



# Canada's Management Approach to Address Ghost Gear

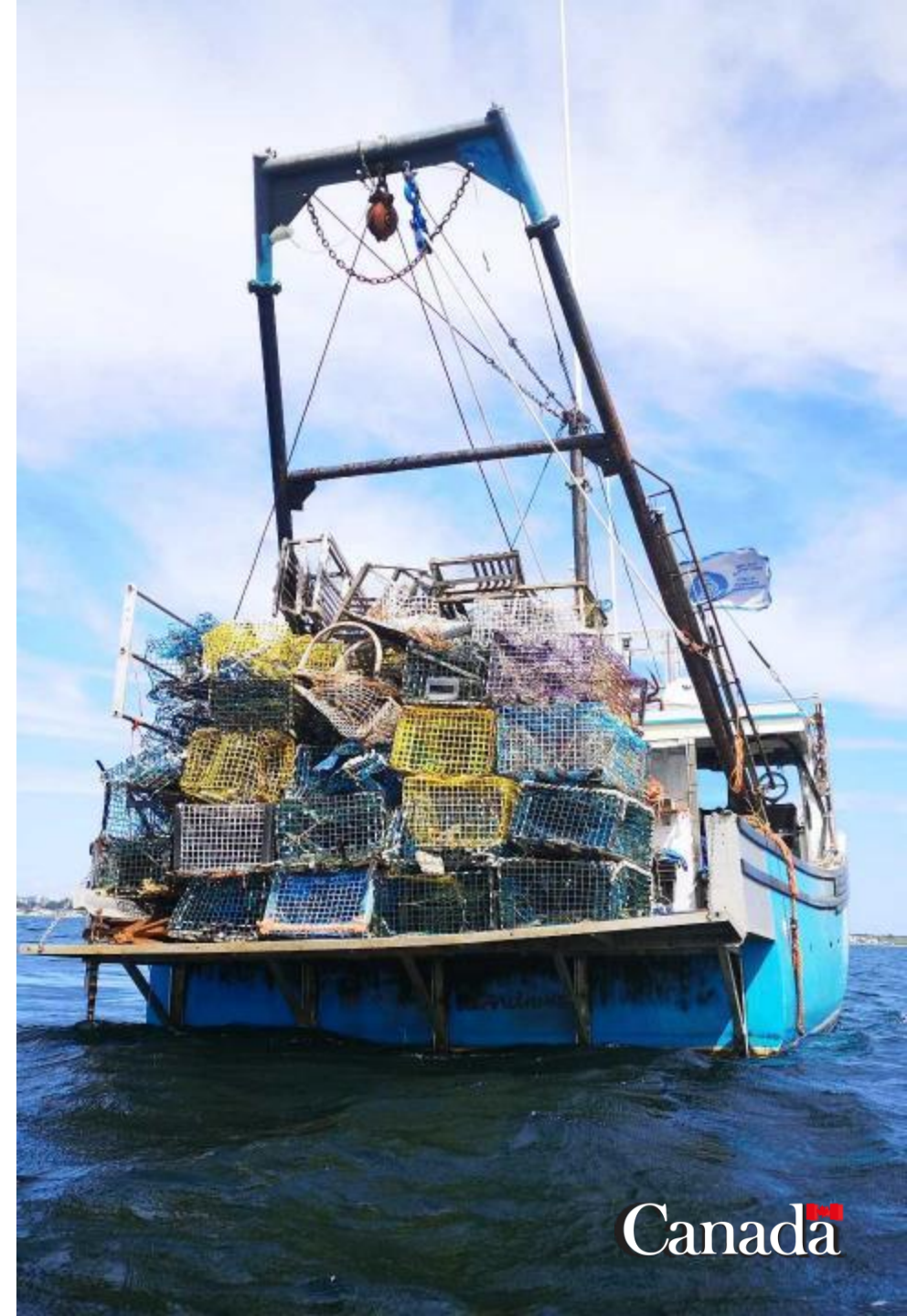
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NARW Technical Working Group  
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# OVERVIEW

- Update ongoing work to prevent gear loss and address ghost gear
- Ghost Gear Action Plan (2019-2027)
  - Phase 1: Building capacity, knowledge and becoming world leaders
  - Phase 2: Modernizing Canada's fisheries
  - Phase 3: Managing Canada's fisheries

Next Steps





## WHAT WE KNOW

Ghost gear continues to gain recognition as a global issue

- Poses a threat to NARW
- Immediate need to identify the scale of ghost gear in Canada and address the existing gear in our waters.
- Unknown where the gear ends up after the last location is reported (currents, bathymetry, tides, etc.)
- Tagging has enabled the Program to match and return retrieved gear to the harvester
- Enhancing reporting and marking requirements of fishing gear are critical measures to addressing Ghost Gear



# PHASE 1: BUILDING CAPACITY, KNOWLEDGE AND BECOMING WORLD LEADERS

## LOST GEAR REPORTING

Mandatory lost gear reporting was established for all commercial fisheries as a condition of licence in 2020. The reporting of lost gear is a legal obligation under subsection 22 (1) of the Fishery (General) Regulations.

