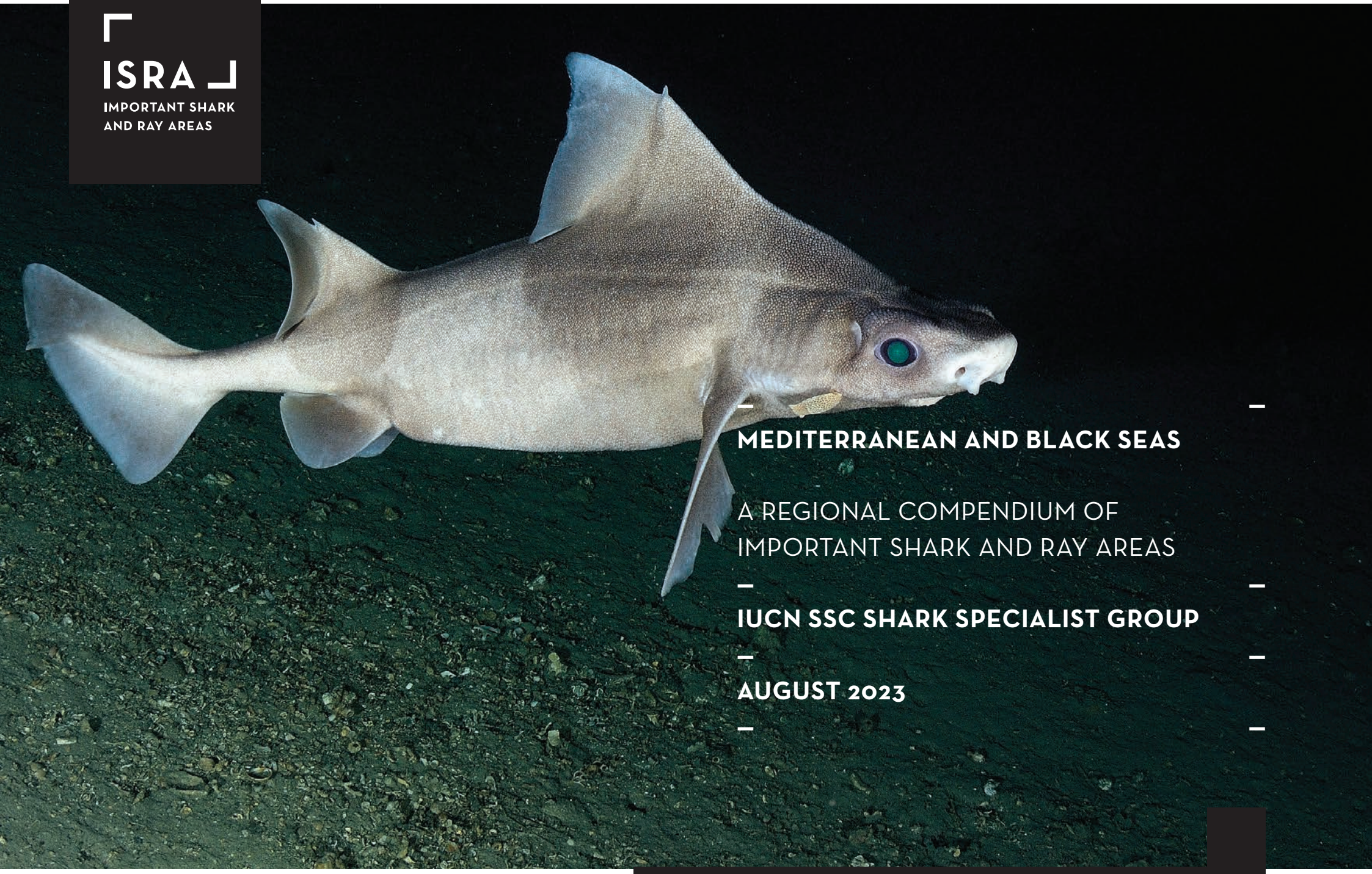
ISRA

IMPORTANT SHARK AND RAY AREAS



MEDITERRANEAN AND BLACK SEAS

A REGIONAL COMPENDIUM OF IMPORTANT SHARK AND RAY AREAS

IUCN SSC SHARK SPECIALIST GROUP

AUGUST 2023

Citation

Jabado RW, García-Rodríguez E, Kyne PM, Charles R, Armstrong AH, Bortoluzzi J, Mouton TL, Gonzalez-Pestana A, Battle-Morera A, Rohner C, Notarbartolo di Sciara G. 2023. Mediterranean and Black Seas: A regional compendium of Important Shark and Ray Areas. Dubai: IUCN SSC Shark Specialist Group.

Cover photo © Alessandro Pagano | Angular Roughshark (*Oxynotus centrina*)

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IUCN SSC Shark Specialist Group

Shark Conservation Fund

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VISION

ENHANCED CONSERVATION OF ALL SHARK, RAY, AND CHIMAERA SPECIES THROUGH THE IMPLEMENTATION OF A SYSTEMATIC PLACE-BASED APPROACH, SUPPORTED BY THE IDENTIFICATION OF ISRAS THROUGHOUT THESE SPECIES' RANGES.

MISSION

TO MOBILIZE SCIENTISTS AND CONSERVATIONISTS TO ENSURE THE RANGES OF ALL KNOWN SHARK, RAY, AND CHIMAERA SPECIES ARE GLOBALLY INVESTIGATED, SO THAT ISRAS ARE IDENTIFIED WITHIN SUCH RANGES AND MAPPED, AND PROVIDE DECISION-MAKERS AND OTHER RELEVANT STAKEHOLDERS WITH ACTIONABLE KNOWLEDGE NECESSARY FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF ADEQUATE SYSTEMATIC PLACE-BASED CONSERVATION.

The term 'sharks' refers to the Class Chondrichthyes comprising all species of sharks, rays, and chimaeras.

Marc Martin Sola

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The second Important Shark and Ray Areas (ISRA) regional expert workshop was held in hybrid mode (in person and online) in Thessaloniki, Greece from 8–12 May, 2023. The goal was to identify and delineate three-dimensional and discrete portions of habitat that are critical to the survival of sharks, rays, and chimaeras (hereafter 'sharks'), and that have the potential to be managed for conservation. The region covered included the Mediterranean and Black Seas.

In addition to the 11-person ISRA team coordinating the meeting, the workshop was attended by 87 experts, including in-person participants (n = 17) and online participants (n = 70) (see Annex II for the complete list of participants). Representatives of each country proposed areas they considered critical for the survival of sharks. In many cases, experts had experience working in multiple countries across the region and/or had already been working collaboratively through the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Species Survival Commission (SSC) Shark Specialist Group (SSG) network of members or various regional initiatives (e.g., Angel Shark Conservation Network).

This scientific collaboration amongst regional and global experts resulted in the identification of 65 Important Shark and Ray Areas, 6 candidate ISRAs, and 20 Areas of Interest. Identified ISRAs range in size from small underwater areas of 0.09 km^2 at depths of 1,100–1,150 m (Palmahim Brine Pools ISRA in Israel) to large areas of 219,913 km^2 (Strait of Sicily and Tunisian Plateau ISRA which is transboundary in nature encompassing waters of Italy, Libya, Malta, and Tunisia) from surface waters to a depth of 2,000 m.

A comprehensive workshop report, along with relevant materials related to the ISRA process, criteria, and regions, can be found at **www.sharkrayareas.org**

Thessaloniki, Greece | Mediterranean and Black Seas regional expert workshop participants, May 2023

MEDITERREANEAN AND BLACK SEAS REGION

The Mediterranean and Black Seas (ISRA Region 3) is composed of two large semi-enclosed, connected basins. The Mediterranean Sea is bordered by 22 countries or jurisdictions including Spain, France, Monaco, Italy, Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Albania, Greece, Türkiye, Syria, Lebanon, Israel, Palestine (Gaza), Egypt, Libya, Tunisia, Algeria, Morocco, and Gibraltar (British Overseas Territory); Malta and Cyprus, are island countries in the sea. The Black Sea is bordered by six countries or jurisdictions including Bulgaria, Romania, Georgia, Russia, Türkiye, and Ukraine. This region has a coastline length of ~54,000 km with 75.7% included within Europe, 13.6% in Asia, and 10.6% in Africa.

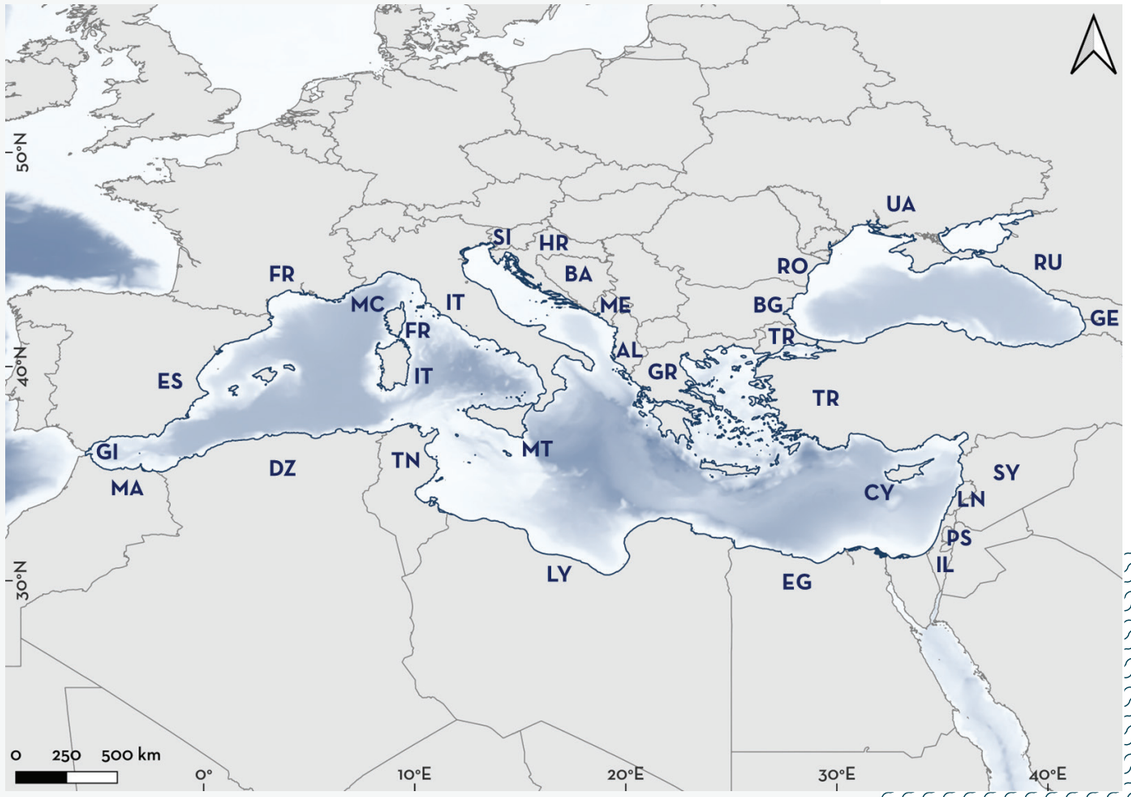
The Mediterranean Sea covers an area of ~2,500,000 km^2. It is connected to the Atlantic Ocean through the Strait of Gibraltar. It is also connected to the Red Sea (Western Indian Ocean) through the man-made Suez Canal (opened for navigation in 1869). The Strait of Sicily divides the Mediterranean Sea into western and eastern sub-basins. There are >5,000 islands and islets with Sicily, Sardinia, Corsica, Cyprus, and Crete representing the largest islands, and the Aegean, Dalmatian, and Balearic the largest island complexes. Average primary production is lower than most oceanic areas, with mostly oligotrophic waters. Exceptions are the Adriatic Sea, Gulf of Lion, Northern Aegean Sea, and Alboran Sea due to nutrients inputs from river run-off and water mass that enriches the coastal ecosystems. The Mediterranean Sea basin has a negative water balance due to excess evaporation over precipitation and river runoff. Sea surface temperatures range between 6.5°C and 29.3°C.

The Black Sea represents the world's largest land-locked inland sea with an area of ~436,400 km^2. It is connected to the Mediterranean Sea through the Turkish Strait System, composed of the Marmara Sea, the Strait of the Dardanelles, and the Bosphorus Strait. This basin comprises an upper brackish well-oxygenated water layer overlying a deep anoxic water mass with limited marine life. Mesotrophic conditions prevail, while eutrophic conditions are present in the Sea of Marmara and near the mouths of large river systems. The Black Sea has a positive water balance due to ample river discharges.

The Mediterranean and Black Seas, considered as two separate Large Marine Ecosystems (LMEs), have a general surface water circulation that is cyclonic and characterised by many permanent gyres and coastal eddies. This region has a microtidal environment due to its limited connection with the open ocean. Seafloor topography is highly variable, featuring underwater mountain chains up to 5,000 m below sea level and deep trenches. The continental shelf is generally narrow although wider shelves are present in the Adriatic Sea, Gulf of Gabès, and Gulf of Lion. Maximum depth reaches 5,267 m in the Calypso Pit (or Well of Inousses) in the Ionian Sea (Mediterranean Sea) while maximum depth in the Black Sea is 2,212 m.

This region represents ~ 1% of the area covered by the world's oceans encompassing about 0.38% of their total volume. Yet it represents a hotspot of marine and coastal biodiversity, with its mosaic of ecosystems having a high rate of endemism (28%), 7.5% of the world's marine fauna, and 18% of its marine flora.

ISRA Region 03 |
The Mediterranean and Black Seas - the blue boundary indicates the area within the scope of the workshop. Country codes refer to: ES - Spain; FR - France; MC - Monaco; IT - Italy; SI - Slovenia; HR - Croatia; BA - Bosnia and Herzegovina; ME - Montenegro; AL - Albania; GR - Greece; TR - Türkiye; BG - Bulgaria; RO - Romania; UA - Ukraine; RU - Russia; GE - Georgia; SY - Syria; CY - Cyprus; LN - Lebanon; PS - Palestine (Gaza); IL - Israel; EG - Egypt; LY - Libya; MT - Malta; TN - Tunisia; DZ - Algeria; MA - Morocco; GI - Gibraltar

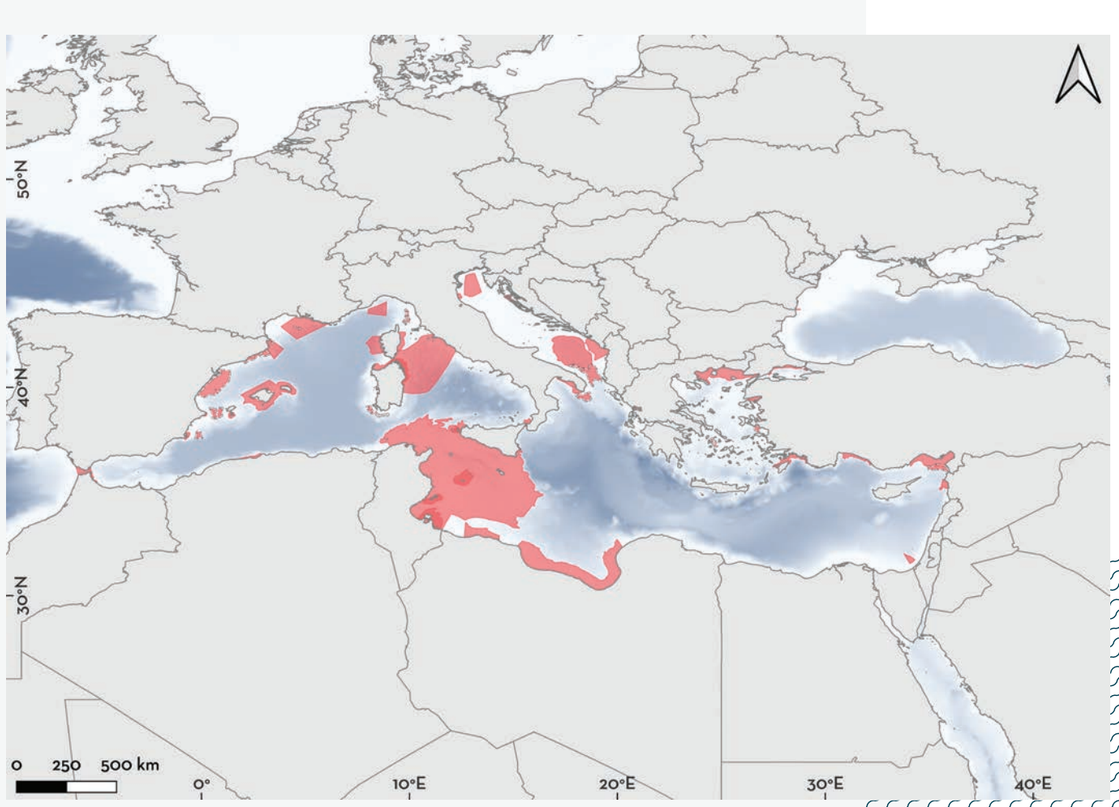


IMPORTANT SHARK AND RAY AREAS (ISRA)

Important Shark and Ray Areas are ‘discrete, three-dimensional portions of habitat, important for one or more shark species, that are delineated and have the potential to be managed for conservation’. Colored areas on the map below represent those meeting the ISRA Criteria. ISRAs that do not include surface waters (sub-surface areas below 0 m depth) are indicated with a dashed white line.

28 JURISDICTIONS

65 ISRA



/P	JURISDICTION	ISRA NAME	CONTRIBUTORS
21	**Spain**	Balearic Islands	Gabriel Morey, Amanda Batlle-Morera, and Christoph Rohner
22	**Spain**	Benidorm Island	Claudio Barría, Laura Monteverde, David Ruiz-García, Ana I. Colmenero, and Adriana Gonzalez-Pestana
23	**Spain**	Cala Vella Mallorca	Gabriel Morey, Amanda Batlle-Morera, and Christoph Rohner
24	**Spain**	Central Catalonia	Ana I. Colmenero, Claudio Barría, Joan Navarro, Marc Aquino Baleytó, Amanda Batlle-Morera, and Adriana Gonzalez-Pestana
25	**Spain**	Costa Brava Canyons	Théophile L. Mouton, François Poisson, David March, Marco Costantini, Caroline M. Bousquet, Oscar Esparza, and Simone Niedermüller
26	**Spain**	Ebro Delta	Claudio Barría, David Ruiz-García, Ana I. Colmenero, Amanda Batlle-Morera, and Adriana Gonzalez-Pestana
27	**Spain**	El Toro-Sa Dragonera	Gabriel Morey, Amanda Batlle-Morera, and Adriana Gonzalez-Pestana
28	**Spain**	Formentera Island	Gabriel Morey
29	**Spain**	Ibiza Channel Slope	Javier Guallart, Gabriel Morey, and Amanda Batlle-Morera

30	**Spain**	Marina Alta	Pablo García-Salinas, David Ruiz-García, Alvaro Almagro-Rodríguez, Jaime Penadés-Suay, Ana I. Colmenero, and Claudio Barría
31	**Spain**	Murcia Eastern Coast	María Pozo-Montoro, Jose Antonio García-Charton, Antonio Ortolano Muñoz, Pedro Clemente Navarro-Martínez, Francisco López Castejón, Elisa Arroyo, Francisca Giménez-Casalduero, Antonio Esteban, Alfonso A. Ramos, Isabel Abel, Abraham Soriano, Almudena Angulo, Angel Manso, Aranzazu Canovas, Devayana Valero, Gabriel de Robert, Enrique Garrindo, Ismael Serna, Javier Murcia, Joaquín López, José Antonio Rodríguez, Jorge Ruiz, Luis Velarde, Nico Marín, Pablo García, Patricia Gandolfo, Yves Delvaux, and Adriana Gonzalez-Pestana
32	**Spain**	Murcia Pockmarks	Elisa Arroyo, Francisca Giménez-Casalduero, Antonio Esteban, Alfonso A. Ramos, Isabel Abel, María Pozo-Montoro, Jose Antonio García Chartón, Amanda Batlle-Morera, and Adriana Gonzalez-Pestana
33	**Spain**	Roses	Claudio Barría, Ana I. Colmenero, David Ruiz-García, and Adriana Gonzalez-Pestana
36	**France**	Corsica Canyons	Atlantine Boggio-Pasqua, William Travers, Matthieu Lapinski, Théophile L. Mouton, and Julien Gasc
37	**France**	Eastern Corsica	Anthony Acou, Marion Bouet, Caroline M. Bousquet, Jean-Michel Culioli, Jessica Dijoux, Eric D.H. Durieux, Michel Marengo, Théophile L. Mouton, Eva K. Meyers, Johann Mourier, Marie-Catherine Santoni, and Pauline Stephan
38	**France**	Eastern Gulf of Lion	Théophile L. Mouton, François Poisson, Marco Costantini, David March, Caroline M. Bousquet, and Simone Niedermüller
39	**France**	Petit to Grand Rhône Canyon Heads	Ignasi Nuez, Théophile L. Mouton, and Manel Gazo
41	**Italy**	Cervia-Marina di Ravenna	Matteo Barbato, Simone D'Acunto, Jacopo Bernardi, Zaira de Ros, Emanuela Fanelli, Carlotta Mazzoldi, and Peter M. Kyne
42	**Italy**	Egadi Archipelago	Desirée Grancagnolo, Marco Milazzo, Carlo Cattano, Manfredi Di Lorenzo, Antonio Calò, Antonio Di Franco, Théophile L. Mouton, and Paolo Guidetti
43	**Italy**	Ligurian Sea	Simone Niedermüller, Fulvio Garibaldi, Alessandro Buzzi, Luca Lanteri, Cecilia Pinto, Fabrizio Serena, and Théophile L. Mouton
44	**Italy**	Pelagie Archipelago and Levante Shoal	Carlo Cattano, Marco Milazzo, Desirée Grancagnolo, Giorgio Aglieri Gabriele Turco, Federico Quattrocchi, Fabrizio Serena, and Ryan Charles
45	**Italy**	Santa Croce Bank	Eleonora de Sabata, Simona Clò, Théophile L. Mouton, Pasquale Manzi, and Fabrizio Serena
46	**Italy**	Santa Maria di Leuca	Adriana Gonzalez Pestana, Fabrizio Serena, Gianfranco D'Onghia, Letizia Sion, Angela Carluccio, and Peter M. Kyne

47	**Italy**	Strait of Messina	Marco Milazzo, Desirée Grancagnolo, Carlo Cattano, Giuseppe Notarbartolo di Sciara, Agostino Leone, Teresa Romeo, Pietro Battaglia, Théophile L. Mouton, and Danilo Malara
48	**Italy**	Sulcis	Théophile L. Mouton and Adriana Gonzalez-Pestana
49	**Italy**	Tuscany Offshore Thumb	Monica Barone, Cecilia Mancusi, Théophile L. Mouton, Caroline M. Bousquet, and Fabrizio Serena
50	**Italy**	Western Apulian Coast	Eleonora de Sabata, Simona Clò, Théophile L. Mouton, and Fabrizio Serena
52	**Croatia**	Western Virsko More	Patrik Krstinic, Alen Soldo, Simone Niedermüller, Eva K.M. Meyers, and Peter M. Kyne
55	**Greece**	Amvrakikos Gulf	Ioannis Giovos, Carlotta Mazzoldi, Dimitrios Moutopoulos, Georgios Rallis, Martina Ciprian, Roxani Naasan Aga Spyridopoulou, Giuseppe Notarbartolo Di Sciara, and Peter M. Kyne
56	**Greece**	North Cyclades	Jenny R. Bortoluzzi and Ioannis Giovos
58	**Romania**	Vama Veche	Victor Nita, George Tiganov, Magda Nenciu, and Emiliano García-Rodríguez
61	**Türkiye**	Boncuk Bay	Simona Clò, Eleonora de Sabata, Vahit Alan, M. Tunca Olguner, Funda Kök, Zafer A. Kızılkaya, and Emiliano García-Rodríguez
62	**Türkiye**	Gulf of Antalya	Nuri Basusta and Emiliano García-Rodríguez

63	**Türkiye**	Iskenderun and Mersin Bays	Ismet Saygu, Elizabeth Grace Tunka Bengil, and Emiliano García-Rodríguez
64	**Türkiye**	Izmir Bay	Elizabeth Grace Tunka Bengil, Ismet Saygu, and Emiliano García-Rodríguez
65	**Türkiye**	Marmara Sea Shelf	Hakan Kabasakal and Emiliano García-Rodríguez
66	**Türkiye**	Prince Islands	Hakan Kabasakal and Emiliano García-Rodríguez
67	**Türkiye**	Sigacik Bay	Elizabeth Grace Tunka Bengil, Nuri Basusta, and Emiliano García-Rodríguez
68	**Türkiye**	The Trabzon-Rize	Emiliano García-Rodríguez and Nuri Basusta
70	**Syria**	Latakia - Baniyas	Hasan Alkusairy, Adib Saad, and Asia O. Armstrong
73	**Israel**	Dalia Beach	Adi Barash, Ya'ara Grosmark, Barak Azrieli, and Christoph Rohner
74	**Israel**	Danny Reef Palmahim	Adi Barash, Ya'ara Grosmark, and Christoph Rohner
75	**Israel**	Gdor Kurkar Ridges	Adi Barash, Ya'ara Grosmark, Shahar Chaikin, and Christoph Rohner
76	**Israel**	Palmahim Brine Pools	Adi Barash, Ya'ara Grosmark, Maxim Rubin-Blum, Yizhaq Makovsky, and Christoph Rohner
77	**Israel**	Rosh-Hanikra Achziv	Adi Barash, Ya'ara Grosmark, Shevy Rothman, and Christoph Rohner

80	**Libya**	Sirt Gulf	Esmail Shakman, Sara A. Al-Mabruk, Khaled Etayeb, Abdalha Ben Abdalha, Mahmoud Salih, Akram Turki, Mohamed Elhajaji, Elmaki Elagil, Eva K. M. Meyers, Ioannis Giovos, Jenny R. Bortoluzzi, and Ryan Charles
81	**Libya**	Tripolitania	Esmail Shakman, Khaled Etayeb, Abdalha ben Abdalha, Mahmoud Salih, Akram Turki, Mohamed Elhajaji, Ryan Charles, and Jenny R. Bortoluzzi
83	**Tunisia**	Jerba-Zarzis	Mohamed Nejemeddine Bradai, Bechir Saidi, Samira Enajjar, and Adriana Gonzalez-Pestana
84	**Tunisia**	Kerkennah	Mohamed Nejemeddine Bradai, Bechir Saidi, Samira Enajjar, and Adriana Gonzalez-Pestana
85	**Tunisia**	Lagoon of Bizerte	Gofrane Labyedh and Adriana Gonzalez-Pestana
88	**Algeria**	Ras Akrata-Cap Tenes	Hamza Mohammed Anis Mendil, Farid Hemida, and Ryan Charles
91	**Morocco**	M'Diq and Cabo Negro	Javier Guallart and Jorge Sáez
94	**Cyprus, Türkiye**	Cilician Basin	Nuri Basusta, Emiliano García-Rodríguez, and Ryan Charles
95	**Greece, Türkiye**	Edremit Bay	Hakan Kabasakal and Emiliano García-Rodríguez
96	**Palestine (Gaza), Israel**	Gaza	ISRA Team
97	**France, Italy**	Northeastern Sardinia	Eleonora de Sabata, Simona Clò, Fabrizio Serena, Théophile L. Mouton, and Cecilia Mancusi

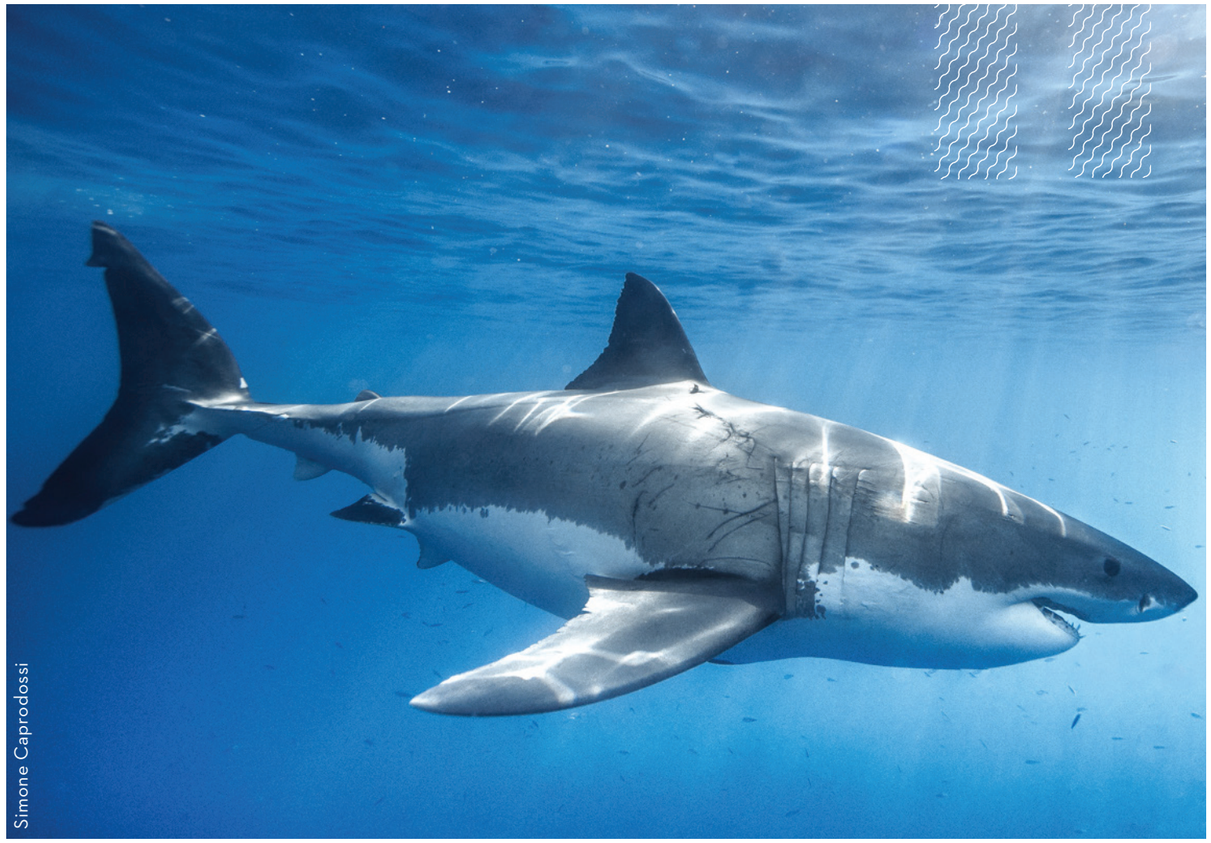
98	**Italy, Croatia**	Northwest Adriatic	Sara Bonanomi, Alessandro Lucchetti, Simone D'Acunto, Massimiliano Bottaro, Mauro Sinopoli Emilio Sperone, Maria Cristina Follesa, Letizia Marsili, Pierluigi Carbonara, Peter M. Kyne, and Adriana Gonzalez-Pestana
99	**Albania, Italy**	Otranto Channel	Azzurra Bastari, Domitilla Senni, Alex Bartoli, Fabrizio Serena, Vittoria Gnetti, and Peter M. Kyne
100	**Albania, Montenegro**	River Bojana/Buna Delta	Ilija Cetkovic, Ana Pešic, Rigers Bakiu, Elvis Kamberi, and Peter M. Kyne
101	**Greece, Türkiye**	Southeastern Aegean Sea	Aylin Ulman, Roxani Naasan Aga Spyridopoulou, Cat Gordon, Ali Hood, Halit Fılız, Ioannis Giovos, Eva Meyers, and Jenny R. Bortoluzzi
102	**Italy, Libya, Malta, Tunisia**	Strait of Sicily and Tunisian Plateau	Marco Milazzo, Desirèe Grancagnolo, Carlo Cattano, Monica Barone, Francesco Colloca, Marco Costantini, Manfredi Di Lorenzo, Fabio Fiorentino, Germana Garofalo, Valentina Lauria, Agostino Leone, Simone Niedermüller, Théophile L. Mouton, Adriana Gonzalez-Pestana, Federico Quattrocchi, and Fabrizio Serena
103	**Albania, Italy, Montenegro**	Southern Adriatic Pit	Pierluigi Carbonara, Laura Pintore, Silvia Aveta, Giulia Prato, Simone Niedermüller, Ilija Cetkovic, Fabrizio Serena, and Peter M. Kyne
104	**Morocco, Spain, United Kingdom**	Strait of Gibraltar	Jenny R. Bortoluzzi
105	**Greece, Türkiye**	Thracian Sea Shelf	Roxani Naasan Aga Spyridopoulou, Ioannis Giovos, Carlotta Mazzoldi, Nuri Basusta, and Jenny R. Bortoluzzi

106	**France, Italy**	Tyrrhenian	Giuseppe Notarbartolo di Sciara and Théophile L. Mouton

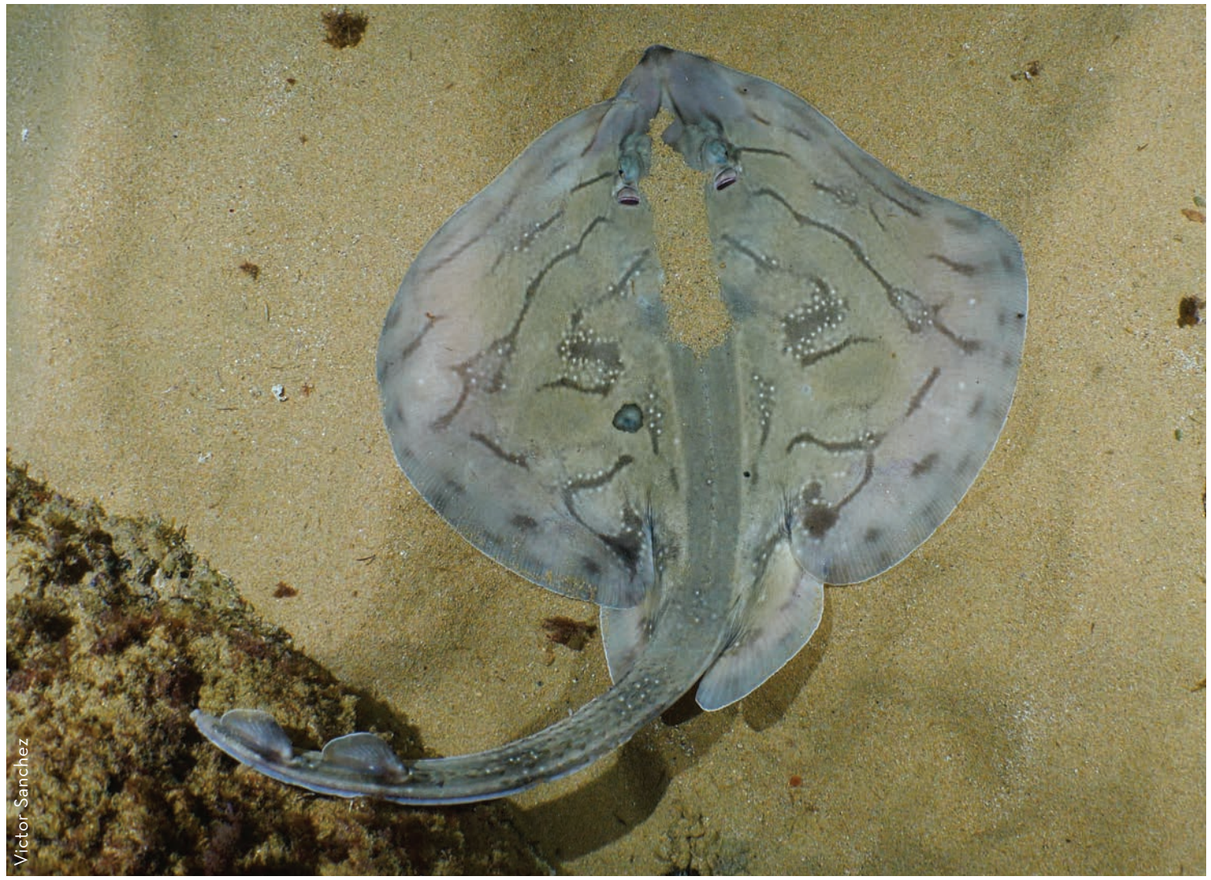
The following sections of the compendium provide a country level summary of each ISRA identified in the Mediterranean and Black Seas region. Each page includes the name of the ISRA, jurisdiction (including Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction (ABNJ), depth (in metres), surface area (in km^2), a brief description of the habitat, the ISRA Criteria met, and example of the species meeting the criteria within the delineated area. Maps are also provided to illustrate the area with blue lines indicating the area meeting the ISRA Criteria and dashed lines indicating the suggested buffer for use in the development of appropriate place-based conservation measures.

