

The Crisis and Controversiality of Overfishing in Micronesia Through the Lens of Environmental/Human Security

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POHNPEI MICRONESIA WOMAN SELLING FRESH FISH

Overfishing is a huge issue in Micronesia because so many people own their own fish markets and there is a huge number of fish going to waist and rotting because of the outdoor markets and their heat
<https://www.gettyimages.com/detail/news-photo>



TAKING FISHERIES MANAGEMENT BEYOND THE SCALE

Around 25% of the worlds Tuna supply comes from the Micronesia area. Unlike most other fish that are being overfished there are rules in Micronesia about fishing tuna, but they are rarely followed.
<https://www.nature.org/en-us/newsroom>



SUGEONFISH BEING SOLD AT THE LOCAL MARKET

This photo from a fishery in Pohnpei is important because there are a lot of sturgeon in the image. The Sturgeon is an endangered species in the world and are illegal to catch, but black-market fishing operations in Micronesia are not helping the cause.
<https://www.alamy.com/stock-photo>



DEAD FISH WASTED

You can see the sea of dead fish that are just getting ready to be wasted. It is said from a credible source that in Pohnpei's oceans 1.6 million pounds of fish are taken each year and they only spawn 1.1 million.
<http://www.walker-foundation.org/Files/walker>



MORE OVERFISHING

Fishing is a large part of the economy in Micronesia and here we see a man with little resources trying to cash in on opportunity, thus leading to more overfishing.
<https://www.pinterest.com/pin/328199891565013969/>

Background:

- What is the extent of overfishing in Micronesia?
- Is there an impact on human security due to threats to the ecosystem and fish productivity?
- Series of individuals photos taken by professionals to showcase the overfishing epidemic in the Federated States of Micronesia
- Micronesia is a series of states located in the Pacific Ocean Consisting of Yap, Chuuk, Pohnpei and Kosrae.
- "Research shows that about 1.6 million pounds of fish are removed from Pohnpei's reefs each year, but the reefs produce only 1.1 Million pounds annually."
- "Large scale commercial fishing is the primary industry of Pohnpei" (BrighterGreen)

Methodology:

- The mass amount of information I found about Micronesia when searching overfishing attracted me and is another reason why I wanted to take a closer look at this area.
- The method I will use to configure my question will be through arts-based research. This will be helpful to visualize the extent of overfishing by drawing on images through news media sources.
- I chose Micronesia over more local American areas because it is a much bigger issue to human security in that area.
- My photos showcase the extreme number of fish that are going to waste as there are too many being caught and not purchased in Micronesia

References

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"Conserving Coastal Fisheries in Pohnpei." U.S. Embassy in the Federated States of Micronesia, 21 Dec. 2018, fm.usembassy.gov/conserving-coastal-fisheries-in-pohnpei/.

Literature Review:

- Outside the reef, fishing of another sort continues. Large-scale, commercial fishing is the primary industry of Pohnpei.
- The annual value of tuna harvested from the waters surrounding the Federated States of Micronesia is \$200 million.
- The FSM has licensed the rights to those waters to foreign ships; the FSM thus receives only 20 million from the tuna harvest each year, primarily from license sales
- Outsiders started coming into our reefs, they used scuba gear and dynamite, and the fish got smaller and fewer. (Pala)
- Pohnpei has a large coral reef area in relation to its human population size. However, land based stressors and over exploration of fisheries have impacted these natural resources, resulting in degraded coral reefs that have impaired ecosystem functioning and produce fewer fish. (US Embassy)

Conclusion:

- My findings so far show that Micronesia's economy will take a hit when there is a shortage of fish due to overfishing in today's times.
- My pictures showcase everything from how the fish are caught, how they are showcased in markets, and the excess and illegality of fish being caught.
- "If overfishing continues, more species will be driven to extinction and aquatic ecosystems will collapse. Fisheries should behave responsibly because they are major forces of ecological and evolutionary change." (Revolution)