

# What's the catch with lumpsuckers?

## A North Atlantic study of seabird bycatch in lumpsucker gillnet fisheries

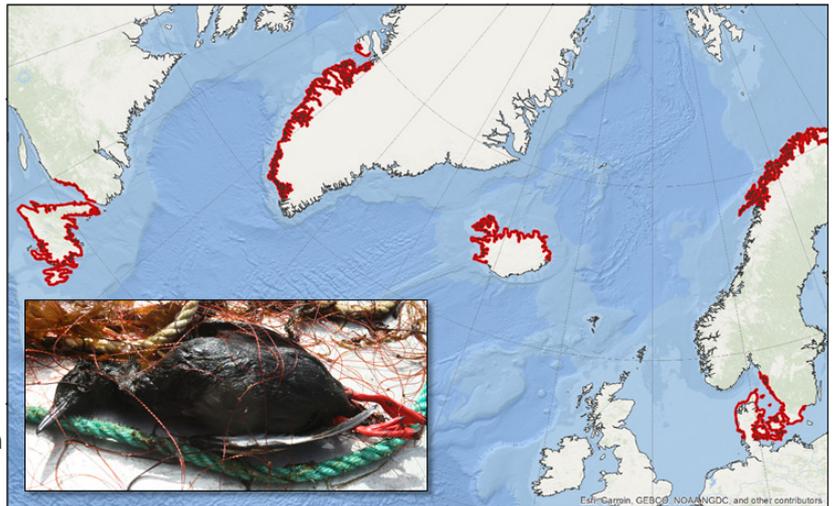
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### Key results:

This factsheet presents the findings of the first effort to quantify the potential impacts on seabird populations of a species-specific fishing activity across its entire range. It provides an understanding of the overall effects of coastal gillnet fisheries on seabird populations and bycatch reduction efforts.

Incidental bycatch in fisheries is a conservation threat to many seabirds. Most knowledge on bycatch comes from longline fisheries whereas the impacts of coastal gillnet fisheries are poorly understood e.g. the North Atlantic lumpsucker fishery.

Across the range of lumpsucker fisheries most birds killed are diving ducks, cormorants and auks. Bycatch rates vary substantially among countries, and locally high numbers of bycaught birds were recorded. Large differences between countries might reflect large spatial differences in bycatch rates, but may also be due to how data is recorded by onboard inspectors (Iceland), self-administered registration (Norway) and direct observations by cameras (Denmark).



Map of the North Atlantic showing the main areas where North Atlantic lumpsucker is fished. Picture: black guillemot drowned in lumpsucker net. Photo © Kirstin Fangel.

Lumpsucker gillnet fisheries may pose a significant risk to some seabird species and there is a need to document the impact of these fisheries on North Atlantic and Arctic seabird populations through independent data collection schemes.

### Management and Conservation implications:

- Lumpsucker fisheries might pose a significant risk to multiple seabird populations of different species.
- It is important to assess bycatch on seabirds across large spatial scales.
- Seafood sustainability certification schemes are an opportunity to ensure adequate monitoring of bycatch and the protection of vulnerable seabird species.

### Monitoring recommendations:

- Fill the large knowledge gaps on seabird bycatch through more regular independent fisheries monitoring.
- There is a need to standardize methods and metrics recorded in monitoring of seabird bycatch among the North Atlantic and Arctic countries.
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