

Britain wants the EU to limit tuna fishing

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The European Union is reportedly being urged to limit tuna fishing as rising demand for sushi drives tuna stocks to near collapse.

Britain's Department of the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, or DEFRA, is urging urgent intervention and stringent new controls to prevent the seasonal closure of fishing grounds, The Independent reported Tuesday.

Government officials said they will press their demands in November during a meeting of the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tuna.

The move comes amid mounting evidence from environmental groups that European fishing fleets are illegally catching far more tuna than quotas allow, the newspaper said.

Most European-caught tuna previously was exported to Japan, but the market in Europe is growing due to the popularity of sushi. It's estimated Britons now eat 600 tons a year, pushing the price of tuna to several thousand dollars for a single fish, The Independent reported.

DEFRA issued a statement saying: "Scientific evidence shows that there is overfishing and under-reporting occurring in the bluefin tuna fishing industry. Urgent action needs to be taken to address this problem."

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