



Whale Sharks in the Al Shaheen – Offshore Participation in Science

EREPS November 2020

Al Shaheen: Qatar's largest offshore oil field

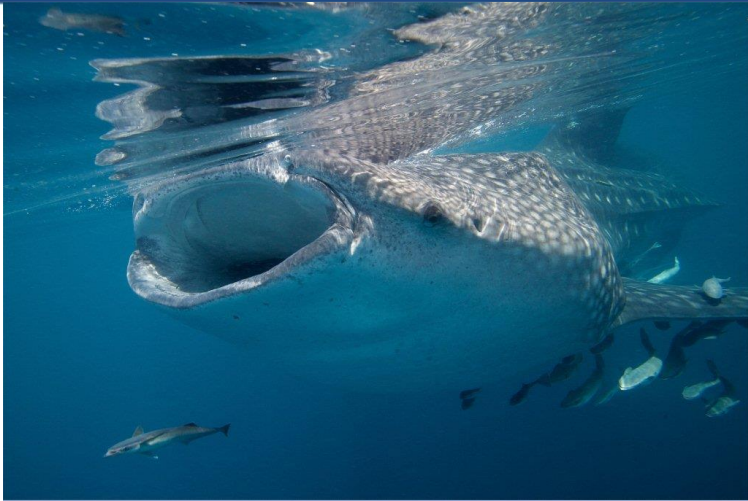
- ▶ 80 km offshore Qatar
- ▶ 300,000 bbls oil per day
- ▶ 1/3 of Qatar's oil production
- ▶ 9 platform locations
- ▶ 2 of the world largest storage tankers (FSOs)



The Al Shaheen Oil Field – Biodiversity hotspot?

