



Deep, deep Secrets brought to the surface



GREENPEACE



## Deep-Sea Gallery

### Facts:

- Every second breath you take comes from the oceans.
- 90% of the oceans have yet to be explored
- There are more maps of the moon than of the deep-sea
- Only 0.0001% of the deep-sea floor has been subject to biological investigation
- Average ocean depth is approximately 3800m. 95% of the oceans lie below 130m.
- Approximately 98% of all ocean species live in, on, or just above the seafloor.
- The majority of the estimated 500,000 to 1 million species living in the deep-sea have yet to be discovered.



## 1. 150 years old and still gorgeous

© Greenpeace/ Lizzy Barber

This is a deep-sea fish called an "Orange Roughy". When it was first discovered, this fish was named 'Slimehead' - probably because of the thick layer of slime covering its body. But, when the marketing divisions of the fishing industry got hold of this fish, they decided that it would be more palatable, if given the 'tasteful' name of Orange Roughy - and if filleted before served so that it's large eyes and slimy skin weren't what consumers saw when it landed on their plates!

Whatever its name and looks, this fish is remarkable in many ways.

One of the oldest recorded Orange Roughy's was found to have lived for 240 years - older than our grandparents and great-grandparents put together. Orange Roughies live in large shoals and inhabit the deep waters of every ocean. They are slow growing and do not mature (and thus start to breed) until they are around 32 years of age. In little more than the teenage-years of the fish in this picture, the high seas bottom trawl fleet has dramatically depleted the numbers of Orange Roughy in our oceans. New technologies have provided access to deeper and more distant waters than ever before, with fleets trawling the depths of our oceans without considering the consequences of their actions. Once a secret of the deep-ocean, Orange Roughy is now widely available at restaurants and fish markets across North America and Europe. You can even pick some up in cyberspace! [Available on Amazon.com at \$32.99 for 6/6 oz]



## 2. Mountains of the deep

© Greenpeace/Elaine Hill

The deep-seascape is as varied as that on land - featuring canyons, valleys and peaks. In fact the Earth's longest mountain range is not on land but deep beneath the sea. The Mid-Atlantic Ridge is four times longer than the Andes, Rockies, and Himalayas combined and winds through the deep-waters of the Atlantic ocean!

Seamounts are underwater mountains that rise 1,000 meters or higher from the seabed without breaking the ocean's surface. They are island oases for deep-sea life like Orange Roughy, and also act as the way-stations, pit-stops and cross roads for migratory species like tuna that roam the world's oceans. It is estimated that there may be as many as 30,000 to 100,000 seamounts lying beneath the waves. Less than 200 of these have been scientifically examined. Many occur in relative isolation from other seamounts, providing shelter and refuge in an otherwise open ocean. Virtually every study of a seamount has found species previously unknown by science and endemic - or absolutely unique - to the area studied.

## 3. Xmas for corals!

(A Christmas tree coral through port hole of a submarine)

©Tom Laidig

The deep-sea is home to remarkably rich coral habitats. Once thought to inhabit only the warm and shallow waters of tropical and subtropical regions, corals are now known to thrive in the deep, dark and cold waters of the open ocean. Having colonised the deep-sea for many millions of years. There are more coral species living in the deep oceans than in the light-infused waters of our tropical coasts.

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#### 4. Secret Gardens

© courtesy NMFS/Alberto Lindner

Deep-sea research is extremely expensive and difficult to conduct. This is one of the main reasons why our understanding of the deep-sea life and how they function is still so - well, shallow, as compared to our knowledge of life on land or in shallower coastal waters. What we do know is that the deep-sea, and seamounts especially, are literally teeming with weird and wonderful life. This includes such delightful creatures as the hagfish (or "snot eel"), blobfish and giant squid. Seamounts are home to cold-water coral reefs and forests, sponge beds and hydrothermal vents, as well as the many millions of species dependent on these. One study of a deep-sea community revealed 898 species from more than 100 families in an area about half the size of a tennis court. More than half of these species were new to science.



#### 5. Corals as big as trees

© courtesy of NOAA and MBARI

Some cold-water corals are more than 5,000-8,500 years old and have grown into beautiful structures that rise up to 35 meters in height. Two-thirds of all known coral species live in waters that are deep, dark, and cold - some live four kilometers below the surface and are able to survive in nearly freezing temperatures. Some of the Gorgonian corals that have been studied have been found to produce antibiotics and some corals resemble human bone so closely that they can be used for bone replacements.



#### 6. Hide-and-peek

© courtesy of NOAA and MBARI

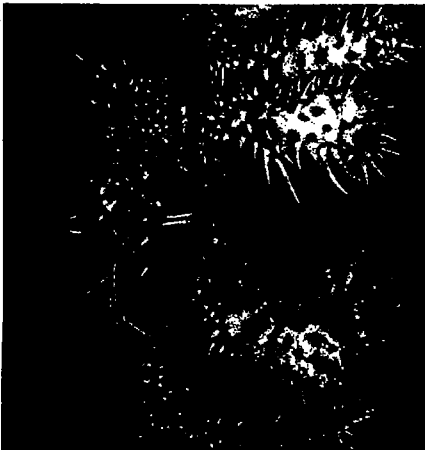
Although scientists have only just begun to explore the ecology of cold water corals, it is clear that cold-water reefs are bustling with life, providing essential sanctuaries and nursing grounds for countless species. They provide protection from currents and predators and form essential hiding places for a variety of marine life. Here a is hiding in a sponge photographed at the Davidson seamount off the coast of California. The Davidson seamount is one of the better documented seamounts. It is close to land and many research stations yet still less than 1% of its surface has been explored.

