Jul 41. Let's go fishing with big data!

Keyword phrase - big data for fishing

*Illegal practices in the global fish trade have made overfishing an international issue as it is a threat to the environment as well as the worldwide fish economy. Now, big data for fishing helps to tackle this global issue.*

Overfishing is the global issue which has depleted the world’s fish population to a major extent. It has accounted 30% of the worldwide fish catch and contributed to a loss of billions annually. To fight against overfishing, researchers are harnessing the power of big data for fishing to identify patterns of suspicious fishing activities.

# IUU fishing: A global threat to the fish economy

The global fish stock is under threat from IUU (illegal, unreported, and unregulated) fishing. IUU exacerbate the problem of overfishing activities as vessels, and harvesters operate in protected waters, where there is a complete ban on fishing activities. This has become a significant issue already because legal fishing activities have overexploited the fish stock. Now, illegal activities are making it tougher to conserve fish stocks. As a result, researchers have started collating a significant amount of data from fisheries control agencies, trade figures, and experts estimates to crack down illegal fishing. IUU fishing happens at a large scale because people involved in such practices are exempted from punishments. This occurs mainly in waters where there are weakest governance measures to manage fishing activities. Some of the severely affected waters are:

* West coast of Africa accounts for 40% of fishes caught which is highest worldwide.
* IUU fishing accounts for 34% of the total catch in the western Pacific region.
* The northern Pacific region amounts to 33% of the catch.
* IUU fishing in the southwest Atlantic accounts for 32 % of the total catch.

# Big data for fishing: Weapon to fight against IUU fishing

[Google’s ‘Global fishing watch’](https://www.leonardodicaprio.org/global-fishing-watch-big-data-and-artificial-intelligence-to-end-illegal-fishing-and-guide-sustainable-fisheries/) and ‘[Detect IT: Fish’](https://detect.trade/) have embraced big data technology to:

* Increase transparency in global fish trade
* Improve existing science-based management strategies
* Curb illegal harmful and dangerous fishing practices by informing governments

Detect IT: Fish is a web-based tool which uses big data analytics to identify potential flows of illegal fishing activities. This tool enables automated collection, comparison, and analysis of data to track down discrepancies and irregularity to investigate IUU fishing.

Google’s Global fishing watch is an open database platform that uses big data to inform the public about the various illegal fishing activities of individual vessels. This information is used by researchers to understand patterns of fishing pressure.

Global fishing trade has become safer with the advent of big data in fisheries. However, it is not just about securing businesses from illegal practices, but to also conserve the fish stock. Therefore, business leaders in this industry must pay heed to IUU fishing and tackle it by harnessing the power of big data with the help of the experts in big data vendor service.