



Cornwall



Unravelling the Tangle

Investigating cetacean bycatch in Cornwall
and the Isles of Scilly



Niki Clear

Marine Conservation Officer

Cornwall Wildlife Trust

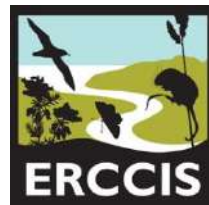
Niki.clear@cornwallwildlifetrust.org.uk

Photo Paul
Semmens



In 2000, NHM, IoZ (ZSL), SAC in Scotland and MEM in Wales were amalgamated by Defra into the CSIP

CWT MSN is a partner and operates in Cornwall and IoS



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SEAL
Group
Research
Trust





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UK Cetacean strandings

2011- 2017

Scotland – **33%**

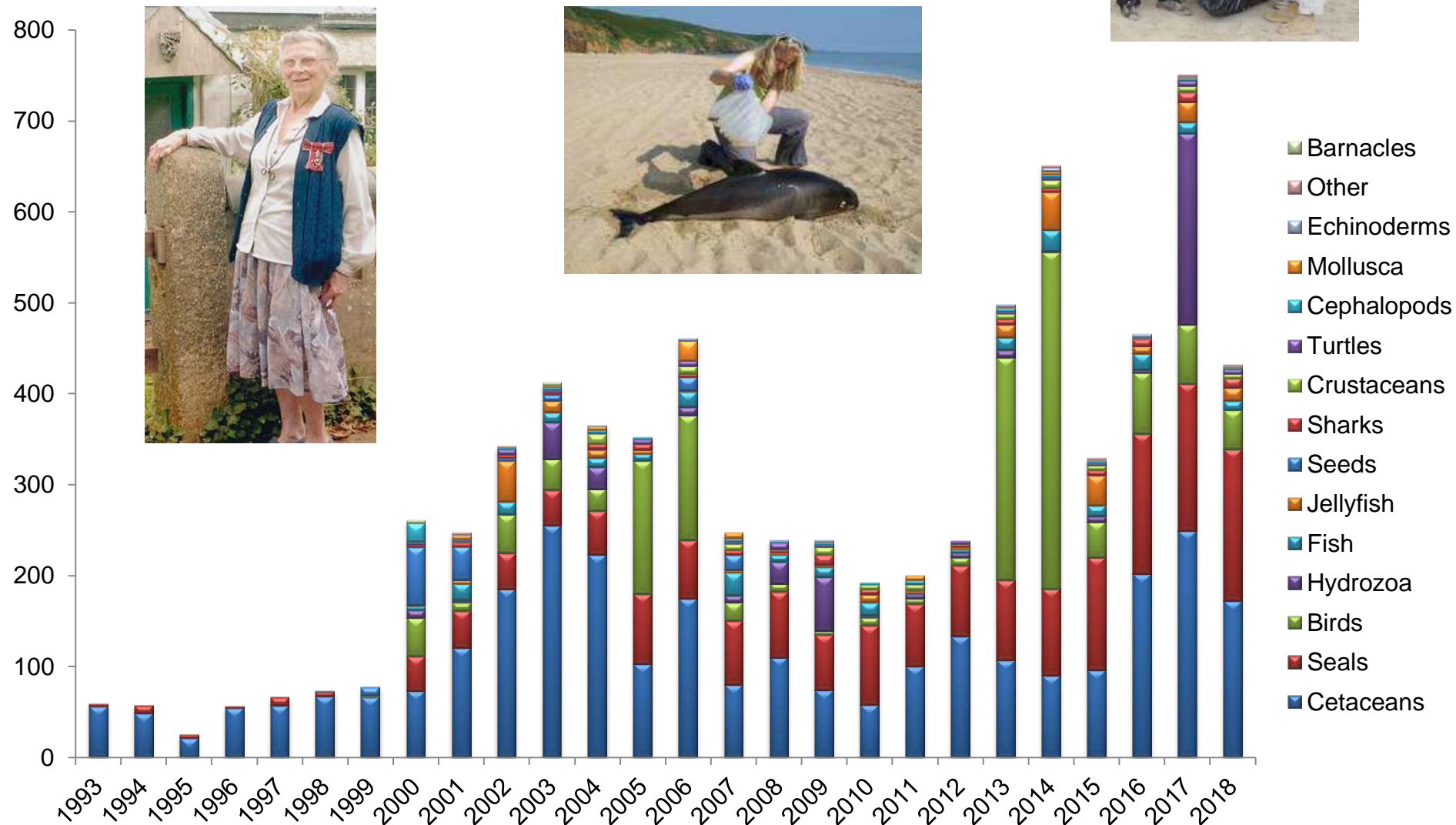
England (ex Cornwall) – **28%**

Wales – **16%**

NI and Island nations – **3%**

Cornwall – 20%







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Assessing Cause of Death Cetaceans

