



PRESS RELEASE, EMBARGOED UNTIL 00:01 WEDNESDAY 5TH APRIL 2022

New sustainability ratings show affordable, ocean-friendly seafood options are possible

The Marine Conservation Society's [Good Fish Guide](#) is the charity's flagship tool for identifying sustainable seafood. The Guide uses a simple traffic light system to help consumers and businesses make sustainable seafood choices depending on where and how a species is caught or farmed.

Covering seafood sold or produced in the UK, green are the 'Best Choice' most sustainable options, amber is an 'OK choice', but improvements are needed, and red indicates unsustainable 'Fish to Avoid'.

Updated biannually, ratings are carefully researched and rigorously reviewed by scientists at the charity using a transparent process and a publicly available methodology.

Seafood is one of the first things to drop off consumers' shopping lists when purse strings tighten*, but that needn't be the case. Affordable and sustainable seafood options are possible, especially when it comes to tinned fish.

Tinned fish goes a long way, providing a budget-friendly meal with plenty of flavour, but sustainability does depend on what it is, where it's caught and how. This information on the Good Fish Guide will tell you the up-to-date rating for the seafood you've got in hand.

In this season's rating update, wild-caught Pacific salmon, known as keta, pink or red salmon and often found in tins, was reviewed and stays green-rated. North Sea herring was also reviewed and stays green-rated - a budget-friendly option, herring is great for adding to pastas or spreading on toast.

Jack Clarke, Sustainable Seafood Advocate at the Marine Conservation Society

said: "Tinned fish can be an ocean-friendly, store cupboard staple. There are certified sustainable options for herring, anchovies, tuna, sardines and salmon, all of which could create the base for a thrifty mid-week meal."

However, not all tinned fish is sustainable, and sadly some have moved off the green list with this update to the Good Fish Guide. Northeast Atlantic mackerel, commonly found in supermarkets, has moved from a green rating to amber due to overfishing.

In the past, stocks have been big enough to cope with fishing, but now populations of Northeast Atlantic mackerel are declining. The Marine Conservation Society is calling on governments to deliver better fisheries management and agree internationally on mackerel fishing quotas.

Of 194 wild-caught ratings reviewed, only 38 made improvements with this ratings update.

Charlotte Coombes, Good Fish Guide Manager at the Marine Conservation Society said, "We need UK governments to act on their promises and provide better management of our seas. Fish are central to the health of our ocean and the livelihoods of fishing communities. In the UK, 60% of fish stocks are fished beyond environmental limits, but we know that better management, as well as monitoring, can help stocks to recover."

On the opposite end of the spectrum, European eel stays on the charity's Fish to Avoid list. Often found on menus in fine dining establishments, European eel is still finding its way onto plates across the country despite populations dropping by as much as 95% in the last decade and it being as endangered as the Bengal tiger.

To help businesses, the Marine Conservation Society's also has the *Good Fish Guide for Business*, a free tool to assist chefs, restaurants and anyone working in the seafood supply chain, stop allowing red-rated fish ending up as dinner. The Good Fish Guide recommends sustainable alternatives to red-rated seafood and has seafood pages for recipes and menu inspiration for businesses and consumers.

To learn more about the Marine Conservation Society's work, please visit the charity's website: www.mcsuk.org.

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Images

Please find a Dropbox link to [images and graphics here](#).

Please let us know if you would like to use any of our species illustrations featured on the Good Fish Guide.

Press Contact

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Notes to Editors

The [Marine Conservation Society](#) is the UK's leading ocean charity, fighting for cleaner, better-protected, healthier seas. The charity works to highlight the importance of our ocean, and the life within it, through working with government, industry and education, to take action to restore and protect the marine environment.

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*SOFINA: [How the cost-of-living crisis is affecting UK seafood consumption](#)

Ratings overview

The Good Fish Guide has around 650 ratings for over 100 different species of fish and shellfish. A proportion of these ratings are reviewed during each update, which happens in April and October. Each rating is specific to a species, living in a certain area, caught or farmed by a certain method, and, if applicable, certified to a recognised standard.

In this ratings update, 186 ratings were reviewed: 18 farmed ratings and 194 wild-caught ratings. 22 ratings were deleted due to irrelevance in the UK market and 12 new ratings were added.