

MOROCCO  
TUNISIA  
TURKEY

# MED BYCATCH

A stylized illustration of an underwater scene in shades of blue. At the top, a seagull flies against a white background. Below, a dolphin leaps from the water. In the middle ground, a shark swims to the right, and a sea turtle swims towards the left. The bottom of the scene is filled with various smaller fish, a stingray, and coral reefs. The overall composition is framed by a white border.

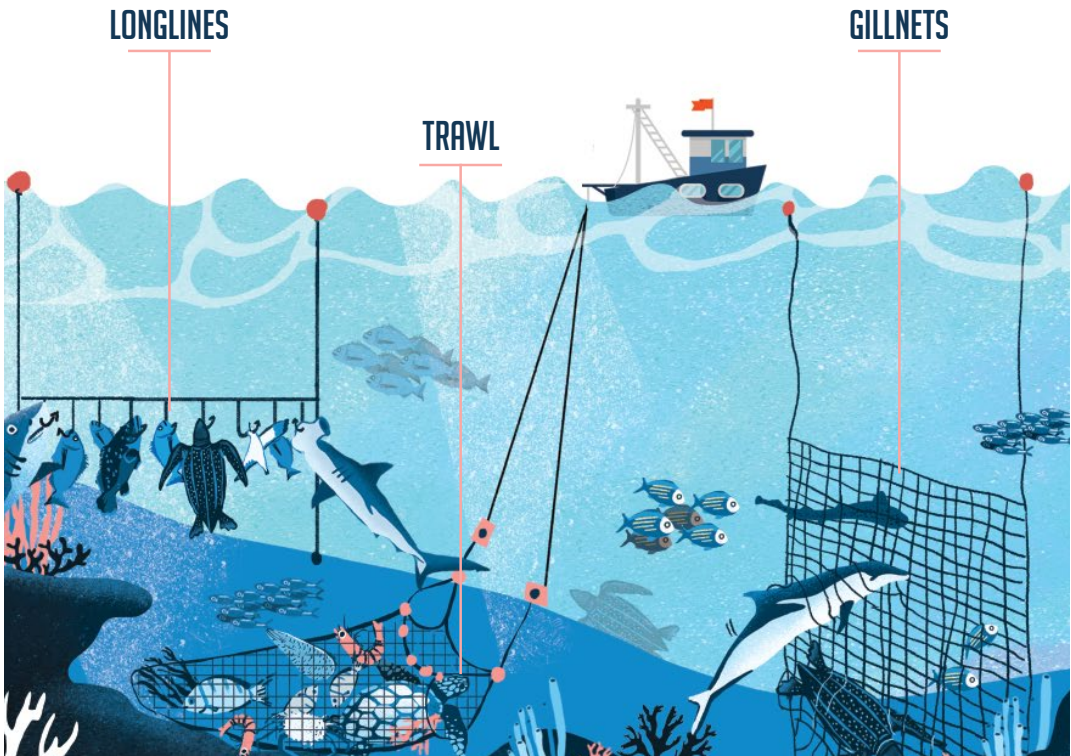
**UNDERSTANDING AND ADDRESSING BYCATCH:  
KEY STEPS FOR SUSTAINABLE FISHERIES**

# WHAT IS BYCATCH?

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The term “**bycatch**” is widely used to refer to that part of the catch unintentionally captured during a fishing operation, in addition to target species, and consisting both of other commercial or non-commercial fish species (also known as discards) and incidental catches of vulnerable species (namely sea turtles, seabirds, elasmobranchs and marine mammals).

Bycatch is considered one of the main threats to the profitability and sustainability of fisheries, as well as to wider marine biodiversity and the conservation and welfare of marine species. Though some fishing methods are more harmful than others, researchers, fisheries managers and conservationists all agree that bycatch (as a combination of discards and incidental catch of vulnerable species) is highest in trawl, longline and gillnet fisheries. Fishers truly don't want to haul in bycatch—it wastes their time and damages their gear. Gear modifications, closed areas, and more selective fishing methods can help reduce the impact of fisheries on vulnerable species.





PROJECT INTERVENTION AREA

## THE PROJECT

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The **Med bycatch project** works on improving knowledge, providing skills, tools and means towards the reduction of incidental catch of vulnerable species in the Mediterranean, with particular focus in Morocco, Tunisia and Turkey. The on-the-ground activities aim at implementing standardised data collection and testing mitigation measures towards effectively reducing single and multi-taxa bycatch, through a collaboration approach between national fisheries institutes, local NGOs and fishers and fishing associations. The project plans to leverage change within all of the coastal Mediterranean countries on the issue of incidental catch of vulnerable species, including through communication and advocacy activities with the fishing industries and decision makers.



42 OBSERVERS



5 TAXA



>300 OBSERVATIONS



43 PORTS



Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations



General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean  
Commission générale des pêches pour la Méditerranée



**MEDASSET**  
Mediterranean Association to Save the Sea Turtles



IN COLLABORATION WITH

