

# SWEEPING DESTRUCTION

## WHY BOTTOM TRAWLING MUST BE BANNED

Bridget Meyboom

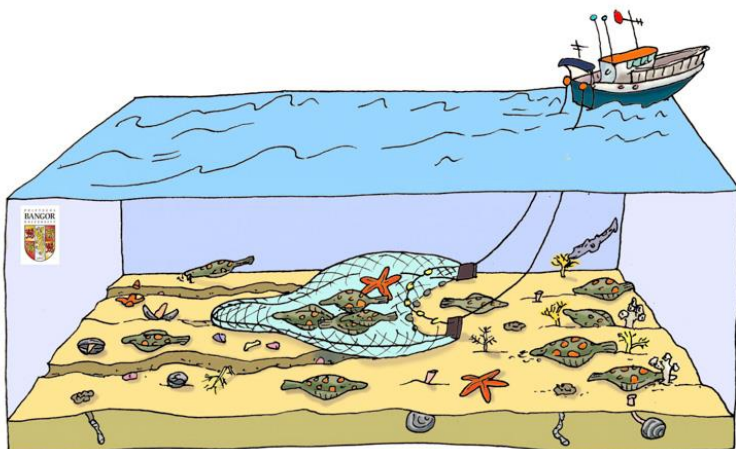
[bridgetmeyboom@gmail.com](mailto:bridgetmeyboom@gmail.com)

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Bottom trawling is detrimental to biodiversity, ecosystem complexity, and has negative impacts on the volume of the ocean's carbon sequestration. Steps must be taken to move the fishing industry away from bottom trawling and towards selective, non-destructive fishing methods.

### What is bottom trawling?

Bottom trawling is a method of fishing which drags a net, weighted so that it can reach the bottom of the ocean, along the ocean floor. It is a method that is not able to target specific species (since it's just a huge net being dragged along) and so results in a large amount of bycatch. The net-dragging process is fuel-intensive, and destroys the complex ecosystems that it goes through, no matter what type of bottom trawling gear is used – lighter or heavier<sup>7</sup>.



How bottom trawling works. [This Photo](#) by Unknown Author is licensed under [CC BY-ND](#).

## Recommendations for phasing out bottom trawling

**Support** trawl fishers in moving away from trawl fishing by providing:

- Income security
- Retraining opportunities in other areas of the industry
- Alternative employment opportunities

**Eliminate** harmful subsidies that support bottom trawling and redirect those funds towards selective and non-destructive fishing methods.

**Support** selective and non-destructive fishing methods economically to move the fishing industry towards more sustainable fishing methods.

**Research** the impacts of bottom trawling in BC as well as the impacts of other fishing methods to support the ban and develop a strong basis for supporting other fishing methods.

# SUCCESS STORIES

## Trawling ban in the Gulf of Castellammare<sup>2</sup>

Research after a 14-year trawling ban revealed great success. Researchers found that not only had the biomass of reproductively mature individuals had increased, but also that females deeper than 50m were larger, and there were higher recruitment numbers annually, as well as a longer recruitment period each year.

## Trawling ban the Ungawa Bay fishery in Kenya<sup>4</sup>

Within 2 years of the trawling ban being implemented, researchers found that the landings from artisanal fishers had increased. Additionally there was evidence of fish stocks and benthic habitats being restored due to the elimination of the pressure from bottom trawling.

## References

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# HOW BAD IS IT REALLY?

## Environmental impacts

Produces a protein source with one of the highest carbon footprints<sup>6</sup>:

- Trawl boats produce 3x more CO<sub>2</sub> than non-trawlers<sup>6</sup>.
- Globally bottom trawling releases the equivalent of 15%-20% of the amount of atmospheric CO<sub>2</sub> the ocean absorbs<sup>3</sup> (it absorbs around 25% of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions into the atmosphere<sup>5</sup>).

## Ecosystem impacts

Trawling decimates ecosystems in and around where trawler went through:

- It reduces the complexity of the ecosystem by flattening it, and therefore reduces biodiversity.
- It could take 7.5-15 years to recover from one trawl pass<sup>3</sup>.
- Trawling plays a major role in sediment resuspension off the coast of Vancouver Island, which blocks light for photosynthetic organisms, clogs the gills of filter feeders, weighs plankton down, and impacts adjacent areas because of currents carrying the sediments<sup>3</sup>.

## Potential contacts

George Heyman, Minister of environment and climate change strategy, BC Provincial Government, [env.minister@gov.bc.ca](mailto:env.minister@gov.bc.ca)

David Eby, Premier of BC, [premier@gov.bc.ca](mailto:premier@gov.bc.ca)

Joyce Murray, **Minister of fisheries, oceans and the canadian coast guard**, [dfo.minister-ministre.mpo@dfo-mpo.gc.ca](mailto:dfo.minister-ministre.mpo@dfo-mpo.gc.ca)