

## The REAL cost of your sushi: How the lunchtime favourite is wiping out tuna supplies... and is packed full of harmful microbeads

- A celebrity-favourite, the sushi market is worth £69million a year in the UK
- Fashion for sushi causing a massive decline in the number of tuna in the oceans
- Marine biologists warn it is also damaging our bodies with harmful microbeads

By [Victoria Allen Science Correspondent For The Daily Mail](#)

**PUBLISHED:** 00:44 GMT, 13 January 2017 | **UPDATED:** 07:49 GMT, 13 January 2017

It is the trendy lunch of choice for everyone from office workers to Hollywood film stars.

But oh-so-healthy sushi is actually damaging our seas and our bodies, leading marine biologists have warned.

They say that the fashion for the fish dish is not only causing a massive decline in the number of tuna in the oceans, but also filling us with harmful microbeads.



Oh-so-healthy sushi is actually damaging our seas and our bodies, leading marine biologists have warned

The sushi market is worth £69million a year in the UK, largely due to its reputation as a low-calorie, vitamin-rich food.

It is endorsed by celebrities including actresses Angelina Jolie and Jennifer Aniston.

However, Professor Daniel Pauly and Dr Dirk Zeller, from the University of British Columbia, in Canada, who published a respected study last year on the global fish catch, say bluefin and yellowfin tuna populations are at 'crisis' levels.

Both men blame the stock depletion on tuna's reputation as a source of heart-healthy omega-3 fatty acids.

Speaking in advance of a lecture at the Zoological Society of London last night, Professor Pauly said: 'Historically we have had the "Popeye effect" where everyone ate spinach, then vitamin D was good and vitamin C would save us from having cancer.

'Now it is omega-3 – all these things are going to save us, make us healthy and we are going to live for ever. None of this is true – what we need is a balanced diet.'

The professor also said he was confident the tuna served up in sushi bars contains plastic microbeads, found in cosmetic products including make-up and deodorants.

The microscopic plastic particles, set to be banned in the UK following a Daily Mail campaign, are magnets for pesticides and industrial chemicals.

He added: 'Microbeads are poison pills which soak up all the pollutants and they are consumed by little fish which are then eaten by tuna.'



The sushi market is worth £69million a year in the UK, largely due to its reputation as a low-calorie, vitamin-rich food



Tuna served up in sushi bars is said to contain plastic microbeads, found in cosmetic products including make-up and deodorants

Bluefin tuna tends to be in luxury sushi served in high-end Japanese restaurants, while a cheaper lunchtime supermarket sushi roll is likely to contain yellowfin tuna. Most sushi eaten in the UK comes from the Indian Ocean, and tuna is routinely overfished to meet global demand.

Professor Pauly warned: 'We are in permanent crisis if you look at it in historic terms. Bluefin tuna was extremely abundant, especially in the Mediterranean. 'What has become of that? We have 2 to 3 per cent of what we had 200 years ago.'

Although demand for tuna is partially driven by the touted health benefits of sushi, Dr Zeller said that it is not necessarily good for us as it can contain high levels of mercury and polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs). These are polluting chemicals in waterways that are feared to cause cancer in people.

Both men urged consumers to eat less glamorous fish such as anchovies and sardines instead – the majority of which are currently turned into meal, with around half fed to animals.

LINK: <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-4115470/Warning-lunchtime-favourite-wiping-tuna-supplies-packed-harmful-microbeads.html#ixzz4VfiuGE1P>