
Seafood Summit: Defining sustainability

Dr. Daniel Pauly of the University of British Columbia's Fisheries Centre talks about the importance of small-scale fisheries.

Editor's note: SeafoodSource Contributing Editor Lindsey Partos and SeaFood Business Associate Editor James Wright are in Paris this week covering the Seafood Choices Alliance Seafood Summit.

"Sustainability has to simply mean you could do this for ever," said Dr. Daniel Pauly in his opening address at this year's Seafood Choices Alliance Seafood Summit in Paris.

Pauly is from the University of British Columbia's Fisheries Centre and principal investigator at the Sea Around Us project. In his vision of a sustainable future for seafood, small-scale fisheries could play a pivotal role, particularly as the era of cheap fuel — apparent in the 20th century — comes to an end.

"The future could be made exclusively of small-scale fisheries that could supply local markets as well as foreign," said Pauly.

According to Pauly, intensive, industrialized fishing methods that use fuel-thirsty trawlers will be far less dominant in the future, giving rise to increasing numbers of small-scale, less fuel-dependent fisheries.

"It is hard to imagine trawlers in 20 years time," said Pauly, adding that "sustainable trawlers are not possible."

The Sea Around Us project is currently reconstructing catch time series, including illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) catches, for all countries in the world; its preliminary conclusion is that "small-scale fisheries are not small."

Intimately tied to the issues of sustainability, fish stocks and the need to feed consumer demand is global warming, which Pauly explained is likely to have a considerable impact on the biomass make-up of the world's oceans.

"Fish are cold-blooded and cannot regulate their temperature, so as the temperature rises, fish move," said Pauly. In the future, "local extinction" could occur, as such arctic fauna could be replaced by fish from temperate latitude as the fish flee from warmer to cooler waters.

Pauly predicted that the next 50 years will see a change in catch potential; Alaska, Norway and Greenland would be among the "winners," while Indonesia, Chile, and Brazil would fall among the losers.

[All Environment & Sustainability stories >](#)

Story from SeafoodSource.com:
<http://seafoodsource.com/newsarticledetail.aspx?id=4294988957>

Published: Monday, February 01, 2010

© SeafoodSource.com 2008 - 2010