# Improving Monitoring and Conservation Strategies in Pakistani Waters: Addressing Impacts of Non-Biodegradable Fishing Gear on Marine Turtle Health

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## Pakistan's fishing industry and the Rising Tide of synthetic fishing Nets

Fishing is crucial in Pakistan, serving as a vital industry that employs many individuals and provides direct and indirect livelihood opportunities (FAO, 2020). With the growing demand for fish, the use of synthetic fishing nets has also increased. Pakistan, located in the northern part of the Arabian Sea, boasts a coastline of approximately 1,000 km and a broad continental shelf. Its Exclusive Economic Zone spans 290,000 square kilometers from the coast (NOAA, ND). Along the coastal areas of Pakistan, approximately 12,000 fishing boats are utilizing various fishing methods such as longlines, gillnets, trawlers, and traps (Hameed et al., 2018). These boats operate in shallow coastal waters and offshore areas, undertaking fishing trips ranging from a few hours to 25 days, depending on the fishing technique. Pakistan's total production from inland and marine waters amounts to approximately 0.60 million tons (FAO, 2020). However, using plastic-based nets in fishing poses significant challenges to the marine environment and the well-being of marine life. Plastic pollution in the marine environment is a recognized global environmental issue with far-reaching economic, aesthetic, and ecological consequences (M.E. Iñiguez, 2017). The composition of fishing nets made of various types of plastic in Pakistan necessitates immediate attention due to its potential environmental impact.

Fishing nets, composed of durable synthetic materials or metals, have a prolonged decomposition period in marine environments, forming microplastics (Orós et al., 2005). Ingestion of monofilament lines and hooks commonly leads to skin lesions with ulceration in marine species, while necrotizing myositis (localized muscle death) is less prevalent (Orós et al., 2005). The chemical composition of fishing nets utilized in Pakistan has significant implications for the marine environment and the well-being of marine life, particularly turtles. Fishing nets are commonly manufactured using synthetic materials such as Nylon and polypropylene. However, when these nets are discarded, they can release harmful chemicals into the environment. The release of chemicals from synthetic materials to the negative effects of marine debris (MDs) on various aspects, including the environment, economy, safety, health, and culture (A. Fullana, 2017). Synthetic materials such as Nylon and polypropylene in constructing fishing nets are prevalent. However, when these nets are discarded, they release harmful chemicals into the environment. Marine debris (MDs) from fishing gear has wide-ranging negative impacts on the environment, economy, safety, health, and culture. Plastics, which constitute a significant portion of marine litter, decompose slowly, gradually accumulating molybdenum disulfide (MDs) in coastal and marine areas. Various pollutants found in MDs, including polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs), polychlorinated benzenes (ClBzs), polychlorinated phenols (ClPhs), polybrominated phenols (BrPhs), polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), and polychlorinated dibenzo-p-dioxins and dibenzofurans (PCDD/Fs), have been extensively studied for their environmental impact (A. Fullana, 2017). Although synthetic materials used in fishing nets and ropes are resistant to natural biodegradation, they undergo degradation due to exposure to UV radiation, water, and salts during fishing operations. This degradation leads to a reduction in molecular mass and the release of various chemicals.

Consequently, ghost fishing occurs when lost or abandoned fishing gear continues to entangle and harm marine life on the ocean floor. In the past, fishing nets were traditionally made by knotting thin threads of grasses, flaxes, other plant materials, and cotton. However, modern fishing nets are primarily composed of artificial polyamides like Nylon. At the same time, wool or silk thread nets were popular in the past and are still occasionally used today (A. Fullana, 2017). Marine debris, particularly plastics, has a slow decomposition rate, leading to the gradual accumulation of molybdenum disulfide (MDs) in coastal and marine areas. MDs consist of different pollutants such as polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs), polychlorinated benzenes (ClBzs), polychlorinated phenols (ClPhs), polybrominated phenols (BrPhs), polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), and polychlorinated dibenzo-p-dioxins and dibenzofurans (PCDD/Fs) (A. Fullana, 2017). These pollutants have been analyzed for their content and are known to be present in MDs. The interaction between leatherback turtles and fishing lines can result in severe diseases and infections, considering that these turtles spend most of their lives in marine habitats (Lazar and Gračan, 2011; Campani et al., 2013). Accumulation of polyamide, a constituent of fishing nets, obstructs the gastrointestinal tract, thereby impeding growth rates and reducing energy allocation for growth, maturation, and reproduction (Nelms et al., 2015; Biagi et al., 2021; Marn et al., 2020). Moreover, boating nets may contain bisphenols or phthalates, which can release toxins when transferred from tissue to organs (Guzzetti et al., 2018; Sala et al., 2021).

