

NEWPORT'S COMMERCIAL FISHERIES

BOTTOM TRAWLERS tow a funnel-shaped net along the ocean floor to catch fish that live on or near the bottom. Rubber discs are stacked along the net's footrope, or bottom tending gear, to stabilize the net and hold it off of the bottom. Size restrictions on the rubber discs are intended to limit trawling to smooth seafloor areas, such as sand and mud.

BOTTOM TRAWLER

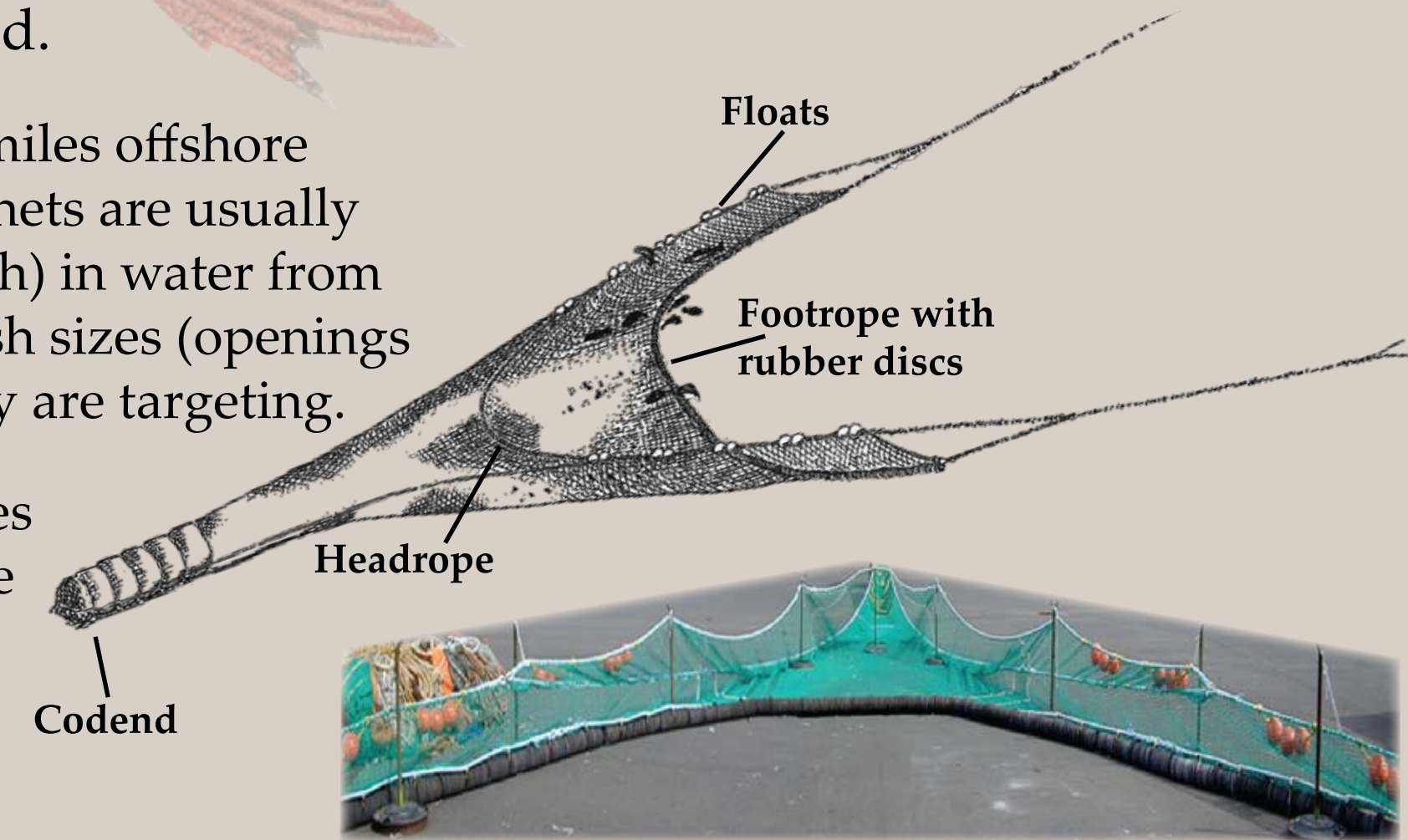


Photo provided by NOAA-NMFS

Bottom trawlers generally fish from 1 to 40 miles offshore catching various species of groundfish. The nets are usually towed at a speed of about two knots (2.3 mph) in water from 30 to 3500 feet deep. Nets have different mesh sizes (openings in the net) depending on the type of fish they are targeting.

After a tow, the crew hauls in the net, releases the fish onto the deck, and resets the net. The fish are sorted and then transferred into the fish hold and iced or refrigerated.

Back at port, the catch is delivered to local fish markets or seafood processors who ship the fish to markets all over the world.



The pineapple trawl net shown here, has a reduced headrope that allows many species of rockfish to rise upward without getting caught. This reduces bycatch and increases catch of targeted species.

Photo provided by Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife

GROUNDFISH MANAGEMENT

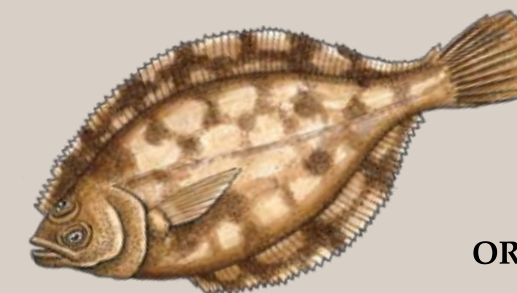
To protect the species and their habitat, federal and state fishery managers set strict quotas, limiting the number of fish that can be caught. Large areas of the ocean are closed to bottom trawl fishing to help ensure that fish stocks are sustainably harvested. The fishery is further regulated with limited entry permits, vessel monitoring systems, onboard observers, and gear restrictions.

GROUNDFISH is a term that describes a group of federally managed and commercially harvested fishes found on or near the ocean floor. This group includes sablefish, rockfish, and flatfish like Dover sole, petrale sole, and sanddabs.

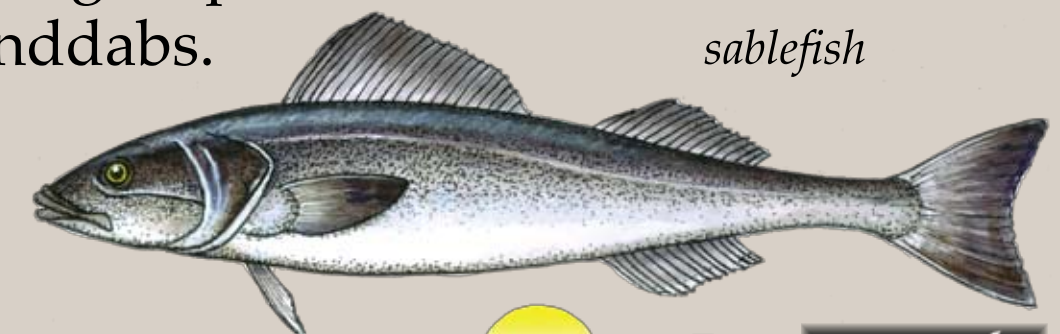
Illustration of net by Herb Goblirsch



shortspine thornyhead rockfish



sanddab



sablefish

