

FREE LITTERAT PROJECT

Advancing towards litter-free Atlantic coastal communities

2023-2026



- Workpackage 1** / Prevention by improving waste management and recycling
- Workpackage 2** / Assessing and Monitoring micro and macro litter contamination
- Workpackage 3** / Modelling approaches from micro and macro litter
- Workpackage 4** / Reducing marine litter and associated risks

Project website : www.freelitterat.eu
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STUDY OF WASTE MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

Fishing gear

Passively fished waste



Visits of fishing ports along the Atlantic coast

RECYCLING TESTS

Shredding
Grinding

Prototype fabrication



DISSEMINATION

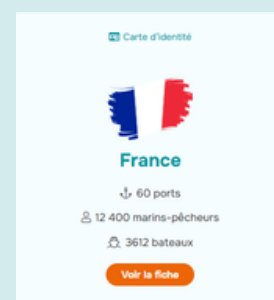
Webinars
Workshops

Pilot actions in ports



TOOLS

- Analysis of regulatory implementation
- Website: <https://goodpractices.freelitterat.eu/>
- Life cycle studies of fishing gear
- Prototypes of mending needles
- Practical guides for the collection and management of passively fished waste



CONTEXT

FRANCE

PRACTICES

End-of-life fishing gear (EOLFG) : Half of the ports sort EOLFG → practices vary widely from one port to another

- Some ports impose fines for illegal dumping.
- Recycling centers may be open or closed.
- Some fishermen dismantle gillnets, but this is not the case in all ports.
- Valorisation: Searching for Solutions
- Fishing gear is still often landfilled, incinerated, or stored until it can be recycled.
- Currently, there are several shipments of nets to Ukraine, where they are used to protect cities from drone attacks.

Fishing For Litter (passively fished waste) : 14 ports participate in the program « Repêchons les Océans » in France, with around 900 fishermen.



CHALLENGES

- Fishermen involvement : varies from one port to another → sorting is often seen as a burden (in terms of time and energy); EOLFG is sometimes left on the quays, and waste bins are not always used properly (mixing of waste).
- Funding for the dismantling of EOLFG
- Some ports lack storage space for EOLFG.
- Lack of suitable locations for selective collection and lack of uniformity in port practices.
- Recovery: difficult recycling (contamination and mixing of materials) + closure of Fil&Fab (2025) → no local recycling chain
- Enforce the AGECE law on port reception facilities to enable the separate collection of waste

SPAIN

PRACTICES

End-of-life fishing gear (EOLFG) : no common waste management system

- Local facilities for recycling fishing gear materials are limited.

Fishing For Litter: programs in place since 2009

- Led by R&D organizations, NGOs, or private organizations, these initiatives focus on collection, quantification, characterization, recovery, and awareness-raising. These initiatives primarily rely on trawlers.
- Once the projects end, the collection systems (containers, logistics, coordination) are often suspended, which causes frustration.
- Work is underway to establish a national program for collecting marine litter



CHALLENGES

- Lack of standardized reporting and data collection systems across ports.
- Limited options for recycling and processing fishing gear, which hinders the development of economically viable supply chains.
- Fragmented management practices due to the absence of a uniform national system.
- Difficulties in maintaining fishermen's involvement in marine litter collection.
- Logistical challenges in ports, including the inappropriate use of containers, traceability issues, and a lack of storage space.
- Reliance on FFL project funding, which jeopardizes sustainability once projects are completed.

IRELAND

PRACTICES

Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) provisory program under the "Haul it Back CLG" (HIB) initiative.

Management of EOLFG: varies from port to port

- Generally handled by general waste collection companies and landfilled or incinerated.

What is recovered:

- Certain gear containing metal, such as traps and oyster bags.
- In some ports, rubber is recycled through a program.
- Wooden pallets and reels may also be collected for recycling or made available for reuse.
- Nylon pelagic trawl nets are collected and exported.

Fishing For Litter: 12 ports participate in the "Fishing for Litter" program in Ireland.

In 2025, the BIM began a review of the FFL program and is conducting several pilot initiatives to improve implementation and increase participation.



