



FACT SHEET

Natal Wrasse

Anchichoerops natalensis

Family: Labridae

Other common names: Natalse lipvis

Description

A large, robust wrasse which has variable colouration, normally reddish-brown with yellow or orange spots. Some 7-10 dark, vertical bars may be present on the sides, but these tend to fade with age. The dorsal, caudal and anal fins have a blue margin. The mouth has thick, fleshy lips and visible canines.

Distribution

Endemic, from Port St Johns to Sodwana.

Habitat

Found off rocky headlands and on shallow rocky reefs in depths of 10-55 m.

Feeding

Feeds on sponges, ascidians, corals and small crustaceans.

Movement

Believed to be highly resident.

Reproduction

Little known but spawning has been recorded on reefs in KwaZulu-Natal.

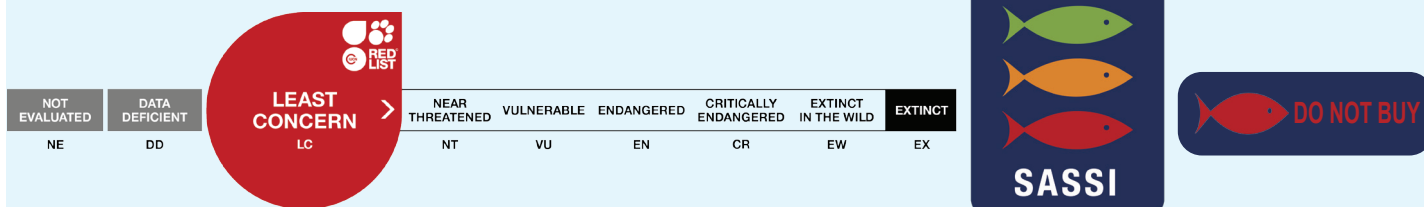
Age and growth

They can reach a maximum size of at least 75 cm total length and a weight of 15.4 kg. They have not been aged.

Current status

Not assessed but historically they were heavily depleted by spearfishing prior to the national ban placed on harvesting this species in 1984. They are now commonly seen on shallow reefs off KwaZulu-Natal. They have been evaluated as Least Concern on the IUCN Red List (2010).

South African Sustainable Seafood Initiative (SASSI) List: Red.



Capture

Rarely taken on bait by ski-boat fishermen but an easy target for spearfishermen and hence its full protection by law.

Current recreational fishing regulations

Daily bag limit: Zero
Minimum size limit: Not applicable
Closed Season: Not applicable
Other regulations: Prohibited species
Marine protected areas (MPAs): In addition to the moratorium placed on harvesting this species, it is likely that this species has also benefitted from protection within no-take zones of MPAs such as Aliwal Shoal and Pondoland.

Reference

Information from the ORI Fish App. www.saambr.org.za



INCORPORATING

