

# Taking Stock

Ranking supermarkets  
on seafood sustainability

2010 edition



**GREENPEACE**

[greenpeace.ca](http://greenpeace.ca)



## GREENPEACE

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p. 20 Gosselin Payment

We would like to thank all the volunteers who took the time to do supermarket surveys.

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Pressure on popular but dwindling fish supplies is growing and factory ships are pushing further and deeper into vulnerable marine ecosystems, working around the clock to fill restaurant menus and shopping carts. As much of the industry fishes for today, leaving little for tomorrow, and global governments continue to fail in ocean protection, the breeze blowing off the water is a little less fishy these days – and not just because there are fewer fish in our oceans. Change is happening in Canada's seafood sector, including the eight largest supermarket chains.

It has been a year since Greenpeace released its first ranking report, *Out of Stock, Out of Excuses*, scoring the food retail giants on their seafood procurement practices. The results of this year's ranking show that fewer retailers are making excuses to avoid taking action on Greenpeace's "Redlist" species and other unsustainable and inequitable seafood on sale. Some grocers have taken notice of the state of the oceans and have chosen to play a more positive and more vocal role in its preservation.

Western grocer Overweitea Food Group leads the way with the first and only passing grade, while last year's leader and Canada's largest retailer, Loblaw, follows close behind in second place. Safeway, following in its US counterpart's footsteps, wins most improved for its jump from second-last place in last year's ranking to third place this year. These three leading retailers scored points because they have developed and implemented a seafood policy, begun to rid their shelves of harmfully fished and farmed Redlist seafood, and committed to being transparent about their sustainability initiatives with employees and customers.

Walmart and Metro also released seafood policies and finished in fourth and fifth place respectively for this reason. While the policies that have been developed are far from perfect, they represent a big step in the right direction. Nevertheless, the gap between the leaders and the laggards in this ranking is chiefly due to changes on the shelves that reflect the leaders' commitment to ensuring more sustainable and transparent seafood supply.

Sobeys and Federated Cooperatives have committed themselves to developing policies in the coming year, and credit for that work will come once the policies are made public. The slip by Sobeys, Canada's second-largest retail chain, and the only company in our ranking to be headquartered on Maritime soil, from second place in last year's ranking to sixth place this year reflects the chain's loss of momentum over the past year in policy development and in-store change. Just before the release of this ranking, Sobeys removed some Redlist species from sale and revealed plans to release a policy this summer. Meanwhile, Metro has moved up three places in the ranking and has been diligently working to prepare for movement in 2010. And all the while Costco, falling to last place in the ranking, chooses to remain mute on the issue, while continuing to sell out the oceans and customers interested in sustainable seafood.

While a sea change is beginning behind seafood counters, a walk through most supermarkets still reveals an array of overfished, destructively fished or farmed, and in many cases illegally sourced seafood. And this includes stores of even our top ranked chains. This is why Greenpeace is urging retailers to keep up the momentum and act faster to remove Redlist seafood from sale, adopt policies to avoid having such products line their shelves in the future, communicate sustainability requirements to their suppliers, and help customers adjust their tastes – choosing sustainable seafood rather than more popular but unsustainable options.

# CONTENTS

- 5 Introduction
- 6 Ranking overview
- 8 The Redlist
- 10 Overwaitea**
- 12 Loblaw**
- 14 Safeway**
- 16 Walmart**
- 18 Metro**
- 20 Sobeys**
- 22 Federated Co-operatives**
- 24 Costco**
- 26 Time and tuna are running out
- 28 What's in a label?
- 30 Glossary



# INTRODUCTION

There is a sea change beginning behind the fish counters in Canadian supermarkets. Information is being gathered, policies are being developed and rumblings of tougher standards are rippling up the supply chain to fisheries and fish farms. But only the beginnings of the change to come can be seen on supermarket shelves, which are still laden with overfished and destructively fished and farmed seafood.

In this International Year of Biodiversity, marine diversity is slipping away at an alarming rate, while less than 1 per cent of our oceans is protected in marine reserves. In 2009, the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization revealed that 80 per cent of global fish stocks are fully fished, overfished or depleted, up about 5 per cent from two years ago. Many of these species are extremely popular with consumers, creating a demand that the oceans cannot meet. Clutched in chopsticks around the globe, the prized and majestic Atlantic bluefin tuna is the most high-profile seafood being fished toward commercial extinction. Recent stock assessments estimate that the eastern and western stocks have declined to less than 15 percent of their historical abundance, and yet action to save them has been overruled by industry and market pressure. This past year also saw the collapse of the Fraser river sockeye salmon, one of British Columbia's keystone species, and no notable signs of recovery for the iconic Atlantic cod which collapsed off Canada's east coast almost two decades ago.

Destructive fishing methods such as longlines are pushing endangered sea turtle and shark populations to dangerously low levels, and bottom trawls still plough our ocean floors destroying fragile corals and sponges. And while wild species are being eaten to the brink of extinction, fish farms to supplement them are crowding our coasts, transferring parasites to wild stocks and robbing communities of smaller fish that is ground into fishmeal.

Public awareness of the crisis in our oceans and the need for better knowledge of where our seafood comes from has been mounting. Environmental organizations including SeaChoice, WWF and Greenpeace have been at the forefront of the work of informing consumers and persuading retailers, restaurants and the seafood industry to think about the long term sustainability of the species they sell.

Greenpeace has directed its attention at Canada's eight largest retailers, with three core demands being asked of them: develop a strong seafood purchasing policy, stop selling species from our "Redlist" of destructively fished or farmed species, and improve labelling and traceability of seafood products.

In 2008, Greenpeace published a state of the oceans report and released the Redlist. A year later, the first Greenpeace ranking report was released, in which all retailers obtained failing grades. These results suggested that pressure was needed on the sector

as a whole before change was to happen in stores. Colourful activities were staged inside and outside supermarkets drawing attention to the unsustainable seafood on sale, and thousands of letters, postcards and emails from concerned customers were sent to headquarters asking for action to protect the oceans. Some retailers began to listen. Managers, executives and seafood buyers held meetings to discuss the problem and explore solutions, and retailers began gathering information and forming partnerships with environmental organizations, scientists and new suppliers.