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## 7. King Crab

© ExploreTheAbyss.com

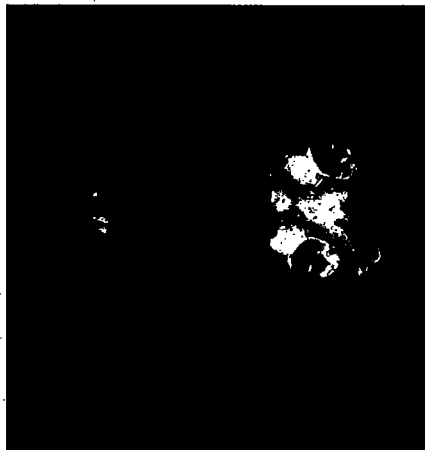
Many creatures that are familiar to us from the seashore such as crabs, also live in the deep-sea. In this picture, a deep-sea cousin of the shore crab and has been likened to a cactus when young: very sharp to touch. As king crabs grow their spines become blunter from the rough and tumble of life in the deep-sea.



## 8. Aliens from planet earth

© ExploreTheAbyss.com

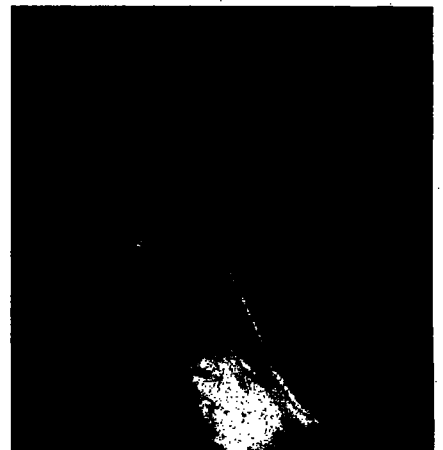
The deep-sea is full of weird and wonderful creatures. This strangely human-looking creature is a transparent squid. As juveniles, transparent squid live in the upper ocean. However, as adults they live in much deeper water. Sperm whales and other marine mammals dive down to feed upon these and other oceanic squid - in fact, deep-living squid are the sperm whale's staple diet.



## 9. Lizard fish

© ExploreTheAbyss.com

It can be hard to find a mate in the vast emptiness of the deep-ocean, so some deep-sea fish are known to change sex so that they can impregnate themselves during their lifetime. Scientists have also recently discovered that fish that otherwise wander the deep, gather to spawn and breed around seamounts making them oceanic 'hotspots' for deep-sea life in more ways than one. This fish is called a lizardfish and is one of the smaller predators (20-30cm) that can be found living on seamounts and the deep sea-floor, eating other fish and invertebrates.

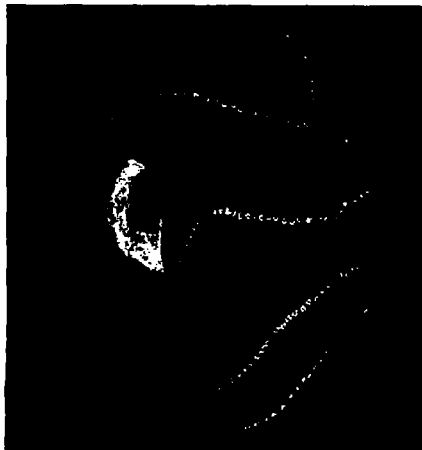


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## 10. Anyone have an umbrella?

© ExploreTheAbyss.com

There are many different varieties of octopus living in the deep-sea. This one is an umbrella octopus and it lives in very deep waters in excess of 1500m. These umbrella octopii lay their eggs on black and gorgonian corals that grow on seamounts. Seamounts and the rich habitats they provide are important to many deep-sea creatures as either breeding areas or as refueling stops on their long journeys in the vast darkness of the deep-sea. Nobody knows what these octopii eat.



## 11. Whale haven

© Greenpeace

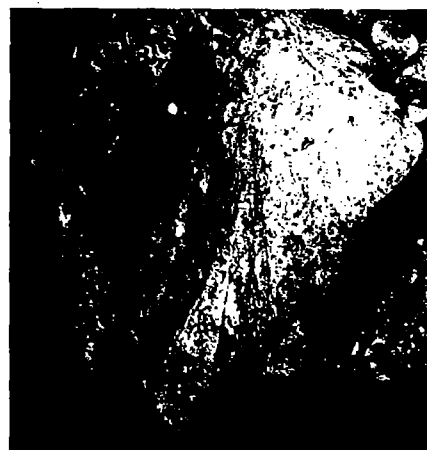
Some marine mammals such as these sperm whales are regular visitors to the deep. They can dive down to depths of 3000m to feed on squid and fish. Sperm whales are known to especially concentrate around canyons and seamounts, which offer them rich pickings. In May 2006, the Greenpeace ship Esperanza, will visit the Azores Islands in the Atlantic as part of the year-long 'Defending our Oceans' Expedition. The Azores are seamounts that have broken the surface as Islands. Female sperm whales and calves concentrate to feed around the seamounts that surround these islands. Greenpeace will use remotely operated cameras to document the deep-sea life on the seamounts around the Azores. You can join us on the expedition at [oceans.greenpeace.org](http://oceans.greenpeace.org)



## 12. Hagfish

© ExploreTheAbyss.com

This hagfish is also known as a "shot eel" and at first glance, looks just like it's shallow water cousins. It does, however, have a reputation as being one of the more 'disgusting' animals of the deep-sea. Hagfish not only produce incredible amounts of mucous when disturbed (hence the name 'shot eel'), they also tear their way into the corpses of fish and marine mammals and eat them from the inside out. Even more squirmy details have surfaced of hagfish swimming up the anus of live marine mammals for a feed... but we won't go into that here!

