

# Whales have worse than average year for entanglement in gear

6 December 2018

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Federal officials say last year was slightly worse than average for the entanglement of large whales, which is a major threat to the animals' populations.

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration released a report Thursday on the subject. The agency says that the number of cases nationally was 76, and that 70 of the entanglements involved live animals, while the rest were dead. The 10-year average is closer to 70 entanglements.

The agency says about 70 percent of the confirmed entanglement cases were attributable to fishing gear, such as traps, nets and [fishing line](#).

NOAA says the entanglements happened along all U.S. coasts except for the Gulf of Mexico. Entanglement is a major concern for jeopardized species such as the North Atlantic right whale, which number only about 440.

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APA citation: Whales have worse than average year for entanglement in gear (2018, December 6) retrieved 29 November 2022 from <https://phys.org/news/2018-12-whales-worse-average-year-entanglement.html>

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