Much of the initial work undertaken by supermarkets centres on tracing where and how the seafood being sold is caught or raised, including items on the Redlist. The majority of retailers found that their stores carried seafood from most of the 15 species or groups of species<sup>1</sup> on the Redlist, and the past year has seen five retailers remove several species/groups from sale. Items that have been pulled off shelves include orange roughy, shark, Chilean sea bass, Arctic surf clams, skates, rays, swordfish and bluefin tuna. However, although these items certainly required immediate action, they are not among those that make up the bulk of Redlist species on sale. The ubiquitous canned yellowfin tuna, taken from declining stocks (with little income provided to the Pacific Island fishing nations from which it is sourced), is sold across the board. So are the destructively dredged Atlantic sea scallop, and farmed salmon and tropical shrimp, the latter two being favourites among seafood shoppers. In this year's ranking the three largest retailers (Loblaw, Sobeys and Metro) were still selling nine or more of the 15 species/groups, leaving much work to be done to green their shelves.

At certain seafood counters, more information is being provided about the species on sale, and some retailers are taking the time to educate their customers about why some products will no longer be sold. Nevertheless, recent studies have found mislabelling rampant within the retail sector, and the bulk of seafood products remain inadequately labelled, leaving better choices still unclear for the more eco-conscious seafood consumer.

This year's ranking reflects a sector with some leaders working hard to move toward sustainable seafood sales, and some laggards that have yet to turn internal rumblings into action. But more must be done to create change on and beneath the water. In order to tip the seafood industry into sustainability, all players must do their part to ensure its long-term health. In the short term, seafood buyers must recognize that as our ocean life continues to disappear, we must eat, buy and sell less fish.

<sup>1</sup> The shorthand "species/groups" will be used in the rest of this report to refer to "species and groups of species."

# RANKING OVERVIEW

## How Greenpeace grades

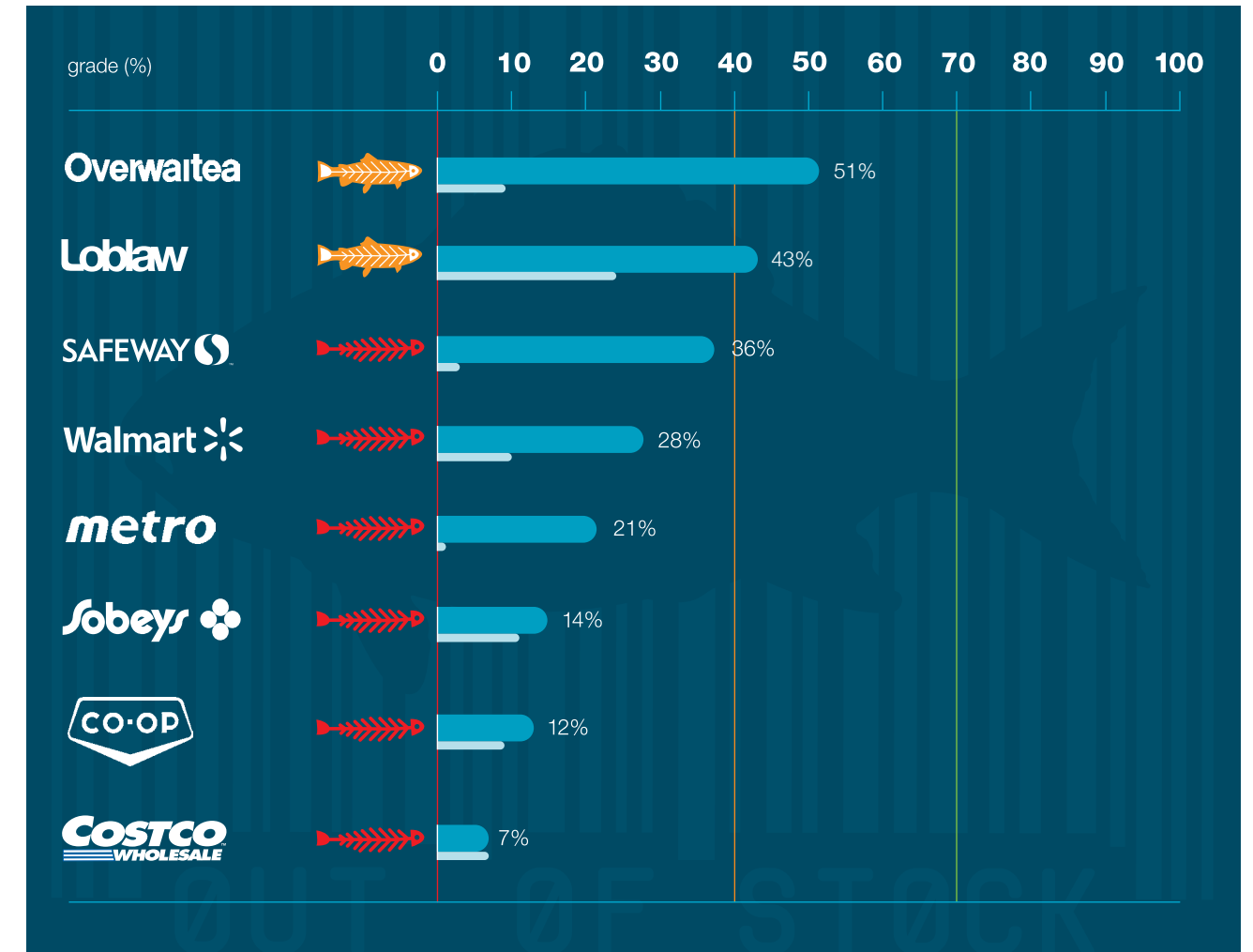
Each year, Greenpeace contacts Canada's eight largest supermarket chains and requests that they fill out a questionnaire with detailed information about their seafood policies and practices. Supermarket profiles are then written and sent back to allow each retailer to point out errors or provide additional information. Greenpeace grades supermarkets on their sustainable seafood policies and practices, including the quality of their policies, the information provided to customers and the number of Redlist species/groups sold. Each criterion (see table below) receives equal weighting. The "Redlist" criterion is the number of Redlist species/groups sold out of 15, represented as a percentage of Redlist species/groups *not* on sale. To get full marks, supermarkets need to have strong policies which are fully implemented and stop selling all Redlist seafood.