Over 150 trained volunteers at examine and photograph in-situ, analysed by experts in CWT and MSN following strict protocol

Facilitate PM retrieval (CSIP licenced)

which are preformed at UoE Penryn campus





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Bycatch and Entanglement





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Bycatch Evidence Evaluation Protocol and Seal Evidence Evaluation Protocol





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Volunteers trained to take detailed photos

Experts assess photos to identify known features of bycatch

Final assessment is checked by vet pathologist before use in analysis

Currently conducting a study to test features and ability to identify BEEP against PME conclusions – initial findings >80% accurate

Cetacean photo requirements

Wash off sand/debris/blood/seaweed first, and as you turn the body

Photos with red captions are priority, to help us assess possible cause of death. Please photograph all views shown below and overleaf, even if the animal is going for post-mortem examination. Take shots of the skin when both wet and dry, and with and without flash when overcast. **Please ensure sharp focus.**



View of animal at stranding site. To show location, beach type, rocks, etc., that may cause scratches.



Full views, left and right side. To confirm species and determine BCC (BCC = level of decomposition).



Genital area, close-up and whole underside of body. To confirm sex and show any marks.



Encircling marks. Follow the line of any linear marks on the body, head, beak, jaw, fins, tail, tailstock.



Show how the line continues around the body part, even if it only partially encircles.



Provide a complete record of the track of any linear marks from all angles.



Head from above and below. Take photos even if no marks are visible.



Head, from left and right sides. Take photos even if no marks are visible.



Upper and lower jaw. Close-ups to show any net cuts/slices to lips and inside mouth. Take care with sharp teeth.



Nutritional state. Take photos from horizontal angle looking from the head towards to tail, to show nutritional state.



Amputated body parts. Full-width views from all angles to show where on the body the part is missing.



Amputated stump, detailed close-ups from all angles. To show clean or ragged (scavenged) edges.



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Bycatch Evidence Evaluation Protocol