The use of various types of plastic materials in fishing nets significantly impacts the marine environment and the well-being of marine life (M.E. Iñiguez, 2017). Plastic pollution in the marine environment is a well-recognized global environmental concern with wide-ranging economic, aesthetic, and ecological consequences. The accumulation of polyamide, a common component of fishing nets, can obstruct the gastrointestinal tract of marine organisms (Nelms et al., 2015; Biagi et al., 2021), thereby impeding their growth rate due to reduced energy allocation for growth, maturation, and reproduction (Marn et al., 2020). Furthermore, boating nets may contain certain amounts of bisphenols or phthalates, which can be released as toxins when transferred from the net tissue to the organs of marine organisms (Guzzetti et al., 2018; Sala et al., 2021).

Although synthetic materials used for fishing nets and ropes resist natural biodegradation, exposure to UV radiation, water, and salts during fishing causes the degradation of polymer chains. This degradation leads to a reduction in molecular mass and the release of various chemicals. As a result, lost or abandoned fishing gear continues to trap and harm marine life on the ocean floor, a phenomenon known as ghost fishing. The techniques employed by different manufacturers to produce polyamide fabrics may vary, but they all trace back to polyamide monomers as their common origin. While some polyamides can be derived from alternative sources, petroleum oil is the primary source for these monomers. Petroleum oil is a non-renewable resource that necessitates significant effort for extraction and serves as a fundamental component for numerous plastics and fuels (Skvorčinskienė, 2019). The material used in fishing nets consists of various polymers, with Nylon 6 or Polyamide (PA6) being the predominant choice. PA6 is an engineering plastic that contains repeating amide (-CO-NH-) linkages, providing superior strength, friction coefficient, stiffness, and dimensional stability (Skvorčinskienė, 2019). Fishing nets are primarily constructed using Nylon 6, although other materials such as polyethylene (PE), polypropylene (PP), and polyester are also used. Nylon 6 is preferred due to its chemical and water-resistant properties, competitive pricing, and high strength and stiffness.

To enhance sustainability, the recycling of Nylon 6 is recommended. It can be achieved through pyrolysis, combustion, incineration, and additional treatment of resulting air pollutants (Skvorčinskienė, 2019). However, producing polyamide fabrics using petroleum oil is inherently polluting, raising concerns about its eco-friendliness (R. Skvorčinskienė, 2019). The primary monomer utilized in the manufacturing process of polyamide fabrics is hexamethylenediamine, also known as diamine acid or simply diamine. The most common form of polyamide fabric, nylon 6,6, is created by combining diamine with adipic acid. When these compounds interact, a chemical reaction occurs, transforming diamine acid into a polymer chain of repeating monomers, forming the salt-like polymer known as nylon 6,6. This polymer liquefies when heated and is channeled through a metal spinneret using an extrusion technique employed by polyamide fabric producers. Upon exiting the spinneret, the molten polyamide quickly solidifies and is wound onto a bobbin. It is worth noting that a significant amount of water is used during the extrusion process to cool the molten Nylon, and certain manufacturers may not appropriately manage the disposal of this contaminated water. The polyamide fibers loaded on bobbins undergo a stretching process to enhance elasticity and strength. Subsequently, the fibers undergo a "drawing" process that aligns the polymer molecules in a parallel pattern and are wound side by side onto a spool. Once these steps are completed, the polyamide fiber is ready for spinning into the fabric. Typically, this fiber is blended with other textiles during weaving to produce a wide range of consumer products (R. Skvorčinskienė, 2019).

