



The Perfect Protein: The Fish Lover's Guide to Saving the Oceans and Feeding the World

Andy Sharpless, Suzannah Evans, Bill Clinton (Foreword)

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The planet will be home to more than 9 billion people by 2050, and we're already seeing critical levels of famine around the world mirrored by growing obesity in developed nations. In *The Perfect Protein*, Andy Sharpless maintains that protecting wild seafood can help combat both issues, because seafood is the healthiest, cheapest, most environmentally friendly source of protein on earth. While the conservation community has taken a simplistic, save-the-whales approach when it comes to oceans, Sharpless contends that we must save the world's seafood not just to protect marine life and biodiversity but to stave off the coming humanitarian crisis.

With high demand for predator species like tuna and salmon, wealthy nations like the U.S. convert "reduction" species such as anchovies, mackerel, and sardines into feed for salmon and other farmed animals—even though these overlooked fish are packed with health-boosting Omega-3 fatty acids and could feed millions. By establishing science-based quotas, protecting wild habitats, and reducing bycatch (and treating anchovies and their like as food, not feed), Sharpless believes that effective ocean stewardship can put healthy, sustainable seafood on the table forever. To that end, Oceana has tapped 20-plus chefs, including Mario Batali, Eric Ripert, and Jose Andres for recipes that give us all a role to play in this revolutionary mission: to save the fish so that we can eat more fish.

The Perfect Protein: The Fish Lover's Guide to Saving the Oceans and Feeding the World Details

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From Reader Review The Perfect Protein: The Fish Lover's Guide to Saving the Oceans and Feeding the World for online ebook

B Herrmann says

Excellent - starts by telling how the ocean's have been and still are abused for food supply, then how to select sustainable fish and shell fish, and finishes with a lot of good recipes.

Amanda says

Gives the reader a really good idea how plentiful the oceans once were and a clear strategy to sustainably catch fish that will sustain a human's appetite and a healthy population. I already use the Monterey Bay Aquarium SeaWatch Guide, yet I had no idea the vast destructiveness of trawling, longline or bycatch fishing practices. While I love Chilean Sea Bass (Patagonian Toothfish) and Scallops, I can surely leave them only to be seen alive and not on my plate!

Alyce says

Amazing. Completely eye-opening and heart-wrenching at times. It made me highly motivated and gave me hope for the future of our oceans. Must read for everyone, in my opinion. Don't leave yourself in the dark and assume someone else will take care of the problem. It is time to start giving a crap and do something to save our life-force: the oceans.

Ok Montreal says

It's a good book for anyone interested in conservation but the book fails on a journalistic front with no real insight from the commercial fishing boats so vilified throughout the book (justifiably I'm sure but the "proof" is neglected). Sharpless offers interesting stories about good and bad management of fisheries from around the world. Lots of information about the ever reducing fish stocks and clever solutions that are already working. It prompted me to try and eat clams again something I hadn't done in 20+ years.

Greg says

Good guide to ethical and healthy fish eating. I started eating sardines and oysters after reading this book.

Kami Bratten says

Eat more fish, it's simple. The Perfect Protein offers sound, albeit repetitive reasons. It's good for your body,

it's good for the earth, it's good for the future.

Lauren says

Excellent source on how the global seafood market impacts the health of our oceans, and how important initiatives from the grassroots level up to the biggest government agencies can improve the oceans both for the livelihood of fish and marine mammals and for the world's population of seafood eaters. As for my personal seafood consumption, I'm now going by Andy Sharpless's motto (based off of Michael Polan's) - "Eat seafood. Not too big. Mostly local." Boston mackerel, Long Island clams, and sustainable farmed fish are now on my grocery list!

Zach says

I read this book immediately after finishing Paul Greenberg's *Four Fish: The Future of the Last Wild Food*. It opened up a new area of interest for me, reading about ocean ecosystems and our efforts to stabilize what is currently a failing ecosystem. Growing up and later living in landlocked cities, I've always felt a deep attraction for the open seas – sailing, diving and seafood.

The authors have a harsher tone than other books with similar scope, a tone that is quite understandable once you see the way they chose to present the story of fishing.

The ocean, they say, suffers from the same fate as the land fauna explorers encounters across the oceans – hunted to extinction. In this case, fished to extinction and it's easy to see why, as fish are harder to see and thus easier to forget.

The fish have ran out of places to hide

The story of depleting oceans starts very late in our history, the later decades of the 19th century. When Europeans discovered the New World, they were amazed by the richness of the seas: in the Caribbean, sea turtles were so many that ships had difficulties navigating the waters. The cod next to New England, was so big that Europeans have never seen a specimen so big. The wildlife was so abundant and rich in the America, that Europeans believed it's inexhaustible. Colonists used to catch flatfish (that live on the sea floor) by hand. It only took 30 years for some species to become extinct.

"One-third of all the wild fish caught on Earth end up as fish meal or oil. Of that, 81 percent goes to feed farmed fish."

Stewards of the sea

One of the most important concepts I found in the book is redefining the relationship between humans and the ocean.

