
Net Free Seas Handbook 2021

FOR FISHERS



About the project:

The Net Free Seas project (NFS) is a project started by the Environmental Justice Foundation (EJF) in 2019. EJF is an international non-profit organisation that is working to protect the natural environment and the people and wildlife that depend upon it. The Net Free Seas project is funded by the Norwegian Retailers' Environment Fund.

The main objectives of NFS are:

- 1) Remove fishing net waste and ghost fishing gears from the natural environment;
- 2) Provide economic benefits to local communities to collect and clean nets, ready to be recycled.
- 3) Provide communities with a secondary source of income to build resilience in the face of environmental threats or climate change.

Introduction:

Discarded fishing nets and ghost fishing gears can be extremely harmful to marine animals and ecosystems. World Animal Protection estimates that nets kill at least 136,000 seals, sea lions and whales every year. They also injure or kill thousands of other birds, turtles, fish and other species

NFS aims to empower communities to feel that they are part of the recycling solution. Currently, EJF works with artisanal fishing communities in Rayong, Chanthaburi, Nakhon Si Thammarat, Songkhla, Surat Thani and Phang Nga. By October 2020 we had already recycled 5.9 tonnes of nets into new products and even face shields and push sticks - designed to prevent the transmission of COVID-19.

Net Free Seas – Project Supply Chain



How does Net Free Seas work?

NFS is built to be simple by putting communities in direct communication with recyclers. This approach is designed to make the project as flexible and adaptable as possible so that it can fit to community needs whilst also addressing an environmental problem.

What can be made from fishing nets?

We are working with a range of Thai companies to show that you can make products including household items, COVID-19 related materials such as push sticks and face shields, as well as experimenting with making larger form products such as surfboard fins and chairs.



How can communities get involved?

NFS works with small-scale fishing communities across Thailand. We are always looking for new communities to join our network in recycling nets.



Steps to becoming part of the Net Free Seas project:



1. If your community uses a lot of fishing nets or you find there are lots of discarded nets in your community get in touch with us on LINE.



2. Find a person to be your focal point.
This person will oversee net collection.



3. Identify a fishing net collection point (This could be an area that is close to the pier or fishing boats but sheltered enough that nets won't blow away or be washed into the sea) in your community.



4. Work with your focal point to work out logistics from the net collection point to recyclers.



5. We will help you design a book-keeping system that is suitable for your community.



6. We will train you in how to clean the nets ready for collection. For more details about cleaning nets, please see below.



7. Coordinate with the NFS team on a timescale that works for you (collections every month, 2 months, etc) to collect nets.

How to identify nets?

We only collect and recycle gillnets made from Nylon (PA 6). These nets are extremely hard wearing and durable making them perfect for recycling!

This guide includes other types of net that we currently do not accept but are included to help fishers better identify what is and what is not acceptable. In the future we will expand NFS to accept different types of net.

Name of net	Main catch	Description	Market price for discarded nets	Net Free Seas accepted? (2020)
Gillnet	Crab	White/blue colour, very fine mesh	2-8 baht/kg	✓
Polypropylene	Fish (mostly commercial)	Blue, green, black, red. Thick and fine mesh.	2 - 5 baht/kg	✗
Fishing rope	N/A	Green and grey	2 - 5 baht/kg	✗



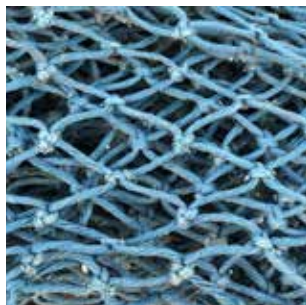
Type: Gillnet

Description: 0.25 - 1 mm twine, 2.5 - 10 cm mesh size, very fine but stiff.

Material: Monofilament nylon

Market price for discarded nets: 2 - 8 baht per kilogram

Net Free Seas buying price: ✅ 10 baht per kilogram



Type: Trawl, lift net

Description: Double and single twine, 2.5 - 5 cm mesh size, stiff plastic, can be both fine and thick.

Material: Polypropylene, Polyethylene

Market price for discarded nets: 4-5 baht

Net Free Seas buying price: ❌ Not accepted at this time



Type: Fishing rope

Description: Stiff and thick plastic

Material: Polypropylene, Polyethylene

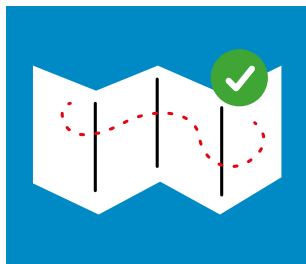
Market price for discarded nets: 2-5 baht

Net Free Seas buying price: ❌ Not accepted at this time

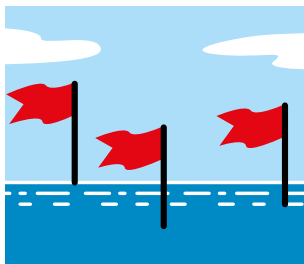
If you have questions about nets or ropes or are unsure if NFS can accept your gillnets, contact us via LINE.

How to prevent fishing net loss at sea

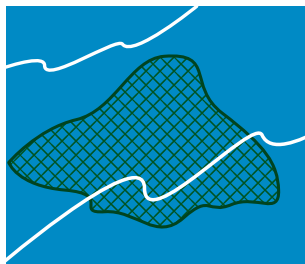
The easiest way to stop nets from harming our natural environment is to stop nets from falling in the sea in the first place or to pick them out of the sea as quickly as possible. Here are some tips to remember:



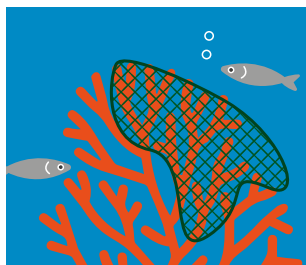
1. Get accurate maps from DoF or DMCR on where underwater coral formations lie so you can better avoid them.