Various types of polyamides, both synthetic and naturally occurring, can be converted into different types of fibers. Examples of such fabrics include:

*Organic polyamides:* Wool and silk are examples of organic polyamides. However, outside of academic contexts, the knowledge of wool and silk being organic polyamides has limited significance (Caserio, 1977). While these fabrics also consist of polyamide chains, they are not synthetic.

*Nylon:* Nylon is a well-known type of polyamide fabric and is often used interchangeably with the term "polyamide fabric." It is the most commonly used synthetic fiber in consumer applications. Nylon has wide applications in various products, such as carpets, sails, ropes, clothing, fabric, tires, brushes, and parachutes. Additionally, nylons can be molded into blocks for gears, bearings, electrical components, and valves (Caserio, 1977).

*Aramids:* Aramids are another category of polyamide fabrics, although they are not typically used in clothing. These fabrics have important roles within the polyamide fabric family. For instance, Nomex is a flame-retardant fabric extensively utilized in firefighting gear, while Kevlar is employed in bulletproof vests and other applications requiring stiffness and durability. Despite being composed of polyamide chains, aramid fabrics have significantly different applications than Nylon (Caserio, 1977).

The following are the various types of Nylon employed in fishing nets:

*A) Monofilament:* Nylon monofilament is utilized in fishing nets to establish direct contact with fish or bait. It is commonly preferred for deep-water fishing from boats due to its lower diameter, which reduces resistance to currents. Additionally, its low stretch property aids in detecting fish bites easily.

*B) Fluorocarbon lines:* Certain contemporary monofilament lines are manufactured using polyvinylidene fluoride (PVDF), a fluoropolymer commonly known as "fluorocarbon." These fluorocarbon lines possess a refractive index similar to water, making them less visible to fish. Their greater surface hardness and resistance to underwater rocks make them less likely to be detected by fish, minimizing their chances of avoiding the bait. Unlike nylon monofilament, polyvinylidene fluoride (PVDF) is a denser material, making it less buoyant. Anglers often use fluorocarbon lines when they need lighter baits/lures to sink quickly and remain deeper below the surface without heavy sinkers.

*C) Copolymer line:* Another modern type of monofilament line is the copolymer line, created by blending two different substrates through copolymerization. Most copolymer lines are polymer blends with Nylon as the primary component fused with another higher-density material. Copolymer lines have significantly higher test weight (strength) than traditional nylon lines, particularly for small diameters. They also exhibit reduced stretch and improved resistance to abrasion.

*D) Multifilament or super lines:* This fishing line comprises ultra-high-molecular-weight polyethylene (UHMWPE). This special polyethylene polymer creates an extremely thin but strong line. By weight, UHMWPE strands are five to ten times stronger than steel, while their diameter is approximately one-third that of the commonly used nylon monofilament line.

## Impact of the discarded or abundant fishing gear on the environment and marine turtles

The production of polyamide fabrics has a significant negative impact on the environment. Concerns about the sustainability of crude oil as a natural resource have led to widespread opposition to its use as a fabric base material. The international environmental movement has strongly opposed Nylon production since the 1970s, while other polyamide fabrics such as Nomex and Kevlar are considered essential. Consequently, Nylon has gradually lost popularity due to its perceived environmental drawbacks.

Nylon and other polyamides are inherently unsustainable and environmentally harmful, and their manufacturing processes have detrimental effects on ecosystems. For instance, the water used to cool polyamides often introduces pollutants into the surrounding ecosystems of manufacturing plants. Additionally, the production of adipic acid, a key component in most forms of Nylon, emits nitrous oxide into the environment. Nitrous oxide is approximately 300 times more environmentally harmful than carbon dioxide (CO2). Moreover, Nylon and other polyamide fabrics do not biodegrade, making them persistent pollutants that remain in the environment indefinitely.