## DISCHARGE OF GARBAGE FROM FISHING VESSELS

In 2022, commercial fisheries in Atlantic Canada, Quebec and the Arctic have a new condition of licence relating to the discharge of garbage from fishing vessels.

*The licence holder/operator is prohibited from discarding in Canadian fisheries waters from their vessel any item that may be harmful to fish or fish habitat including but not limited to plastics, ropes, fishing gear, garbage bags, fuel, oil, rags, glass, bottles, metal, extruded polystyrene foam (e.g. Styrofoam), and tires.*

## INTERNATIONAL LEADERSHIP

Canada advocates for strengthening ghost gear measures at international forums. Additionally, through the Commission for Environmental Cooperation (CEC), Canada together with the United States and Mexico have embarked on a trilateral multi-year project to address ghost gear in North America.



# WHAT IS THE FISHING GEAR REPORTING SYSTEM (FGRS)?

Launched July 2021, the Fishing Gear Reporting System is a free Government of Canada tool that will help Canadian harvesters meet their mandatory commercial lost gear reporting requirements.

Increased reporting of lost gear helps DFO to identify accurate gear loss hotspots maps and trends, guiding more effective retrieval efforts and identification of high-priority areas.

More effective retrieval will result in larger amounts of ALDFG recovered, which can be returned to its original owner if tagged and in good condition.

Offline reporting is now available. Offline reporting allows users to access the site, input and save data without an internet connection.

**Fishing Gear Reporting System**

**User login**

Email or username \*

Password \*

[Reset your password](#)

**User registration form**

First Name

Last Name

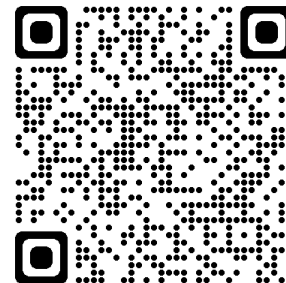
Phone Number

Email \*

The email address is not made public. It will only be used if you need to be contacted about your account or for opted-in notifications.

