

Directions

Read this article. Then answer questions 49 through 51.

Too Many Fishermen

by Carole Garbury Vogel

The shimmering blue waters of the ocean cover nearly 71 percent of the Earth's surface. However, if you look at a world map you will most likely see the continents drawn in great detail, while the ocean is depicted as a monotonous blue expanse with no hint of the majestic landscape beneath the waves. If you could explore the vistas¹ on the ocean floor, you would find deeper valleys, wider plains, and mountain ranges longer and more massive than anywhere on land.

You would also discover that the majority of ocean life lives within oyster bays, coral reefs, and other habitats in the shallow water rimming the continents. Impressive as this watery world appears today, it pales in comparison to what it once was. Just three hundred years ago you would have found colossal underwater "cities" packed with sea life along every coast. Overfishing turned many of these lush marine havens into biological deserts.

Overfishing depletes fish stocks by taking fish at a rate faster than they can replace themselves. Many fish are harvested before they are even mature enough to reproduce. As a result, marine species are disappearing at an alarming rate. Some kinds of whales and other sea creatures have already been hunted to extinction. More are on the verge. And development along coasts that drains swamps and fills in wetlands has eliminated precious nurseries for new generations of fish and shellfish.

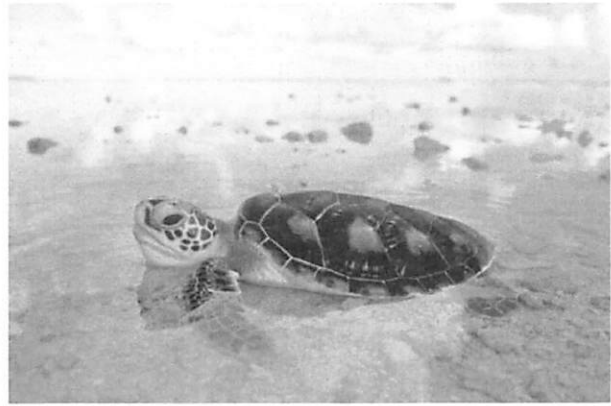
The same map that gives little information about the ocean realm provides clues about the sea life that previously flourished near shore. Place-names like Cape Cod (Massachusetts), Oyster Bay (New York), Seal Harbor (Maine), and Herring Bay (Maryland) are ghostly reminders of animals once plentiful in these locations.

Historical records provide insight, too. Can you imagine New York's harbor crowded with seals, whales, and porpoises, and its shores teeming with lobsters 6-feet (108-meters) long? The Dutch found such bounty when they settled the region in the early 1600s.

Most people know more about the dinosaurs, which became extinct 65 million years ago, than about the massive sea animals that died out within the last three centuries along their own nation's coasts. However, unlike dinosaurs which will never come back, many sea creatures have a chance of recovery. They are considered to be "ecologically extinct." This means that there are still some left but not enough to make an impact on an ecosystem. Their numbers may increase if they are protected from fishing—commercial as well as sport—and if their habitats are shielded from development and pollution.

¹vistas: views

Overfishing began in the Stone Age. For example, tens of millions of green turtles once lived in the Caribbean Sea. Now so few remain that the survival of the species is threatened. The turtle decline started three thousand years ago when humans settled the region. The turtles were agile in the water but they made easy prey for hunters when they lumbered up sandy beaches to lay eggs. The people came to rely on turtle meat and eggs as a major part of their diet.



On some islands, the turtles disappeared by 800 A.D. From the 1500s on, European settlers hastened the demise of the remaining turtle populations by harvesting them not only for food, but also for their skin to make leather, and their shells for use in jewelry and other ornaments.

GO ON

- 49** According to “Too Many Fishermen,” what is the **main** reason previously abundant marine environments have declined? Use **two** details from the article to support your answer.

- 50** The author of “Too Many Fishermen” describes certain place-names as “ghostly reminders.” What does the author mean by using the words “ghostly reminders”? Use **two** details from the article to support your answer.

GO ON

51

“Monster Debris” and “Too Many Fishermen” both indicate that human beings are having a negative impact on ocean life. How does each author support this claim? Describe the evidence each author uses and evaluate the relevance and strength of the evidence. Use details from **both** articles to support your response.

In your response, be sure to

- identify the support given in each article that shows the negative impact human beings have had on the ocean environment
- evaluate the effectiveness, strength, and relevance of the support
- use details from **both** articles to support your response

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal blue or grey ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.