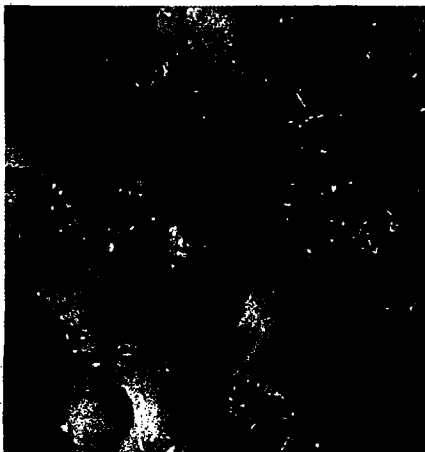


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### 13. Lophelia Coral

© Greenpeace/Newman, Gavin

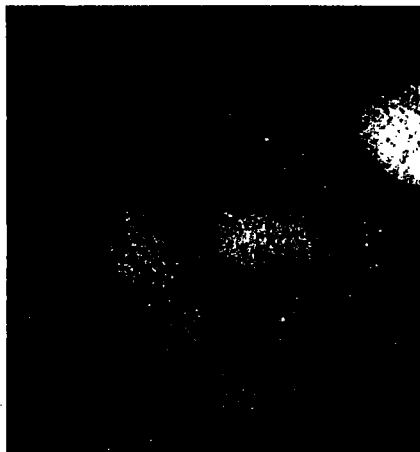
This close up picture is of a cold water coral called Lophelia. Lophelias can be found from shallow depths of only 40m in Norwegian fjords, to depths of up to 3300m. The biggest Lophelia reef in the world was found off the coast of Norway in 2002. It is the same size as Manhattan. It is estimated that the reefs in the north-Atlantic date back to the last ice age making them nearly 10 000 years old! Lophelia reefs have been found across the North Atlantic. This sample was taken from the Mingulay Coral reef around the Inner Hebrides near Scotland, where the Greenpeace ship Esperanza was studying the effects of bottom trawling together with the Scottish Association for Marine Science in May 2005.



### 14. Shiny sponges

© courtesy of NOAA and MBARI

This picture is of a sponge ridge at the Davidson Seamount off the coast of California. In addition to playing host to a rich variety of deep-sea life, deep-sea coral and sponge communities are largely untapped sources of natural products with enormous potential as pharmaceuticals, enzymes, pesticides, cosmetics, and other commercial products. For example: compounds found in certain deep-sea sponges are potent immunosuppressive and anti-cancer agents.



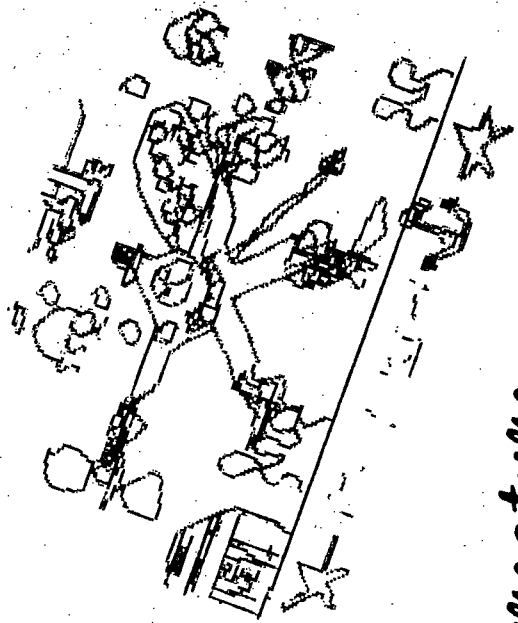
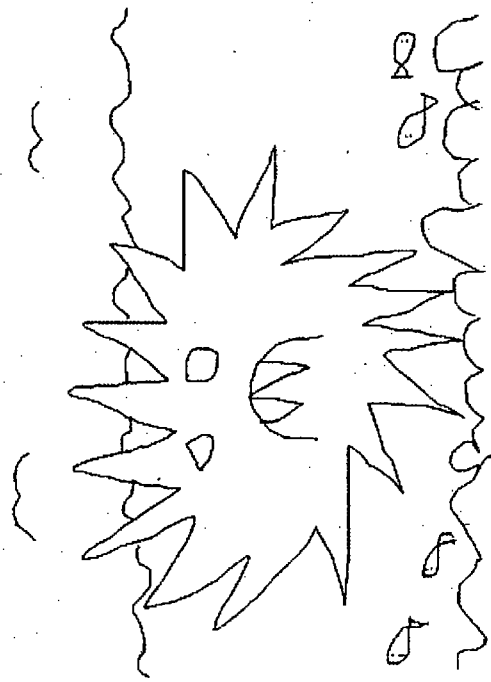
### 15. Blob fish ?!

© NORFANZ 2005

We said that the creatures of the deep are weird and wonderful. This strange looking creature is called a 'blob fish' and was found in June 2003 by a research vessel in waters North-West of New Zealand in an area called the Norfolk Ridge at a depth of between 1000 and 1300 meters. Does it look like anyone you know?



