



University of Windsor

This international multi-faceted programme has been developed by Cousteau (France) in partnership with the local management authority, the Sudanese Wildlife Conservation General Administration (WCGA), SUDIA – Sudanese Development Initiative (Sudan), the University of Windsor (Canada), The Deep Aquarium (United Kingdom) and other local stakeholders. It will be implemented in Sudan by SUDIA and WCGA with the technical support of the international partners.

COUSTEAU



Sharks and Rays of Sudan

A conservation and management programme benefiting local communities.



THE DEEP
For conservation, not profit.

The program is jointly financed by Darwin Initiative through UK Government funding (www.darwininitiative.org.uk), The Deep Aquarium (www.thedeep.co.uk) and Cousteau (www.cousteau.org).



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« We must not only defend sharks because they are useful and beautiful, but we must protect the sea that feeds them. And also restore the balance of the great ocean's ecosystem, of which sharks form an important link and on which we ultimately depend. » Jacques Cousteau

An initiative launched and supported by



More than 90 million sharks and rays are removed from the oceans every year, either killed for their fins or caught as by-catch.

It is extremely rare to hear reports of healthy shark populations. Sudan is one of the unique hotspots on earth where this statement still holds true. Sudan borders the Red Sea, one of the most diverse tropical seas, and supports large aggregations of manta rays and large schools of scalloped hammerheads sharks among other species on the offshore reefs.



The Sharks and Rays programme aims to increase global recognition of Sudan as a marine biodiversity hotspot and to raise awareness the threatened status of sharks and rays, and their potential economic importance for the local communities.

Improved knowledge about the movement and residency patterns of shark and ray species will be used to update spatial management plans for Sudan's Red Sea coast and the wider region. The information will also be used to support the development of sustainable eco-tourism to assist local communities to realize economic benefits from the wise use of their marine biodiversity resources.

Objectives :

- Build scientific knowledge and improve the conservation status of sharks and rays;
- Engage the people who rely on, and impact upon these species in the process;
- Assist local communities to realise the potential benefits of protecting biodiversity through the development of sustainable alternative livelihood initiatives;
- Build national capacity to effectively monitor and manage biodiversity of wide-ranging flagship species such as sharks and rays.



Strengthening Marine Protected Area Management

Sudan has declared two Marine Protected Areas (MPAs), Dugonab Bay and Mukawwar Island National Park (DMNP) and Sanganeb Atoll Marine National Park (SMNP). This programme will support the local management authority, the Wildlife Conservation General Administration (WCGA), to help them to be able to better manage their existing MPAs and threatened species through securing new equipment, renovating existing infrastructure and providing staff with additional training.

A broad range of stakeholders will be engaged through the programme to help ensure that a common vision for the MPAs is realised.

Poverty alleviation

Shark and ray based eco-tourism can provide economic benefits to local communities through sustainable tourism ventures in areas where there are relatively reliable sightings, which is the case in Sudan.

Currently, shark and ray ecotourism brings in \$314 million annually worldwide, and the sector is expected to continue growing.

Community members inside DMNP in Sudan will have access to microfinance to support self-employment and income-generating opportunities. Better links will also be created with the dive operators.



Capacity building

Marine biologists, MPAs specialists and socio-economists from Cousteau, University of Windsor and the local non-governmental organisation SUDIA, will conduct state-of-the-art research and train local stakeholders to support monitoring, conservation management and small business development.