Comprehensive factsheets for each ISRAs are available on the ISRA website (www.sharkrayareas.org/resources/isra-factsheets/) along with options to request spatial layers for each area, country, or region (www.sharkrayareas.org/resources/isra-spatial-layers/). All ISRA factsheets have undergone review by the ISRA Independent Review Panel prior to their publication.

For further information, please contact the ISRA Team: info@sharkrayareas.org

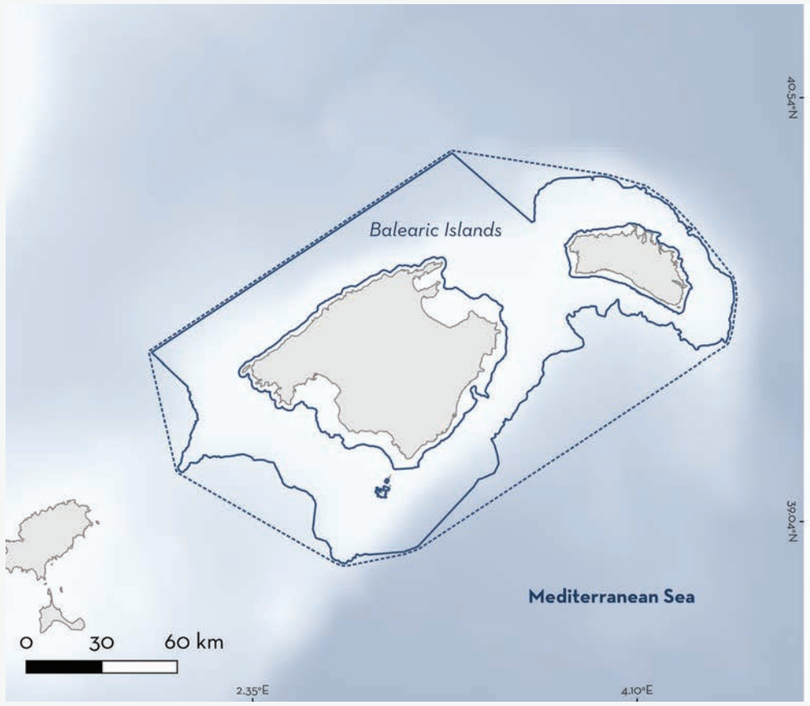


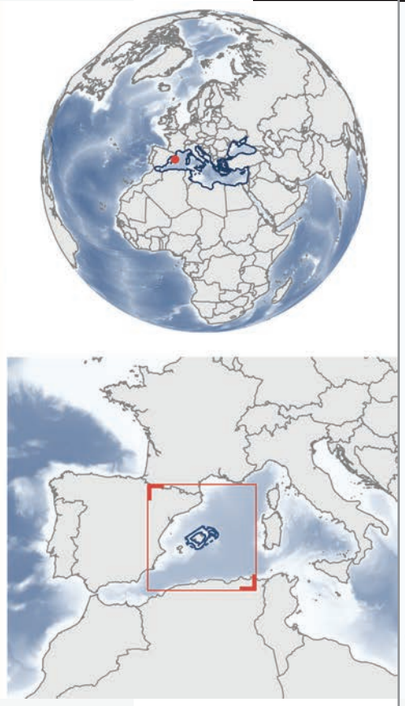
Simone Caprodossi



Victor Sanchez

Drew Dizzy Graham | Unsplash





BALEARIC ISLANDS ISRA

SUMMARY

Balearic Islands is located east of Spain in the central Balearic Sea. The area consists of continental shelf and deeper waters around the two main islands of the archipelago and is characterised by the lowest productivity levels of the Western Mediterranean Basin. Habitats in the area include rhodolite and maërl beds, seagrass meadows, sandy substrates, and pelagic waters. Within this area there are: **threatened species** (e.g., Rough Skate *Raja radula*); **range-restricted species** (e.g., Speckled Skate *Raja polystigma*); **reproductive areas** (e.g., Spinetail Devil Ray *Mobula mobular*); **feeding areas** (Blackmouth Catshark *Galeus melastomus*); **undefined aggregations** (Common Smoothhound *Mustelus mustelus*); and the area sustains a **high diversity of sharks** (22 species).

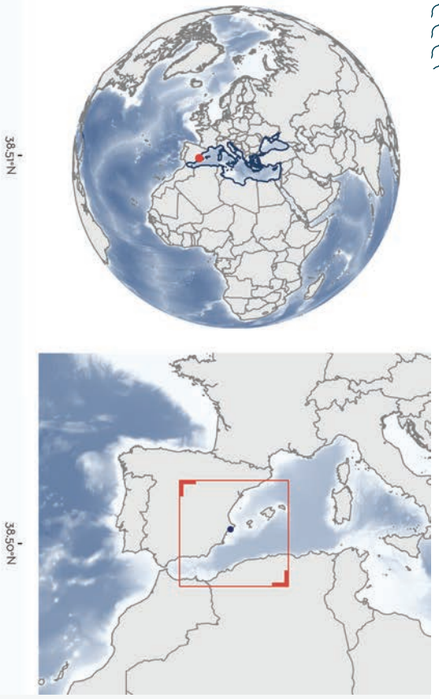
SPAIN

0–1,700 metres

12,195.52 km²

CRITERIA

Criterion A – Vulnerability; Criterion B – Range Restricted; Sub-criterion C1 – Reproductive Areas; Sub-criterion C2 – Feeding Areas; Sub-criterion C5 – Undefined Aggregations; Sub-criterion D2 – Diversity



BENIDORM ISLAND ISRA

SUMMARY

Benidorm Island is located off the southeastern coast of the Iberian Peninsula, Spain, in the western Mediterranean Sea. The area is dominated by sandy areas with meadows of Neptune Grass *Posidonia oceanica* and Slender Seagrass *Cymodocea nodosa*. This area overlaps with one Natural Park, an Ecologically or Biologically Significant Marine Area, and one Key Biodiversity Area. Within this area there are: **threatened species** and **undefined aggregations** (Common Eagle Ray *Myliobatis aquila*).

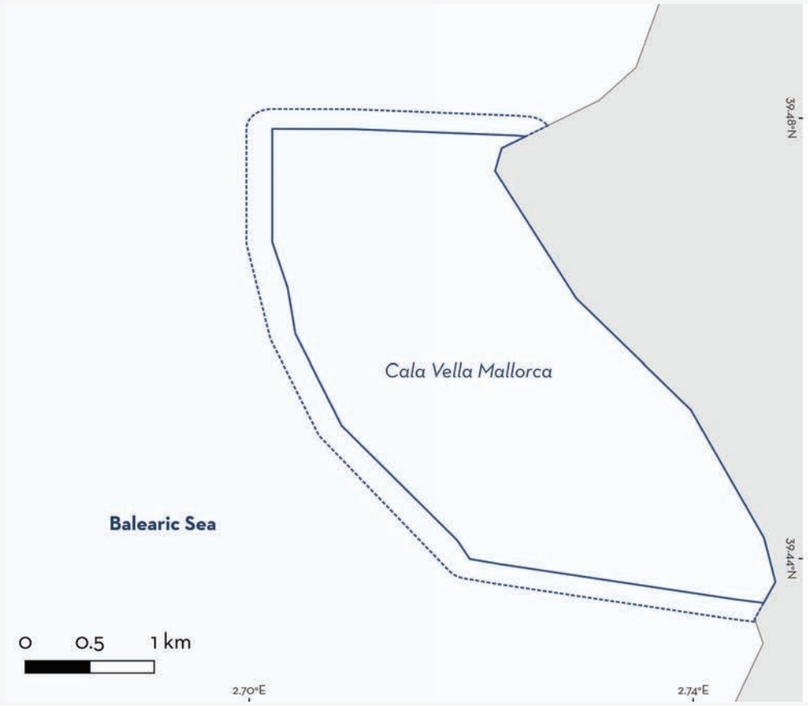
SPAIN

0–30 metres

0.21 km²

CRITERIA

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



CALA VELLA MALLORCA ISRA

SPAIN

0–30 metres

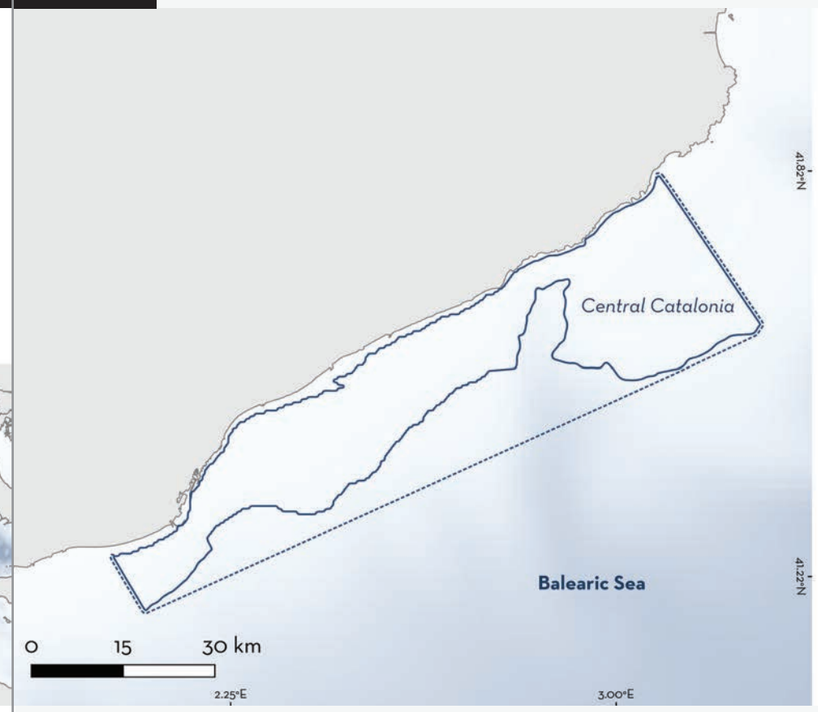
10.6 km²

SUMMARY

Cala Vella Mallorca is a small coastal area located in the east of Palma Bay in Mallorca Island, Spain. This shallow area is characterised by a combination of seagrass meadows and extensive submerged sandbanks, with rocky substrates restricted to a narrow and shallow belt. It is located within the Palma Bay Marine Reserve and the North-western Mediterranean Benthic Ecosystems Ecologically or Biologically Significant Marine Area. Within this area there are: **threatened species** (e.g., Rough Skate *Raja radula*); **range-restricted species** (Rough Skate); and **reproductive areas** (Common Stingray *Dasyatis pastinaca*).

CRITERIA

Criterion A – Vulnerability; Criterion B – Range Restricted; Sub-criterion C1 – Reproductive Areas



CENTRAL CATALONIA ISRA

SPAIN

20–200 metres

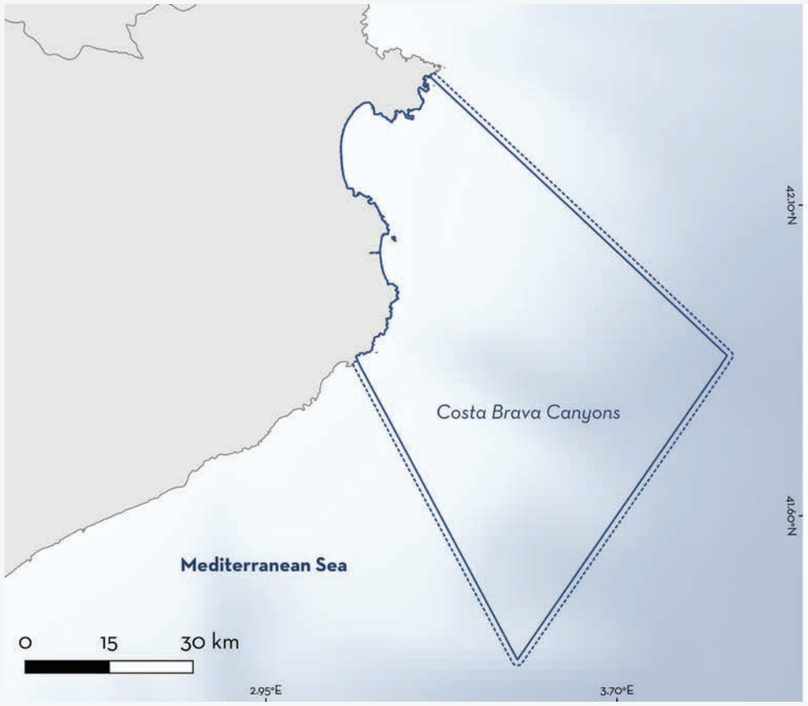
1,634.2 km²

SUMMARY

Central Catalonia is located along the continental shelf of Barcelona and Girona in Spain. The area has a broad continental shelf extending to 200 m depth characterised by a high productivity. The area includes sandy and muddy substrates, rocky coasts, and submarine canyons. This area includes three Natura 2000 areas, two Special Protection Areas, partially overlaps with two Key Biodiversity Areas, and sits within an Ecologically or Biologically Significant Marine Area. Within this area there are: **range-restricted species** (Starry Skate *Raja asterias*); **reproductive areas** (Smallspotted Catshark *Scyliorhinus canicula*); and **feeding areas** (Starry Skate).

CRITERIA

Criterion B – Range Restricted; Sub-criterion C1 – Reproductive Areas; Sub-criterion C2 – Feeding Areas



COSTA BRAVA CANYONS ISRA

SUMMARY

Costa Brava Canyons is located in the northwestern Mediterranean Sea, bordering the coast of northern Spain. The area has a narrow continental shelf carved by deepwater canyons. It is a high productivity area due to nutrient input from nearby rivers and coastal upwelling generated by winds blowing off the continent. In this area, the Northern Mediterranean Current flows southward along the continental slope. This area sits within the North-western Mediterranean Pelagic Ecosystems Ecologically or Biologically Significant Marine Area and partly overlaps with the Mar del Empordà Key Biodiversity Area. Within this area there are: **threatened species** and areas important for **movement** (Blue Shark *Prionace glauca*).

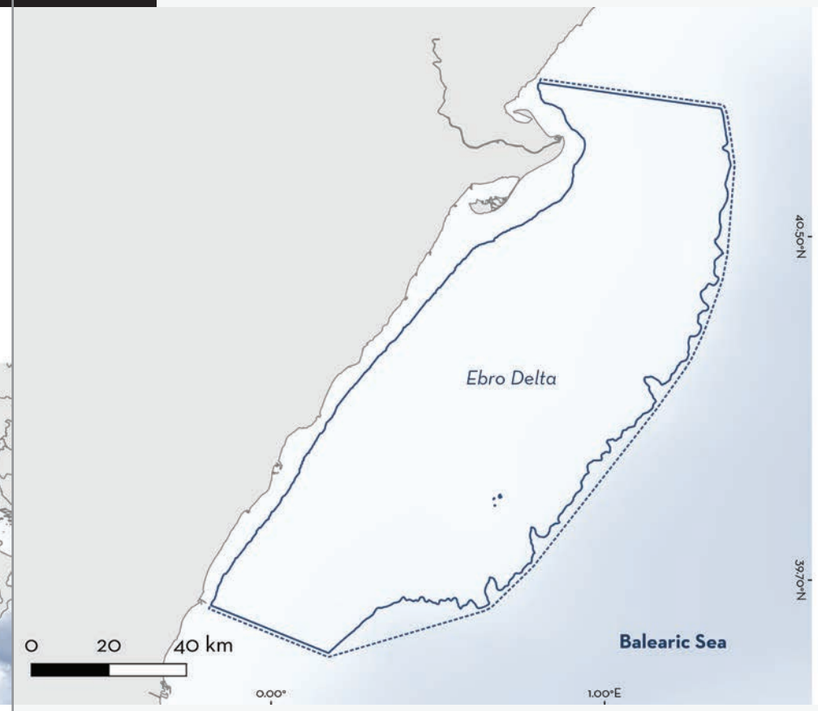
SPAIN

0–1,082 metres

3,586 km²

CRITERIA

Criterion A – Vulnerability; Sub-criterion C4 – Movement



EBRO DELTA ISRA

SUMMARY

Ebro Delta is located on the Catalan coast of Spain and is influenced by the Ebro River delta. The continental shelf is wide and heterogeneous including prodeltaic structures. This area has high levels of primary production due to the presence of upwellings and river output. The area is adjacent to the Delta del Ebro National Park and belongs to the Natura 2000 network as a Special Protection Area. It also overlaps with a Key Biodiversity Area and an Ecologically or Biologically Significant Marine Area. Within this area there are: **range-restricted species** (Starry Skate *Raja asterias*) and **reproductive areas** (e.g., Smallspotted Catshark *Scyliorhinus canicula*).

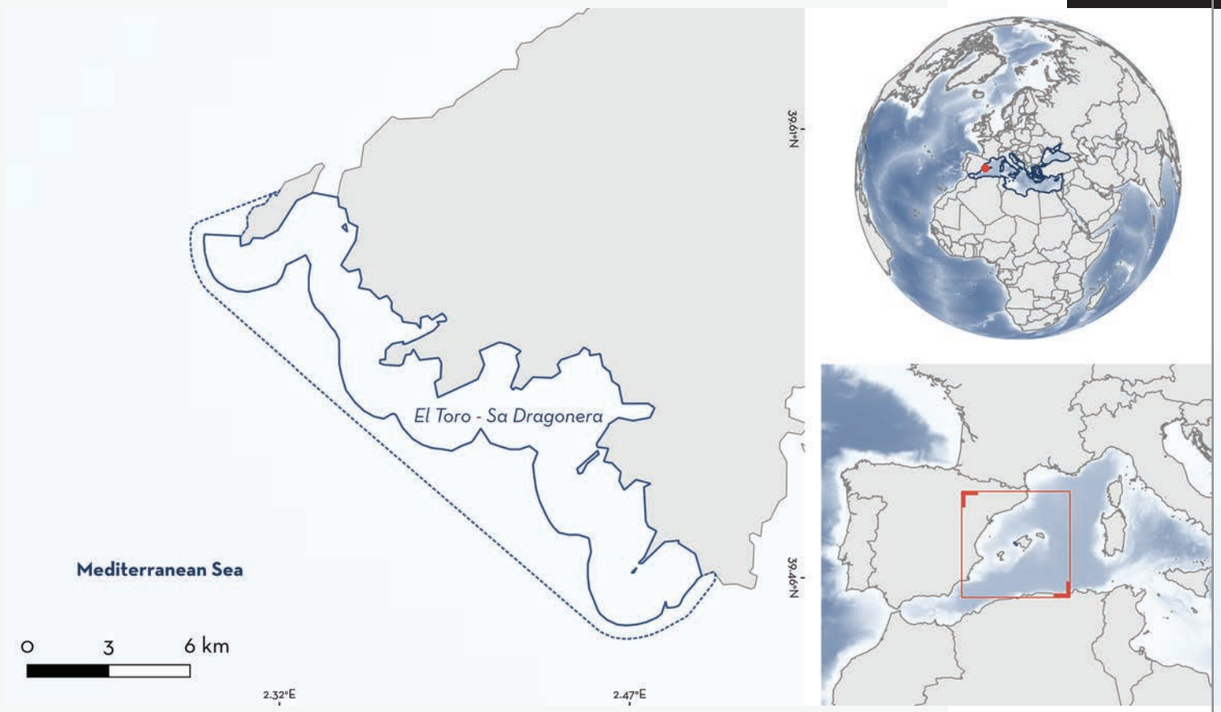
SPAIN

20–200 metres

8,788.9 km²

CRITERIA

Criterion B – Range Restricted; Sub-criterion C1 – Reproductive Areas



EL TORO - SA DRAGONERA ISRA

SPAIN

0–50 metres

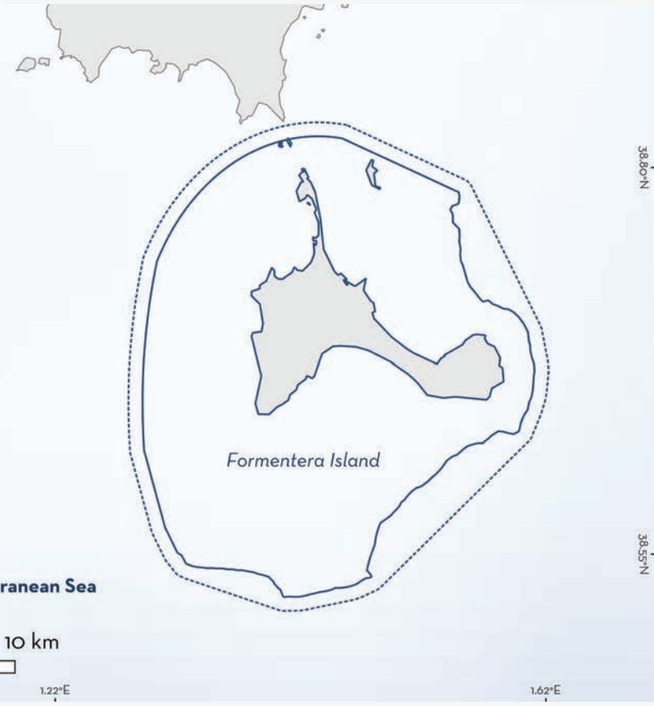
68.7 km²

SUMMARY

El Toro-Sa Dragonera is located on the southwest coast of Mallorca Island in the Balearic Sea off Spain, northwestern Mediterranean Sea. The area is characterised by coastal detrital substrates, with seagrass meadows and scattered coralligenous habitats. The area overlaps with two Ecologically and Biologically Significant Marine Areas and one Key Biodiversity Area, two marine reserves, and two Natura 2000 sites. Within the area there are: **threatened species** and **undefined aggregations** (Spiny Butterfly Ray *Gymnura altavela*).

CRITERIA

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



FORMENTERA ISLAND ISRA

SPAIN

0–200 metres

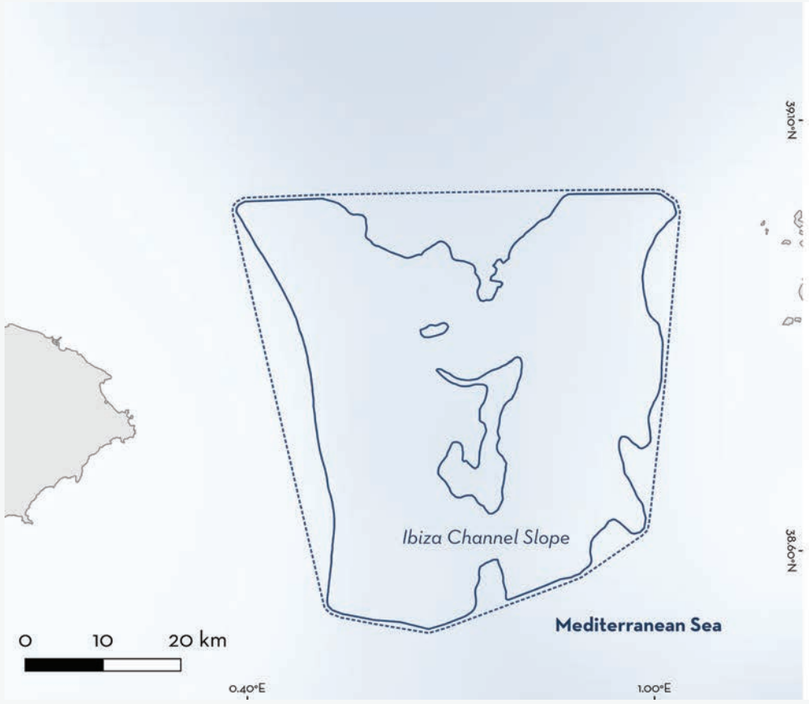
562.6 km²

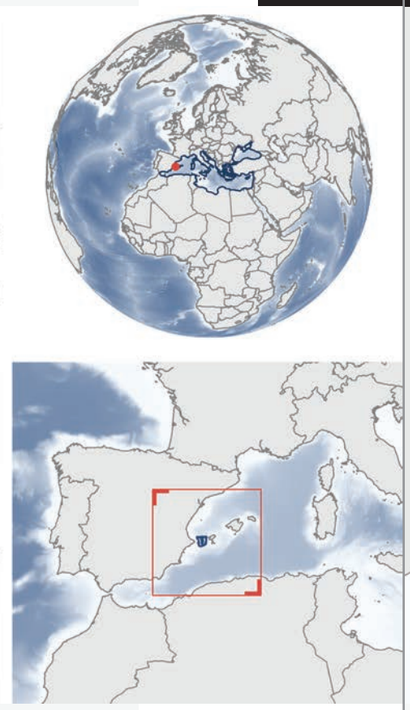
SUMMARY

Formentera Island, the southernmost island of the Balearic Archipelago, is located east of the Iberian Peninsula of Spain. The area is characterised by benthic habitats that include extensive Neptune Grass *Posidonia oceanica*, rocky shores, sandy substrates, maërl beds, and coralligenous areas, as well as some flat and low seamounts in its southern part. The area overlaps with the Freus d'Eivissa I Formentera and the Punta de sa Creu Marine Reserves, seven Natura 2000 areas, and the North-western Mediterranean Benthic Ecosystems Ecologically or Biologically Significant Marine Area. Within this area there are: **threatened species** (e.g., White Skate *Rostroraja alba*); **range-restricted species** (Rough Skate *Raja radula*); and **undefined aggregations** (White Skate).

CRITERIA

Criterion A – Vulnerability; Criterion B – Range Restricted; Sub-criterion C5 – Undefined Aggregations





IBIZA CHANNEL SLOPE ISRA

SUMMARY

Ibiza Channel Slope is a deep channel connecting the Iberian Peninsula and the Balearic Islands promontory in Spain. The channel plays an important role in water exchange between the Balearic Basin and the Algerian Basin and thus promotes productivity. The dominant habitats are mud substrates with patches of rock and sand, with geological features such as the Xabia-Ibiza Seamount and pockmark fields. Within this area there are: **reproductive areas** (e.g., Bluntnose Sixgill Shark *Hexanchus griseus*).

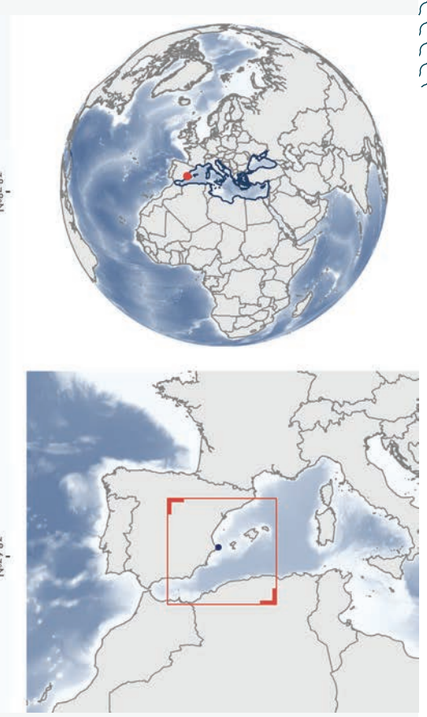
SPAIN

400–850 metres

1,975.2 km²

CRITERIA

Sub-criterion C1 – Reproductive Areas



MARINA ALTA ISRA

SUMMARY

Marina Alta is a coastal area located on the southeastern Iberian Peninsula in the western Mediterranean Sea. It is characterised by diverse habitats including large seagrass meadows surrounded by sandy substrates. It overlaps with the North-western Mediterranean Benthic Ecosystems Ecologically or Biologically Significant Marine Area, three Marine Protected Areas, a Key Biodiversity Area, a Natura 2000 site, and is classified as a Site of Community Importance and/or Special Protection Area. Within this area there are: **threatened species** (e.g., Rough Skate *Raja radula*); **range-restricted species** (e.g., Starry Skate *Raja asterias*); **reproductive areas** (Spiny Butterfly Ray *Gymnura altavela*); **feeding areas** (Spiny Butterfly Ray); and **resting areas** (Spiny Butterfly Ray).

