

An introduction to the world of Catch Welfare

**Catch
Welfare**
PLATFORM

Market Advisory Council

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A close-up, textured background of a teal-colored fishing net, with the mesh pattern clearly visible. A black circle is centered over the lower half of the image.

Catch Welfare

PLATFORM

The catch welfare platform is an industry-science driven platform to create pragmatic solutions to improve catch welfare.

The importance of Catch Welfare



9/10 European consumers believe fish deserve the same protection as other production animals.



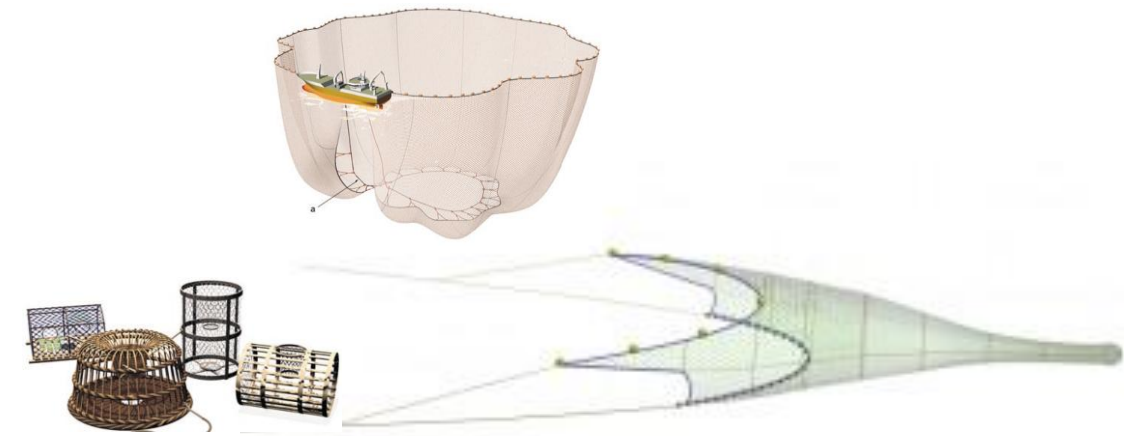
Aquatic animal welfare is increasingly becoming a topic on the agenda of governments.



Growing evidence that poor catch welfare impacts both the sustainability and quality of seafood.

Defining welfare

"The welfare of an **individual** is its state as regards to its attempts to **cope** with its **environment**" (Broom, 1986)



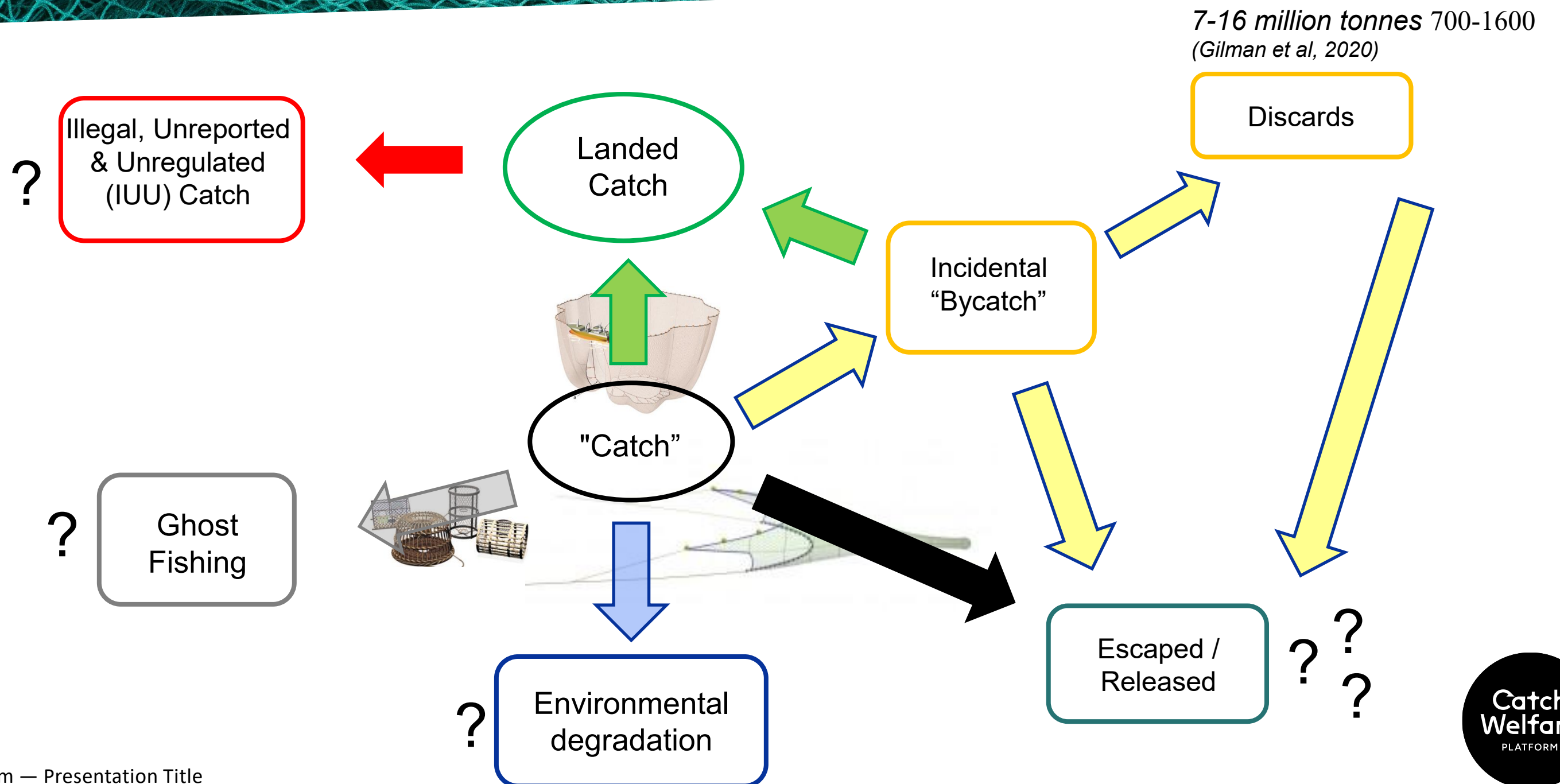
Most capture methods are stressful for catch

⇒ only negative impact on welfare

⇒ focus on minimising the impact of stressors

[Breen et al, 2020a]

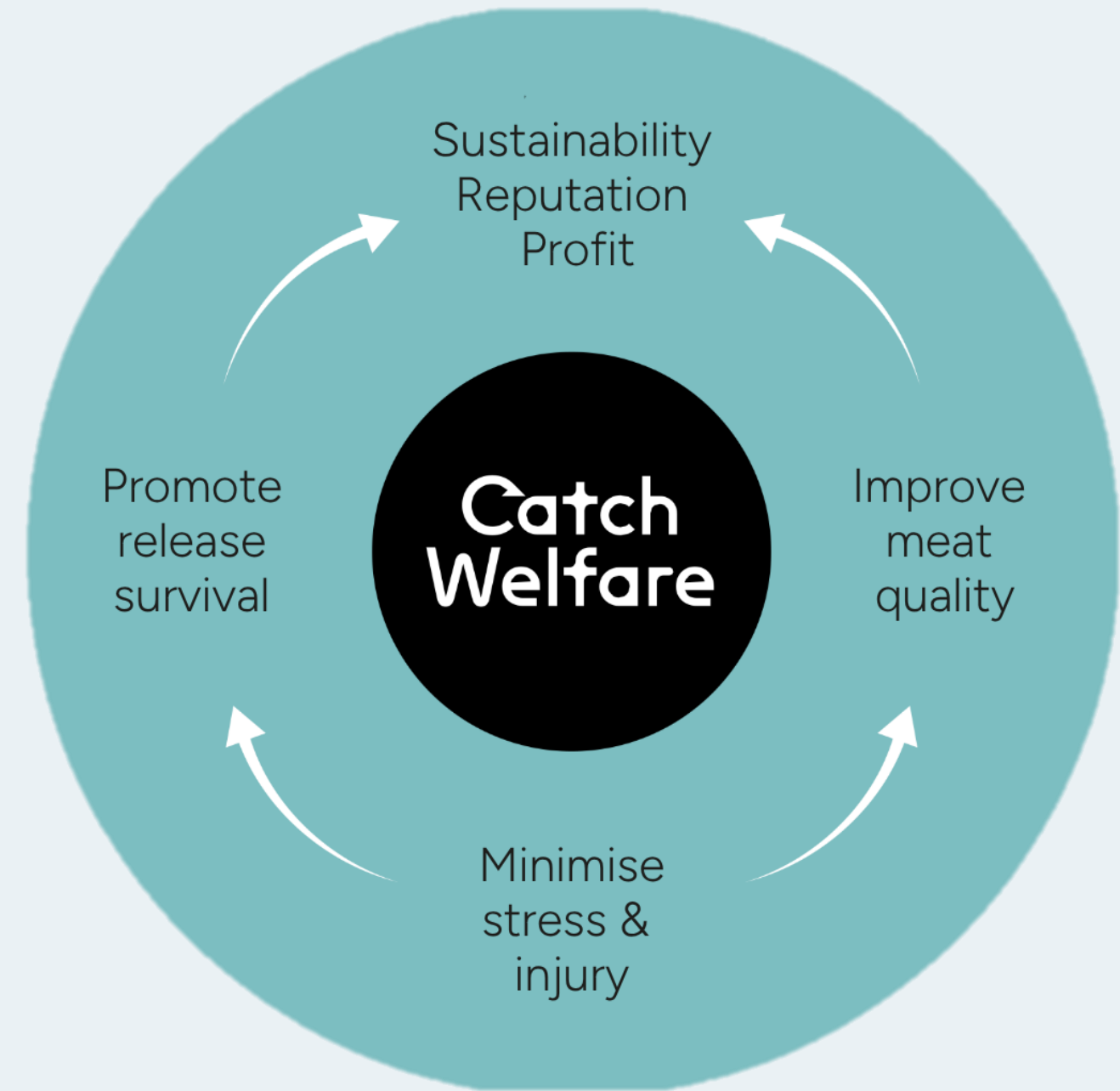
Components of 'The Catch'



