



Notice to Fish Harvesters

January 31, 2020

UPDATE – EASTERN CANADA GEAR MARKING REQUIREMENTS FOR NON TENDED FIXED GEAR FISHERIES, CRAB TRAP FISHERIES AND LOBSTER TRAP FISHERIES

Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) – In December 2019, Fisheries and Oceans Canada communicated the mandatory gear marking requirements for all non-tended fixed gear fisheries, as well as crab trap and lobster trap fisheries, in Eastern Canada starting in 2020. The Gulf, Maritimes, Newfoundland & Labrador, and Quebec Regions are hereby offering the following guidelines for fish harvesters to appropriately implement the gear marking requirements.

For pre-determined colours, see the attached document titled “*Gear Marking Eastern Canada - for non-tended fixed gear fisheries – Mandatory Color Scheme*”.

Interlacing coloured twine within existing rope (Annex 1)

The gear marking requirement consisting of interlacing different coloured twine sections within existing rope must be implemented as follows:

- a) A first colour to identify specific Region – to be interlaced on the same segment of rope as the second colour.
- b) A second colour to identify target Species – to be interlaced on the same segment of rope as the first colour.
- c) For lobster and snow crab fisheries only, a third colour to mark different fishing areas must be interlaced. The third colour must be interlaced immediately before or after the segment of rope containing the first two colours. The third colour must not be interlaced within the same segment containing the first and second colour.

The above coloured twine markings must be permanently and fully interlaced within the rope.

Each coloured twine must be a minimum of 15 cm in length **when** interlaced.

The use of paint or tape is not an admissible alternative to twine.

When interlacing coloured twine within existing rope, at a minimum, gear marking will be required at the top, middle and bottom of the vertical line (aligned with minimum requirements in the US) or, in a few fisheries, within every 27.4 metres throughout the length of the rope (aligned with existing practice in Gulf and Quebec Regions).



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The top, middle and bottom gear marking requirement will be included in all conditions of licence of non-tended fixed gear fisheries, as well as crab trap and lobster trap fisheries, in Eastern Canada. The option of marking gear within every 27.4 metres will only be included in conditions of licence for fisheries that were subject to mandatory gear marking prior to 2020 only.

Top, middle and bottom specification:

The coloured twine markings together represent a sequence. When inserting coloured twine markings at the top, middle and bottom, the rope used to attach a buoy to the fishing gear must have a minimum of three sequences dispersed on the rope in the following manner:

- Sequence #1 (i.e. top marking)
 - o entirely within two metres of the buoy
- Sequence #2 (i.e. middle marking)
 - o When using rope shorter than 30 metres:
 - the entire marking must be further than three metres from the buoy and further than three meters from the fishing gear
 - o When using rope with a length of 30 metres or more:
 - the entire marking must be further than 12 metres from the buoy and further than 12 metres from the fishing gear
- Sequence #3 (i.e. bottom marking)
 - o entirely within two metres of the fishing gear

27.4 meters specification:

When inserting coloured twine markings within every 27.4 meters of existing rope, the rope used to attach a buoy to the fishing gear must have a minimum of three sequences of markings dispersed on the rope.

Additional option – New rope with integrated coloured yarns (Annex 2 & 3)

For the purpose of this option (see picture in Annex 2 for rope components):

- yarn is defined as the product of two or more fibers spun together;
- strand is defined as the product of two or more yarns spun together;
- strands twisted or plaited together form a rope.



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Use of a rope with integrated coloured yarns throughout its full length will be permitted, however it will have to comply with the following specific requirements:

- the integrated coloured yarns representing the regional and species colours will have to be fully interlaced within the same strand of a rope in order to reflect the corresponding colour combination;
- when a fishing area colour applies, the integrated coloured yarn representing the fishing area will have to be fully interlaced within a different strand than the regional and species strand;
- the colour of the rope will have to contrast with the integrated coloured yarns;
- no additional colours will be permitted in the rope.

This option will be included in all conditions of licence for non-tended fixed gear fisheries, as well as crab trap and lobster trap fisheries, in Eastern Canada.

If your fishery does not currently have fishing area specific markings, please be mindful that fishing area specific markings may be introduced to fisheries other than snow crab and lobster in the future. This will affect the integrated coloured yarns configuration required in the rope for fisheries that do not currently have fishing area specific markings only.

“Tracer” alternative to coloured marking – update

The “tracer” alternative communicated in the December 2019 Notice to fish harvester is still in its developmental stage.

It will not be supported as a gear marking requirement until it can be visible without having to cut into or open the rope to verify compliance with marking requirements. It will therefore not be part of the conditions of licence in 2020. Consideration will be given in the future to allow for the use of tracers should the need for external visibility be addressed.

Any fish harvesters affected by these latest developments can contact their DFO regional representative at the bottom of this notice.

Mandatory Colour Scheme update

- A third colour to mark the fishing area will also apply in the Quebec Region CFA 12 toad crab fishery to avoid a conflicting colour combination with new marking requirements.
- The December 2019 Notice to fish harvester indicated that certain fisheries grouped together (e.g. lobster, rock crab and Jonah crab) could be marked differently. Given that it would not



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allow the rope to be traced back to a specific fishery, regional conversations with affected harvesters would need to take place to determine if it could be appropriate to implement. The Mandatory Colour Scheme has been modified accordingly to remove this option.

Vertical line

Gear marking requirements are mandatory for all ropes used to attach the fishing gear to a buoy or any other floating apparatus used in the fishery (vertical line).

Gear marking requirements are not mandatory in 2020 for all other rope segments such as the rope from the primary buoy to the secondary buoy, and the rope segments between traps set on a same line. However, fish harvesters wanting to mark these rope segments may do so at their discretion.

Twine size diameter

There is no twine size requirement for the coloured markings. However, fish harvesters must ensure that the twine being used is distinguishable as a coloured twine insert.

Twine supplier list / availability

The following list of twine suppliers is provided for guidance only. It's not meant to be comprehensive and may be amended. Please also note that each supplier may not have all the colours for Eastern Canada's gear marking requirements, however this is confirmation that all colours are available through at least one supplier or a combination of suppliers.

Suppliers:

- acpgaspesie.com
- atlanticbraids.com
- blyacht.com
- canadacordage.com
- cancord.com
- entship.ca
- fipec.qc.ca
- hampidjan.ca
- knotandrope.com
- lamestpierre.com
- namss.ca
- novabraid.com
- polysteel.ca



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- rainbownetrigging.com
- ropeshop.ca
- spartanmarine.ca

Shade colour

No specific shade has been identified for each colour, with the notable exception that both a blue and a navy blue are used to identify fishing areas in the Mandatory Colour Scheme. Fish harvesters are asked to stay as close as possible to the colours in the “*Gear Marking Eastern Canada - for non-tended fixed gear fisheries, as well as crab trap and lobster trap fisheries, Mandatory Colour Scheme*”.

Multiple area colour combination clarification

As with any other part of a fishing gear / equipment, for example a trap, the gear has to align with the requirements of the fishing area in which the licence applies. The rope requirements should align as well. The multiple area colour scheme offers a phasing out opportunity at best.

The multiple area colour combination does not apply for:

- substitute operator situations,
- new instances of shared gear / rope; and
- gear from a licence holder that **might** be shared/leased at some point by a licence holder from another fishing area

Fisheries and Oceans Canada will formally announce other management measures to protect North Atlantic Right Whales in February 2020.

For additional information, contact:

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