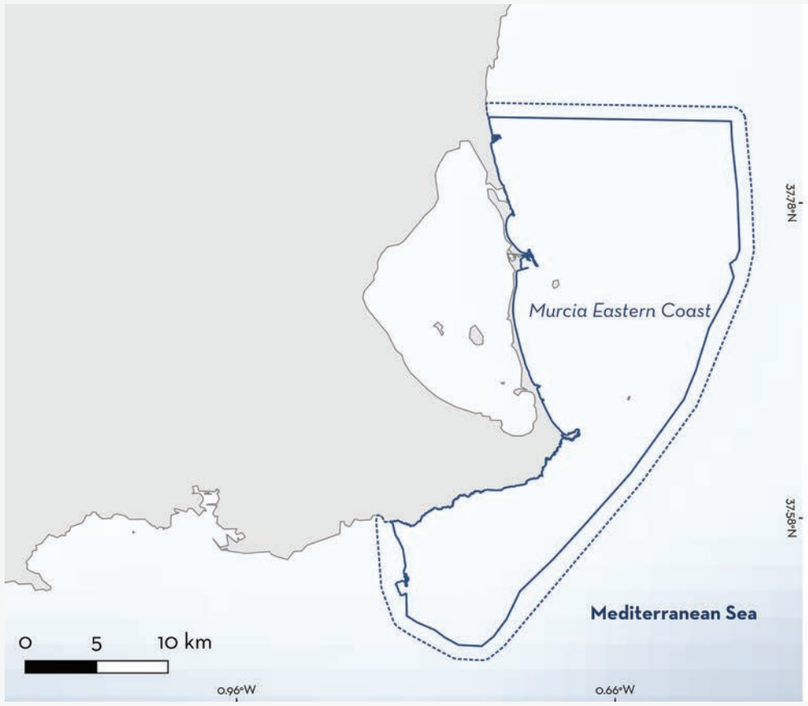
SPAIN

0–50 metres

134.23 km²

CRITERIA

Criterion A – Vulnerability; Criterion B – Range Restricted;
Sub-criterion C1 – Reproductive Areas; Sub-criterion C2 – Feeding Areas;
Sub-criterion C3 – Resting Areas



MURCIA EASTERN COAST ISRA

SUMMARY

Murcia Eastern Coast is located in the coastal region of southeast Spain in the western Mediterranean Sea. The area is characterised by diverse habitats including >40 km of shallow sandy areas with one of the largest seagrass meadows in Spain, highly productive underwater seamounts hosting rocky reefs and gorgonian forests, detrital seabeds, and islands of volcanic origin. Geographical features in the area promote upwelling events which fuel high biodiversity. This area overlaps with one Key Biodiversity Area, two Ecologically and Biologically Significant Marine Areas, three Natura 2000 sites, one marine reserve, and one Specially Protected Area of Mediterranean Importance. Within this area there are: **threatened species** (e.g., Common Guitarfish *Rhinobatos rhinobatos*); **range-restricted species** (Starry Skate *Raja asterias*); **reproductive areas** (e.g., Spiny Butterfly Ray *Gymnura altavela*); and **undefined aggregations** (e.g., Common Eagle Ray *Myliobatis aquila*).

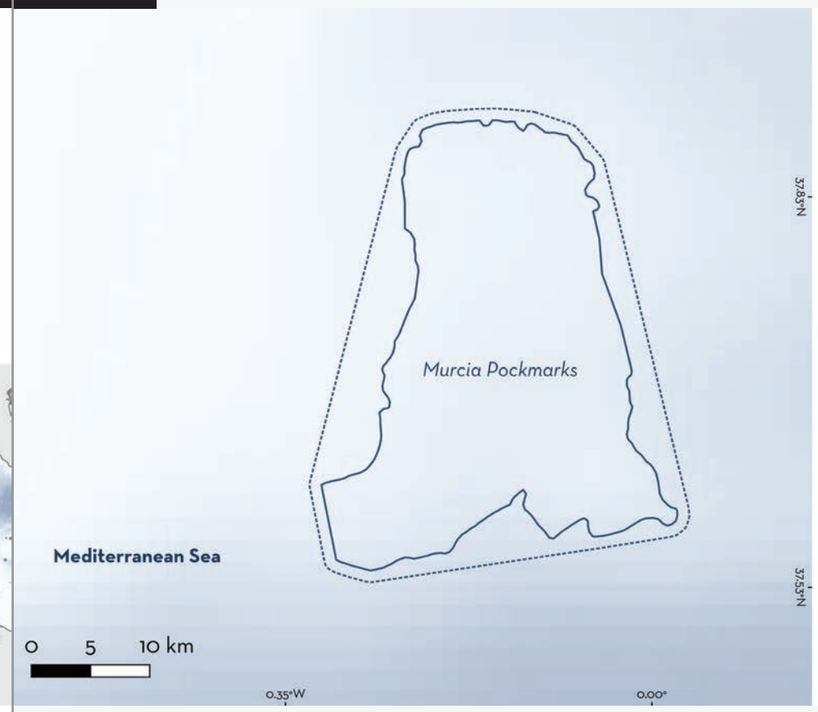
SPAIN

0–85 metres

436.7 km²

CRITERIA

Criterion A – Vulnerability; Criterion B – Range Restricted;
Sub-criterion C1 – Reproductive Areas; Sub-criterion C5 – Undefined Aggregations



MURCIA POCKMARKS ISRA

SUMMARY

Murcia Pockmarks is located in a transition zone between the Alboran Sea and the Algerian-Balearic basin in the western Mediterranean Sea. It includes the seamount of Seco de Palos, the knolls Planazo and Plis-Plas, and a muddy field of pockmarks created by the expulsion of gas and water. It is characterised by habitats that are considered Vulnerable Marine Ecosystems, including sponges (Demospongiae), gorgonian assemblages, yellow tree coral, sea-pen fields, and bamboo coral gardens. This area overlaps with the North-western Mediterranean Benthic Ecosystems Ecologically or Biologically Significant Marine Area. Within the area there are: **threatened species** (Velbet Belly Lanternshark *Etmopterus spinax*); **range-restricted species** (Starry Skate *Raja asterias*); and **reproductive areas** (Velbet Belly Lanternshark).

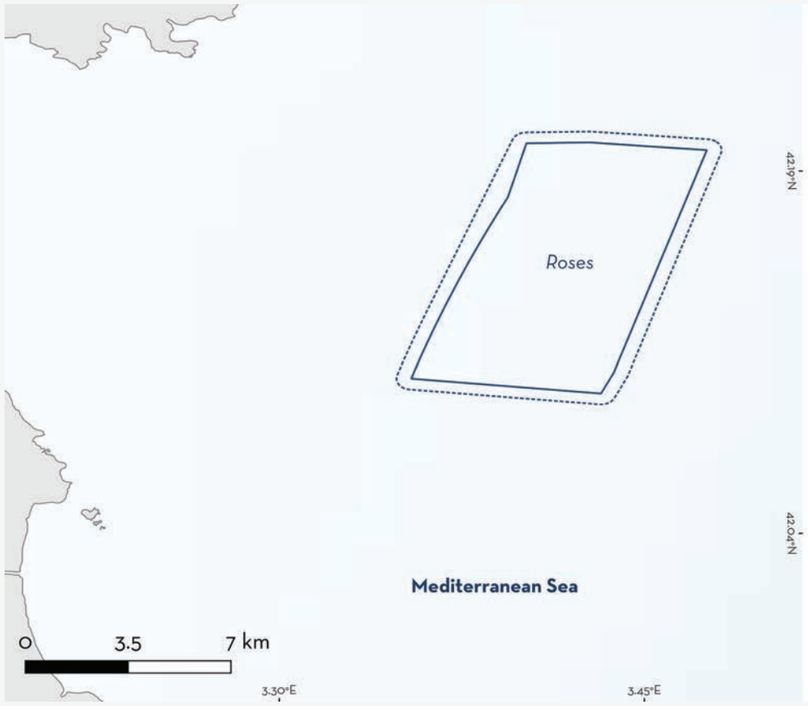
SPAIN

300–800 metres

682.6 km²

CRITERIA

Criterion A – Vulnerability; Criterion B – Range Restricted;
Sub-criterion C1 – Reproductive Areas



ROSES ISRA

SUMMARY

Roses is located in the Gulf of Roses, northern Spain, in the northwest Mediterranean Sea. The presence of the Liguro-Provençal-Catalan Current, combined with the boreal winter disruption of the thermocline, and discharge from nearby rivers makes this area highly productive. This area is located on the continental shelf on muddy substrates. It overlaps with a marine protected area designated by local fishers in 2014, a Key Biodiversity Area, and an Ecologically or Biologically Significant Marine Area. Within this area there are: **range-restricted species** and **feeding areas** (Speckled Skate *Raja polystigma*).

CRITERIA

Criterion B – Range Restricted; Sub-criterion C2 – Feeding Areas

SPAIN

–

120–150 metres

–

71.64 km²

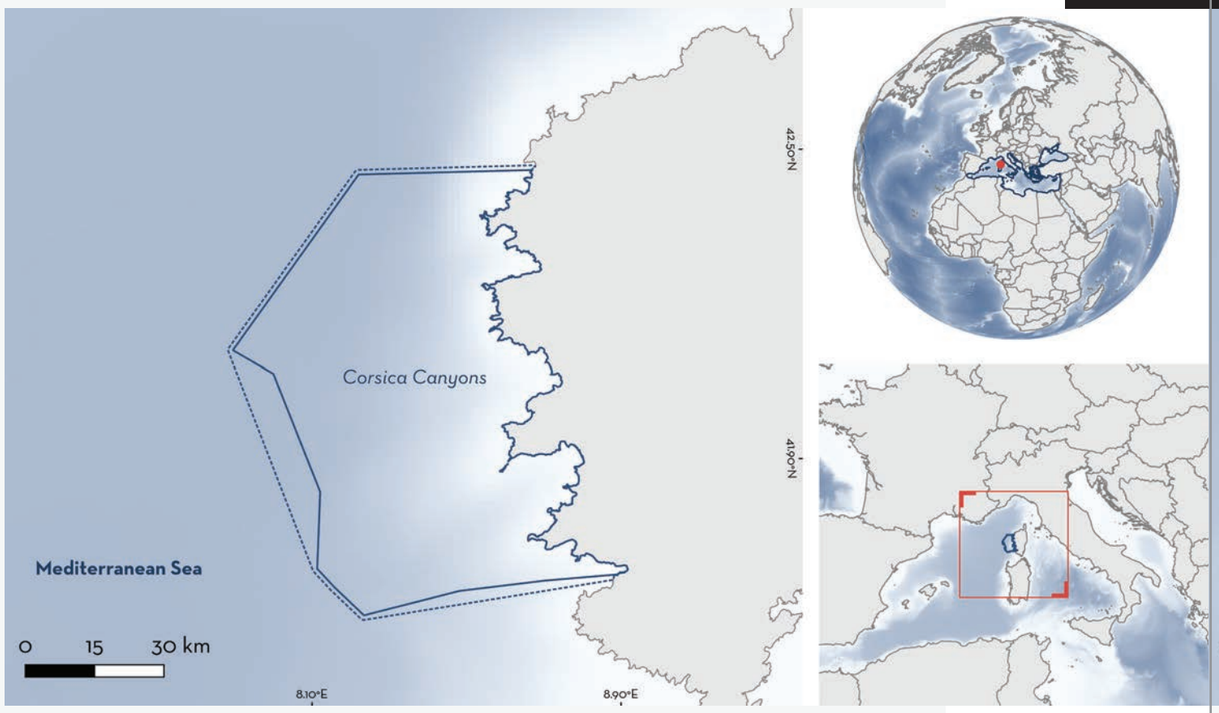
–

Luis Perez Berrocal

Egidio Trainito

FRANCE

Dusan Veverkolog | Unsplash



CORSICA CANYONS ISRA

SUMMARY

Corsica Canyons is located on the western coast of Corsica in the northwestern Mediterranean Sea. The area is characterised by a very narrow continental shelf and an abrupt continental slope with numerous underwater canyons. It overlaps with the North-western Mediterranean Pelagic Ecosystems Ecologically or Biologically Significant Marine Area, two Key Biodiversity Areas, several Natura 2000 sites, and the Pelagos Marine Mammal Sanctuary. Within this area there are: **threatened species**, **reproductive areas**, and **undefined aggregations** (Spinetail Devil Ray *Mobula mobular*).

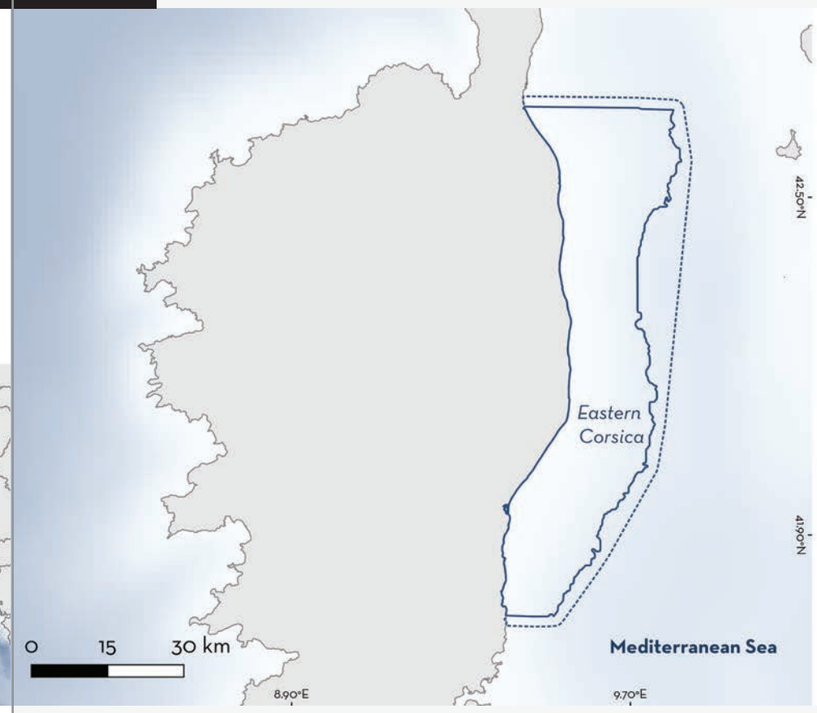
FRANCE

0–1,112 metres

4,264.7 km²

CRITERIA

Criterion A – Vulnerability; Sub-criterion C1 – Reproductive Areas; Sub-criterion C5 – Undefined Aggregations



EASTERN CORSICA ISRA

SUMMARY

Eastern Corsica is located in the French northern Tyrrhenian Sea, Western Mediterranean Basin. This area is characterised by its wide expanses of sandy substrates and seagrass meadows. It includes benthic habitats of the continental shelf, slope, and underwater canyons. The area is recognised as a Site of Community Importance through the Natura 2000 network, overlaps with a Key Biodiversity Area, and sits within the Pelagos Marine Mammal Sanctuary. Within this area, there are: **threatened species** (Angelshark *Squatina squatina*); **reproductive areas** (e.g., Smallspotted Catshark *Scyliorhinus canicula*); and **undefined aggregations** (Angelshark).

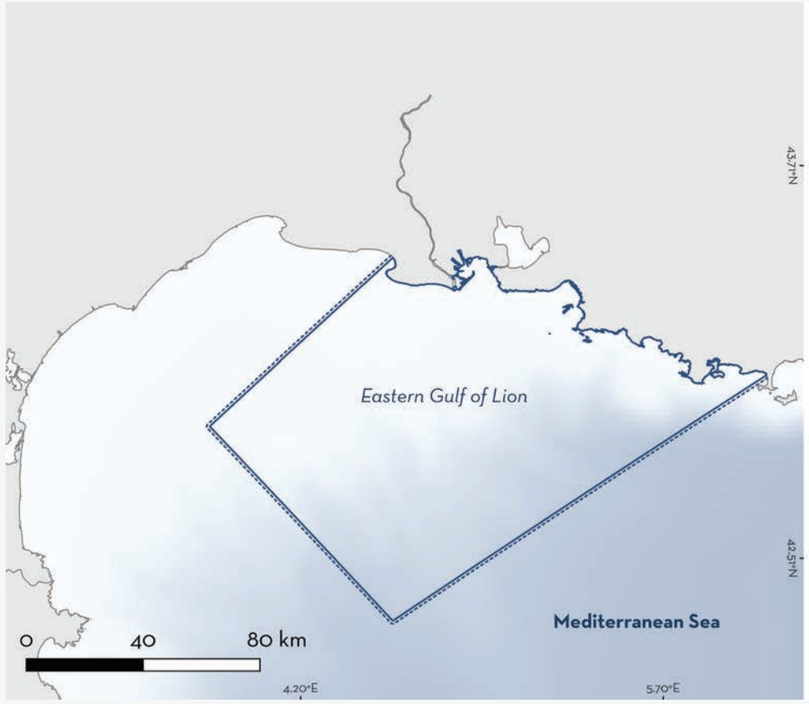
FRANCE

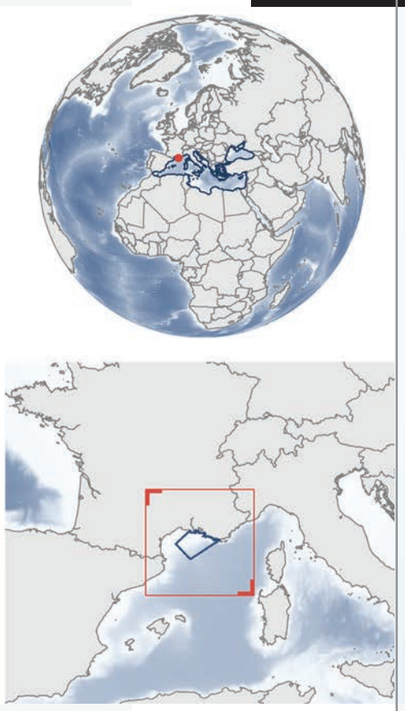
0–600 metres

1,800 km²

CRITERIA

Criterion A – Vulnerability; Sub-criterion C1 – Reproductive Areas; Sub-criterion C5 – Undefined Aggregations





EASTERN GULF OF LION ISRA

SUMMARY

Eastern Gulf of Lion is in the northwestern Mediterranean Sea, bordering the coast of Provence in France. It is located in continental shelf edge, slope, and underwater canyon head zones. Surface waters are dominated by the oligotrophic Northern Mediterranean Current flowing westward. Within this area there are: **threatened species** and areas important for **movement** (Blue Shark *Prionace glauca*).

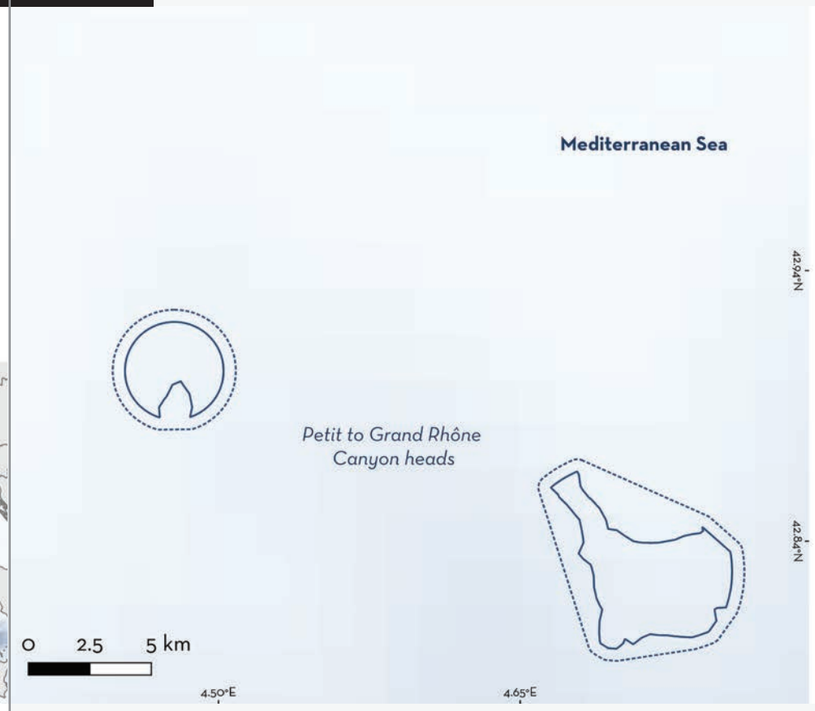
FRANCE

0–1,000 metres

11,529.7 km²

CRITERIA

Criterion A – Vulnerability; Sub-criterion C4 – Movement



PETIT TO GRAND RHÔNE CANYON HEADS ISRA

SUMMARY

Petit to Grand Rhône Canyon Heads is located on the continental slope of the Gulf of Lion, in French waters of the northwestern Mediterranean Sea. The area is situated on steep slopes off the continental shelf edge and is characterised by a muddy seafloor. It partly overlaps with a proposed site of community importance and sits within two Ecologically or Biologically Significant Marine Areas. Within this area there are: **reproductive areas** (Blackmouth Catshark *Galeus melastomus*).

FRANCE

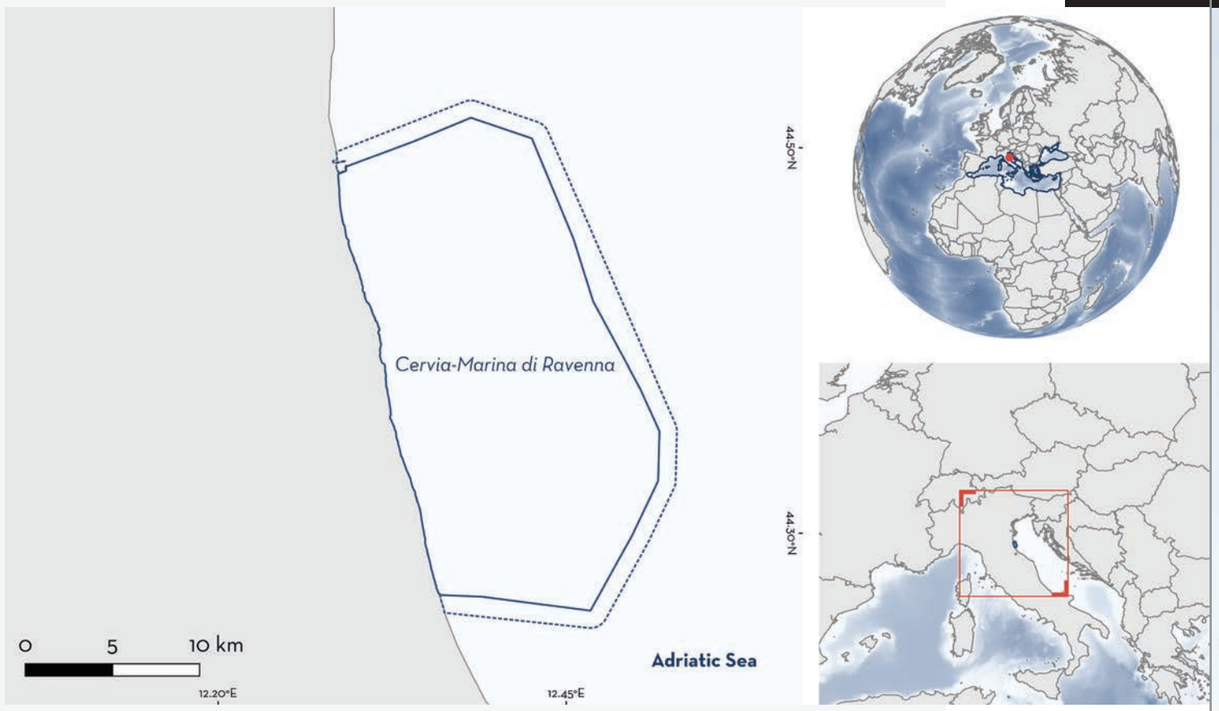
300–600 metres

36.3 km²

CRITERIA

Sub-criterion C1 – Reproductive Areas

Fabio Santaniello Brunn | Unsplash



CERVIA-MARINA DI RAVENNA ISRA

SUMMARY

Cervia-Marina di Ravenna is located on the continental shelf of the northwest Adriatic Sea. The area is located between the cities of Cervia and Marina di Ravenna (Emilia-Romagna) in Italy. It is characterised by shallow depths, a muddy-sandy seafloor, and productive waters due to the presence of the Po River plume. The area has calm waters as it lies in the lee of the main wind-driven southward current. In this area there are: **threatened species** and **reproductive areas** (Sandbar Shark *Carcharhinus plumbeus*).

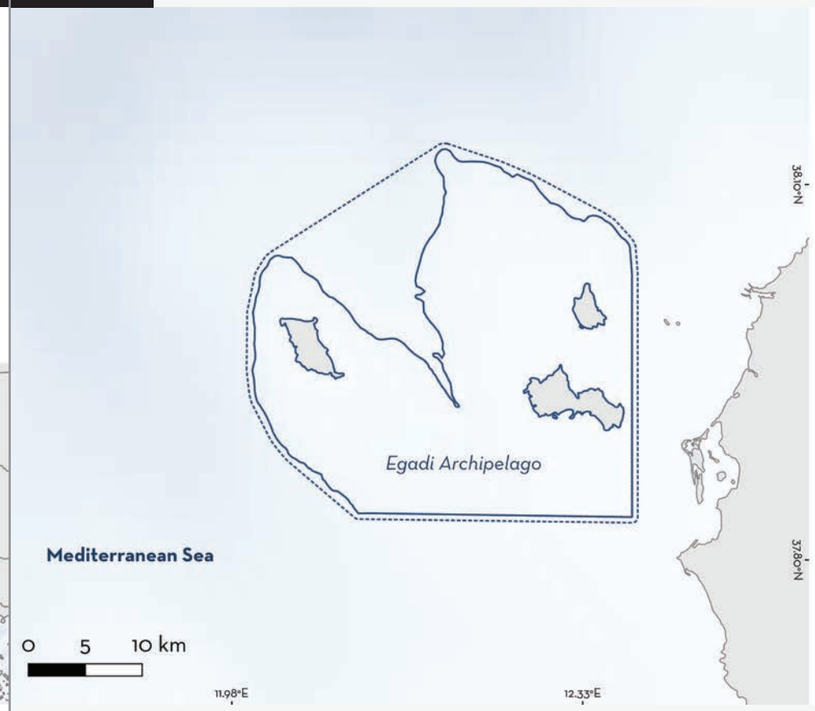
ITALY

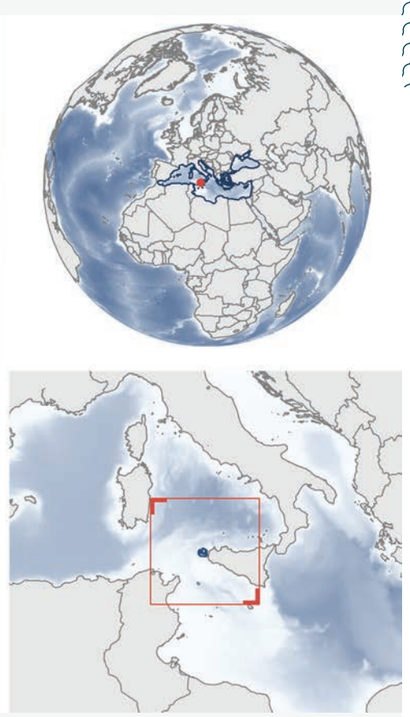
0–25 metres

344 km²

CRITERIA

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





EGADI ARCHIPELAGO ISRA

SUMMARY

Egadi Archipelago is located in the northwestern part of the Sicily Channel bordering the Tyrrhenian Sea. This area includes the three islands of the Egadi Archipelago (Favignana, Levanzo, and Marettimo Islands). It overlaps entirely with a national marine protected area and a special protection area. It is also located within the southern border of the Tyrrhenian Ecological Protection Zone and within the northern border of the Sicily Channel Ecologically and Biologically Significant Marine Area. The area encompasses continental shelves mostly extending southeast to 130 m depth and crossing a canyon that connects Sicily Island to the Tyrrhenian abyssal plain. Within this area there are: **threatened species** (e.g., Common Eagle Ray *Myliobatis aquila*); **range restricted species** (Rough Skate *Raja radula*); **reproductive areas** (Common Eagle Ray); and **undefined aggregations** (Smallspotted Catshark *Scyliorhinus canicula*).

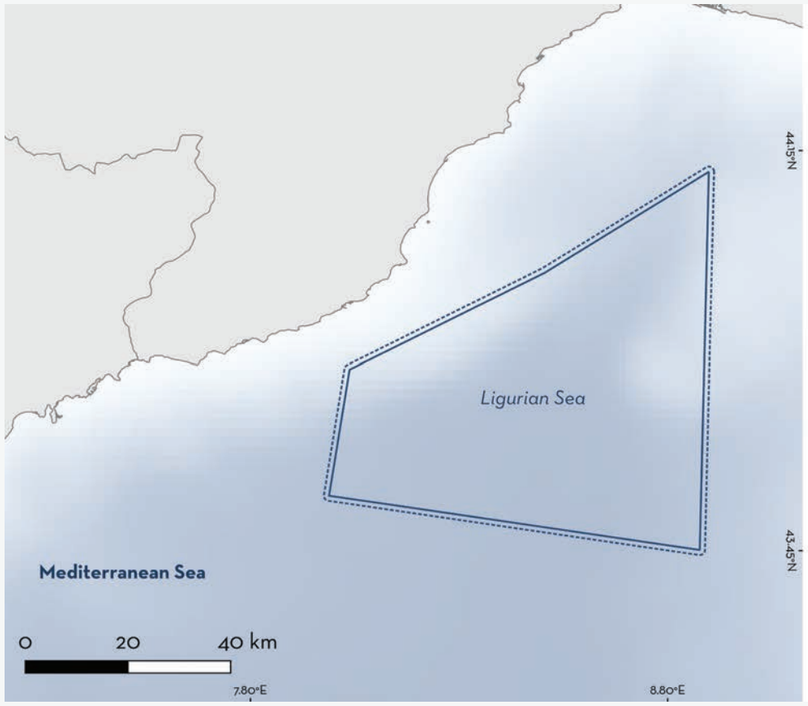
ITALY

0–350 metres

705.6 km²

CRITERIA

Criterion A – Vulnerability; Criterion B – Range Restricted;
Sub-criterion C1 – Reproductive Areas; Sub-criterion C5 – Undefined Aggregations



LIGURIAN SEA ISRA

SUMMARY

Ligurian Sea is located in the northwestern Mediterranean Sea, in the Italian region of Liguria. The area is characterised by the presence of a cyclonic circulation of water masses, mesoscale eddies, and areas of significant upwelling. It also includes seamounts, underwater canyons, and deepwater coral banks. Within this area there are: **threatened species** (e.g., Spinetail Devil Ray *Mobula mobular*); **reproductive areas** (Little Sleeper Shark *Somniosus rostratus*); and **feeding areas** (e.g., Basking Shark *Cetorhinus maximus*).

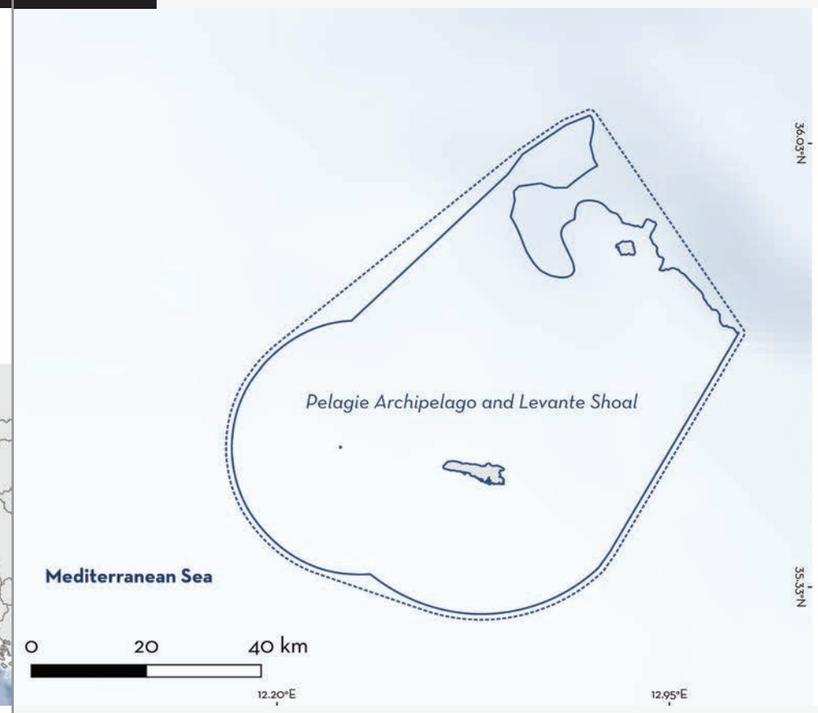
ITALY

0–2,620 metres

3,345.3 km²

CRITERIA

Criterion A – Vulnerability; Sub-criterion C1 – Reproductive Areas; Sub-criterion C2 – Feeding Areas



PELAGIE ARCHIPELAGO AND LEVANTE SHOAL ISRA

SUMMARY

Pelagie Archipelago and Levante Shoal is located on the African continental shelf of the southern Mediterranean Sea. It represents the southernmost part of Italian waters and lies within the Sicilian Channel. It includes the area around Lampedusa, Linosa, and Lampione Islands, and the channel between Lampedusa and Linosa Islands. The seafloor of this area is mostly flat and characterised by seagrass meadows, rhodolith and maërl beds, and coralligenous assemblages. The area partially overlaps with a Marine Protected Area, two Natura 2000 sites, and falls within an Ecologically or Biologically Significant Marine Area. The influence of Atlantic currents makes it a high-energy area. Within this area there are: **threatened species** (e.g., Shortfin Mako *Isurus oxyrinchus*); **reproductive areas** (Shortfin Mako); and **undefined aggregations** (Sandbar Shark *Carcharhinus plumbeus*).

