

Intrafish: London Olympics commits to sustainable seafood

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By Tom Seaman, December 14, 2009

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All of the seafood to be served during the London 2012 Olympic Games must be "demonstrably sustainable," say the event's organizers.

The 82 metric tons of seafood must be "sustainable" according to the Food Vision of the organizers, published Dec. 7.

All wild-caught fish served must meet the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) code of conduct for responsible fisheries, the scheme on which the Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) certification is based.

The organizers, who will be feeding 15,000 athletes over the course of the Games, said no fish will be served that is identified by the Marine Conservation Society (MCS) as "fish to avoid."

There are two different levels to the standard, Emily Howgate of the Seafood Choices Alliance told IntraFish.

"It is obligatory for seafood to be demonstrably sustainable. There is also an aspirational standard, which has more on using diverse species and on farmed fish as well as looking into ethical trading and sourcing," said Howgate.

The news was also welcomed by the MCS.

"This shows true commitment to sustainability by the London Olympic Games organizers," said Sam Wilding of the MCS.

MCS, the MSC, SeaWeb's Seafood Choices and Sustain work together on Good Catch, a collaborative project that helps the foodservice sector navigate seafood sustainability.

Good Catch will be at catering trade event Hotelympia from Feb. 28 to March 4 next year, with the aim of starting a process of giving caterers easy access to the information they need to ensure their seafood meets the sustainability requirements of the Olympics.

"The Olympics tendering process is going to be top of mind for many caterers over the coming year," said Howgate, who is the coordinator of the Good Catch initiative.

"Through Good Catch activities, and presence at events such as Hotelympia, caterers can be equipped with the know-how to buy, serve and promote sustainable seafood options -- something that is clearly key for the 2012 Olympic Games."