

The Last Ocean

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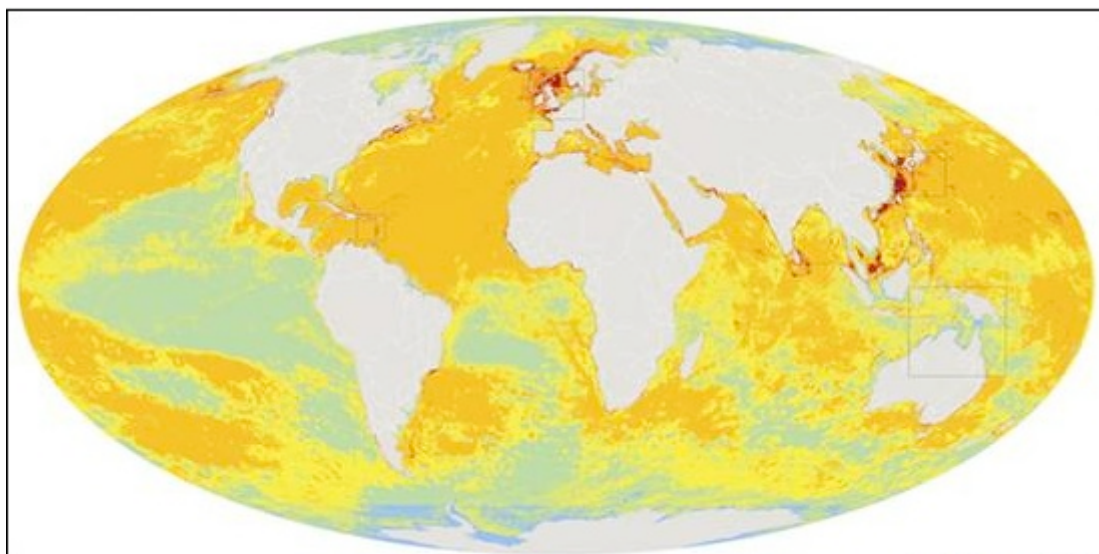
The Last Ocean

New Zealand documentary brings a New Zealand twist to a global issue.

New Zealand filmmaker Peter Young brings global attention to commercial fishing in the Ross Sea, Antarctica with the premier of his feature documentary *The Last Ocean* at the New Zealand International Film Festival next week.

The Last Ocean is a documentary directed by Peter Young, one of the country's leading nature cameramen. It tells the story of the race to protect Earth's last untouched ocean, the Ross Sea Antarctica, from our insatiable appetite for fish.

Six years ago Peter accepted an invitation to film in the Ross Sea, the most pristine stretch of ocean on Earth (Map of human impact on the worlds oceans, Halpern et al 2008). The trip marked the beginning of *The Last Ocean*, a documentary that exposes the impact that commercial fishing is having on Antarctica. Commercial fishing began in 1996 and was initiated by New Zealand. The 87-minute feature documentary is premiering at the New Zealand International Film Festival in Auckland on Wednesday 1 August at Sky City at 6.30pm. It will then tour the country throughout August and September.



Ben Halpern / NCEAS

“It’s been a labour of love, and a lot of hard work” said Young, “but at the end of the day, the issue needed to be brought to public attention and I was one of the privileged few who had been there,” said Peter.”

The Ross Sea Antarctica is the world's last large untouched and intact marine ecosystem. US Ecologist Dr David Ainley, who has been studying in the Ross Sea for more than 40 years describes it as a 'living laboratory.' “The Ross Sea is a place that can teach us about the workings of all marine ecosystems,” Ainley says. “All of the top predators are still intact and provide a shape of the food web below.” This is unique to the Ross Sea. A scientific paper Ainley wrote in 2004 was impetus for the Last Ocean Story.

In the documentary Young travels the world to look at how the Ross Sea commercial fishery is managed and the impacts it is likely to have. While the land of Antarctica are protected under a global treaty signed more than 50 years ago, the waters allow for the rational use of a living resource. In 1996, the Government encouraged a major New Zealand fishing company to explore the Ross Sea. They found Antarctic toothfish, a lucrative catch that is sold as Chilean Seabass in up-market restaurants around the world. As word got out, that one boat from New Zealand grew to near on 20 from a dozen different countries and they were permitted to take more than 3000 tonnes of Antarctic Toothfish every year. “

Young’s film follows a campaign to protect the Ross Sea. The message is that unless fishing is stopped, the natural balance of this unique ecosystem will be lost forever.

“Young’s ravishing Antarctic footage lends emotive force to a detailed account of the conservationist case and the long political and diplomatic campaign to counteract the hungry fishing lobby,” Bill Gosden, New Zealand International Film Festival.

Young says that while New Zealand has been pivotal in the development of the fishery, we can also be part of the solution. ***The Last Ocean*** project is more than a documentary – it includes a website, a book of photographic images, a traveling exhibition, a charitable trust and a political movement, charged by scientific evidence and the voices of those who have seen the damage first hand. The aim is to sound the alarm and to raise awareness of the values of the Ross Sea, to have it turned into a Marine Protected Area.

This year, the world's Governments are meeting to decide the fate of marine protection the Ross Sea. New Zealand is key to that process.

The New Zealand International Film Festival is a national event extending the cinematic options of audiences and filmmakers throughout New Zealand and features a programme of over 150 films.

Peter Young presents ***The Last Ocean***, premiering as part of the New Zealand International Film Festival.

Auckland AUG 01 (Premiere) & 02; SKYCITY Theatre

Wellington AUG 10 & 12

Dunedin AUG 17 & 18

Christchurch AUG 23, 24, 25 & 26

The film is then touring the rest of the country.

Learn more, visit: www.lastocean.co.nz

View the promo here:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bKQUmIV6cSk&feature=youtu.be>

View the NZFF page here:

<http://www.nzff.co.nz/film/35d8f2fa-25c9-4a04-9f5e-3f9e757116e>

Peter Young's credits include:

A Giant Squid, Discovery Channel, documentary

Explorers, TVNZ, series with *Peter Elliot*

Hunger for the Wild, TVNZ, series

Blue Planet, BBC, series

Country Calendar, TVNZ, series

Coasters, TVNZ, series

For more information, imagery from the movies or to speak to Peter Young, please contact:

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