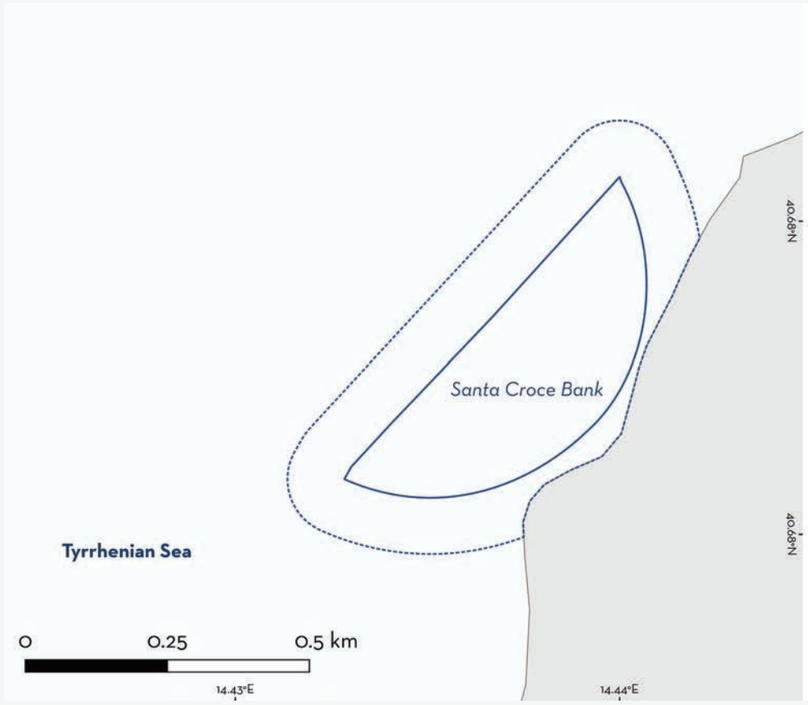
ITALY

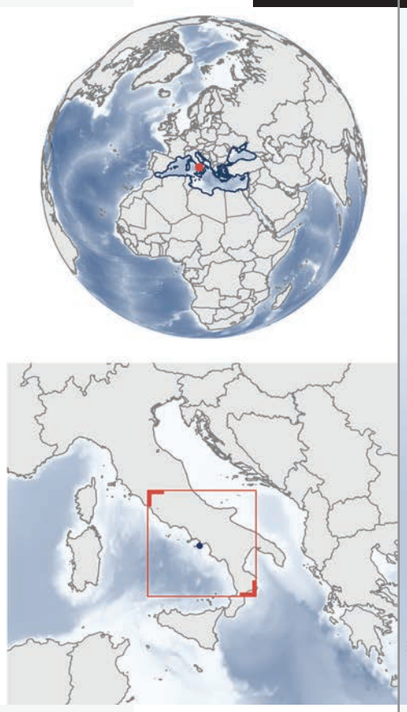
0–800 metres

4,257 km²

CRITERIA

Criterion A – Vulnerability; Sub-criterion C1 – Reproductive Areas; Sub-criterion C5 – Undefined Aggregations





SANTA CROCE BANK ISRA

ITALY

0–50 metres

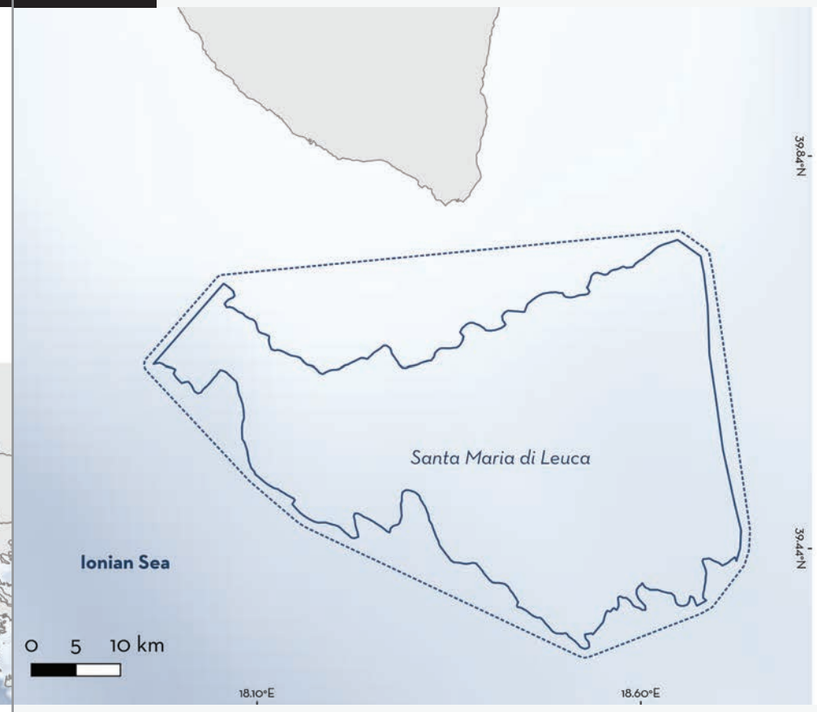
0.13 km²

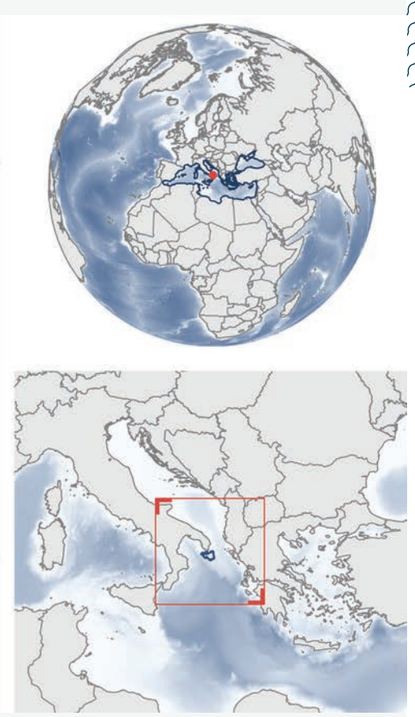
SUMMARY

Santa Croce Bank sits in the southeastern sector of the Gulf of Naples, central Tyrrhenian Sea, Italy. Its rocky outcrops rise from seafloor depths of 9–50 m and are surrounded by sandy areas. The strong currents and suspended particulate matter, due in part to inflow from the Sarno River, support rich invertebrate and fish biodiversity. The area has been designated a 'biologically protected area' since 1993 and falls within a Natura 2000 site. Within this area there are: **threatened species** (e.g., Common Eagle Ray *Myliobatis aquila*); **reproductive areas** (Nursehound *Scyliorhinus stellaris*); **resting areas** (Nursehound); and **undefined aggregations** (Common Eagle Ray).

CRITERIA

Criterion A – Vulnerability; Sub-criterion C1 – Reproductive Areas; Sub-criterion C3 – Resting areas; Sub-criterion C5 – Undefined Aggregations





SANTA MARIA DI LEUCA ISRA

ITALY

350–1,100 metres

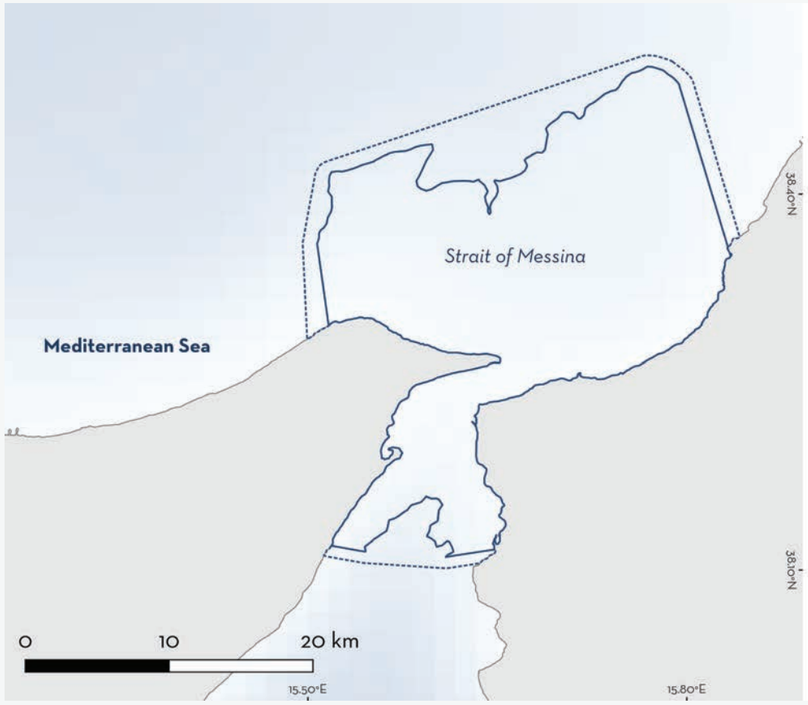
1,552 km²

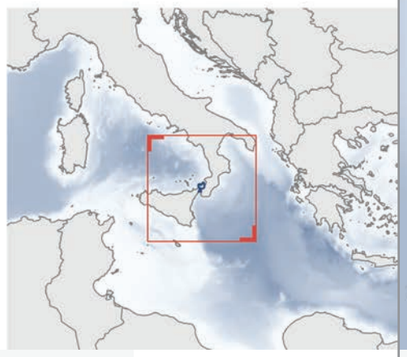
SUMMARY

Santa Maria di Leuca is located along the Apulian continental margin between the southwest Adriatic Sea and northwest Ionian Sea. The area is included in an almost continuous belt of patchy cold-water coral banks that represents a rare example of living Lophelia-Madrepora-bearing coral mounds in the Mediterranean Sea. The area is characterised by complex and diverse coral habitat. Greater abundance of demersal fauna has often been recorded inside this area than surrounding areas, indicating refuge effects. This area overlaps with the South Adriatic Ionian Straight Ecologically or Biologically Significant Marine Area. Within this area there are: **threatened species** and **reproductive areas** (Velvet Belly Lanternshark *Etmopterus spinax*).

CRITERIA

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





STRAIT OF MESSINA ISRA

SUMMARY

Strait of Messina separates Sicily Island from the Italian peninsula and connects the Tyrrhenian Sea with the Ionian Sea. Its articulated benthic topography and the presence of strong tidal currents, cause upwellings of the deep Ionian cold and nutrient-rich waters. The Scilla Valley, in the northern part of the area, has a well-developed coralligenous habitat. Within this area there are: **threatened species** (e.g., Spinetail Devil Ray *Mobula mobular*); **reproductive areas** (Common Stingray *Dasyatis pastinaca*); areas important for **movement** (Spinetail Devil Ray); and **distinctive attributes** (Bluntnose Sixgill Shark *Hexanchus griseus*).

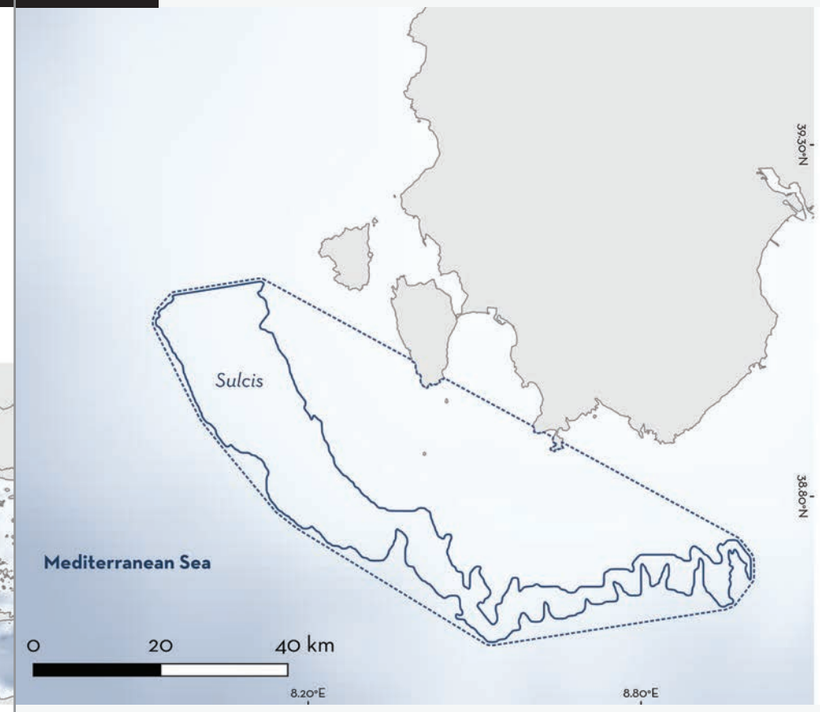
CRITERIA

Criterion A – Vulnerability; Sub-criterion C1 – Reproductive Areas; Sub-criterion C4 – Movement; Sub-criterion D1 – Distinctiveness

ITALY

0–500 metres

622.46 km²



SULCIS ISRA

SUMMARY

Sulcis is in the southwestern waters of Sardinia Island, Italy. It sits within the Algerian-Provençal Basin and the Sardinia Channel. The area is influenced by the Modified Atlantic Water and Levantine Intermediate Water currents. The substrate is characterised by muddy, silty, or rocky bottoms. Rich gorgonian and black coral assemblages dominate the benthos on most hard substrates of the area. Within this area there are: **reproductive areas** (Longnose Spurdog *Squalus blainville*).

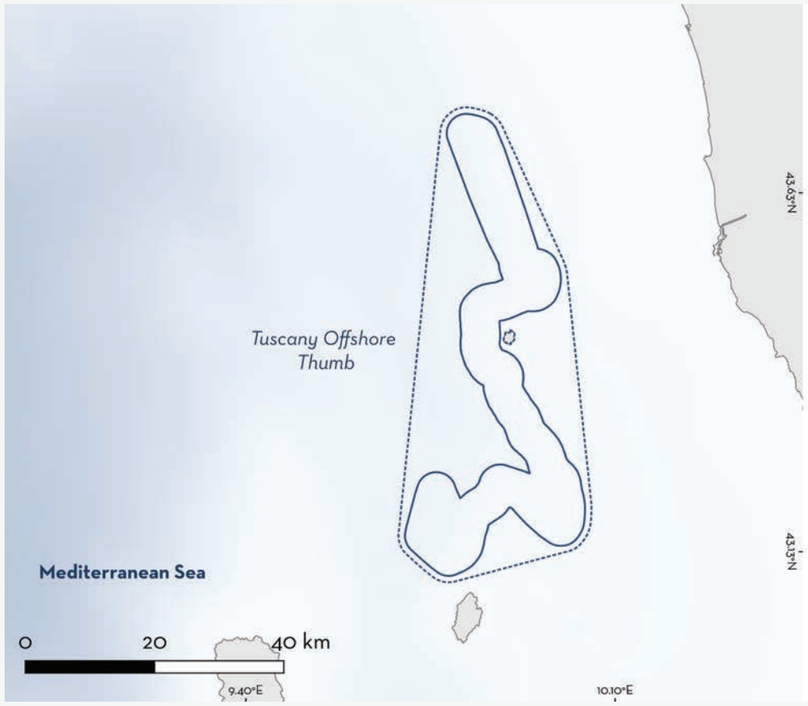
CRITERIA

Sub-criterion C1 – Reproductive Areas

ITALY

150–350 metres

939.9 km²



TUSCANY OFFSHORE THUMB ISRA

SUMMARY

Tuscany Offshore Thumb is located ~45 km off the Tuscany coast of Italy. The area is a platform bordering the continental shelf and lies around the Islands of Capraia and Gorgona in the Tyrrhenian Sea, northwest Mediterranean Sea. The area belongs to the Tuscany Magmatic Province, an association of intrusive and effusive rocks. In the core of the area, the seafloor is characterised by thanatocoenosis surrounded at relatively lower depths by fine detrital substrates with communities of the sea-lily crinoid *Leptometra phalangium*. The area overlaps with the Pelagos Sanctuary for Marine Mammals, an Ecologically and Biologically Significant Marine Area, and a Key Biodiversity Area. Within this area there are: **reproductive areas** (Smallspotted Catshark *Scyliorhinus canicula*).

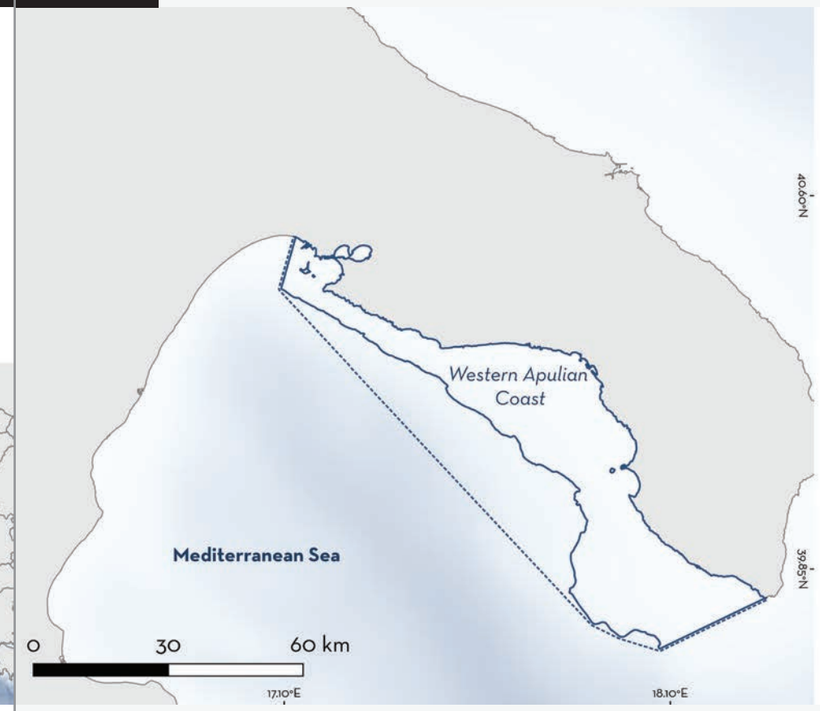
ITALY

100–450 metres

732.3 km²

CRITERIA

Sub-criterion C1 – Reproductive Areas



WESTERN APULIAN COAST ISRA

SUMMARY

Western Apulian Coast is located in southeastern Italy. It constitutes the eastern part of the largest gulf in Italy, the Gulf of Taranto. The area includes pelagic waters over the continental shelf. Offshore of the area, there is a deep submarine canyon leading to the 'Taranto Valley', an area reaching 2,200 m depth. This characteristic causes a complex flow pattern of water masses and the occurrence of upwelling events with significant seasonal variability. The area includes Porto Cesareo marine protected area, and the southern part falls within the South Adriatic Ionian Straight Ecologically or Biologically Significant Marine Area. Within this area there are: **threatened species** and **feeding areas** (Basking Shark *Cetorhinus maximus*).

ITALY

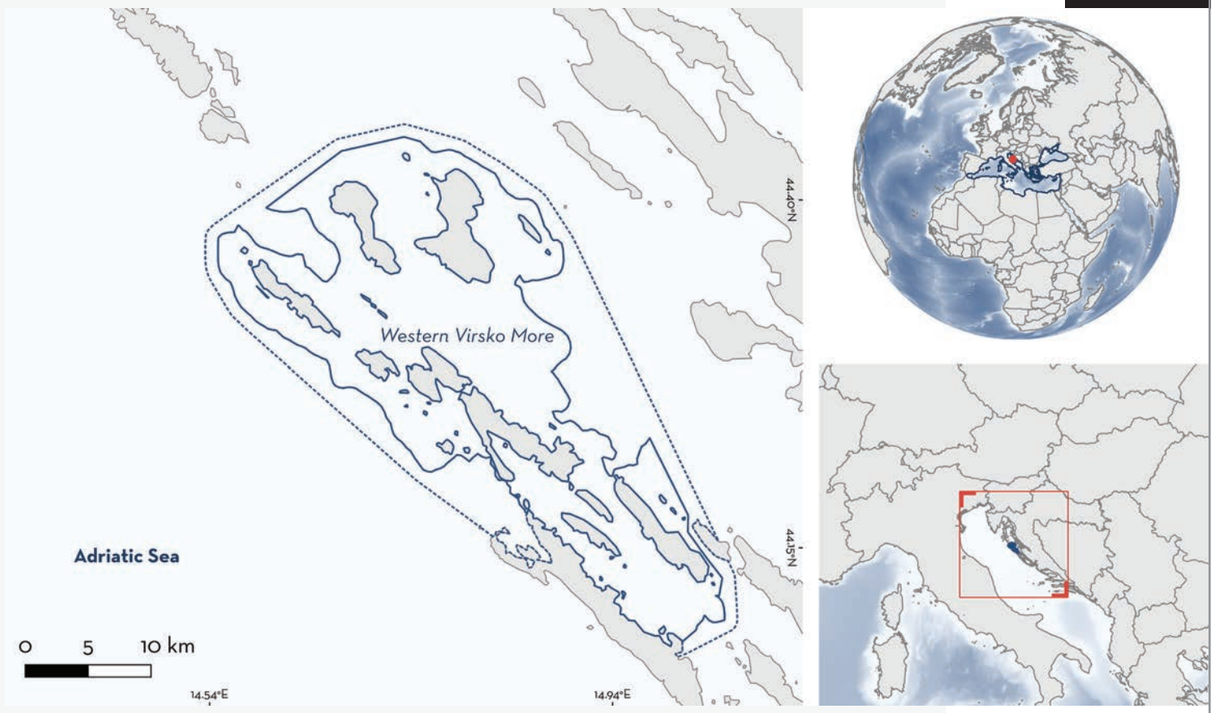
0–200 metres

1,983.8 km²

CRITERIA

Criterion A – Vulnerability; Sub-criterion C2 – Feeding Areas

Máté Melega | Unsplash



WESTERN VIRSKO MORE ISRA

SUMMARY

Western Virsko More is a small coastal area in Croatia in the eastern mid-Adriatic Sea. The area includes parts of the coastline of 11 large islands, and 48 smaller islets and rocks, with Olib and Molat Islands being the largest islands in the area. Shallower areas consist of sandy and rocky substrates, while deeper areas (to 85 m depth) comprise muddy-sandy or muddy substrates. Habitats include large shallow bays, channel areas, and open water. The area includes 16 Natura 2000 Special Areas of Conservation (SAC). Within the area there are: **threatened species** and **reproductive areas** (Angelshark *Squatina squatina*).

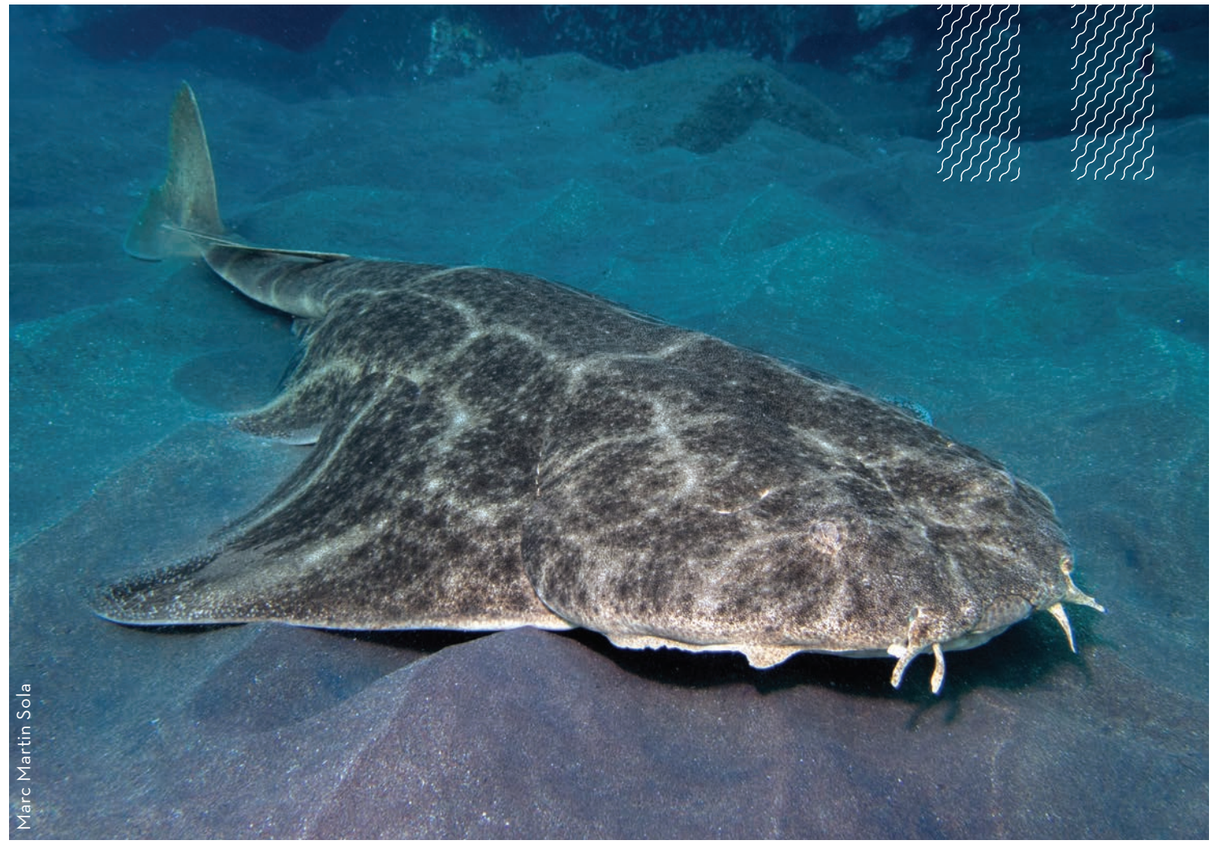
CROATIA

0–85 metres

499 km²

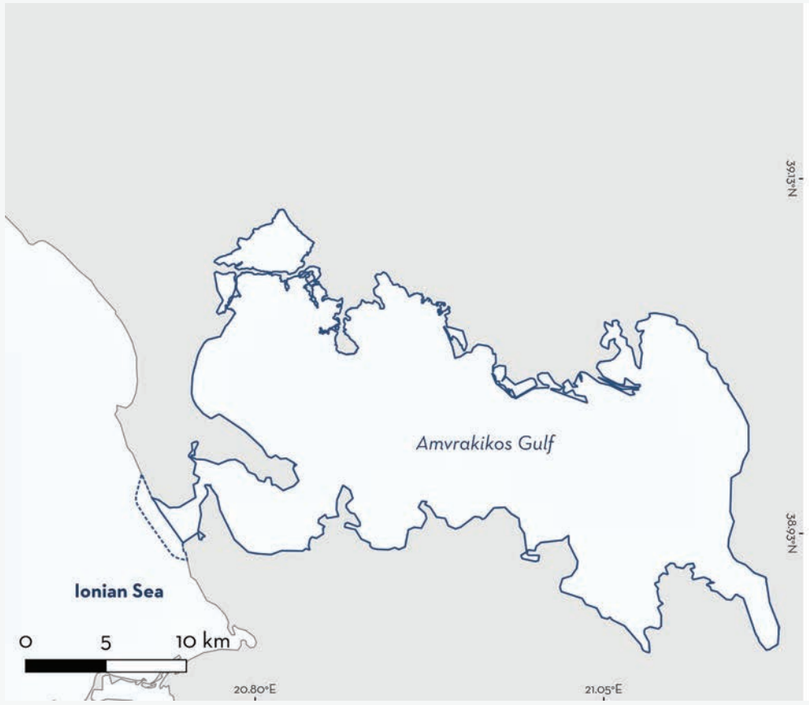
CRITERIA

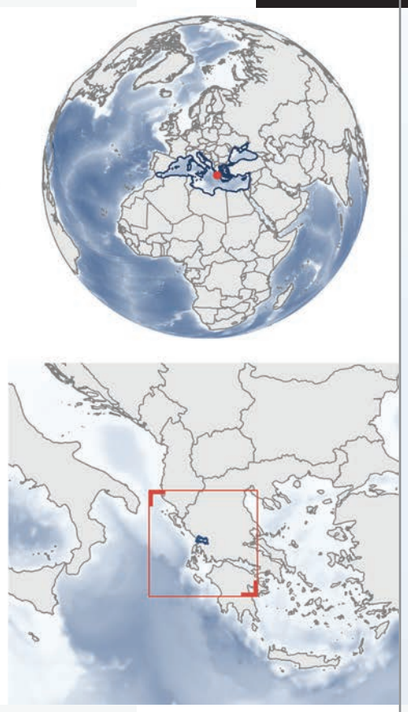
Criterion A – Vulnerability; Sub-criterion C1 – Reproductive Areas


Marc Martin Sola


Eleonora de Sabata | MedSharks

Katerina Katopis | Ocean Image Bank





AMVRAKIKOS GULF ISRA

GREECE

0–60 metres

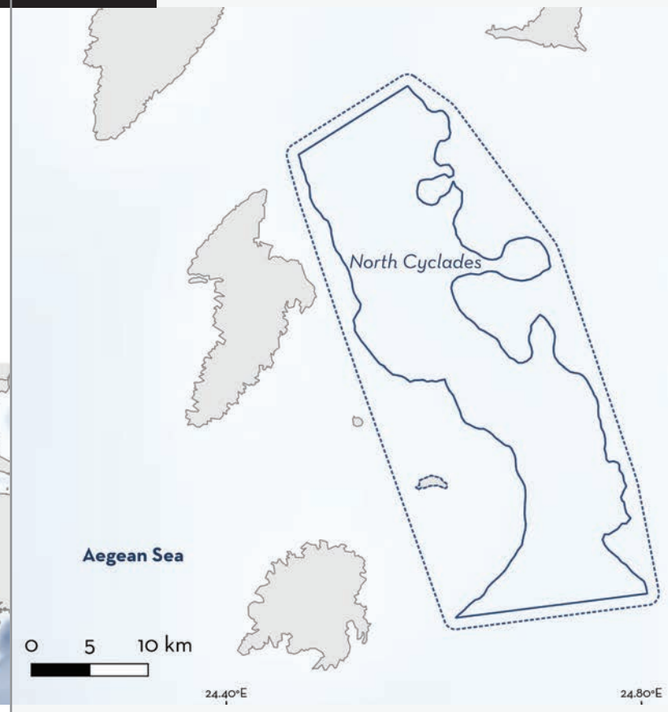
481.4 km²

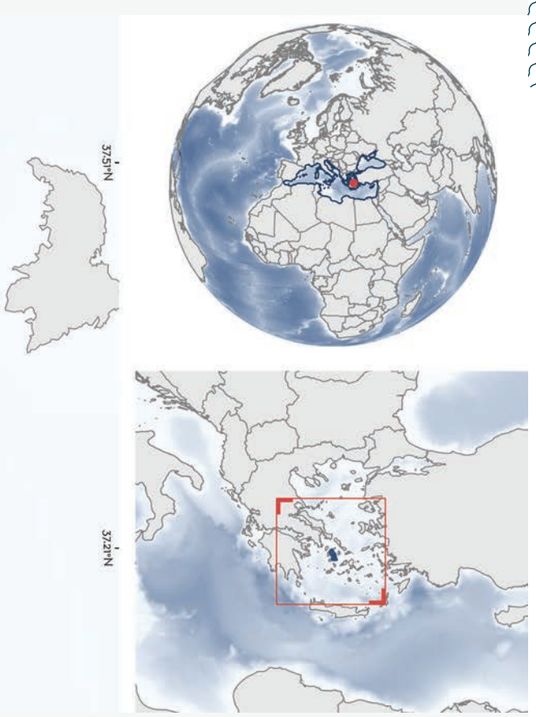
SUMMARY

Amvrakikos Gulf is a shallow and semi-enclosed embayment in northwest Greece. The gulf is ~35 km long and 6–15 km wide, with freshwater input from the Arachthos and Louros Rivers. These rivers create extensive delta complexes, including freshwater marshes, wet meadows, and seasonally inundated land. Amvrakikos Gulf is isolated from the Ionian Sea by the narrow, shallow Preveza channel (~600 m wide; 8.5 m mean depth). The area is characterised by a well-stratified water column comprised of a brackish water surface layer and a saline water benthic layer. The gulf has been designated as a National Park of Greece and includes a Key Biodiversity Area, two Natura 2000 sites, and a Ramsar site (Wetland of International Importance). Within this area there are: **threatened species** (e.g., Spiny Butterfly Ray *Gymnura altavela*); and **reproductive areas** (e.g., Duckbill Eagle Ray *Aetomylaeus bovinus*).

