

Commercial Fishing Practices Result in Varying Levels of Bycatch

Non-selective fishing practices have a higher potential for bycatch than those that allow the fisher to identify species and size.

Low Bycatch

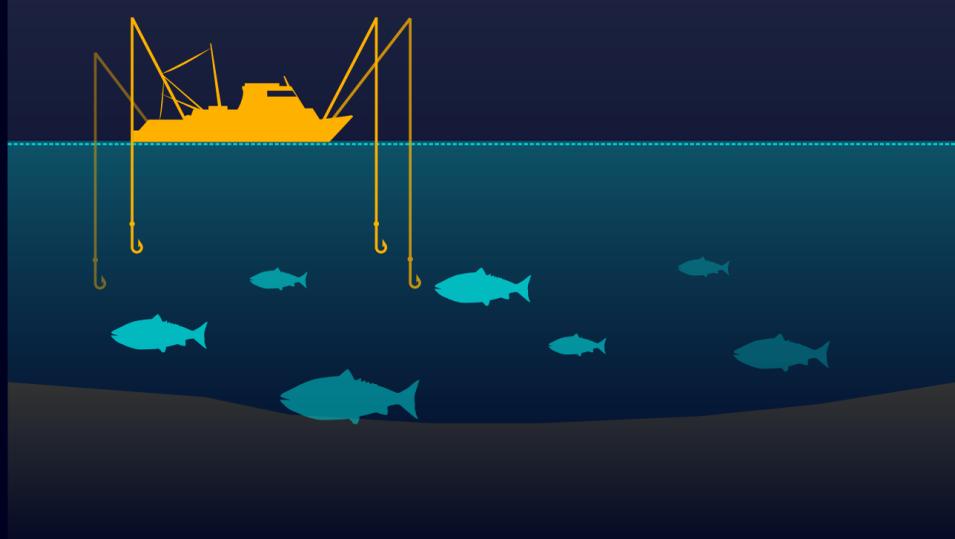
Pot & Trap

Pot and traps are baited, submerged, cages that are used to attract and hold living fish or invertebrates. They are typically placed on the seafloor to catch crustaceans and bottom-dwelling fish species, but have lower seafloor impact than mobile methods.



Pole / Troll

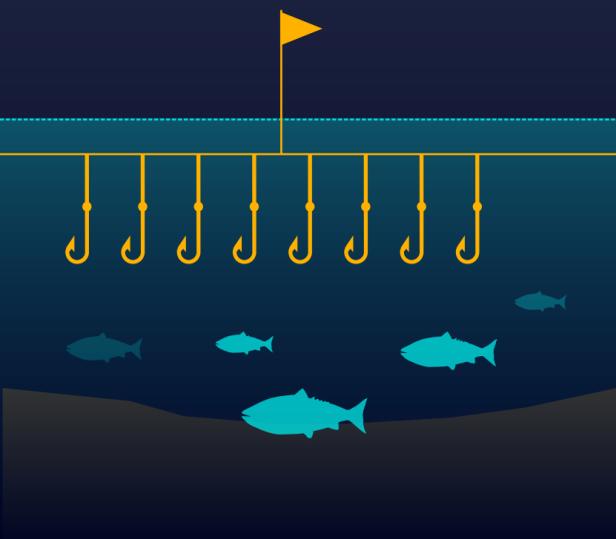
Pole and troll techniques utilize fishing poles and bait to attract a variety of fish species, ranging from open ocean swimmers to bottom dwellers. Pole/troll methods serve as a good alternative to longlining.



High Bycatch

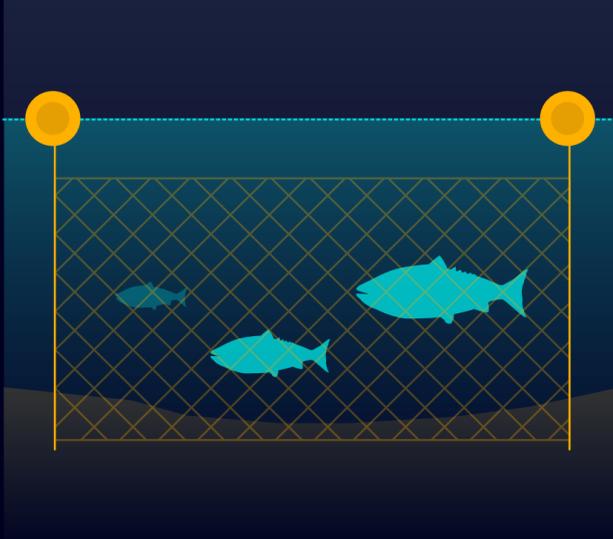
Longline

Longlining utilizes a central fishing line (1-50 miles long) that incorporates a series of smaller, baited, hooks spaced at regular intervals. Longlines can be set near the surface to catch pelagic fish or along the seafloor to catch demersal species; non-targeted species are often attracted to the bait.