Catch Welfare, a functional definition

Good catch welfare practices are: “capture and handling methods that minimise the physical damage to, and stress on, any retained fish until after they are either slaughtered or released”.

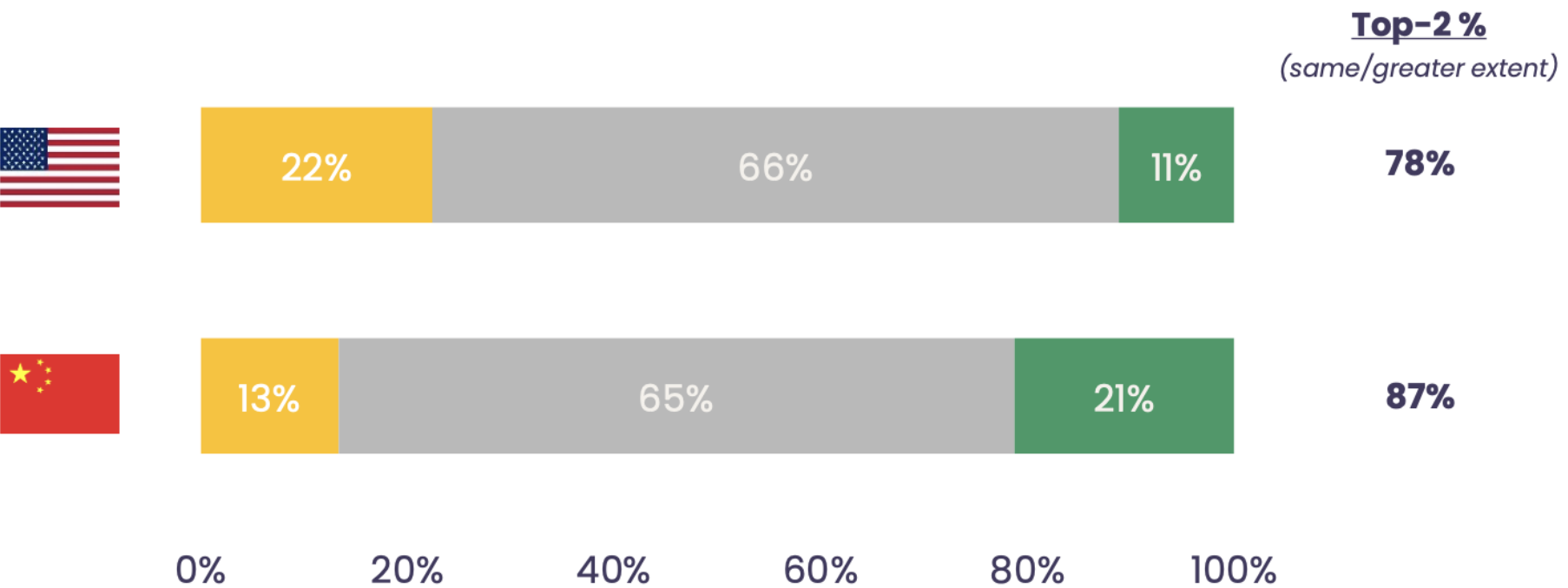
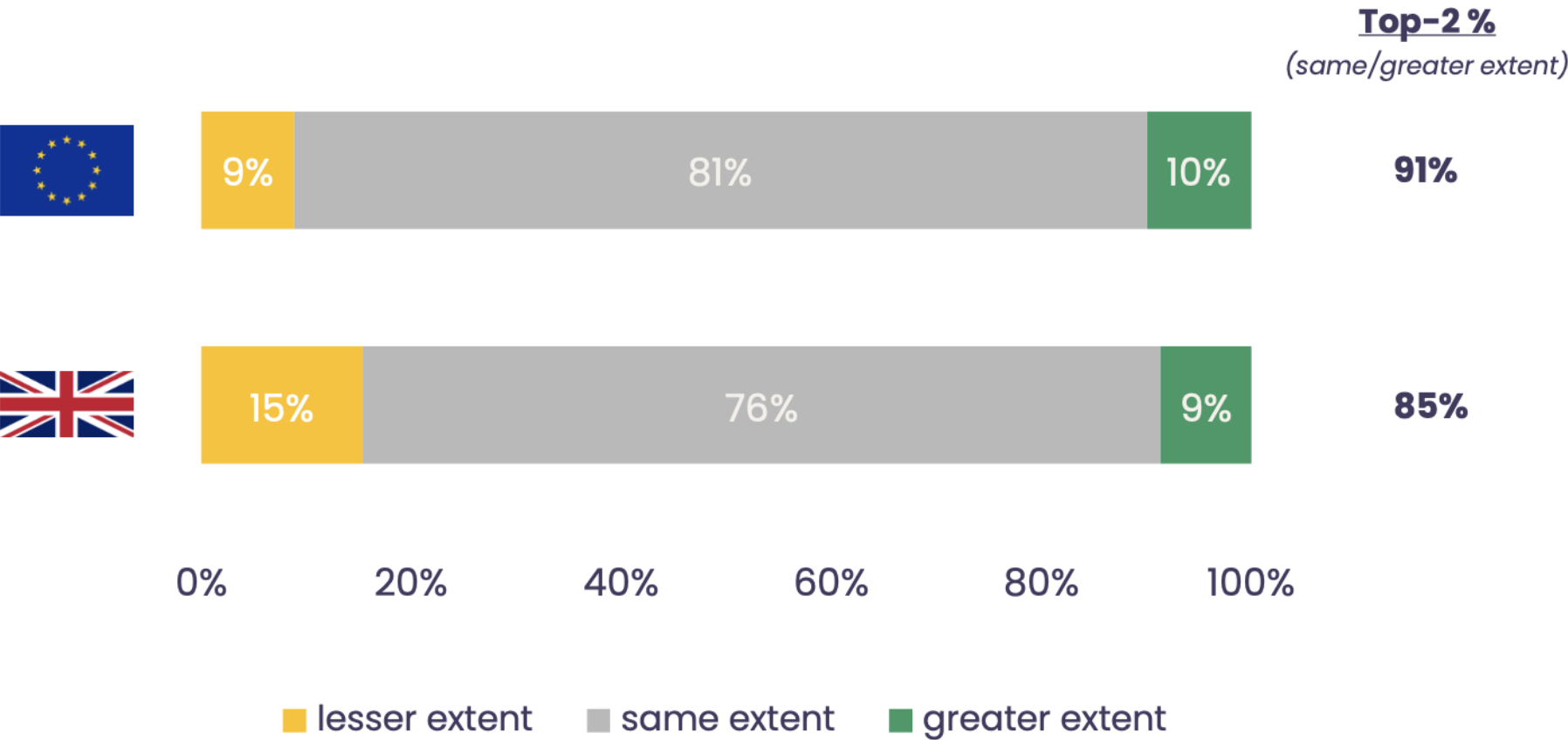
Breen et al, 2020a.



