

Too few fish in the sea? Scientists report decline in large fish

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Washington - The amount of large [fish](#) in the world's oceans has fallen by two-thirds in the last 100 years, and the global fish supply will continue to decline even as human demand for fish rises, researchers said Friday.

'Will there be fish left in 2050?' Villy Christensen of Canada's University of British Columbia asked at the American Association for the Advancement of Science meeting in Washington. 'Yes, there will be fish left, but it will be a different ocean than what our parents and grandparents knew and what we see now.'

His research developed estimates of the mass of fish in world oceans from 1880 to 2007, and found that much of the decline in large fish populations had occurred in the last 40 years.

The decline in large, predatory fish creates an imbalance in ocean [ecosystems](#).

'We are moving from wild oceans to a system that is much more like a farm,' Christensen said.

'We are getting more of the small [fish](#) and less of the big fish. We are moving from a system much more like the wild Serengeti to a system where the lions are gone and all we have left are the plant eaters, the antelopes.'

At the same time, it seems more energy is being expended to catch ever fewer fish, fellow University of British Columbia researcher Reg Watson said.

Jacqueline Alder of the UN Environment Programme encouraged fisheries to use more fish lower in the food chain and to immediately reduce overall fishing to allow ecosystems to rebound.

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