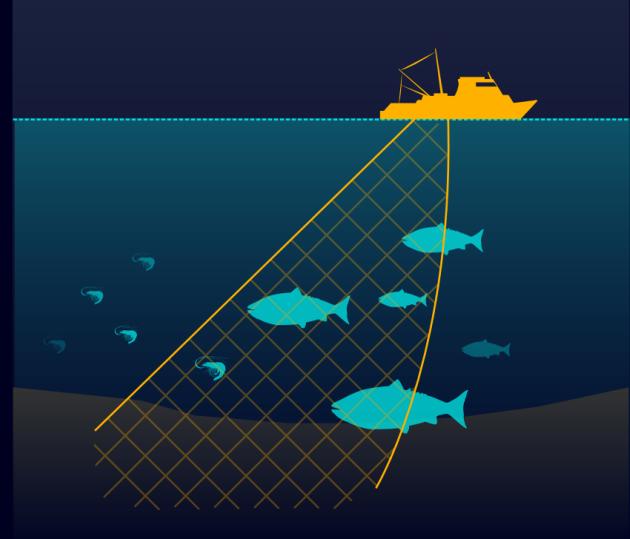
Gillnet

Gillnetting employs vertically hanging nets that are suspended by floats on the top line and are anchored to the seafloor or weighted on the bottom line. The thin netting is practically invisible to fish; non-targeted species can often become entangled.



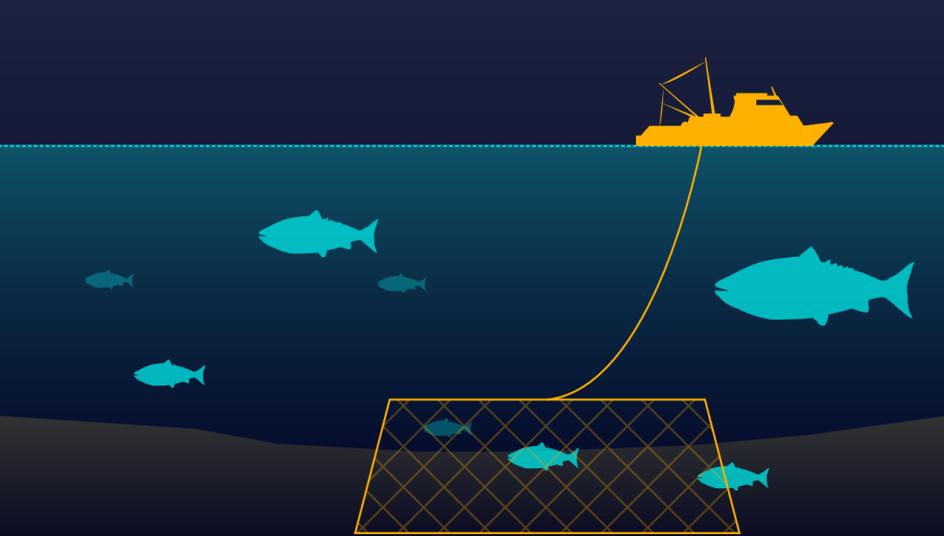
Trawl

Trawls are weighted nets that are towed along the seafloor, or at various depths, to catch fish or shellfish. The nets are kept open by heavy beams or doors that can cause significant damage to the seafloor.



Dredge

Dredges are heavy metal frames with an attached mesh grate or net that are dragged across the seafloor to catch species that live in the mud or sand (e.g. scallops, clams, oysters). Dredging can cause significant damage to the seafloor and to organisms that live in and on it.



Purse Seine

Purse seine nets are large nets (up to 600m diameter and 250m deep) that are used to encircle and trap schooling fish or species that gather to spawn. Bycatch levels can vary, depending upon the particular type of net used and how it is operated.

