

ILLEGAL FISHING OF PROTECTED SPECIES EATEN BY LOCALS AND TOURISTS IN ZANZIBAR

Threatened species like sea turtles, sharks, rays, seahorses, and corals are putting pressure on artisanal fisheries trying to supply the growing population and tourists in a popular African travel destination.

SEA TURTLES



- **Endangered or Critically Endangered** on the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species™ species such as Green, Hawksbill, and Loggerhead and occasionally the Olive Ridley, are found in Zanzibar's waters.
- **Increasing demand** for sea turtles as it's seen as a delicacy in hotels on the mainland, regardless of the alarming number of deaths.
- Sea turtle shells are commonly in curio shops or by street vendors **targeting tourists**.

SHARKS, RAYS AND SKATES



- Shark meat is mainly sold and eaten within the country but not by the coastal communities.
- The more lucrative **shark fins are collected for international trade**.
- Data over the past ten years shows that even though the Zanzibar government does not provide export licenses, **a clandestine network of dealers is trading shark fins mainly to markets in Asia and the Middle East**.

SEA CUCUMBERS



- **Dried sea cucumbers are the archipelago's most exported marine-protected products** - the majority destined for Asia.
- Farmed and wild-collected sea cucumbers are traded in the Zanzibar Archipelago – mainly harvested by women and children, collecting up to 2 kg of sea cucumber each.
- **Fishers have seen a significant decrease in their ability to catch wild sea cucumbers**.
- Tanzania has started providing farming permits in specific areas, but international trade from the main-land has been banned.
- **Dealers are trying to hide mainland-farmed sea cucumbers in the archipelago's exports**.

SEAHORSES AND PIPEFISHES



- Zanzibar has banned the harvest and export of seahorses and pipefishes.
- **Seahorses are often traded, fetching higher prices abroad** - dried (wild) specimens for traditional medicine or curio trade and some (wild and captive-bred) seahorses for aquariums.
- Higher prices of traditional medicine products are increasing the harvest.
- **Local traditional medicine demand is increasing** due to a growing community of expatriates from Asia.

DESTRUCTIVE METHODS IMPACT WIDER ECOSYSTEM



- Fishers are going out **without permits and in prohibited areas**
- Illegal fishing off the archipelago uses unlawful methods such as **illegal nets, traps, spear guns, and chemicals such as cyanide and dynamite**.
- These activities impact fish stocks and threaten other marine life around the islands. For example, using **dynamite and dragging seine nets have destroyed the coral of Misali Island and nearby areas, leading to a decline in at least 30% of the coral reef**.