CRITERIA

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





NORTH CYCLADES ISRA

GREECE

250–300 metres

472.9 km²

SUMMARY

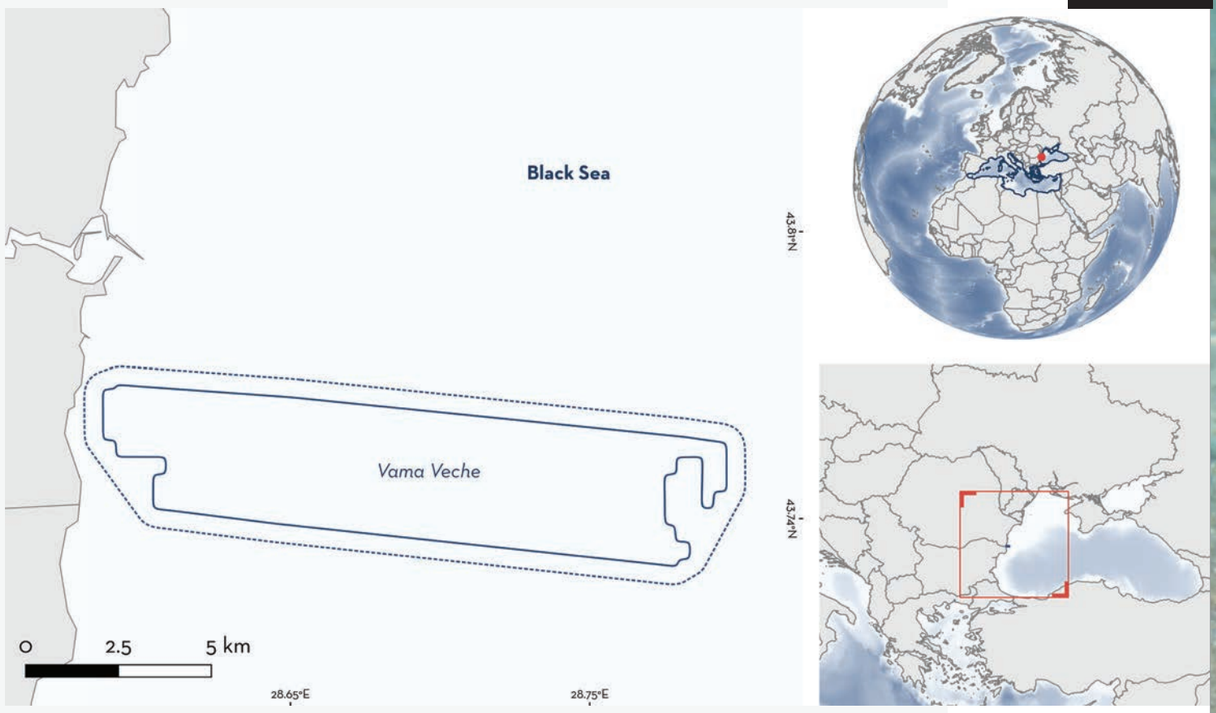
North Cyclades sits within the Cyclades Archipelago, a group of around 220 islands in the Aegean Sea, southeast of mainland Greece. Situated in the northwest part of the archipelago, it consists of a deeper area of the Cyclades plateau, between the islands of Kea, Gyaros, Kithnos, and Ermoupoli. The northern edge of the archipelago is under the influence of the warm Levantine current which splits into the Evvoia current in the northwest and feeds into a permanent gyre in the Myrtoan Sea to the west. The area is characterised by deep calcareous sandy mud to muddy sand habitats. Within this area there are **reproductive areas** (Longnose Spurdog *Squalus blainville*).

CRITERIA

Sub-criterion C1 – Reproductive Areas

ROMANIA

Artem Zhukov | Unsplash



VAMA VECHE ISRA

SUMMARY

Vama Veche is located in the southern Romanian Black Sea. The area is characterised by a wide continental shelf with sandy and muddy substrates. Other habitats within the area include reefs, rocky areas, and patches of seagrass. This area overlaps with the Vama Veche-2 Mai Marine Reserve Ecologically or Biologically Significant Marine Area, the Black Sea Key Biodiversity Area, and a Natura 2000 site. Within this area there are: **threatened species** and **undefined aggregations** (Spiny Dogfish *Squalus acanthias*).

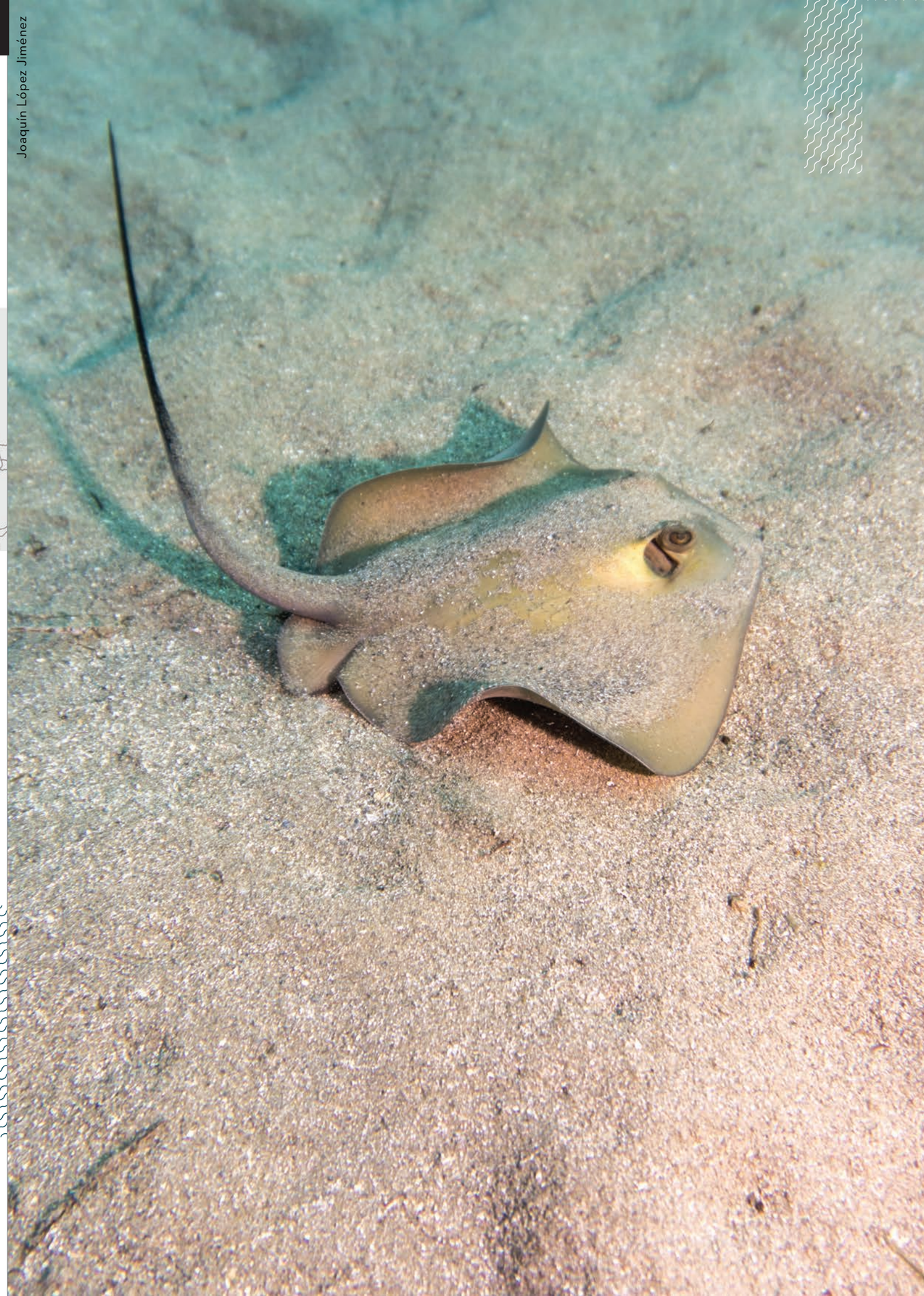
CRITERIA

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

ROMANIA

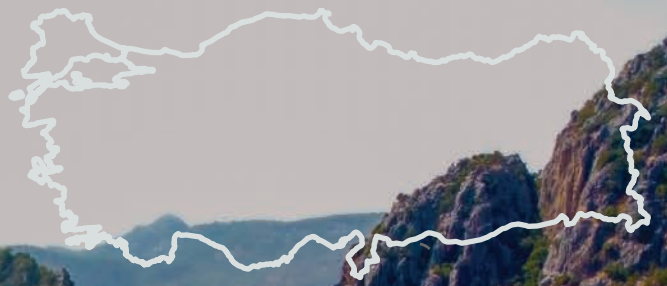
0–120 metres

52.3 km²

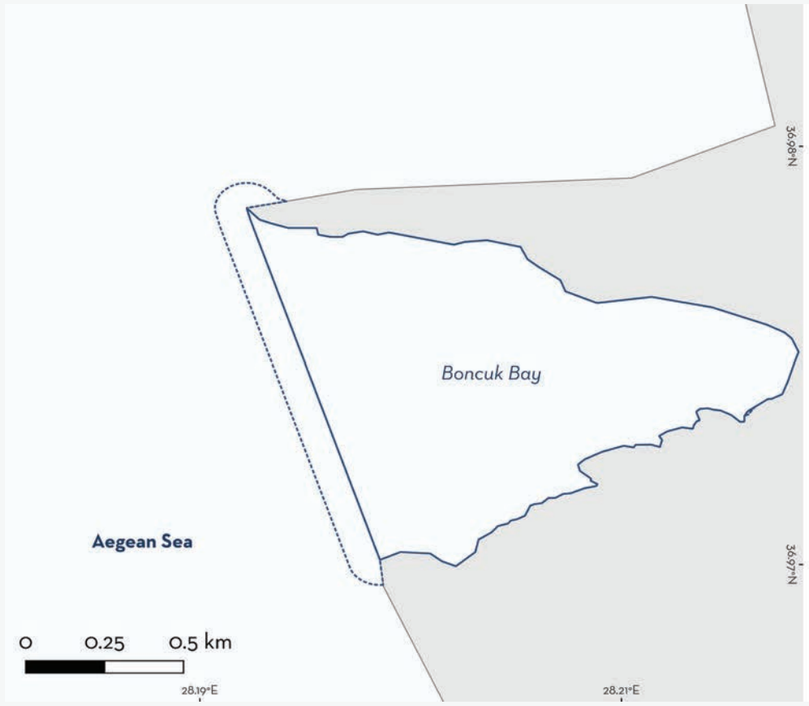


Joaquín López Jiménez

TÜRKIYE



Dima Pima | Unsplash



BONCUK BAY ISRA

TÜRKIYE

0–60 metres

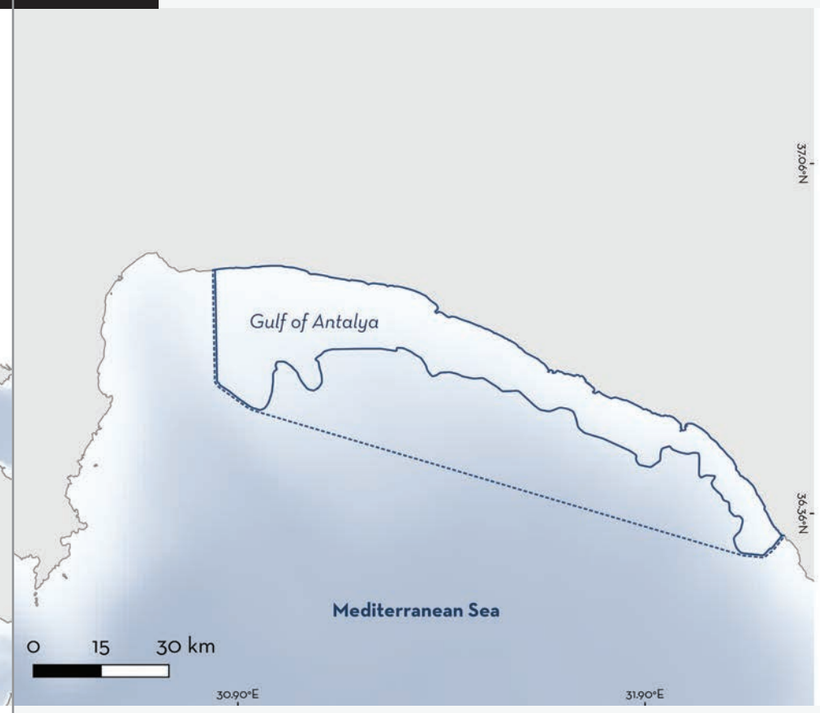
1.29 km²

SUMMARY

Boncuk Bay is a sheltered bay in Gökova Gulf, Türkiye, in the Aegean Sea. This area is characterised by shallow sandy and rocky substrates, and seagrass meadows. It overlaps with a marine protected area (Gökova Bay Special Environmental Protection Area) and with the Central Aegean Sea Ecologically or Biologically Significant Marine Area. Within this area there are: **threatened species** and **reproductive areas** (Sandbar Shark *Carcharhinus plumbeus*).

CRITERIA

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



GULF OF ANTALYA ISRA

TÜRKIYE

0–600 metres

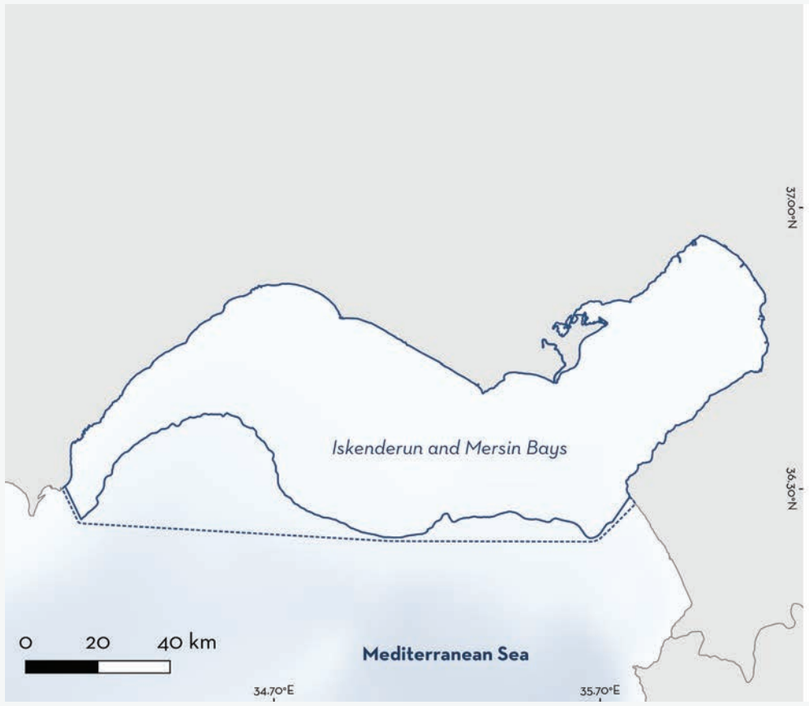
1,775.1 km²

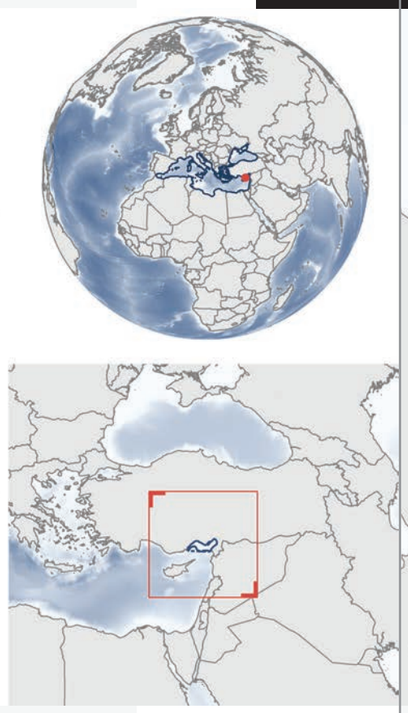
SUMMARY

Gulf of Antalya is located on the southern coast of Türkiye in the Levantine Sea. This area is characterised by muddy and sandy substrates with patches of rock and seagrass meadows. Three rivers flow into the area which is dominated by high temperatures, high salinities, and oligotrophic conditions. The area overlaps with an Ecologically or Biologically Significant Marine Area (North-East Levantine Sea) and with three Key Biodiversity Areas. Within the area there are: **threatened species** (e.g., Velvet Belly Lanternshark *Etmopterus spinax*); **range-restricted species** (Rough Skate *Raja radula)*; and **reproductive areas** (e.g., Blackmouth Catshark *Galeus melastomus*).

CRITERIA

Criterion A – Vulnerability; Criterion B – Range Restricted; Sub-criterion C1 – Reproductive Areas





ISKENDERUN AND MERSIN BAYS ISRA

TÜRKIYE

0–200 metres

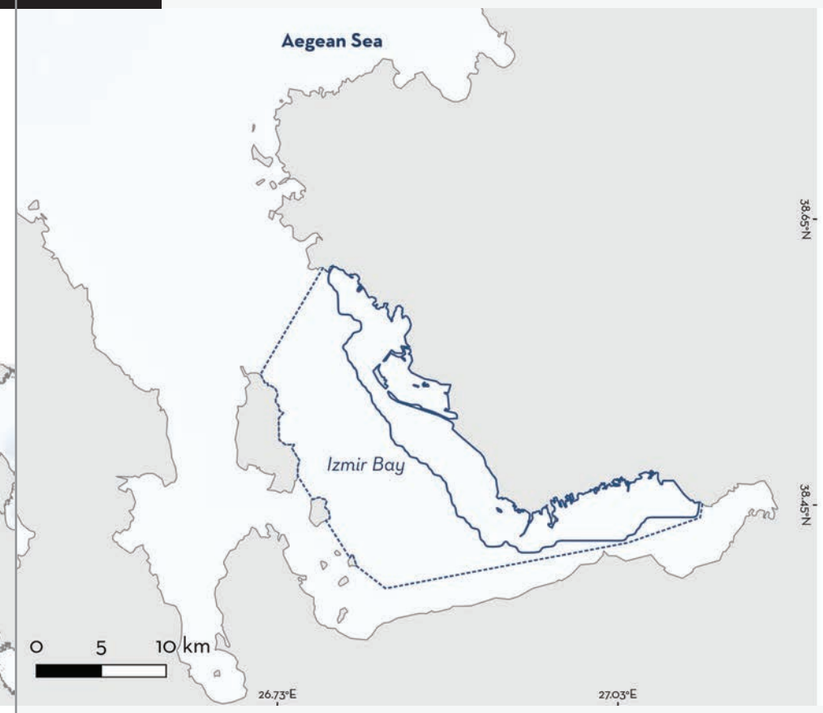
7,860.9 km²

SUMMARY

Iskenderun and Mersin Bays is located along the southern coast of Türkiye in the Cilician Sea. The area is characterised by sandy and muddy substrates and receives large freshwater input of nutrient-rich waters resulting in brackish waters along the coast. The area overlaps with the North-East Levantine Ecologically or Biologically Significant Marine Area, nine Key Biodiversity Areas, and two Ramsar sites. Within the area there are: **threatened species** (e.g., Blackchin Guitarfish *Glaucostegus cemiculus*); **reproductive areas** (e.g., Common Guitarfish *Rhinobatos rhinobatos*); and **feeding areas** (Common Stingray *Dasyatis pastinaca*).

CRITERIA

Criterion A – Vulnerability; Sub-criterion C1 – Reproductive Areas; Sub-criterion C2 – Feeding Areas



IZMIR BAY ISRA

TÜRKIYE

0–10 metres

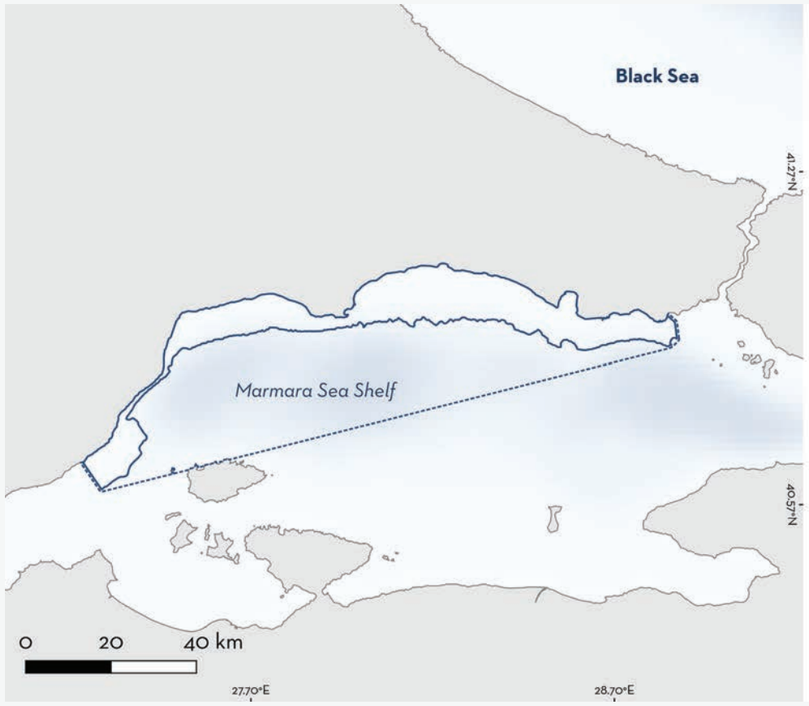
135.4 km²

SUMMARY

Izmir Bay is located in the eastern Aegean Sea in Türkiye. It is characterised by muddy and sandy substrates and includes four lagoons (Kırdeniz, Homa, Cilazmak, and Tas) that are located near the Gediz River delta. The area overlaps with a Wildlife Protected Area, the Central Aegean Sea Ecologically or Biologically Significant Marine Area, four Key Biodiversity Areas, and one Ramsar site. Within the area there are: **threatened species**; **reproductive areas**; and **feeding areas** (Blackchin Guitarfish *Glaucostegus cemiculus*).

CRITERIA

Criterion A – Vulnerability; Sub-criterion C1 – Reproductive Areas; Sub-criterion C2 – Feeding Areas



MARMARA SEA SHELF ISRA

TÜRKIYE

SUMMARY

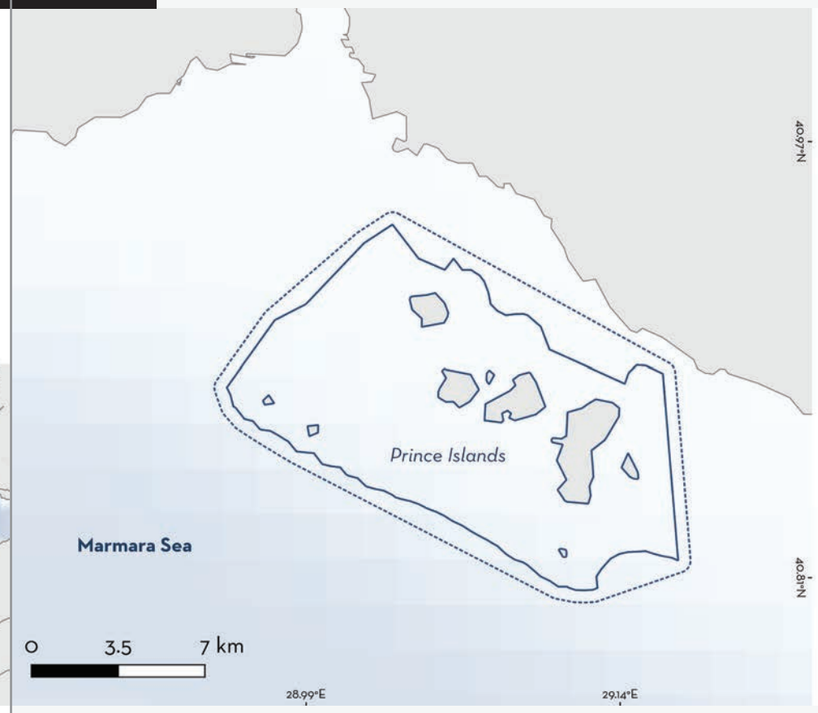
Marmara Sea Shelf is located in Türkiye, in the inland sea connecting the Black Sea and the Mediterranean Sea. The northern coastline is characterised by a narrow continental shelf and steep slope. The area consists mostly of sandy and muddy substrates. This area overlaps with three Key Biodiversity Areas. Within the area there are: **threatened species** (e.g., Common Smoothhound *Mustelus mustelus*) and **feeding areas** (e.g., Starry Smoothhound *Mustelus asterias*).

0–200 metres

1,142.25 km²

CRITERIA

Criterion A – Vulnerability; Sub-criterion C2 – Feeding Areas



PRINCE ISLANDS ISRA

TÜRKIYE

SUMMARY

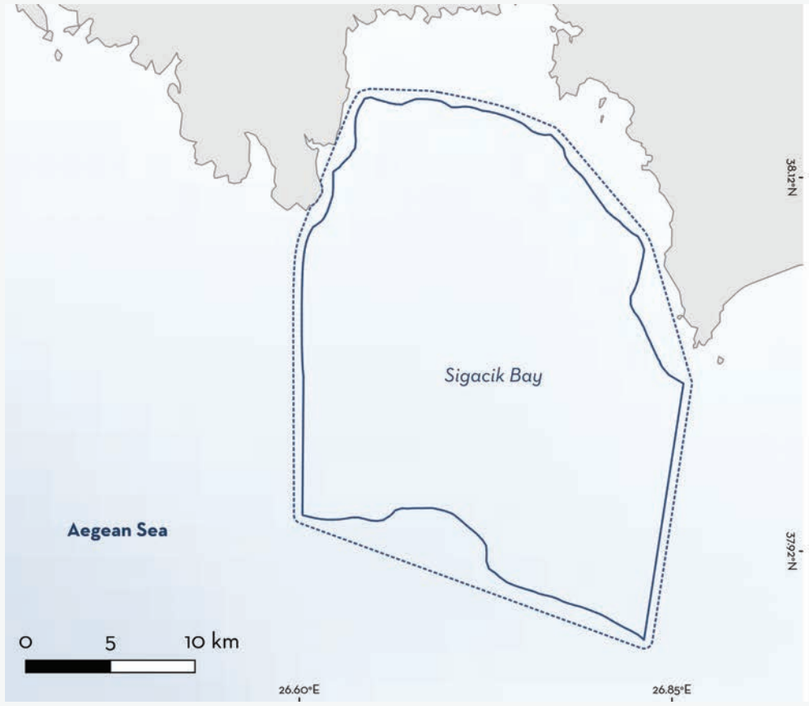
Prince Islands is an archipelago located in the northeast Marmara Sea, Türkiye. The area includes nine islands and is characterised by sandy and muddy substrates with patches of seagrass meadows and gorgonians reefs. This area overlaps with one Key Biodiversity Area and a Special Environmental Protection Area. Within the area there are: **threatened species** (Angular Roughshark *Oxynotus centrina*) and **undefined aggregations** (e.g., Bluntnose Sixgill Shark *Hexanchus griseus*).

0–100 metres

133.7 km²

CRITERIA

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



SIGACIK BAY ISRA

– –

TÜRKIYE

– –

100–600 metres

– –

508.9 km²

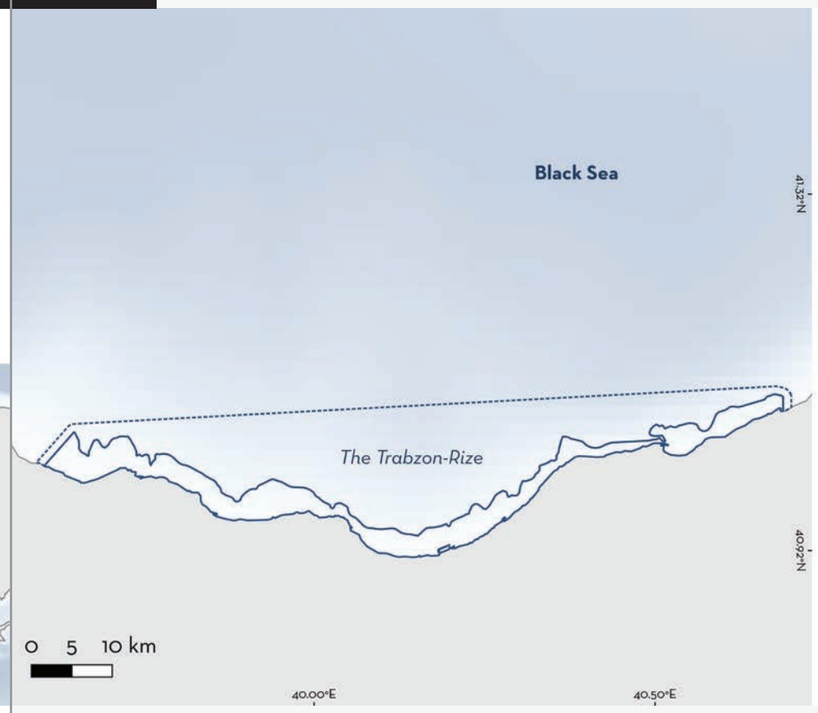
– –

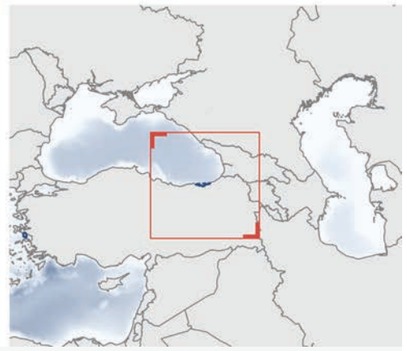
SUMMARY

Sigacik Bay is located in the southern Aegean Sea of Türkiye. The area has a narrow continental shelf and is characterised by sandy and muddy substrates. It overlaps with an Ecologically or Biologically Significant Marine Area (Central Aegean Sea) and with two Key Biodiversity Areas. Within the area there are: **threatened species** (Velvet Belly Lanternshark *Etmopterus spinax*); and **reproductive areas** (e.g., Blackmouth Catshark *Galeus melastomus*).

CRITERIA

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





THE TRABZON-RIZE ISRA

– –

TÜRKIYE

– –

0–120 metres

– –

258.5 km²

– –

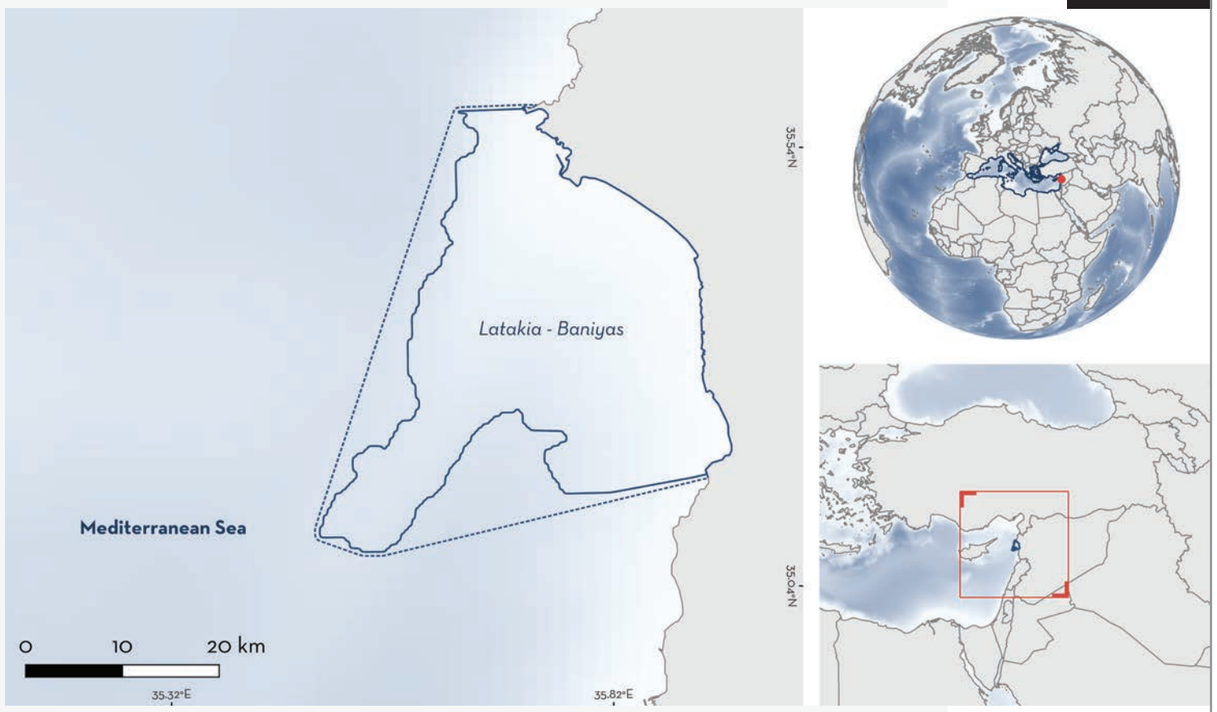
SUMMARY

The Trabzon-Rize is located in the southeastern Black Sea of Türkiye. The area is characterised by mud and sand-gravel substrates, with the discharge of several rivers contributing terrestrial nutrients to coastal waters. The area overlaps with two Ecologically or Biologically Significant Marine Areas (Trabzon-Arsin and Trabzon-Surmene). Within the area there are: **reproductive areas** (Thornback Skate *Raja clavata*).