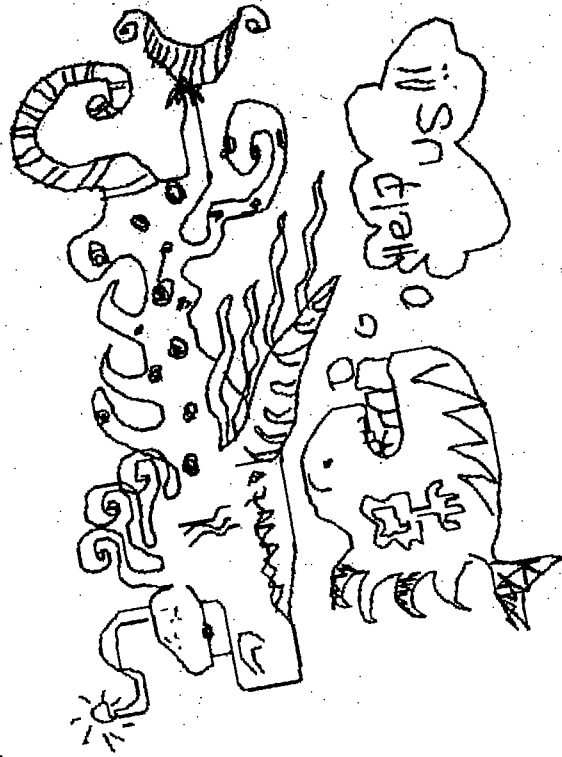
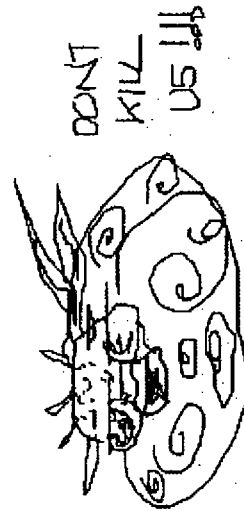
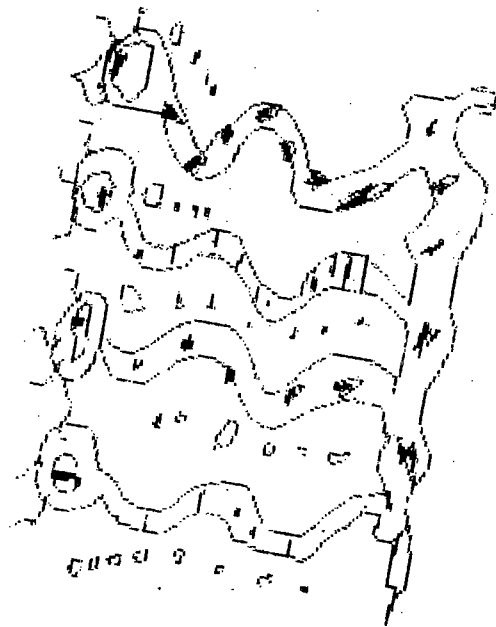
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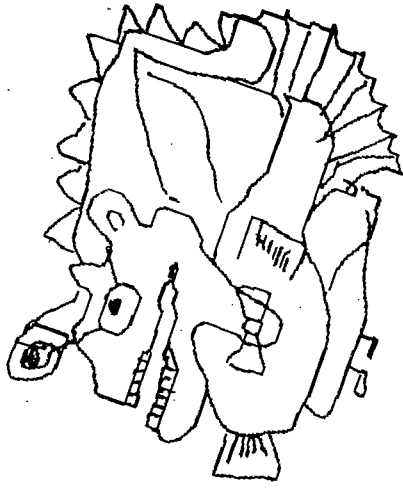
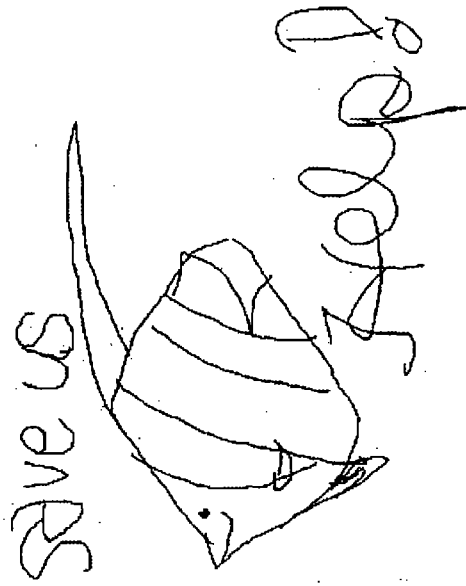
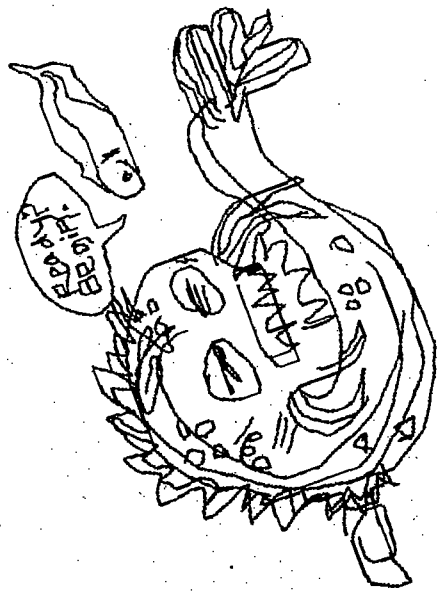
*Take action! and design your deep sea creature on:*

