

# Sustainable Fisheries: Ten Things You Can Do To Help

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## 1. Choose Sustainable Seafood

Support fisheries that are better for the environment and relieve pressure on those that aren't doing as well. Many organizations inform consumers about which seafood can be selected and which to avoid to reduce overfishing and damage to the underwater environment.

Download your regional Seafood Guide at [www.projectaware.org](http://www.projectaware.org).

The Good Fish Guide and [www.fishonline.org](http://www.fishonline.org) uses a rating system to provide advice on more than 125 fish species. This rating is based on the status, sustainability and fisheries impact of each species.

## 2. Look for Eco-Labels

When buying seafood, look for eco-labels such as Dolphin Friendly or Marine Stewardship Council. The Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) has developed an environmental standard for sustainable and well-managed fisheries. This designation rewards environmentally responsible fishery management practices. The label ensures consumers that the product has not contributed to overfishing. For an international directory of where to buy MSC labeled products visit [www.msc.org](http://www.msc.org)

## 3. Ask your supermarket and restaurant

Ask your local supermarkets and restaurants if they stock seafood with sustainable labels. If not, encourage them to add sustainable species to their product line. Your consumer power can influence local businesses.

## 4. Don't assume that farmed seafood is always an environmentally friendly alternative.

Depending on the species, farms can introduce or increase waste, toxins, disease and chemicals into the natural environment. Carnivorous species like salmon and shrimp require an unsustainable amount of wild caught fish in order to reach marketable size. This means that the increase in farmed carnivorous fish still put pressure on fished species as they are caught to produce feed. For example, to produce one pound of farmed salmon, requires from 1-2 kilograms/2-5 pounds of ocean fish as food. By knowing your seafood source you can use sustainable seafood guides and eco-labels to guide your decisions.

## 5. Eat lower down on the food chain.

Fish species that are higher on the food chain such as tuna, swordfish and shark, tend to be larger in size and fewer in number than those at lower levels. Occasionally eating seafood lower on the food chain can reduce pressure on higher species and make better use of protein sources. For example, it takes approximately 10,000 kilograms of sardines to produce one kilogram of farm-raised tuna. Consider eating sardines, anchovies or farmed tilapia - fish that live off algae or plants.



## 6. Stay tuned in to fisheries management issues

Support initiatives that improve fisheries through responsible management, conservation, fishing practices and fishing gear. Turtle Excluder Devices (TEDs), for example, are a fishing gear modification that allows larger animals like sea turtles and sharks to pass through shrimp trawl nets.

## 7. United Nations (UN) Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries

Be sure your country has implemented the United Nations (UN) Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries and related International Plans of Action (IPOA). These voluntary measures aim to ensure the effective conservation and management of living aquatic resources. A major focus of these actions is to halt illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing, which can cause problems for international fisheries management. If your country hasn't implemented the Code and a national action plan, encourage the government to do so. For more information, visit the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) website at [www.fao.org/fi/agreem/codecond/codecon.asp](http://www.fao.org/fi/agreem/codecond/codecon.asp).



## 8. Support the establishment of Marine Protected Areas (MPAs)

Research indicates that properly designed MPAs preserve biodiversity while providing refuge and nursery grounds for fish species. These MPAs also have the potential to increase fish stocks, and therefore fishing, outside MPA boundaries.

## 9. Think Twice

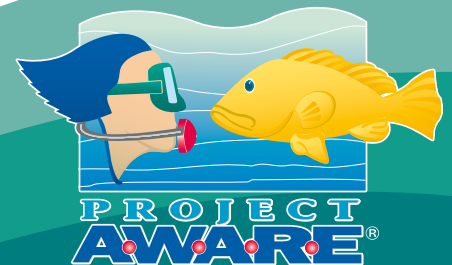
Think twice before starting an aquarium hobby. Unless aquarium or ornamental fisheries are carefully and responsibly managed, collection of these species for captive display often damages coral reefs and marine species. Serious concerns include destructive capture methods, overexploitation and high mortality rates during transportation. Project AWARE Foundation supports publication of the Responsible Marine Aquarist book by the Marine Conservation Society. This book addresses concerns, raises awareness of conservation and management issues and summarizes ways that these fisheries are monitored and regulated. For more information visit [www.mcsuk.org](http://www.mcsuk.org).



## 10. Educate your family, friends and coworkers

Tell them why you support sustainable fisheries and how they can help make a difference. Consumers, through their voices and pocketbooks, have the power to make positive change - but only if they make the effort.

For more information and to download your Seafood Guide visit [www.projectaware.org](http://www.projectaware.org)



Divers Conserving Underwater Environments<sup>SM</sup>

[www.projectaware.org](http://www.projectaware.org)

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