

# Sustainable Fish City: top ten swaps

People are eating more fish than they used to, and a lot of it is being caught by destructive methods. The world is now seriously at risk of losing some species from our seas for ever. Help protect precious fish, marine environments and good fishing livelihoods by making some simple seafood swaps. You'll be giving some of our most 'at risk' species a chance to recover.

"Sustainable Fish City: top ten swaps" has been created with advice from expert organisations that contribute to the Sustainable Fish City working party. We have also included tips on where to buy more sustainable alternatives, from top supermarkets that score consistently highly in the Marine Conservation Society sustainable fish supermarket survey ([www.mcsuk.org](http://www.mcsuk.org)). *N.B. Waitrose also scores well in these surveys, but was unable to provide information for this fact sheet.*

Published by the campaign to help make London the world's first Sustainable Fish City. No matter where you work, eat, shop or learn, you can help ensure a sustainable fish future.

See the Sustainable Fish City website at: [www.sustainablefishcity.net](http://www.sustainablefishcity.net)



**Top Tip:** Look out for the Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) eco-label, showing that the seafood is from a certified sustainable source.

See: [www.msc.org](http://www.msc.org)

**Top Tip:** For farmed fish, Freedom Food and Organic Certified are a good option.



**Why swap?** There are lots of different species of tuna, a few of which are critically endangered and some of which are caught in ways that damage other marine life.

**Top swaps:** Try **Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) certified albacore tuna** – hand-caught in the Pacific Ocean. Albacore has very light, firm and delicately flavoured meat, and is available canned and in jars. Most canned tuna is **skipjack**, the most resilient species of tuna, with all stocks currently healthy – choose **pole and line, handline or troll caught**.

	Co-op	Marks & Spencer	Sainsbury's
Where you can buy top ten swaps:	MSC certified albacore tuna is available in tins.	Pole and line caught tuna is used in tins, sandwiches, salads and ready meals.	MSC certified albacore tuna available in most stores in tins and jars. All own-brand tinned tuna is pole and line caught.



**Why swap?** Salmon is sometimes farmed very intensively, leading to serious environmental problems.

**Top swaps:** Why not try **MSC certified Alaskan wild salmon**. It's much leaner than farmed salmon, so be careful not to overcook it. Alternatively, look out for certified **organic farmed salmon** or **Freedom Food** farmed salmon. Or, for grilling or pan-frying, try **mackerel** (which is as healthy as well as a tasty choice).

	Co-op	Sainsbury's
Where you can buy top ten swaps:	Freedom Food farmed salmon is available.	All Sainsbury's wild salmon is MSC certified, available pre-pack and in tins. All own brand Responsibly Sourced Scottish Farmed Salmon is Freedom Food. Organic farmed salmon and MSC mackerel are widely available pre-pack (raw and hot smoked) and on counters.



**Why swap?** Our love of this chip-shop favourite has led some haddock stocks to be over-fished. And haddock often swim with cod (see below), meaning that haddock fisheries may catch both fish.

**Top swaps:** Look out for **MSC certified haddock** from Scotland or Norway, or try a different firm, white fish such as **coley** (often sold as **saithe**), which has an undeserved reputation as something you feed to the cat but, when spanking fresh, is delicious.

	Co-op	Marks & Spencer	Sainsbury's
Where you can buy top ten swaps:	MSC Scottish or Norwegian haddock is available.	MSC Scottish haddock available in fresh fish and breaded ranges.	Line caught MSC certified haddock from Norway. Coley (fillets and marinated) on counters and fillets in frozen section.



**Why swap?** Many stocks of Atlantic cod are overfished.

**Top swaps:** Give cod a break and try a different white, flaky fish such as the delicate **pollack** (line-caught from Cornwall is a good choice), or the similarly named **MSC certified Alaskan pollock**. **Coley** (see above) is also a great alternative. If only cod will do, go for **MSC certified cod** from the Arctic, Atlantic & Pacific oceans.

	Co-op	Sainsbury's
Where you can buy top ten swaps:	MSC Norwegian cod is available.	MSC certified Alaskan pollock and MSC certified cod is widely available.



**Why swap?** King or tiger prawns are usually farmed in the tropics, often very intensively and in ways which can seriously damage local communities and the environment.

**Top swaps:** Choose **organic tiger prawns**, or for a more local option, go for **Scottish langoustines** (also known as **Dublin Bay prawns** or **scampi**). Or look out for the smaller **MSC-certified cold-water prawns** from Canada. Like prawns, **crab** is as good with strong flavours like chilli as it is plain with lemon and mayonnaise.

	Marks & Spencer	Sainsbury's
Where you can buy top ten swaps:	MSC cold water prawns and brown crab available.	Organic prawns and MSC certified Canadian cold water prawns in pre-pack section. Scottish langoustines are on counters and dressed crab is in pre-pack in some stores.



**Why swap?** Left to their own devices, plaice can live for 50 years or more. They grow and reproduce very slowly, making them vulnerable to overfishing. Some beam trawl fisheries catch vast numbers of young plaice as 'bycatch', and throw them back into the sea, dead.

**Top swaps:** More sustainable flatfish choices include **flounder**, **dab** or **lemon sole** (ask for fish caught by otter trawl or seine net). Or go for **MSC certified plaice**, or (for posh) **MSC certified Dover sole**.

	Co-op	Marks & Spencer	Sainsbury's
Where you can buy top ten swaps:	All plaice and sole is MSC certified.	Sells lightly dusted dabs and lemon sole using otter trawl and twin rig methods.	Sainsbury's sells lemon sole in pre-pack and on counters in most stores. Dab is on most fish counters, with plans to increase availability throughout 2011.



**Why swap?** Big, slow-growing 'game' fish like swordfish are particularly vulnerable to over-fishing.

**Top swaps:** Nothing similar fits the sustainability bill, but **jig-caught squid** stands up to strong flavours and is delicious grilled or on the barbeque – and ditto for **mackerel**.

	Sainsbury's
Where you can buy top ten swaps:	MSC certified mackerel is widely available in pre-pack (raw and hot smoked) and on counters.



**Why swap?** Sea bass is commonly farmed in the Mediterranean, and is a carnivorous fish, raising the problem of fish-feed. Wild sea bass are often caught in pelagic trawls that can kill other sea life such as dolphins.

**Top swaps:** Look for **line-caught sea bass** or **organically farmed sea bass**, or try **line-caught black bream**, **porgy** or **seabream**.

	Marks & Spencer	Sainsbury's
Where you can buy top ten swaps:	Line caught sea bass available when in season.	Line caught sea bass and black bream on counters when available.



**Why swap?** Sadly, the once "common" skate is now critically endangered, and several other species of skates and rays are overfished.

**Top swaps:** Nothing really compares to the soft, fibrous texture of skates and rays, but the smaller **starry, spotted and cuckoo rays** are generally considered a more sustainable choice. Bizarrely, circles of skate wing are sometimes sold as fake scallops, so a luxurious alternative could be **diver-caught scallops**.

	Sainsbury's
Where you can buy top ten swaps:	Dived scallops are available on fish counters in a limited number of stores.



**Why swap?** Halibut is another slow-growing, long-lived species that has been overfished to the point of being endangered.

**Top swaps:** As an alternative, look for **MSC certified Pacific halibut** – or for something different but similarly meaty and very tasty, try **red, grey or tub gurnard**.

	Sainsbury's
Where you can buy top ten swaps:	Sainsbury's sell farmed halibut as an alternative to wild.