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*View some examples in the gallery:*



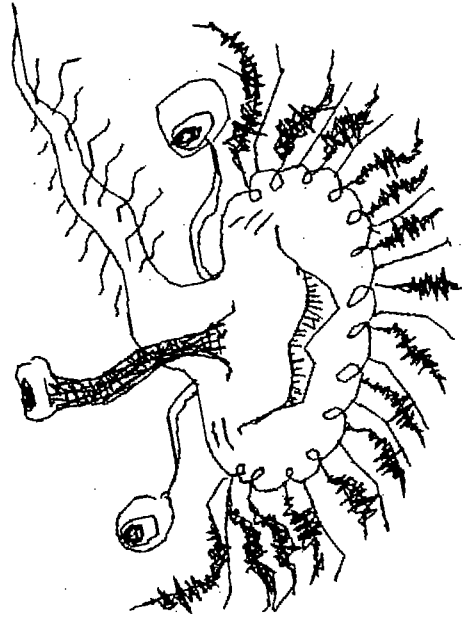
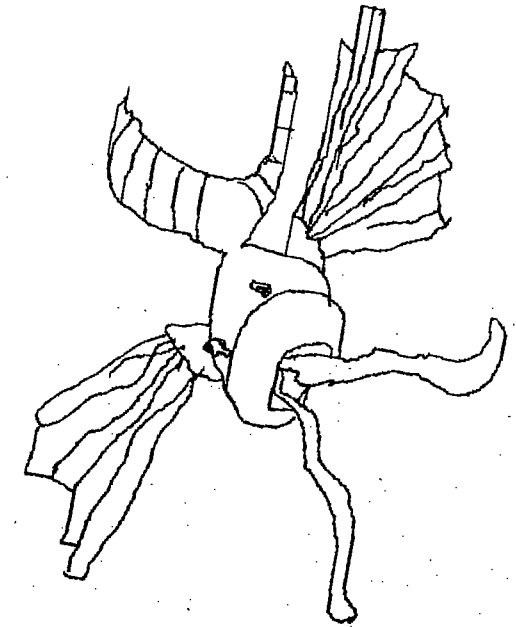
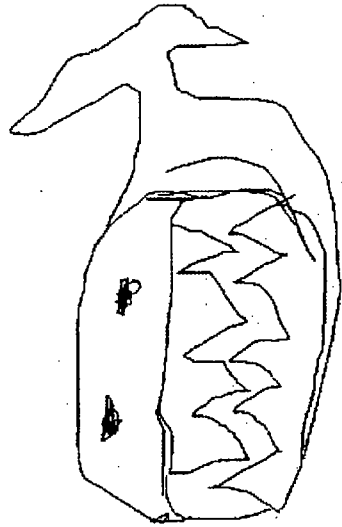




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*View some examples in the gallery:*





## The Destruction Gallery - Deep Deep trouble . . .

### Facts:

- The United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation estimates that 75% of the world's fish stocks are fully exploited, over-exploited or depleted.
- Unwanted by-catch amounts to 20% of the annual world fish catch
- In the time it takes for you to take a breath, an area of seabed the size of 10 football fields is trawled by the high seas bottom trawl fishing fleet. At this rate it will take only 16 years for the fishing fleet to hit the entire area of vulnerable sea bottom in the international waters of the high seas once. Trends indicate that the high seas bottom trawl fleet is expanding.
- High seas bottom trawling is so unselective that it has been compared to bulldozing a forest to catch a few rabbits
- The high seas bottom trawl industry directly employs between 1000-2000 people globally, and just 250-300 boats on a full-time equivalent basis.
- The value of the industry has been placed at 250-300 million euros per year. The value of the cost of the destruction to deep-sea life: priceless



## 1. One trawl, and they're history ...

© Greenpeace/Grace, Roger

For the fishing industry, the unreachable is now within reach. Advances in fishing technology mean that today's bottom trawlers are capable of fishing deep-sea canyons and rough seafloor that was once avoided for fear of damaging nets. To capture one or two target commercial species, deep-sea bottom trawl fishing vessels drag huge nets armed with steel plates and heavy rollers across the seabed, plowing up and pulverizing everything in their path. More powerful engines, bigger nets, more precise mapping, and advanced navigational and fish-finding electronics have enabled fishing vessels to drag fishing gear across the ocean bottom reaching down to areas as deep as two kilometers below the surface. Compared to life in shallow waters, deep-sea fish live a very slow life and reproduce much more slowly. Fishing for deep-sea stocks has been compared to strip-mining because of the reduced capacity of these fish stocks to withstand exploitation.

## 2. A big trawl net vs our trawl net

© Greenpeace/ Elaine Hill

The bottom trawl net displayed here is a small example of what is used in the deep sea. The mouth of the trawl net is held open by two steel trawl doors that help to keep the net extended as it travels across the seafloor. One company markets what it calls 'Canyonbusters', trawl doors that weigh up to five tons each (our trawl doors here weigh approximately 1.5 tonnes each) and undoubtedly live up to their name. To protect the net from snagging on rugged seafloors, heavy chafing gear is attached to the bottom of the trawl net. A heavy cable is then strung through steel balls or rubber bobbins - known as roller gear or rockhoppers - that can measure a meter or more in diameter (our net also has small rubber rockhoppers which are only approximately 30cm across). The mouths of the biggest bottom trawl nets are as big as a football field and they are as high as a three storey building (this is why we are traveling with this smaller one!).

