

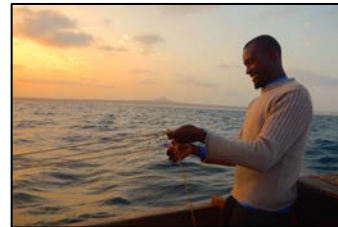
# Project Brief

## Baseline BRUV Surveys

### Eastern Cabo Verde

We have monitored marine megafauna in Eastern Cabo Verde around the islands of Boavista, Maio and Sal since 2015.

Working with traditional fishers and students we use baited remote under video (BRUV) deployed systematically around the islands based on a spokes-on-a-wheel design, that generated a baseline of abundance and distribution of sharks, rays and large finfish species. The surveys have revealed patterns of diversity, distribution that have further highlighted several critical foraging and nursery habitats.



12

Fishers & students  
Trained in monitoring



220

Hours of underwater  
video footage



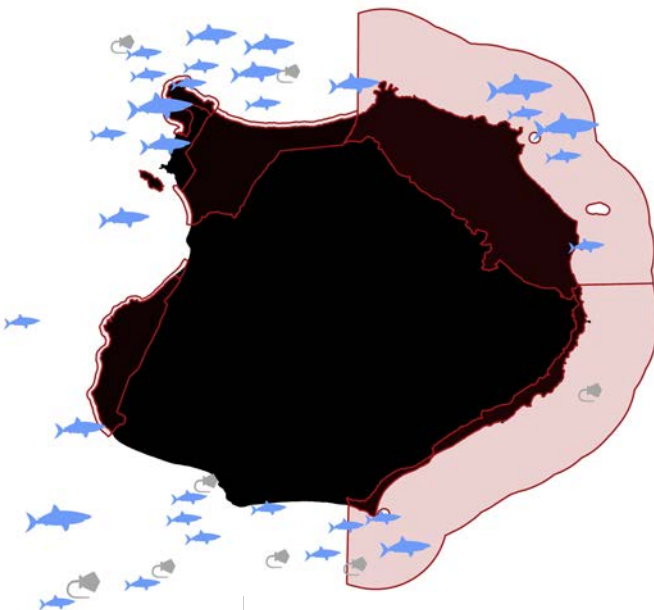
300

Km of coastline  
surveyed



16

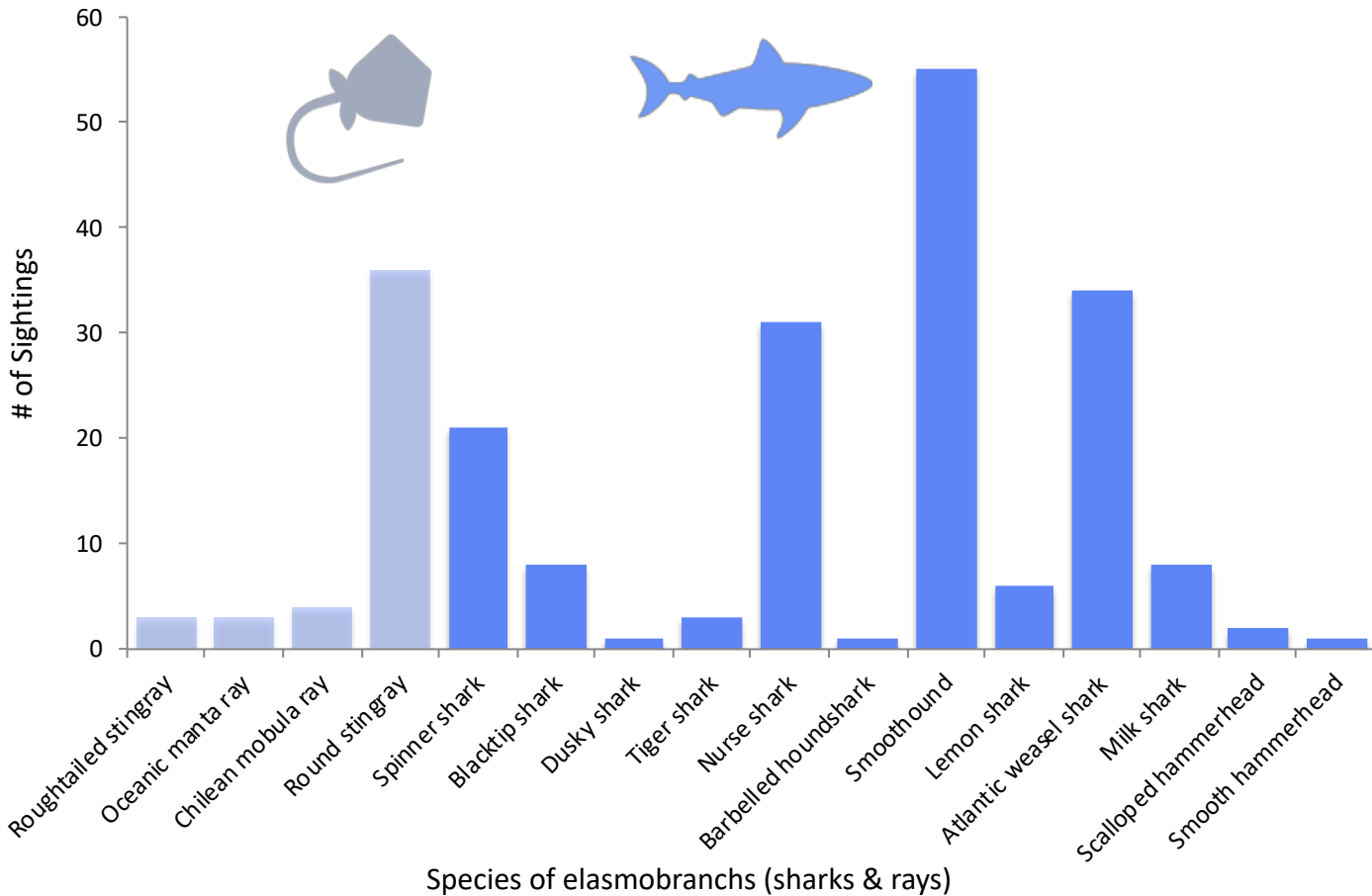
Species of sharks and  
rays documented



< Map of the island of **Boavista** showing the distribution of sharks and rays observed during the island-wide BRUV survey in 2015. Larger icons indicate higher relative abundance. The areas in red are the current **protected** areas with a marine component.

We generated data from over 205 baited remote underwater videos (BRUV) deployed for the standard minimum of 65 minutes. BRUVs are a relatively non-invasive method that provides information on species' relative abundance and diversity.