**Ranking criteria**

- Sustainable seafood policy**  
Existence and implementation of a policy
- Strong policy criteria**  
Criteria to exclude unsustainable fisheries or aquaculture
- Sustainability initiatives**  
Working with suppliers to find alternatives, supporting research
- Traceability**  
Ensuring that seafood can be traced back to ship
- Labelling**  
Providing scientific name, origin, catch or farming method
- Redlist species/groups sold**  
Stopping sale of 15 Redlist species/groups
- Promotion and auditing**  
Raising customer awareness, working with stakeholders on improvement of fisheries, undertaking audits on implementation of policies



# 2010 RETAILER RANKINGS



● 2010 ● 2009

Grade	Percentage Range	Icon
Poor	0% to 40%	Red fish icon
Fair	40% to 70%	Orange fish icon
Good	70% to 100%	Green fish icon

# THE REDLIST

How did these fish end up on the Redlist? The fish on our Redlist are there for many reasons. Generally, each species was included because the fishery or production method has negative impacts on the target species or other marine species, leads to ecosystem alterations, has social implications, or is poorly managed or illegally fished. **For more information on the evaluation criteria for the Redlist, see our report, Out of Stock: Supermarkets and the future of seafood.**

Some stocks of Redlist species may be fished or farmed more sustainably than the general practice— for example, swordfish which is harpoon-caught instead of caught using longlines. In such cases, retailers should ensure that these more sustainable choices are fully traceable and labelled with catch method and exact origin. **For more information about Redlist species, go to [green-peace.ca/redlist](http://green-peace.ca/redlist)**



**ARTIC SURF CLAMS**  
*Macromeris polynyma*



**ATLANTIC COD**  
*Gadus morhua*



**ATLANTIC HADDOCK (scrod)**  
*Melanogrammus aeglefinus*



**ATLANTIC HALIBUT**  
*Hippoglossus hippoglossus*



**ATLANTIC SALMON (farmed)**  
*Salmo salar*



**ATLANTIC SEA SCALLOPS**  
*Placopecten magellanicus*



**CHILEAN SEA BASS**  
*Dissostichus eleginoides*



**GREENLAND HALIBUT**  
*Reinhardtius hippoglossoides*



**NEW ZEALAND HOKI**  
*Macruronus novaezelandiae*



**ORANGE ROUGHY**  
*Hoplostethus atlanticus*



**SHARKS (many species)**  
Spurdog (piked dogfish, spiny dogfish) *Squalus acanthias*, porbeagle shark *Lamna nasus*, shortfin mako shark *Isurus oxyrinchus*, blue shark *Prionace glauca*...



**SKATES AND RAYS (many species)**  
Thorny skate *Amblyraja radiata*, big skate *Raja binoculata*, longnose skate *Raja rhina*...



**SWORDFISH**  
*Xiphias gladius*



**TROPICAL SHRIMP AND PRAWNS**  
*Penaeus spp*



**TUNA**  
Atlantic bluefin *Thunnus thynnus*, yellowfin *Thunnus albacares*, bigeye *Thunnus obesus*

# SUPERMARKET SALES OF REDLIST SPECIES/GROUPS

The spread of Redlist species on sale in Canadian retailers has begun to shrink since the release of our 2008 report Out of Stock, Out of Excuses. At that time, most chains were selling over half of the 15 species/groups on the list. The table presented below illustrates the progress made so far by retailers to remove these unsustainable products from sale. Progress has been made, notably with overfished species such as orange roughy, sharks and skates/rays. Nevertheless, most retailers continue to sell at least half of the Redlist species/groups. All chains continue to sell six species including farmed Atlantic salmon, dredged scallops and Atlantic cod which may be very popular among customers, but are extremely harmful to the overall health of our ocean ecosystems.

- ✓ still sold in supermarket
- ✓ not sold prior to the beginning of the campaign
- ✓ delisted since start of campaign

Species	Overwaitea	Loblaws	SAFeway	Walmart	metro	Jobey's	CO-OP	COSTCO WHOLESALE
Arctic surf clams	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Atlantic cod	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Atlantic Haddock	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Atlantic halibut	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Farmed Atlantic salmon	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Atlantic sea scallops	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Chilean sea bass	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Greenland halibut	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
New Zealand hoki	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Orange roughy	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Sharks	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Skates and rays	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Swordfish	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Tropical shrimps and prawns	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Bigeye tuna	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Bluefin tuna	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Yellowfin tuna	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓



# OVERWAITEA FOOD GROUP STEAMING AHEAD

# 51%

Overwaitea Food Group has taken impressive action since our last ranking, moving from fourth place to first, and is the first supermarket chain to have achieved a passing grade. Soon after the release of our last report, Overwaitea Food Group (OFG) released a sustainable seafood policy and began implementing it in stores across western Canada. The retail chain partnered with SeaChoice and embraced the principles of the Common Vision for Sustainable Seafood. OFG stores removed four species from Greenpeace's Redlist at the same time it released its policy, leaving five species to be addressed throughout the chain. OFG is actively seeking alternatives for Redlist species/groups in its seafood array, and is urged to keep up the momentum and address the remaining Redlist products on sale. OFG has taken the initiative of providing pertinent sustainability information to their customers through a species reference manual provided at seafood counters. The company is also seeking avenues to encourage policy makers to make change on the water.

- offering customers sustainable seafood options and reducing procurement of unsustainable seafood;
- working with suppliers to improve the transparency and traceability of products;
- collecting and sharing information and educating employees, suppliers and customers; and
- encouraging policymakers to improve and develop laws and regulations that support the improvement of fisheries and aquaculture management and enforcement.

OFG's policy also states that all new seafood entering the stores will comply with SeaChoice sustainability criteria with the intention of weeding out unsustainable supply.

### Seafood sustainability initiatives

In 2009, OFG partnered with SeaChoice and endorsed the sustainable seafood initiatives of the Conservation Alliance for Seafood Solutions. Through this partnership, in addition to removing species found on Greenpeace's Redlist, they have removed products graded red ("avoid") by SeaChoice. Seafood products removed include monkfish, osetra caviar, sevruga caviar, blue marlin, barracuda, and mahi mahi.