## 3. Healthy sea bed

© NIWA 2005

Orange roughly swimming across a coral forest on the Gothic Seamount, Graveyard Seamount complex, north Chatham Rise, New Zealand.

The coral is *Madrepora oculata* which grows up to 1 meter in height. A single coral can grow hundreds of metres across and form the healthy habitat for molluscs, squid, starfish and primitive lobsters to thrive in.

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#### 4. Destroyed seabed

© NIWA 2005

Fragile deep-water ecosystems, coral systems in particular, stand no chance against these ruthlessly effective underwater bulldozers. Deep-sea structures are not merely damaged; they are obliterated in a manner akin to clear-cutting a rainforest. After heavy trawling, the surfaces of seamounts are reduced to mostly sand and bare rock or coral rubble. This image shows a destroyed seabed after trawling with an old trawl net on the sea floor. Trawl nets are occasionally snagged on seamount features and remain on the seafloor. There is some scientific concern that whales diving for deep sea squid may also become tangled in these forgotten nets.



#### 5. Deep-Sea Destroyer: Spanish owned bottom trawler Anuva

© Greenpeace/Davison, Kate

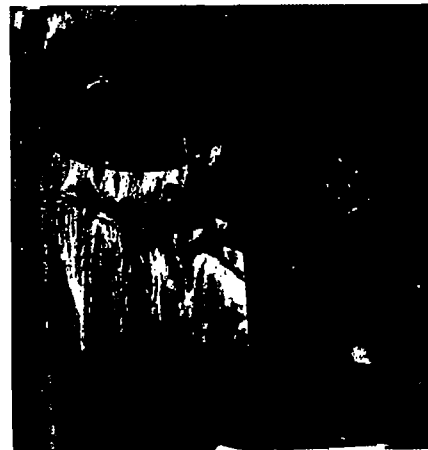
The fishing industry has long known that seamounts provide the best fishing areas in the high seas as they are where fish look for shelter and concentrate to feed and to spawn. For a few commercial target species, thousands of tons of coral are hauled up only to be thrown back dead or dying, along with huge quantities of unwanted by-catch. In a matter of a few weeks or months, bottom trawl fishing can destroy what took many thousands of years to create. This picture was taken on the Hatton Bank in the North Atlantic in October 2004. Greenpeace took non-violent direct action to stop the vessel from fishing in this vulnerable area.



#### 6. Hard evidence

© Courtesy of Fisheries Ministry New Zealand

This picture was taken by a fisheries Observer onboard a New Zealand-flagged bottom trawler fishing in the Pacific. It shows a giant piece of gorgonian coral being hoisted out of a bottom trawl net. (Note more coral in the net). Coral this size is estimated to be more than 500 years old. On the high seas south of Australia, in an area known as the South Tasman Rise, observers recorded trawlers bringing up an average of 1.6 tons of coral per hour in their nets in 1997 - the first year they started to fish for Orange Roughy in a seamount fishery.





## 7. The beginning of the end

© Greenpeace/Westerskov, Kim

For the fishing industry, targeting Orange Roughy as they gather to spawn around seamounts ensures a big catch. This photo taken in 1989, shows Orange Roughy caught while spawning with little coral by-catch. Orange Roughy are caught both while they are breeding above seamounts and during the time they are spread on the deep-sea floor.

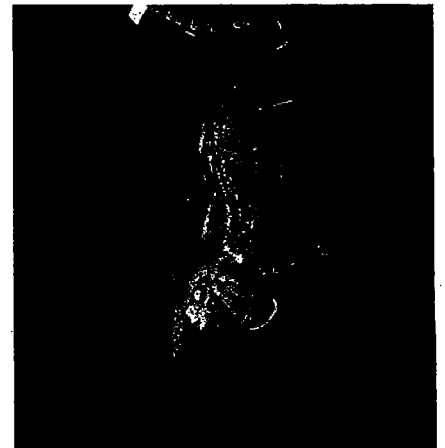
The populations and their habitats have suffered serial depletion as bottom trawlers repeatedly plow through the spawning mass and quickly move on to newly discovered seamounts when numbers are too low to make a profit. Since Orange Roughy - like many other deep-sea fish - mature slowly, at around age of 32, overfishing the breeding stock has resulted in serious decline within a very short time. In some areas, in just a few years, Orange Roughy populations have collapsed to just 3% of their pre-trawled state in just a few years. Deep-sea trawling is not just destructive to sensitive seabed habitats but also an extremely unsustainable way of fishing slow growing deep-sea fish stocks.



## 8. It's about more than just the fish!

© Greenpeace/Davison, Kate

Odin, crew member of the Greenpeace ship Esperanza, holding a large spider crab that has been caught and killed by Spanish-flagged bottom trawler Playa de Mendiña, fishing on the Hattion Bank, NE Atlantic. Large quantities of 'non-target' species other than corals and animals that are attached to the sea bed are also captured and these are often discarded at sea as waste. Bottom trawling has a high level of unwanted by-catch often making up as much as 80% of the total catch. That means that for every one fish that you eat, at least four other marine creatures have died and been thrown away as waste.

