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Geographical range

Amazing Species: Giant Guitarfish

The **Giant Guitarfish**, *Rhynchobatus djiddensis*, is listed as 'Vulnerable' on the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species™. Distributed in the Western Indian Ocean, its range extends from the Eastern Cape Province, South Africa, to the Red Sea. This species can reach over 3 meters in length and weigh over 220 kg; it prefers relatively shallow coastal waters usually around 35 meters deep.

Fins of this and other large *Rhynchobatus* species are among the most valuable for trade in Asian markets, primarily for shark fin soup. The Giant Guitarfish is directly targeted by both artisanal fishers and by commercial vessels (often poaching in territorial waters) as well as retained as bycatch. Its life history characteristics, accessible inshore habitat and sought-after fins make this species extremely susceptible to unsustainable exploitation.

At present, there are no measures in place to protect Giant Guitarfish. More biological information is essential in order to inform the development and implementation of regional or national action plans for the species. Harvest and trade management are urgently needed, including control of fin trading activities and commercial fisheries throughout its range.

Knowledge
Experts
Action
Get Involved



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