

Dolly Ropes

...a never-ending story (from problems to solution)

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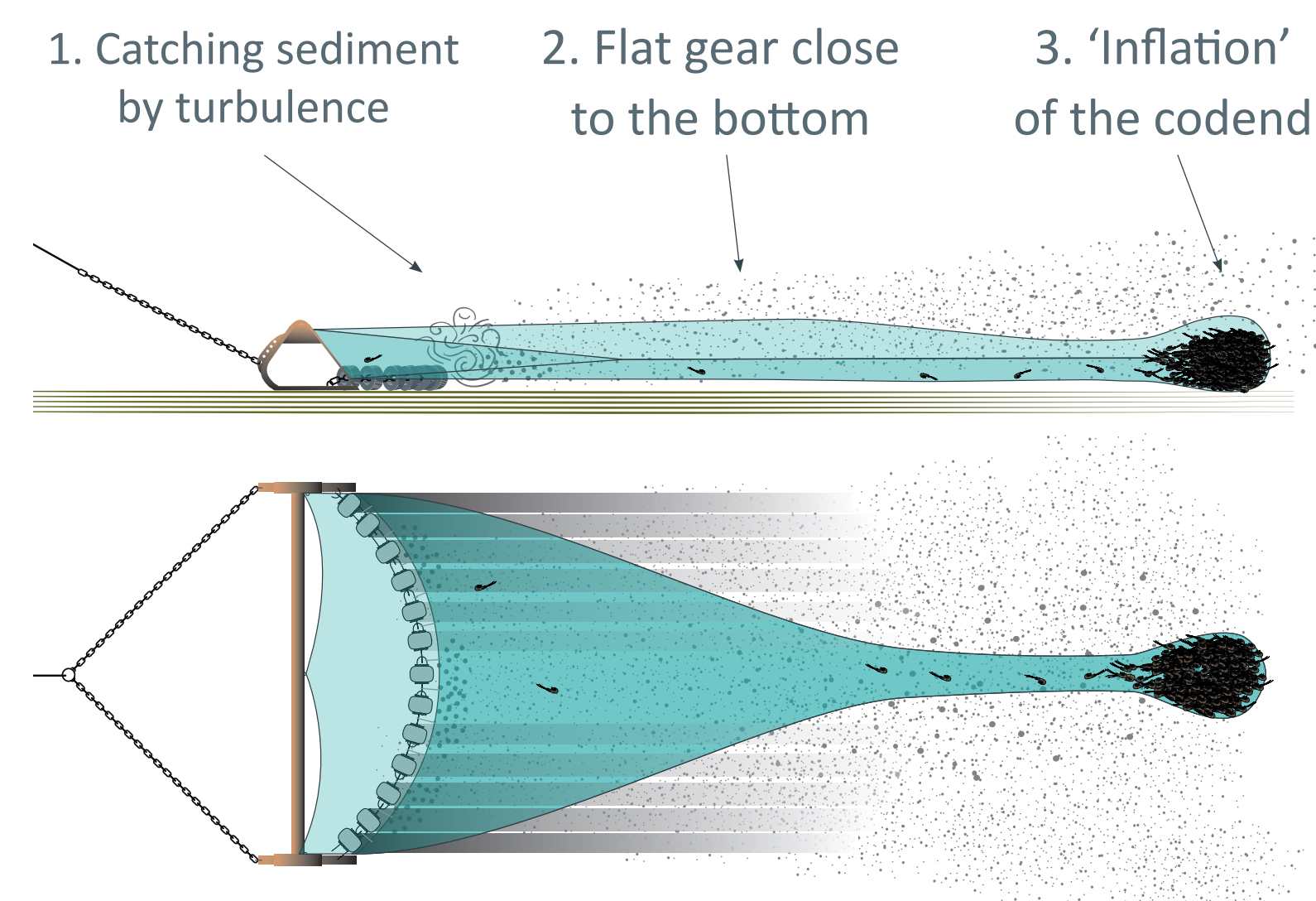
The curse



The loss of Dolly Ropes results in:

- Ecological problems, e.g. due to plastic entering the ecosystem and the food chain
- Aesthetic problem
- Problem for fisheries and shipping
- Possible violation of MARPOL Convention 1
- Possible/probable deterioration of the size selection of the trawl nets by closing the meshes

The cause



Bottom trawls are towed very close to the sea bed due to their design. To reduce chafing of the lower panels of these nets on the seabed, mats of polyethylene rope cardels are often placed there. These ropes are known as "Dolly Ropes". A large part of the Dolly Rope material is released after a short time at sea.

