

Region Under Threat:  
The entire OSPAR Maritime  
Area

# Species: Leafscale gulper shark

OSPAR Recommendation 2014/04:

Contracting Parties are required to report progress with implementation of recommendations every six years, with initial more frequent reporting until 2019.

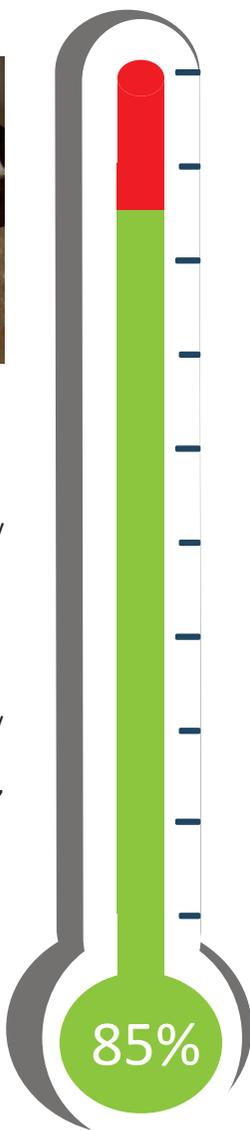
Measures taken by Contracting Parties to protect the Leafscale Gulper shark include cooperation through NEAFC to prohibit directed fisheries, designation of MPAs and additional monitoring in a number of countries



© Brian Suda

## Description

Leafscale Gulper sharks (*Centrophorus squamosus*) are widely distributed in the OSPAR Maritime Area from Iceland and the Faroes on the Atlantic slope to Africa, including Madeira and the Azores, on the Mid-Atlantic Ridge from Iceland to the Azores, and on the Hatton Bank. They live on or near the seabed at depths of 230–2400 m on continental slopes, and are also reported from the upper 1250 m of oceanic water, well above the seabed in ocean depths of around 4000 m. The species appears to be highly migratory. Pregnant females and pups are found in mainland Portugal and Madeira, with only pre-pregnant and spent females in northern areas and the Faeroes.



## Action Highlights

Each Recommendation requires Contracting Parties to report on the methods used to implement the measures. The methods are Legislation, Administrative action and Negotiated agreement, or any combination of these. Recent examples include:

1. Contracting Parties have cooperated through NEAFC to prohibit directed fisheries until 2019;
2. France, Spain, France, and UK undertake monitoring surveys;
3. Spain has 3 MPAs;
4. France, Spain, and UK have undertaken awareness raising activities such as producing identification guides and holding workshops.

## Engagement

The engagement index (left) measures how well Contracting Parties have engaged with the national measures in the Recommendation. The higher the score the greater the number of actions that Contracting Parties, which have reported, have taken to implement the measures in the Recommendation. Click here for more information on the index.

### References:

Background Document for Leafscale gulper shark *Centrophorus squamosus* (OSPAR Publication 473)  
OSPAR Recommendation 2014/04  
OSPAR List of Threatened and/or Declining Species and Habitats (Agreement 2008-06)

## Condition

The population of *C. squamosus* in the OSPAR Area is severely depleted, to less than 10 % of the baseline. Fortunately, pregnant females are only rarely seen in commercial landings, indicating that they segregate in areas that were not fished, and the species is therefore only assessed as “Endangered” regionally in the IUCN Red List of Threatened. Directed fishing is currently banned by NEAFC. Exploitation of the grounds used by pregnant females would be extremely damaging to the population. The very low productivity of this species means that, when all deepwater fisheries mortality ceases, recovery will be extremely slow (in the order of many decades).



© Dr Alan Jamieson