



**MSC we need you...**

*Let's stop the waste of marine life*



## WHAT YOU SEE

### **Sustainable snow crab and lobster**

- Captured in traps and pots attached to lines with buoys on the surface.
- Snow crab and lobster fisheries in Maine, USA and the East Coast of Canada certified as sustainable by MSC.
- Exported around the world.

## What you DON'T see...

### **The North Atlantic right whale**

- Critically endangered and declining.
- As few as 411 remain, of which fewer than 100 are breeding females.
- 20 North Atlantic right whales found dead in 2017–2018 with seven dying from entanglement in fishing gear.
- Three deaths were caused by snow crab fishing gear and at least nine more whales were entangled and injured in this gear.
- Only five calves were born in 2017 and no new calves were born in 2018.



**Let's end the waste of marine life together:  
make the MSC tick count**



# Why we urgently need action...

Despite right whales being listed as endangered in Canada and the US for decades, fisheries have failed to put comprehensive management plans into place. The whales migrate through seven MSC-certified lobster and crab fisheries every year off the East Coast of the US and Canada. These fisheries have caused many deaths and injuries over the years – in fact, 83% of North Atlantic right whales show scars from entanglement in fishing gear. Unfortunately, since there is no requirement for fleets to identify who their gear belongs to, when a whale is entangled, the origin of the fishing gear can't be traced back to a specific fishery. Research has shown that female right whales are especially likely to die due to entanglement in crab fishing equipment, and the species is reproducing at an alarmingly low rate. There is also evidence that even lighter lobster fishing gear can result in injuries with long term health consequences.



Until recently, there was little to no evidence presented about right whale entanglement during MSC assessments of crab and lobster trap and pot fisheries on the East Coast of Canada and the US, despite there being information available. Acknowledging the problem in March 2018, MSC suspended certification of one fishery – the St Lawrence snow crab fishery – but the MSC certification of other fisheries in Canada and the US where right whales are still becoming entangled remains in place, potentially contributing to right whale injuries and deaths. MSC needs to consider the cumulative impacts of fisheries under its certification, particularly when they impact endangered species.

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We are calling for urgent and swift changes to the MSC certification standard in order to uphold the scientific rigour, transparency, and original vision of the seafood label as well as its promise to consumers and retailers that it is the “gold standard of sustainability”.



**MAKE  
STEWARDSHIP  
COUNT**

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