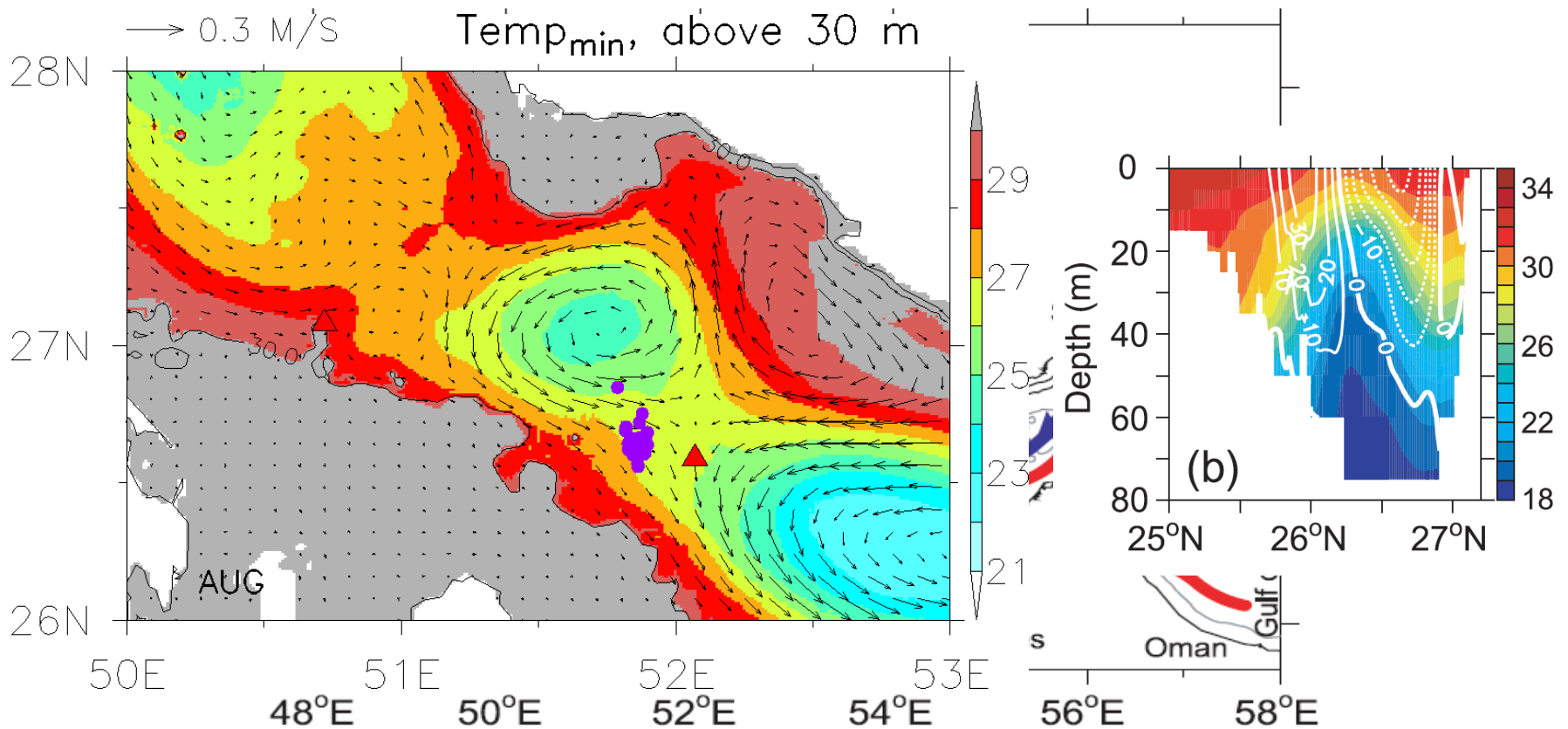


Why are there whale sharks in the Al Shaheen oil field?



High concentration of Tuna Mackerel (*Euthynnus affinis*) spawn May-October

Cyclonic currents in the Arabian Gulf – driven by heat



Natural riches within water column

- ▶ Platforms function as **artificial reefs**, provide shelter and feeding grounds
- ▶ No fishing allowed in **safety zones** and no net fishing in the area



- ▶ Since 2017 NOC transition some reports
- ▶ In particular due to older WS project, NOC's commitment to begin the project and start monitoring
- ▶ Focus on State of Qatar and NOC



- ▶ NOC could not do environmental monitoring during lockdown
- ▶ NOC key stakeholder State of Qatar Ministry of Environment (MME)
- ▶ **Launched Wildlife of the Al Shaheen**
- ▶ To **Spot** marine wildlife whilst offshore.
- ▶ **Report** at ALSWildlife@noc.qa
- ▶ The data shall go towards NOC assisting in **Protecting** wildlife.



Wildlife of the Al Shaheen Spot. Report. Protect

- ▶ Easy to use ID guide and other posters
- ▶ Intranet and button to report
- ▶ Rolled in out with presentations to each department on and offshore.
- ▶ Dedicated email; respond to each sighting



The poster is titled "PROTECT OUR WILDLIFE WHEN OFFSHORE" and features a large image of a whale shark swimming underwater. The text is in white and green on a dark blue background. It includes instructions on how to report sightings and how to interact with marine life safely.

PROTECT OUR WILDLIFE WHEN OFFSHORE

Whales, dugongs, whale sharks and turtles are susceptible to collision with vessels. In addition, the navigational abilities, social behaviour, reproduction and feeding of all species can be disrupted or impacted by vessel movements, lights, underwater noise, litter and pollution.

DISPOSE OF LITTER APPROPRIATELY

- Dispose of all waste and litter at the waste management stations. Litter thrown overboard can be fatal to marine wildlife if ingested.

AVOID COLLISIONS, LIMIT SPEED AND KEEP YOUR DISTANCE

- If sightings are made from a vessel, hold course and speed, and gradually reduce speed to a minimum and maintain a constant, slow speed. If dolphins bow-ride your vessel avoid sudden changes in direction. Adhere to the vessel speed limits for Al Shaheen during the Whale Shark season between May to October
- Avoid heading directly for marine life or across their path
- Limit any approach to marine wildlife to a minimum of 100 meters. Cease or reduce unnecessary sources of underwater noise
- Do not approach Whale Sharks when they're feeding; a Whale Shark will move around slowly on the surface and do not move out of the way of vessels
- Do not attempt to approach, encircle, feed or touch marine life. Do not try to entice them to move away.

