1.4 The Global Ghost Gear Initiative (GGGI)

> *Summary of role: The Global Ghost Gear Initiative (GGGI) is a cross-sectoral alliance launched by the World Animal Protection in 2015 to achieve a net reduction of ghost gears in the ocean by 2030.*
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> *Summary of work: The GGGI consists of a series of projects reviewed by the GGGI Project Review Board and approved by the GGGI Steering Group: Global Ghost Gear Portal and Ghost Gear Reporter, Best Practice Framework for the management of fishing gear, Myanmar Ocean Project - Ghost Gear Removal in the Myeik Archipelago, Gear Marking in Indonesian Small Scale Fisheries, Thai Union Ghost Gear Work Plan and Philippines: the Steveston Harbour Net Recycling Initiative.*
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> *Keywords/research fields: Global Ghost Gear Initiative (GGGI); GGGI Review Board and GGGI Steering Group; Global Ghost Gear Portal and Ghost Gear Reporter; Best Practice Framework for the management of fishing gear; Myanmar Ocean Project - Ghost Gear Removal in the Myeik Archipelago; Gear Marking in Indonesian Small Scale Fisheries; Thai Union Ghost Gear Work Plan; Philippines: the Steveston Harbour Net Recycling Initiative*

1.4.1 Background and aim

The Global Ghost Gear Initiative (GGGI) is a cross-sectoral alliance founded and launched in 2015 by the World Animal Protection. It focuses on abandoned, lost and otherwise discarded fishing gear (ALDFG) with the aim of achieving a net reduction in ghost gears in our oceans by 2030. On 17–18 November 2019, GGGI held its 6th annual meeting in Panama City, Panama. Available: https://www.ghostgear.org/news/2019/11/19/2019-gggi-annual-meeting-draws-to-a-close.

1.4.2 Activities and projects

The GGGI consists of a series of projects reviewed by the GGGI Project Review Board and approved by the GGGI Steering Group. Participants to the projects include 14 governments, two international organisations (regional organisations from the Pacific Ocean), 23 private sector participants, 15 corporates, 55 NGOs and two academic institutions. Participants from Southeast Asia include Myanmar Ocean Project (Myanmar) and Thai Union (Thailand). Available: https://www.ghostgear.org/members.

Global Ghost Gear Portal and Ghost Gear Reporter

One major operation of GGGI is the development of a robust platform for the global reporting of ALDFG, which can be done through the GGGI 'Global Ghost Gear Portal' online or through the 'Ghost Gear Reporter' mobile application. Whilst the extent of participation of states from the ASEAN+3 at GGGI still seems limited at this stage, valuable ALDFG data from the ASEAN+3 are still collected and reported (Figure 1.6.1.1 below).

Figure 1.6.1.1. 'Map of gear events' from the GGGI global data portal.
Green dots mark out areas where there are ALDFG reported. (Available: https://globalghostgearportal.net/dp/gearmap.php.)

Best Practice Framework (BPF) for the management of fishing gear

GGGI has published its Best Practice Framework (BPF) on ALDFG. The purpose of the BPF is to provide guidance to fishing industry and related stakeholders to prevent lost fishing gear and its impacts, as well as mitigate those impacts when gear is accidentally lost.

The work plan spans key areas identified by the GGGI to tackle ALDFG, particularly 4 key areas as follows:

(i)   End of life fishing gear;
(ii)   Habitat destruction;
(iii)   Non-entangling FADs; and
(iv)   Removal of fishing gear from the oceans.

Available:
https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5b987b8689c172e29293593f/t/5bb64b578165f5891b931a6b/1538673498329/wap_gear_bp_framework_part_2_mm_lk-2017.10.23.pdf

Myanmar Ocean Project – Ghost Gear Removal in the Myeik Archipelago

In 2019, the Myanmar project completed its first phase in assessing the prevalence of ALDFG in the archipelago, specifically in three locations identified as ALDFG hotspots. In this first phase, ALDFG was indeed prevalent in the archipelago as the project successfully removed more than 1000 kg of ALDFG from the sites. As the next step, the project is developing more efficient ways of removal by better locating ALDFG through aerial and underwater drones and remotely operated vehicles. Available: http://www.myanmarocean.org/.

Gear Marking in Indonesian Small-Scale Fisheries

In this study, fishing gears in small-scale fisheries were marked to combat ALDFG through traceability and recovery of lost gear. This study revealed the feasibility of a gear marking system but identified a need for a greater understanding of the benefits of this system and difficulties in retrieving gear. Moving into its next phase, more environmentally-friendly tags will be developed and expansion into different gear types will be explored. Available: https://static1.squarespace.com /static/5b987b8689c172e29293593f/t/5bd6e743a4222f4430aabf3b/1540810590236/Casestudy-INDONESIA.mk2.single.pdf.

Thai Union Ghost Gear Work Plan

Thailand joined the GGGI in 2018 and applies the BPF in tackling the ALDFG issue. There are four work streams under the plan as follows:

(i)   Promote and raise global awareness of the issue through new initiatives;
(ii)   Fishery Improvement Projects (FIPs) for purse seine tuna in the eastern Atlantic Ocean and Indian Ocean, in line with the GGGI Best Practice Framework and the FAO Voluntary Guidelines on the Marking of Fishing Gear;
(iii)   Increase the number of vessels involved and the capacity to remove lost FADs under the FAD Watch programme in the Indian Ocean; and
(iv)   Improve management practices for ALDFG in Thailand to reduce and prevent pollution into the marine environment.

Available: https://www.thaiunion.com/files/download/sustainability/policy/Thai-Union-and-the-Global-Ghost-Gear-Initiative-Work-Plan-2018-2020-Overview.pdf.

Philippines: the Steveston Harbour Net Recycling Initiative

This initiative involved the shipping of discarded fishing nets (that had been retrieved by the fishing communities in the Philippines) to Slovenia to be recycled into nylon yarn for product manufacture. The first shipment of nets for recycling revealed that only nets made of nylon 6 could be recycled. This is only a subset of a full seine net. Other parts of the net are made of other types of plastics that cannot be recycled in the context of this project, such as the polyethylene-based border web and the polypropylene ropes. New options are being explored for these. Available: https://www.ghostgear.org/projects/2018/10/10/steveston-harbour-net-recycling-initiative.