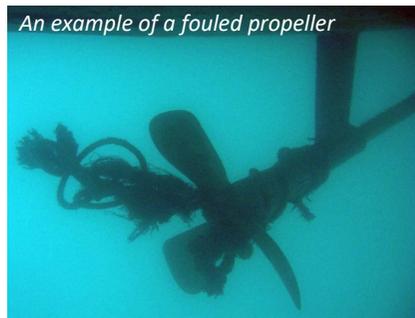


COMMERCIAL

NORTHUMBERLAND INSHORE FISHERIES AND CONSERVATION AUTHORITY CODE OF CONDUCT FOR THE MARKING OF STATIC FISHING GEAR

Background: Locally and nationally there have been concerns raised at how some sites of passive (also known as static) fishing gear are being marked. NIFCA has looked within its own district at how passive fishing gear is marked and recognises that most fishers adopt good practice and are compliant with all parts of Byelaw 5 “Marking of fishing gear and keep boxes”. There is however a small minority who do not meet the standard set out in the byelaw.



Poorly marked fishing gear is a navigation hazard and can lead to a loss of gear for fishers, a fouled propeller, damage to steering, drive gear, or worse.

What do the current regulations specify?

NIFCA byelaw 5 clearly states, that a person must not fish passive gear unless the marker buoy or dahn is **clearly visible on the surface of the water** and the gear is marked with the vessel name, port letters and numbers of that vessel.

Pictured below are examples of unacceptable and good gear marking



What do NIFCA recommend in this code of conduct?

1. Responsibility

Fishermen setting passive (a.k.a. static) gear have a responsibility to ensure that their gear is not a navigational hazard to other vessels. This means that surface markers, dahns or bouys should be clearly visible in the water at all times and that action is taken as soon as possible to avoid the dangerous practice of lines floating on the surface. Gear should be set outside navigable channels.

2. Compliance

All markers should comply fully with NIFCA Byelaw 5.

- Passive gear should be marked with a dahn or a buoy that is **clearly visible in all conditions**.
- If using a dahn marker NIFCA recommend as the minimum standard, that the pole extends at least 1 metre from the water with a suitable flag attached. Reflective tape can be added to dahn poles enabling them to be seen using a flashlight.
- If using marker bouys, the recommended standard is a minimum size of 16 inch diameter marker buoy, of a bright colour, (preferably red).
- All markers should be marked with the vessel name and port letter numbers.

3. Maintenance

Fishers are responsible for the maintenance of their surface markers to ensure they remain clearly visible and clearly marked with vessel identification, in particular

- Flags need to be replaced periodically before they become worn and torn
- Bouys get covered in weed, which requires cleaning to maintain good visibility
- Vessel identification wears off & should be maintained to be clearly readable at all times
- FINALLY, avoid using materials which can disintegrate or cause environmental or other pollution or harm wildlife