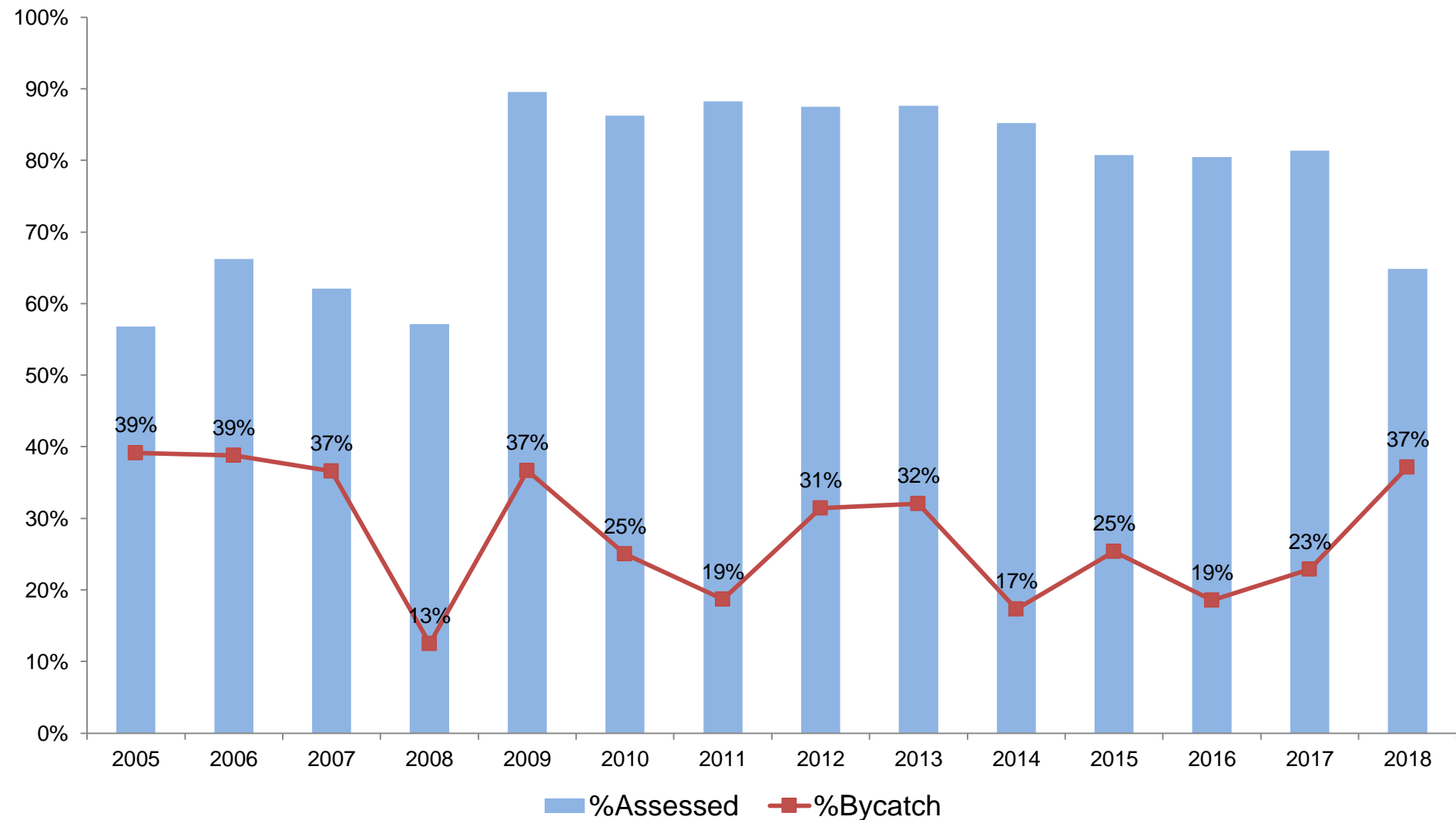
Currently

- Diagnosing bycatch without PM lacks credibility
- National statistics based on animals that undergo post-mortem examination
- Valuable data from animals that are not PM'd are often lost or ignored
- True scale of bycatch mortalities is under-represented
- Post mortem opportunities are low (fraction of strandings)

Change this by publishing our
BEEP methods



Bycatch Evidence for Cetaceans from BEEP assessments and PM





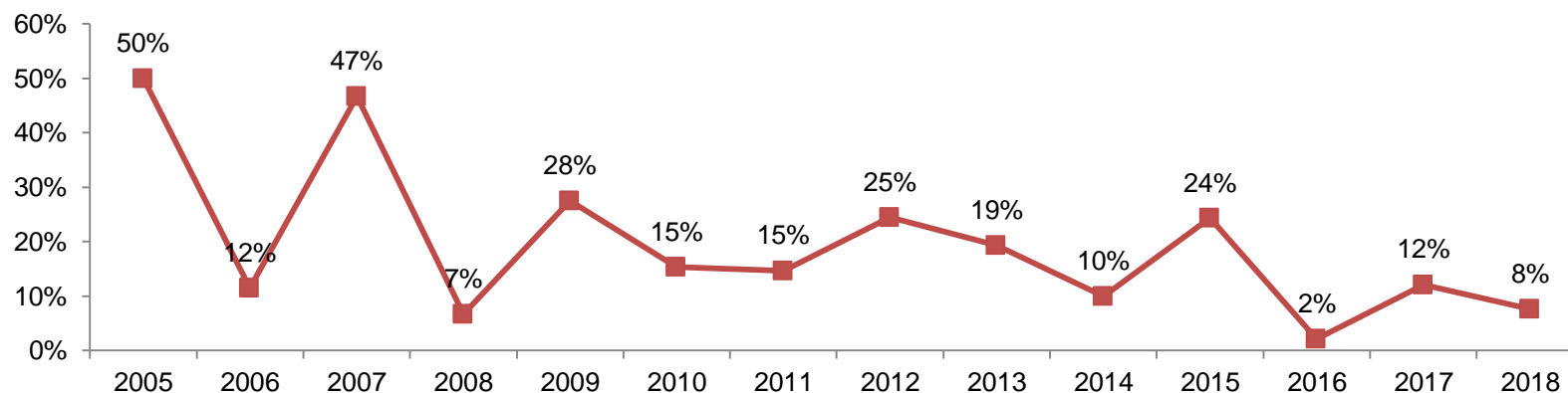
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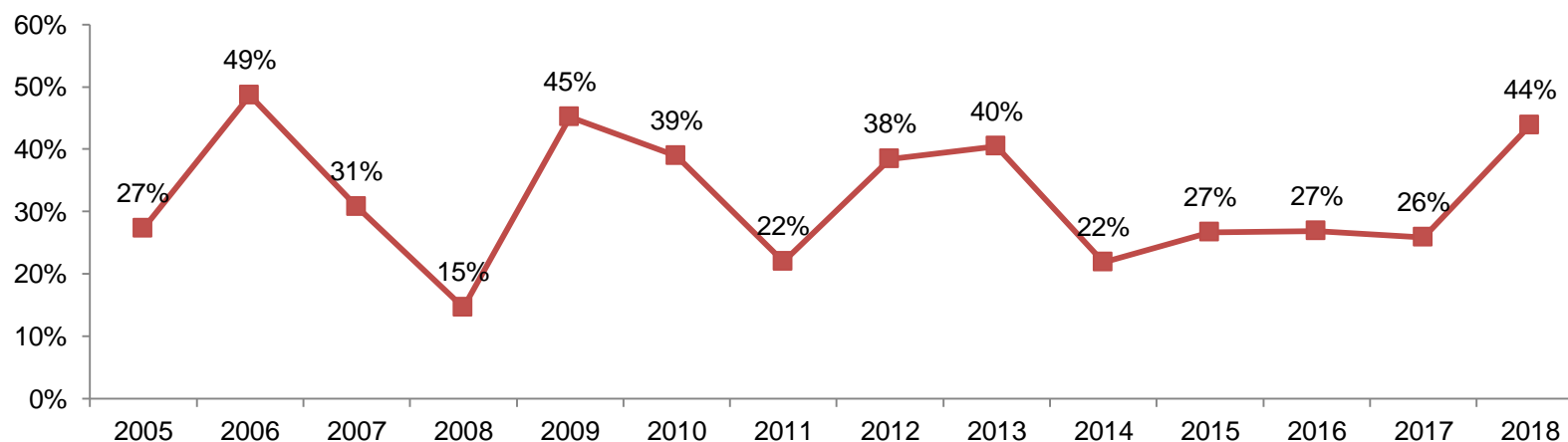
Bycatch Evidence