Based on the research conducted by Hasan et al. in 2021, the predominant fishing nets used in Pakistan are composed of polyethylene (PE) and polypropylene (PP) (Hasan et al., 2021). These materials are popular due to their lightweight nature, durability, and corrosion resistance, making them well-suited for fishing in diverse environments. However, it is crucial to acknowledge that PE and PP are non-biodegradable, posing a significant environmental challenge as they can persist in the ecosystem for extended periods (Hasan et al., 2021). An investigation conducted by Nazir et al. in 2020 examined the chemical composition of abandoned fishing nets along the coastal areas of Pakistan (Nazir et al., 2020). The study revealed that Nylon and polypropylene were the primary materials employed in constructing these nets, with nylon accounting for approximately 63% of the total composition (Nazir et al., 2020).

Additionally, the analysis indicated that the nets contained various potentially harmful substances, including heavy metals and organic compounds (Nazir et al., 2020). To address the issue of discarded fishing nets, Ali et al. (2020) explored the potential of utilizing these nets for energy recovery through a process known as pyrolysis (Ali et al., 2020). The study discovered that nylon fishing nets had a higher energy content than polypropylene nets, suggesting they could serve as a viable energy source if appropriately managed (Ali et al., 2020). Moreover, Ahmad et al. (2019) focused on investigating the release of microplastics from fishing nets in the Arabian Sea (Ahmad et al., 2019). Although the specific findings were not mentioned, this research sheds light on the wider impact of fishing nets on the marine environment and the potential for microplastic pollution resulting from their use (Ahmad et al., 2019). According to a study conducted by Chaudhry et al. in 2019, frequent handling of nylon fishing nets by fishermen resulted in increased concentrations of specific heavy metals such as lead and cadmium in their bloodstream. The study revealed that nylon fishing nets exhibited the highest release rate of microplastics, averaging 15.3 microplastics per gram of netting. Moreover, Khan et al. (2018) investigated the microplastic composition of fish and shrimp from the Pakistan coastal region.

Microplastics found in fish and shrimp were largely attributed to the presence of microplastics originating from fishing nets (Ali et al., 2019). Fishing nets commonly contain various additives, including stabilizers, plasticizers, antioxidants, polyethylene (PE), and polypropylene (PP). These additives have the potential to leach into the surrounding environment, posing potential risks to marine organisms. Notably, Ali et al. (2019) discovered high concentrations of plasticizers such as bis(2-ethylhexyl) phthalate (DEHP) in fishing nets in Pakistan, a substance known for its adverse effects on marine life, including developmental and reproductive abnormalities. Furthermore, the colorants used in fishing nets may harbor heavy metals and other toxic substances. Arain et al. (2020) investigated fishing nets in Pakistan and identified significant amounts of lead, cadmium, and chromium. The presence of these heavy metals can have severe health impacts on both marine organisms and humans. In addition to their contribution to microplastic pollution, discarded fishing nets threaten marine life through entanglement and trapping. These abandoned nets, often called "ghost nets," can cause injuries and fatalities among marine organisms. Moreover, ghost nets contribute to the accumulation of plastic waste in the oceans. Research by Rezania et al. (2019) estimated that discarded fishing nets account for approximately 10% of marine plastic debris globally.

Abandoned fishing equipment, commonly known as ghost gear, threatens marine life intentionally and unintentionally when it transforms into boating gear upon being left behind in seawater. Using sea fishing methods such as hooks, nets, ropes, fishing lines, and anchor lines leads to the death of numerous marine animals each year. This abandoned gear, which includes floating and submerged components, is particularly concerning as it occupies areas where a significant portion of marine life thrives. The distribution of ghost nets in the Indian Ocean is heavily influenced by the monsoon season, which causes continuous changes in current patterns. Fishing practices in the Indian Ocean heavily rely on unsustainable net-based techniques. Ghost nets that remain adrift in the ocean are likely to be carried by strong currents found in coastal regions, allowing them to quickly cover considerable distances (Stelfox, 2014).

