



Sustainable Fish City: top swaps

People are eating more fish than they used to, and a lot of it is being caught by destructive methods, or farmed in environmentally damaging ways.

Help protect precious fish, marine environments and good fishing livelihoods by making some simple seafood swaps. By mixing up your menu you'll be giving some of our most 'at risk' species a chance to recover and inspiring customers to try something new.

'Sustainable Fish City: top swaps' has been created with advice from expert organisations that contribute to the Sustainable Fish City working party. 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.

The Sustainable Fish City website: www.sustainablefishcity.net



Top Tip: Look out for the Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) ecolabel, showing the seafood is from a certified sustainable source: www.msc.org



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

These 'top swaps' are a starting point – a guide to help you think about the variety of sustainable seafood options available. We suggest you base your buying policy on these principles:

Avoiding the worst: Telling our supplier(s) or caterer to remove endangered species from menus and catering, those rated 'fish to avoid' by the Marine Conservation Society: www.fishonline.org/advice/avoid/

Promoting the best: Serving sustainably managed fish – MSC-certified fish, and those rated as 'fish to eat' by the Marine Conservation Society: www.fishonline.org/advice/eat/

Improving the rest: Telling our supplier(s) or caterer we want to serve only sustainable fish – and that there are organisations that can help, such as Good Catch: www.goodcatch.org.uk and the MSC: www.msc.org



tuna

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 or MSC certified purse seine**. Due to the high level of bycatch, avoid tuna caught for tins with the combination of Purse Seine nets and Fish Aggregation Devices.



salmon

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**. **Freedom Food** farmed salmon will ensure good standards of animal welfare.



Why swap?

Our love of this chip-shop favourite has led some haddock stocks to be overfished. 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, Norway or Iceland. If it is not MSC Certified, a number of Haddock fisheries are rated as fish to eat by the Marine Conservation Society. Do ask your supplier to confirm the rating or try a different company. White fish such as **bib** (also known as **pouting**), or **coley** (often sold as **saithe**), which have an undeserved reputation as something you feed to the cat but, when spanking fresh, is delicious.



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**. **Bib/pouting** or **coley** (see above) are also great alternatives. If only cod will do, make sure it is **MSC certified cod** from the Arctic, Atlantic & Pacific oceans. An increasing number of cod fisheries are now gaining MSC certification.



Why swap?

Wild and farmed warm-water prawns (such as king and tiger prawns) are usually sourced from the tropics and produced very intensively and in ways which can seriously damage local communities and the environment.

Top swaps: Choose **organic certified king/tiger prawns** or those from **zero input systems**. 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.



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**.



Why swap?

Eels can take as long as 30 years to reach sexual maturity and only spawn once, after which they die. Therefore fished eel have not had the chance to reproduce. Wild caught marine eels are very susceptible to untargeted fishing within the North Atlantic mixed fishery, which leads to high levels of 'bycatch' and discards. Furthermore, the only stock of freshwater European eel is critically endangered and in serious danger of collapse. Finally, farmed eel is also unsustainable as it relies on the capturing of wild juveniles, further depleting the wild populations.



swordfish

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. Another option is pole and line, jig or troll caught **Mahi Mahi**. If only swordfish will do, choose MSC certified swordfish.



sea bass

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, MSC certified sea bass or organically farmed sea bass**, or try **line-caught black bream, porgy or seabream**.



skate

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 rays - starry, spotted and cuckoo** - are generally considered a more sustainable choice so be sure your supplier can verify the exact species they sell. A luxurious alternative could be **diver-caught scallops, MSC certified king scallops** from the USA or **MSC Queen scallops** from the Isle of Man.



halibut

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, farmed Halibut** – or for something different but similarly meaty and very tasty, try **red, grey or tub gurnard**.

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