Consumer attitudes

“Q5. Which of the following comes closest to your view?

The welfare of fish should be protected to a greater/a lesser/the same extent than the welfare of other animals we eat.”

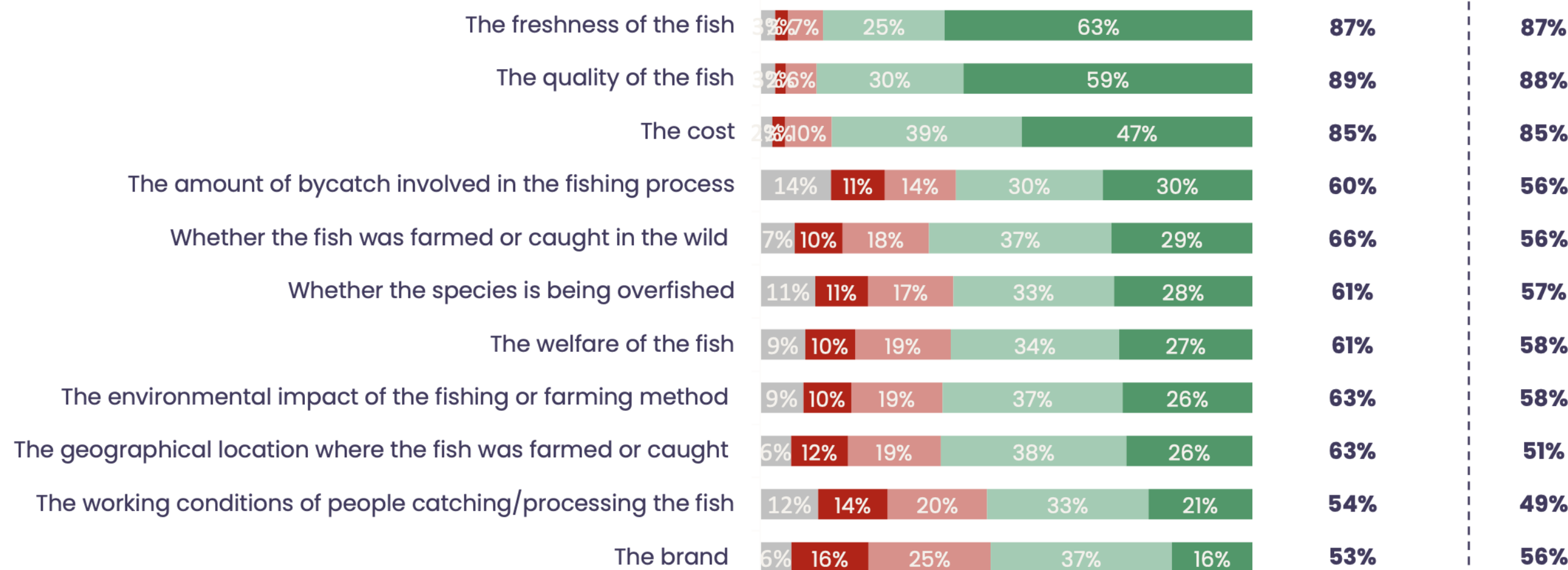


Consumer attitudes

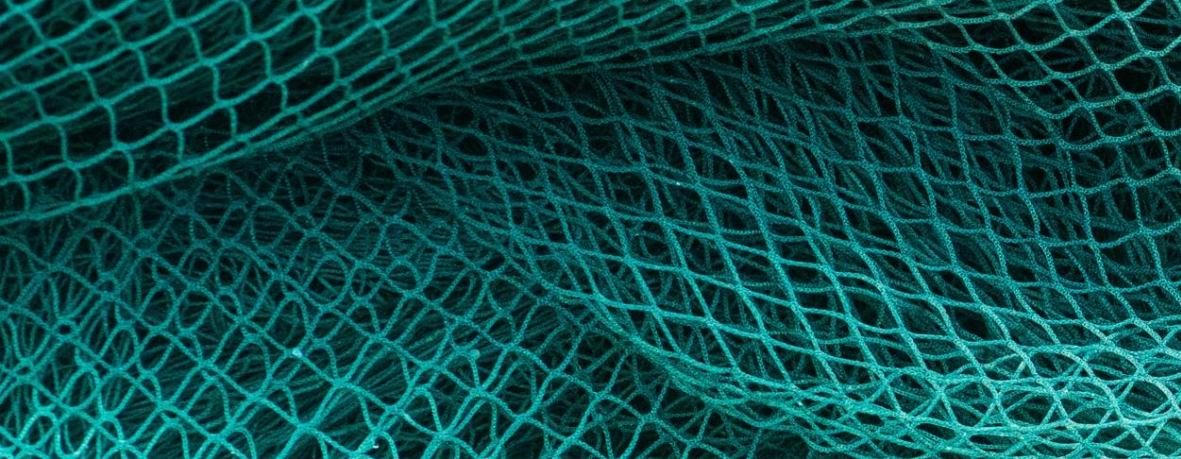


"Q13. To what extent, if at all, does each of the following things have an impact on your choice of which fish you buy?"

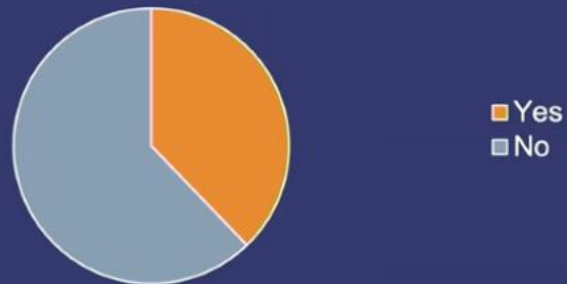
Top-2 %
(some/great impact)



■ Don't know ■ Has no impact ■ Has little impact ■ Has some impact ■ Has a great impact

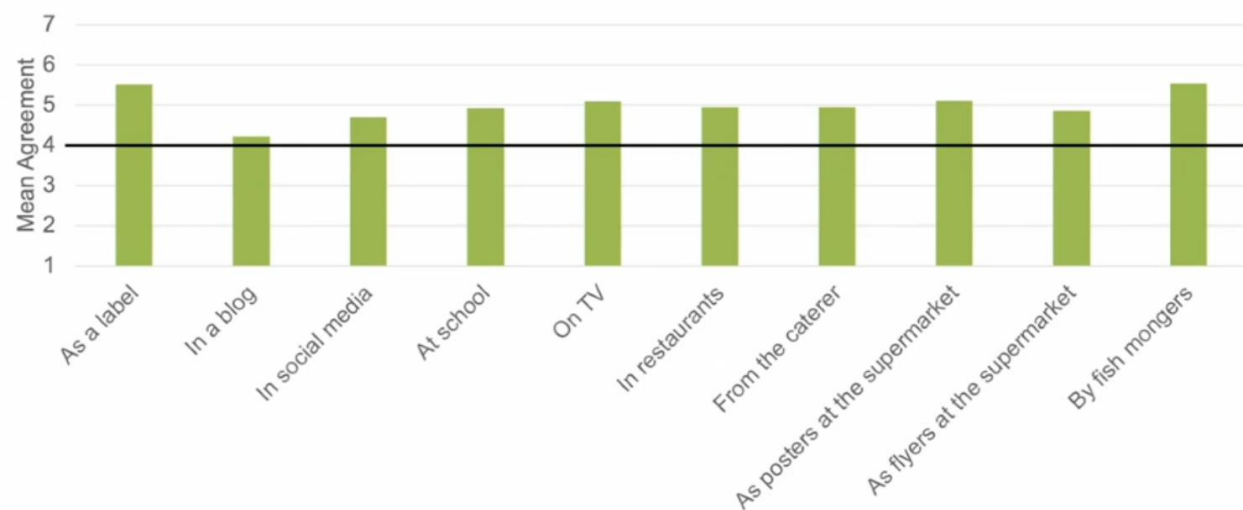


Would you like to receive more information about fish and crustaceans welfare during catch and handling?



“Good catch welfare practices are capture and handling methods that minimise the physical damage to, and stress on, any retained fish until they are either slaughtered or released.”

This type of information related to fish welfare should be presented ...