Overwaitea Food Group (OFG) supermarkets are found throughout Western Canada, operating over 100 supermarkets under a number of banners in Alberta and British Columbia. Based in Vancouver, OFG is a division of The Jim Pattison Group, Canada's third-largest private company, operating in over 383 locations worldwide across various sectors. OFG stores carry several private label brands including Western Classics, Value Priced, and Good & Kind.

### Banners

Overwaitea Foods, Save-On-Foods, PriceSmart, Urban Fare, Cooper's Foods, Bulkley Valley Wholesale.

### Sustainable seafood policy

Following its endorsement last year of the Conservation Alliance for Seafood Solutions Common Vision Statement, OFG has adopted and implemented a sustainable seafood policy. The policy commits OFG to:

- engaging stakeholders to ensure a productive, sustainable future for both wild and farmed seafood products;



Land based, closed containment farmed salmon on promotion at Overwaitea

OFG has also taken steps to educate and train its staff on seafood sustainability issues, certification programs and assessments of various species by creating training programs and reference materials, including a Sustainable Seafood Reference Guide that contains detailed information on fish species sold in stores.

In April 2010 OFG demonstrated its commitment to providing sustainable seafood alternatives through its announcement that it would procure coho salmon from Aquaseed, a company that produces seed stock and operates a closed containment salmon farm.

OFG procures various Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) products, and this includes through its private label brands. However, while noting this initiative, Greenpeace does not endorse the MSC or any other seafood certification at this time<sup>1</sup>.

### Labelling and transparency

OFG's policy commits it to obtaining the following information from its suppliers to help ensure traceability and transparency for its customers:

- species name, country of origin, catch region, fishery name and gear type for wild products.
- species name, country of origin and specific production method details for aquaculture products.

OFG makes the above information available to its customers in the Sustainable Seafood Reference Guide, and stores identify products rated as green or yellow by SeaChoice with a coloured logo that corresponds to the information in the Guide. The company provides the common name for items on the seafood counter and indicates whether a product is wild or farmed, but the label or fish counter sign for most seafood still does not provide information about where and how the product was caught or farmed.

### Redlist seafood sales

Greenpeace surveys found that Overwaitea Food Group sells six out of 15 Redlist species/groups: Farmed Atlantic salmon, Atlantic cod, Atlantic sea scallops, haddock, tropical shrimp and prawns, yellowfin (canned only – fresh and frozen yellowfin has been removed from sale) and bigeye tuna.

<sup>1</sup> For Greenpeace assessments of certain existing seafood certifications, see <http://www.greenpeace.org/international/seafood/changing-your-business/what-about-certification>

## “first supermarket chain to have achieved a passing grade”

### GRADES



### Overwaitea

Existing policy	50 %
Policy criteria	25 %
Sustainability initiatives	83 %
Traceability	13 %
Labelling	31 %
Redlist	60 %
Promotion	92 %

9% → 51%  
2009 2010

4th → 1st  
2009 2010

Sells 6 species from the Redlist



# LOBLAW TAKEN THE PLUNGE

# 43%

Since Loblaw released its sustainable seafood policy in spring 2009, it has been at work translating words into action. In addition to determining which of the thousands of products it sells contain seafood, the company has been deciding which products to promote and, more importantly for the oceans, which to pull from the shelves. In early 2010, Loblaw announced that it had removed four Redlist species/groups from sale: sharks, skates, orange roughy and Chilean sea bass. In a striking move, the trays that held products removed from sale are left empty, with signs reading "Not available – at risk." We encourage Canada's largest supermarket to keep up this momentum, stop selling more Redlist items and take public positions to help ensure that more fisheries and aquaculture management become sustainable.

The majority shareholder of Loblaw Companies Limited is Canadian billionaire Galen Weston, who also controls George Weston bakeries and owns Holt Renfrew and the British department store Selfridges. The company runs 613 corporate stores and 416 franchises and is present in every province and territory in Canada. Recently Loblaw has moved to increase the number of corporate stores allowed to franchise, and has plans to convert 20 more stores in the Québec banner Provigo to franchises in 2010. Loblaw acquired Asian food chain T&T in 2009, bringing its 18 stores into the Loblaw family and adding a challenge to the implementation of its sustainable seafood policy, given the large variety of imported seafood sold at T&T.

Loblaw markets thousands of private label products under brand names including President's Choice and No Name. Promotion of "environmental" products, including seafood certified by the Marine Stewardship Council, has been ramped up in recent years, with TV commercials featuring chairman Galen Weston.

### Banners

Atlantic SaveEasy, Atlantic Cash & Carry, Atlantic Superstore, Dominion (in Newfoundland and Labrador), Extra Foods, Fortinos, Freshmart, Intermarché, Loblaws, Maxi & Cie, Lucky Dollar Foods, No Frills, Provigo, The Real Canadian Superstore, The Real Canadian Wholesale Club, SaveEasy, ShopEasy, SuperValu, Valu-mart, Your Independent Grocer, Zehrs, Cash & Carry, T & T.

### Sustainable seafood policy

Loblaw launched a sustainable seafood policy in May 2009, in which the company committed to purchasing all seafood from sustainable sources by 2013. The policy covers all canned, frozen, and fresh seafood, whether farmed or wild, and includes both private label products and those bought from other companies. The policy states that all wild-caught fish sold in Loblaw's stores should be certified to Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) or other independent equivalent standards.

For farmed seafood, the company commits to supporting the development of credible aquaculture certification. It specifically mentions the company's intention to avoid selling illegally fished or overfished seafood as defined by the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO).

Despite its strong points, including a deadline for full implementation and the fact that it applies to all products sold, across all banners, the policy has some major flaws. It identifies few criteria that the company will use to evaluate seafood, such as impacts of fishing or farming on other species or habitat, or type of fishing gear used. There is a heavy dependence on



Tray that formerly held skate lies empty since Loblaw stopped selling it

MSC certification, a certification Greenpeace does not endorse and, in the case of aquaculture, on certifications that do not yet exist. However, other resources are used to evaluate seafood sold and MSC products are not automatically stocked.

The 2010 implementation plan for Loblaw's policy is very general, mentioning only broad intentions such as continuing to work with different stakeholders to manage "at risk" species and working with salmon farmers to introduce more responsible aquaculture products in the marketplace. There is no indication that this will involve reducing or eliminating farmed salmon sales or moving toward closed containment operations powered by green energy.

