

Anchovy fishing may harm penguins

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Over-fishing by humans could cause a famine among penguins on the Patagonian coast of Argentina, U.S. researchers said.

Elizabeth Skewgar, a biology professor at the University of Washington, said a newly approved plan to open the Patagonian coast to anchovy fishing could have serious repercussions for penguins, right whales, elephant seals and other animals living there, the American Association for the Advancement of Science said in a news release.

The area where the fishing is proposed is near the world's largest continental Magellanic penguin colony, she said. The plan does not include ways to study what happens to fish and wildlife that depend on anchovy.

In their article, Skewgar and her colleagues said researchers need to determine the plan's effects on other fisheries, as well as risks to wildlife, before the plan proceeds.

Skewgar's comments appear in Friday's issue of Science.

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