

## Greenpeace's sustainable seafood campaign: Achievements with supermarkets by March 2009

### Background

Since 2005, Greenpeace has campaigned for supermarkets to sell only sustainable seafood. This paper reviews the key achievements and developments of the campaign to date. For more detailed information on a particular country or fish species please visit the relevant websites (the URLs are listed at the end of the document).

**October 2005:** Greenpeace UK publishes a league table ranking UK supermarkets on the basis of their seafood sourcing policies – this lays the ground-work for Greenpeace's sustainable seafood campaign.

**2006:** Greenpeace France and Greenpeace in Central & Eastern Europe (Greenpeace CEE) join the campaign.

**May 2006:** Greenpeace CEE publishes a report ranking the seafood purchasing policies of Austrian supermarkets.

**2007:** Greenpeace Germany and Greenpeace Netherlands join the campaign.

**September 2007:** Greenpeace Netherlands publishes its first ranking of the top 18 Dutch supermarkets.

**December 2007:** Greenpeace Germany publishes a ranking of top German supermarkets.

**2008:** Greenpeace Nordic joins the campaign.

**January 2008:** Greenpeace Nordic publishes a ranking in Denmark.

**March 2008:** Greenpeace Nordic publishes rankings in Sweden and Norway.

**May 2008:** Significant improvements by Swedish supermarkets in a very short time mean that, just two months later, the ranking is updated.

**June 2008:** First retailer ranking is being published by Greenpeace US. Greenpeace in Canada publishes a report about retailer's seafood sourcing.

**August 2008:** Greenpeace moves to Southern Europe to publish rankings of top Spanish and Portuguese retailers.

**December 2008:** Greenpeace Germany and Greenpeace US publish their second ranking of top retailers in both countries.

**February 2008:** Greenpeace in Poland publishes a first retailer ranking.

Supermarkets in all countries have started to adapt their fish purchasing policies. Many retailers have developed sustainable fish purchasing guidelines and, as a minimum, most companies have delisted (stopped selling) a number of overfished or destructively-fished species. Some retailers have even delisted all red-listed products.

## Sustainable seafood policies

### Germany

In Germany, in 2007, four supermarkets (**Norma**, **REWE**, **Kaufland**, and **Netto**) developed sustainable seafood procurement policies. Norma came first in the German ranking, followed by Kaufland. All German supermarkets except Bünning, which came last, scored in the mid-range. This means that, while they had taken good measures towards sourcing sustainable seafood, there is still much more to be done. German supermarket **Edeka** changed its own brand products (frozen and canned) completely to Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) certified ones, and delisted all tuna products except skipjack.

### The Netherlands

In 2009 all the 18 biggest supermarkets in the Netherlands have developed a sustainable seafood sourcing policy. They are all in the mid-range of the ranking. This means that, while they had taken good measures towards sourcing sustainable seafood, there is still much more to be done.

Nine supermarkets have made their policy available to the public. Supermarkets that have not published their policy yet, will either do this in 2009 or at least give a broad explanation of their policy on their website.

Most supermarkets have a policy that applies to a restricted part of their seafood product range, for example home brand products or fresh, frozen and canned seafood for human consumption. Four supermarkets included pet food in their policy.

Not all policies will lead to a fully sustainable seafood supply in the near future, but all retailers are committed to remove the worst products and increase the range of sustainable fish. All Dutch supermarkets committed to selling only MSC-certified fresh fish by 2011.

### Norway

In 2006, Greenpeace exposed an illegal cod fishing scandal in the Barents Sea. This sparked moves by all Norwegian supermarkets to develop seafood purchasing guidelines to avoid sourcing illegally-caught fish.

The two retailers leading the Norwegian retailer ranking list, **Smartclub** and **ICA (Royal Ahold)**, developed additional comprehensive policies to cover their entire seafood ranges.

### Sweden

In Sweden, all companies actively work with sustainable seafood purchasing policies. **Bergendahlsgruppen** and **Axfood** have the most developed sustainable policies, closely followed by **ICA (Royal Ahold)**. Their policies have led to delisting of all 14 products on Greenpeace Nordic's red list. All retailers except **Co-op** agreed to delist all red-listed products. Some Swedish retailers reported a record number of customer requests demanding sustainable seafood policies, more feedback than they have ever received on any issue.

## United Kingdom

In the UK, the nine largest supermarket chains included in the Greenpeace UK league table have adopted seafood procurement policies. These take, to varying degrees, sustainability into account as a key criterion when purchasing fish products. **Marks & Spencer** and **Waitrose** have the most developed policies, leading the table in both the first ranking and the follow-up ranking published in October 2006.