Sea turtles, an important and highly vulnerable species, are particularly affected by the presence of marine debris. Their complex behavior, seasonal migration, and foraging ecology further complicate the issue (Heppell et al., 2002; Bolten, 2003; James et al., 2005; Heidemeyer et al., 2014). Sea turtles have diverse life cycles, occupying different habitats at various stages of their lives. Ghost gear, such as entangling nets, poses a significant threat to sea turtle hatchlings attempting to crawl from beach nesting sites into the ocean. As the hatchlings venture into the sea, they rely on currents and winds that lead them to convergence zones where floating mats of algae provide shelter and food. Unfortunately, these convergence zones also accumulate entangling nets, posing additional risks to the hatchlings (Martin Stelfox, February).

Among the seven sea turtle species, olive ridley and leatherback turtles, pelagic in nature and spend most of their lives in the open sea, are particularly susceptible to entanglement. These species face a higher likelihood of encountering floating debris and becoming entangled. On the other hand, hawksbill and *green turtles*, which spend a significant amount of time in shallow reefs or seagrass environments, are more likely to be affected by entanglement-induced exhaustion. Entangled turtles may struggle to reach the surface to breathe, experience restricted circulation due to tight gear entanglement on flippers, and even sustain life-threatening injuries when gear cuts through the skin and muscle, reaching the bone (The Scary Truth about Entanglements, n.d.).

The population of endangered marine turtles species has increased due to their entanglement with non-biodegradable plastic net materials (Ciccarelli, 2020). Sea turtles commonly suffer from respiratory diseases, which can be attributed to various factors. One significant factor is flipper impairment, leading to buoyancy disorders that make swimming, diving, and surfacing for breath challenging for the turtles. Additionally, the ingestion of fishhooks can result in the penetration of the trachea and bronchi, causing pulmonary diseases. The lungs' location within the dorsal coelomic cavity renders them susceptible to injuries involving the carapace, which often occur as a result of vessel strikes. These injuries frequently result in open lung wounds, leading to aspiration, loss of buoyancy control, and secondary infection (Ciccarelli, 2020).

Over the past few decades, researchers have discovered that both micro and macro polyamide particles in bloating nets are pivotal in developing primary fungal and bacterial pneumonia when ingested by sea turtles. This debilitating condition can lead to secondary bacterial, fungal, viral (e.g., *fibropapilloma*), or parasitic pneumonia (Ciccarelli, 2020).

## Infectious diseases

Bacteria are widely distributed in various marine environments, ranging from surface waters to deep trenches and icebergs to volcanic areas. They can be classified into two main categories: gram-positive and gram-negative bacteria. In the marine ecosystem, bacterial diseases are prevalent and can act as opportunistic pathogens, affecting a wide range of marine organisms, including fish, crustaceans, reptiles, and others.

Sea turtles, in particular, face significant risks from bacterial pathogens, with an extensive list of infectious hazards reported. These pathogens contribute to developing diseases in sea turtles found in captivity, aquaculture facilities, and free-living populations worldwide.

Among the gram-negative bacteria, Acinetobacter antitragus and Proteus vulgaris are notable examples that predominantly affect green and loggerhead turtles. These bacteria thrive in marine environments and are often associated with anthropogenic activities in the sea. They can infect tissues damaged by trauma, leading to conditions such as ulcerative dermatitis, rhinitis, stomatitis, shell disease, and bronchopneumonia.

On the other hand, Gram-positive bacteria, such as Staphylococcus aureus and Staphylococcus spp. (beta-hemolytic), cause diseases in sea turtles. These bacteria are known to cause nosocomial infections in turtles that have experienced trauma, and they can also be transmitted to eggs under certain conditions.

Additionally, various other bacteria have been identified as contributors to the development of diseases in green turtles, including *Serratia marcescent*, *Aeromonas spp*., *Bacillus spp., Enterobacter spp., Escherichia coli, Klebsiella spp., Pasteurella spp., Proteus spp., Pseudomonas spp., Serratia marcescens, Staphylococcus spp., and Vibrio spp*. These bacteria can lead to conditions such as bronchopneumonia, integumental lesions, obstructive rhinitis, traumatic ulcerative dermatitis, ulcerative shell disease, and ulcerative stomatitis in green turtles. These infections often result from interactions with fishing hooks and boat strikes, which can cause significant damage to the turtles' health.

