

NEWS

National and world news in brief

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Seafood industry facing collapse

WASHINGTON: A new report published Friday in the journal *Science* claims that almost all species currently caught by the seafood industry will collapse by 2048.

The report's lead author, Boris Worm of Dalhousie University in Nova Scotia, Canada, was alarmed that both whole industries and ecosystems seem to be on the verge of breakdown from over fishing and ecological pollution.

"Whether we looked at tide pools or studies over the entire world's ocean, we saw the same picture emerging. In losing species we lose the productivity and stability of entire ecosystems," said Worm. "I was shocked and disturbed by how consistent these trends are...beyond anything we suspected."

The study that the report was based on took place over four years and included dozens of experiments in several locations. Sediment samples were collected to produce trending data for as far back as a thousand years. It also pointed out areas where ecosystem collapse has badly damaged the fishing industry.

"At this point, 29 percent of fish and seafood species have collapsed...that is, their catch has declined by 90 percent. It is a very clear trend, and it is accelerating. If the long-term trend continues, all fish and seafood species are projected to collapse within my lifetime -- by 2048. It looks grim and the projection of the trend into the future looks even grimmer," Worm said. "But it's not too late to turn this around. It can be done, but it must be done soon. We need a shift from single species management to ecosystem management. It just requires a big chunk of political will to do it."

The report is being released amid a resurgence of American seafood appetites. Consumers are eating on average almost two pounds more of seafood per year than they did just four years ago.

However, the National Fisheries Institute, which is an association of the largest businesses making up the seafood industry, downplayed the study's findings.

"Fish stocks naturally fluctuate in population," the institute said in a published statement. "By developing new technologies that capture target species more efficiently and result in less impact on other species or the environment, we are helping to ensure our industry does not adversely affect surrounding ecosystems or damage native species."

The study was funded by the National Science Foundation.

Lebanese government on verge of collapse

WASHINGTON: The White House released information on Wednesday that gave indications that the Lebanese government is on the verge of collapse, and some organizations are actively trying to overthrow the current leaders.

The information is being released as the current government announced a tribunal with intent of discovering the circumstances behind the assassination of the last Lebanese Prime Minister in 2005.

"Any such effort to sideline the tribunal will fail, however, for the international community can proceed with establishing it no matter what happens internally in Lebanon," White House Press Secretary Tony Snow said in a press conference.

New evidence is also being released that points to both Syria and Iran as funders and supporters of Hezbollah and other rebellious groups trying to take control of the Lebanese government.

U.S. officials believe that the new interference is part of a larger plan to destabilize countries that border Israel.

Protests over election rigging rage in Mexico

OAXACA CITY, Mexico: Mexican federal police in riot gear have contained a group of liberal protesters and college students onto the grounds of a university after weeks of fighting.

The protests, which have now lasted more than five months, began when several groups started making accusations that the state's governor, Ulises Ruiz, had rigged the election results and had hired groups of thugs to keep potential voters away from polling places. Police were unable to follow the protesters onto the college campus because it is illegal for them to do so under Mexican law without being invited by the rector in charge of the university, who has declined to do so.

The mass of rioting citizens had, at one point, captured the center of the city and the state capital, forcing the governor and state lawmakers to flee for safety.

City residents and business owners are frustrated that the protests have kept potential customers and tourists from coming to the city, which is renowned for its archaeological sites and ancient ruins.

"We haven't sold a single thing in about five months," said Luis Lazo Mendoza, who runs a family business selling hand-woven carpets and rugs. Like many other residents, the Mendoza family is running out of money for necessities like food and clothing.

Several countries, including the United States, have posted warnings to tourists cautioning them not to visit the troubled area.



Source: CNN.com, Yahoo! News, The Smoking Gun

Behrend Showcase



Rita S. Weryha/THE BEHREND BEACON

Behrend Sophomores wishing spring would soon arrive huddled together as they walked to and from their classes.



Rita S. Weryha/THE BEHREND BEACON

Erie's first big snowfall this Thursday caught many students by surprise and made driving conditions difficult.

Erie's first snowfall shocks many

The snow started falling early Thursday around 9:00 a.m. and continued to fall sporadically throughout the morning hours. Weather forecasts previous to Thursday predicted little precipitation, but did not predict the many inches of snow that now cover the Erie area. By 3:00 p.m., the snow was heavily falling and the wind was blowing with great force. The wind speed at 3:00 p.m. was recorded at 15 m.p.h., and ranged from 6 m.p.h. to 17 m.p.h. over the entire 24 hours. The snow accumulation varied from approximately three to four inches, depending on the area.

The Penn State Behrend Maintenance and Operations crew responded quickly to the snowfall, and they cleared the streets, sidewalks and parking lots as the snow continued to come down. Many Behrend students were delighted by the snow and were seen all around campus, building snowmen and having snowball fights.

The forecast for Friday will be mostly cloudy, windy and cold with snow showers, accumulating a coating to an inch. Saturday will be mostly cloudy and cold with a flurry or two. Sunday's forecast is predicted to have times of sun and clouds with possible wind speeds of 14 m.p.h.

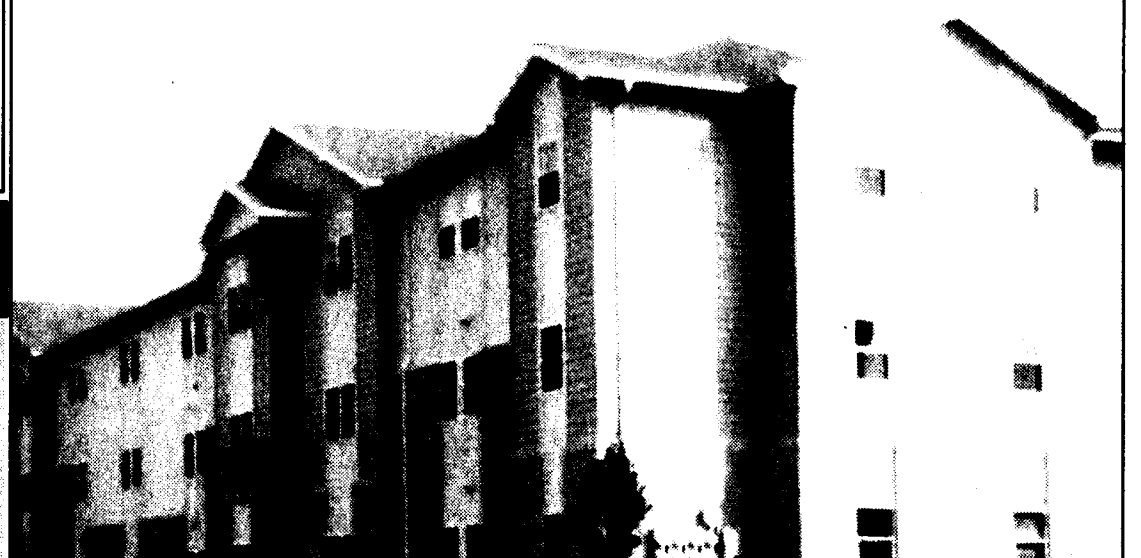
Weather information was compiled from www.accuweather.com.

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Quotes on Civility

"The words you speak today should be soft and tender ... for tomorrow you may have to eat them."

— Unknown

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for Manners & Civility