Walmart subsidiary **Asda** ranked last in the initial UK league table. In January 2006, it adopted a comprehensive sustainable seafood policy. It then moved up to fifth place in the second UK ranking. Asda's new policy led to the immediate delisting of Dover sole, lumpfish, dogfish, skate and swordfish. Later in the year, Asda stopped selling any North Sea cod in its fresh, pre-packed chilled and frozen ranges. Asda also committed to selling only MSC-certified fresh and frozen fish within five years.

In August 2008, The Co-operative Group launched its new sustainable seafood range which operates under its new, stronger seafood sourcing policy. The policy now covers every farmed or wild-caught seafood product in the Co-op-brand range and resulted in the replacement of a wide range of seafood products with more sustainable options, and well as the delisting of products for which sustainable options could not be found. Somerfield, previously last in the 2006 UK retailer ranking, has been bought by the Co-operative Group and will operate under its new seafood policy.

## Transparency

Transparency is key to the development of sustainable seafood procurement policies. In order to guarantee a sustainable seafood range and minimise the risk of illegally caught fish supermarkets have to implement full traceability of their seafood products. Supermarkets are only in a position to make a sustainable choice when they know what exactly they buy – what species it is, where exactly and how it was caught.

To prove the traceability of their seafood products a number of companies have provided an extensive overview of their seafood ranges to Greenpeace. In the best cases for each species sold this information includes both the common name and the Latin species name, the FAO (major fishing areas as defined by the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation<sup>1</sup>) catch area, the port the catch was landed in, the day it was caught, the stock it came from, and the fishing method used to catch it.

Lists of seafood on offer in stores, with varying levels of detail, have been provided to Greenpeace by the supermarkets Hofer (Austrian subsidiary of Aldi), Lidl, Norma and others in **Austria**; Kaufland, Lidl, Norma, Rewe, Edeka, Netto provided detailed information on their product range and policies in **Germany**; All 18 supermarkets in the **Netherlands** provided an overview of (part of their) their seafood range and are actively working on full traceability of their seafood products; all chains in **Sweden** except Netto provided detailed information on their policies and their product range; and all nine **UK** supermarkets on the ranking provided Greenpeace with information on their seafood ranges.

Many supermarkets have also increased the transparency regarding the sourcing of their seafood range to their customers. For example in Germany 7 of 11 supermarket chains Greenpeace Germany is in touch with cover the topic of seafood sustainability

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.fao.org/fishery/area/search>

on their website. Some also provide information leaflets to consumers at their fresh fish counter or cover the topic in their in house magazines and advertisement.

## **Labelling and traceability**

### **Austria**

Hofer (Aldi) and Norma in Austria improved their labelling. **Norma** developed a completely new 'transparent fisheries' logo, launched in May 2007. This provides the Latin species name, catch area, catch method and catch day on each of its frozen products. Norma claims the label guarantees the full traceability of the product back to the ship. Since the end of 2006, its competitor **Hofer** has provided the Latin species name in addition to the information requested by EU law (common name, FAO catch area, wild or farmed) on its frozen fish products.

Labelling of **Rewe's** own brand's 'Quality First' frozen seafood products (including breaded fish products) has exceeded the legal requirements in Austria since March 2005. The labels display the Latin species name as well as the exact FAO fishing area by name, rather than by code, according to the batch.

### **Netherlands**

Most supermarkets (including Albert Heijn - Ahold, Lidl and Aldi) improved or have a policy to improve the labelling of (part of their range of) seafood products in 2009, including the common name, Latin species name, catch area and country of origin for aquaculture products. Four supermarkets also include the catch method and details on the aquaculture method. One major supplier of fresh seafood for 6 supermarkets has already included catch-/aquaculture method on their products.

In addition two supermarkets (including Albert Heijn – Ahold) make reference on their homebrand fish label to their website where they give more details about their fish products. Several other supermarkets give more detail about the fish products on their website or have made a (red-amber-green) fish guide of their product range to help consumers chose for more sustainable alternatives.

### **Norway**

Frozen seafood products in several Norwegian supermarkets is labelled with FAO catch area, species name, processing country and processing plant. Almost all fresh fish caught in Norwegian waters by Norwegian boats is traceable back to the boat.

### **United Kingdom**

In the UK, supermarkets improved their labelling, especially on fish counters and for packaged fresh fish. In cases where the seafood is from a single source, the common name, catch area and country of origin, or farm and farm location, is often supplied. Catch method is increasingly being labelled on line-caught products, for example, line-caught Icelandic cod. **Waitrose** provides more detail about the origin of its seafood on its website. In October 2006, **Morrison's** became the first UK supermarket to include the Latin name on its fish counter labels and pre-packed fish, and its wide range of line-caught fish is also clearly labelled.

