



PRESS RELEASE

Sportfishing Organization Joins Opposition to Drift Gillnets

Anglers encouraged to engage in political process, join petition drive

March 4, 2015 (Sacramento, CA): Today, California's leading advocate for recreational anglers joined a [broad based coalition](#) of wildlife conservation and recreational fishing organizations in a united effort to ban the use of drift gillnets off the California coast.

"Its time for an irresponsible and destructive commercial fishing practice to come to an end," said Marko Mlikotin, Executive Director. "Drift gillnets are responsible for an unacceptable amount of unintended death or injury to fish and marine life. While a very small segment of the commercial fishing industry still uses drift gillnets to catch swordfish and thresher sharks, it is limiting sportfishing opportunities that support outdoor tourism and California jobs."

Even though the drift gillnet swordfish fishery makes up just ½ of 1% of the value of California's commercial fishery, approximately 60% of sea life caught with drift gillnets intended for swordfish is dumped back into the ocean, much of which is dead or injured. Its victims include tuna, marlin, dolphins, sea turtles, sea lions, whales and many other forms of marine life and fish.

On Wednesday, March 11, the [Pacific Fishery Management Council](#) will be reviewing this destructive fishing practice ([Item H.4](#)). In the months leading up to this meeting, the Council [over 500 pages of public comment](#), including [a letter from a broad coalition](#) of recreational anglers and wildlife conservation groups.

If the Pacific Fishery Management Council moves to ban drift gillnets, it would not be the first of its kind. Drift gillnets are already banned in Washington and Oregon, and the international community has also recognized the damage drift gillnets cause, as they are banned in all international high seas and the entire Mediterranean Sea.

The California Sportfishing League is urging California anglers to join its call for an outright ban on drift gillnets by joining its petition drive found on its [website](#).

There is a growing recognition among recreational anglers that responsible commercial fishing practices are important to protecting the future of sportfishing.

"While we disagree with our coalition partners on a number of issues regarding sportfishing, the banning of drift gillnets is an issue that unites us," said Mlikotin.

The California Sportfishing League (CSL) is a nonprofit coalition of fresh and saltwater anglers, and small business owners devoted to protecting access to recreational fishing. Recreational fishing contributes over \$4.9 billion annually to California's economy, a source of outdoor tourism and jobs.

To learn more visit www.SportfishingConservation.org or [@CASportfishing](https://twitter.com/CASportfishing)

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