**Supplementary table 1.** Characteristics of the 13 sites sampled (Figure 3). In unprotected sites (Not), there is no limits to tourist numbers, recreational fishing can be intensive and bottoms are degraded (e.g. many anchored boats). In partly protected sites (Partly) recreational fishing is prohibited, but only in a narrow area around each colony (sometimes less than 300m offshore, ~244 ha for Signal), fishing can be intensive nearby and tourism is intensive (e.g. anchoring in the substrate). GLS stands for “Grand Lagon Sud” Marine Park where several remote terrestrial sites benefit from seasonally strict protection (e.g. N’da) but others do not (e.g. Rédika): that is, fishing is not prohibited. Two strictly protected sites are situated in a remote large marine reserve (17,150 ha) created in 1970. Dist. reef stands for distance from site to the barrier reef (km). Lagoon W stands for width of the lagoon, straight line from mainland coast to the barrier reef passing through the site (km). The sum of the four parameters provides an index of habitat quality (HQ) for the area over which snakes can forage. Fishing pressure was not mapped by Jollit et al. (2010) for two sites (\*), but we observed intensive fishing activity associated with low fish density (based on scuba diving and snorkeling surveys, pers. obs.). Further information about habitat quality is provided below.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Site** | **Statut** | **Fishing**  | **Dist. reef** | **Lagoon W** | **HQ** |
| Ile Verte\* | Partly | High | 0.9 | 2.5 | 0.2 |
| Ténia | Partly | Low | 0.5 | 9.5 | 2.4 |
| M’ba | Not | High | 4.5 | 13.0 | -1.1 |
| Signal | Partly | Medium | 7.8 | 20.0 | 2.5 |
| Larégnère | Partly | Medium | 7.0 | 21.0 | 2.5 |
| Porc-épic | Not | Medium | 23.0 | 27.0 | 2.2 |
| Amédée | Partly | Medium | 3.3 | 31.0 | 2.6 |
| Rédika | Not | High | 12.0 | 32.0 | 0.4 |
| Mato | Not | High | 20.0 | 29.0 | 1.0 |
| N’da | GLS | Low | 6.5 | 50.0 | 3.7 |
| Brosse\* | Not | High | 0.5 | 3.7 | -1.8 |
| Améré | Strictly | Very low | 10.0 | 17.0 | 5.6 |
| Kié | Strictly | Very low | 11.0 | 7.8 | 5.3 |

**Supplementary information about habitat quality**

Although our measures of lagoon width, distance to barrier reef and protection status were straightforward to code (Table 1), fishing pressure extracted from the maps provided by Jollit et al. (2010) was more problematical. Strong contrasts exist among sites due to the shape of the Neo-Caledonian lagoon, and proximity to population centres. Recreational fishing is far more common in islets close to Nouméa where navigation is not perilous, such as Redika for example, compared to remote dangerous zones, like N’Da for example. Our long term field experience is consistent with the mapping by Jollit et al. (2010). For example, we observed only one illegal visit (a sealing boat from New Zealand) in the large strictly protected area (we spent 57 days over 6 years in this area); but partly protected sites were regularly visited by poachers (especially at night); and in unprotected sites tens of boats, many spear or line fishers, and fishing camps were observed during week-ends and holidays (we spent > 500 days over 11 years in these areas). Long-term empirical observations and mapping of the impact of informal fisheries by Jollit et al. (2010) are congruent with those observations, supporting the reliability of our index to reflect differential fishing pressure during the study.