



Truly Sustainable Oceans - it's our right

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Planet Ocean

Oceans cover three quarters of our planet; they drive our weather systems, are a ready made food source for billions on land and at sea and give sanctuary to a staggering 80 per cent of life on Earth. Lying beneath the waves are the highest of the world's mountains (taller than any conquered by Sir Ed!) and the tallest waterfall. From great creatures such as the majestic blue whale, to the largest living thing on Earth – the Great Barrier Reef – to billions of tiny bacteria, our oceans are teeming with life.

Every second breath you take comes from the oceans. They give us half the oxygen we need to survive. Without the oceans, Earth would be just another lifeless orb revolving in our universe. With such an intimate connection, it is little wonder that a stroll by the ocean awakens every sense.

It is strange to think that the life force of our planet is still such a mysterious world, almost completely unknown to humans. Ninety per cent remains unexplored and there are more maps of the moon than there are of the oceans.

There are fish that thrive in the dark waters near the bottom that have lived more years than we have spent trying to understand their habitat. Take the orange roughy, which can live for 150 years. In that span we have gone from horse and cart to walking on the moon, but it is only in the last 70 years that we have had the technology to truly understand the sheer scale of the grand canyons, vast mountain chains, waterfalls, volcanoes, coral forests and underwater caves deep below us.

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Our heritage, our oceans and our birthright

New Zealand's waters are some of the most diverse and spectacular in the world. It's estimated our oceans and not our land holds most of our indigenous biodiversity. We also have one of the **largest** expanses of oceans in the world; we are responsible for managing and protecting a whopping 4 million square kilometres! ⁽¹⁾

New Zealanders love the oceans from the amazing wildlife and beautiful beaches that stretch along the majority of our coastline to the delicious and diverse seafood that our waters provide.

We're blessed with amazing water-based activities - from whale watching in Kaikoura, to swimming with the dolphins in Northland or simply hanging out with our kids and making sand castles at Auckland's Long Bay.

Our oceans are a vital part of what it means to be Kiwi.



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“We are woefully ignorant of what could well be New Zealand's number one ecological and economic asset.”

*J. Morgan Williams,
Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment.*



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Toss a line, catch a fish

Tell the average Kiwi that they may not be able to eat seafood in the future and we're guessing they'd scoff at you. We're more likely to know about other countries' ocean and overfishing issues than about the realities of what's happening in our own back-yard.

The oceans around New Zealand once brimmed with abundant sea life. The nearly 1 million Kiwis who enjoy recreational fishing could easily surf cast from the beach and be guaranteed at least a kahawai and some mussels off the rocks.

Not any more. Most recreational fishers lament the fact that what was once just taken as our God-given right is no more. Industrial fishing has put an end to the “easy catch”, and in fact even these huge industrial operators are finding it harder and harder to trawl, hook and net the few remaining fish around New Zealand.

“In the Ministry of Fisheries 2000 Annual Report, the Chief Scientist was quoted (rather boldly) as saying: New Zealand is respected world wide as a leader in science-based fisheries management, so I believe we can all feel confident that our fishery will be there for future generations. I think the Emperor has no clothes; I think we have been fooling ourselves.”

Dr John McKoy: NIWA National Institute of Water and Atmospheric Research, Wellington

1. Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ).

Industrial fishing, one fish, two fish, no fish

New Zealand's oceans are in trouble. A handful of industrial fishing companies are ruining it for the rest of us. Industrial fisheries catches are getting smaller and smaller, not because of stringent rules and regulations, but because there's less and less fish down there and they're getting harder and harder to catch!

Current rates of fishing will not only increase the purchase price of fish until it's out of most Kiwis' grasp, but will ultimately destroy our fish stocks, our fishing industry and countless jobs.

While fishing is traditionally seen as a romantic trade, with small boats putting to sea and coming back with holds full of fish for market, the reality of industrial fishing is far from warm and fuzzy.

Our oceans and remaining fish stocks are hunted in unsustainable ways with boats that go to sea for weeks at a time, trawling the ocean with huge nets that can stretch for kilometres, or alternatively scouring the sea floor, felling ancient coral forests and scooping up thousands of tonnes of fish and anything else in their path.

More advanced fishing has seen everything from the arrival of seafloor mapping to satellite sensors on nets so that the poor fish

don't stand a chance. The computer technology to hunt fish stocks is so advanced it would make our own minds boggle!

This advancement has sadly increased the industry's ability to plunder fishing stocks, collapsing them faster than ever before. Global seafood catches have been declining since the late 1980s, and 76 per cent of the world's fish stocks are now in deep, deep trouble.

Industrial fisheries are actually fishing themselves to extinction. Trawl times and distances have dramatically increased over the last decade. It now takes much longer to catch the same amount of fish and days to sail out to the fishery instead of hours.