## Germany

German supermarkets Lidl and Aldi South provide Latin species and FAO catch areas on most of the seafood products. More and more German supermarkets now label their own brand tuna cans with Latin species names.

The most extensive labelling in Germany is done by Norma. The supermarket chain even labels stock name and catch method, also for cans.

## Delistings of threatened species

A number of supermarkets around Europe delisted some or all of the most threatened species identified by Greenpeace for that country. In Sweden, eight out of nine retailers cancelled their contracts for all 14 of the species on the Greenpeace Nordic red list. This includes European eel, cod, beam and bottom-trawled plaice, Atlantic and Greenland halibut, tuna from threatened stocks, redfish, sole, shark, skate, ray, anglerfish, wild Atlantic salmon from threatened stocks, swordfish, marlin and tropical shrimps.

Key examples for delistings are:

- **Sharks and dogfish**

When the campaign started in **Austria** in May 2006, **shark** products were sold in six Austrian retail/wholesale chains. All of them delisted shark products by spring 2007. This includes the international chains Metro and Spar. In **Germany** 6 supermarket chains delisted sharks in the 2008: Lidl, Kaufland, Metro, Rewe, Kaiser's Tengelmann, Bunting and Aldi North stopped selling any shark products. There is only one supermarket chain left in Germany selling shark products. In the **US** Ahold, Wegmans, Safeway, A&P, Price Chopper, Whole Foods stopped to sell sharks. In the **UK**, Asda, Co-op, Sainsbury's, Somerfield and Morrison's delisted **dogfish**, a small species of shark. In the Netherlands none of the supermarkets sells sharks and dogfish.

- **Swordfish and marlin**

Another key threatened species delisted around Europe as a result of the campaign was **swordfish**. In **Austria**, the international chains Rewe, Spar and Metro stopped selling swordfish, as did Asda and Somerfield in the **UK**. In Norway, ICA (Royal Ahold) delisted both marlin and swordfish. In the Netherlands all supermarkets do not source or have stopped sourcing marlin and swordfish.

- **Skates and rays**

**Skates** and **rays** were widely sold in **UK** supermarkets at the start of the campaign. Asda, Co-op, Sainsbury's, and Somerfield have now delisted them. Morrison's, Tesco and Waitrose delisted all skate species except starry, spotted and cuckoo rays. Waitrose is now funding the production and distribution of a skate and ray identification card, including information on minimum and maximum landing sizes, in order to help fishermen, anglers and producers avoid the most vulnerable and overfished species. ICA (Royal Ahold) in **Norway** stopped selling skates. In the US Publix delisted skates. In the Netherlands all supermarkets do not source skates and rays.

- **Atlantic cod and haddock**

There have been significant movements on **Atlantic cod** and **haddock** in the last three years. In the **UK**, Asda stopped selling any cod caught in the North Sea – the

last supermarket in the UK to do so. Both smoked and chilled (uncoated) cod and haddock fillets sold by Marks & Spencer come from fish line-caught in Icelandic waters. Sainsbury's only sells line-caught fresh cod and haddock, primarily from Iceland with a small range from Norway. As yet this policy does not cover frozen fish. The supermarket chain ICA (Royal Ahold) stopped selling frozen Eastern Baltic cod in **Sweden** and **Norway**. Lidl in **Germany** delisted Baltic cod, Aldi North and Aldi South as well as Rewe delisted any cod. In the **Netherlands** most supermarkets (including Albert Heijn - Ahold for their homebrand, Coop and Spar) replaced (part of) their fresh and frozen North Sea cod with cod from Iceland, the Barents Sea and the Pacific. Other Dutch supermarkets (**including** Albert Heijn - Ahold for their fresh home brand) have improved the catch method from bottom trawled to line caught.

- **Halibut**

Publix, A&P, Ahold in the **US** committed in November 2008 to delist Atlantic Halibut. Safeway delisted Greenland Halibut. Only 3 of the 18 supermarkets in the **Netherlands** still sell Atlantic halibut (Super de Boer, Jumbo and Spar). Em-Te, Goff, Dirk van den Broek, and Aldi stopped sourcing halibut in 2008. In **Germany** Aldi North stopped selling Halibut.

