MARINE DEBRIS: STOW IT!!

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The introduction of synthetic materials, or "plastics", is one of the most significant technological advancements for modern industry. Cargo nets, trawls, lines, strapping bands, and typical domestic galley refuse are increasingly made from plastic. The very qualities of plastic favoured over former degradable materials - its lightweight, strength, low cost, and durability - are the basis for the problems it is causing in the marine environment when accidentally or purposely lost as opposed to **STOWING IT** properly.

Scientists, fishermen, and coastal enthusiasts alike are becoming increasingly aware of the growing oceanic problem of the entanglement of fish, birds, crabs, lobsters, and marine mammals. Refuse from maritime activities (commercial and recreational) continues to be dumped over the side much as it was a century ago. These materials not only are an eye-sore, but are known to damage many marine animals including some commercially viable

target species. They can also interfere with vessel operations and ultimately crew safety through propulsion entanglement and damage through intakes.

This report focusses on the international problem of marine debris and its interactions with commercial fisheries and their resources. Marine impacts will be discussed including entanglement, ingestion, and "ghost" fishing. Various alternatives to be examined include, incineration, compaction, alternate materials, selective galley procurements, and recycling. National and international legal proposals will be reviewed including The Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships (MARPOL) Annex V. and resultant consequences on the fishing industry.

Most fishermen recognize it to be in their best interest to do something about marine debris, because they particularly desire plentiful resources and a clean ocean.