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437 million tonnes of fish wasted due to harmful fishing



Cheryl Santa Maria
Digital Reporter

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Tuesday, May 15, 2018, 3:47 PM - A new study out of the University of British Columbia (UBC) finds that fisheries relying on bottom trawling have wasted 437 million tonnes of fish and \$560 billion in revenue over the past 65 years globally.

Bottom trawling is a practice where industrial fishing boats drag nets along the seafloor pulling up anything and everything in its path, including the intended fish.

Unwanted or unneeded coral, fish and marine life is dumped back into the ocean, but much of it is damaged or killed in the process.

The study tracked bottom trawling between 1950 and 2014 and found it is the most wasteful form of fishing.

"Industrial fisheries do not bring everything they catch to port," Tim Cashion, lead author of the study and a PhD student at UBC's Institute of Oceans and Fisheries, said in a statement, adding the process generates about 60 per cent of the fishing industry's total waste.

"They threw away fish that-- even though are not the most valuable-- are perfectly good for human consumption," Deng Palomares, co-author of the study, said in a statement.

"The worst part is that, in general, bottom trawlers are so expensive to operate that the only way to keep them afloat is by giving them government subsidies. Ironically, had they landed that catch, they would have made \$560 billion according to our dataset of prices."

Researchers found that small -scale fisheries account for about 23 per cent of total catch but generate more revenue because they use smaller and more cost-effective tools.

Researchers hope the findings will help officials better calculate the costs and benefits of national fisheries.

The complete study can be found online at [Fisheries Research](#).

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