CRITERIA

Sub-criterion C1 – Reproductive Areas

Hosein Charbaghi | Unsplash



LATAKIA-BANIYAS ISRA

SUMMARY

Latakia–Baniyas lies in the eastern Mediterranean Sea and covers ~50 km of the coastline of Syria. The seafloor in this area encompasses very shallow and flat areas, mixed gravel and coarse sand, short stretches of rocky coast, and a steep continental slope extending to deeper waters. This area sits within the North-East Levantine Sea Ecologically or Biologically Significant Marine Area. Within this area there are: **threatened species** (e.g., Blackchin Guitarfish *Glaucostegus cemiculus*) and **reproductive areas** (e.g., Spiny Butterfly Ray *Gymnura altavela*).

CRITERIA

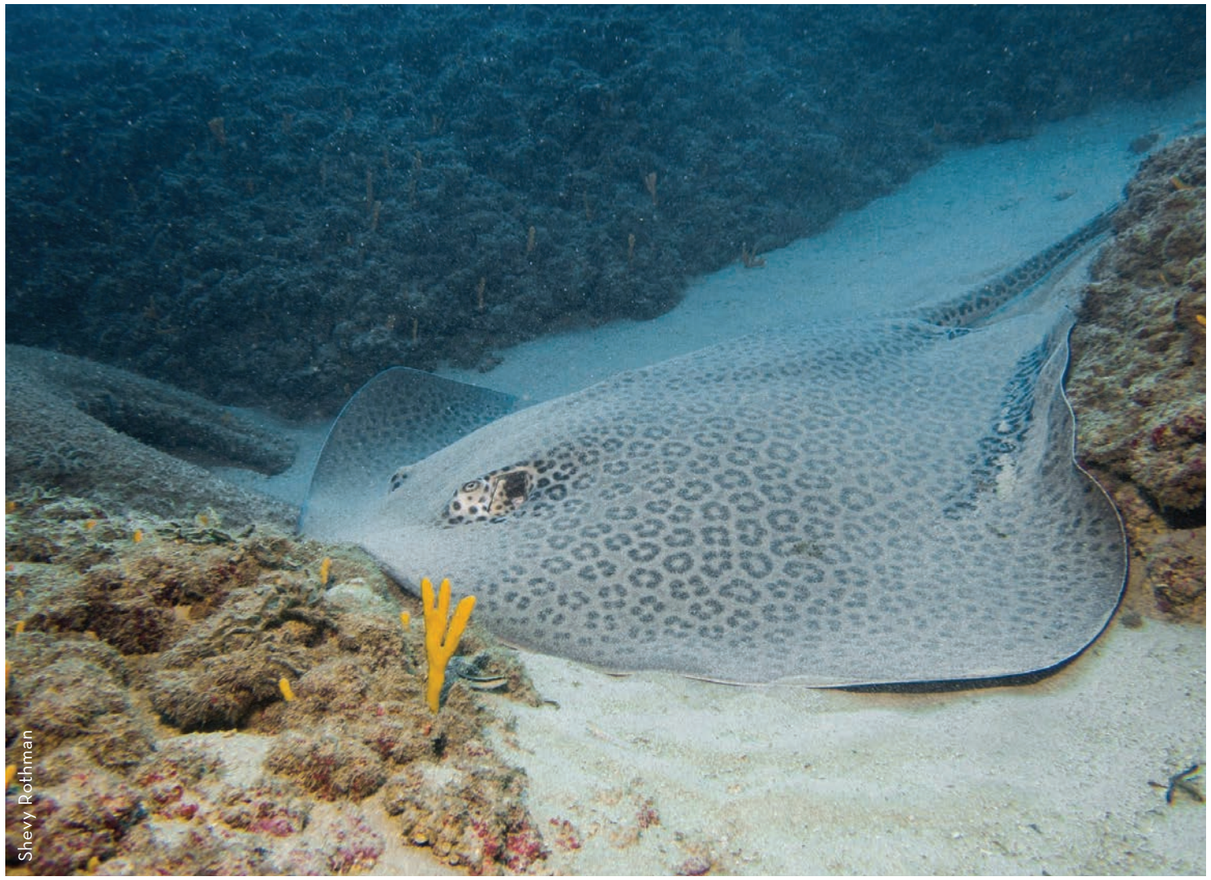
Criterion A – Vulnerability; Sub-criterion C1 – Reproductive Areas

SYRIA

0–1,020 metres

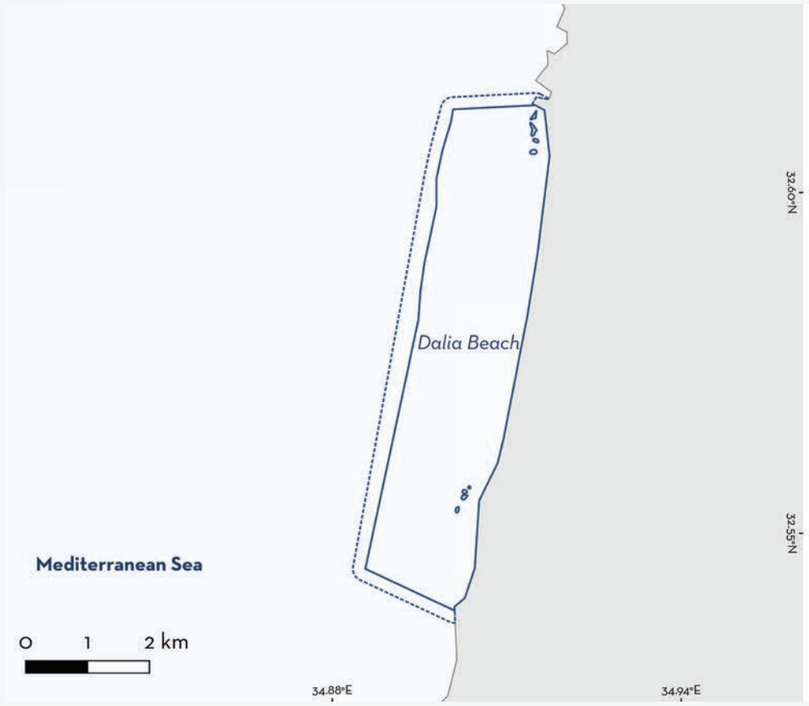
1,192.6 km²

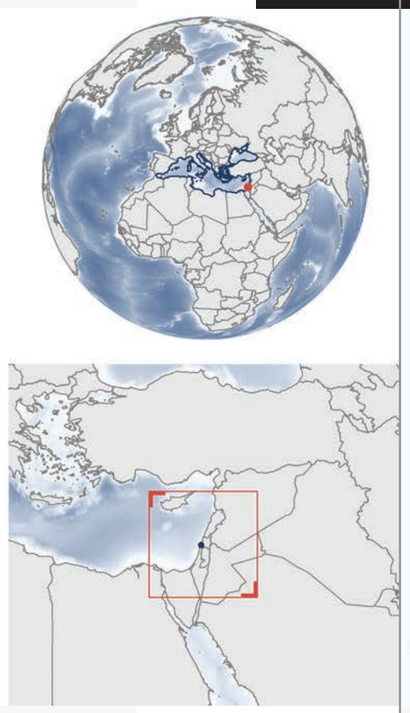

Meron Segev


Shevy Rothman

ISRAEL

Yousef Espanioly | Unsplash





DALIA BEACH ISRA

– –

ISRAEL

– –

-1–20 metres

– –

13.85 km²

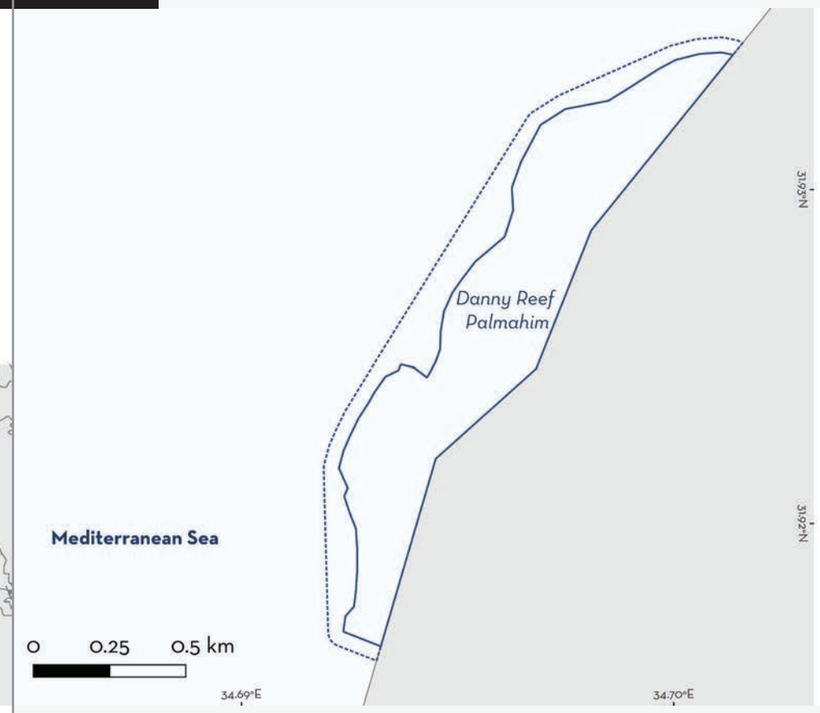
– –

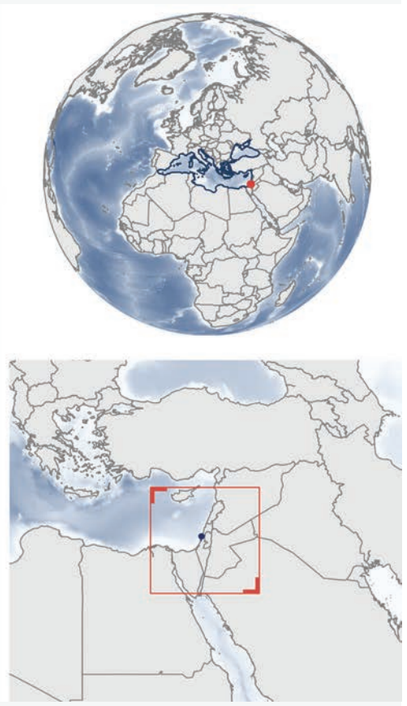
SUMMARY

Dalia Beach is located on the Mediterranean coast of Israel. The area includes the Dor and Ma'agan Micha'el Islands nature reserve, and its coast is a part of the Carmel Coast Key Biodiversity Area. Sandy beaches bordered by Kurkar ridges characterise the site, and within it are submerged rocky sandstone areas (Kurkar reef patches), two estuaries, and other river mouths. Within this area there are: **threatened species**, **reproductive areas**, and areas with **distinctive attributes** (Blackchin Guitarfish *Glaucostegus cemiculus*).

CRITERIA

Criterion A – Vulnerability; Sub-criterion C1 – Reproductive Areas; Sub-criterion D1 – Distinctiveness





DANNY REEF PALMAHIM ISRA

– –

ISRAEL

– –

0–8 metres

– –

0.59 km²

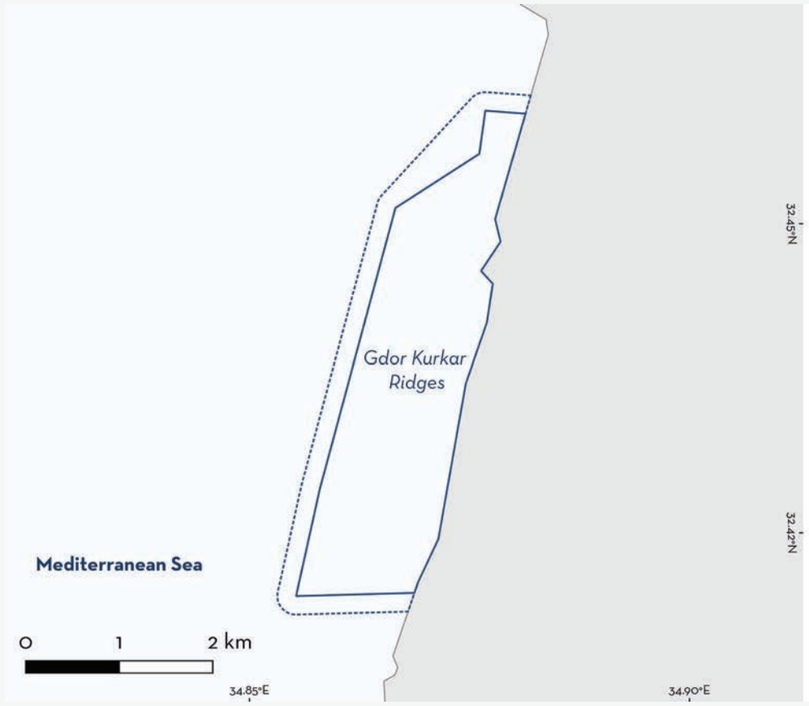
– –

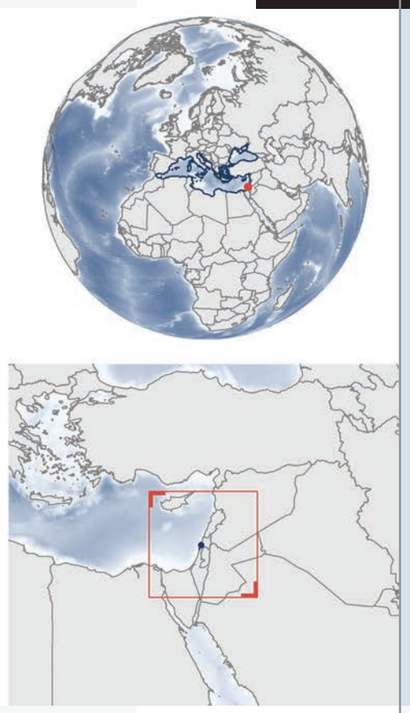
SUMMARY

Danny Reef Palmahim is located in the coastal waters of Israel. The area surrounds the formation of the Kurkar rock and consists of varied habitats in shallow water <8 m deep, including detached abrasion tables, shallow sandy lagoons, a submerged Kurkar rocky reef, and patches of sandy substrate. Within this area there are: **threatened species** (e.g., Blackchin Guitarfish *Glaucostegus cemiculus*); **reproductive areas** (e.g., Common Stingray *Dasyatis pastinaca*); and **undefined aggregations** (Marbled Stingray *Dasyatis marmorata*).

CRITERIA

Criterion A – Vulnerability; Sub-criterion C1 – Reproductive Areas; Sub-criterion C5 – Undefined Aggregations





GDOR KURKAR RIDGES ISRA

ISRAEL

0–14 metres

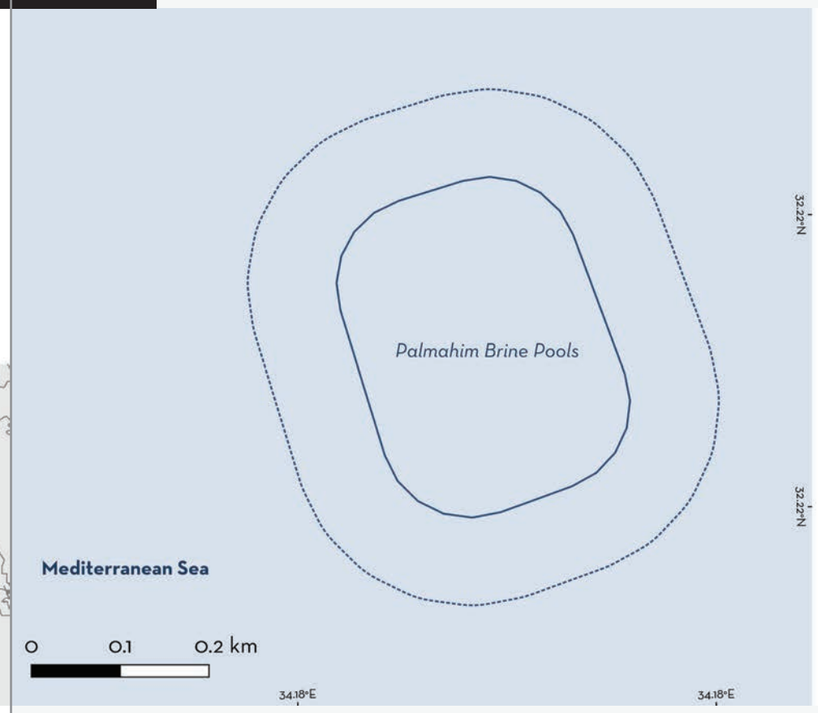
5.93 km²

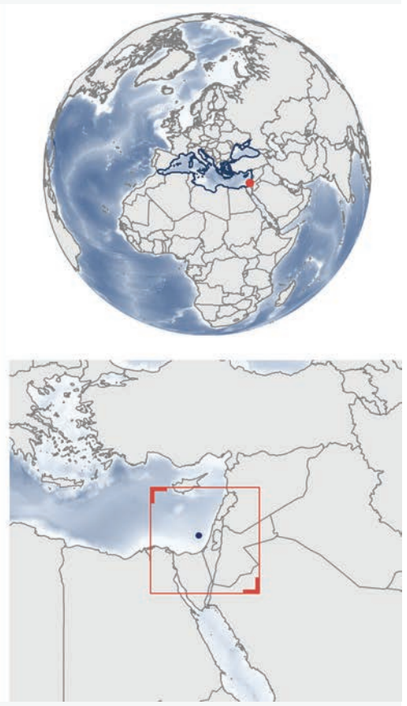
SUMMARY

Gdor Kurkar Ridges is a ~5 km long coastal area in Israel. It is characterised by diverse and rich habitats which include detached abrasion tables, shallow sandy lagoons, a submerged Kurkar rocky bottom, and patches of sand among the rocky substrates. It includes most of the Gdor Marine Protected Area (0–300 m from shore). Within this area there are: **threatened species** (e.g., Common Stingray *Dasyatis pastinaca*); **reproductive areas** (e.g., Marbled Stingray *Dasyatis marmorata*); and **undefined aggregations** (e.g., Blackchin Guitarfish *Glaucostegus cemiculus*).

CRITERIA

Criterion A – Vulnerability; Sub-criterion C1 – Reproductive Areas; Sub-criterion C5 – Undefined Aggregations





PALMAHIM BRINE POOLS ISRA

ISRAEL

1,100–1,150 metres

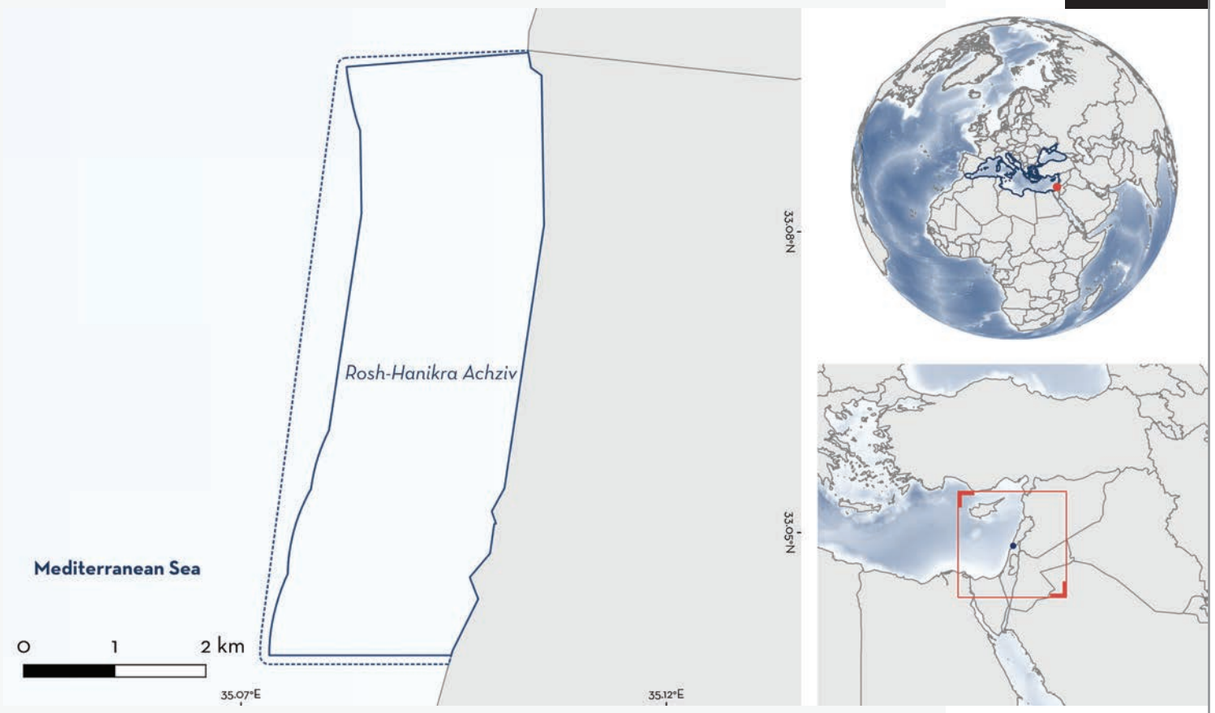
0.09 km² –

SUMMARY

Palmahim Brine Pools is located in the southeastern Mediterranean Sea, 60 km off the coast of Israel. The area is within a marine protected area that covers a large-scale submarine rotational slide rooted in the Messinian evaporites. This area is characterised by a warm and saline brine pool system. Within this area there are: **threatened species** (Angular Roughshark *Oxynotus centrina*); **reproductive areas** (Blackmouth Catshark *Galeus melastomus*); and **feeding areas** (Angular Roughshark).

CRITERIA

Criterion A – Vulnerability; Sub-criterion C1 – Reproductive Areas; Sub-criterion C2 – Feeding Areas



ROSH-HANIKRA ACHZIV ISRA

SUMMARY

Rosh-Hanikra Achziv is a coastal area in northern Israel that overlaps with the larger Rosh-Hanikra Achziv Marine Protected Area. This area is characterised by a variety of unique habitats, including abrasion tables bordering the shoreline and sandy substrate habitats, and hosts rich and diverse communities. Within this area there are: **threatened species** (e.g., Spiny Butterfly Ray *Gymnura altavela*); **reproductive areas** (Round Fantail Stingray *Taeniurops grabatus*); and **undefined aggregations** (e.g., Duckbill Eagle Ray *Aetomylaeus bovinus*).

CRITERIA

Criterion A – Vulnerability; Sub-criterion C1 – Reproductive Areas; Sub-criterion C5 – Undefined Aggregations

ISRAEL

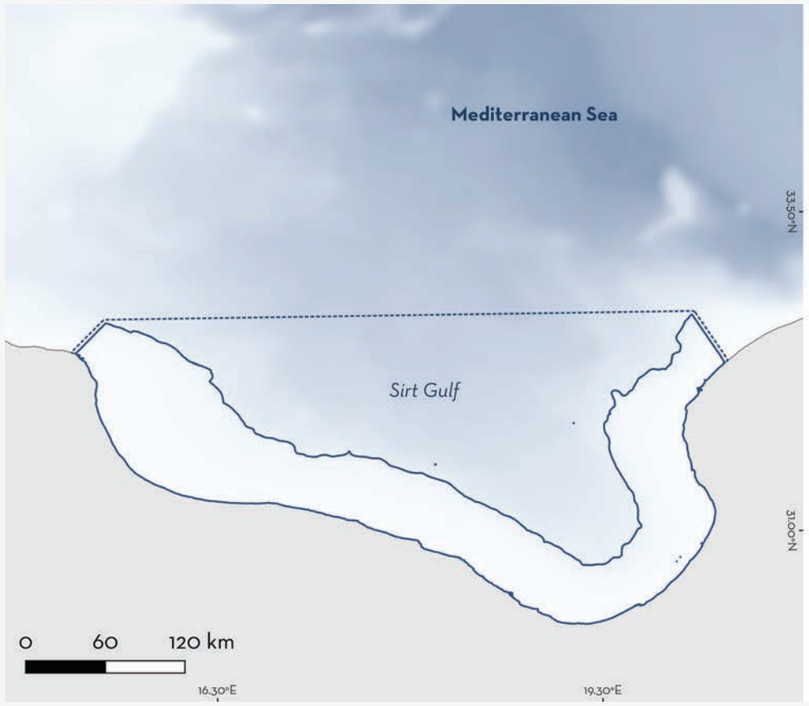
0–45 metres

13.59 km²


Meron Segev


Meron Segev

Ameen Alarabi | Unsplash



SIRT GULF ISRA

– –

LIBYA

– –

0–500 metres

– –

40,477.93 km²

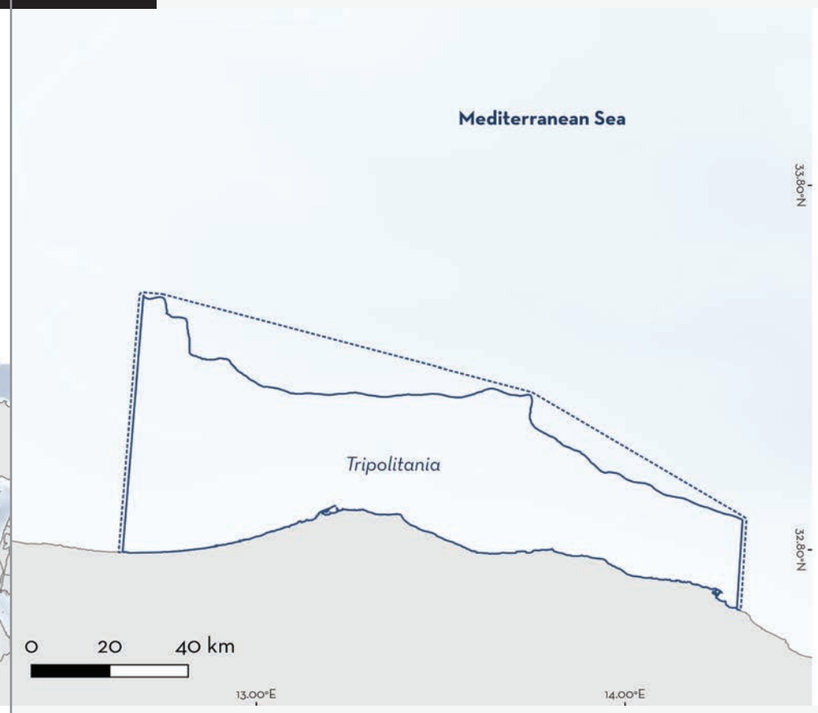
– –

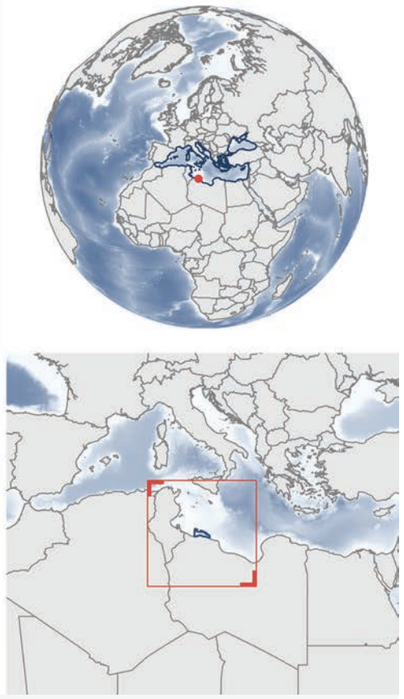
SUMMARY

Sirt Gulf lies along the coast of Libya in the southern Mediterranean Sea. The area is characterised by sandy bays interspersed with small rocky areas, and seagrass beds. It is bordered by salt marshes and terrestrial coastal protected areas. Sirt Gulf is known as a hotspot for biodiversity and contains five Key Biodiversity Areas and overlaps with an Ecologically or Biologically Significant Marine Area. Within this area there are: **threatened species** (e.g., Smoothback Angelshark *Squatina oculata*); and **reproductive areas** (e.g., Angelshark *Squatina squatina*).

CRITERIA

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





TRIPOLITANIA ISRA

– –

LIBYA

– –

0–200 metres

– –

6,423.4 km²

– –

SUMMARY

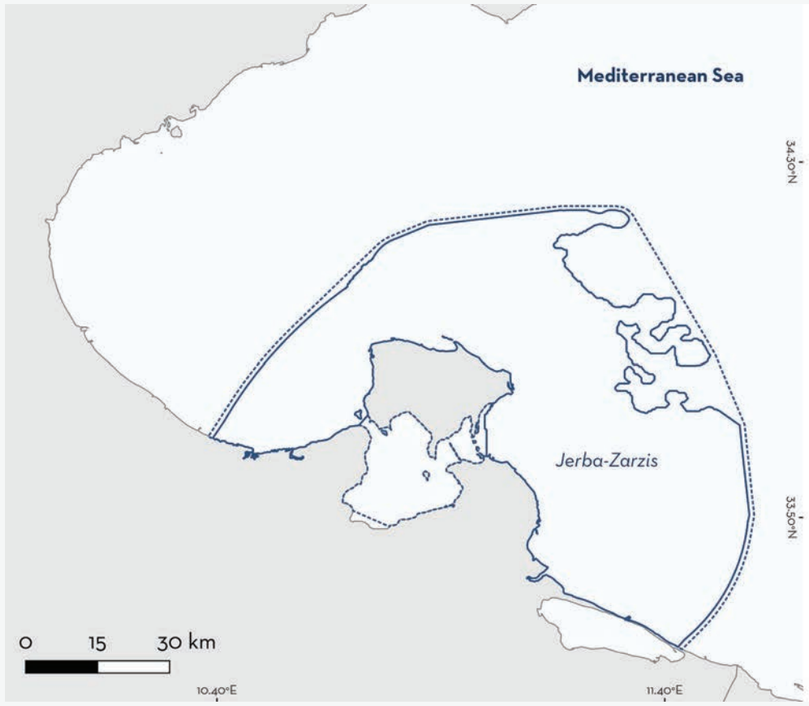
Tripolitania is located along the coast of Libya in the southern Mediterranean Sea. The area is characterised by a wide continental shelf that joins the Libyan land mass to the Malta and Medina Banks with habitats such as seagrass beds, rocky ledges, and sand deposits. The area overlaps with an Ecologically or Biologically Significant Marine Area and a Key Biodiversity Area. Within this area there are: **threatened species** and **reproductive areas** (Common Smoothhound *Mustelus mustelus*).

CRITERIA

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

TUNISIA

Khalil Yamoun | Unsplash



JERBA-ZARZIS ISRA

TUNISIA

0–40 metres

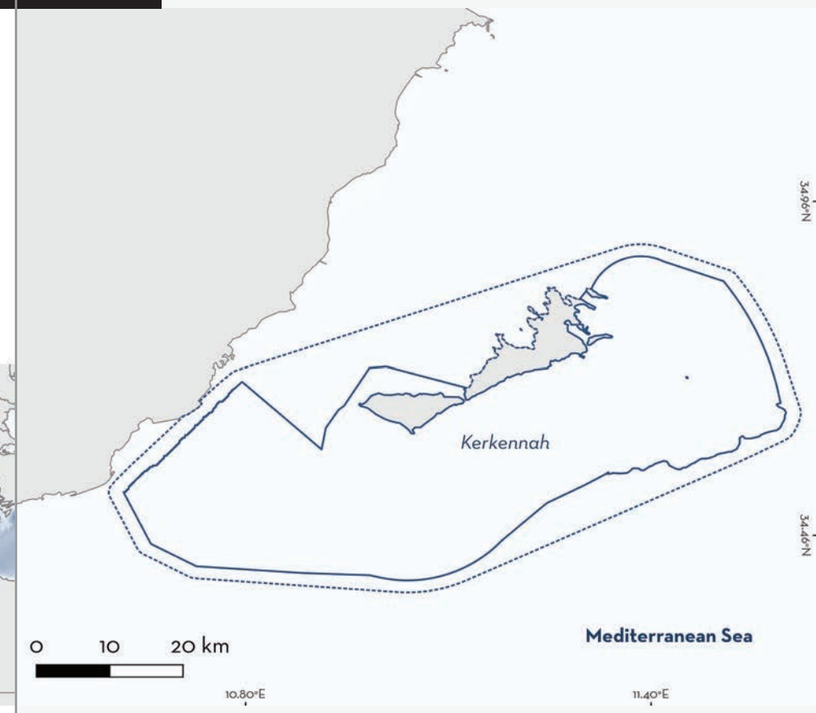
5,178.2 km²

SUMMARY

Jerba-Zarzis is located in the south-eastern side of the Gulf of Gabès, Tunisia. This area is characterised by shallow waters with a wide continental shelf. It is one of the most productive areas of the Western Mediterranean Sea, as this area contains the most extended and continuous Neptune Grass *Posidonia oceanica* meadow in this body of water. The area overlaps with the Le Golfe de Gabès Ecologically or Biologically Significant Marine Area, and partially overlaps with Côtes De L'île De Djerba Key Biodiversity Area. Within this area there are: **threatened species** (e.g., Blackchin Guitarfish *Glaucostegus cemiculus*); **range-restricted species** (Rough Skate *Raja radula*); and **reproductive areas** (e.g., Sandbar Shark *Carcharhinus plumbeus*).

