

# Stop The Nets:

## Pass The Driftnet Modernization and Bycatch Reduction Act (S.273)

Large-mesh drift gillnets—mile long, nearly invisible nets set at night near the ocean's surface to capture swordfish—entangle, injure and kill incredible numbers of whales, dolphins, sea lions, sea turtles, sharks and other animals. This single fishery kills more dolphins each year than all other observed U.S. West Coast and Alaska fisheries combined.

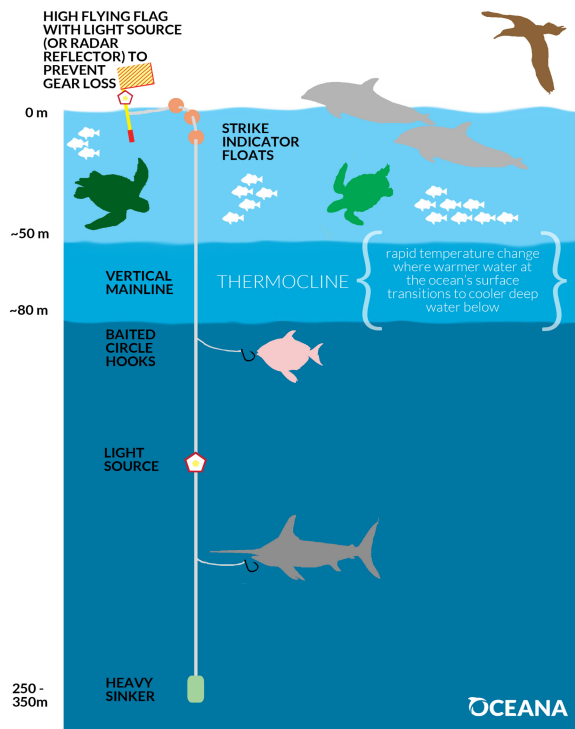
California is the only place in the nation where drift gillnets are still allowed to catch swordfish. Recent state legislation (S.B. 1017) established a transition program to assist fishermen to move to more selective gear and sunset state drift gillnet permits in 2024. The California Ocean Protection Council and Oceana contributed a combined \$2 million to implement the program. Participating fishermen become first in line for new federal deep-set buoy gear permits, an innovative technique that targets swordfish selectively without causing harm to marine mammals and sea turtles.

Federal legislation (S. 273) to permanently end large-mesh (14 inch and greater) drift gillnet fishing gear in the United States passed the Senate unanimously and is under consideration in the House of Representatives. This legislation is crucial to transitioning California's dirtiest fishery once and for all. Every day that goes by with these nets in the water is another day of deadly risk for ocean wildlife.

Take Action Today at [www.oceana.org/StopTheNetsForever](http://www.oceana.org/StopTheNetsForever)

### Transitioning To Cleaner Fishing Gear

Ending the use of large mesh drift gillnets will not mean the end of fishing for swordfish in California. It will simply require a transition to **deep-set buoy gear**. The gear is actively tended, so swordfish are landed faster, meaning the fish is higher quality and can be worth nearly double the fish caught in drift gillnets. Transitioning to deep-set buoy gear will save countless whales, sea turtles, seals, sea lions, seabirds and other animals, while continuing a sustainable West Coast swordfish fishery.



Transitioning to deep-set buoy gear  
to catch swordfish

# WILL SAVE

an estimated



## 27 WHALES



## 548 DOLPHINS



## 333 SEALS & SEA LIONS

## 24 SEA TURTLES



and

## 70 SEABIRDS



over 10 years<sup>1</sup>

With the state of California's transition program underway, there's just one more step to make sure we remove deadly drift gillnets for good. Federal legislation will ensure this fishery never again threatens whales, sea turtles, dolphins and other animals in our nation's waters.

## Where We Are Now:

- Fishermen are already participating in the State of California's transition program for drift gillnets and receiving funds to surrender their permits and nets for recycling. The program is designed to compensate fishermen who turn in drift gillnets and permits, and aid with the transition to deep-set buoy gear.
- Oceana and the California Ocean Protection Council deposited a total of \$2 million into the state transition fund.
- Passage of S.273, the Driftnet Modernization and Bycatch Reduction Act, will mean a permanent end to this destructive fishing gear nationally.
- The Pacific Fishery Management Council approved a new deep-set buoy gear fishery, and the National Marine Fisheries Service will soon begin issuing federal permits to drift gillnet fishermen participating in the state transition program.

This is a chance to make a tangible difference by getting large-mesh drift gillnets off the water permanently, while supporting local fishermen and ocean wildlife.



Above: Left: Sperm whale; Right: Elephant seal pup at Big Sur. Far Right: Top: Humpback whale; Middle: Long-beaked common dolphins in Monterey Bay; Bottom: Swordfish.

The U.S. Senate passed legislation to end large mesh drift gillnets. The House of Representatives is expected to vote soon, and passage out of the House would send the action to the President's desk to be signed into law. This would phase out federal permits for large-mesh drift gillnet fishing and make sure this destructive and outdated fishing practice never returns. Together with the state of California's transition program, fishermen can provide swordfish to consumers without needlessly killing dolphins, whales, sea turtles and other marine life.

**TAKE ACTION**

**Write to your Congressman today!**

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Swordfish caught with  
deep-set buoy  
gear can be worth nearly

**TWICE AS MUCH**

as swordfish caught  
with drift gillnets



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