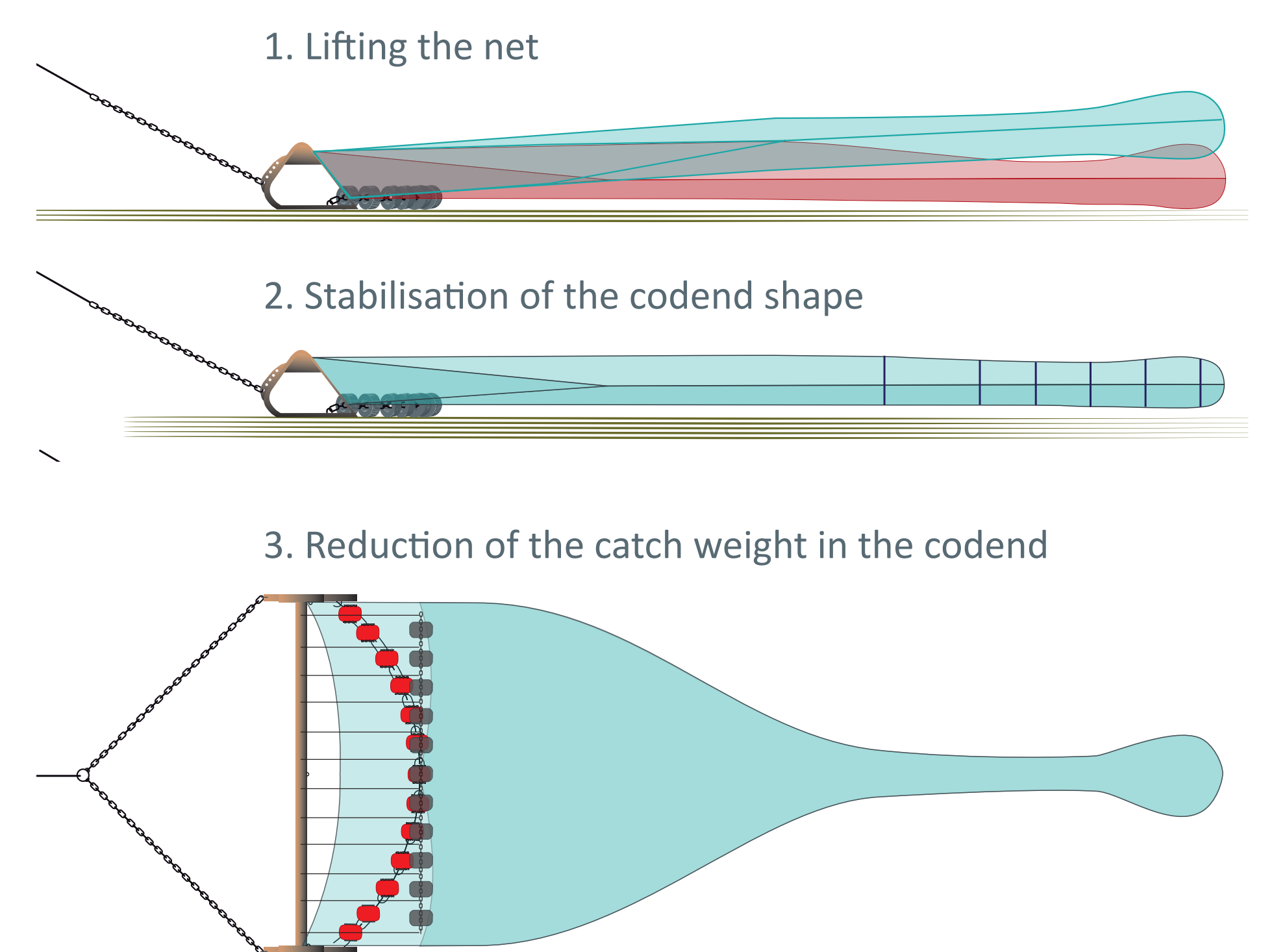


The solution

It is possible to mitigate the use of Dolly Ropes (and other harmful chafing gears).

