

Name: _____

Period: ____ Date: _____

Web Quest: Overfishing

Overfishing is a problem that is affecting the entire planet. Many of the most popular and, at one point, the most prominent fish species are now in serious danger of becoming extinct. Fishing fleets have grown twice as fast as the rise in catches (it will take decades to recover IF the fishing were to stop today).

Our fishing practices have become archaic, for example, in recent years fishermen have spent \$125 billion to catch only \$70 billion in fish (that's a \$55 billion loss). Fishermen are only able to sustain this style of fishing because of government subsidies, which simply lead to more overfishing. It's time for a change.

In this web quest you will be researching the six types of fishing that are leading to the decline, as well as researching a few of the alternative methods that could save our fisheries.

Part 1: The Problem

Go to: www.overfishing.org

1. What is overfishing? (pick one of the three definitions)

2. What is causing overfishing?

3. How large is our current global fishing capacity?

4. Use the example of Newfoundland to explain why overfishing is a problem. Could this spread to other areas?

5. What does it mean to "fish down the food web"?

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Part 2: The Methods

Go to: www.seafoodwatch.org – click on the “Ocean Issues” tab → “Fishing and Farming Methods”

Define the following types of fishing:

1. Trawls and Dredges:

2. Purse Seine:

3. Longlining:

4. Gillnetting:

5. Harpooning:

Part 3: The Methods

Go to: www.seafoodwatch.org – click on the “Ocean Issues” tab → “Wild Seafood” → “Overfishing”

1. What is the current state of the world’s fisheries?

2. Why are large fish the first to be caught and how does this affect the world’s fisheries (think reproduction)?

3. What happens to large fish when fishermen start to focus on animals that are lower on the food chain?

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Part 4: Unintended Consequences

Go to: www.seafoodwatch.org – click on the “Ocean Issues” tab → “Wild Seafood” → “Bycatch”

1. How many fish are caught either dead or dying and are simply discarded?

2. Describe bycatch.

3. What are 3 fishing methods with the most bycatch?

4. How many sea turtles have been affected by bycatch?

Part 5: The Solution

Go to: www.seafoodwatch.org – click on the “Ocean Issues” tab → “Wild Seafood” → “Management”

1. What are fishermen doing to reduce bycatch?

2. How much fishing is illegal? What’s being done to stop this?

3. What is meant by “Yosemite of the Sea”?

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