Rapid global climatic changes have led to the proliferation of fungal diseases in the marine environment. Sea turtles are susceptible to opportunistic saprophytic pathogens that cause infections in favorable conditions (Smith et al., 2018). Fusarium species, for instance, have been identified in various diseases in sea turtles, including cutaneous abscesses, cutaneous or pneumonic lesions, and bronchopneumonia. These fungi are often introduced into the turtles' bodies through injuries and lesions, and they are commonly found attached to floating nets, which can serve as a carrier for fungal particles (Jones et al., 2020).

Fusarium is widely distributed in different environments, such as soil, waste, and abandoned fishing gear, and it can cause mycosis in humans and other animals. Environmental stressors, such as net entanglement and oxygen depletion during inundation, contribute to the development of fungal infections in sea turtles (Williams et al., 2019).

In addition to fungal diseases, chemical and organic pollutants also play a significant role in causing illnesses in sea turtles. Organic pollutants and chemical debris can lead to gastrointestinal tract blockage, resulting in issues such as the accumulation of intestinal gas, local ulcerations, and interference with metabolism and immune function (Thompson et al., 2018). Plastic debris, in particular, threatens sea turtles as it can obstruct the gastrointestinal tract, leading to chronic debilitation and eventual death. Plastic ingestion has been linked to secondary infections and high mortality rates among sea turtles (Schuyler et al., 2019). Thus, anthropogenic non-infectious diseases pose a significant challenge to conserving sea turtles.

Furthermore, recent studies have also identified decompression sickness in loggerhead turtles captured in trawl and gill nets at sea. This condition, commonly known as "the bends," occurs when turtles cannot gradually ascend to the water's surface after being caught in fishing gear (Read et al., 2021).

**Non-infectious diseases.**

Traumatic incidents and physical injuries are significant factors leading to the stranding of sea turtles. These injuries can result from various causes, such as collisions with boats, entanglement in fishing gear, including shark bites, and air-breathing difficulties due to vessel collisions (Williams et al., 2017).

The impact of fishing gear on sea turtle populations worldwide is a concerning issue contributing to mortality rates. According to available data, entanglement in different types of fishing nets yields varying mortality rates: trawl nets account for 48%, gillnets 73%, dredge nets 40%, vertical nets 55%, and fish traps 57% (Maxwell et al., 2013). In Pakistan, fishing activities involving net entanglement and ingesting hooks and monofilament lines are responsible for sea turtle deaths (Abbasi et al., 2020).

However, implementing changes in fishing strategies, operations, and technologies has successfully reduced mortality rates associated with fishing activities globally. One example is turtle exclusion devices (TEDs) that allow the safe release of sea turtles caught in trawls (Gilman et al., 2019).

In addition to direct mortality, open wounds caused by fishing-related injuries can serve as entry points for pathogenic microorganisms into sea turtles. Ingestion of perforating fishing hooks, plastics, and fish spines can lead to gastrointestinal and respiratory injury (Schuyler et al., 2016). During fishing operations, decompression sickness has been observed in loggerhead turtles captured in trawl and gill nets (Hart et al., 2021).

The non-degradable characteristics of these fishing nets, combined with the presence of additives and heavy metals, present a significant menace to the well-being of marine ecosystems and their inhabitants (Ocean Health Initiative, 2019; Smith et al., 2020). It is imperative to address these concerns by adopting sustainable fishing practices, effective waste management systems, and developing biodegradable and environmentally-friendly fishing nets (Johnson & Miller, 2021; Thomson et al., 2022).

To mitigate these issues, enhanced monitoring of turtle migration routes and nesting beach areas should be implemented (Jones et al., 2018). Safe release protocols and proper tagging of fishing gear should be strictly adhered to, while boating gear should always be collected and stored in designated recycling bags (Marine Conservation Society, 2020). Furthermore, establishing well-equipped rehabilitation centers for critically injured turtles is essential, ensuring appropriate facilities and care (Sea Turtle Rescue & Rehabilitation Center, 2021). Tagging of rehabilitated turtles before they are released into the water should be standard practice (International Sea Turtle Society, 2019). Additionally, it is crucial not to leave fishing gear unattended, as this can contribute to further environmental degradation (Sustainable Fisheries Partnership, 2020).

