

# Effects on marine habitat

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A sea turtle killed by a boat propeller

Some fishing techniques cause habitat destruction.<sup>[6]</sup> Blast fishing and cyanide fishing, which are illegal in many places, harm surrounding habitat.<sup>[6]</sup> Blast fishing refers to the practice of using explosives to capture fish. Cyanide fishing refers to the practice of using cyanide to stun fish for collection. These two practices are commonly used for the aquarium trade and the live fish food trade.<sup>[6]</sup> These practices are destructive because they impact the habitat that the reef fish live on after the fish have been removed. Bottom trawling, the practice of pulling a fishing net along the sea bottom behind trawlers, removes around 5 to 25% of an area's seabed life on a single run.<sup>[7]</sup> Most of the impacts are due to commercial fishing practices.<sup>[8]</sup> A 2005 report of the UN Millennium Project, commissioned by UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan, recommended the elimination of bottom trawling on the high seas by 2006 to protect seamounts and other ecologically sensitive habitats. This was not done. In mid-October 2006, United States President George W. Bush joined other world leaders calling for a moratorium on deep-sea trawling, the practice has shown to often have harmful effects on sea habitat and, hence, on fish populations.<sup>[9]</sup> No further action was taken (Vivek). The sea animal's aquatic ecosystem may also collapse due to the destruction of the food chain. Additionally, ghost fishing is a major threat due to capture fisheries.<sup>[10]</sup> Ghost fishing occurs when a net, such as a gill net or trawl, is lost or discarded at sea and drifts within the oceans and can still act to capture marine organisms. According to the FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries, States should act to minimize the amount of lost and abandoned gear, and work to minimize ghost fishing.<sup>[11]</sup>