Nofima
Norwegian Institute of Food, Fisheries and Aquaculture Research

Nofima
Norwegian Institute of Food, Fisheries and Aquaculture Research



And around half mistakenly believe that 'sustainable' equals high animal welfare

When they see the term “sustainable” on the label

47%

X assume the fish was killed quickly and painlessly

56%

X assume farmed fish were kept in conditions allowing them to exhibit all natural behaviours

However, most people want higher welfare options, and are willing to pay more for them



93%

would like to buy higher welfare fish products



69%

would like to see information about the way fish were farmed and killed on the label of all products

61%

say the welfare of the fish impacts which product they buy

Aquatic Animal Welfare Legislation



Norwegian Parliament: White Paper on Animal Welfare (20 Dec 2024)

“Norway has all the prerequisites to be a leader in animal welfare.”

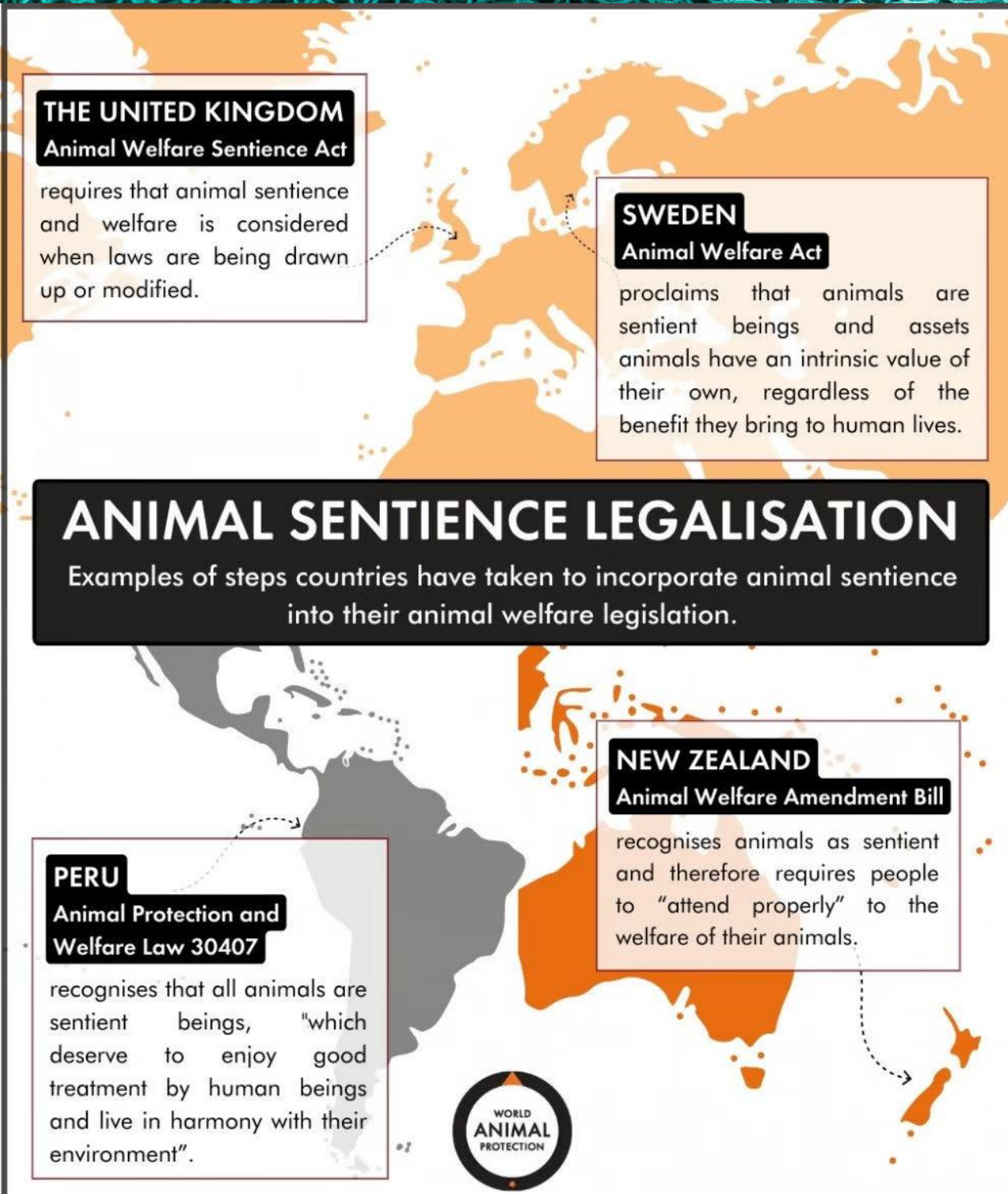
Geir Pollestad, Norwegian Minister of Agriculture & Food

“Fish welfare is not only an ethical obligation we have. It is also a prerequisite for us to have a sustainable and thus competitive industry.”

Marianne Sivertsen Næss, Minister of Fisheries and Oceans



Aquatic Animal Welfare Legislation



UK Animal Welfare (Sentience) Act 2022

- recognizes all vertebrates (including fish), as well as cephalopods & decapod crustacea, as sentient.
- requires that animal sentience and welfare is considered when laws are being drawn up or modified.

Quality

No gaping = myotomes connected = \$\$\$ 😊



Crowding affected fillet quality indicators :

- Gaping (increased)
- Rigor mortis (increased strength, & fast onset)
- Fillet colour (more red / less green)
- Fillet texture (softer)

Gaping = myotomes separating = \$\$\$ 😞



Pre-mortem crowding stress modified water holding capacity (WHC), cathepsin activity and fillet firmness and colour through interactions with frozen storage (upto 12 months) and RSW treatments.

Anders et al, 2020 & 2022a.

MHS cod-end



Conventional cod-end



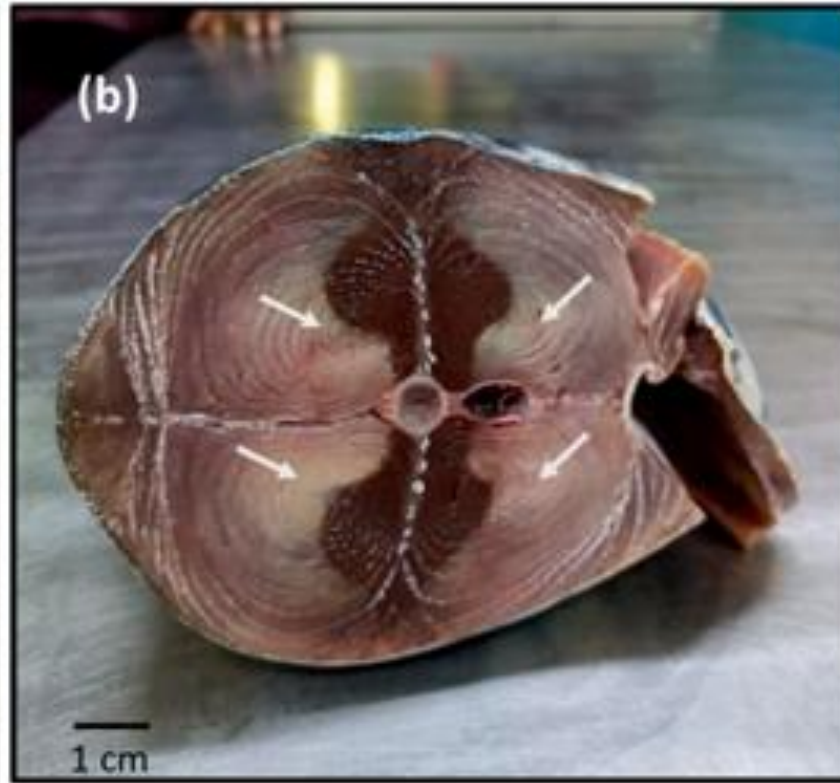
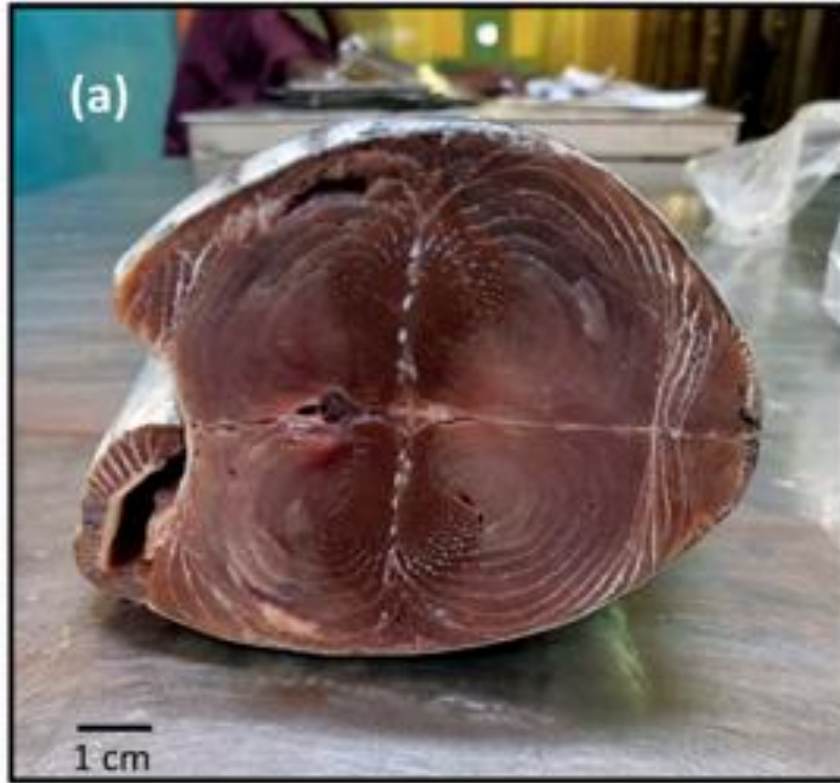
Pieke Molenaar, 2025