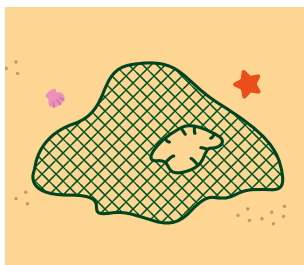
2. Work with other fishers to put flags over underwater formations so that they can see where they could snag their nets.



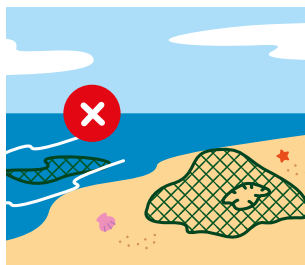
3. If you find lost nets in the sea bring them back to shore so that NFS can recycle them.



4. If you know that there is a net caught on a coral reef or underwater formation but it is too difficult or dangerous to retrieve yourself, save the GPS coordinates of the location and notify the NFS team on LINE.



5. If you damage your net at sea, please do not throw the net into the sea. Instead, keep it and bring it back to shore.



6. If you repair your nets at shore make sure that your discarded net does not fall in the sea. Keep it and store it so that NFS can recycle them.

Net Free Seas environmental and social compliance:

- We ask that participating communities adhere to a set of minimum standards that safeguard the natural environment whilst also protecting contributing individuals. These have been established in collaboration with local partners and international consultants.
- It is important to note that EJF operates a **zero-tolerance** policy towards the use of child labour or corruption. If individuals or communities are suspected of engaging in either practice EJF reserves the right to terminate the relationship immediately.

Environmental compliance:

- Nets, ropes and other plastic materials should never be burned as this can give off harmful fumes which are damaging to health.
- No chemicals should be used to clean the nets. These could contaminate the environment and harm wildlife. EJF advises communities to use sea water or rainwater to clean nets.

Child labour and young workers:

- EJF forbids the use of child labour at any point in the Net Free Seas supply chain. EJF defines a child as being any young person under the age of 18 years old. EJF follows the International Labour Organisation's definition of child labour to be any work that deprives children of their childhood, their potential and their dignity, and that is harmful to physical and mental development.
- EJF encourages communities to offer children internships or training as this is a useful way of building skills and knowledge. However their work must not:
 - ▶ Be work that **should** be conducted by core workers or community members.
 - ▶ Interfere with their schooling by depriving them of the opportunity to attend school.
 - ▶ Involve long working hours or work during the night.
 - ▶ Involve handling of hazardous chemicals or dangerous machinery, equipment and/or tools.

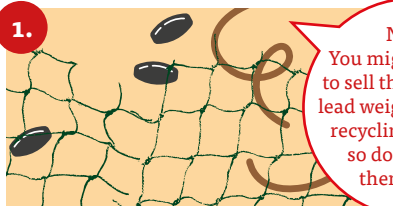
Working health, hours and benefits:

- The buying price of discarded gillnets under the project is guaranteed at 10 baht per kilogram. EJF will conduct unannounced inspections to ensure that the price is paid.
- A person hired under the project must be paid no less than the minimum wage of each province per day determined by the Wage Committee under the Thai Labour Protection Act. <https://www.mol.go.th/อัตราค่าจ้างขั้นต่ำ/>
- Working hours should not exceed eight working hours per day and workers should receive a minimum one hour rest during this period.
- EJF encourages the use of gloves while cutting, collecting and transporting the nets to avoid injuries.

How to clean nets?

Fishing nets should be cleaned and dried before shipping. This increases the quality of pellets produced from the discarded nets and means that recycling factories are more likely to accept nets in the future.

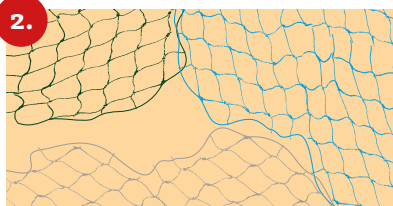
Here are some tips on how to clean nets:



1.

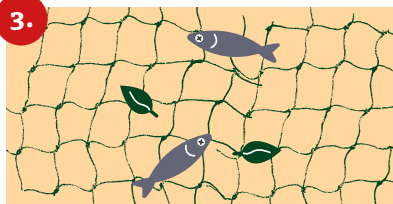
1. Remove ropes (often a different material) and lead weights - NFS only collects nets.

Note!
You might be able to sell the ropes and lead weights to other recycling partners so don't throw them away!



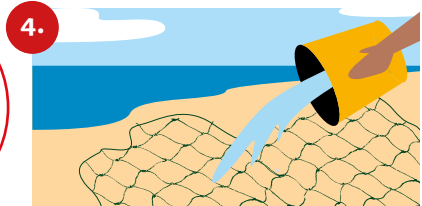
2.

2. Separate the different types of nets, check the guide above.



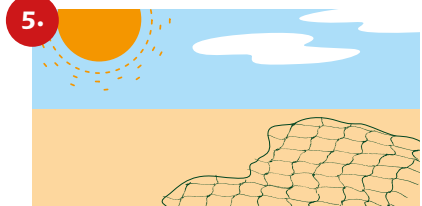
3.

3. Remove any fish or other animals, twigs, leaves, pebbles or other debris from the nets.



4.

4. Clean the nets with salt or rain water. We advise against using chemicals or freshwater.



5.

5. Dry the nets and keep them in a clean and sheltered place.



YES!



NO