### Sustainability initiatives

Loblaw works with World Wildlife Fund-Canada, scientific and industry experts and other international retailers, and has regular dialogues with the MSC, Greenpeace and SeaChoice as well as with government representatives.

Loblaw participates in the Sustainable Seafood Working Group of the Food Marketing Institute. It hosted a sustainable seafood information session for key vendors in 2009 and encourages its vendors to participate in the Aquaculture Dialogues. Loblaw's supplier agreements will be modified to include a Corporate Social Responsibility clause which, among other things, will set out the company's sustainable seafood policy.

The company has implemented several avenues for customers to be educated and join discussions about the issues and challenges facing the oceans, including media engagement workshops

known as "fish schools," a Facebook page discussion board about sustainable seafood, and an in-store consumer awareness campaign. Unfortunately, in the material for this campaign, Loblaw proposed several alternatives to the seafood removed from sale which are not themselves sustainable.

Loblaw strives to educate and train all seafood staff on seafood sustainability issues through a presentation at the yearly store manager conference and through a chapter about sustainable seafood in its National Standards Manual.

### Labelling and transparency

In its sustainable seafood policy, Loblaw commits to "labelling and marketing with information including credible certification marks to enable customers to make informed buying decisions."

Loblaw is developing a sustainable seafood website to provide customers with additional information regarding seafood sold, including scientific name, common name and other relevant information such as fishing or farming methods used.

### Redlist seafood sales

Nine of the 15 Redlist species/groups are currently sold by Loblaw: Atlantic cod, Atlantic halibut, Greenland halibut, farmed Atlantic salmon, Atlantic sea scallops, haddock, swordfish, tropical shrimps and prawns and yellowfin tuna. In addition, certain recently acquired banners (T&T) and companies operating within Loblaw stores currently continue to sell species which Loblaw recently removed from sale.

## "must keep up the momentum"

### GRADES



Existing policy	50 %
Policy criteria	10 %
Sustainability initiatives	67 %
Traceability	13 %
Labelling	31 %
Redlist	40 %
Promotion	92 %

24% → 43%  
2009 2010

1st → 2nd  
2009 2010

Sells 9 species from the Redlist



# SAFEWAY FINDING THE WAY

# 36%

Canada Safeway has shown some real progress since being placed second-last in the 2009 ranking. At the time, Safeway was selling 12 out of 15 Redlist species/groups and had yet to follow through on its commitment to develop a sustainable seafood policy in line with Safeway US. But much has changed. Safeway has removed six Redlist species/groups from sale, has made its commitment public through in-store fliers and has identified a plan of action to increase the range of sustainable products sold and remove Redlist species/groups from its shelves. Nevertheless, much work needs to be done, especially with regard to the criteria used in deciding to sell or not sell species, the labelling of seafood products and ridding shelves of the remaining Redlist seafood.

Not found within the policy principles but given prominence in the brochure is a commitment not to sell Redlist and other unsustainable seafood and to seek out appropriate alternatives. Safeway says that these plans will be developed and implemented over the coming years, but no deadlines for completion have been set.

Safeway's policy needs to be clearer about the criteria used during procurement or elimination of seafood products. The policy also neglects to highlight the importance of engaging in political action that will help push for long-term solutions to the problems in the seafood sector.

### Seafood sustainability initiatives

Safeway US partnered with FishWise in January 2010 and Canada Safeway plans to follow suit with a similar relationship in Canada. Through the partnership, Safeway hopes to strengthen its commitments to environmentally responsible seafood. FishWise, in association with a Canadian consultant, will coordinate supplier sustainability assessments and source improvement plans, train staff on the company's seafood policy, provide science-based information on sustainable seafood to

Safeway Inc. is one of the largest food and drug retailers in North America. As of January 2010, the company operated 1,501 stores in the United States and 224 in Western Canada. Safeway also holds a 49 per cent interest in Casa Ley, S.A. de C.V., which operates 156 food and general merchandise stores in Western Mexico. Safeway also operates distribution, manufacturing and food processing facilities. Safeway offers numerous private label brands including Safeway Select, O Organics and Lucerne.

### Banners

Safeway.

### Sustainable seafood policy

In November 2009, Canada Safeway released a brochure in stores giving details of its seafood sustainability policy. The policy, modelled on the one released by Safeway US in March 2009, outlines the principles behind the chain's procurement strategy, which include: creation of an internal seafood taskforce charged with sustainable product procurement; communication of the policy to suppliers and the requirement of a sourcing assessment; an employee education program; and providing consumers with relevant information. The supplier sourcing assessment is aimed at identifying and screening out suppliers and products that do not meet the requirements of Safeway's policy. The company has stated that the policy will be fully implemented by 2015.



Safeway's fish counters provide pamphlets describing their seafood policy

its customers, and help identify species/groups for removal from sale. Through the partnership with FishWise, Safeway has also supported the principles of the Conservation Alliance for Seafood Solutions.

Canada Safeway, represented by Safeway Inc., participates in the Food Marketing Institute Seafood Sustainability Working Group and representatives from Safeway Inc. have attended the Seafood Choices Alliance's seafood summit. Safeway US also recently joined The Sustainability Consortium, with the goal of obtaining information on primary sectors, including fisheries, to help Safeway create its company-wide supply chain policy.

Safeway offers products certified to the standards of the MSC and the Best Aquaculture Practices of the Global Aquaculture Association and is working with suppliers to achieve three-star Aquaculture Certification status. Although we note these certification initiatives, Greenpeace does not endorse any seafood certification system and considers the standards to be inadequate to ensure environmental or social sustainability.

### Labelling and transparency

Canada Safeway has provided its customers with a pamphlet explaining which seafood products have been removed from

sale and which products Safeway deems more sustainable. The company also provides a book at the seafood counter of certain stores which includes recipes and some information about seafood sold in Canada. Information at seafood counters and labels on seafood products about where and how the product was caught or farmed remains inadequate and needs much improvement.

In addition to providing pamphlets at the seafood counters, Safeway has plans to include notations of catch method and the Latin names of species on displays as well as noting "best choice" and "good alternative" designations for species.

