

Fish consumption guidelines not environmentally sustainable

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Recommendations to increase fish consumption because of health benefits may not be environmentally sustainable and more research is needed to clarify the benefits of omega-3 fatty acids, write Dr. David Jenkins of St. Michael's Hospital in Toronto and coauthors in an analysis in *CMAJ*.

Health agencies and the medical community around the world recommend the consumption of fish for [health benefits](#) and people in developed countries have been urged to increase their consumption of fatty fish 2 to 3 fold.

However, there has been insufficient attention given to studies that fail to show a significant health benefit from omega-3 fatty acids and the evidence that while some may benefit, others may not. This analysis looks at the evidence for the health benefits of fish.

The authors point out that even at current [fish consumption](#) levels, global fisheries are in severe crisis as demand outstrips supply and declining stocks are being diverted from local markets to affluent markets, with serious consequences for the food security of poorer countries and coastal communities. Global stocks have been declining since the late 1980s and there have been more than 100 cases of marine extinctions.

"These trends imply the collapse of all commercially exploited stocks by mid-century," state the authors. "Yet the dire status of fisheries resources is largely unrecognized by the public, who are both encouraged

to eat more fish and are misled into believing we live in a sea of plenty."

More information: <http://www.cmaj.ca/press/pg633.pdf>

Source: Canadian Medical Association Journal

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