

Fish



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The most common reason why even animal-loving semi-vegetarians are still consuming fish is because they are concerned about their health. Nutrition experts are repeating the necessity of fish consumption in order to avoid possible shortages. But this advice is not only obsolete but also devastating. Fish farming has already grown into a large-scale industry, with the same consequences for humans, animals and the environment as factory farming on land.

Aquaculture as an alternative to wild-caught

In 2006 over 144 million tonnes of marine animals were fished from the water world-wide. Of which 110 million tonnes were intended for human consumption.¹

But now it has become clear that the oceans are exhausted and can not give what the fishermen really want. By educating the public through environmental associations and the media, more and more people are becoming aware of the dramatic effects of the over-exploitation of the world's oceans and they are looking for alternatives. One of them is to breed, fish and other marine animals, such as shrimps, in specially separated water reserves - so-called fish farms or aquacultures - so that the stock in the seas can recover. About a third of the fish consumed worldwide comes from these farms.

The breeders initially praised the so-called sustainable and future-oriented breeding, but in the meantime, it turns out that aquaculture is not the hoped-for solution to the problem of overfishing. On the contrary, many fish are not vegetarians and therefore have to be treated with fish (fish oil, flour or pellets). On average, for fish to gain one kilo of weight, they must consume about four times as much food.² This is done by using fish that do not taste good to humans, thus encouraging hunting for fish species that have been spared from overfishing so far. About a third of the fish caught on the globe are processed to feed the breed fish. Breeding farms tend to exacerbate the problem of overfishing rather than solve it. These fish and seafood species, which until now have been uninteresting for human consumption, are the food for larger fish, which are now being snatched away by humans. As a result, these fish stocks are also collapsing.

Habitats are destroyed

Just as a part of the rainforest is cut down in cattle breeding, in order to create grazing areas for the animals, hundreds of thousands of hectares of mangrove forest are irretrievably destroyed for the fish and shrimp farms. These ecologically valuable brackish water areas are the habitat of numerous species of fish, birds and other animals that are killed, displaced or separated from their families. The mangrove forests are not only a protected area for many animals, but the densely wooded forests are also used by humans as protection or to mitigate natural disasters such as tsunamis.³

Water pollution caused by faeces

Also the manure problem can be transferred to today's fish farming: An eight-hectare US salmon farm produces as much organic waste as a city with 10'000 inhabitants! These organic wastes cause an explosive spread of the algae in large quantities, which deprive the oxygen of the water, so that the fish and other organisms turn off the air. The affected water turns over, all life in it dies.

slaughter methods

The killing methods of aquatic animals are nothing better than those of slaughter animals. The vast majority of marine animals die a slow torturous death by suffocation in the air (the others, who are impaled on a fishing hook and torn out of the water, are not feeling better). Previous anesthesia, as it is common in slaughter animals, is not even discussed in marine animals. Should we not feel compassion for fish simply because we are unable to hear their cries?

Toxins in fish and seas

Again, the fishing industry has the same problems as factory farming in general. Because too many animals are kept in a too small space, it is inevitable in industrial breeding to add medicines and / or antibiotics to the animals' feed. This way the breeders try to stem diseases. Even more than with herbivorous "livestock", the added toxins accumulate in fish, also because they consumes other marine animals, which are also already burdened. With each additional stage of the food chain, the toxins are further concentrated.

The residues of these medicines are partly excreted and pollute the ecosystem of the oceans. In the case of random samples, however, independent laboratories repeatedly come across residues of antibiotics in the meat of fish and shrimp. Despite the administration of medicines, the animals are repeatedly affected by diseases. Breeding fish, which can escape from the cages into the open sea, spread the illnesses also to their free-living fellow-species and thus decimate the wild stock.

Artificial health

Wild salmon usually covers thousands of kilometers. The attitude in the cages of breeding farms is so unnatural that their flesh would not appear pink anymore (as consumers are accustomed to), so mostly artificial colors are added to the food. The feed pills of the salmon farmers include e.g. in addition to vitamins and minerals, synthetic dyes (which are banned in the USA) to prevent the «breeding gray», making the meat of the fish as pink as the free-living fish. Mass animal husbandry in the cages also favors inbreeding, which promotes the spread of disease and genetic damage. The breeders undertook, so far in vain, great efforts to breed a salmon, which feels comfortable even in confined space, or is able to suppress its innate territorial habitat.

As was the case with meat a few years ago the consumers are now fooled with the fish that this is a healthy and vital food. On closer inspection, however, the fish consumption offers neither health nor ecological benefits. The problems in industrial fish farming match to every other form of mass animal husbandry - again, a living being is held captive against its natural behavior and fattened and killed for human consumption.

According to the report „The State of World Fisheries and Aquaculture 2006“ by the UN World Food Organization (FAO) on fisheries published in March 2007, 52% of marine fish stocks are so heavily exploited that they can no longer be increased, 16% overfished and 7% were exhausted. Just 1% of the stocks were in a state of recovery after being fished to exhaustion.

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Fussnoten:

1. FAO: [The State of World – Fisheries and Aquaculture 2008](#) [2]
2. [Wikipedia, Aquakultur](#) [3]

Man darf sich nicht täuschen lassen durch den offiziellen Futterquotienten der besagt, dass mit 1

Kilogramm Futter 1 Kilo Fisch erzeugt wird. Denn da wird trockenes Futter mit nassem Fisch verglichen. Das Gewicht des Fisches ist inkl. Wasser, das Trockenfutter selbst ist aber von 80 bis 90 % Wasseranteil der Fische befreit, sodass das Verhältnis am Schluss um einiges höher ist.

[Wikipedia/Teichwirtschaft](#) [4], [fair-fish](#) [5]

3. <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/science/nature/7385315.stm> [6]

Weitere Infos:

- [Fische: Das erstaunliche Leben unter Wasser](#) [7]
- [Overfishing](#) [8]
- More information about fish [fair-fish](#) [9]
- SWR2: [Auch Fische haben Schmerzen](#) [10]
- [Der Fisch auf unserem Teller kann Antibiotika-resistent machen](#) [11], 1.9.2017, Stern

Source URL (modified on 11/01/2017 - 11:28): <https://www.swissveg.ch/overfishing?language=en>

Links

[1] <https://www.swissveg.ch/overfishing?language=en>

[2] <http://www.fao.org/docrep/011/i0250e/i0250e00.htm>

[3] <http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aquakultur>

[4] <http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Teichwirtschaft>

[5] <http://www.fair-fish.ch/wissen/zucht/fischfutter.html>

[6] <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/science/nature/7385315.stm>

[7] <http://www.swissveg.ch/node/95>

[8] <http://www.swissveg.ch/node/120>

[9] <http://www.fair-fish.ch/>

[10] <http://www.swr.de/swr2/wissen/fische-empfinden-schmerzen/-/id=661224/did=19481312/nid=661224/1sd49il/index.html>

[11] <http://www.stern.de/gesundheit/der-fisch-auf-dem-teller-kann-antibiotika-resistent-machen-7603028.html>