CRITERIA

Criterion A – Vulnerability; Criterion B – Range Restricted; Sub-criterion C1 – Reproductive Areas



KERKENNAH ISRA

TUNISIA

0–30 metres

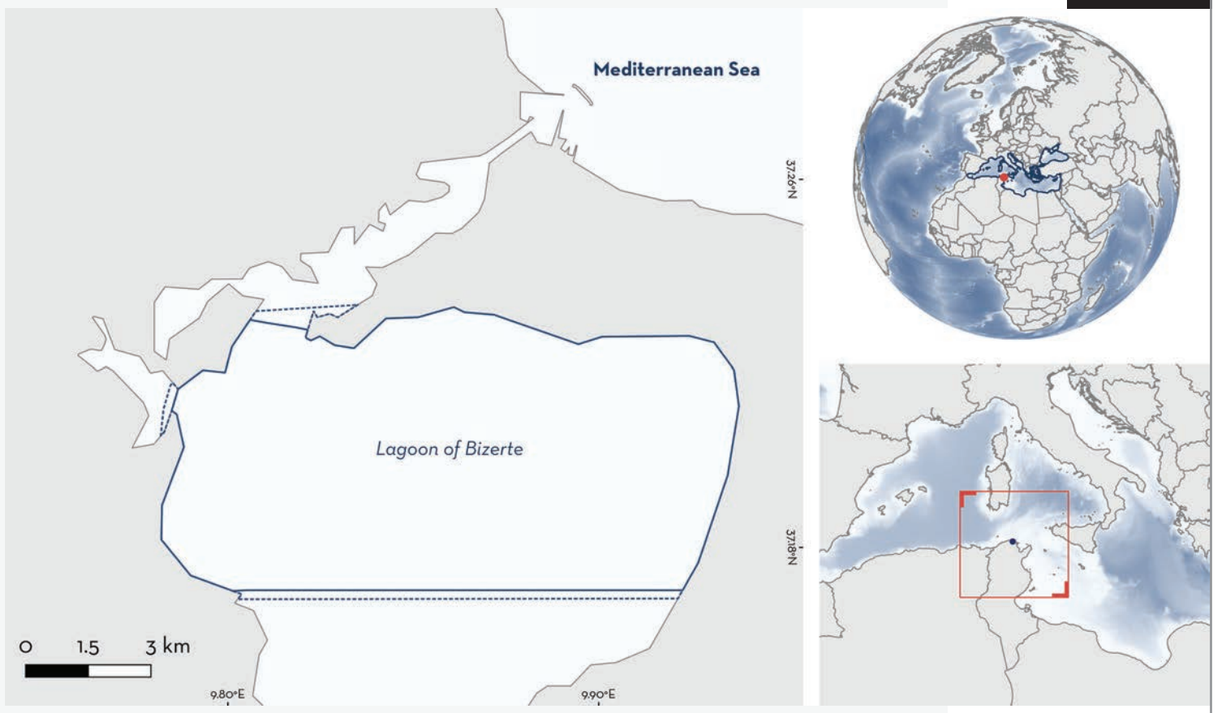
2,329.5 km²

SUMMARY

Kerkennah is located on the northern side of the Gulf of Gabès in Tunisia, surrounding the Kerkennah Islands. The Gulf of Gabès is characterised by shallow waters and the presence of the most extensive and continuous Neptune Grass *Posidonia oceanica* meadow of the Mediterranean Sea. The area overlaps with Le Golfe de Gabès Ecologically or Biologically Significant Marine Area. Within this area there are: **threatened species** (e.g., Common Guitarfish *Rhinobatos rhinobatos*); and **reproductive areas** (e.g., Common Smoothhound *Mustelus mustelus*).

CRITERIA

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



LAGOON OF BIZERTE ISRA

SUMMARY

Lagoon of Bizerte is a brackish shallow water body located in northeastern Tunisia in the southwestern Mediterranean Sea. This area is situated in the north and central region of the Lagoon of Bizerte (the overall lagoon is 11 km width and 13 km long). It is connected to the Mediterranean Sea by an artificial navigation channel (6 km long, 12 m depth) and receives freshwater from eight streams depending on rainfall. This area is characterised by sandy, muddy, or detrital substrates, along with seagrass meadows. Within this area there are: **threatened species** and **reproductive areas** (Ocellate Torpedo *Torpedo torpedo*).

CRITERIA

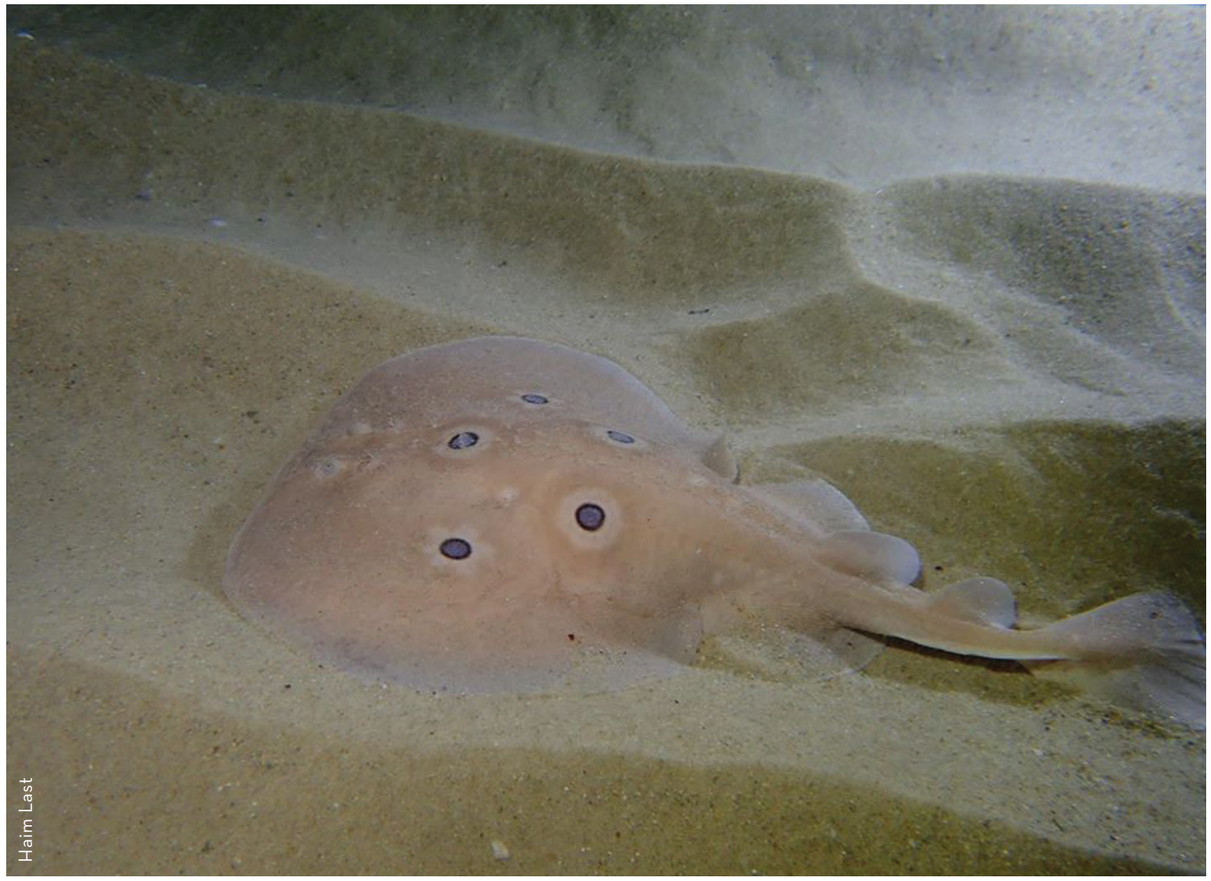
Criterion A – Vulnerability; Sub-criterion C1 – Reproductive Areas

TUNISIA

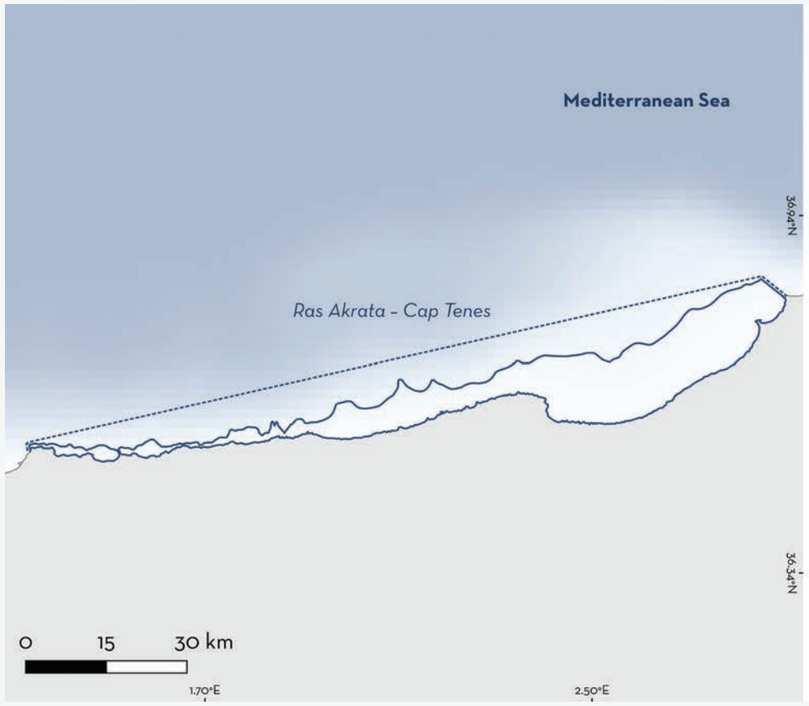
0–12 metres

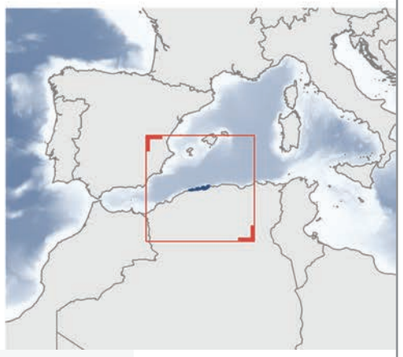
80.5 km²


Shevy Rothman


Haim Last

Dhaya Eddine Bentaleb | Unsplash





RAS AKRATA-CAP TENES ISRA

SUMMARY

Ras Akrata-Cap Tenes is spread over a 181 km coastal strip along the central basin of the Algerian coast. Located south of the western Mediterranean basin, in the Algerian current of the Modified Atlantic Water, it covers a narrow continental shelf to the south with a steep drop in its central part. This area is characterised by a highly productive ecosystem due to intense upwelling and nutrients supplied by coastal leaching and rivers. In this area there are: **threatened species** and **reproductive areas** (Blue Shark *Prionace glauca*).

CRITERIA

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

ALGERIA

0-200 metres

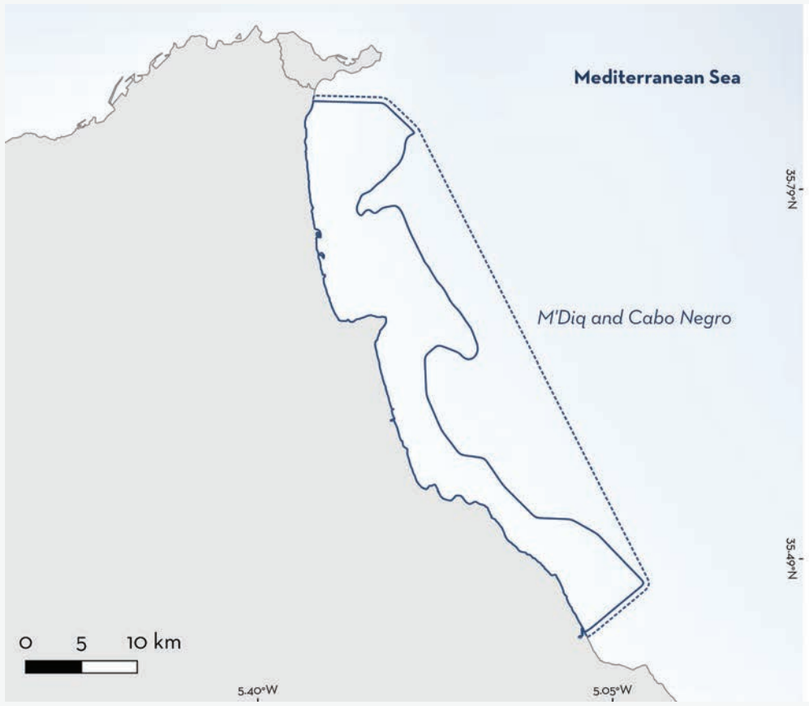
856.52 km²


Matthieu Lapinski | Ailerons


Desirée Grancagnolo

MOROCCO

Achraf Talha | Unsplash



M'DIQ AND CABO NEGRO ISRA

SUMMARY

M'Diq and Cabo Negro is located in northern Morocco in the Alboran Sea (western Mediterranean Sea). The area is characterised by muddy and sandy substrates, made of quartz sediments, which make up wide spreading beaches. There are various soft substrate communities in the area, interspersed with gravel and rocky outcrops. Within this area there are **range-restricted species** (Starry Skate *Raja asterias*).

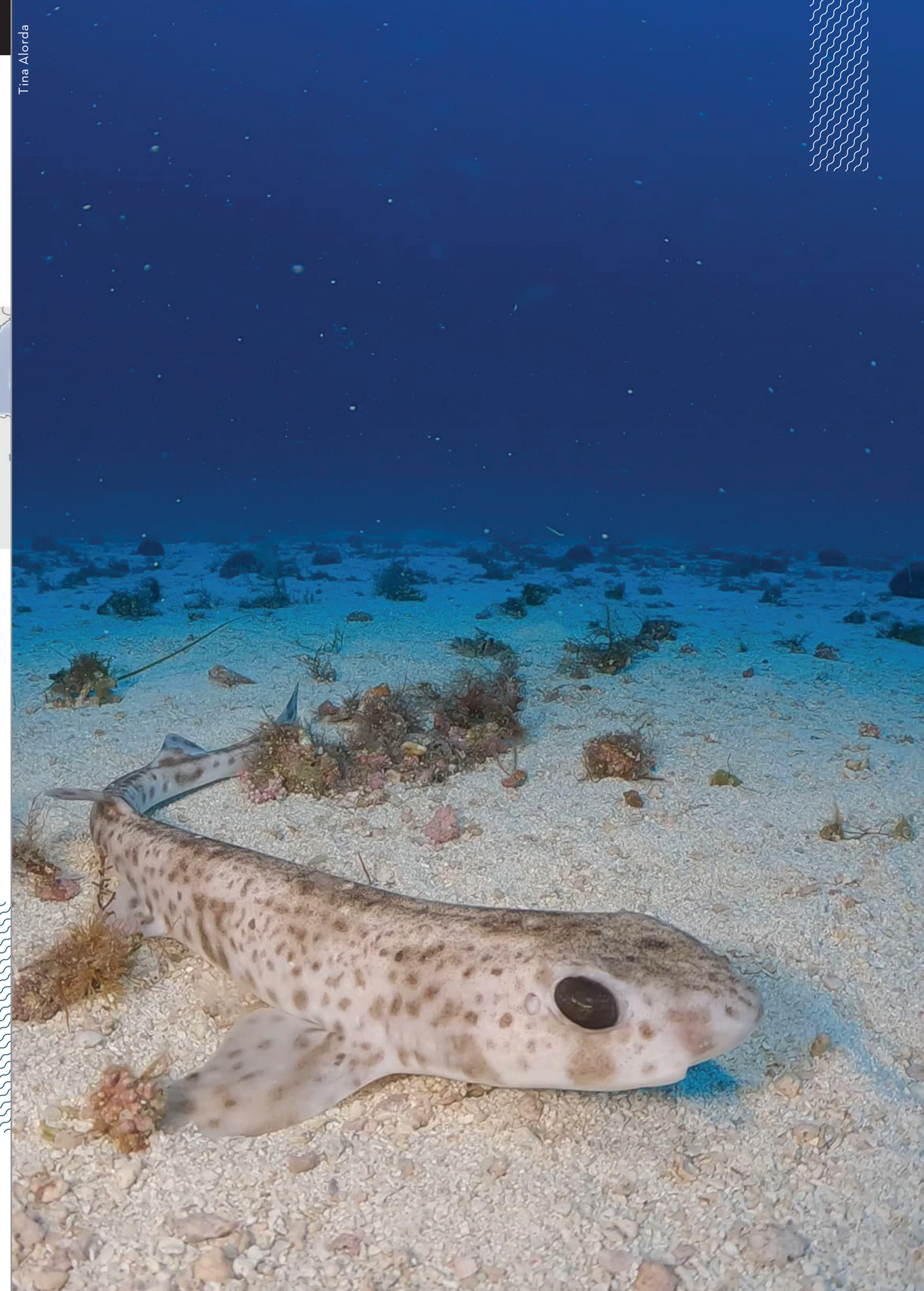
CRITERIA

Criterion B – Range Restricted

MOROCCO

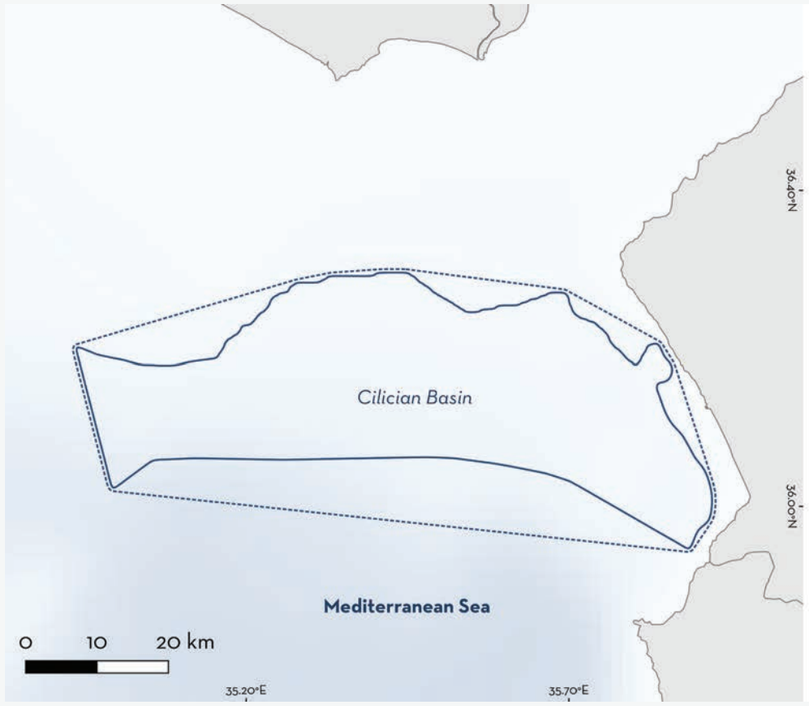
0–200 metres

323.3 km²


Tina Alorda

TRANSBOUNDARY

Matthieu Lapinski | Ailerons



CILICIAN BASIN ISRA

SUMMARY

Cilician Basin is located in waters straddling Cyprus and Türkiye. The Mid-Mediterranean Jet is the major water circulation feature in the area. It is also influenced by eddies as well as the Cilician Current and the Asia Minor Current. The substrate of the area is muddy. It overlaps with the North-East Levantine Sea Ecologically or Biologically Significant Marine Area. Within the area there are: **threatened species** (Angular Roughshark *Oxynotus centrina*) and **reproductive areas** (e.g., Longnosed Skate *Dipturus oxyrinchus*).

CRITERIA

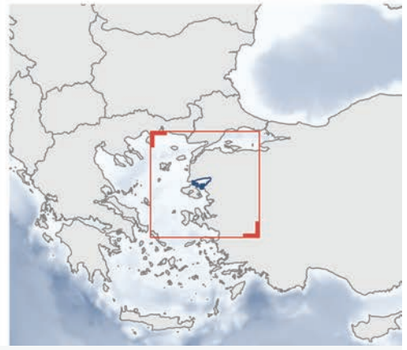
Criterion A – Vulnerability; Sub-criterion C1 – Reproductive Areas

CYPRUS

TÜRKIYE

150–450 metres

1,797 km²



EDREMIT BAY ISRA

SUMMARY

Edremit Bay is located in the northern Aegean Sea off the coast of Türkiye. The northern coast of the bay is bordered by high mountain ranges and the southern coasts exhibit an insular coastal topography. The western part, where the bay connects with the open sea, is bordered by Lesbos Island (Greece). The area is characterised by a narrow continental shelf on the northern part and wider shelf on the southern part of the bay, with depths increasing quickly on the western side. The coastline is covered by seagrass meadows and gorgonian beds in the southern part. The area overlaps with an Ecologically or Biologically Significant Marine Area (Central Aegean Sea) and three Key Biodiversity Areas. Within this area there are: **threatened species** and **reproductive areas** (White Shark *Carcharodon carcharias*).

CRITERIA

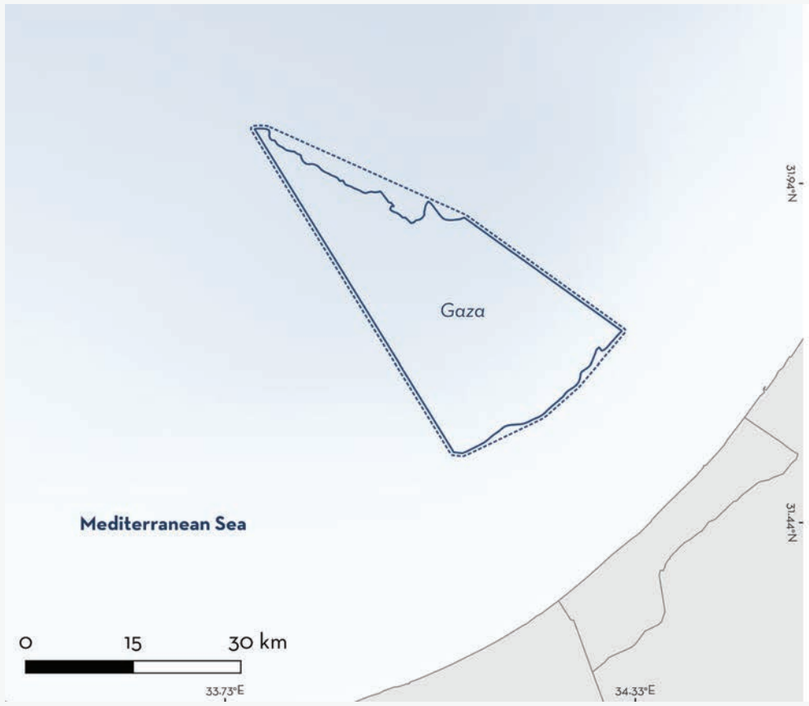
Criterion A – Vulnerability; Sub-criterion C1 – Reproductive Areas

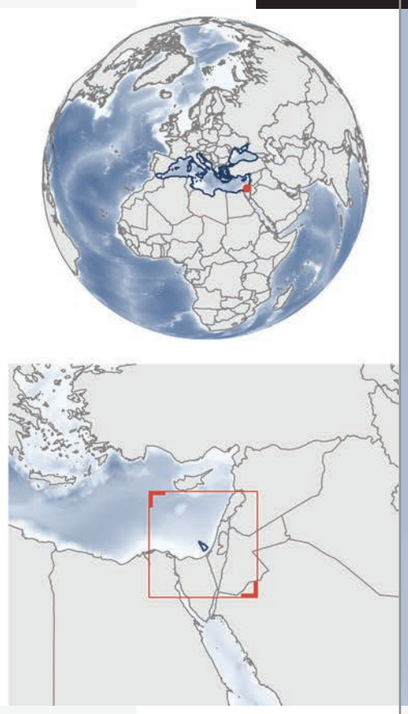
GREECE

TÜRKIYE

0–100 metres

995.1 km²





GAZA ISRA

SUMMARY

Gaza is located off the coast of the Gaza Strip, Palestine in the eastern Mediterranean Sea. The area is influenced by the Libyan–Egyptian current, and the surface current flowing eastward along the continental slope off Egypt and then northward along Israel and Lebanon. Within this area there are: **threatened species** and **undefined aggregations** (Spinetail Devil Ray *Mobula mobular*).

CRITERIA

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

–

PALESTINE (GAZA)

ISRAEL

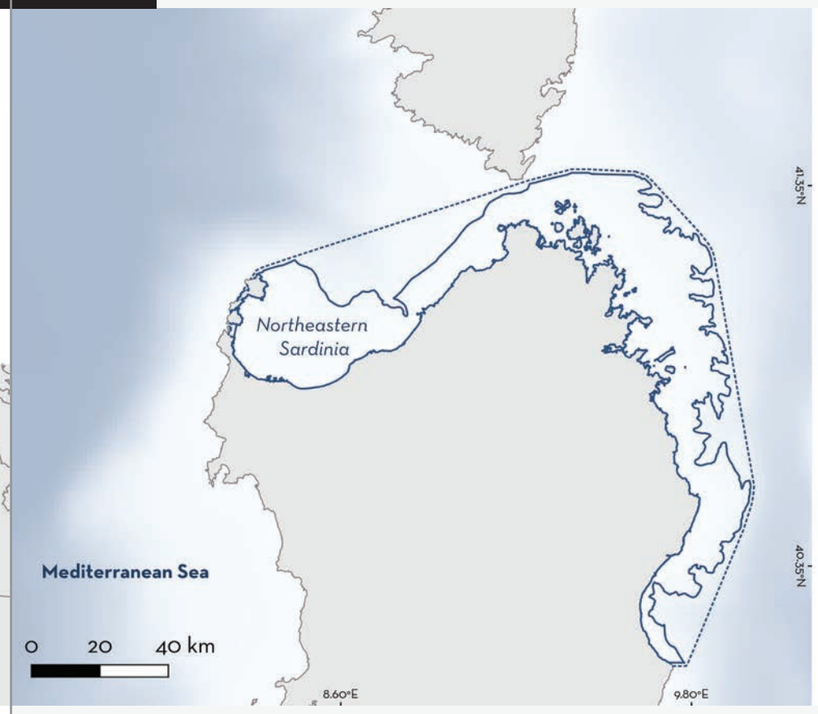
–

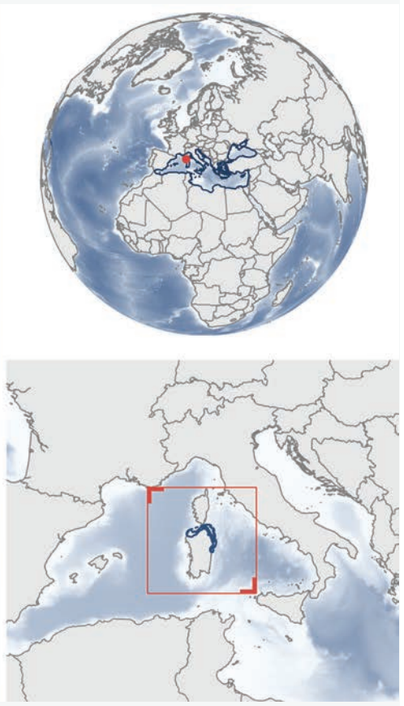
0–1,000 metres

–

998.6 km²

–





NORTHEASTERN SARDINIA ISRA

SUMMARY

Northeastern Sardinia is a coastal area bordering the coastline of Sardinia (Italy) and the waters of Corsica (France). It includes the Gulf of Asinara, the southern part of the Bonifacio Strait between Sardinia and Corsica, the islands and islets of the Maddalena Archipelago, and extends south to the islands of Tavolara and Molara and the coast down to the Gulf of Orosei. The area is characterised by a continental shelf of variable width (~1–20 km) and includes numerous deepwater canyons. Winter phytoplankton blooms are frequent in the area and characterise seasonal variations in productivity. The area overlaps with the North-western Mediterranean Pelagic Ecosystems Ecological and Biological Significant Marine Area, four Marine Protected Areas, and four Key Biodiversity Areas. Within this area there are: **threatened species** and **feeding areas** (Basking Shark *Cetorhinus maximus*).

CRITERIA

Criterion A – Vulnerability; Sub-criterion C2 – Feeding Areas

–

FRANCE

ITALY

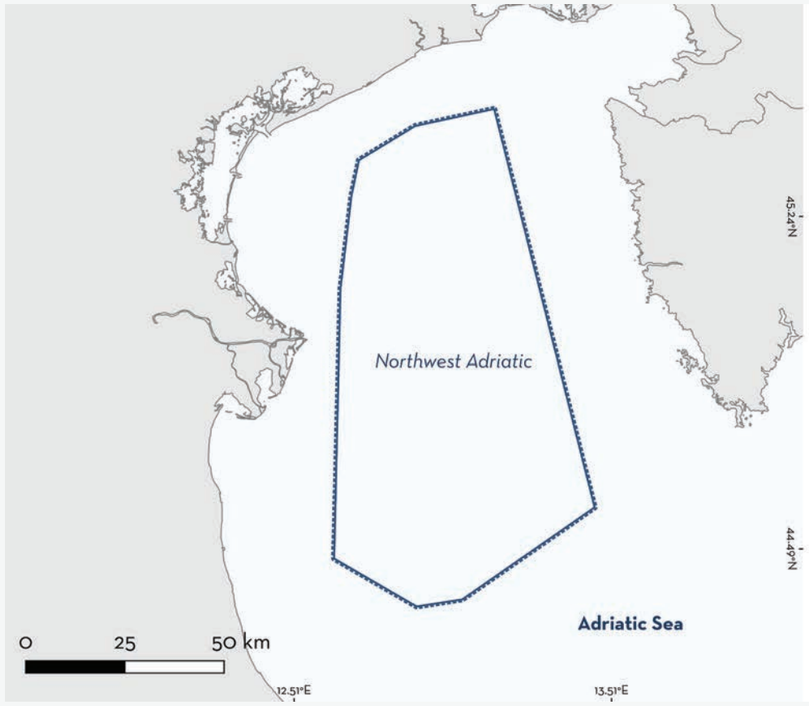
–

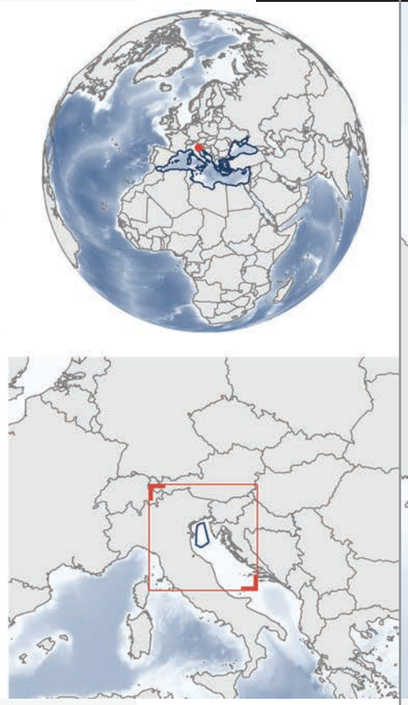
0–200 metres

–

4,324.8 km²

–





NORTHWEST ADRIATIC ISRA

SUMMARY

Northwest Adriatic is located in the western part of the North Adriatic Sea basin. The area is characterised by shallow waters and is under the strong influence of the Po River plume which results in high marine productivity. The area includes mobile sandy substrates, seagrass meadows, hard substrate associations, and unique rocky outcrops. This area overlaps with the Northern Adriatic Ecologically or Biologically Significant Marine Area. Within this area there are: **threatened species** (e.g., Spiny Dogfish *Squalus acanthias*) and **reproductive areas** (e.g., Common Smoothhound *Mustelus mustelus*).

