**Seaspiracy (2021) | Netflix | Documentary Questions**

**NB.** Between 1:14 - 1:18 there is quite graphic slaughtering of whaling. You might want to skip this section if watching with younger students.

1. How do marine mammals such as whales and dolphins help to keep the ocean environment healthy?
2. Why is phytoplankton so important?
3. How big is the Great Pacific Garbage Patch?
4. How much plastic is dumped in the sea every minute?
5. What are **microplastics**?
6. What are some of the ways that the narrator, Ali Tabrizi, tried to reduce his plastic consumption?
7. When did the whaling ban come into existence?
8. Which countries do not adhere to the ban?
9. Why are people in Taiji, Japan, capturing and killing dolphins?
10. How much can a yellow fish tuna sell for in Japan?
11. What percentage of yellow fish tuna stocks remain in the ocean today?
12. Why is shark fin soup such an important industry in Asia?
13. What percentage of sharks have been lost in the last few decades?
14. Why are sharks such an important part of the ocean ecosystem?
15. What is **bycatch**? What percentage of marine life caught is bycatch?
16. How many commercial fishing vessels are at sea?
17. Who are Sea Shepherd and what do they do?
18. Why are the ‘sustainable fishing’ labels put on fishing products not always truthful?
19. Why are discarded fishing nets even more of a problem than plastics in the ocean?
20. How many sea turtle species are currently threatened?
21. Why are fish so important to keeping coral reefs healthy?
22. How has the amount of halibut caught changed from 1830 to present day?
23. By what year do leading fishing experts believe we will see empty oceans by?
24. What role do marine animals play in reducing global warming?
25. How much carbondoes marine vegetation store?
26. What is **seafloor trawling** and why is it so destructive to the ocean environment? How much land in the ocean does it destroy?
27. How many Marine Protected Areas are there? How many should there be?
28. What is a **subsidy**? Why do we subsidize the fishing industry?
29. What are the negative impacts on the economy and the environment of fishing subsidies?
30. What are **fish farms**?
31. What are the positive impacts of fish farms?
32. What are the negative impacts of fish farms?
33. How much of the world's fish comes from fish farms at present?
34. What are **mangroves** and why are they important?

1. What percentage of the world’s mangroves have been destroyed for fish farms?
2. Why is there so much slave labour in the fishing industry in parts of Asia?
3. Traditional whaling is often viewed very negatively by society. In the interview with Jens Mortan Rasmussen, what were his reasons for saying that whaling was not as bad as the fishing industry?

**Seaspiracy (2021) | Netflix | Documentary Answers**

1. How do marine mammals such as whales and dolphins help to keep the ocean environment healthy?

When they come up to the surface to breed the fertilise the phytoplankton.

1. Why is phytoplankton so important?

They absorb x 4 the amount of carbon dioxide than the Amazon rainforest. It generates up to 85% of the oxygen we breathe.

1. How big is the Great Pacific Garbage Patch?

I.6 million square km’s

1. How much plastic is dumped in the sea every minute?

A garbage truck load of plastic (150 million tonnes already floating around)

1. What are **microplastics**?

Microplastics are small plastic pieces less than five millimeters long which can be harmful to our ocean.

1. What are some of the ways that the narrator, Ali Tabrizi, tried to reduce his plastic consumption?

Donated to ocean charities, attended beach cleanips, carried reusable cutlery and cups, stopped using single-use plastic, campaigned against the use of plastic straws

1. When did the whaling ban come into existence?

1986

1. Which countries do not adhere to the ban?

Japan, Faroe Islands,

1. Why are people in Taiji, Japan, capturing and killing dolphins?

Because they believe that the dolphins are eating all of the fish and reducing the fish stocks for the commercial fishermen.

1. How much can a YellowFin Tuna sell for in Japan?

$3 million!

1. What percentage of YellowFish Tuna stocks remain in the ocean today?

Less than 3% of the species remain

1. Why is shark fin soup such an important industry in Asia?

Held as a status symbol in many countries

1. What percentage of sharks have been lost in the last few decades?

From 80-99% of their populations have been lost.

