

Case study 1: the giant devil ray, *Mobula mobular*

The giant devil ray is a Mediterranean endemic species. As all the mobulids, it is an epipelagic species feeding on crustaceans and small schooling fishes. Due to its limited geographical range and low reproductive potential, this species is very sensitive to over-exploitation. In the Mediterranean it has been protected since 1995 when it was listed in Annex II to the Barcelona convention ratified by several Mediterranean countries (Link to Shark Paper). Main anthropogenic threats come from by-catch, especially in swordfish pelagic driftnets, and pollution of Mediterranean Sea, in particular due to oil spills and intense marine traffic.

In the 2004 IUCN Red List (provisional), this species is considered **Vulnerable** according to criteria A3d (a population size reduction of $\geq 30\%$, projected or suspected to be met within the next 10 years or three generations, whichever is the longer, based on actual or potential levels of exploitation). Such an assessment highlights the high extinction possibility that this species faces and the need for urgent conservation action.