WILDLIFE SIGHTINGS

We need your help to monitor and protect the wildlife of the Al Shaheen. Record and report all marine wildlife sightings to: ALSWildlife@noc.gov.ae

Your sightings provide vital information for NDC to help manage our activities to reduce our impact on marine life.

Wildlife of the Al Shaheen - Spot. Report. Protect



SUBMITTING A SIGHTING



Information to Record and Submit. Please provide as much information as possible.

DATE	TIME (use 24 hour clock)	TYPE OF ANIMAL(S) (Provide species if known)	NUMBER in group	APPROXIMATE SIZE (meters)	GPS or Location		SKIN PATTERN (spotted, striped, no pattern) & BEHAVIOUR	OBSERVER'S NAME & ACTIVITY (at time of sighting)
					N:	E:		
30/04/2020	12:30	Whale Shark	45+	8m-10m	C-Location		Spotted Feeding at surface	David Smith Fabric maintenance CD Top Deck

Wildlife Sightings

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WILDLIFE OF AL SHAHEEN

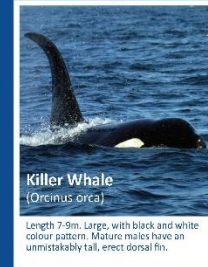
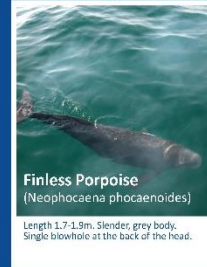
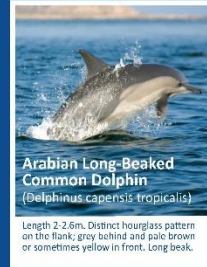
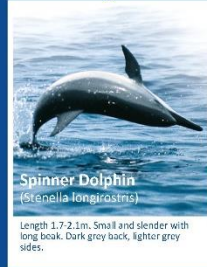
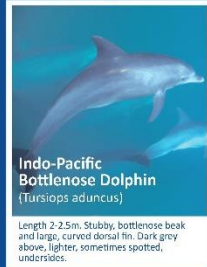
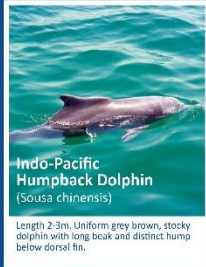
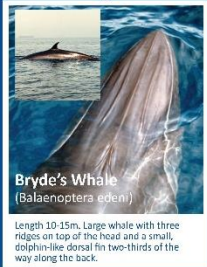
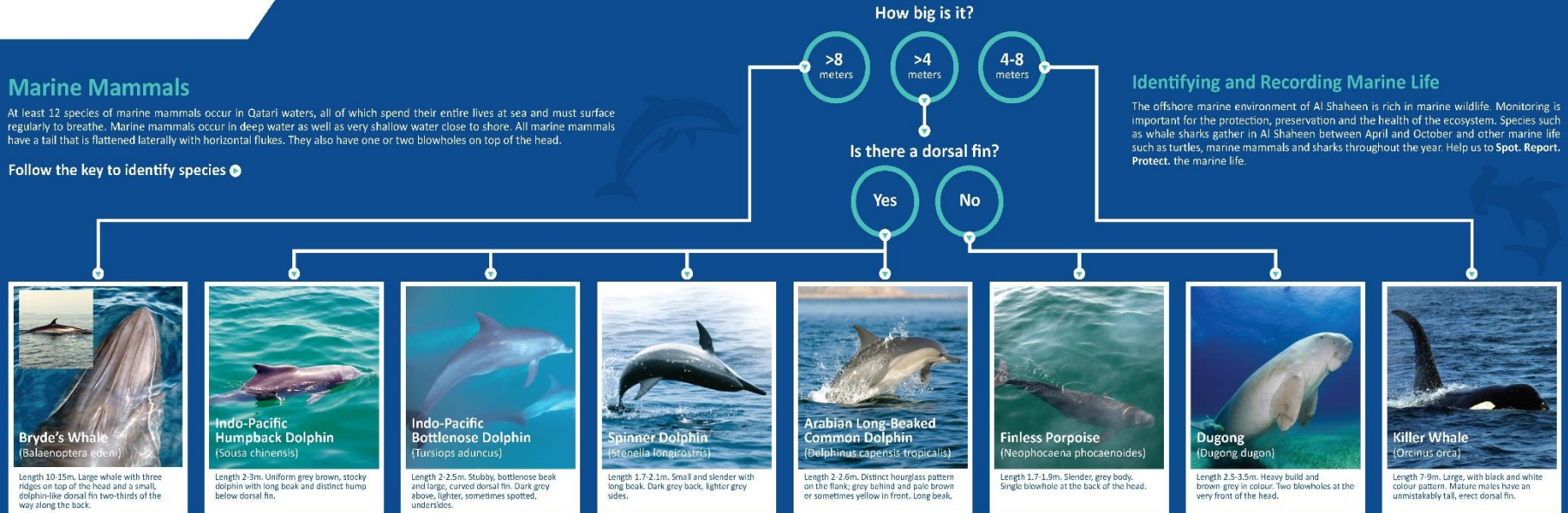
SPOT. REPORT. PROTECT.

