

FACT SHEET

DORADO

Coryphaena hippurus

Family: Coryphaenidae

Other common names: Dolphinfish, Mahimahi, Dorade

Description

An elongate fish with exceptionally beautiful colouring when alive and a deeply forked caudal fin. They are predominantly metallic blue green in colour with yellow to golden flecks and blotches on the sides. The spineless dorsal fin extends the entire length of the body and forms a crest. They show sexual dimorphism with males growing larger and having a steeper forehead. Their beautiful colouration fades quickly after death.

Distribution

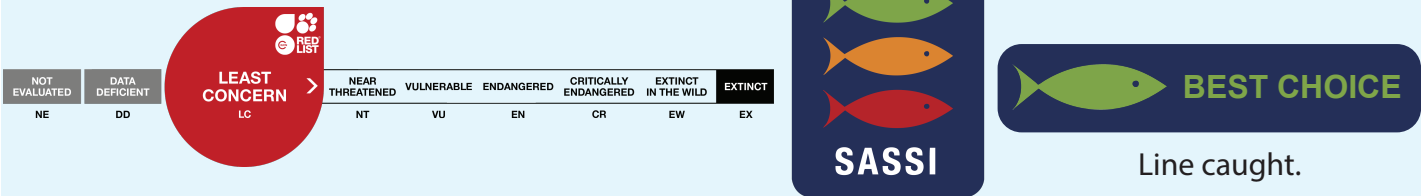
Worldwide in tropical and warm temperate waters, most common in water temperatures between 21–30°C and generally between 30° N and S latitudes. Distributed throughout South African waters to 35° south with occasional large adults being caught off the Cape south coast. Not in the Benguela system off the west coast and Namibia but are found in warmer oceanic waters further offshore.

Habitat

Epipelagic, wide-ranging in oceanic and shelf waters, sometimes aggregate under floating objects, often seen in pairs but may form small aggregations. Normally close to the surface but can be found to depths of 85 m. Juveniles are pelagic, often associated with flotsam and their cryptic colouration provides good camouflage. Larvae are usually found at temperatures greater than 24°C and are generally offshore beyond the 50 m depth isobath.

Feeding

Adults feed on small fish, especially pelagic drifters such as juvenile trigger fish, crustaceans, nautilus, squid and a wide variety of planktonic organisms. Also known to feed on flying fish, mackerel and small carangids. Juveniles feed on planktonic organisms such as crustacean and fish larvae.

Movement	Largely nomadic although some pre-spawning migration has been proposed in the tropical areas of the Atlantic Ocean.
Reproduction	Size at maturity varies but is normally around 65-70 cm fork length for females and 75-80 cm fork length for males and an age of 3-5 months for both sexes. Spawning mainly occurs in summer in tropical, oceanic waters.
Age and growth	They are extremely fast growing and can reach a maximum size of 200 cm fork length and a weight of 39 kg. They have been aged up to 4 years but seldom survive longer than 2 years.
Current status	Not assessed in South African waters. Globally there is no indication that this species is undergoing significant population declines, partly because it is very fast-growing, early maturing and short-lived. It has been evaluated as Least Concern on the IUCN Red List (2010). South African Sustainable Seafood Initiative (SASSI) List: Green (line caught).
	
Capture	Highly prized commercial and recreational species. Forms a major component of recreational ski-boat catches in KwaZulu-Natal during summer. Often targeted around natural and artificial fish attraction devices (FADs). Caught as a bycatch in the pelagic longline fisheries in the south-west Indian Ocean. They are a very exciting fish to catch, being extremely fast and jumping frequently. They will take a wide range of lures and baits.
Current recreational fishing regulations	Daily bag limit: 10 per person per day Minimum size limit: None Closed Season: None Other regulations: None Marine protected areas (MPAs): It is unlikely that MPAs will provide protection for this nomadic, wide-ranging species.
Reference	Information from the ORI Fish App. www.saambr.org.za



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