

Sea snake monitoring: Improved collection of fisher bycatch data

Sea snakes are disappearing

20 species of sea snakes live in northern Australian waters. All are classified as Protected Marine Species, and two are Critically Endangered. Their numbers seem to be decreasing but no one knows why. We do know that many are caught as 'bycatch' by trawlers and trap fishers.

Working together as a team

Fishing industry
Traditional Owners
Scientists

A better way

To increase participation, fishers and researchers have joined together to improve the data collection methods and ensure all sea snake interactions are logged. Crew have also been trained in safe sea snake handling and tissue sampling.

How will it help?

This will make collecting data easier and safer for fishers while building our knowledge of sea snakes and helping us understand bycatch patterns. Improved tissue sampling will help us understand genetic relationships between individuals, regional populations, and species.

A bit of a problem...

When they can, fishers record sea snake data in a logbook, but the need for the quick removal of these venomous reptiles from the catch is often the higher priority. In this pressured situation, logbooks can easily be forgotten.



Scan the QR code and visit the NESP Marine and Coastal Hub website for more information.



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