



Updated Seafood Watch Recommendations Effective July 2009

New Recommendations

- **New recommendation for Cobia**
Cobia (U.S. Farmed) Best Choice
Cobia (Imported Farmed) Avoid

Cobia is becoming increasingly popular in the aquaculture industry due to its fast growth rate and excellent flavor and texture. Cobia found in the U.S. market is predominantly farmed in the U.S., Asia (Taiwan, China and Vietnam) and Central America (Belize). U.S. cobia is farmed inland with closed recirculating systems where diseases, escapes, effluent and potential pollutants can be managed and treated. Cobia farmed in the U.S. is fed less fish meal and fish oil than those farmed internationally. Also, cobia from other countries is farmed in floating or submerged net pens, which risks disease transfer, escapes and pollution impacts on surrounding ecosystems and species.

- **New recommendation for Tongol Tuna**
Tongol Tuna (Handline or Troll/pole-caught) Good Alternative
Tongol Tuna (Malaysia) Good Alternative
Tongol tuna (All Other) Avoid

Most tongol tuna comes from Indonesia, Iran, Malaysia or Thailand. The majority is caught using drift gillnets and purse seines, which are cause for concern due to high bycatch. Drift gillnets can catch marine mammals, sharks and undesired fish species. Purse seines can catch undesired or juvenile fish species. In addition, fisheries management in Indonesia, Iran, and Thailand is ineffective due to poor data collection and regulatory enforcement. Malaysia's management is more effective as the country is monitoring catch, landings and fishing effort, and enforcing vessel monitoring systems, resulting in a "Good Alternative" ranking.

A small portion of the tongol fishery (less than 20 percent) is conducted with line and troll/pole gear, which are more selective and don't have the bycatch of purse seines and longlines. Therefore all tongol tuna caught with these fishing methods is considered a "Good Alternative," regardless of country of origin.

Recommendation Changes

- **Shrimp (U.S., Canada) Good Alternative**
All shrimp from Canada and the U.S., whether farmed or wild-caught, is at least a "Good Alternative."
- **Caviar and Sturgeon (U.S. Farmed) Good Alternative**
Farmed sturgeon consumes large amounts of fish meal and fish oil, representing a net loss of ocean-based protein. It takes an average of 2.4 pounds of wild-caught fish to grow each pound of U.S. farmed sturgeon. As a result, U.S. farmed sturgeon and caviar are "Good Alternatives".

Additions to SeafoodWatch.org and Pocket Guides

Previously found only in our scientific reports, the following recommendations have been highlighted on the website, iPhone app and pocket guides in response to market research.

- **Atlantic Cod (N.E. Arctic and Iceland, Except Trawled) Good Alternative**
Atlantic Cod (Trawled, All Regions) Avoid
Atlantic cod is considered overfished throughout most of its range. However, in the Northeast Arctic and Iceland, where bottom longlines and gillnets are used, environmental impacts are less severe. In addition, management is better in this region.
- **California Halibut Good Alternative**
California halibut when caught with hook-and-line or bottom trawl is a “Good Alternative” because it’s caught on a sandy seafloor where environmental impacts are lessened. “Avoid” gillnet-caught California halibut due to bycatch concerns.
- **Canned Tuna (All Except Albacore and Skipjack) Avoid**
Canned tuna not labeled as albacore (white tuna) or skipjack may include one or more species of other tunas: bigeye, tongol or yellowfin tuna. The majority of canned tuna from these other fisheries face conservation concerns including depleted populations, high bycatch and poor management. Visit SeafoodWatch.org for specific information on each species.
- **Pacific Cod (Imported) Avoid**
Pacific cod imported from Japan and Russia comes from fisheries where the population status is not well monitored and overall fisheries management is ineffective.
- **Opah/Moonfish (U.S.) Good Alternative**
Opah/Moonfish (Imported) Avoid
Opah is caught in longline fisheries where there are considerable concerns about bycatch of sharks, turtles, sea birds and marine mammals. While U.S. longliners have made gear adjustments to reduce this bycatch, most other countries have not. Therefore, imported opah is on the “Avoid” list.
- **Rock Shrimp (U.S. Gulf of Mexico and South Atlantic) Good Alternative**
Like other U.S. wild-caught shrimp, rock shrimp from the Gulf of Mexico and South Atlantic is a “Good Alternative.”
- **Tilapia (Farmed in Central and South America) Good Alternative**
Tilapia (Farmed in Asia) Avoid
Concerns about ineffective farm management and the impact of escaped tilapia on surrounding ecosystems make farmed tilapia from Asia a product to “Avoid”. Tilapia farms in Central and South America vary widely and are of moderate concern, earning a “Good Alternative” ranking. The “Best Choice” remains U.S.-farmed tilapia due to improved farm management and effective regulations.

Other Changes to the Pocket Guides

- The Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) blue eco-logo was added to pocket guides to help consumers identify wild-caught seafood from sustainably managed fisheries.
- The language on the front panels of the pocket guides was changed to better explain why sustainable seafood choices matter, and how consumers can make a difference.
- Some sushi names were changed to reflect what appears on U.S. menus.