

The problem of ghost fishing in Norway



What is ghost fishing?

Fishing gear that is lost continues to capture animals. It circulates often for years resulting in an unknown mortality of marine animals.¹

1

Typical gear lost in Norway²

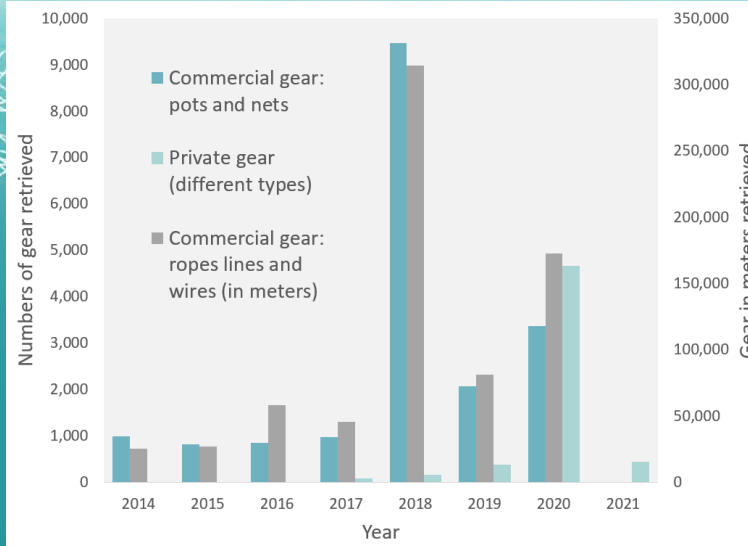


2

Species that are caught most³

- Crab (*Cancer pagaris*)
- Lobsters (*Homarus gammarus*)
- Greenland Halibut (*R. Hippoglossoides*)
- Marine mammals

3



The amounts of lost fishing gear retrieved along the Norwegian coast from 2014 – 2021 (Data from DOF⁶ & ⁷ shows that action is needed.

4

Ghost catch in numbers

It is very difficult to give accurate numbers on ghost catch⁴. Estimations of the ghost catch on Greenland Halibut suggest that 20-30% of the commercial catch is additionally caught by abandoned fishing gear⁵. This is a high number of biomass loss for the ecosystem as well as for fisheries. It requires action against ghost fishing and advanced research on numbers of lost gear and catch to give more accurate numbers for all species.

Future solutions

- Underwater Drones to find and recover gear⁹
- Degradable nets and pots⁴

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Present solutions

- The coastguard gets informed about lost gear, and ID marking for gear⁹
- Fritidsfiskeappen* (Fiskedirektoratet) An app where individuals can report lost or found fishing gear. App informs local divers for recovery¹⁰
- Resqunit AS*: A company that developed a remote-controlled hatch (can be activated when pots is lost, lets the animals escape, meanwhile a GPS-transmitter shares the location)⁸

5

References

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