CHALLENGES

- Inappropriate use of port facilities (disposal of waste in trash cans or dumpsters not intended for that purpose)
- Lack of resources at ports to manage, report, and sort waste.
- Lack of standardization among ports, leading to inconsistencies in waste disposal.
- The presence of multiple competent authorities can also complicate data reporting when different reporting templates are used.
- Lack of waste recovery streams for end-of-life fishing gear
- Low volumes of passively caught waste (FFL) (insufficient to justify recovery)

Workshop

Better management of EOLFG and passively fished waste



Haliotika - Cité de la Pêche
Port of Guilvinec



TABLE 1 - COLLECTION AND SORTING

How can we set up an efficient waste collection and sorting system at the port ?

OBSERVATIONS

- Waste collection is organized differently in each port (lack of standardization)
- Funding for EOLFG management is not specifically allocated
- Dismantling issues—predominant for trawl nets
- In some ports, all waste is mixed together
- Lack of communication between entities (ports, cooperatives, fishermen)
- Insufficient staff at ports
- Incivility on the part of non-fishermen who use port waste collection points

OPPORTUNITIES

- Take inspiration from the agricultural sector
- Regulatory measures
- Use maritime cooperatives

OBSTACLES

- Communication with fishermen
- Cost of dismantling
- Lack of motivation within the sector
- Limited and unsuitable storage space (lack of land and open port)
- Conflicts over port use between the port authority and local communities

PROPOSITIONS

- Store EOLFG at a main port in the region
- Implement penalties for abandoning or improperly disposing of EOLFG
- Add this issue to the agenda of port council meetings
- Tag fishing gear and provide a badge for fishermen for weighing their waste
- Propose a common framework for all ports
- Make waste fees more visible
- Promote initiatives to bring together fishermen from different ports
- Simple and standardized instructions and signage
- Public funding (EU); check out the recreational boating sector ("APER plaisance")

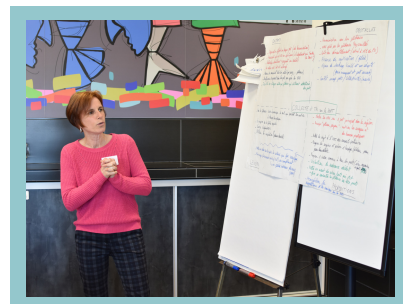
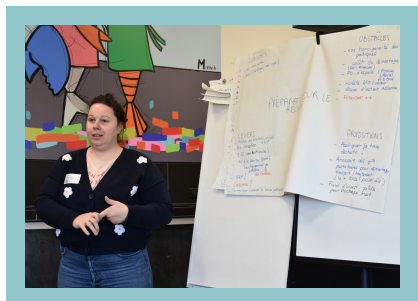


TABLE 2 - PREPARATION FOR RECYCLING

How can we best prepare used fishing gear so that it can be recycled?



OBSERVATIONS

- Decline in the transmission of mending techniques: this practice is becoming less common among younger generations
- Fishing gear made of multiple and mixed materials, and dirty

OBSTACLES

- Inconsistency in practices
- Cost of dismantling (human and financial resources)
- Space and land issues along the coast and on board
- Lack of awareness regarding the network of stakeholders

OPPORTUNITIES

- Seek financial solutions
- Strong environmental awareness among younger generations
- Social and Solidarity Economy (SSE) or prison labor for dismantling
- Source sorting: changing practices
- Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) for fishing gear
- Promote best practices (see Table 4)
- Sharing of practices: dedicated space/massification (e.g., Paimpol maritime district)

PROPOSITIONS

- Apply waste taxes
- Compile a list of service providers for dismantling, transportation, and processing (as local as possible)
- Pilot investment fund for storage and recycling

TABLE 3 - TREATMENT AND RECYCLING OF EOLFG

How can we improve the processing and recycling of waste once it has been collected?