harbour porpoise and common dolphin

% Bycatch for harbour porpoise strandings



% Bycatch for common dolphin strandings





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Bycatch – the national picture harbour porpoise and common dolphin

“By-caught short-beaked common dolphins were primarily recorded stranded in southwest UK (n=278)”

“By-caught harbour porpoises were recorded UK wide, with highest numbers in the southwest (n=125)”

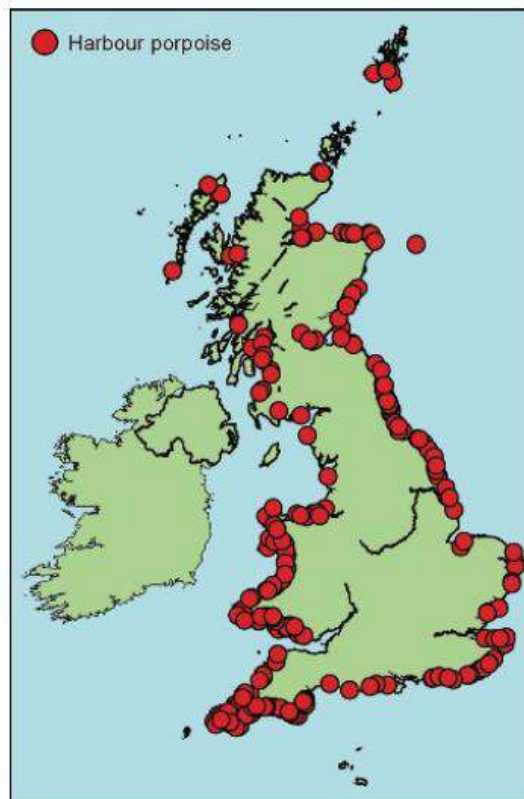


Figure 26 Distribution of harbour porpoise by-catch in the UK (1991-2017)