Strategy 1: Use of alternative materials
(natural, more robust or degradable materials)
Projects: *DollyRopeFree (NL)* *DSOLVE (NOR)*

Strategy 2: Modification of the gear
Projects: *DRopS (Dolly Ropes Suspension, GER)*



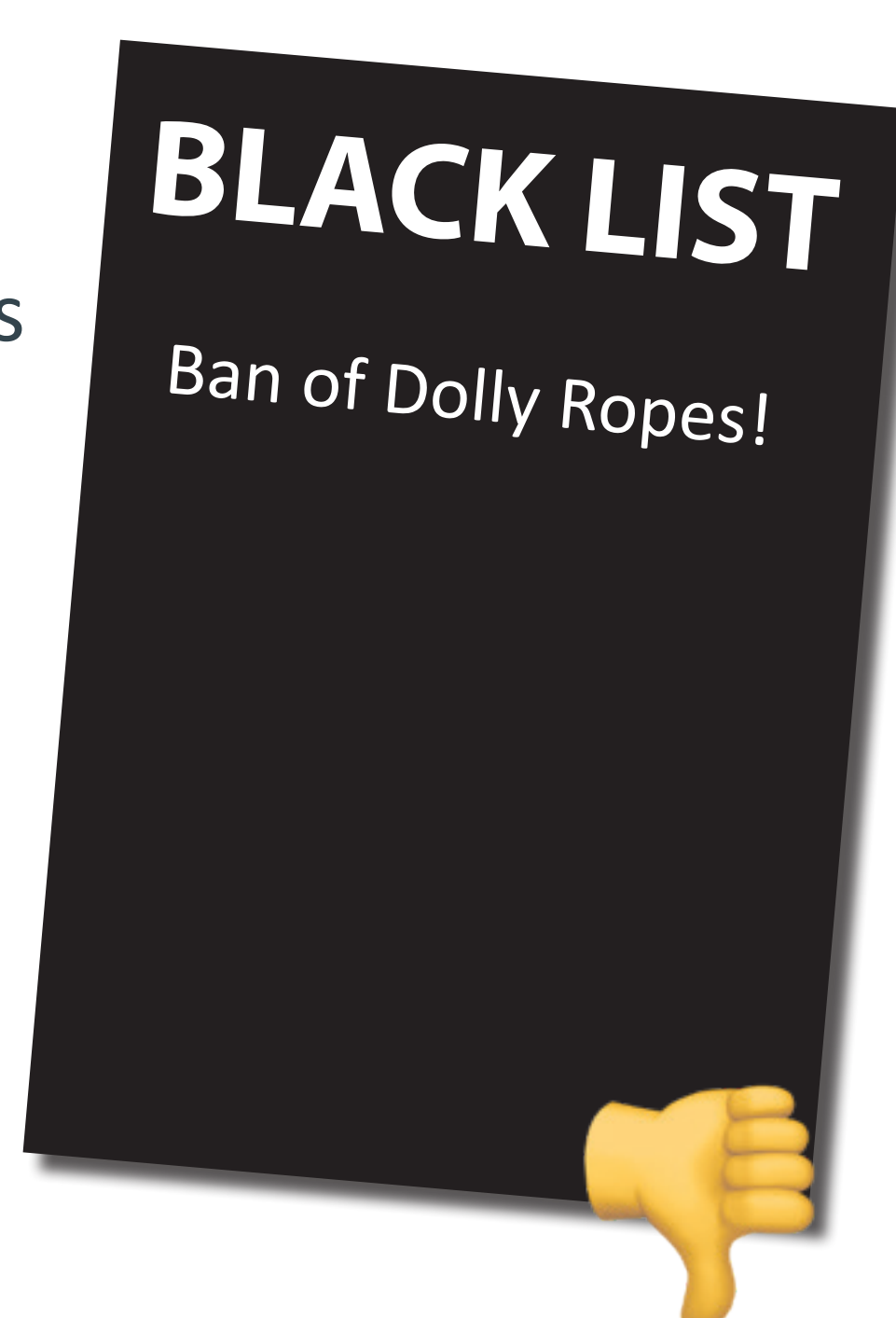
How to implement?

Regulation – Option 1

Goal: No Dolly Ropes!

Problems:

- No definition/specs of Dolly Ropes
- Likely avoidance reaction (with unknown consequences)



Regulation – Option 2

Goal: No marine litter!