We need your help to monitor and protect the marine life of Al Shaheen.
Record and report all marine life sightings to: ALSWildlife@noc.qa

Marine Mammals

At least 12 species of marine mammals occur in Qatari waters, all of which spend their entire lives at sea and must surface regularly to breathe. Marine mammals occur in deep water as well as very shallow water close to shore. All marine mammals have a tail that is flattened laterally with horizontal flukes. They also have one or two blowholes on top of the head.

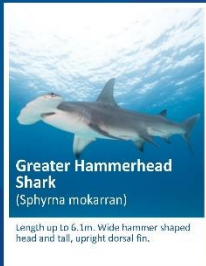
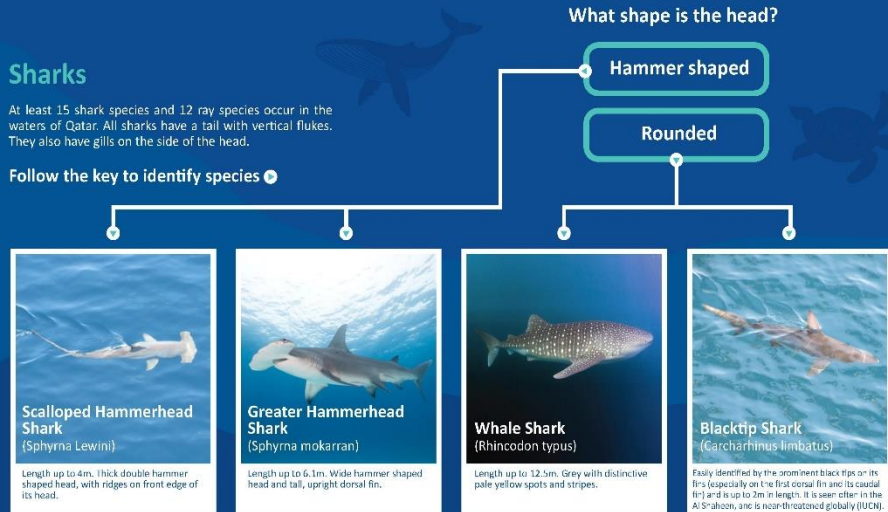
Follow the key to identify species



Sharks

At least 15 shark species and 12 ray species occur in the waters of Qatar. All sharks have a tail with vertical flukes. They also have gills on the side of the head.

