Interesting Facts:

* It is estimated that between 65% and 85% of seafood consumed in the U.S. is imported (Gephart et al.2019; NOAA 2021).
* Atlantic cod, halibut and salmon. All three pair nicely with a lemon-butter sauce, a side of asparagus and a glass of sauvignon blanc. Yet no matter the preparation, a fresh catch from the USA’s 95,471 miles of coastal waters is always enjoyable — and perhaps a bit too much.
* These seafood staples are now on the U.S. government’s list of depleting fish stocks.
* On a global scale, advocates say depleting fish stocks are the most [**urgent threat to oceans**](https://www.msc.org/media-centre/news-opinion/news/2022/05/17/depletion-of-fish-stocks-is-most-urgent-threat-to-oceans-say-msc-stakeholders) and immediate change is needed. In some waters, consumer demand for certain seafood is to blame for the smaller stocks; in other areas, environmental issues are harming marine life. Either way, it’s a [**complicated problem**](https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s11160-020-09631-x) to solve because it involves a whole host of nations, organizations and research institutes.
* Depleting fishing stocks are the result of both *overfishing* and *being overfished*, which, according to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Institute, [**are two separate problems.**](https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/national/sustainable-fisheries/status-stocks-2021)
* Overfishing happens when individuals or industries take more fish out of the water than can be reproduced.
* Overfishing is closely tied to [bycatch](https://www.worldwildlife.org/threats/bycatch)—the capture of unwanted sea life while fishing for a different species. This, too, is a serious marine threat that causes the needless loss of billions of fish, along with hundreds of thousands of sea turtles and cetaceans.
* Being overfished, on the other hand, can also involve heavy fishing — or it can be the result of environmental issues such as pollution, climate change or degradation to the stock’s environment. If these issues persist over time, repairing a depleted stock might not be possible.
* The United States is a global leader in sustainable seafood. U.S. fishermen and seafood farmers operate under some of the most robust and transparent environmental standards in the world.
* NOAA Fisheries regulates commercial and recreational fisheries in U.S. waters to preserve and support fish populations and fishing activities for future generations. Regulations can apply to individuals, businesses, state or local governments, non-profit institutions, and others.

Solutions:

* Annual catch limit
* Sustainable practices such as aquaculture:

*U.S. aquaculture is an environmentally responsible source of food and commercial products, helps to create healthier habitats, and is used to rebuild stocks of threatened or endangered species.*

* Traceability standards
* Protecting essential predator species
* Fishing subsidy and agricultural investment reform
* Continued enforcement of the Magnuson-Stevens Act, The Endangered Species act,
* Marine Mammal Protection Act.