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SATURDAY, OCTOBER 28, 2006

PRESS-REGISTER

Mobile, Ala.

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Fisheries scientist Daniel Pauly will deliver lecture in Mobile

By **BEN RAINES**

Staff Reporter

Daniel Pauly, a renowned fisheries scientist, will deliver the 13th annual Wiese lecture Wednesday at the University of South Alabama.

This year's installment of the free lecture series — which in years past has attracted biologists, including E.O. Wilson, Bob Paine and Jeremy Jackson — will focus on what Pauly has described as

“the big picture” of the world's fisheries.

In that picture, Pauly sees oceans being fished to the point of emptiness, a point, he warns, that has already been reached in much of the world.

“Dr. Pauly has become an outspoken, and at times controversial, critic of modern fishing practices,” said Bob Shipp, head of the marine sciences department at USA. “He has suggested that marine fishers

will leave little but jellyfish for future generations to eat.”

Pauly has published papers in prestigious scientific journals and created <http://fishbase.org>, a Web site that describes the present situation of 27,000 species of marine creatures.

While his work is often attacked by commercial fishing interests and even governments, his conclusions about an international crisis unfolding beneath the seas are widely re-

garded as prescient and correct.

This marks the third year in a row that the lecture series has featured a scientist recognized for chronicling the decline of the world's oceans.

Pauly, who has written numerous books, including one about the fish studied by Charles Darwin, published a landmark article in *Science* magazine in 1998 titled,



Daniel Pauly, one of the world's pre-eminent fisheries scientists, will speak Wednesday at the University of South Alabama. His lecture will highlight the crisis unfolding beneath the world's oceans.

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“Fishing Down Marine Food Webs.” In that article, he suggested that once the most desirable fish species in a given ocean were fished to the point at which commercial harvest was no longer viable, anglers would move on to the next most desirable species and so on down the line until there was little worth catching in a given area.

He suggested that this pattern has been playing out all over the globe since the 1950s and especially so in the northern hemisphere.

“Dr. Pauly, because there is so much

focus on world fisheries and the decline of highly migratory species around the world and in the Gulf of Mexico, there is no one more important we could have come to speak here,” Shipp said.

“He is a dynamic speaker. I've heard him a couple of times. You are just glued to your seat. I look at my library, and I've got all these yellowed folders with ‘Pauly’ written on them. For at least 15 or 20 years he has been the pre-eminent man in his field.”

The scientist's journey to the top of the academic heap was not easy. Pauly has described in published accounts a

Cinderella-like childhood during which — after being essentially kidnapped by a well-heeled Swiss family at age 2 — he was forced to work as a servant until running away at age 16.

After making his way to Germany, Pauly put himself through high school, rediscovered his birth parents and became one of the giants in his chosen field.

The lecture, titled, “Global Trends in World Fisheries: Impact on Marine Ecosystems and Food Security,” begins at 7 p.m. Wednesday at the University of South Alabama's Mitchell Center. Admission is free and open to the public. For more information, call 460-7136.