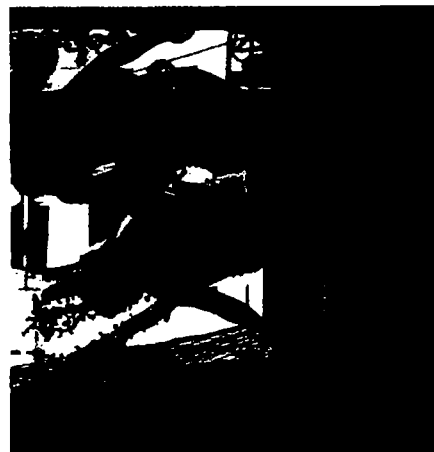


## 9. Shark trouble

© Greenpeace/Grace, Roger

Crew member of the Greenpeace ship Rainbow Warrior holds a deep-sea shark thrown overboard dead from a deep-sea bottom trawler. Sharks are incredibly diverse and well adapted marine animals also inhabiting the deep-sea around seamounts. Deep-sea sharks have been recognised as being extremely vulnerable to the impacts of fishing because of their low breeding rates. Now these fearsome fish are under serious threat from a combination of destructive fishing practices. Stocks of two North Atlantic deepwater sharks - the Leafscale gulper shark and Portuguese dogfish - have crashed by 80% in just 10 years. Recent scientific evidence suggests that deep-sea sharks only live on the edges of continental shelves and seamounts, making them even more vulnerable to being wiped out by high seas bottom trawlers.

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## 10. This is not fishing - this is extinction

© Greenpeace/Pullman, Malcolm

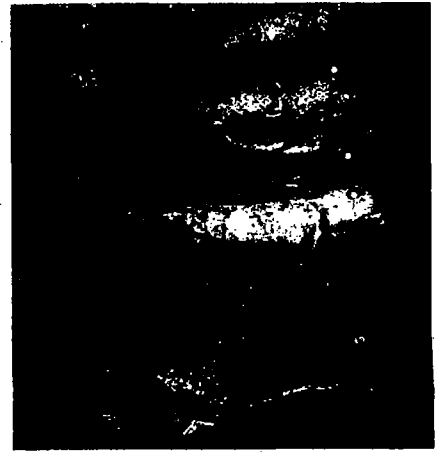
This picture was taken by Greenpeace in 2005 in the international waters of the Tasman Sea where a crewman on the New Zealand-flagged bottom trawler Waipori hauled a large piece of 'Paragorgia' coral dredged from the deep-sea in their net and dumped it overboard, dead. In the first year of the fishery, 20 bottom trawlers were estimated to have brought up over 10 000 tons of coral. This figure does not include coral that was damaged but not brought up in the nets. By contrast, at the same time the catch of Orange Roughy - the target species in this fishery - was reported to be less than 4,000 tons. That is 60% more coral than fish - an extreme price to pay to put a fish older than your grandparents on your dinner plate.



## 11. Official waste

©Courtesy of Fisheries Ministry New Zealand

Considerable damage to deepwater coral communities has been recorded in international waters off both coasts of North America, off Europe from Scandinavia to Northern Spain, and on seamounts in the international waters near Australia and New Zealand. In Norwegian waters, for example, an estimated one-third to one-half of the deepwater reefs have been damaged or destroyed by trawling. Photographs near Norway document giant trawl scars up to 4 kilometers long. This picture shows species hauled up in the nets and recorded by Observers on New Zealand bottom trawlers.



## 12. Now you see us - soon you won't

© Greenpeace/Grace, Roger

More by-catch collected by the Greenpeace ship Esperanza from high seas bottom trawlers fishing in the North Atlantic. A recent study published in the peer-review journal Nature in January 2006, has revealed serious declines in deepwater species targeted in the last two decades by commercial fishing in the Northwest Atlantic - roundnose grenadier and the onion-eye or rough head grenadier (commercially valuable species) and blue hake, spiny eel and spiny tail skate (taken as unwanted by-catch). The authors concluded that the steep rate of decline qualifies these species as "critically endangered" according to World Conservation Union criteria. This means that these deep-sea fish are more endangered than the giant panda.

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### 13. Calls to stop destruction

© Courtesy of Fisheries Ministry, New Zealand

1,452 marine scientists from 69 countries have signed a statement expressing profound concern "that human activities, particularly bottom trawling, are causing unprecedented damage to the deep-sea coral and sponge communities on continental plateaus and slopes, and on seamounts and mid-ocean ridges." The statement calls on governments and the United Nations to adopt an immediate moratorium on high seas bottom trawling.

Never before have such a large number of marine scientists united around a call on such a specific marine environmental issue.



### 14. The net is closing in

© Greenpeace/Grace, Roger

Only a handful of rich OECD countries are involved in high seas bottom trawling with the European Union being responsible for 60% of all high seas bottom trawling world wide. Spain is responsible for 40% of the EU catch with France and Denmark as the second biggest operators. Currently an area twice the size of the USA is bottom trawled every year for less than 0.5% of the world's annual wild fish catch.



### 15. Urgent action NOW

©Greenpeace/Grace, Roger

So for the price of few very old wrinkled fish, the wonderful and mysterious life of the deep-sea life is being destroyed. There is a solution -countries have a one time opportunity to protect the deep-sea under international law. The United Nations General Assembly can declare a moratorium on all high seas bottom trawling this year. In October, countries will get together to discuss this issue again and we want to make sure that this time they act to protect the common heritage of all humankind - before it is too late. A moratorium would provide immediate protection to the biodiversity of the deep sea. Please support our call by signing the petition and by becoming an Oceans Defender at oceans.greenpeace.org, be one in a million defending our oceans.

