



MarineGuardian

Beach Seine Fishery/ Arte Xávega in Portugal

Beach Seine Fishery



This traditional Portuguese fishing method, known as Arte Xávega, uses a long seine net deployed from a small boat offshore. The net forms a wide arc, with both ends connected to ropes brought back to the beach. Tractors then haul the ropes from the shore, gradually closing the net and concentrating the fish into the central bag, which is finally brought ashore.

The Xávega Boat



The traditional Xávega boat is specially built to operate directly from an open sandy beach and to withstand the surf. Its broad, sturdy hull and raised bow allow it to push through the waves and come safely ashore. The boat is launched and retrieved with the help of tractors, which pull it across the sand and into or out of the water. Once offshore, it carries the net out in a wide arc before returning.

Sorting and Selling the Catch



Once the net is pulled back onto the beach, the catch is gathered and shovelled into containers. The fish are then sorted by hand on tables, separated by species and size. Traditionally, the sorting process has involved the local village, with residents and, in some places, visitors. The freshly landed fish can then be sold directly, keeping the journey from sea to consumer short and local.

Net and Pingers Underwater



A 3D underwater camera was mounted on the beach-seine net, close to the large flotation buoys and the pingers being tested. The camera recorded the net and pingers from underwater during deployment, hauling and retrieval, capturing their position and movement within the fishing gear under real operating conditions. The footage provides an immersive perspective of the underwater setup.



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