- **Tuna**

The supermarket chain Metro, third largest grocery retailer globally and the biggest fish trader in Europe (according to company information), placed signs in its **Austrian** shops in December 2006 stating that it does not sell any **northern or southern bluefin tuna** or bigeye tuna "*for reasons of protection of species*". The retail chain Co-op stopped selling bluefin tuna in Italy in April 2007. In **Norway**, the supermarket chain ICA (Royal Ahold) stopped selling bluefin tuna. Carrefour stopped selling bluefin in **Italy** and **Spain** and will do so in **France** in 2009. Auchan also stopped selling bluefin tuna in France. In the US Ahold, Wegmans, A&P, Price Chopper, Publix, Safeway and Whole Foods stopped selling bluefin tuna. In **German** Kaiser's Tengelmann and Kaufland stoppen selling Bluefin tuna.

In the **Netherlands**, the last supermarkets stopped sourcing bluefin tuna in 2008. Many supermarkets stopped sourcing fresh and frozen **yellowfin tuna** steaks and other unsustainable yellowfin and white tuna products in 2008. Albert Heijn (Ahold) is working together with WWF on the sustainability of the fishery from which they source their frozen yellowfin tuna. Several supermarkets (including Albert Heijn – Ahold) introduced the first MSC certified white tuna cans from pole & line fisheries in 2008.

ICA in **Sweden** has decided to delist yellowfin tuna, but may reconsider if it finds a sustainable fishery from the Atlantic. Lidl, Aldi North and Aldi South in Germany in **Germany** delisted yellowfin tuna. Hofer (Aldi South) in **Austria** stopped selling canned yellowfin tuna, it now only sells canned skipjack tuna. Wal-Mart in the US committed to delist fresh and frozen Yellowfin tuna and Publix committed to delist Bigeye tuna.

- **Deep sea species**

Several supermarket chains delisted a number of **deep sea species**: Groupe Casino (**France**) stopped buying blue ling and roundnose grenadier. In the **UK**, Waitrose no longer sources any fish caught by deep-water trawling and Morrison's delisted ling. The **Austrian** regional supermarket chain MPreis stopped selling all deep sea species. Ahold in the US stopped selling Chilean seabass.

- **Redfish**

Publix, Safeway, Target, Wal-Mart in the **US** committed to delist Redfish.

In **Austria** the supermarket chains ADEG, Rewe, Wedl, Spar, Pfeiffer and Kastner delisted red fish. The Austrian chain Norma stopped selling bottom-trawled redfish. In the **Netherlands** only Albert- Heijn (Ahold) sources redfish in 2009. Most Dutch supermarkets stopped sourcing redfish in 2008. In **Germany** Lidl and Norma stopped sourcing red fish.

- **Eel**

In **Denmark** Aldi, Rema1000 and Spar stopped selling **eel**, as did the supermarket chain ICA (Royal Ahold) in **Norway** and Lidl and Kaufland in **Germany**.

In **Sweden**, Willys, Hemköp, City Gross, AG, ICA ( at least, from its central product range) delisted European eel.

In 2008 the first **Dutch** supermarket Dirk van den Broek stopped sourcing eel as well as the main supplier of the Troefmarkt supermarket. All the other supermarkets continue to source threatened eel. Most of the products originate from suppliers that contribute to the Dutch eel recovery programme by releasing some of the farmed eel into the wild.

- **Orange Roughy**

Waitrose, the only major supermarket stocking orange roughy in the **UK** implemented a sustainability policy and took the species off its shelves in 2005 due to concerns over the potential for environmental damage caused by deep-sea trawling of their habitat.

Movements in the **US**: Whole Foods & Ahold (Stop&Shop, Giant, Martins) have delisted orange roughy due to sustainability concerns. The Great Atlantic & Pacific Tea Company (A&P) committed to stop selling orange roughy along with several other species in November 2008. Since March 2006, the Compass Group has eliminated orange roughy and seven other species from its outlets. Target committed to remove orange roughy from sale by January 2009. Wall Mart committed to stop selling orange roughy in November 0.8 None of the **Dutch** and **Austrian** supermarkets sources orange roughy.

- **Hoki and Oreos**

Oreos were delisted by the **Austrian** supermarket chains Spar, MPreis and Sutterlüty. Hoki is no longer sold by four supermarket chains in Austria that were previously selling it (Spar, Sutterlüty, MPreis and Zielpunkt/ Plus).

In the **United States**, hoki was one of the first species removed from sale by Safeway as they began the process of developing a seafood sustainability policy and began taking unsustainable seafood off their shelves. Publix in the US committed to delisting hoki.

In the **Netherlands** hardly any hoki was found in Dutch supermarkets at the start of the campaign in 2007 and therefore hoki was not included on the national Greenpeace red list. Despite of concerns raised, hoki supplies have increased in all Dutch supermarkets.

