

Daniel Pauly Talks Fish on 'Fresh Air'

Posted Tue, Nov 3, 2009 by oceana to [aquacalypse now](#), [daniel pauly](#), [fisheries depletion](#), [overfishing](#), [the new republic](#)

On the heels of his piece in *The New Republic*, [Aquacalypse Now](#), fisheries guru and Oceana board member [Dr. Daniel Pauly](#) has a two-part interview on NPR's "Fresh Air" yesterday and today.

Here he is talking with host Terry Gross about [orange roughy](#):

GROSS: But I have to say the fish that you mentioned, orange roughy, Chilean sea bass, monkfish, they're very tasty.

Prof. PAULY: Oh, no problem with that. In fact, the flesh of very old animal in the water is strangely - is firm and it's white, beautiful fillet. And it's richly fat. Yeah, this is good fish. The problem is that this fish are long-lived. If you take orange roughy, they reach up to 150 years. And they...

GROSS: Wow, really?

Prof. PAULY: ...yeah. The oldest has been aged that old. And they mature at 30 years.

GROSS: Wait, wait. I just want to make sure I understand you correctly. You mean, each fish lives 150 years?

Prof. PAULY: The one that survive can live up to 150 years. And they become mature, they become adult at 30 years, older than us, twice older than us. So you are eating something that is older than your grandmother when you're eating one.

GROSS: Wow. So, it's going to take a long time for them to replenish.

Prof. PAULY: That's right. In fact, orange roughy essentially cannot replenish because this is an - like an old-growth forest. You harvest it and then you have to move on because the replenishment takes too long for any operation. When the orange roughy craze begun in the '80s, lots of countries got into that, New Zealand is the biggest one. And essentially, they harvest sea mounts. You know, this is underwater mountains, and at the top of them are full of orange roughy. And you fish it out, and then you move on to the next sea mount. So this is essentially unsustainable, and if an area has been fished out, then that's it.

So just in case you were feeling a little too good about the state of the oceans, have a listen (or read the transcript). And then [take action](#) to help us fix the mess we're in.

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