– –

ITALY

CROATIA

– –

0-50 metres

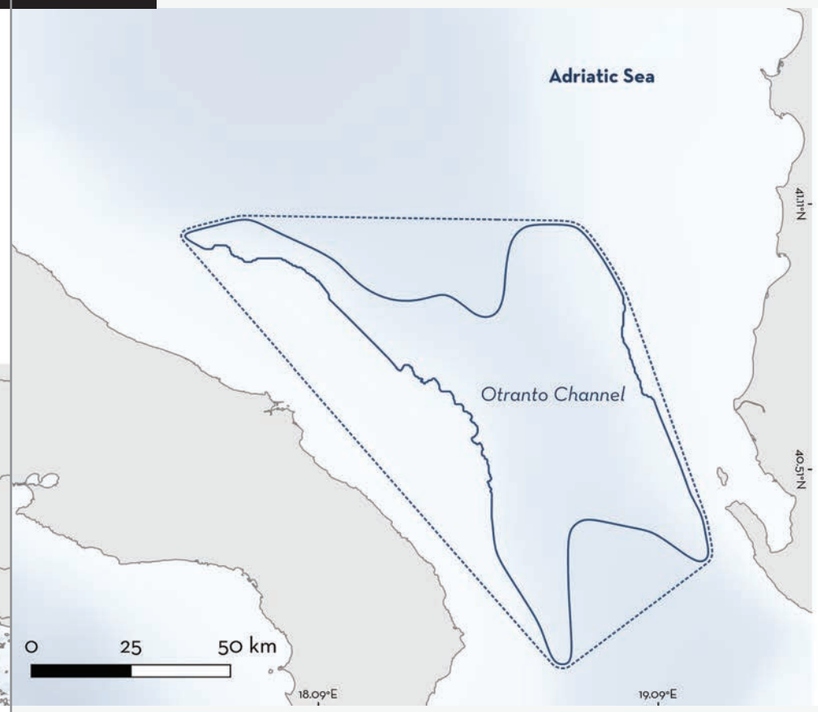
– –

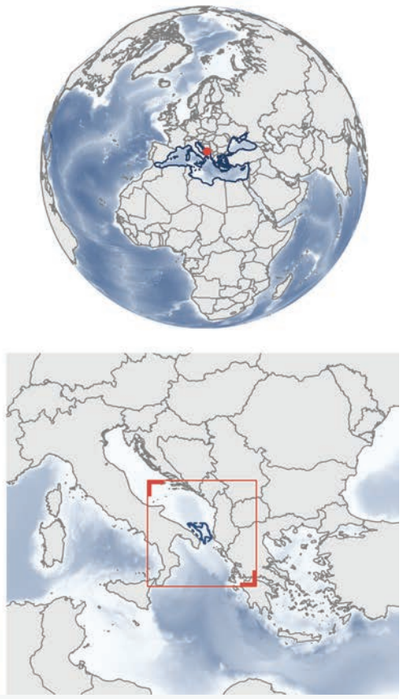
5,852 km²

– –

CRITERIA

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





OTRANTO CHANNEL ISRA

SUMMARY

Otranto Channel is located in the southern Adriatic Sea, a sub-basin of the Mediterranean Sea in the waters of Albania and Italy. The area hosts Vulnerable Marine Ecosystems such as beds of the sessile colonial cnidarian *Isidella elongata*, sea pens, deepwater sponges, deepwater corals, and other colonial and solitary coral species. It overlaps with the boundary of the South Adriatic Ionian Straight Ecologically or Biologically Significant Marine Area. Within this area there are **reproductive areas** (Blackmouth Catshark *Galeus melastomus*).

– –

ITALY

ALBANIA

– –

200-900 metres

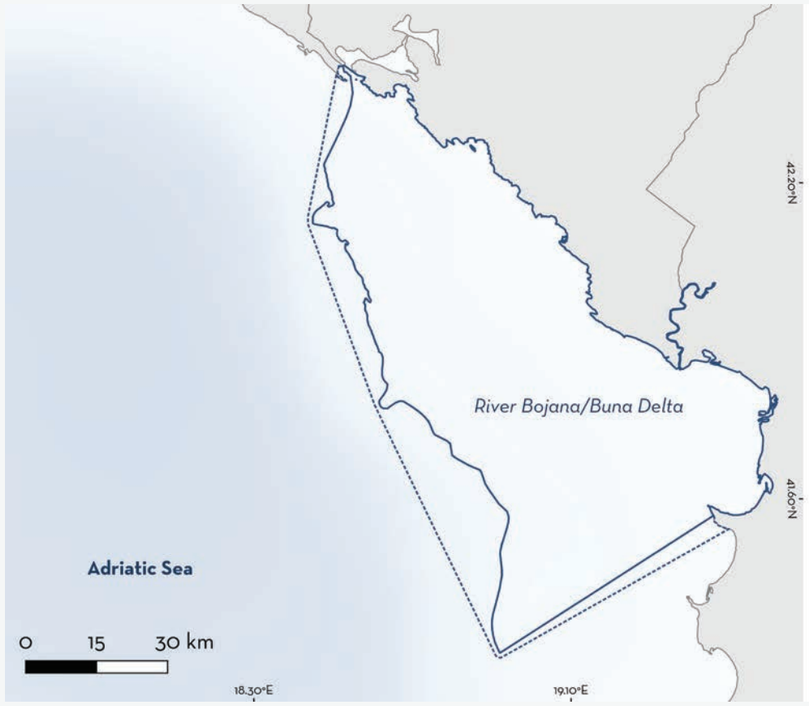
– –

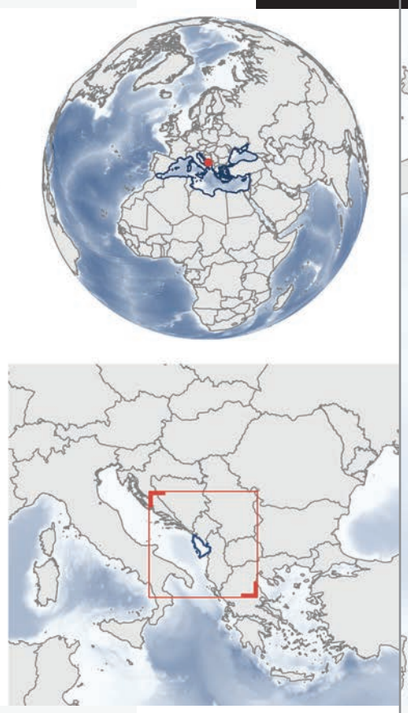
4,299.9 km²

– –

CRITERIA

Sub-criterion C1 – Reproductive Areas





RIVER BOJANA/BUNA DELTA ISRA

SUMMARY

River Bojana/Buna Delta is located in the southeast Adriatic Sea. It encompasses the area mostly influenced by the River Bojana/Buna, as well as nearby freshwater inflows. This river is the second largest tributary of the Adriatic Sea and creates a distinctive habitat rich in nutrients and fine sediments. Its lower reaches represent the border between Montenegro and Albania, among which the area is shared. The area overlaps with three existing marine protected areas in Montenegrin territorial waters and five Key Biodiversity Areas are recognised within the area, including sites covering lagoons and freshwater inflows. Within this area there are: **threatened species** (e.g., Common Thresher *Alopias vulpinus*); **range-restricted species** (Starry Skate *Raja asterias*); **reproductive areas** (e.g., Blue Shark *Prionace glauca*); and **undefined aggregations** (e.g., Blackspotted Smoothhound *Mustelus punctulatus*).

CRITERIA

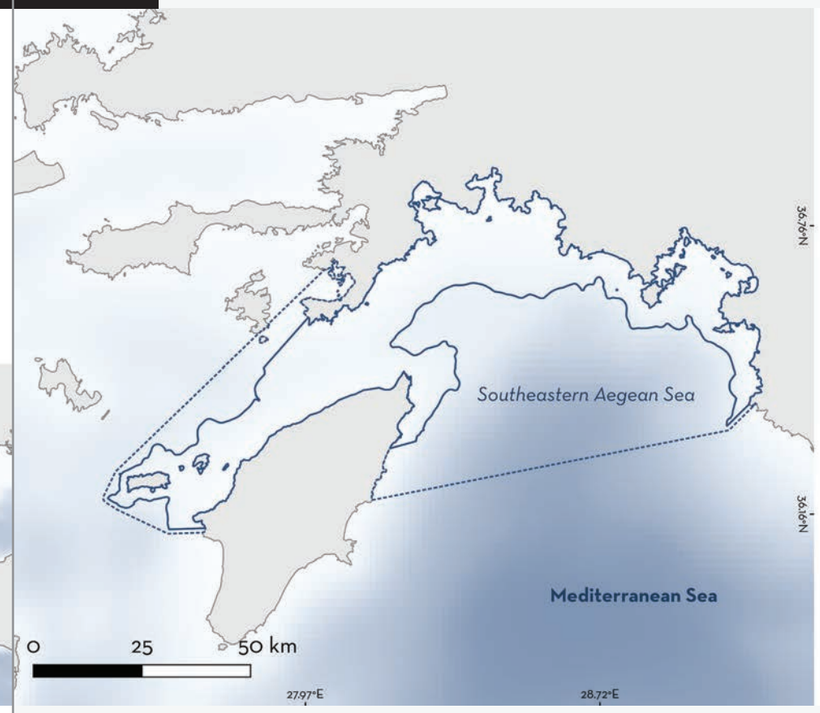
Criterion A – Vulnerability; Criterion B – Range Restricted;
Sub-criterion C1 – Reproductive Areas; Sub-criterion C5 – Undefined Aggregations

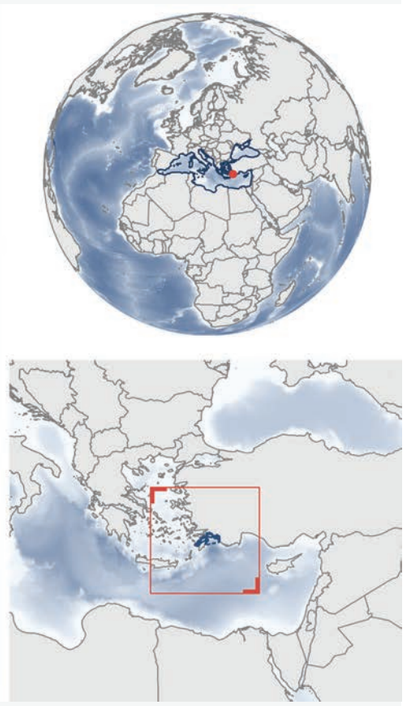
ALBANIA

MONTENEGRO

0–200 metres

5,120 km²





SOUTHEASTERN AEGEAN SEA ISRA

SUMMARY

Southeastern Aegean Sea is located between Greece and Türkiye. On the Greek side, it includes Northwest Rhodes Island and its small islets, the strait of Rhodos, and continues south to Aphantou. On the Turkish side, the area extends from Oludeniz Bay in Fethiye, to Datça Peninsula. The area is characterised by diverse coastal and benthic habitats, including a subtropical open sea environment and bays, sandy to muddy substrates, rocky shores, islets, and rivers that flow into the bays. The area overlaps with five Natura 2000 sites, two Key Biodiversity Areas, and an Ecologically or Biologically Significant Marine Area. Within this area there are: **threatened species** (e.g., Smoothback Angelshark *Squatina oculata*); **reproductive areas** (Smoothback Angelshark); and **undefined aggregations** (Sandbar Shark *Carcharhinus plumbeus*).

CRITERIA

Criterion A – Vulnerability; Sub-criterion C1 – Reproductive Areas;
Sub-criterion C5 – Undefined Aggregations

GREECE

TÜRKIYE

0–500 metres

2,719 km²

SOUTHERN ADRIATIC PIT ISRA

SUMMARY

Southern Adriatic Pit is located in the southern Adriatic Sea, a sub-basin of the Mediterranean Sea. It is characterised by steep slopes reaching a maximum depth >1,000 m. Water exchange with the Mediterranean Sea takes place through the Strait of Otranto. This area covers the epipelagic and mesopelagic zones of the water column from the surface to a depth of 800 m. The area overlaps with the South Adriatic Ionian Straight Ecologically or Biologically Significant Marine Area (EBSA). Within the area there are: **threatened species**; **reproductive areas**; and areas important for **movement** (Blue Shark *Prionace glauca*).

ALBANIA

ITALY

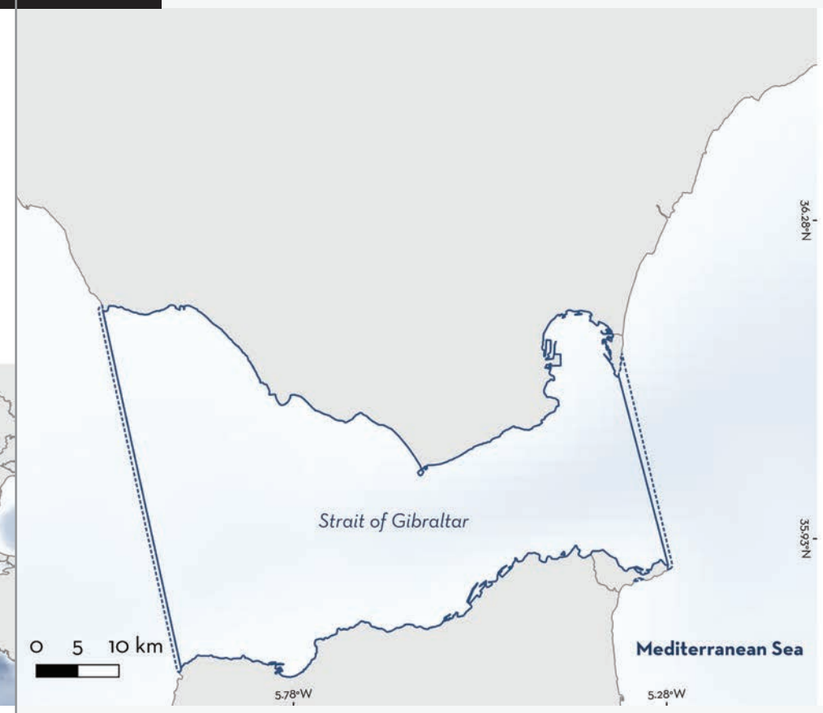
MONTENEGRO

0–800 metres

20,347 km²

CRITERIA

Criterion A – Vulnerability; Sub-criterion C1 – Reproductive Areas; Sub-criterion C4 – Movement



STRAIT OF GIBRALTAR ISRA

SUMMARY

Strait of Gibraltar is the only connection between the Atlantic Ocean and the Mediterranean Sea and separates the Iberian Peninsula of Spain from Morocco. Water flows through the strait from the Atlantic Ocean into the Mediterranean Sea by a surface current, and out of the Mediterranean Sea into the Atlantic Ocean by a deep outflow of water. The area overlaps with one Ecologically or Biologically Significant Marine Area (Gulf of Cadiz) and five Key Biodiversity Areas. Within this area there are: **threatened species** (e.g., Blue Shark *Prionace glauca*), and areas important for **movement** (e.g., Tope *Galeorhinus galeus*).

MOROCCO

SPAIN

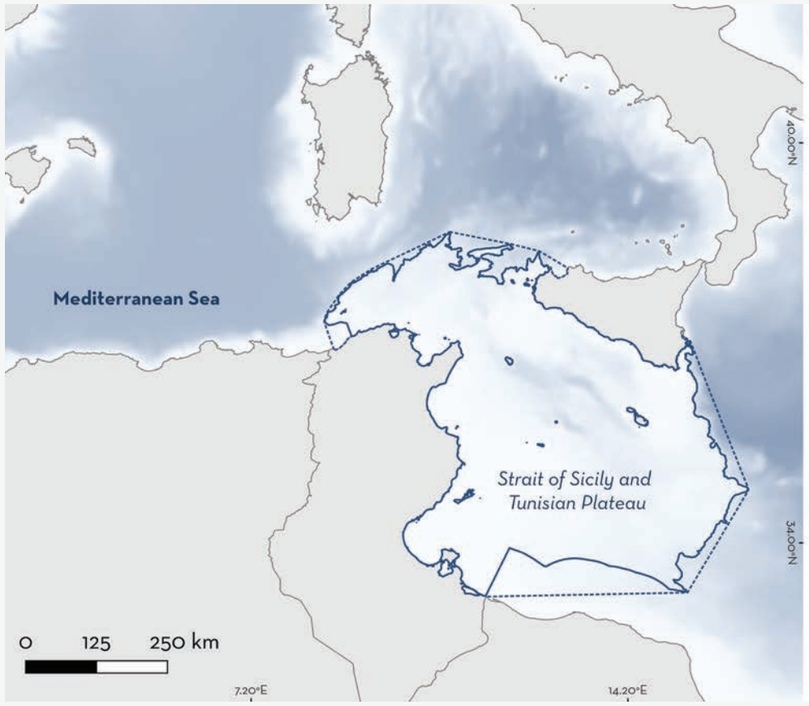
UNITED KINGDOM

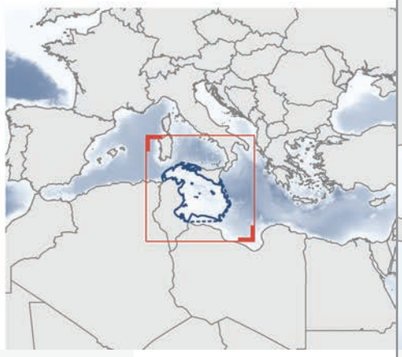
0–900 metres

1,710.5 km²

CRITERIA

Criterion A – Vulnerability; Sub-criterion C4 – Movement





STRAIT OF SICILY AND TUNISIAN PLATEAU ISRA

SUMMARY

Strait of Sicily and Tunisian Plateau is located between Sicily, Malta, western Libya, and Tunisia, encompassing Pantelleria Island, Kerkennah Islands, and the Egadi and the Pelagie Archipelagos. The area is characterised by diverse habitat features, such as submerged volcanic seeps, trenches, canyons, seamounts, banks, and sensitive habitats (e.g., cold-water corals and seagrass beds). The area overlaps with the Sicilian Channel Ecologically or Biologically Significant Marine Area. Within this area there are: **threatened species** (e.g., Common Guitarfish *Rhinobatos rhinobatos);* **range-restricted species** *(*e.g., Rough Skate *Raja radula);* **reproductive areas** (e.g., White Shark *Carcharodon carcharias*); **undefined aggregations** (e.g., Sandbar Shark *Carcharhinus plumbeus*); and the area sustains a **high diversity of sharks** (32 species).

–

ITALY

LIBYA

MALTA

TUNISIA

–

0–2,000 metres

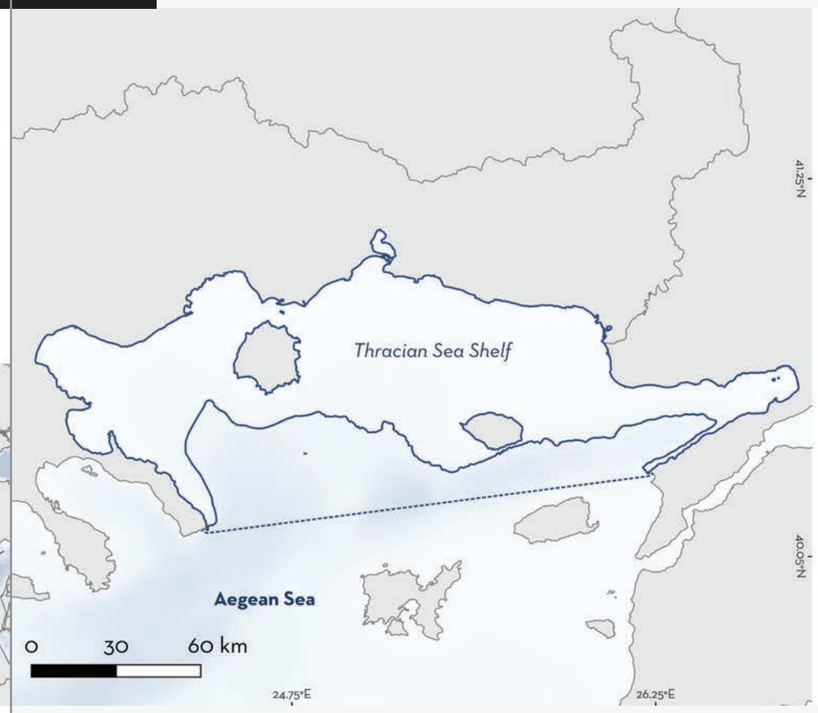
–

219,913 km²

–

CRITERIA

Criterion A – Vulnerability; Criterion B – Range Restricted;
Sub-criterion C1 – Reproductive Areas; Sub-criterion C5 – Undefined Aggregations;
Sub-criterion D2 – Diversity



THRACIAN SEA SHELF ISRA

SUMMARY

Thracian Sea Shelf is located in the northernmost part of the Aegean Sea. It is characterised by a diverse coastal and shelf morphology including several gulfs and two islands (Thasos and Samothraki). It has an extended continental shelf, primarily covered with seagrass meadows and sandy-muddy substrates. The nutrient-rich rivers and Black Sea waters support high biological productivity in the area. The area overlaps with an Ecologically or Biologically Significant Marine Area, 12 Key Biodiversity Areas, 10 Natura 2000 sites, five Ramsar sites, and two national parks. Within this area there are: **threatened species** (e.g., Duckbill Eagle Ray *Aetomylaeus bovinus*), **range-restricted species** (Rough Skate *Raja radula*); **reproductive areas** (e.g., Smallspotted Catshark *Scyliorhinus canicula*); and **undefined aggregations** (Common Stingray *Dasyatis pastinaca*).

–

GREECE

TÜRKIYE

–

0–300 metres

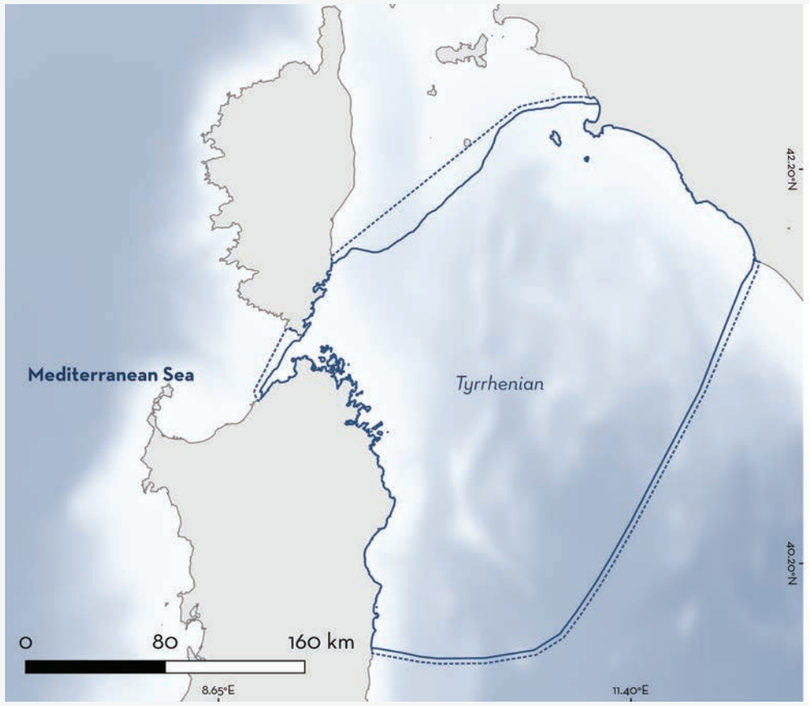
–

9,980.6 km²

–

CRITERIA

Criterion A – Vulnerability; Criterion B – Range Restricted;
Sub-criterion C1 – Reproductive Areas; Sub-criterion C5 – Undefined Aggregations



TYRRHENIAN ISRA

SUMMARY

Tyrrhenian is a large area between the Italian peninsula and the east coasts of southern Corsica and Sardinia. The area is characterised by habitats that include mostly pelagic waters over an abyssal plain scattered with ridges and seamounts. The northern part of the area includes a portion of the Tuscan Archipelago National Park, and the North-western Mediterranean Pelagic Ecosystem Ecologically or Biologically Significant Marine Area. Within this area there are: **threatened species** and **undefined aggregations** (Spinetail Devil Ray *Mobula mobular*).

CRITERIA

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

–

FRANCE

ITALY

–

0–1,112 metres

–

49,244.9 km²

–

Shevy Rothman

CANDIDATE ISRAS & AREAS OF INTEREST

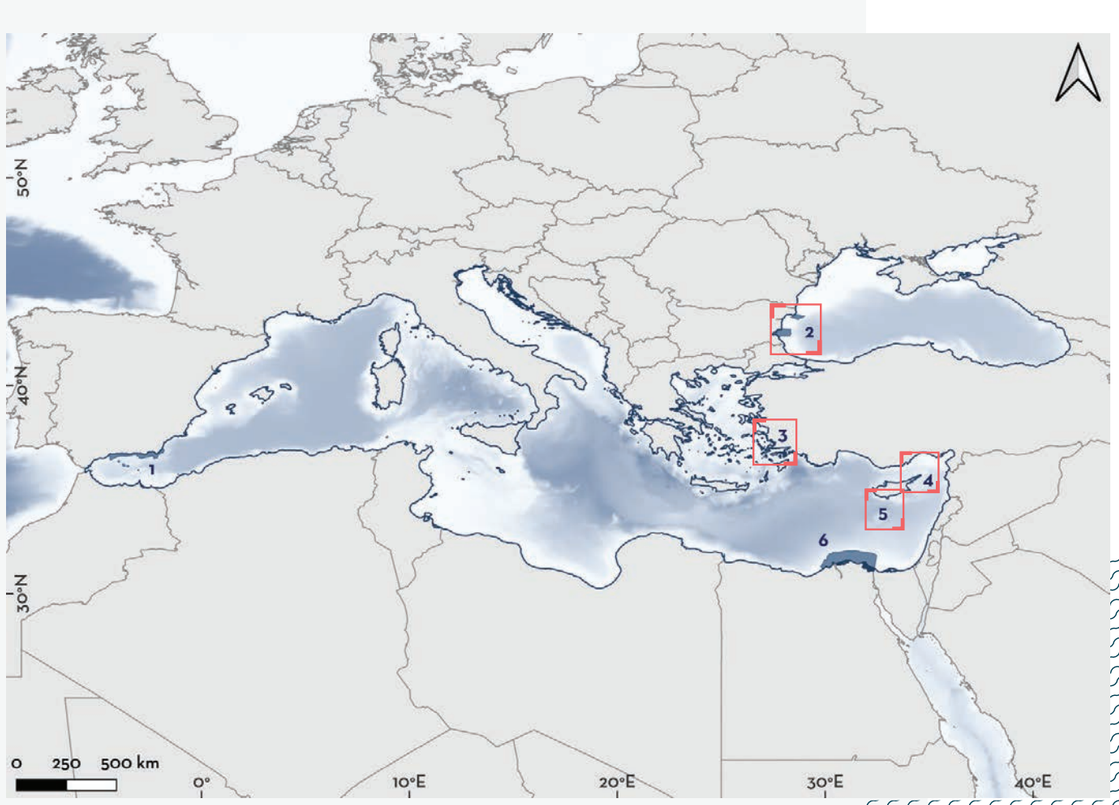
Marc Martin Sola

CANDIDATE IMPORTANT SHARK AND RAY AREAS (cISRA)

A candidate ISRA (cISRA) nominated during a regional workshop which does not have sufficient information to become an ISRA can remain a cISRA with the potential to be re-assessed in the future and become an ISRA when more information is available.

5 JURISDICTIONS

6 cISRA



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4	**Cyprus**	Akrotiri-Larnaca Bays	Periklis Kleitou, Demetris Kletou, Ioannis Giovos, Roxani Naasan Aga-Spyridopoulou, Giorgos Rallis, Ryan Charles
5	**Cyprus**	North Cyprus	Elizabeth Grace Tunka Bengil, Robin Snape, Ryan Charles
6	**Egypt**	Lower Egypt Delta	Mahmoud M. S. Farrag, Ryan Charles

AREAS OF INTEREST (AoI)

An Area of Interest (AoI) is considered during a regional workshop but found to have insufficient information to satisfy the ISRA Criteria and therefore does not become a candidate ISRA (cISRA).

11 JURISDICTIONS

20 AoI

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9	Ukraine	Feodosia Gulf	Emiliano García-Rodríguez, Jenny R. Bortoluzzi
10	Ukraine, Russia	Kerch Strait	Emiliano García-Rodríguez, Jenny R. Bortoluzzi
11	Russia	Tuapsé	Emiliano García-Rodríguez, Jenny R. Bortoluzzi
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18	Libya	Bomba Gulf and Ain Alghzala	Esmail Shakman, Khaled Etayeb, Abdalha ben Abdalha, Mahmoud Salih, Akram Turki, Mohamed Elhajaji, Jenny R Bortoluzzi
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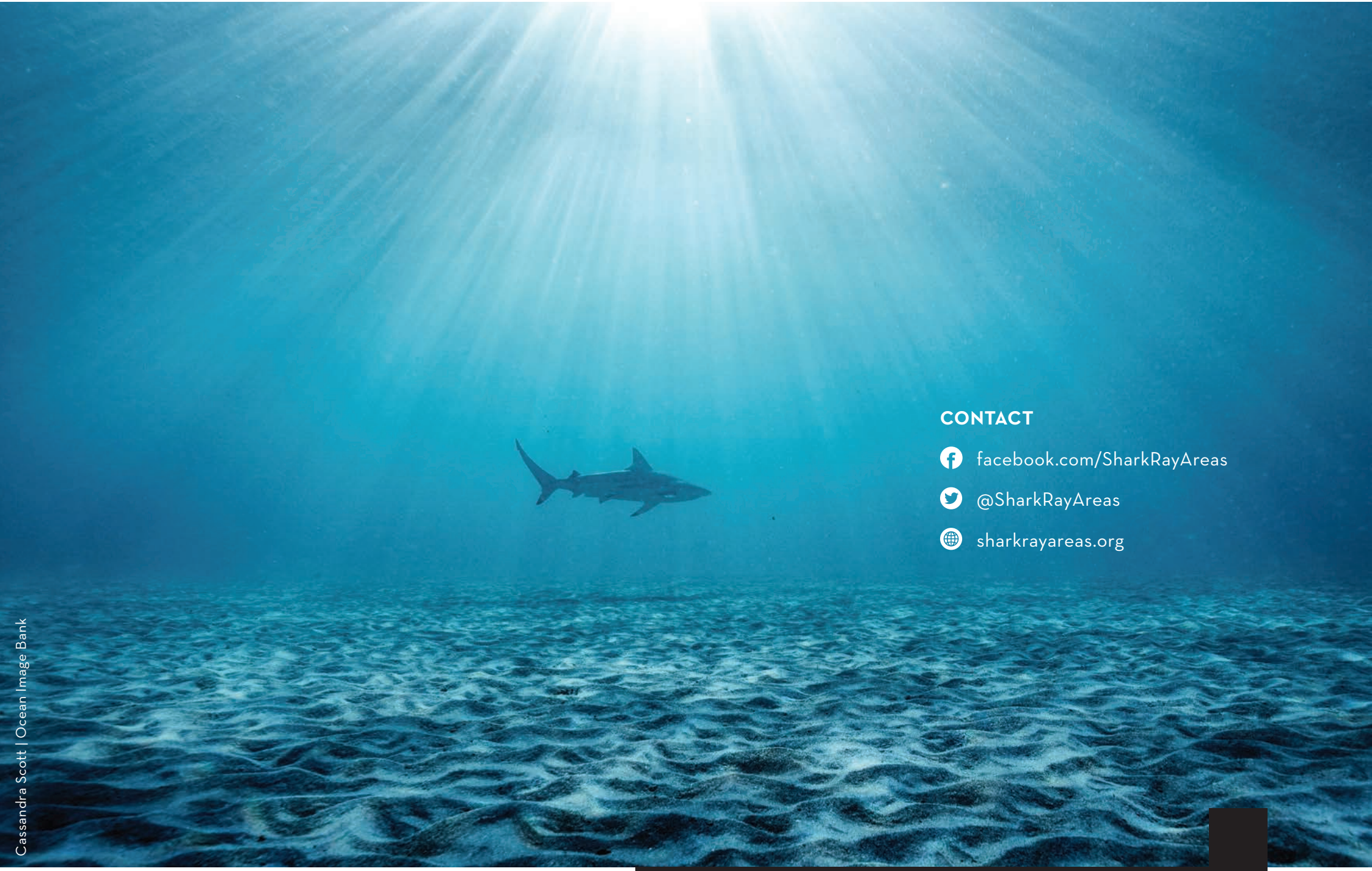
Meron Segev



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