

Seafood UK Position Statement

Background

The marine environment is an incredibly fragile eco-system covering around two thirds of the earth's surface. The marine environment also sustains the livelihoods of millions and feeds billions around the world. Fish now accounts for almost 17 percent of the global population's intake of protein.

Seafood is also a popular choice for many of our customers and can contribute towards a balanced and healthy diet. But we recognise the pressures on global wild fish and shellfish populations and the need to protect the environmental, social and economic sustainability of the fishing industry and aquaculture so we can continue to provide our customers with good quality seafood in years to come.

Our approach

Our own impacts on the marine environments are driven through our supply chains; by the way we source, by the amounts of fish we source, and by the species we source. Our responsible seafood policy seeks to mitigate these risks by addressing issues like catch methods and consumer preference for overfished or scarce species. There are three main pillars to our policy:

1. All our seafood will be sourced from responsibly managed fisheries and farms where fishing and farming practices are managed to ensure fish stocks and marine eco-systems are maintained and protected for future generations.
2. Our customers are able to make responsible seafood choices based on the information and ranges we offer.



3. We work with industry bodies, government and other expert stakeholders to help us deliver our policy and achieve our goal of ensuring fish stocks and marine ecosystems are maintained and protected for future generations.

1. Sourcing

Wild fish

The first pillar of our strategy is about ensuring that all the fish we source will be from responsibly managed fisheries. To do this, we are implementing a Responsible Seafood Sourcing Policy in partnership with our Suppliers and the environmental charity the [Sustainable Fisheries Partnership \(SFP\)](#), to risk assess our wild fisheries and make recommendations on how they can be improved.

Our Policy requires that the health of the fish stock, fishery management and environmental impacts such as catching methods, are assessed by SFP, and action taken to improve where risks are identified. The outcomes of the assessment are then discussed with our suppliers and we work with them to understand the steps we need to take to address any issues, whether that's at the supplier level or through multi-stakeholder Fishery Improvement Projects (FIPs). For example, one is [Sri Lankan tuna](#). This FIP was established in 2009, and since then there has been significant progress made in the management of the fishery working directly with the local fishermen and government while improving data collection for scientific analysis. We are also involved in the Moroccan sardine FIP, the Southeast Asia Roundtable and the North Sea and Western Waters Fishery Roundtable.

Aquaculture

Aquaculture is a global industry that is expanding rapidly to feed a growing world population. This global industry needs to be nurtured and at Tesco we have established Aquaculture Requirements which outline standards that we apply to all our aquaculture producers to ensure good farming practice. These Requirements address animal health and welfare, environment, ethics and feed. Tesco aquaculture producers are independently audited against the Aquaculture Requirements to assess compliance.



Often, our producers are stretched by the requirements and where necessary our Aquaculture Manager will work with our supply base to ensure producers aspire to and meet standards. This includes encouraging innovation and research to improve the industry as a whole.

2. Supporting our customers

The second pillar of our strategy is around supporting customers to make informed decisions. We know that only five species make up a total of 80% of all seafood sold in the UK (salmon, cod, haddock, tuna and shrimp) and this puts a huge amount of pressure on these species. By encouraging our customers to have a diverse diet and by providing them with the information they need to make responsible choices, we hope to relieve the pressure on these five fish.

Encouraging diverse diets

With over 600 counters we are proud to be the UK's largest fishmonger. Tesco has developed a unique training programme for our fishmongers enhancing their knowledge of fish species and filleting skills to pass on to our customers.

In order to encourage people to eat different types of seafood we launched our Catch of the Day Scheme in 2012 introducing customers to a broader range of species by increasing our range of seasonal fresh fish on counters from 40 to 60 varieties, the widest range on UK high streets.

All of the new fish varieties are caught in and around British coastal waters, including a mixed fishery with over 40 species in the south west where the Gulf Stream meets the colder waters from the north. This means that the fishing effort is generally not targeting any one species rather than putting pressure on a single species.

Labelling

We ensure that our fresh and pre-packed fish is labelled with key information such as catch method, species name and the area of the catch. We have provided additional information on our canned tuna, indicating catch method.



We are also working with the [Sustainable Seafood Coalition](#) to draft and implement a voluntary labelling scheme which aims to define the terms ‘sustainably sourced’, ‘responsibly sourced’ and ‘responsibly farmed’ across the industry. The hope is that the adoption of this code will make it clearer for customers what the whole industry means by these terms.

3. Working with industry bodies

Where there are systemic issues in seafood such as Illegal, Unregulated and Unreported fishing (IUU) or issues around the sustainability of fishmeal, which are bigger than our own supply chain, we work with industry to try and tackle the problem.

In aquaculture, for example, we know that reducing reliance on fishoil and fish meal is a complex industry-wide issue so we worked with the International Fishmeal and Fish Oil Organisation (IFFO) to develop a Global Standard for the Responsible Supply of fishmeal and fish oil in order to ensure the wild fish used as feed ingredients for our farmed fish are responsibly sourced, traced and produced. Since the launch of the standard in 2009, Tesco has continued to play an active role on the governance board.

We’re also working with our shrimp supplier in Thailand on developing trials which limit the use of fishmeal through the use of alternative proteins and improving farming methods. We hope to be able to roll out any successes to our supplier base. Through the British Retail Consortium we established a working group on fishmeal involving other major UK supermarkets.

We regularly consult with suppliers and industry to continue the development of our Aquaculture Requirements, and we are working on developing training in best practice fish and shrimp welfare for our supply base. In addition to this we are working with industry to develop improved welfare systems for fish at the end of life.

We participate in the Global GAP technical committee for aquaculture to address global aquaculture standards and work to improve these across the industry.

We also recognize that Marine Protection Areas have a vital role to play in safeguarding the marine environment, and we support their introduction in areas where they will benefit conservation efforts.



Commitments

- 100% of our own brand tuna is caught using pole and line catch methods. This includes tuna products like salads, sandwiches and ready meals.