Conventional cod-end

MHS cod-end



Pieke Molenaar, 2025



Soni et al, 2023



Craig Turley, 2024

Platform Goals

01

Giving the industry a voice in the catch welfare conversation

02

Steering away from feelings and focusing on facts

03

Sharing knowledge and creating realistic expectations

04

Creating practical and profitable solutions for catch welfare

Kick-off Conference 2023

Bergen, Norway

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121 participants



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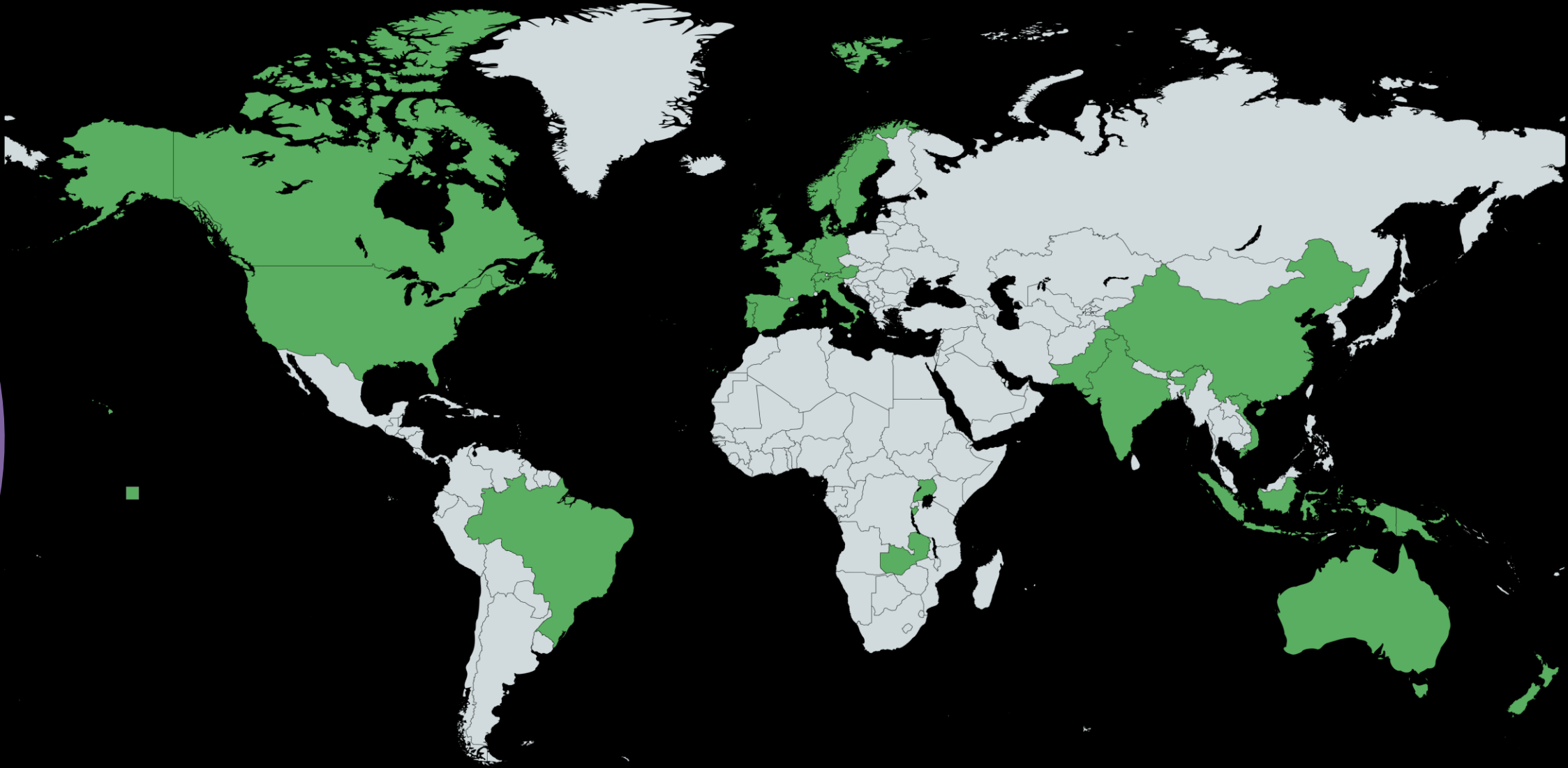
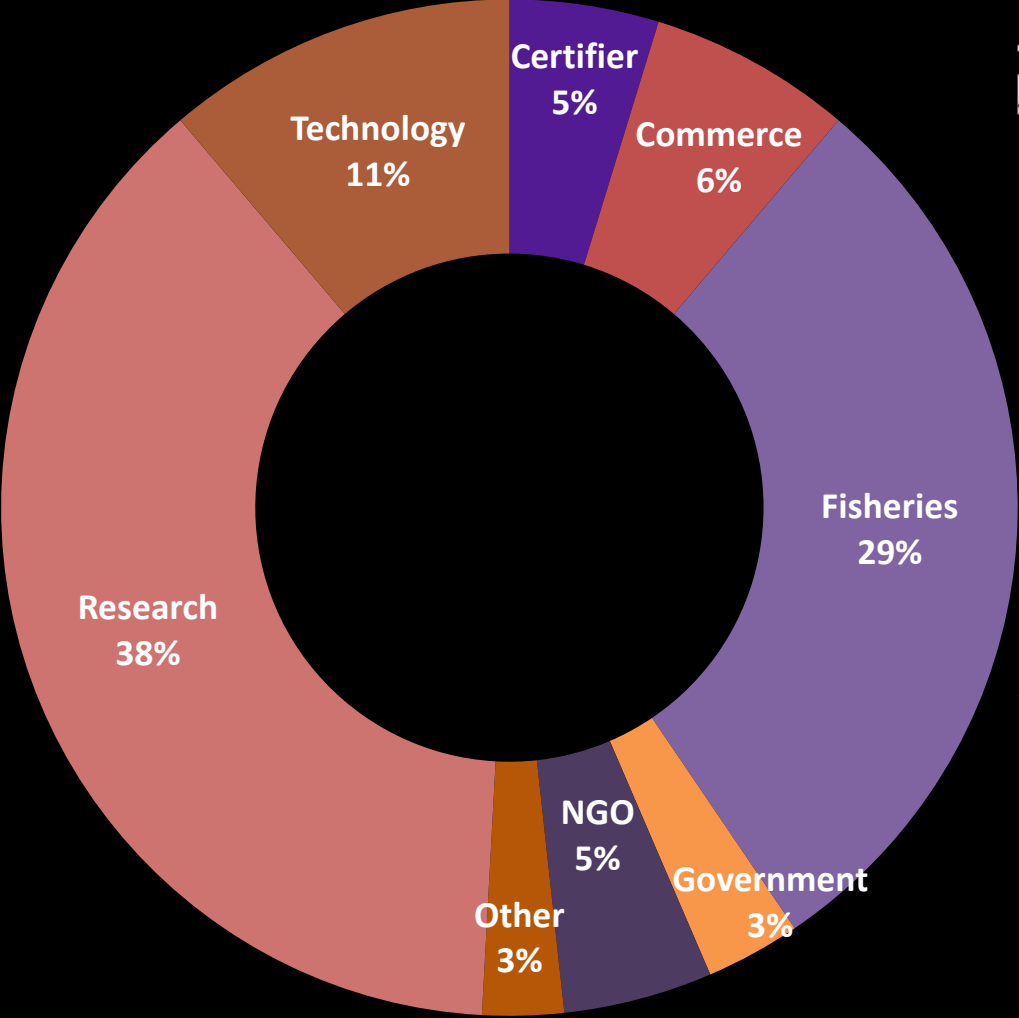
3rd Conference 2025

