



The oceans at a glimpse

Ø With an average depth of 3800 meters, the world's oceans represent 98% of the available space on Earth for life.

Ø The numbers of large predatory fish such as sharks, tuna, salmon, marlin and swordfish, have declined by over 90% during the last 50 years.

Ø The “high seas”, which constitute 60% of the world's surface, are the least protected areas on Earth.

Ø 1.5 million large whales have been killed by humans over the past 200 years. It has been calculated that, in terms of biomass, this is equivalent to having slaughtered 1.5 billion human beings.

Ø In October 2008, the International Union for the Conservation of Nature reported that up to 38% of all animals are becoming extinct.

Ø The planet is currently experiencing the 6th mass extinction in its history since complex life appeared on Earth about 550 million years ago, during the “Cambrian explosion”. The extinction rate is up to 1000 times faster than any of the five previous similar events.

Ø It will take around 10 million years for flora and fauna to reach previous levels of biodiversity after a mass extinction.

Ø Small fish like anchovies and sardines live less than ten years, whereas deep-sea commercially important fish like orange roughies live for 160 years. Despite this huge difference, they are exploited at the same pace, leading to their very rapid worldwide depletion.

Ø Fleets around the world are estimated to be 250% larger than they should, leading to unsustainable fishing. This disproportion is largely fueled by governmental subsidies.

Ø 50 billion liters of fuel are burned in the process of landing about 80 million tons of fish a year. This means that on average, 0.63 liters of fuel is needed for every kilo of fish that we consume!

Ø It is universally accepted that bottom trawling – in which no more than 400 ships worldwide participate – is the most destructive of all fishing methods. The gigantic nets irreversibly wipe out a common natural heritage of deep coral reefs which are up to 10,000 years old far more quickly than they can be studied and understood.