

## Researcher Assistant

ISRA\_003\_AST\_2022 (Research Assistant - Part time)

ISRA\_004\_AST\_2022 (Research Assistant - Full time)

### Date posted

05 | May | 2022

### Application closing date

20 | May | 2022

### Expected starting date

01 | July | 2022

### Location

Remote / Potential travel for workshops

### Salary

Salary will be commensurate with experience

### Type

Full-time and Part-time positions available

### Reporting to

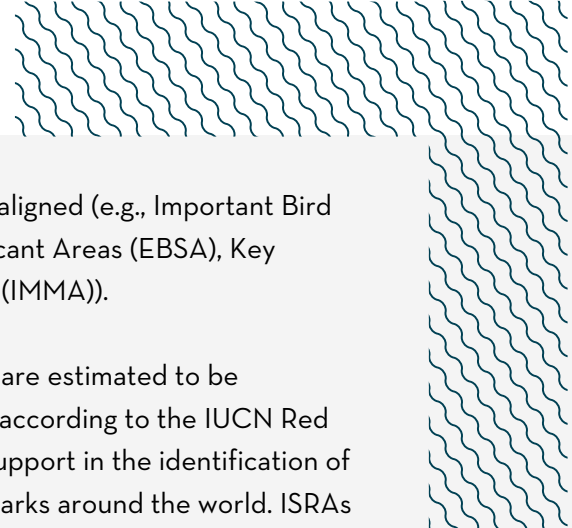
Dr. Rima Jabado | Chair | IUCN Species Survival Commission Shark Specialist Group

### Job description

The IUCN SSC Shark Specialist Group is seeking to appoint **Research Assistants in part-time and full-time capacity** to support the implementation of the **Important Shark and Ray Areas (ISRA) project** funded by the Shark Conservation Fund. Both positions will start from 1 July 2022 on a fixed term basis until 30 June 2023 with possibility of extension for an additional two years depending on performance and funding.

Successful applicants will join a team of international researchers working on shark, ray, and chimaera (hereafter 'sharks') ecology, fisheries, and conservation. They will take part in the first effort to apply a global spatial planning approach to sharks, while learning from the application





of other similar approaches and evaluating how findings can be aligned (e.g., Important Bird and Conservation Area (IBA), Ecologically or Biologically Significant Areas (EBSA), Key Biodiversity Areas (KBA), and Important Marine Mammal Areas (IMMA)).


Sharks are facing a global extinction crisis. One-third of species are estimated to be threatened (Critically Endangered, Endangered, or Vulnerable) according to the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species. Successful applicants will provide support in the identification of discrete habitats of critical importance for the persistence of sharks around the world. ISRAs are identified based on the application of scientific criteria that allow the delineation of discrete portions of habitats that are critical to sharks. This identification process requires careful collation and examination of scientific data and the application of the ISRA Criteria region-by-region and in any aquatic ecosystem where sharks occur. Successful applicants will compile and synthesize information on habitat use and behavior of sharks at a region-by-region basis. Full-time Research Assistants may also be able participate in workshops and support the ISRA Team in the management of the project, preparing and delivering the workshops, supporting the review of candidate ISRAs, liaising with the Independent Review Panel, and reporting and communicating findings.

## Requirements

Successful applicants will have a relevant degree, be able to work independently, be motivated and deliver results on defined timeframes, present information on research progress and outcomes, and have an interest in marine conservation issues.

Specifically, applicants will have:

- A relevant Master or PhD degree in fisheries science, marine ecology, environmental science and management, natural resource management or economics, spatial planning, or a related field at the time of appointment;
- Demonstrated experience working with sharks (including in a field setting);
- Demonstrated experience and knowledge in conservation science;
- Demonstrated experience and knowledge in shark ecology, conservation, and ideally, spatial planning and management;
- At least one publication in a quality peer-reviewed journal, preferably in a lead author capacity;
- Ability to undertake research work independently as well as part of an international team, collaborating remotely across time-zones;
- Excellent time management and organization skills in addition to paying attention to details;
- Fluency in spoken and written English;

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- Knowledge of Spanish would be an advantage but is not essential.