IJmuiden, the Netherlands

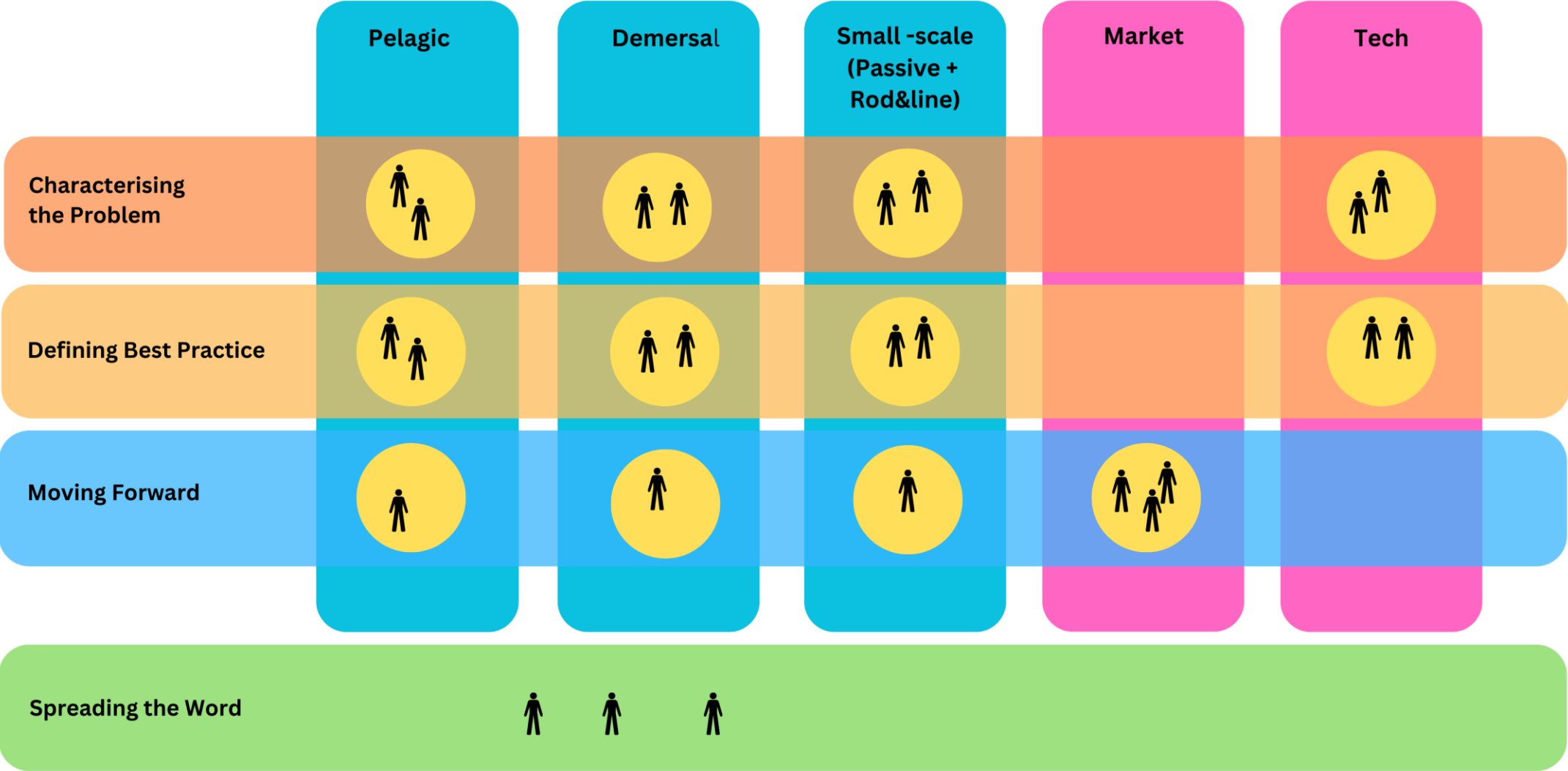


Catch Welfare Platform 2025

232 Members



Expert Groups



Expert groups



Expert Group Core Members

Pelagic



Demersal



Small-scale



Stunning & Killing



Market



Tech



Crustacean



You ?

Working Objectives

Risk Assessments

Identifying welfare hazards

Characterising the problem

Best Practices

OWI's

Best practices/
guidelines

Moving Forward

Criteria

Training toolkits

Education materials

Case studies



Skipjack Tuna
Katsuwonus pelamis

Pole & line &
Purse seine



Norway lobster
Nephrops norvegicus

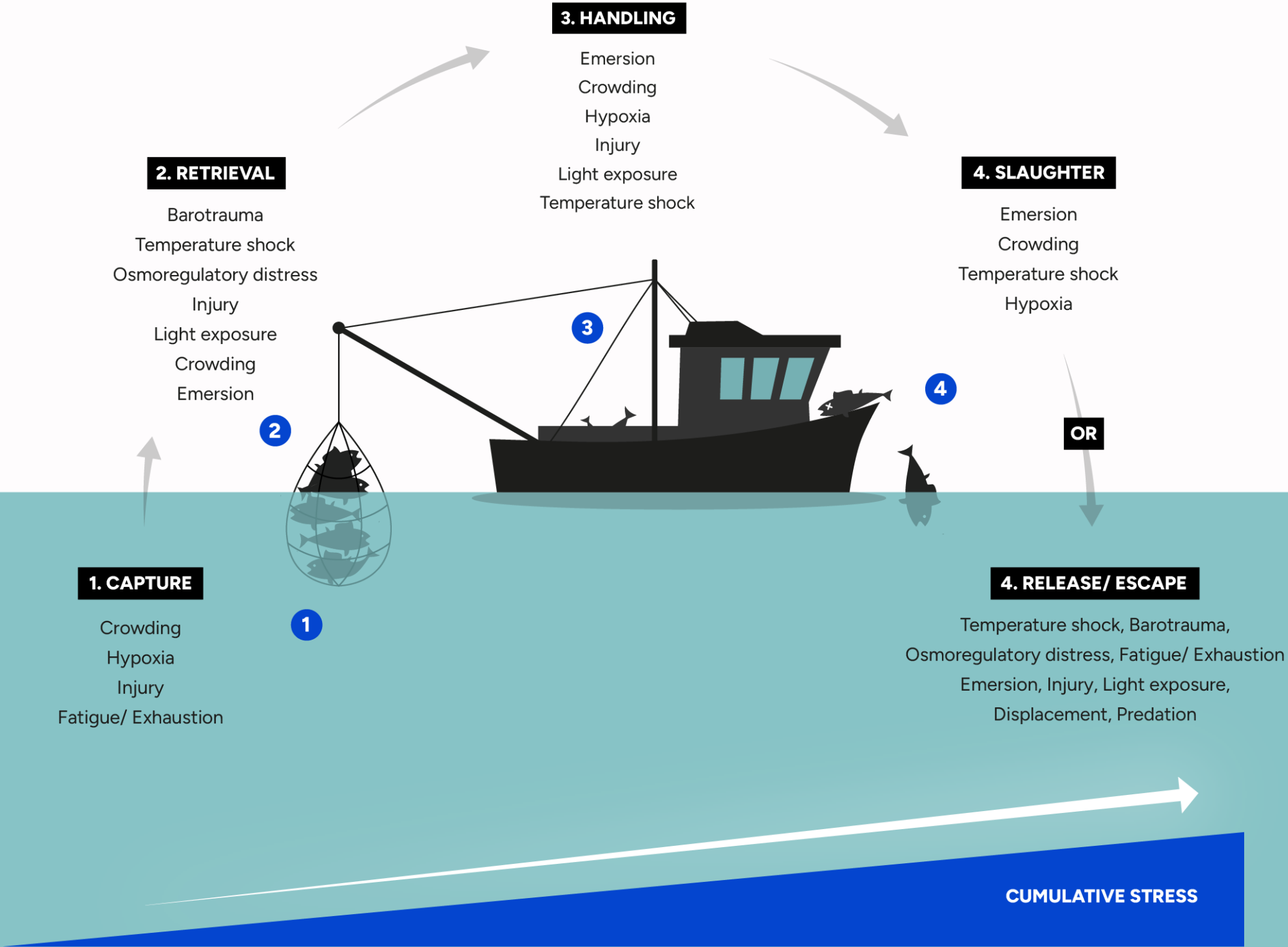
Demersal trawl &
Creels



Atlantic Mackerel
Scomber scombrus

Pelagic trawling &
Purse seine

Stressors during a fishing operation



- Using “Pathway Analysis” define likely stressors at each phase of fishing operation.
- Based on knowledge of capture process assess likely severity and exposure to identified stressors.