Follow the key to identify species

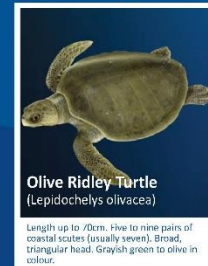
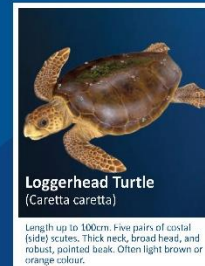
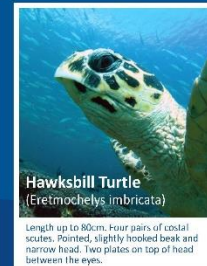
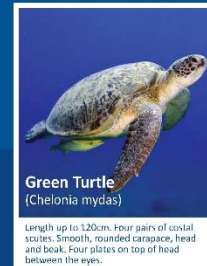
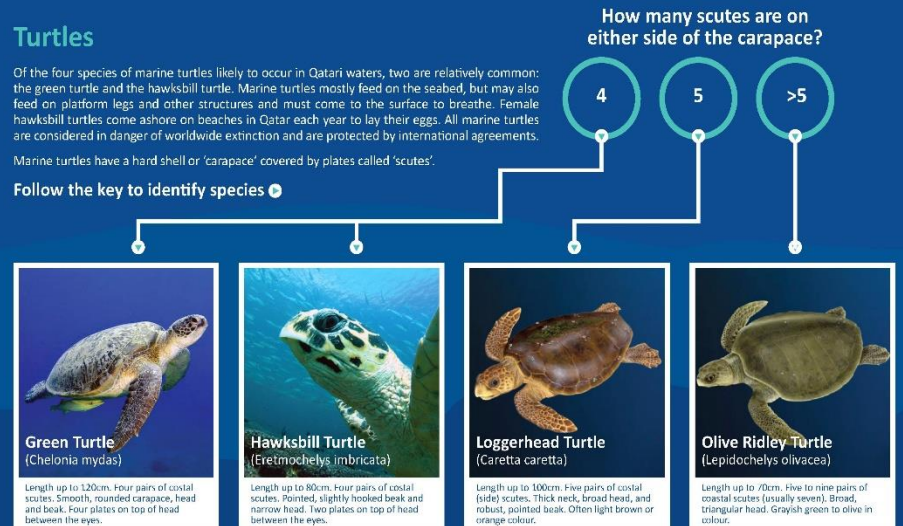


Turtles

Of the four species of marine turtles likely to occur in Qatari waters, two are relatively common: the green turtle and the hawksbill turtle. Marine turtles mostly feed on the seabed, but may also feed on platform legs and other structures and must come to the surface to breathe. Female hawksbill turtles come ashore on beaches in Qatar each year to lay their eggs. All marine turtles are considered in danger of worldwide extinction and are protected by international agreements.

Marine turtles have a hard shell or 'carapace' covered by plates called 'scutes'.

