# Humpback Whale Rescued from Fishing Gear off Gippsland Coast



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A humpback whale entangled in 800kg of fishing equipment was rescued off Victoria’s Gippsland coast after being spotted near Loch Sport on June 23, 2024. The multi-agency rescue team, including the Victorian Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (DEECA), Victorian Fisheries Authority, and Parks Victoria, attached a tracker to the whale when it resurfaced near Lake Tyers on Friday.

The team's efforts on Saturday involved cutting away 185 of the 200 meters of rope entrapping the whale, significantly easing its movement. Inspector James Dalton of Victoria’s water police highlighted the whale’s distress, necessitating careful approach and coordination. Although some rope remained, rescuers were satisfied with the significant reduction in the whale's burden.

Victoria police used a crane to remove the heavy ropes and buoys from the water, ensuring no further hazards for marine life or vessels. Ellen Dwyer from DEECA reported that the whale appeared in good spirits post-rescue.

In a similar incident, another whale was freed from a shark net off Marcoola Beach in Queensland by onlookers, despite legal restrictions. This marked the second such entanglement in a month.

These incidents highlight ongoing risks to marine life from fishing gear and nets, even as whale populations along the Australian coast show signs of recovery since hunting was banned in 1978.