

Nicholas Fisher

Fukushima Radioactivity in the Pacific and Risks to Marine Life and Humans

Fisher and his colleagues evaluated the release of radioactivity from the failed Fukushima nuclear power plant in Japan into the Pacific Ocean and the subsequent bioaccumulation of select radionuclides in marine animals. They found that cesium isotopes were accumulated in all plankton samples as well as in bluefin tuna that transport the cesium from the waters off Japan towards North America. They further evaluated the dose that marine animals received from Fukushima and compared the levels with naturally occurring radionuclides present in the ocean. Mindful of public health concerns relating to this radioactivity, they compared the doses and impacts that humans would receive from eating these tuna to doses they ingest from other sources. The team also considered radionuclides as possible tracers of migration timing and patterns of bluefin tuna and other large migratory species in the Pacific.

Nicholas Fisher is Distinguished Professor of Marine Sciences in Stony Brook's School of Marine and Atmospheric Sciences and also serves as Director of Stony Brook's Consortium for Interdisciplinary Environmental Research. He has over 250 publications on the accumulation and toxicity of diverse contaminants. He has worked at the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution, the Ministry for Conservation in Melbourne Australia, the International Atomic Energy Agency in Monaco, and Brookhaven National Laboratory before joining Stony Brook in 1988.