Follow the key to identify species



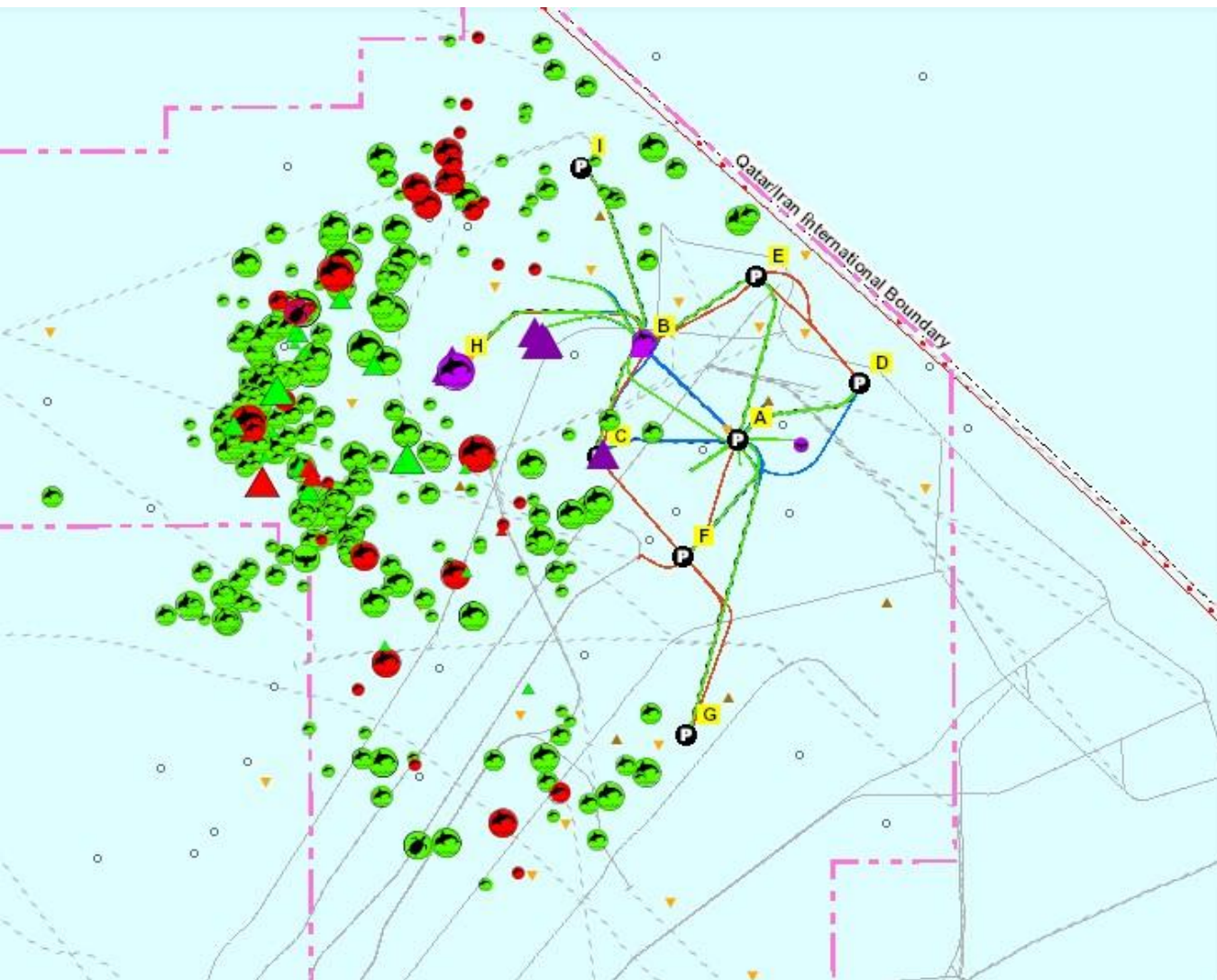
Since the Sightings launch at beg May 2020

Spot. Report. Protect

- ▶ Total of 55 sightings this year, at least doubled previous years
- ▶ Sightings included Whale Sharks; Sharks and Rays; Turtles; Different Dolphin Species and Whales
- ▶ Important discoveries to science; presence of species; behaviours and habitats - Rays feeding on platforms legs; Whale sharks in other areas not seen before.
- ▶ Update of the intranet per quarter and report to MME
- ▶ End of year Wildlife of the Al Shaheen online Award's and competition for the best sighting per quarter.



Since the Sightings launch at beg May 2020 Spot. Report. Protect



Layer List

- 1 to 10
- 11 to 25
- 26 to 50
- 50 to 100
- Whale (Bryde - Dead) (NOC Q2 2020)
- HSE Data (NOC Sourced)
- Environmental Surveys
- Coral probability (Creocean 2017)
- OBN Coral Scouting Survey (NOC 2018)
- OBN Campaign Species Observations (NO 2018/19)
 - Whale
 - Turtle
 - Shark
 - Dolphin
- Whale Shark Feeding (MOQ 2014)



The background consists of two solid-colored geometric shapes. A teal-colored shape occupies the left and top-left portions of the frame, while a dark blue shape occupies the right and bottom-right portions. The two shapes meet at a diagonal line that runs from the top-right towards the bottom-left.

Thank You