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Greenpeace is an independent, campaigning organisation which uses non-violent, creative confrontation to expose global environmental problems and to force solutions essential to a green and peaceful future.

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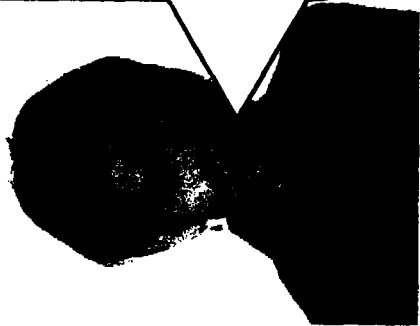
# The EU is dragging out the inevitable ...

The European Community (EC) has been negotiating its position on a UN General Assembly moratorium on bottom trawl fishing on the high seas, with a view to protecting vulnerable deep sea ecosystems from destructive fishing practices.

However, the Council Working Party on the Law of the Sea (COMAR) appears deadlocked, with those wanting to protect some of the most diverse habitats on this planet at loggerheads with countries unwilling to accept limits on their fishing fleets.

Here is what they say ....

"Sweden supports the idea for a temporary moratorium on deep sea bottom trawling..." It is the intention of the Government that this fundamental position will continue to be promoted in those discussions within the EUs biodiversity- and fisheries group where bottom trawling in deep waters will be discussed before a common EU position in these questions can be formulated."



Lena Sommestad  
Swedish Environment Minister  
*Parliamentary question, January 2005*

"...I can confirm that Austria, for environmental and species conservation reasons, regards high seas bottom trawling critically. Austria has repeatedly expressed this view in international fora and has tried to push for this to become the common EU position."



Ursula Plassnik  
Austrian Foreign Minister  
*letter to Greenpeace  
May 2006*

"France will support a moratorium on all deep species fishing techniques where that are no RFMOs (75% of the oceans) [...] France encourages the adaptation of the mandate of RFMOs to integrate to the protection of biodiversity [...]"

French Government  
2005

## Even the Spanish government states ...



Spanish government,  
August 2005

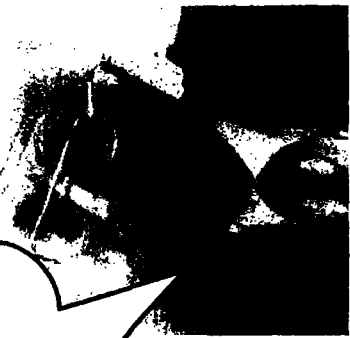
"This suspension of trawling will only affect new areas whereby Spanish vessels will not be allowed to trawl on seamounts, hydrothermal vents and cold water corals anywhere in the high seas [...] Bottom trawling on the Patagonian shelf will continue [...]. In the event that vulnerable ecosystems had been located in this fishing area, they would now be gone due to past trawling."

"Deep sea bottom trawling is an act of insanity and should become subject to prosecution."



Achim Steiner, IUCN Director General and future UNEP Director General  
*(June 2006-2010)*

"Evidence of actual destruction of ecosystems is overwhelming [...] we know sufficient about growing human pressure on marine biodiversity in areas beyond national jurisdiction to [...] tak[er] further steps [...] on the basis of the precautionary principle [...]"



Gerhard Hafner - Austrian EU Presidency on behalf of the European Community

UN Working Group, February 2006

"We should put in place an interim prohibition of destructive fishing practices in international waters including bottom trawling that has adverse effects on vulnerable marine ecosystems"



Stavros Dimas, EU Environment Commissioner  
Conference of the Parties of the Convention on Biological Diversity, Curitiba, March 2006

"We have committed the UK publicly [...] to continue to pursue a strong EU position on destructive fisheries practices through international co-operation, including the use of prohibitions against deep-sea bottom trawling on seamounts and other vulnerable ecosystems. We see this as an important part of our commitment to the WSSD target to achieve a significant reduction in the rate of biodiversity loss by 2010."



Ben Bradshaw, UK Fisheries Minister,  
Letter to Greenpeace 2005

"We must commit to safeguard parts of the deep marine environment that are particularly rich in biodiversity"



Jacques Chirac  
French President  
2005

"Everyone must be aware (that) without intact coral reefs, warm and cold water reefs, you will not be able to restore fish stocks fully."



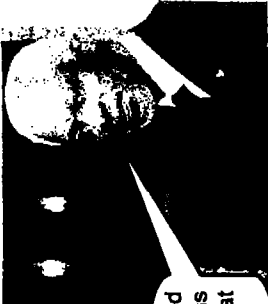
Klaus Toepfer, UNEP Executive Director (1997-2006)

"Global fisheries authorities must agree to eliminate bottom trawling on the high seas by 2006 to protect seamounts and other ecologically sensitive habitats."



Jeffrey Sachs  
UN Millennium Project

"If at one time what happened on and beneath the seas was 'out of sight, out of mind', that can no longer be the case."



Kofi Annan, Secretary-General of the UN

The European Community to date has failed to respond to the recommendations, resolutions and calls for URGENT measures to protect deep-sea biodiversity on the high seas.

Protecting deep-sea life for the benefit of future generations is good policy and makes good sense. The European Community must adopt a position in support of an immediate UN moratorium on high seas bottom trawling, if it is to remain a credible voice in sound fisheries management and on the protection of biodiversity across the planet.