Through overfishing, many prized stocks have collapsed. As large predators, such as Swordfish and Tuna disappear, we're trawling deeper and consistently hunting smaller species of fish. At the rate we're going it may not be long until all that's left to eat is plankton and jellyfish.

You don't have to be a scientist to see that there is something seriously wrong.



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Bottom trawling nets indiscriminately scoop up and destroy everything in their path, such as ancient coral forests.

Help to ensure a future with fish and chips

The facts are so depressing that it's easy to conclude that the demise of our oceans is a done deal. The risk here is that we all give up trying to do anything about it. But we're lucky here in New Zealand, not because our oceans are immune from the rest of the

problems of the world, but because we have such an affinity with the oceans and such a passion about all they provide. We have the power and the right to turn these problems around and help secure a truly sustainable future for New Zealand's waters and beyond.



The more people who demand truly sustainable seafood from their retailers, the more incentive and pressure there is on industrial fisheries to provide sustainably caught fish. By not purchasing the species listed on the Greenpeace Red Fish Guide and asking retailers three vital questions, you can help protect our oceans.

Just ask:

Q: What is it and where is it caught?

This is the minimum a supplier should be able to tell you, which will help you avoid red list species.

Q: How was it caught?

Most fishing is not selective, particularly trawling which is highly destructive.

Q: Do you have a policy for sourcing only truly sustainable seafood?

Retailers have a responsibility to be part of the solution, not the problem.

We are asking for urgent action on these species for one or more of the following reasons:

- They are vulnerable to overfishing. Orange Roughy are just one of many fish species whose life history makes them vulnerable to over fishing. They live for over 100 years, do not reproduce until they are at least 20 years old and produce very few eggs compared to other species.
- They are commonly sourced from overfished and depleted stocks, or are being fished at too high a rate. For example, the Southern Bluefin Tuna is listed by the World Conservation Union as critically endangered.
- The fishing methods used are highly destructive to other ocean creatures and/or habitats. Bottom trawling for Oreo and Orange Roughy destroys ancient coral forests, while trawling for Arrow squid kills threatened NZ sea lions, fur seals, seabirds and sharks. This slaughter of marine life not destined for our plates can be avoided if squid is caught by a better catch method called jigging.

The Red Fish Guide



Antarctic and Patagonian Toothfish

Antarctic Toothfish are very slow growing, while Patagonian Toothfish are heavily overfished world-wide. Bycatch includes large numbers of albatross.



Arrow Squid

Trawling for arrow squid inadvertently kills threatened NZ sea lions, fur seals, seabirds and sharks. Squid caught by jigging causes a lot less harm.



Flatfish

Bottom trawling for these fish wipes out other bottom dwelling sea creatures and destroys their homes.



Hake

Associated with the Hoki fishery with similar issues. High levels of uncertainty surrounding stocks.



Hoki

Every year during the Hoki fishing season hundreds of New Zealand fur seals and seabirds such as albatrosses are killed. One stock is depleted and juvenile fish are being caught risking future stocks.



Orange Roughy

Lives for upwards of 100 years and only starts reproducing at age 20. This makes it extremely vulnerable to overfishing.



Oreos

Like Orange Roughy, Oreos are being overfished. In addition, three unique varieties of Oreo are lumped into just one catch category.



Sharks

Globally, 100 million sharks are killed each year. At the top of the food chain sharks help to preserve ocean ecosystems.



Shrimp and prawns

For every 1kg of shrimp, there is up to 10kgs of bycatch. Overseas shrimp farming drives mangrove destruction and terrible human rights abuses.



Snapper

A slow growing and late starting breeder, Snapper is an important icon for recreational Kiwi fisherman. It is under pressure from combined commercial and recreational catches.



Swordfish

Stock levels are uncertain and using longlining as a catch method also kills seabirds, sharks and marine mammals.



Tuna including: Big Eye, Yellowfin, Pacific Bluefin, Southern Bluefin

Heavily overfished, with some stocks critically endangered. Select only Skipjack Tuna from New Zealand or pole, line or troll fisheries in the Pacific.

<http://www.greenpeace.org.nz/redlist/RedFishGuide.pdf>

The ultimate solution to protect planet ocean

If the people of the world want to continue to eat - let alone sell fish - then we need to safeguard our fisheries by putting an end to destructive fishing. This is why Greenpeace is campaigning for a global network of fully-protected marine reserves covering 40 per cent of our oceans as an essential way to protect our seas from the ravages of climate change, to restore the health of fish stocks, and to protect ocean life from habitat destruction and collapse. We're also calling for the remaining fishing areas to be managed using the precautionary principle and an eco-system based approach.