Password \*

Confirm password \*



**FGRS** [canada.ca/ghostgear](https://canada.ca/ghostgear)



# GEAR RETRIEVAL STATISTICS TO DATE

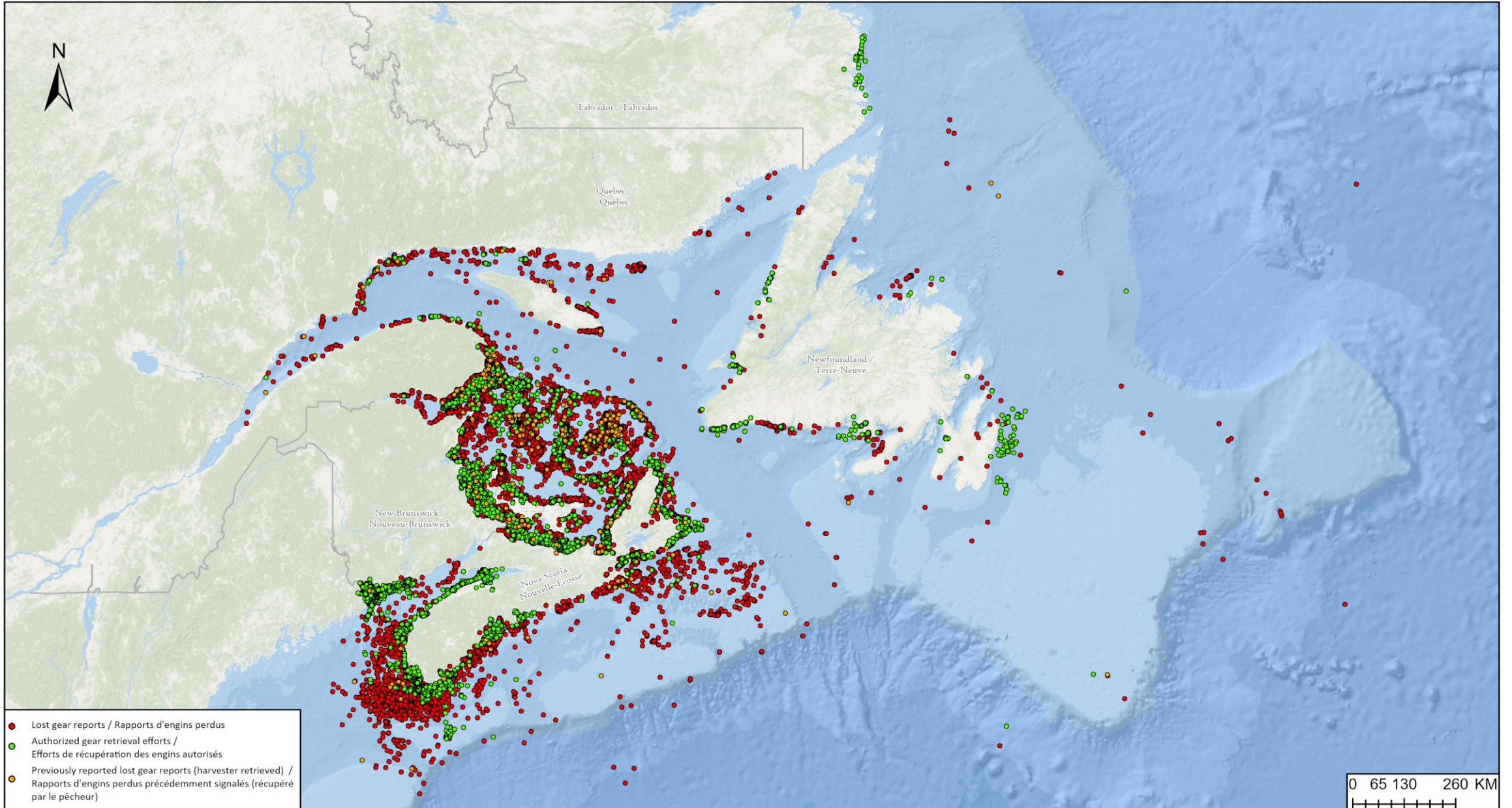
**Since 2020, stakeholders have retrieved:**

- **3,424** at-sea, shoreline, and aquaculture trips
- **38,739** units of gear retrieved *\*excludes rope\**
  - 27,880 units of traps/pots
  - 8,665 units of other gear (includes: buoys, nets, trawls, longline, seine, troll, and other)
  - 2,194 units of aquaculture
- **900 km** of rope retrieved
- **A total of 2,332 tonnes** retrieved including gear, and aquaculture debris *\*excludes rope\**

## **Return of gear**

- Gear successfully returned to owner: **2,952**
- Total number of gear matched to harvester: **5,078**

Locations of Lost and Retrieved Fishing Gear on the Atlantic Coast: 2020-01-01 to 2024-08-31  
Lieux des engins de pêche perdus et récupérés sur la côte Atlantique : 2020-01-01 à 2024-08-31





# PHASE 2: MODERNIZING CANADA'S FISHERIES

Transitioning from primarily managing targeted project funding to a prevention-focused strategy with the aim of modernizing Canada's domestic fisheries.

With stakeholder guidance and feedback, DFO will be:

- Developing a Ghost Gear Regulation and Policy
- Creating a risk assessment matrix, incorporates variables such as fishery and gear types and habitats
- Establishing best management practices
- Assessing fishery and gear specific considerations
- Exploring tools and mechanisms to operationalize ghost gear prevention, loss and trailing or use of technological advancements based on stakeholder feedback

On-going engagement and consultation will be an integral part in the development of ghost gear measures.



# PHASE 3: MANAGING CANADA'S FISHERIES

Canada aspires to attain modernized, sustainable and resilient fisheries while advancing its commitments to achieving zero plastic waste.

Canada's future efforts to address ghost gear:

Implementation of the tools for fisheries, informed by stakeholder feedback and fishery risk assessments.

Fisheries managed using ghost gear best practices, information and tools developed under in Phase 2

Continue to engage with stakeholders and update requirements as conditions, technology and needs evolve.





# NEXT STEPS

- Regional meetings
- Ghost gear presentations at existing Advisory Committees, Industry meetings, etc.
- Online Survey – A survey will be conducted in October-November 2024
- What we heard report
- International Gear Summit- February 2025

We look forward to continued discussions and welcome your input and feedback:



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# THANK YOU!

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