### Redlist seafood sales

Safeway sells six of the 15 Redlist species/groups: Atlantic cod, farmed Atlantic salmon, Atlantic sea scallops, haddock, tropical shrimps and prawns, and yellowfin tuna.

## "some real progress, but needs a clearer policy"

### GRADES



- Existing policy 50 %
- Policy criteria 14 %
- Sustainability initiatives 33 %
- Traceability 19 %
- Labelling 21 %
- Redlist 60 %
- Promotion 54 %

3% → 36%  
2009 2010

7th → 3rd  
2009 2010

Sells 6 species from the Redlist

# WALMART CARRYING ON



Walmart Canada has adopted a sustainable seafood policy committing the company to work towards sustainable seafood procurement. The policy recognizes the importance of ridding stores of illegally caught seafood and encourages full traceability, as well as improvement of fisheries and aquaculture policies.

However, Walmart's policy is very general, and although it recognizes the importance of ridding stores of illegally caught seafood, depends on seafood certifications that do not ensure sustainability. Although relatively few Redlist species/groups are currently sold at Walmart Canada stores, the company has not removed any species since the campaign began over two years ago and still sells overfished yellowfin tuna and dredged Atlantic sea scallops, among others.

Walmart Canada is owned by Walmart, the world's largest retailer, which operates more than 8,400 stores and outlets. Over half of its stores are in the US, but the company also operates a growing number of stores in over a dozen countries in South and Central America, Asia, and Europe. Walmart entered Canada in 1994 with the acquisition of Woolco, a division of Woolworth Canada.

Walmart Canada operates 317 discount stores and plans to open 35-40 more in 2010, mostly in western Canada. While Walmart currently holds only a small percentage of the Canadian grocery market, it continues to grow. Seafood, however, represents a very small percentage of its sales, and Canadian Walmart stores do not have full seafood counters.

## Banners

Walmart

## Sustainable seafood policy

Walmart Canada adopted and made public its first sustainable seafood policy in April 2010. The policy establishes the company's interest in sustainable seafood and concern for the state of the oceans. The policy notes that Walmart will

"delist fish products and suppliers which refuse to improve the environmental performance of their operations." It also states that the company "will not procure seafood caught from illegal, unreported or unregulated (IUU) sources; nor knowingly source seafood from ships currently on any official IUU vessel list."

The policy "encourages full transparency of all seafood products within the seafood industry and full traceability from point of catch to the consumer." Furthermore, it makes a plea for "the cessation of the over-fishing of any and all world-wide fish stocks deemed to be in peril" and encourages policy makers to "improve and develop laws and regulations that support the improvement of fisheries and aquaculture management and enforcement." Finally, the policy specifically states the Walmart does not sell and will continue not to sell bluefin tuna.

However, the goals in Walmart's policy are largely limited to commitments to source from, or work, with certain seafood certifiers or industry groups, including the MSC, the Global Aquaculture Alliance and the International Seafood Sustainability Foundation (ISSF). The company commits to procuring all seafood from these bodies or from sources having equivalent standards by 2013. Although we note Walmart's support for

these certified products, Greenpeace does not endorse any seafood certification system and considers the standards to be inadequate to ensure environmental or social sustainability.

## Sustainability initiatives

Walmart Canada operates a "Sustainable Value Network" for seafood made up of Walmart buyers, executives, suppliers, environmental organizations, and regulators with the goal of providing a more sustainably harvested seafood selection.

## Labelling and transparency

Walmart Canada labels wild fish that are MSC-certified and farmed shrimp that are ACC-certified. The company plans to identify fish with the common name (e.g. yellowfin tuna) and indicate whether it is farmed or wild, but is not making efforts to provide the scientific name, catch area or catching method for wild fish.

## Redlist seafood sales

Six of the 15 Redlist species/groups are still sold by Walmart: Atlantic cod, farmed Atlantic salmon, Atlantic sea scallops, haddock, tropical shrimp, and yellowfin tuna. Walmart Canada does not have fresh seafood counters in its stores, thus limiting the range of fish sold.

# "relies on seafood certifications that do not ensure sustainability"



Farmed Atlantic salmon and Canadian Atlantic cod on sale at Walmart

## GRADES



Existing policy	25 %
Policy criteria	7 %
Sustainability initiatives	33 %
Traceability	13 %
Labelling	20 %
Redlist	60 %
Promotion	39 %

10% → 28%  
2009 → 2010

3rd → 4th  
2009 → 2010

Sells 6 species from the Redlist



# METRO CHANGE OF HEART

Metro came last in the 2009 ranking but has since undertaken an investigation into its seafood sourcing and is working hard to provide its customers with sustainable and equitable seafood options. The company has developed and made public a “responsible fisheries policy” in which it promises to base sourcing decisions on scientific advice and explicitly states a desire to source from local artisanal fisheries. Metro has identified several Redlist species that it will stop selling as of September 2010 and has plans for improved labelling of fresh fish.

Metro is Canada’s third largest food retailer and operates 474 supermarkets and grocery stores and 185 discount stores in Quebec and Ontario. In Quebec, the majority of stores belong to independent owners who have leases or affiliation agreements with the company. Metro operates 11 warehouses for the procurement and storage of meat, fruits and vegetables, and frozen foods and also supplies institutional clients and small retail outlets. Metro’s Pêcheries Atlantiques division is Quebec’s largest distributor of fresh and frozen seafood products.

## Banners

Metro, Metro Plus, Super C, Food Basics.

## Sustainable seafood policy

Metro has made public its “responsible fisheries policy,” which it released in May 2010 and will be fully implemented by June 2011. During this period Metro’s policy will be applied to its fresh and frozen seafood, both wild and farmed, followed by a second phase to address canned seafood and other grocery items containing marine species. Metro notes in its policy that decisions about responsible fisheries will be based on an “objective diagnosis” which integrates scientific reports with the positions taken by governments, non-governmental organizations and suppliers. The company indicates that it will continually update its analysis of seafood products and consult regularly with independent scientists.