### **Main duties and responsibilities**

- Undertake a bibliographic review of existing scientific information to support the delineation of ISRAs;
- Contribute to the delineation of ISRAs across regions of the world;
- Assist in project planning and writing documents, reports, and grants (including ISRA fact sheets and information to incorporate into the ISRA e-Atlas);
- Analyze and interpret results of the ISRA work and generate original ideas based on outcomes;
- Contribute to the production of collaborative research reports and manuscripts for submission to peer-reviewed journals;
- Contribute to collaborative decision-making within the ISRA Team; and
- Communicate complex information orally and in writing and generate graphic and textual summaries.

This job description summarizes the main duties and accountabilities of the Assistant Researcher positions and is not comprehensive: the post-holder may be required to undertake other duties of similar level and responsibility for other projects being led by the IUCN SSC Shark Specialist Group.

### **Specific requirements for positions**

- Experience with research and gathering information from a variety of sources (including peer-reviewed literature and grey literature);
- Preference for experience with spatial analysis (ArcGIS or QGIS) and working in R;
- Proficiency using GitHub and other modern data management, sharing, and presentation interfaces;
- Experience with statistical analysis of spatial and temporal data (e.g., generalized linear models, generalized additive models, Bayesian approaches, machine learning), and species distribution modeling strongly preferred; and
- Ability to scope and evaluate available datasets and identify specific knowledge gaps (including tracking data on shark species, marine protected areas, and fisheries).

### **Specific requirements for positions**

- Experience with research and gathering information from a variety of sources (including peer-reviewed literature and grey literature);

- Ability to scope and evaluate available datasets and identify specific knowledge gaps (including tracking data on shark species, marine protected areas, and fisheries);
- Experience in the creation and management of databases;
- Proficiency using GitHub and other modern data and content management, sharing, and presentation interfaces;
- Ability to handle large volumes of information and to translate scientific data and findings into policy advice;

## Eligibility

Applicants must have a valid passport to allow for international travel.

All qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment without regard to race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, or disability status.

## To apply

Applicants should submit a CV (max 4 pages), a short (2 pages) statement of research experience in relation to the requirements above and reason for interest in the project, a copy of their university degrees, PDF copy of one relevant publication, preferably one that demonstrate data collation, synthesis, and/or application of statistical models or GIS skills. Applicants should also include the names, affiliations, and email addresses of two professional references in the cover letter. At least one referee will be contacted before decisions are made. All documents should be submitted as one consolidated PDF to the email listed below.

Review of applications will begin on May 23rd and continue until the position is filled. Interviewing and hiring will take place throughout May and June on a rolling basis. Positions will start in July 2022 at the latest.

## Communications

All communication should be addressed to Dr. Rima Jabado ([rimajabado@iucnssg.org](mailto:rimajabado@iucnssg.org)) and include the Position Reference in the subject line of the email. Failure to submit the requested documents will be reason for exclusion of the application.

## IUCN SSC Shark Specialist Group

The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) is the world's largest global environmental network composed of both government and civil society organizations. It is a membership union with more than 1,400 member organizations and over 18,000 volunteer



scientists in more than 160 countries. This diversity and vast expertise makes IUCN the global authority on the status of the natural world and the measures needed to safeguard it.

The Species Survival Commission (SSC) is a science-based network of over 9,000 experts from almost every country of the world, all working towards achieving the vision of: 'A just world that values and conserves nature through positive action to reduce the loss of diversity of life on earth'. The work of the SSC revolves around a cycle that comprises assessing the status of biodiversity, planning for conservation, and catalyzing conservation actions.

The IUCN SSC Shark Specialist Group (SSG) was established by the SSC in 1991 in response to growing awareness and concern of the severe impact of fisheries on shark, ray, and chimaera populations around the world. The SSG is now recognized as the leading authority on the status of sharks, rays, and chimaeras and has recently finished assessing the status of all known species. Central to this process has been the knowledge and expertise shared by its members. The SSG is now moving forward to ensure that this knowledge converts into plans and interventions that lead into conservation action for priority species groups.

[www.iucnssg.org](http://www.iucnssg.org)