Risk Assessments



Identify and describe each phase of the fishing operation



For each phase define the likely exposure times



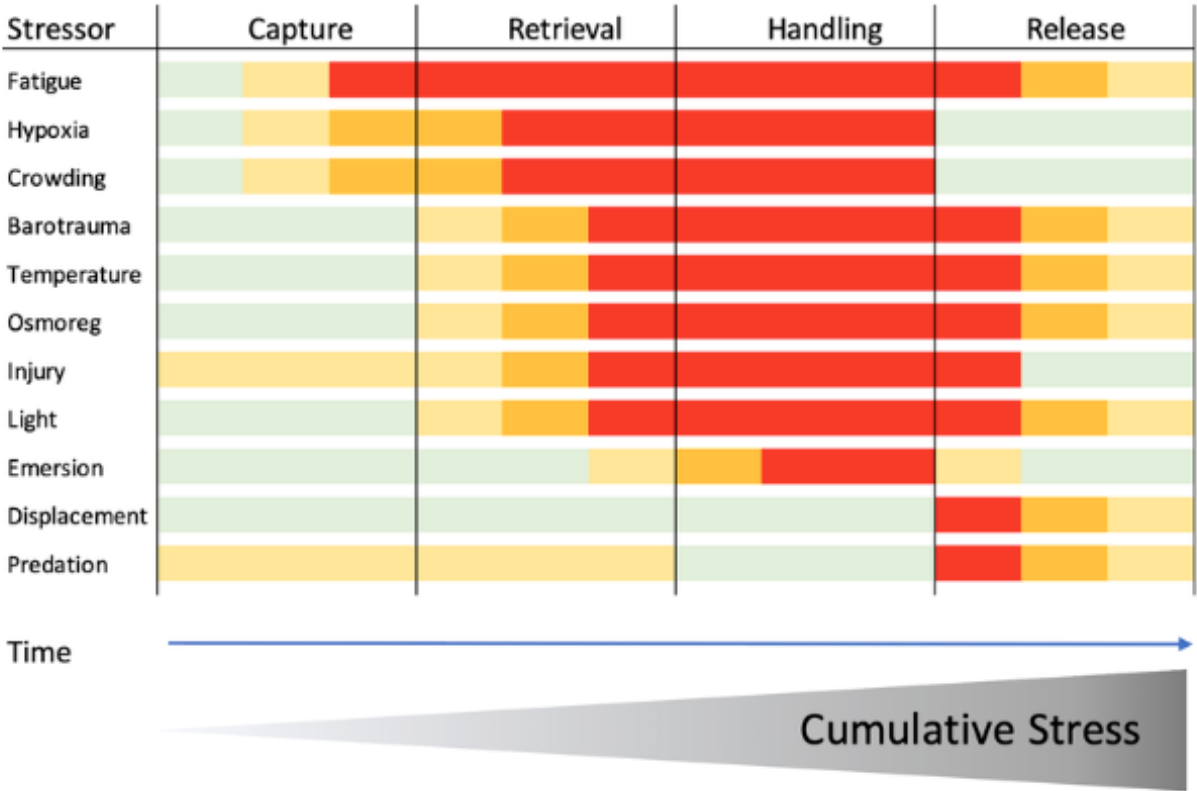
For each phase define the likely stressors that could be experienced



Characterise severity for each stressor at each phase



Welfare Score = proportion of catch x stress response x phase duration

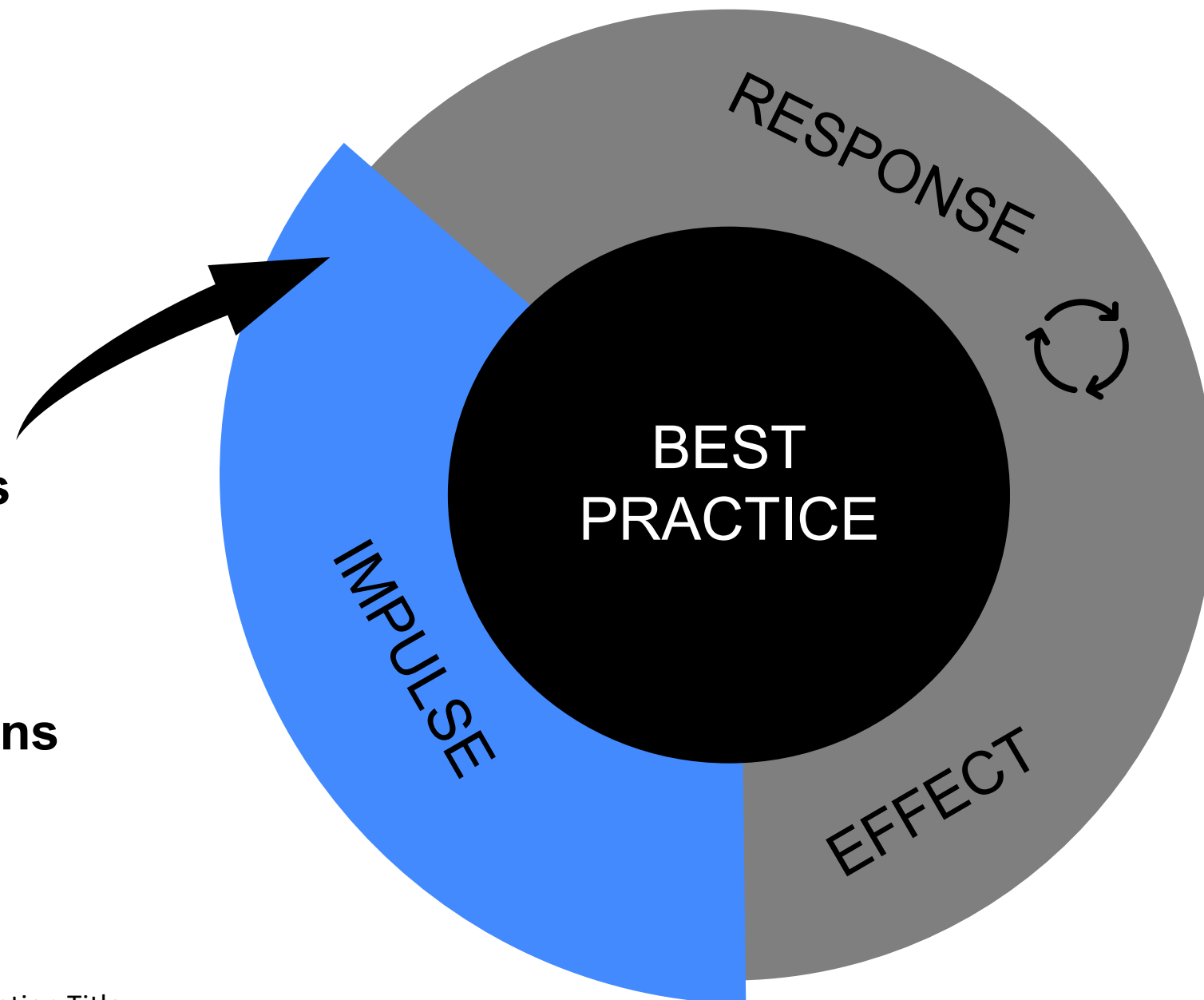


A simplified version of the outcome; a matrix that identifies welfare hazards



Best practice

- New knowledge
- Consumer demands
- Results from risk assessment
- New technology
- Upcoming regulations