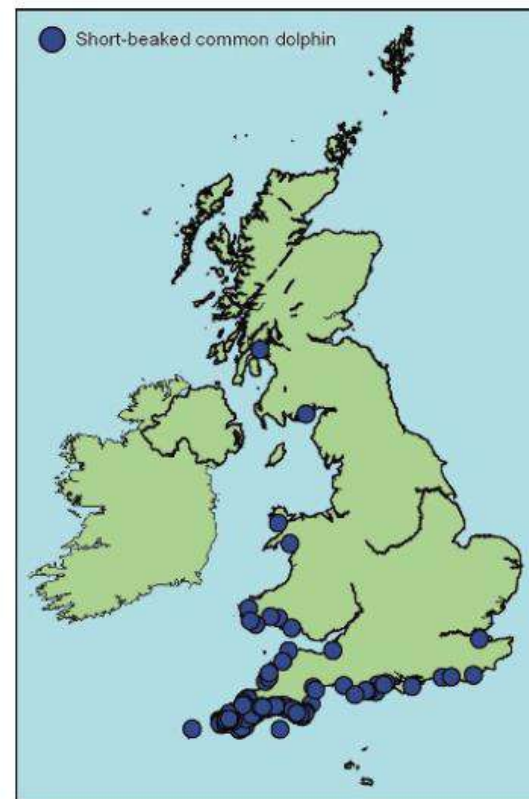


Figure 27 Distribution of short-beaked common dolphin by-catch in the UK (1991-2017)

Cornwall Bottlenose Dolphin Consortium

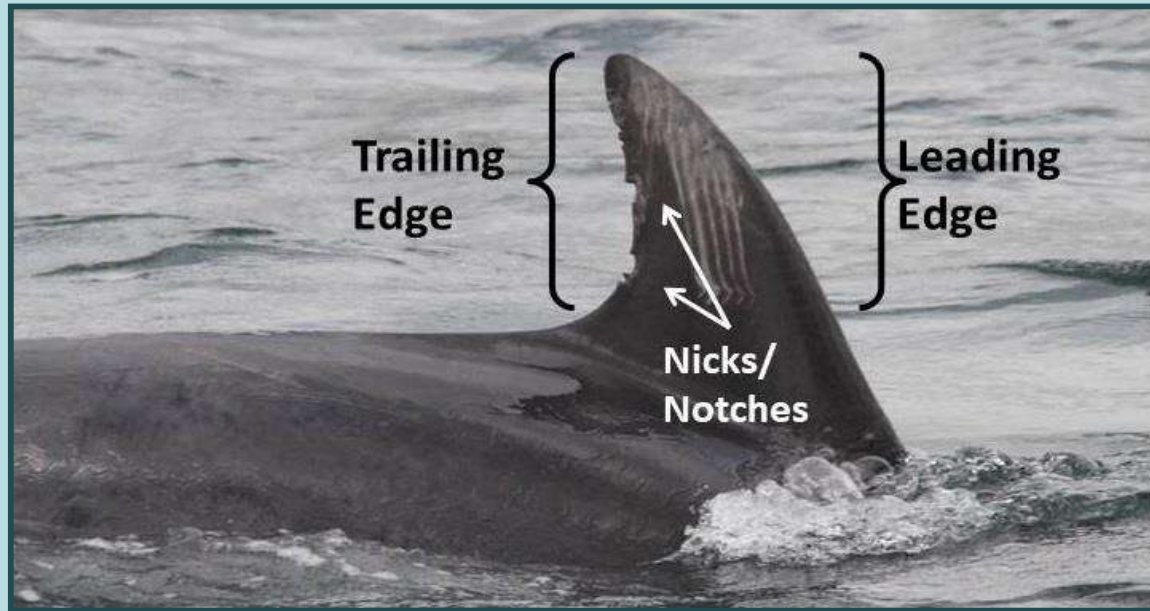
The bottlenose dolphin we see are resident to the SW - England's only resident pod!

There are about 28 individuals in the SW Bottlenose Population

These animals are seen all along the southwest coastline but spend most of their time around the coast of Cornwall



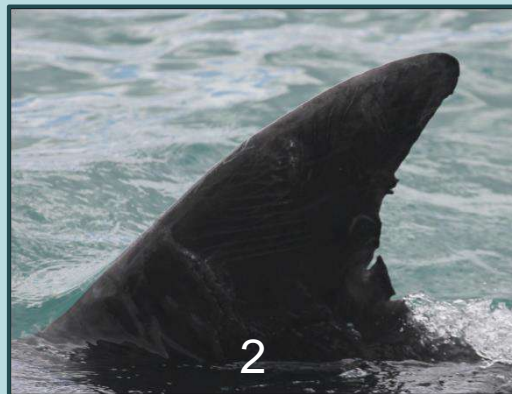
Photo-Identification



Bottlenose dolphins can be identified by looking at photographs of their dorsal fins

The trailing edge of the fin is most commonly used to identify an individual dolphins

Examples:





Bottlenose Dolphin

Polridmouth, Fowey
05 November 2018





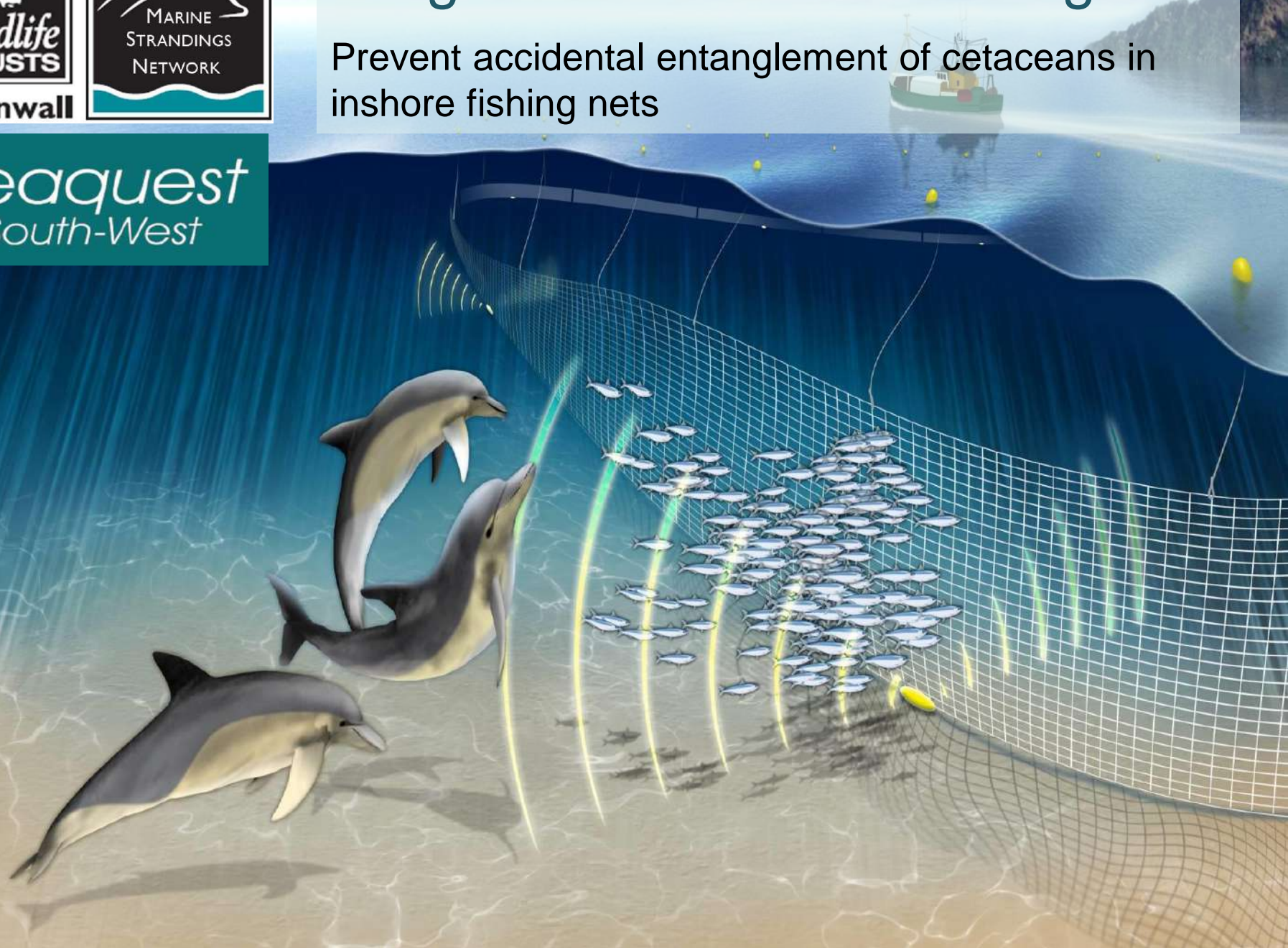
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Seaquest
South-West