21%

Metro’s responsible fisheries policy contains four key criteria:

- 1 Healthy stocks** which originate from sufficiently abundant stocks, fished at rates which ensure adequate renewal of stocks, and are well-managed using legal quotas which are based on scientific reports.
- 2 Responsible fishing and aquaculture methods:** selective fishing techniques which minimize bycatch of other species and prevent alteration of ocean floor habitats, and aquaculture practices with a moderate use of wild fish and a minimal impact on biodiversity and natural resources. Metro also promotes efforts to reduce fuel consumption and greenhouse gas emissions.
- 3 Traceable** from ship to consumer, leading to informative and transparent labelling.
- 4 Local economy and labour law:** an explicit commitment to support local artisanal fisheries and to work with fisheries applying prevailing labour laws.

Metro’s policy is innovative and covers important ground. It could benefit from greater clarity in its criteria, for example by detailing which fishing methods are to be avoided and which sought out.



Metro fish counters still filled with Redlist seafood awaiting removal

Also, there is no mention of a commitment to political action to provide long-term solutions to the crisis facing our oceans.

Metro is also developing its first corporate social responsibility strategy, which will replace a basic short statement which has been the only such policy piece available since 1998. At Metro’s annual general meeting in 2010, CEO Eric Lafèche stated that the priorities of the company’s corporate responsibility approach would be announced by the end of 2010.

## Sustainability initiatives

Metro has been consulting with outside stakeholders as it develops its policy and Redlist analysis, including scientists, Greenpeace and Fisheries and Oceans Canada. After surveying its major seafood suppliers about their sustainability initiatives, Metro is building species profiles of critical species, using information from organizations specialized in sustainable seafood, academic and governmental studies and suppliers. The company plans to identify problematic species and provide better seafood alternatives for customers.

## Labelling and transparency

An internal working group was created in July 2009 to define the strategy for providing seafood information in product labels,

in-store information panels, brochures and company websites. An in-store information campaign scheduled for the fall of 2010 includes plans to label fresh seafood with the common and Latin name, type (wild-caught or farmed) origin (for wild-caught fish) and fishing gear used and certification where applicable. Because Metro operates its own seafood warehouse, it is well positioned to provide such detailed information to its customers.

At present, the company provides a book at the seafood counters of certain stores which includes recipes and information about seafood, but no specific information about the seafood being sold at Metro.

## Redlist seafood sales

Metro currently still sells 14 of the 15 Redlist species/groups including: Arctic surf clams, Atlantic cod, Atlantic halibut, farmed Atlantic salmon, Atlantic sea scallops, Chilean sea bass, Greenland halibut, haddock, orange roughy, shark, skate, swordfish, tropical shrimps and prawns, and tuna (bluefin, yellowfin). Metro has committed to removing several (six or seven) Redlist species from sale by September 2010.

“policy covers important ground but has yet to be implemented”

## GRADES



metro

Existing policy	25 %
Policy criteria	5 %
Sustainability initiatives	33 %
Traceability	13 %
Labelling	28 %
Redlist	7 %
Promotion	39 %

1% → 21%  
2009 2010

8th → 5th  
2009 2010

Sells 14 species from the Redlist



# SOBEYS

## EMERGING FROM THE DEEP

# 14%

After a protracted process to develop a sustainable seafood policy, Sobeys has finally committed to introducing a sustainable procurement policy in the coming months. This news was provided to Greenpeace along with a commitment to remove four Redlist species/groups from sale (all species of sharks and skates, orange roughy and bluefin tuna). Before this recent declaration, the pattern had been much talk and no visible action, so with 11 Redlist species/groups still on sale, we urge Sobeys to finalize its policy, provide more information to its customers and promote sustainability in its supply chain.

Sobeys began as a grocery store in Stellarton, Nova Scotia in 1907 and has since grown to become Canada's second-largest food retailer, under the ownership of Empire Company Limited. It operates more than 1,300 stores across Canada and gas bars in Nova Scotia and New Brunswick. Sobeys has a well-known private label, Compliments, which is divided into several

sub-brands including Compliments Sensations, Compliments Organic, and Compliments Collection.

Sobeys is a relatively decentralized company, and some banners, notably the BC chain Thrifty Foods and the Québec healthfood chain Rachele-Béry, have more developed sustainable seafood practices.

### Banners

Sobeys, IGA Extra, IGA, Needs, Price Chopper, Foodland, Thrifty Foods, Les Marchés Tradition, Western Cellars, Rachele-Béry.

### Sustainable seafood policy

After two years of consulting an impressive list of stakeholders with the goal of developing a seafood sustainability policy, Sobeys has at last committed to completing and releasing a sustainable seafood policy in summer 2010. According to a letter received from Sobeys, the policy will include a focus on "improving the status and management plan of fisheries through engagement." Sobeys notes that it supports fisheries improvement projects such as initiatives targeting the Russian pollock and Newfoundland cod fisheries.



Skate on display at Sobeys just days before it was removed from sale

Sobeys recently engaged the Sustainability Fisheries Partnership to assist in the evaluation of Sobeys' current seafood sourcing and to help the company determine what actions should be pursued. The data collection and analysis process is in the final stages.

### Sustainability initiatives

Sobeys released its first Sustainability Report in 2009, in which it stated that the company is an active participant in the Food Marketing Institute's Sustainable Seafood Working Group. The company notes in the report that it has "engaged with numerous stakeholders on the issue, from regulators to environmental and supplier trade groups to sustainable seafood standards bodies."

The Sobeys private label group is procuring some farmed seafood that is Best Aquaculture Practices (BAP) certified and wild seafood that has been Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) certified. Although we note these certification initiatives, Greenpeace does not endorse any seafood certification system and considers the standards to be inadequate to ensure environmental or social sustainability.

### Labelling and transparency

Sobeys currently provides no labelling other than what is required by law, with the exception of some Ontario stores and the Thrifty Foods chain, which indicate the origin of some fish and whether it is wild or farmed.

Sobeys' Thrifty Foods chain, which operates 23 stores in western British Columbia, is working with Vancouver Aquarium's OceanWise program to develop educational materials on sustainability certification for customers. Thrifty Foods' managers and staff are informed of the chain's sustainability initiatives and provide information for customers upon request.

### Redlist seafood sales

Sobeys sells 11 of the 15 Redlist species/groups: Arctic surf clams, Atlantic cod, Atlantic halibut, farmed Atlantic salmon, Atlantic sea scallops, Chilean sea bass, Greenland halibut, haddock, swordfish, tropical shrimp, and yellowfin tuna.