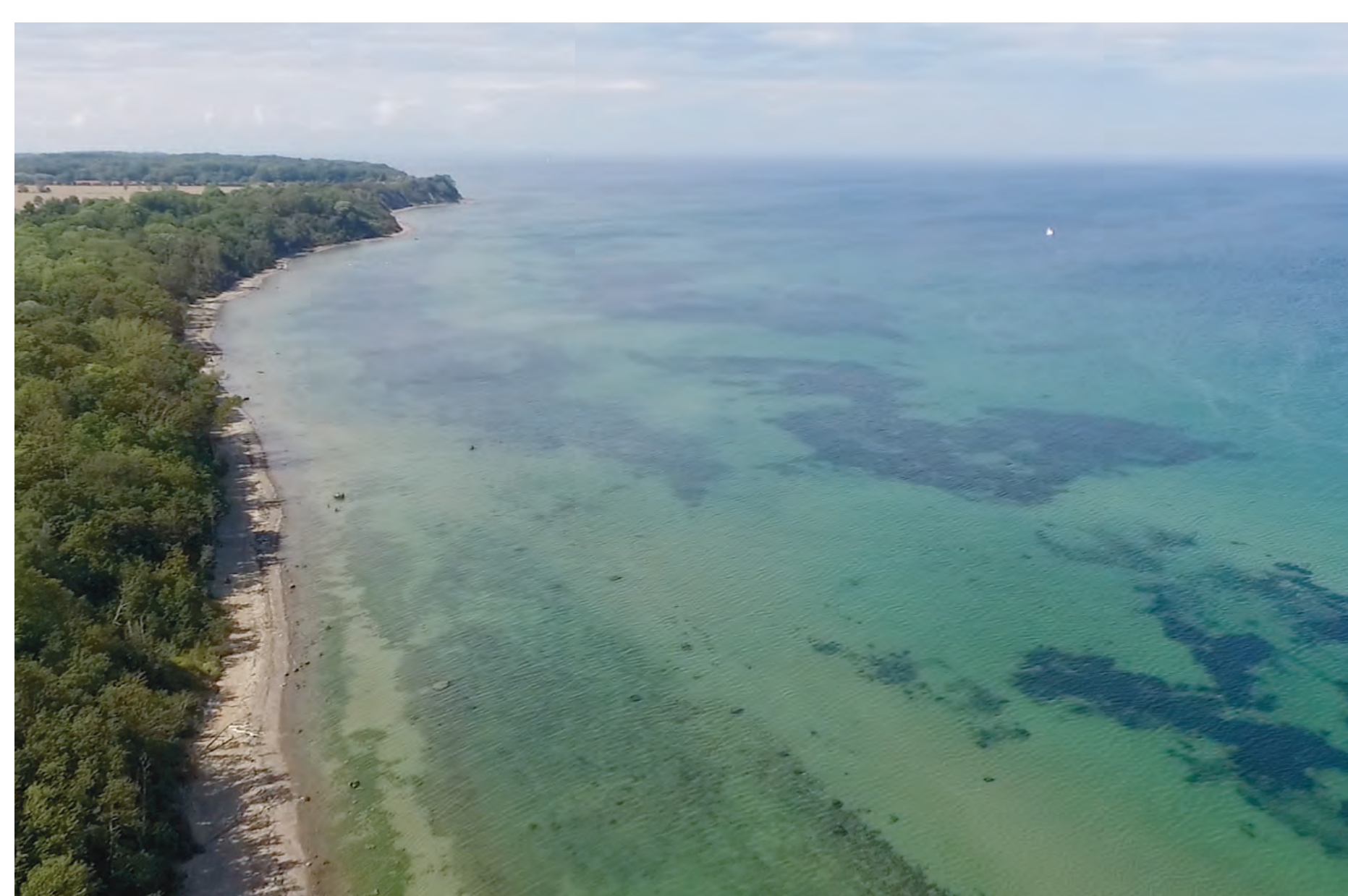
Potential Add On:

Transition period allowing to

- Adapt and identify further alternatives for all fisheries
- Support transition using funds



Voluntary



Irrespective of the possibility of regulating the use of chafing gear (including Dolly Ropes) by law, fisheries could also voluntarily refrain from using chafing gear that leads to marine litter. Sensible incentives would be helpful here.

An example is the voluntary renunciation of the use of Dolly Ropes by the German brown shrimp fishery in the North Sea.

A complete abandonment of dolly ropes by the entire fishery would be achievable through the creation of effective incentives or through legislation.

