



SCOTTISH ENTANGLEMENT ALLIANCE

Understanding marine animal entanglement in Scottish waters

Marine animal entanglement – what is the law?

Whales, dolphins and porpoises are offered 'strict protection' under Scottish law, and this includes protection from deliberate disturbance. In addition, there is a requirement to monitor the incidental capture and killing of whales and dolphins in fishing gear, to ensure that significant negative impacts do not occur to the population concerned. The UK is also a member of the regional conservation convention called ASCOBANS, whose ambition is to reduce bycatch and entanglement levels towards zero.

Scotland has two long-term monitoring programmes to understand levels of bycatch and entanglements in the Scottish and UK fleet. There is an on-board bycatch observer programme that is led by St Andrews University, and a strandings analysis programme that is led by the Scottish Marine Animal Stranding Scheme (SMASS). Both are funded by the Scottish and UK governments. The data collected within these programmes are essential to understand the extent of the entanglement issue and it is important to work in collaboration with fishermen to understand the issue fully, and to work together to identify and to recommend ways to reduce entanglements.

If while tending your fishing gear you discover a whale or other marine species entangled (live or dead), it is not an offence to report this. We encourage you to report any such incidents to the Scottish Entanglement Alliance (SEA) who will be able to offer advice and assistance, on **01463 243030** or **07393 798153**. By reporting such an event you are not incriminating yourself or your fishery but rather you are contributing to important research to help us understand the entanglement issue. Any information you share will be treated sensitively, positively and confidentially.

For more information or if you have any questions please
contact the SEA Co-ordinator on
01463 246048 or **07393 798153**
or email **entanglement@sac.co.uk**

www.scottishentanglement.org