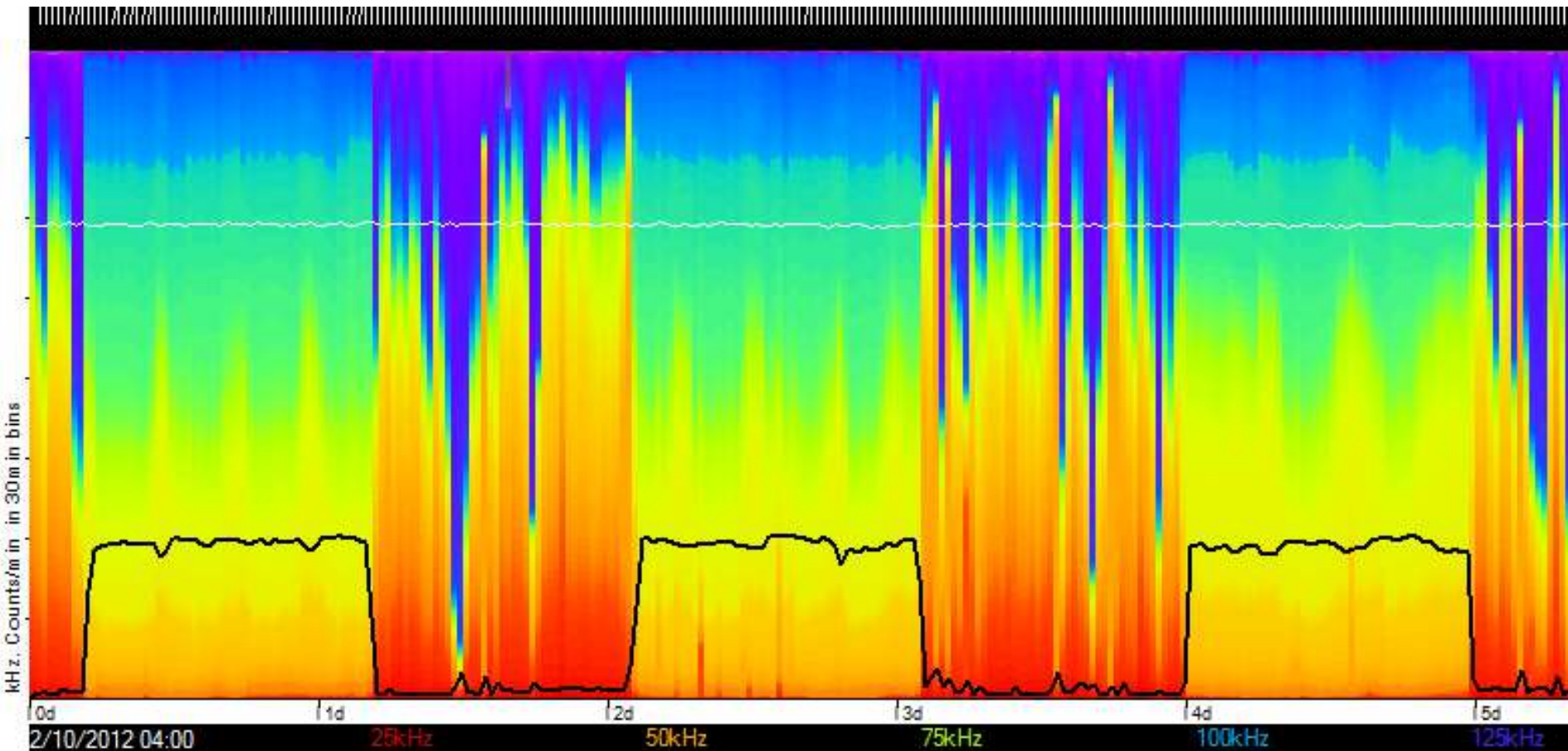
Mitigation devices - the Pinger

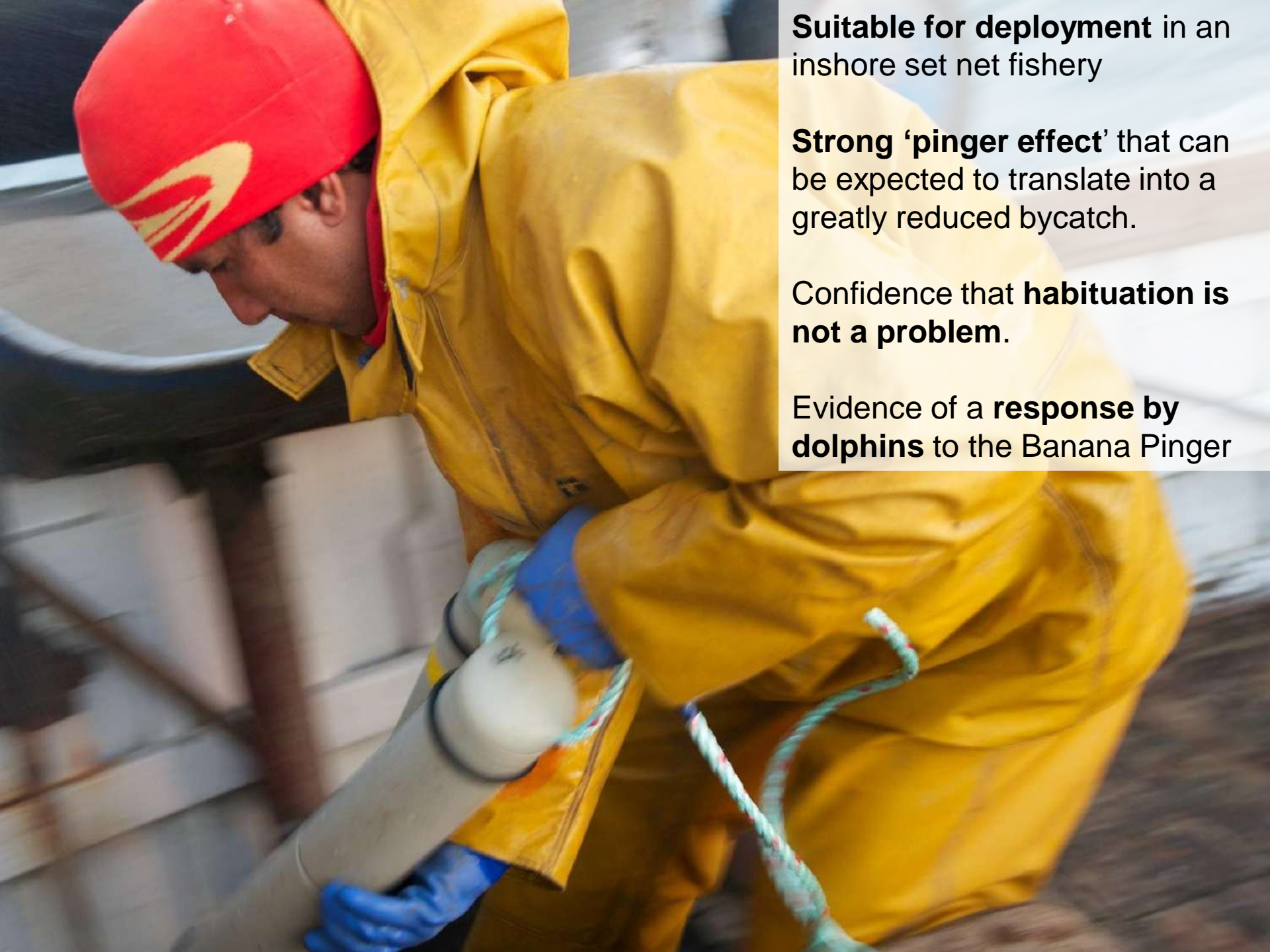
Prevent accidental entanglement of cetaceans in inshore fishing nets



The Cycling Pinger Project

Black line shows pinger mode (ON / OFF)
Purple colouration shows detected porpoise clicks





Suitable for deployment in an inshore set net fishery

Strong 'pinger effect' that can be expected to translate into a greatly reduced bycatch.

Confidence that **habituation is not a problem.**

Evidence of a **response by dolphins** to the Banana Pinger



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Seaquest
South-West

Pingers – best option
currently

Positive engagement in
Mevagissey

DEFRA SW Pilot

Data needed – no blame
reporting



MSN Annual Report 2017

**Published and available
to download**

Summary of all strandings
reported for 2017

Available to download from the
CWT website or request a
copy via email

Strandings@cornwallwildlifetrust.org.uk



2017 Annual Report

Marine Strandings in Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly

Report by
Cornwall Wildlife Trust
Marine Strandings Network

Authors: Niki Clear, Anthea Hawtrey-Collier, Ruth Williams and Cheryl Yarham





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What can you do?



Remember Cornwall's Marine Animal Emergency Contacts

LIVE stranded marine animal

British Divers Marine Life Rescue
01825 765546

DEAD stranded marine animal

CWT Marine Strandings Network
0345 201 2626

Wildlife **Disturbance** or **Harassment**

Cornwall Marine and Coastal Code
0345 201 2626



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Cornwall Marine
& Coastal Code
Group





Cornwall Wildlife Trust

*Protecting Cornwall's wildlife
and wild places*

Thank you!!

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Cornwall Wildlife Trust

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