

Fishing net debris in sea mainly from repair work



Most fishing net debris on beaches in the Arctic and North Atlantic consists of pieces of net that were cut off during repairs. This conclusion comes from a major analysis of waste led by WUR researcher Wouter Jan Strietman.

A total of 211 pieces of trawler net larger than 50 cm were studied with the help of local fisheries experts. A further 2908 smaller pieces of net were also investigated. They were collected on beaches in Greenland, Iceland, Jan Mayen, Spitsbergen, Norway,

the Netherlands and Scotland. By systematically analysing the mesh size, traces of cuts and tears and other clues, the team worked out that fishing net waste mainly consists of loose pieces of nets used in bottom trawling.

If they are not picked up and stored in time, the pieces end up in the sea, deliberately or otherwise. 'The most effective measure for preventing such waste on beaches is to improve the collection and storage of net waste on board and to provide good waste collection facilities in ports,' says Strietman.

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