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Invitation to Press Briefing  
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**The overlooked evolutionary dimension of modern fisheries**

Date: August 27, 2004

Time: 14:00-15:00

World fisheries have reached their limit, with three stocks out of four being maximally exploited or overexploited. This does not only change the abundance of exploited fish but also their traits and genetic composition, adding an evolutionary dimension to fisheries. Evolutionary changes in fish stocks must be of concern to managers, since they affect sustainable yield as well as the stability and recovery of stocks. Five researchers present their theories and findings about fisheries-induced evolution.

**Ulf Dieckmann** from the International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis in Laxenburg, Austria reports on empirical evidence of how commercial fisheries has caused evolutionary change in Northeast Arctic cod, one of the largest and economically most valuable cod stocks in the world. He also describes examples of fisheries-induced evolution in Northern cod, Georges Bank cod, Gulf of Maine cod, and American plaice. *Nature* 428: 932 (2004).

**David Conover** from the Marine Sciences Research Center, State University of New York, Stony Brook, USA, presents his groundbreaking lab research which proves for the first time fast evolution of fish stocks in response to size-selective exploitation. *Science* 297: 94 (2002).

**David Reznick**, Department of Biology, University of California, Riverside, USA, is leading research on how fast fish in the field can adapt to altered patterns of mortality. His presentation describes the implications of these observations for the speed with which we must expect fisheries-induced evolution to alter the genetic composition of exploited stocks. *Science* 275: 1934 (1997).