## **Avoiding destructive fisheries – beam trawling**

In the **UK**, a number of companies reduced the amount of **beam-trawled seafood** they sell. Marks & Spencer reduced the percentage of beam-trawled flatfish it purchases from 55% in 2004 to 47% in 2005, and then to 35% in August 2006 – a reduction of over one-third. The beam trawlers still in use are smaller and use less fuel. Marks & Spencer phased out all beam-trawled species except Dover sole. In December 2006, the UK supermarket Iceland cut the amount of beam-trawled seafood it sells by 50%. Morrison's removed all beam-trawled products from its fresh fish ranges and has only one remaining product containing beam-trawled plaice. Although it does not have a specific ban on beam-trawl products, the Co-op's latest range of seafood products sourced under its new policy contains no beam-trawled products.

**Austrian** Hofer only sources plaice from the only FAO sub-fishing area in which ICES has ascertained that the population is fully reproducing. The discount chain Lidl removed plaice from its product range in Austria.

All supermarkets in the **Netherlands** have committed to not selling plaice caught during the spawning period (December-March). All Dutch supermarkets stopped sourcing beam-trawled juvenile sole. Albert Heijn (Ahold) sources MSC certified Dover sole and additionally gillnet caught sole from the North Sea. Dekamarkt sources farmed sole. Most supermarkets stopped sourcing beam-trawled plaice from the North Sea and replaced it with Pacific plaice. Several supermarkets are considering North Sea otter trawled plaice once it is MSC certified.

In **Germany** Aldi North and South as well as Norma and Edeka delisted plaice.

**Norwegian** Smartclub have a policy of avoiding beam-trawled seafood and is actively promoting alternatives to bottom-trawled seafood (northern shrimps and Norwegian lobsters caught with pots).

Beam and bottom-trawled plaice and nephrops have been delisted by eight out of nine **Swedish** retailers.

## **Roadmap to sustainability for Dutch supermarkets**

The Dutch Supermarket Branche Organisation (CBL) published a roadmap for sustainable fish procurement for Dutch supermarkets in December 2007. The roadmap shows seven steps towards a more sustainable seafood assortment for almost all supermarkets:

1. All freshly caught fish must **comply with MSC standards** as of 2011.
2. Within six months the CBL, together with the government, suppliers and civil society organisations, will **publish a green list of fish species** that can be caught and sold in a responsible manner.
3. **Stop destructive fishing practices.** Some catch methods lead to damage of the seafloor and ecosystems. Other side effects of destructive fishing practices are high fossil fuel use and bycatch. These all have to be reduced.
4. **Reduce bycatch.** Bycatch must be reduced, by adjusting fishing practices, to the unavoidable absolute minimum.
5. The sustainability of fish farming will be improved with **GlobalGAP**. The suppliers of farmed fish will have to adhere to GlobalGAP norms as of 2009.
6. Attention to the **well being of fish** during farming and catching.



7. **Ban illegally-caught fish.** Supermarkets do not want to sell illegally-caught fish. The CBL wants to improve the traceability of fish to further help the government ban illegally caught fish.

**For more information, visit the Greenpeace International seafood website:**  
<http://seafood.greenpeace.org>

**National Greenpeace offices seafood websites:**

**Austria** – <http://marktcheck.greenpeace.at/fisch.html>

**Canada** - <http://www.greenpeace.org/canada/en/campaigns/oceans/what-we-do/sustainable-seafood-markets>

**Danmark** – <http://www.greenpeace.org/denmark/sea-the-future/>

**Germany**

-[http://www.greenpeace.de/themen/meere/nachrichten/artikel/nachhaltig\\_gefangen\\_erstes\\_supermarktranking\\_fisch/](http://www.greenpeace.de/themen/meere/nachrichten/artikel/nachhaltig_gefangen_erstes_supermarktranking_fisch/)

**The Netherlands** – <http://www.maakschoenschap.nl/>

**Norway** - <http://www.greenpeace.org/norway/sea-the-future/>

**New Zealand** - <http://www.greenpeace.org/new-zealand/sos/red-list>

**Poland** - <http://www.greenpeace.org/poland/zagrozone-gatunki-morskie/>

**Portugal** - <http://www.greenpeace.org/portugal/>

**Spain** - <http://www.greenpeace.org/espana/mercados-pesqueros/>

**United Kingdom** - <http://www.greenpeace.org.uk/seafood-seelife/seafood-seelife>

**USA** - <http://www.greenpeace.org/usa/campaigns/oceans/seafood>