OBSERVATIONS

- Net composition: mixed materials
- Contaminated material (organic matter)
- No existing recycling process
- Work on biodegradable nets to come => absorb the additional cost
- Global geopolitical context (price of virgin plastic)



OBSTACLES

- Management varies by port
- Low volume of EOLFG to be recycled
- Lack of recycling operators in France; no local recycling facilities
- Difficult-to-recycle material; technical challenge
- Lack of transparency regarding the establishment of the recycling chain
- Business model: value of recycled plastic compared to virgin plastic; few industrial customers

OPPORTUNITIES

- Willingness to invest/promote innovation
- New entrepreneurial projects (e.g., repurposing oyster bags)
- Political will to harmonize procedures
- Rise in the price of oil per barrel: impact on the price of virgin plastic
- Connections between companies using recycled plastics and port operators
- Involvement of the social economy
- Focus on user needs rather than waste
- Talking about resources rather than waste
- Eco-design of fishing gear to facilitate recycling

PROPOSITIONS

- Support entrepreneurs who have concrete solutions
- Mobile recycling units
- Organization to standardize practices
- Issue calls for expressions of interest
- Designate a contact person in each department and maritime district responsible for resource recovery
- Create a white paper titled "Implementing Sustainable and Long-Term EOLFG Management" that can be replicated
- Establish a French entity for resource recovery (disassembly/recycling/cleaning/shredding, etc.) with the support of ESATs (assisted employment centers)
- Biodegradable nets
- Secure funding to finance EPU recycling
- Conceive an ideal theoretical port

TABLE 4 - STAKEHOLDER INVOLVEMENT

How can all stakeholders get involved in establishing a recycling chain?

OBSERVATIONS

- Slow evolution of practices
- Little communication among the various stakeholders
- Differences in financial and human resources among ports
- Lack of communication about existing initiatives
- Little participation or support from organisations



LEVIERS

- Recognition of fishermen and their good practices
- Recognition of ports and their good practices
- Environmental awareness
- Upcoming challenges for manufacturers (recycled plastic)
- Products made from recycled fishing nets (Kerglenn)
- Local communities' involvement in the reuse of fishing nets (soccer fields)

OBSTACLES

- Incomplete supply chain: no local processing of EOLFG and no outlets for recycled material
- Lack of prevention and awareness-raising => lack of engagement among fishermen and port managers
- Lack of coordination among the various organizations
- Time and energy spent by fishermen
- Fishing vessels not equipped to receive waste

PROPOSITIONS

- Promoting best practices among fishermen through an award, a flag, or incentives for purchasing new equipment through a maritime cooperative
- Social media communication, promotion of the fisherman's profession
- Standard specifications for a "clean port" initiative / working group to create a certification label
- Easy-to-use port reception facilities
- Clear signage
- Identifying local outlets (to demonstrate market possibilities to fishermen)
- Communication about recycling outlets (encouraging sorting, highlighting benefits)
- Transparency regarding the recycling supply chain



SUMMARY

The management of discarded fishing gear and passively caught waste remains a complex issue for both ports and fishing professionals. The workshop held in Guilvinec on March 19, 2026, identified four priorities: improving collection and sorting, establishing a recycling chain, highlighting initiatives, and strengthening stakeholder engagement.

1. Improving Collection and Sorting

Sorting EOLFG places a significant burden on fishermen, hence the need to promote best practices and highlight the efforts of committed professionals. Participants emphasized the importance of clear signage, standardized guidelines, and a common management framework to reduce disparities between ports. Space constraints (both in ports and on vessels) and limited human resources call for the implementation of shared solutions, such as dedicated storage areas or regional centralization. Designating an “EOLFG management” coordinator for each territory or maritime district could also strengthen coordination and the dissemination of information.

2. Establishing a Recovery Chain

The lack of a comprehensive recovery chain currently limits the recycling of EOLFG, due to mixed materials, low volumes, and insufficient economic value for recycled plastics. Establishing this chain will rely on improved sorting, optimized processes, and the identification of industrial markets. Eco-design of the equipment also appears to be a key factor in facilitating its disassembly and recycling.

3. Promoting Initiatives

Growing awareness of environmental issues and stricter regulatory requirements are key drivers for changing practices. Increased communication about the environmental, economic, and regional benefits of optimized management can encourage participation, while also promoting the fishing industry and exemplary initiatives.