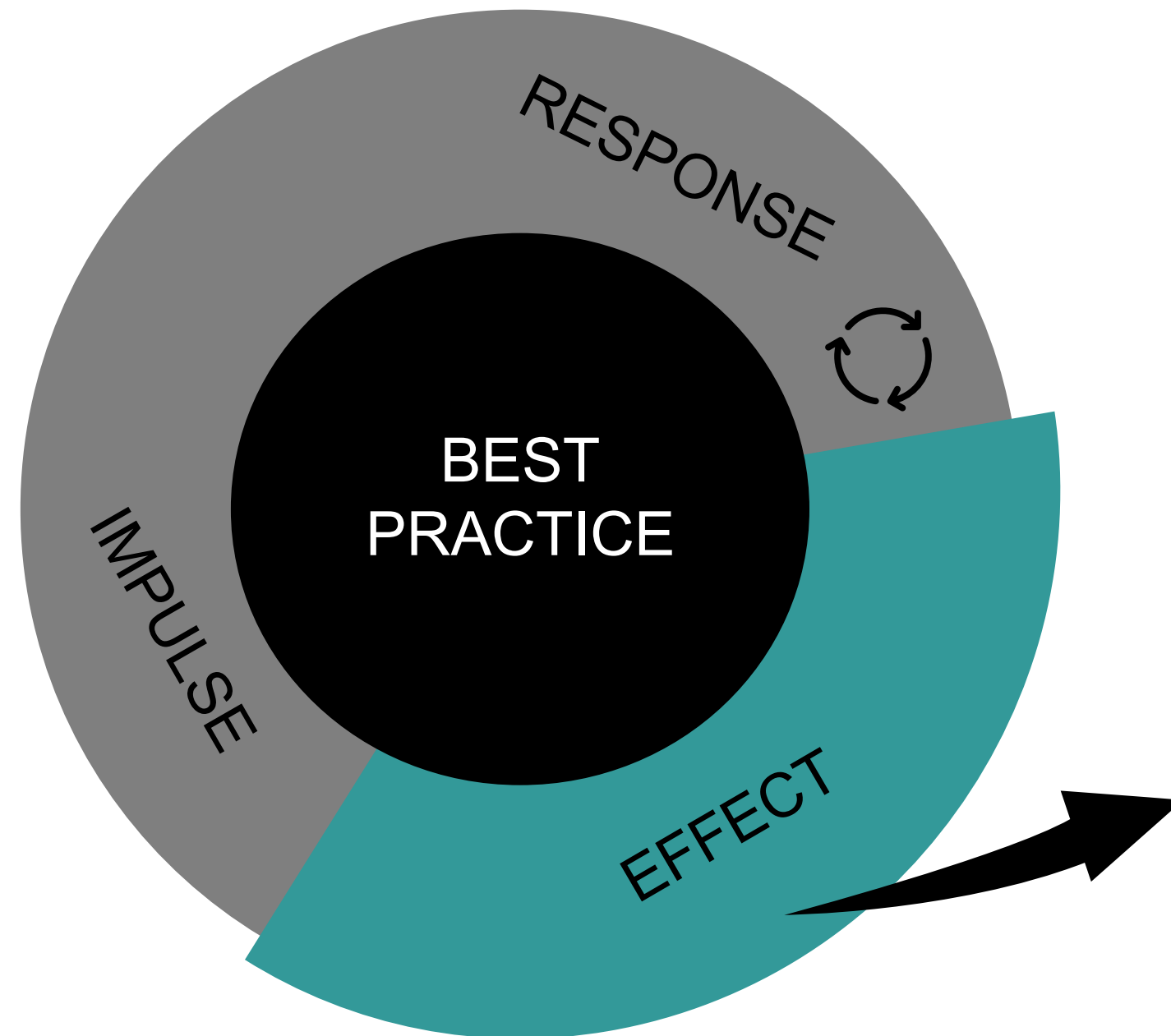


Best practice



- **Monitor practice and new technology / Indicators**
- **Adjust practice**
- **Create guidelines**

Best practice



- **Better practices**
- **Market access**
- **Better welfare**
- **Better quality**

Catch Welfare - Moving Forward

- Develop criteria that can be used in certification schemes, corporate policy, seafood guides.
- Education materials on Best Practice
- Factsheet successful valorization models for welfare
- Communication tools

Currently happening

Friend of the Sea > Implementing welfare guidelines into FOS fisheries certification scheme

GDST > Welfare dialogues to include welfare KDE's to the GDST standard

VISwijzer > Visibility stunning in seafoodguide

FishSource > Start of project to include welfare

Fair-fish Database > A database dedicated to fish welfare



Working Group



Working Group Aquatic Animal Welfare



Aquatic Animal Welfare Working Group China

Established March 2025



Goals of the Working Group:

- ✳ Facilitating **knowledge exchange** between academia and industry
- ✳ Advancing **international collaboration** in aquatic animal welfare science and practice
- ✳ Integrating aquatic animal welfare **education** into Chinese university curricula
- ✳ Empowering local industry to enhance fish welfare **practices**



(Co) Host Conferences

Organising:

- Aquatic Animal Welfare Research and Practice Seminar

Hosting sessions:

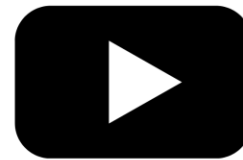
- China Animal Welfare Science Conference
- World Conference on Farm Animal Welfare and Sustainable Agrifood Systems



Catch Welfare – The Podcast



AVAILABLE AT:



YOUTUBE



SPOTIFY



APPLE PODCAST

DO YOU HAVE A STORY TO TELL ABOUT CATCH WELFARE?

GET IN TOUCH:

MICHELLE@CATCHWELFAREPLATFORM.COM





Catch Welfare Platform

@CatchWelfarePlatform · 40 abonnees · 45 video's

Meer informatie over dit kanaal ...meer



Geabonneerd



Home

Video's

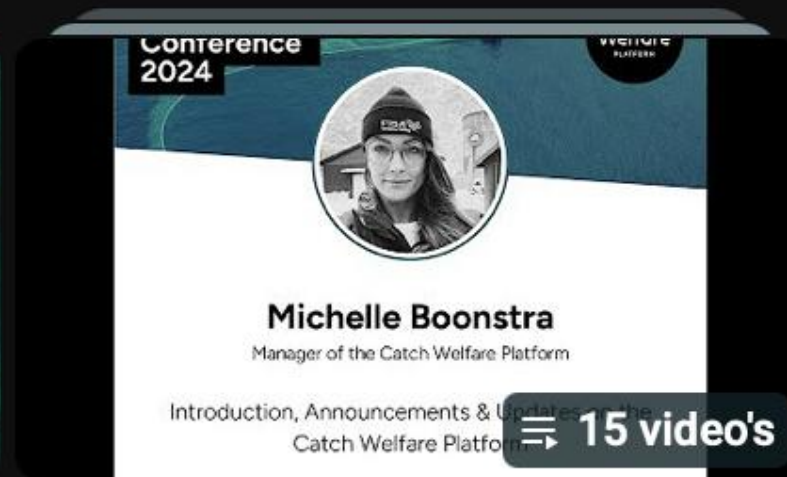
Podcasts

Playlists



3rd Catch Welfare Platform
Conference - 2025

Hele playlist bekijken



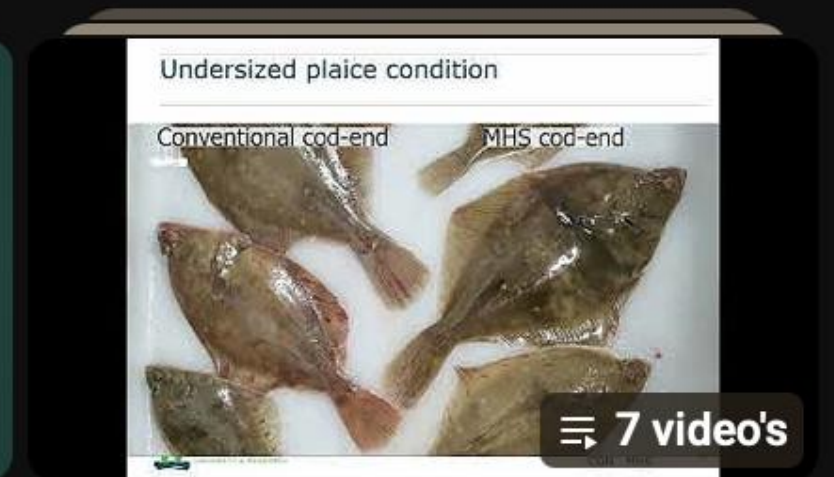
Catch Welfare Platform
Conference 2024

Hele playlist bekijken



Catch Welfare, The Podcast

Hele podcast bekijken



Presentations Kick-off
Conference 2023

Hele playlist bekijken





A Big thank you !!!

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