



Realising Economic Opportunities

Inspiring communities to realise the hidden **economic opportunities** of discarded **fishing nets** and ropes in the Northern Periphery & Arctic region



Northern Periphery and
Arctic Programme
2014-2020



EUROPEAN UNION

Investing in your future
European Regional Development Fund

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CHALLENGES

The Northern Periphery & Arctic Region boasts vibrant coastal communities, breath-taking landscapes and a thriving fishing industry. However, you can't live somewhere this beautiful without encountering challenges. Our location can lead to higher transport costs, outward migration, smaller populations and fewer opportunities. Particularly pertinent to the countries of the NPA region is the relentless increase of marine litter, specifically, **discarded fishing nets**.

The total economic damage of marine plastic waste is estimated at almost **€12 billion per year**, including environmental, commercial and clean-up costs.

Experts believe that entanglement by fishing-related gear is the **NUMBER 1. THREAT** to seabirds, turtles and marine mammals.

Long term effects on marine life include impacts on marine ecosystems that ultimately leads to **loss of biodiversity**.

Up to **12.7 million tons** of marine plastic waste enters the oceans each year due to poor waste management practices.

Over **33,000 nets** are estimated to be lost in selected European fisheries annually due to bad weather conditions, gear conflict and ocean currents.

Plastic material absorbs persistent organic pollutant from its ambient environment, which if ingested by **marine organisms, may enter the food web**.

By 2050, there may be **more plastic than fish** in the world's oceans

Approximately **640,000 tonnes** of fishing gear are lost globally each year

THE CIRCULAR OCEAN APPROACH

Results from our research will be used to inform scientists, politicians, entrepreneurs and local communities on how to develop sustainable solutions to the problem of derelict fishing gear. Circular Ocean will develop the following resources:

- A Marine Litter Environmental Impact and Lifecycle Handbook.

- Reports on the environmental impact of discarded fishing nets.
- Feasibility study and cost/ benefit analysis of fishnet collection for export and recycling.
- A guide to supportive policy and regional frameworks regarding innovation.
- Policy and institutional barrier reports.

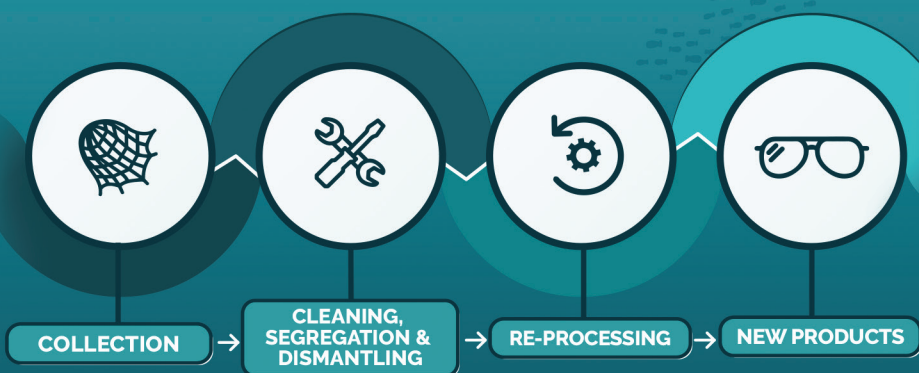
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OPPORTUNITIES

Applying information, knowledge and ideas gathered from across the region and beyond, the Circular Ocean Project will act as a catalyst to **empower communities** to develop robust **business opportunities** that are **environmentally sustainable** and enhance income generation in the NPA region.

Circular Ocean will guide communities on how best to harness the hidden opportunities of discarded fishing nets through each stage in the recovery, recycling and reuse process:



THE CIRCULAR OCEAN APPROACH

The project will provide resources to help and support local communities in the NPA region to capitalise on opportunities including:

- Guidance on the enterprise potential of discarded nets.
- Case studies of existing projects from the NPA region and beyond.
- Information for communities on fishing net reuse and recycling options.
- Examples of pilot work undertaken using discarded fishing nets within remote regions.
- An open-source Eco-innovation Hub to promote the exchange of ideas and techniques.
- An Eco-innovation toolkit to support partners and end-users on Circular Economy Innovation.

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THE NORTHERN PERIPHERY & ARCTIC REGION



Partners in the Circular Ocean project include:

- Environmental Research Institute, North Highland College UHI (Scotland)
- Macroom E (Ireland)
- The Centre for Sustainable Design®, University for the Creative Arts (UK)
- Arctic Technology Centre (Greenland)
- Norwegian University of Science and Technology (Norway)

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The Centre for Sustainable Design®

ARCTIC TECHNOLOGY CENTRE



NTNU

Norwegian University of Science and Technology



NIFHA



Nofir

marinescotland



CONTACT US

For more information contact:

info@circularocean.eu

or visit our website

www.circularocean.eu



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