4. Involving the Entire Supply Chain

Preparing for the future Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) system requires the commitment of all stakeholders, from fishermen to recyclers, including ports, professional organizations, local governments, and manufacturers. The workshop highlighted the importance of this collective approach, which allows for the sharing of challenges, the identification of realistic solutions, and the establishment of a shared governance framework. This broad-based involvement is essential to ensuring an effective transition toward a more sustainable and structured management of port waste.

Resources :

website : <https://goodpractices.freelitterat.eu/>

Contact : compositic@univ-ubs.fr

PROPOSITIONS CLÉS

- Establish EOLFG local representatives
- Share and promote best practices
- Encourage exchanges among stakeholders
- Harmonize practices



1. MANUFACTURE

- Eco-design

2. USE

- Repair
- Passing on skills to younger generations

3. SORTING

- Clear signage
- Closed containers
- Common framework for managing EOLFG among ports in the area
- Specifications

4. DISMANTLING

- Involvement of the Social and Solidarity Economy

5. STORAGE

- Dedicated storage areas
- Regional centralization (massification)

6. TRANSPORT

7. WASTE MANAGEMENT

- Identifying industrial markets
- New reuse channels
- Mobile recycling units

Appendix 1 : Paperboard table 1

Table host : Karine Maignan - MK développement

CONSTATS	OBSTACLES
- Organisation différente sur chaque port (abs. harmonisation) - Financements action des EPU non spécifiques (c. le département qui "boute les trous") - Problématique démantèlement + prégnante sur chalets - Sur certains ports : tout est mélangé - Absence de communication entre les entités (port, coop, ... pêcheurs) - Insuffisance de personnel dans les ports pour gérer les EPU - Incivilité des citoyens autres que pêcheurs qui utilisent abîmement le port	- Communication vers les pêcheurs - EPU jetés par les pêcheurs trop saillies - Coût du démantèlement (estimé à 15% du P.V.) - Absence de motivation (filière) - Espace de stockage limité et non adapté (fonc. manquant et port ouvert) - Conflit usage ports / collectivités (mairie)
COLLECTE et TRI sur le PORT	
- Pour les pêcheurs : levier économique - le seul qui pourrait les motiver à changer leurs pratiques - S'inspirer de la filière aquicole - Levier réglementaire - Utiliser les coopératives (pêcheurs durciers)	- Stocker les EPU sur 1 port principal dans la région - Principe "pollueur-payeur" : motiver les usagers à des bonnes pratiques - Mettre le sujet à l'ordre des conseils portuaires - Ragner les engins et prévoir 1 badge / pêcheur pour peser leur déchets. - Proposer 1 cadre commun à tous les ports (éco. organis. + gest. ports) - Visibiliser la redondance déchets - Mettre en avant des actions / ports qui font + faire se rencontrer les pêcheurs de différents ports - Homogénéiser la signalétique et les consignes sur les ports.
LEVIERS	PROPOSITIONS
- Mettre en valeur sur les ports les acteurs qui font recyclage - Envisager financements publics (EU?) en complément ? ↳ voir filière bateaux plaisance (APERF)	

Appendix 2 : Paperboard table 2

Table host : Mathilde Gueguen - Coopération maritime

CONSTATS	OBSTACLES
- pas mono matière - sale / mélangé (mat. orga.)	- non homogénéité des pratiques - coût du démontage (Rtl - Financier) - Pb d'espace (Foncier Littoral et à bord) - modèle éco / valeur - réseau d'acteur méconnu - Financier ++
PRÉPARATION POUR LE RECYCLAGE	
LEVIERS	PROPOSITIONS
- Chercher des solutions indust. + fin. - éco conception - ESS (pénitentiaire) - tri à la source (port) ↳ changement de pratique dès l'enfance - REP? - Conscience? - Communiquer / valoriser les bonnes pratiques	- Appliquer la taxe déchets? - Annuaire des prestataires pour démontage, transport / traitement (le + local possible) - Fond d'invest. pilote pour stockage mer.