Till now, our relationship with the animals that feed us has had only two names: we are their farmers or we are their hunters. If we are going to rely on them forever as a source of healthy protein for billions of people, the fish in the sea call us to a different relationship—the one called stewardship. Stewardship demands

understanding that something is fully entrusted to one's care. It's not the same as ownership. A steward is a manager who is highly ethical and cares what happens in the long run. A multi-generational orientation is built into the term from its origin in the Middle Ages, when feudal lords appointed estate managers they called stewards. Stewards are operating productive enterprises, not protecting pristine nature zones. We take but we also protect. A symbiosis like the one we had when we first domesticated animals and we needed them just as much as they needed us. Something that we have forgotten currently as we are sitting very far away from the origin of our food.

The book itself is condensed in the first part, as the second part of the book has recipes for cooking unusual sea food (think of jellyfish) and also guides for choosing sustainable seafood when making choices on what fish you want to eat.

The key takeaway of the book comes from paraphrasing Michael Pollan's famous philosophy: "Eat food. Not too much. Mostly plants." Andy and Suzannah boil their philosophy down to this: "Eat wild seafood. Not too much of the big fish. Mostly local."

Note: This review appears on my blog as well, here

Wendy Jensen says

A very informative book with concise statistics. The consequences of over fishing and depleting our oceans is a world wide concern. The author includes stories of people who have been concerned enough to do something about the decline of fish in their area and how they have brought the population back. Makes me want to go out and find some sardines to barbecue like they do in Spain. He has even included quite a few recipes in the back of the book that sound very worth trying. I enjoyed this book very much.

I received this book for free through Goodreads First Reads.

Eldon says

Changed my world view on how I see fishing and what I choose to incorporate into my diet. Amazing book. I have taken steps to be apart of the solution in dilemma we have created with out hunger for the "Big Fish." #anchovies

Kelly says

A must-read for seafood lovers. To see more, check out my blog post:
<http://seasonsofthekitchen.com/2013/0...>

Jim Kisela says

This is a thin book that covers a lot of ground (should I say water), but without much depth. I happen to agree with the premise that seafood is the most important alternative we have as an ecologically correct way of solving the world's demand for protein, to replace the current assumption that beef, pork, and poultry are the best way to put protein in our diets. Arguably, and author Andy Sharpless makes this point effectively, traditional meat supplies are terrible for the environment in a myriad of ways. He doesn't cover the issue of red meats causing health problems, nor does he (I suspect) convince the true vegan that fish should have a place in their diets.

Protecting and renewing the vital stock of fish and shellfish that provide this major protein source depends on the health and vitality of the oceans and other bodies of water. This is where the author's role as CEO of Oceana makes itself evident. Viewed through a more objective prism, the book feels like a rather large fundraising brochure for Oceana, an International organization that focusses on ocean conservation.

Their web site says: "Oceana, founded in 2001, is the largest international organization focused solely on ocean conservation. Our offices in North America, South America and Europe work together on a limited number of strategic, directed campaigns to achieve measurable outcomes that will help return our oceans to former levels of abundance. We believe in the importance of science in identifying problems and solutions. Our scientists work closely with our teams of economists, lawyers and advocates to achieve tangible results for the oceans."

All of that being said, this is an interesting book that makes the case for fish as the major renewable, sustainable, and ecologically sound source of protein in the world: the why and the how outlined in a short, easy to read book.

Stephen Tryon says

Perhaps the best way for me to offer a review of this book is to share the blog I just posted on the facebook fan page for Accountability Citizenship. I think The Perfect Protein is a timely and important book that we should all read. The book is well crafted, and offers practical suggestions to be informed consumers of fish and their habitats.

June 21: Yesterday's "Vital Signs" graph on the front page of the Wall Street Journal showed that fish prices, in general, have increased by about 15% over the past year. This piece of information came just as I was finishing a book called The Perfect Protein (<http://bit.ly/17rDuXd>), which describes the current international challenges of properly managing ocean habitats so we can sustain them as a source of food. Bottom line, without some serious improvements in our global ocean management techniques, the world our children occupy 40 years from now will be one where food scarcity -- partly resulting from mismanagement of oceans--is an increasing cause for conflict. Reading this book was enough to motivate me to join oceana.org, the organization founded by the author.

How is this connected to accountability citizenship, you say? Well, one of the three tenets introduced in my

book (<http://amzn.to/17KcVKk>) is use time management and our personal values to help us be better consumers of government. One of my most important values is to take reasonable steps to improve the quality of life of my son, not just today but throughout his life. In my travels, I find this is a value I share with people around the world. Whether I am sharing dinner in the homes of my Chinese friends in Haikou City or talking with the head internet sales of a major South American internet company in Buenos Aires, the easiest place to find common ground is to talk about our children and what they are doing and how much we love them.

If it is true that we all rank our children's future as one of our top priorities, then we should be willing to dedicate some time to reading The Perfect Protein and taking action to support better global ocean management practices. By the way, managing America's fisheries is one area where our U.S. government has done a great job in the past 20 years. But we have a long way to go, and we can't solve the global problem by ourselves.

Ron says

This slim book is very worth reading if you've ever looked at eating as an ethical act with real consequences. The solution proposed is what drew me to it. Such a simple change in eating behavior, if widely adopted, would all by itself make a huge difference. The author also goes into policy changes that need to happen as well. The great thing is, it made me feel optimistic. Such a nice read.
