Identification and Trends in Deepwater Sharks (DWS-2023-02)

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Abstract	

This report shares the results from the project, Identification and Trends in Deepwater Sharks (DWS-2023-02). The overall goal of the project was to provide information and tools that contribute to the conservation and management of deep-water living resources in the Southern Indian Ocean. The project investigated the chondrichthyan species composition and capture rates aboard the FV Will Watch in 2024 and compared the data to data collected aboard the vessel in 2012 and 2014. Samples and data for future studies were collected and a fast and intuitive shark identification guide was developed. New innovative species identification keys were developed, tested at sea, and users were interviewed for feedback.

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Recommendations
- Continue chondrichthyan data collection to document trends over time and continue to develop a knowledge base of Indian Ocean chondrichthyan diversity and life history.   - Develop data collection tools, protocols, and data plans to study fishing impacts on chondrichthyans   - Continue voluntary collaboration with the authors to document chondrichthyan species.