

Era of fisheries expansion is over: UBC

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So much for sustainable fisheries – a University of British Columbia-led study suggests humans have run out of ocean to fish after a dramatic expansion of fisheries in the 1980s and 1990s.



According to the study, which **UBC** conducted with the **National Geographic Society**, fisheries expanded by one million square kilometres annually between the 1950s and 1970s.

And the rate of expansion more than tripled annually in the 1980s and early 1990s to roughly the size of Brazil's Amazon rain forest, the study found.

Humans caught 90 million tonnes of fish in the late 1980s, compared to 19 million tonnes in 1950.

We're catching slightly fewer fish these days (87 million tonnes in 2005), but according to the study, fisheries aren't much more sustainable today than they were some years ago. Rather, we've simply run out of new places to fish.

The study, which UBC says is the first to measure the spatial expansion of global fisheries, was published Thursday in the online journal *PLoS ONE*.

Daniel Pauly, co-author and principal investigator of the Sea Around Us Project at UBC's fisheries centre, said in a release: "While many people still view fisheries as a romantic, localized activity pursued by rugged individuals, the reality is that for decades now, numerous fisheries are corporate operations that take a mostly no-fish-left-behind approach to our oceans until there's nowhere left to go."

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