



Published on *Marine Ecosystems and Management (MEAM)* (<https://meam.openchannels.org>)

The Sea Around Us investigates global fish catch, provides fisheries data and maps for download

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In the mid-1990s it became clear to many observers that global fisheries were in trouble. When the Northern cod (*Gadus morhua*) fishery collapsed off the east coast of Canada, the outline of the crisis only became starker. In 1999, in the wake of the collapse, the *Sea Around Us* was initiated by Daniel Pauly at the University of British Columbia – with a growing recognition that not only was global fishing becoming unsustainable, but it was negatively affecting the health of marine ecosystems. Therefore, the initiative sought to investigate and document the impacts of fisheries on marine ecosystems and to propose policies to mitigate these impacts.

Since then the *Sea Around Us* – funded by The Pew Charitable Trusts for the first 15 years and currently funded by the Paul G. Allen Family Foundation – has had many successes. The research initiative has:

- Led catch reconstructions for over 250 Exclusive Economic Zones, covering all maritime countries in the world (plus high seas fisheries). This work describing how the amount of fish pulled from the oceans is 30 percent higher than officially reported and declining has been reported by media around the world from the *Washington Post* to *The Guardian*.
- Simulated the effects of climate change on fisheries and marine biodiversity on a global scale for the first time
- Developed and applied advanced software techniques to integrate global ecological and fisheries datasets for spatial representation at ecological and politically meaningful scales.

The content-rich *Sea Around Us* website (www.seaaroundus.org) offers a variety of tools to disseminate fisheries research and make all material and data freely available. Interactive [graphs](#) and [maps](#) display global as well as country and ecosystem level data from 1950 to the present, and all data are available for download by fisheries scientists, students, environmental NGO's and the interested public. These data and tools are essential for protecting our marine resources, because, as Pauly writes in the journal *Nature*: "Most fishermen worldwide are finding fewer fish in the hauls than their predecessors did." And only with better data can we devise and implement policies that can reverse this trend.

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