

Today 11°C, Tues 14°C, Wed 9°C, Thurs 13°C

Get an instant response. Apply now

TD Emerald Flex Rate Visa Card

**straight** EVENTS GUIDES

BEST OF VANCOUVER NEWS LIFE FOOD MUSIC CANNABIS ARTS TECH MOVIES CONFESSIONS GOLDEN PLATES MORE

Food TOPICS

FOOD NOTES »

### Current global tuna fishing levels are unsustainable without proper management: UBC researchers

by Craig Takeuchi on October 4th, 2019 at 4:26 PM

f t 🍷 📧 0



RIZA AZHARI/GETTY IMAGES

Contact a TD Agriculture Specialist. Learn more

POPULAR ON STRAIGHT.COM

- Jagmeet Singh turns table on reporter who asks if he's writing a blank cheque for First Nations
- The Jared McCann trade is going to haunt the Vancouver Canucks
- Homeless in Vancouver: What everyone was craning to see Sunday on West Broadway
- After months of grumbling about NDP climate failures, B.C. Green Leader Andrew Weaver plans major

Diners may love to gobble up tuna served in everything from sashimi and sushi to tacos to sandwiches. But the current rate at which fisheries are scooping tuna out of the sea may mean there may come a time in the future when there won't be any tuna available to feast upon—unless fisheries and fish stocks are properly managed.

That's according to a study by Sea Around Us researchers from the University of British Columbia and the University of Western Australia, published in *Fisheries Research*.

According to the study, global tuna catches have shot up by over 1,000 percent over the past six decades, due to enormous expansions in industrial fisheries.

In recent years, fisheries have been catching almost six million tons of tuna and are operating significantly over capacity.

As populations of tuna and other large fish species have been depleted or over-exploited, there aren't any new fishing grounds left to explore.

Consequently, the researchers created a global database about the amount of tuna caught and their geographic regions. The data, dating back to 1950, was compiled from five tuna regional fisheries management organizations.

The data also includes statistics about unintentionally caught species, such as endangered sharks, large fish, and fish discarded overboard.

The most commonly caught tuna species are skipjack and yellowfin, with combined recent catches of four million tons per year. Bluefin tuna populations have significantly decreased to become critically endangered species.

Blue sharks, an at-risk species, make up about 23 percent of other fish caught in by-catches, with their fins removed to be sold in shark-fin markets or discarded overboard. The study states that industrial tuna fisheries are one of the major threats to sharks populations.



[RICH CAREY](#)/GETTY IMAGES

Researchers also found that 67 percent of the world's total tuna catches come from the Pacific Ocean, primarily taken by Japanese and American fishing fleets. Meanwhile, 12 percent of global catches come from the Indian Ocean, taken by Taiwanese, Indonesian, Spanish, and French fleets, and 12 percent are from the Atlantic Ocean, taken by Spanish and French fleets, as well as Japanese and Korean vessels using Ghana's flag.

The future of tuna fishing depends on “effective and restrictive long-term sustainable management of the fisheries and fleets exploiting these stock and ecosystems”, according to the study.

“The continuation of tuna fisheries’ catch, employment numbers, and revenue figures at levels similar to the present day depends on the long-term sustainable management of the fisheries and fleets exploiting these stocks and ecosystems, and the cooperation of more than 100 countries engaged in tuna fisheries,” Angie Coulter, a Sea Around Us researcher at the Institute for the Oceans and Fisheries at UBC and the study’s lead author, stated in a news release.

Coulter also explained that the study will hopefully encourage stakeholders, policymakers, and industries to increase and coordinate efforts to monitor tuna stocks to ensure their sustainability into the future.

*You can follow Craig Takeuchi on Twitter at [@cinecraig](#) or on [Facebook](#).*

#### RELATED STORIES

- [UBC study finds up to one-quarter of fish products in Metro Vancouver are fraudulently labelled](#)
- [Ocean conservancy group finds over 40 percent of seafood products in Canada are mislabelled](#)
- [UBC Food Services commits to purchasing and serving only sustainable seafood for Vancouver and Kelowna campuses](#)
- [Hong Kong and Vancouver researchers argue shark-fin soup must be abandoned to prevent shark extinction](#)
- [Prior to Lunar New Year, Sharkwater Extinction home release raises awareness about impact of shark-fin soup](#)

#### JOIN THE DISCUSSION

Link: <https://www.straight.com/food/1310266/current-global-tuna-fishing-levels-are-unsustainable-according-ubc-researchers>