

GHOST GEAR

Abandoned, Lost or otherwise Discarded Fishing Gear (ALDFG)

As fishing gear is designed to be durable, if it becomes lost in the ocean, it persists for a **very long time** and can continue to capture marine life.

This is very dangerous since the gear continues to catch animals and **damage** habitats which can **deplete fish stocks** that people rely on for food and livelihoods.

Ghost gear has caused a 5-30% decline in some fish stocks.

For example, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) have found that ghost gear is directly responsible for a **5 percent reduction in total cod catch in the Baltic Sea** and a **30 percent reduction of Greenland halibut off the coast of Norway.**

You can avoid the risk of ghost gear!

Fishers are part of the solution

Fishers and vessel operators play the most important role in **preventing and solving this major threat** to their livelihoods and the natural environment.

Lost at sea?

It has been suggested that...

640,000 tonnes of fishing gear may be lost each year.

Average 15m fishing vessel

This is the equivalent of more than three times the size of the world's largest cargo ship

Ghost fishing...

... occurs when lost gear continues to catch fish and other marine life with **no benefit to fishers.**

Fish and other animals get trapped in lost gear like pots, nets or floating ropes, becoming injured or dying and attracting predators and scavengers which will often face the same fate.

Location, Location, Location

- ▶ Avoid fishing in high-risk areas or situations i.e. rough weather or areas with rocky obstructions
- ▶ Where possible, follow gear zoning initiatives
- ▶ Share information about local conditions and underwater obstructions with others to prevent damage or loss of gear

Respecting equipment

- ▶ Repair and maintain gear regularly

Time to replace gear?

Set the example. Become an:

End-of-life fishing gear champion!

A responsible fisher ...

- ▶ ... limits soak time to the minimum time to get a good catch
- ▶ ... only sets the amount of gear they can responsibly manage
- ▶ ... matches fishing methods to fishing conditions
- ▶ ... avoids setting gear near to or on other fishers' gear

Mark and report!

- ▶ Include your ownership details so gear can be returned
- ▶ Mark static gear to make it visible and easy to recover
- ▶ If possible, report lost fishing gear to authorities to improve chances of recovery

Seen lost gear?

- ▶ Equip your vessel and crew with retrieval equipment
- ▶ Retrieve any lost gear if you can do so safely
- ▶ Make sure there's always space to store recovered gear
- ▶ Share the location of ghost gear with other vessels when it could pose a risk to others

Recycle and reuse fishing gear components whenever possible

Small scale applications exist alongside industrial solutions

When lobster traps are no longer repairable, some fishers will give/sell them to restaurants to use as decor.

Find out more at: www.ghostgear.org