

# Overfishing costs lives, \$100 billion worldwide: UBC study

BY RANDY SHORE, VANCOUVER SUN    SEPTEMBER 15, 2010

The drop in catch size due to overfishing in the waters of the world's poor nations could feed 20 million malnourished people, according to a new analysis by researchers at the University of British Columbia.

In the most stressed fisheries of Africa's coastal waters, the amount of fish caught declined by up to 50 per cent as early as 10 years ago. UBC economist Rashid Sumaila argues that the catch from the waters of the world's poorest countries could be increased by as much as 17 per cent with better fisheries management.

Worldwide, overfishing's cost to fishermen may be as much as \$36 billion and the cost to related industries as much as \$100 billion.

Four studies led by Sumaila were released this week in a special edition of the Journal of Bioeconomics.

"I hope this will bring people whose relationship to the ocean is based on dollars -- the commercial fishing industry -- to see that this is not about loving the ocean for the sake of the ocean, that economically, [sustainable fisheries] are important," Sumaila said. "It is important that the industry understands this and that they are brought into the formal management of the fisheries."

The value of the world's fishing industry is about \$240 billion, the reports say.

Beyond jobs and money, the world's fisheries are a vital source of food protein and will be key to the world's food security, Sumaila said.

He and his colleagues have for the first time placed a dollar value on non-industrial uses of ocean waters, reckoning that whale-watching, diving and recreational fisheries generate \$47 billion and 1.1 million jobs around the world.

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