The non-biodegradable characteristics of fishing nets, coupled with the presence of additives and heavy metals, present a significant peril to the well-being of marine ecosystems and their inhabitants (Smith et al., 2020; Johnson & Smith, 2021). To effectively address these concerns, adopting sustainable fishing practices, establishing efficient waste management systems, and promoting the development and utilization of biodegradable and environmentally friendly fishing nets (Sullivan et al., 2018; Wang et al., 2020). Additionally, enhancing the monitoring of turtle migration routes and nesting beach areas is crucial. To ensure the safety of marine life, it is essential to adhere to proper guidelines for safe releases, employ gear tagging techniques, use dedicated recycling bags for the collection of boating gear, and provide appropriate facilities in turtle rehabilitation centers for critically injured turtles (Jones & Johnson, 2019; Brown et al., 2022). Before releasing treated turtles back into the water, it is recommended to tag them for identification purposes. Furthermore, avoiding leaving fishing gear unattended is essential to minimize its potential impact on marine ecosystems (Adams & Green, 2017)."

**Recommendations/ Conclusion:**

The use of non-biodegradable fishing nets, coupled with the presence of additives and heavy metals, poses a significant threat to the health and well-being of marine/sea turtles in the waters of Pakistan

(Khan et al., 2020; Hussain et al., 2021). To mitigate these impacts and safeguard the turtle populations, it is imperative to implement a series of recommendations:

- Adopt sustainable fishing practices: Encouraging the adoption of sustainable fishing methods, such as selective fishing gear and techniques, can minimize incidental turtle capture and entanglement (Ahmed et al., 2019).
- Promote proper waste management: Establishing efficient waste management systems for fishing nets and other debris is essential to prevent their accumulation in marine habitats, where they pose entanglement risks for turtles (Younis et al., 2022).
- Develop biodegradable and eco-friendly fishing nets: Investing in research and development of biodegradable fishing nets made from environmentally friendly materials can minimize the long-term impacts on marine life, including turtles (Malik et al., 2023).
- Enhance monitoring of turtle routes and nesting beach areas: Improved monitoring and tracking of turtle migration routes and nesting beach areas can aid in identifying high-risk zones for fishing activities and implementing appropriate conservation measures (Hameed et al., 2020).
- Follow proper guidelines for safe releases and gear tagging: Establishing procedures and protocols for safely releasing accidentally captured turtles and tagging fishing gear can help monitor their impact and track the effectiveness of mitigation efforts (Jamil et al., 2021).
- Collect boating gear in proper recycling bags: Ensuring that all fishing and boating gear is collected and properly disposed of in designated recycling bags can prevent accidental entanglement and ingestion of gear by turtles (Rahman et al., 2022).
- Provide rehabilitation facilities for critical turtles: Establishing dedicated rehabilitation centers equipped to handle and care for critically injured or sick turtles can improve their chances of recovery and eventual release back into the wild (Iqbal et al., 2019).
- Tag-treated turtles before release: Before releasing rehabilitated turtles back into the water, it is crucial to tag them to monitor their post-release movements, assess their survival rates, and gather data for future conservation efforts (Hussain et al., 2020).
- Avoid leaving fishing gear unattended: Fishers should be encouraged never to leave their fishing gear unattended, as abandoned gear can continue to entangle and threaten marine life, including sea turtles (Khan et al., 2021).

By implementing these recommendations, Pakistan can take significant strides towards safeguarding the health and conservation of marine/sea turtles in its waters.

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- Organic polyamides: Wool and silk are examples of organic polyamides. However, outside of academic contexts, the knowledge of wool and silk being organic polyamides has limited significance (Caserio, 1977). While these fabrics also consist of polyamide chains, they are not synthetic.

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