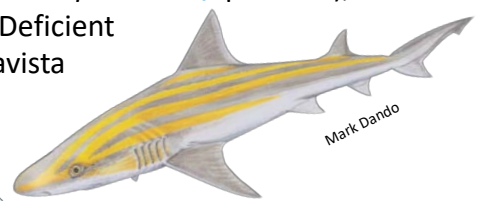
< Graph showing the differences in number of sightings among the shark and ray species recorded during monitoring in Eastern Cabo Verde between 2015-2017.



Species of elasmobranchs (sharks & rays)

The most common species of ray recorded in Eastern islands of Cabo Verde was the **round fantailed stingray** (*Taeniurops grabata*) while the **Smoothhound** (*Mustelus mustelus*) was the most common shark species. We have recorded 2 endangered species of sharks: the **scalloped hammerhead** (*Sphryna lewini*) and the **smooth hammerhead** (*Sphryna zygaena*).

Eastern Cabo Verde is a ‘hotspot’ for marine biodiversity although many species, notably of sharks and rays, lack the scientific data necessary to underpin effective management while threats from small and medium scale fisheries and coastal development continue to rise. One threatened species is the enigmatic and regionally endemic **Atlantic weasel shark** (*Paragaleus pectoralis*, pictured), which is widely consumed as cação (dried shark meat) and considered Data Deficient (IUCN). Our monitoring and surveys highlight the importance of Boavista and Maio as critical foothold for *P. pectoralis* globally.



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