



The Harmful Ways of By-catch and Overfishing



(This is a Bottlenose dolphin found dead entangled in crab pot gear in the Indian River Lagoon, Florida.**
**Source: www.nmfs.noaa.gov/...dolphin_tailless.winter.pdf)

Winter, an Atlantic Bottlenose dolphin, was found on the shore in Cape Canaveral, Florida tangled in a crab net. Winter is an example of what happens to tons of marine animals every year. This is called by-catch. By-catch is when fishermen accidentally catch something besides the target fish. You may wonder how does by-catch and overfishing occur? In order to stop a lot of this, we need to be more careful about where we get our fish and the type that we buy. My three topics will be about dolphin by-catch, other marine animal by-catch, and overfishing.

Some dolphins are accidentally caught in fishing nets, while others are caught purposely for food. Dolphins are mostly caught in the eastern tropical Pacific. Some fishermen use dolphins to locate and then catch yellow fin tuna and sometimes the dolphins get caught as well. Thanks to Sam Lubudde, a marine biologist, dolphin by-catch has been lowered to 12,000 per year because according to Wikipedia, he went undercover and exposed dolphin slaughter by tuna fish industry. He helped strengthen the Marine Mammal Protection Act.

Fishermen not only catch dolphins, they also catch other marine animals like sea turtles, sea birds, sea lions, and more. About 12,000 sea turtles die every year because of by-catch. Some animals are killed by abandoned fishing nets which have been in the sea for years because fishermen throw old nets in the sea that they can't use anymore. Now that you know about different kinds of by-catch, let's learn about overfishing.

Fishermen all over the world catch way too many fish. According to the book, Oceans How We Use the Seas, our fish populations are getting empty. If

this continues, most of our fish will be gone by the year 2050. Overfishing is threatening some species like albatrosses, to extinction. About 100,000 albatrosses are hooked and drowned each year. Some fish like the orange roughly take an extremely long time to breed, and when the females are caught, they are not able to breed again. As a result, they are slowly becoming extinct. Now that you know some facts about my topics of by-catch and overfishing, read the next paragraph to see what you can do to help.

We have discussed the harm from dolphin by-catch, other marine animal by-catch, and overfishing. As you can see, my facts support my paper. Stopping by-catch and overfishing is important if we want to save our animals and to have fish around for a really long time. This should relate to your life because if you know any fishermen out there, tell them that if they catch some animal that they don't need, set it free. Lastly, what you can do to help is buy dolphin-safe tuna, get an app for your phone, or get an information card on seafood watch from the California Academy of Sciences, and use any of them every time you order seafood.