1. Why are sharks such an important part of the ocean ecosystem?

They are an apex predator so they keep the food chain healthy by ensuring that the next marine animals in the ecosystem do not overpopulate the ocean. Seabird populations have declined by 70% because there are no predators to drive shoals of fish to the surface of the ocean for birds to eat.

1. What is **bycatch**? What percentage of marine life caught is bycatch?

Is a fish or other marine species that is caught unintentionally while catching certain target species and target sizes of fish, crabs etc.

1. How many commercial fishing vessels are at sea?

4,600,000

1. Who are Sea Shepherd and what do they do?

A non-profit, marine conservation organization who aim to save marine wildlife and habitats by enforcing, strengthening, and developing protective laws, treaties, policies, and practices.

1. Why are the ‘sustainable fishing’ labels put on fishing products not always truthful?

Labels obscure what really happens at sea. It is impossible to regulate fishing boats at sea because you cannot see them.

1. Why are discarded fishing nets even more of a problem than plastics in the ocean?

Because they are designed to kill wildlife. They not only trap marine wildlife, but they get caught up in fins, and often get eaten.

1. How many sea turtle species are currently threatened?

Six of seven species

1. Why are fish so important to keeping coral reefs healthy?

Fish excrete ammonium, an essential nutrient for coral growth, through their gills

1. How has the amount of halibut caught changed from 1830 to present day?

1830: 1-2 tonnes per day, present day: 1-2 tonnes per year. Over 1,000 times less abundant today!

1. By what year do leading fishing experts believe we will see empty oceans by?

2048

1. What role do marine animals play in reducing global warming?

The power of animals moving through the water column in terms of mixing water is as great as all the wind, waves, tides and currents in the seas combined. This mixing of the water helps the ocean to regulate climate.

1. How much carbondoes marine vegetation store?

The ocean is the biggest carbon sink. Can store up to x 20 more carbon dioxide than forests. 93% of all carbon dioxide is stored in marine vegetation.

1. What is **seafloor trawling** and why is it so destructive to the ocean environment? How much land in the ocean does it destroy?

Seafloor trawling is a widespread industrial fishing practice that involves dragging heavy nets, large metal doors and chains over the seafloor to catch fish. Trawling destroys the natural seafloor habitat by ‘ploughing’ the seabed, and scarring the seafloor. Every year 3.9 billion acres seafloor is destroyed by trawling - 4,300 soccer fields every minute.

1. How many Marine Protected Areas are there? How many should there be?

5%. Should be 30%.

1. What is a **subsidy**? Why do we subsidize the fishing industry?

A sum of money granted by the government to assist an industry or business so that the price of a good or service may remain low or competitive. It was originally subsided to reduce food instability. $35 billion is given to fishing industry subsidies every year.

1. What are the negative impacts on the economy and the environment of fishing subsidies?

It means that western countries have exploited the oceans of lower income countries such as those in Western Africa, and means that local fishermen are unable to catch fish to feed themselves and their families. Local businesses cannot compete with the economic might of larger industries, such as those in the EU.

1. What are **fish farms**?

They are a form of aquaculture which involve raising fish commercially in tanks or enclosures such as fish ponds, usually for food

1. What are the positive impacts of fish farms?

No bycatch, illegal fishing, seafloor damage, killing of endangered species, or dangerous working conditions.

1. What are the negative impacts of fish farms?

Disease outbreaks and transmission to wild fish stocks, organic and chemical pollution from fish farms' wastes.

1. How much of the world's fish comes from fish farms at present?

50%

1. What are **mangroves** and why are they important?

They are trees that grow in coastal swamps. They help stabilize the coastal ecosystem and prevent erosion. Mangroves also provide natural infrastructure and protection to nearby populated areas by preventing erosion and absorbing storm surge impacts during extreme weather events such as hurricanes.

1. What percentage of the world’s mangroves have been destroyed for fish farms?

38%

1. Why is there so much slave labour in the fishing industry in parts of Asia?

Because it is the only economically viable way for many countries to fish, especially when fish stocks are so low.

1. Traditional whaling is often viewed very negatively by society. In the interview with Jens Mortan Rasmussen, what were his reasons for saying that whaling was not as bad as the fishing industry?

Because it is more sustainable than conventional fishing industry as they only take what they need. They are not overfishing the whales.