

# Putting small-scale fishers first:

## Securing Cyprus' coastal waters for sustainable fishing



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### Detailed methods:

Oceana conducted an analysis to identify apparent bottom trawling in the territorial waters of the Republic of Cyprus, excluding the waters adjacent to the occupied areas of Cyprus. Using data from the Global Fishing Watch<sup>1</sup> (GFW) mapping platform, Oceana analysed apparent fishing<sup>2</sup> activity from 1 January 2021 to 31 December 2025. The activity of vessels was tracked using information from their automatic identification systems (AIS), maritime safety devices that transmit vessel data such as identity, speed, and location.

Apparent fishing activity from GFW was cross-checked with the European Fleet Register<sup>3</sup> to identify the fishing gears used by vessels at the time of apparent fishing events. Vessels' Community Fishing Fleet Register (CFR) numbers, Maritime Mobile Service Identity (MMSI) numbers, International Radio Call Signs (IRCS), and/or International Maritime Organization numbers (IMO) were used to eliminate all non-bottom trawling vessels from the analysis. For a vessel to be considered a bottom trawler, both of the following criteria had to be met:



- Global Fishing Watch identified the vessel as a trawler.



- The main fishing gear listed for the vessel in the European Fleet Register was a bottom trawl.<sup>4</sup>

In addition to these filters, the apparent fishing activity of specific vessels was reviewed with experts on Cypriot fisheries, and vessels were excluded from the analysis where the fishing grounds and/or season indicated that fishing was likely to involve gears other than bottom trawls.

The visible activity presented in this analysis is likely to be a conservative estimate of the actual footprint of bottom trawling. Only vessels with AIS were included, and AIS coverage is limited; many fishing vessels below 15 metres length or registered outside the EU are not required to use it, and some vessels that do have AIS may turn it off. In addition, to minimise the likelihood of false positive results, vessels were excluded from the analysis if their total apparent fishing activity inside Cyprus' waters represented less than fifteen hours during the period 2021-2025. Similarly, all transects classified as fishing by GFW that were longer than 10 nm were removed, to avoid the possibility of activities such as the towing of fish cages from being misclassified as fishing events by the GFW algorithm.

### References

- 1 Global Fishing Watch, a provider of open data for use in this report, is an international nonprofit organisation dedicated to advancing ocean governance through increased transparency of human activity at sea. The views and opinions expressed in this report are those of the authors, which are not connected with or sponsored, endorsed or granted official status by Global Fishing Watch. By creating and publicly sharing map visualisations, data and analysis tools, Global Fishing Watch aims to enable scientific research and transform the way our ocean is managed. Global Fishing Watch's public data was used in the production of this publication.
- 2 Any and all references to "fishing" should be understood in the context of Global Fishing Watch's fishing detection algorithm, which is a best effort to determine "apparent fishing effort" based on vessel speed and direction data from the automatic identification system (AIS) collected via satellites and terrestrial receivers. As AIS data varies in completeness, accuracy, and quality, and the fishing detection algorithm is a statistical estimate of apparent fishing activity, therefore it is possible that some fishing effort is not identified and, conversely, that some fishing effort identified is not fishing. For these reasons, Global Fishing Watch qualifies all designations of vessel fishing effort, including synonyms of the term "fishing effort," such as "fishing" or "fishing activity," as "apparent" rather than certain. Any/all Global Fishing Watch information about "apparent fishing effort" should be considered an estimate and must be relied upon solely at your own risk. Global Fishing Watch is taking steps to make sure fishing effort designations are as accurate as possible.
- 3 <https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/fleet-europa>
- 4 Fishing gears considered as bottom trawls for the purpose of this analysis: Beam trawls, Bottom pair trawls, Bottom trawls - electric beam trawls (Pulse Beam), Bottom trawls - electric sunwing trawls (Pulse Wing), Bottom trawls (nei), Bottom trawls nephrops trawls, Bottom trawls shrimp trawls, Multiple bottom otter trawls, Otter trawls (nei), Pair trawls (nei), Semipelagic trawls, Single boat bottom otter trawls, Trawls (nei), Twin bottom otter trawls, Twin trawl, Dredges (nei), Hand dredges, Mechanised dredges including suction dredges, Mechanised dredges, Towed dredges.