Appendix 3 : Paperboard table 3

Table host : Claire Allan - UBS

CONSTATS

questionnement sur matière des filets
travail sur filets modifiés adhésifs → assumer marché
ex. filet mailant en Pêcheur → à venir / pour goût

pêcheurs ont d'autres préoccupations
contexte mondial → politique
la filière n'existe pas

OBSTACLES

aspect contraignant pour les pêcheurs
(claire chargé de travail -)
espace en pêche
coût / coût. éco
coût plastique usage
gestion de la pêche
financement organisation filière locale
faible pécunier / volume
manque de temps en France → pas pour recyclage
de ces matières à leur initiative
pas d'opérateur de recyclage
matière difficile à recycler
challenge technique (limité recyclage)
problème de manque de matière
matériau n'achète pas (trop cher)
opacité / manque de transparence sur mise
en place de la filière

TRAITEMENT

recyclage
éducation marine
environnement

ET VALORISATION

LEVIER

volonté investissement / mise en avant
innovation
grande conscience sociale des jeunes
génération
valoriser les initiatives des pêcheurs
entrepreneurs qui ont des projets → ex. valoriser
de filets à l'écologie (→ filage)

harmonisation procédures
volonté politique (locale / régionale)
base de pêche → 2 pts de recyclage
matérialisation des pratiques (ex. grande marine
manifester le projet)
publicité → forte visibilité
construction entreprises qui utilisent MPR de gestionnaires
de ports
impliquer l'économie solide
lien entre acteurs
partir de l'initiative et pas du décret
parler de la mer comme que de déchets

PROPOSITIONS

x faire liens → entraîner les pêcheurs
plus expérimentés
x accompagner les entrepreneurs avec
réseaux existants
x unités modifiables / recyclage
x avoir des "garanties" pour l'harmonisation des
pratiques / procédures
x harmonisation des
x avoir d'abord aux GIC / intéresser les clubs de
pêcheurs / MPR
x 1. identifier / dpt. de par. garantir maximale MPR
(ordonner aux possibilités valorisation)
x 2. faire état : des déchets / pêcheurs → transformable
x mettre en place d'acteurs (ex. (démocratie / recyclage)
avec offre / MPR
modèle individuel
national / régional
x 3. faire état : des déchets / pêcheurs
x produit financier → placement recyclage
x pour être des opérateurs
transparents
x associer les pêcheurs et les comités de pêcheurs / clubs
x fait historique → idéal

Appendix 4 : Paperboard table 4

Table host : Blanche Moron - UBS

CONSTATS

- évolution lente + travail nécessaire
- manque de prévention / sensi.
↳ mobilisation ? + animation
- manque de com. entre les différents
acteurs.
- incertitude : déchets / mélanges
- boîtes de la transmigration
- disparité entre ports / moyens financiers +
humain
- mauvaise image (déchets)
- initiatives mais manque de com.
↳ manque de participation

LEVIER

→ financements surajoutés
→ cohésion des charges → port propre → pêcheurs propres
→ réglementation / réglementation pour les indus
↳ utilisation plastique recyclé
→ exemple de production pour sensibiliser pêcheurs (Kerguelen)
→ mobiliser collectifs → utilisation.
→ pêcheurs : + valeur
→ communication sur les réseaux (pêcheurs)
↳ valorisation des matières
→ caméras sur déchetterie
→ visibilité économique → suivi filière recyclage (com.)
↳ transparence

IMPLICATION DES PARTIES PRENANTES

OBSTACLES

- pas de modèle éco. viable
- manque de coordina.
- pour valoriser (ports, régions)
- coût
- retard sur la mise en place
de la REP
- local ?
- coût plastique recyclé pour
indus.
- participation asso.
- boîtes pas adaptés à la
réception des déchets
- temps / reconnaissance

PROPOSITIONS

→ isoler budget traitement (port)
→ signalisation (communication)
sur la suite
→ groupe de travail local
→ communication entre services
↳ qualification / communication
↳ qualification / communication
→ valorisation des pratiques
↳ pratiques de pêche
→ harmoniser les pratiques
→ trouver des acteurs locaux
↳ intérêt du tri
→ installer de réception dans les ports. (facilité)

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

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LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

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