



## COPE<sup>o</sup> Working Group on Marine Debris and Entanglement Meeting Minutes

25 June 2024

11am EST

### Attendees

- Wayne Macdougall, *Working Group Chair*
- Clayton A. Burke, *Working Group Chair*
- Sebastien Blanchard
- Hannah Dawicki, *COPE<sup>o</sup> Administrator*
- Sophie Banas, *COPE<sup>o</sup> Administrator*

### Meeting Minutes

#### **1. Introduction and background information**

- Discussed points that were made in the past two previous meetings including technology and innovation in fisheries, impact of fishing gear on marine life, regulations, and next steps and action items that were previously brought up.

#### **2. Recap of previous meetings**

- The Ropeless Consortium was discussed again and how it will take place in October around the same time as the Right Whale Consortium. It was also acknowledged that the platform is a great resource for networking and collecting information from experts.
- Clayton Burke discussed how he had recent communication with the International Marine Institute in Norway and that the group would be happy to share any reports they have completed as well as answer any questions about their work.
- Hannah Dawicki noted that regulations are a part of the group that needs to be considered, whether that is establishing new ones or working with the right people to collaborate on existing ones.
- She also highlighted the need to bring more stakeholders into the meetings to hear their thoughts and perspectives such as fishermen and maritime fishing associations.
- Clayton Burke mentioned a group out of Nova Scotia they have contacted called Cove, who are collaborating with technologies, specifically marine technology regarding fishing gear.
- The final point that was recapped by Hannah was the idea of using old fishing gear for recycling opportunities.

#### **3. Further Work Being Done on the Topic**



- Clayton shared recent articles with the group that were relevant to the relevant goals.
- The first discussed a project at the Institute of Marine Research (IMR) that aims to share information on the impact of offshore wind farms on the vulnerability early life stages of fish
- The second discussed the Scottish government who are looking to work with stakeholders to minimize bycatch and entanglement of sensitive marine species through the future of catching policy.

#### **4. Addressing Working Group Goals**

- Hannah brought up the idea of identifying past missteps, failures, and trends of fishing technology companies and others in the field to further identify the gaps that need to be filled regarding solving the problem of entanglement.
- Identifying roles within the Working Group was discussed and as to how the work will be broken up by person to ensure the most ground can be covered in researching and identifying gaps.
- Clayton identified the goal of working to promote proper gear tagging and other developments. Rope marking/coloring is already regulated in different regions and fishery regions along the North Atlantic coast, but he further discussed the idea of making more identification mandated.
- The group decided it could be beneficial to work towards creating a platform to further help scientists and researchers share information on whale entanglements as well as migration patterns.

#### **5. Closing remarks & action items**

- The group decided on these action items for the next meeting:
  1. Identifying who else we would like to bring to the table to contribute to conversations within the group. This could include fishermen, regulatory bodies, other researchers, and academics.
  2. Identify how feasible it would be to implement more gear marking mandates on fishermen by hearing their feedback on cost and ability.
  3. Connecting with other Working Group members to create a direct line to contact the FCC
  4. Continuing to research what was discussed at past Ropeless Consortium meetings and who we want to contact from there to learn more.