Thrifty Foods sells the following items from the Redlist: farmed Atlantic salmon (in one store), Atlantic sea scallops, haddock, tropical shrimp and yellowfin tuna. Due to inadequate labelling it is unclear whether it is also selling frozen Atlantic cod.

The Rachele-Béry chain sells the following items from the Redlist: Atlantic cod, Atlantic halibut and organically produced tropical shrimp.

## "committed to adopting a policy. Will it be strong?"

### GRADES



Existing policy	0 %
Policy criteria	7 %
Sustainability initiatives	33 %
Traceability	0 %
Labelling	9 %
Redlist	27 %
Promotion	23 %

11% → 14%  
2009 → 2010

2nd → 6th  
2009 → 2010

Sells 11 species from the Redlist



**DID NOT RESPOND**

# FEDERATED CO-OPERATIVES COURSE UNCLEAR



Last year's ranking found Federated Co-operatives Limited (FCL) asleep at the helm, but while the company marked a new course for 2010, it remains unwilling to discuss its plans. FCL has recently established a partnership with SeaChoice. According to SeaChoice, they will work closely together to "assess [FCL's] seafood supply against sustainability criteria, improve sustainable seafood procurement, and educate co-op employees and customers about sustainable seafood options." This important step offers hope for a more sustainable seafood array in FCL stores and a commitment to push for improvement on the water, but it remains to be seen whether words will turn into action.

Federated Co-operatives Limited (FCL) is a multi-faceted organization that is based on the principles of co-operation. It is owned by approximately 260 retail co-ops located throughout Western Canada. These co-ops are the "member-owners" of FCL. FCL provides central wholesaling, manufacturing (sawmill, plywood plant and feed mills), marketing and administrative services to its member-owners. FCL also supplies products to Co-op Atlantic. FCL has two wholly owned subsidiaries: Consumers' Co-operative Refineries Limited (CCRL), a petroleum refining/heavy oil upgrader facility in Regina; and The Grocery People Ltd, an Edmonton-based wholesaler and fresh produce supplier that serves independent retailers in western Canada, the Yukon and the Northwest Territories.

### Banners

The Grocery People, Superfoods, Bigway Foods, Tag.

### Sustainable seafood policy

FCL has committed to developing and implementing a seafood sustainability policy. Through this policy, FCL will seek to:

- offer customers sustainable seafood options and reduce procurement of unsustainable seafood;
- provide transparency and traceability information on seafood products;
- collect and share information regarding seafood procurement and sales;
- educate its employees, suppliers and customers on sustainable seafood; and
- encourage policy makers and seafood producers to improve and develop laws, regulations and certification systems that support sustainable production.

### Seafood sustainability initiatives

FCL recently established a partnership with SeaChoice.

### Labelling and transparency

FCL currently does not label seafood products adequately so that consumers can avoid purchasing destructively fished species and does not promote sustainable seafood to its customers.

### Redlist seafood sales

Greenpeace surveys show that FCL is selling eight of the 15 Redlist species/groups: Atlantic cod, Atlantic haddock, Atlantic halibut, Greenland halibut, farmed Atlantic salmon, Atlantic sea scallops, tropical shrimps and prawns and yellowfin tuna.

*Note: FCL has refused to provide information about its seafood policies and practices since the release of our first report in 2008. The company was given an opportunity to correct and comment on the content of this profile, which it did not take. All the information in this report is taken from publicly available information and in-store surveys.*

## "committed to improve but unwilling to discuss plans"



### GRADES



Existing policy	0 %
Policy criteria	0 %
Sustainability initiatives	17 %
Traceability	0 %
Labelling	5 %
Redlist	53 %
Promotion	8 %

9% → 12%  
2009 2010

5th → 7th  
2009 2010

Sells 8 species from the Redlist



**DID NOT RESPOND**

# COSTCO WHOLESALE OCEAN SELL OUT



Costco Canada continues to refuse to provide any information about its seafood sourcing and appears to be taking no sustainable seafood initiatives. As a major food wholesaler, Costco must stop being compliant in wholesale ocean destruction by developing a comprehensive sustainable seafood policy and eliminating Redlist seafood from its inventory. Although Costco Canada has a limited range of seafood in its stores because of a lack of fresh seafood counters, the Redlist seafood it does carry is sold in bulk.

Costco Wholesale is the largest warehouse club operator in North America. Costco Wholesale Canada operates 76 membership warehouse clubs in nine Canadian provinces, offering discounts on not only food but houseware, appliances, electronics and office products. Costco (then Price Club) opened its first Canadian warehouse in Montreal in 1986 and continues to expand into more and more towns across Canada.

### Banners

Costco.

### Sustainable seafood policy

Costco has no formal environmental policy and no sustainable seafood policy. In the 2008 edition of the members' magazine, *The Costco Connection*, managing editor Stephen Smith writes "Costco's no frills philosophy is tailor made for conservation and efficiency, and examples are abundant." While this may apply to waste reduction, recycling, and energy savings, commitments to ocean conservation from Costco are nowhere to be seen.

### Sustainable seafood initiatives

Since our last ranking, Costco Canada does not appear to have developed any affiliation with any retailer working groups, fishing industry groups, seafood companies, third-party auditors, or environmental conservation organizations working on seafood sustainability.

### Labelling and transparency

Costco does not provide sufficient information on seafood products to enable consumers to avoid purchasing destructively fished or farmed species and does not promote sustainable seafood to its customers.

### Redlist seafood sales

Greenpeace surveys found that Costco sells eight of the 15 Redlist species/groups: Atlantic cod, Atlantic halibut, farmed Atlantic salmon, Atlantic sea scallops, haddock, shark, tropical shrimp and prawns, and yellowfin tuna.

Note: Costco has refused to provide information about its seafood policies and practices since the release of our first report in 2008. Costco was given an opportunity to correct and comment on the content of this profile, which it did not take. All the information in this report is taken from publicly available information and in-store surveys.

## "no sustainable seafood initiatives"



Tuna being sold like there was no tomorrow at Costco

## GRADES



Existing policy	0 %
Policy criteria	0 %
Sustainability initiatives	0 %
Traceability	0 %
Labelling	5 %
Redlist	47 %
Promotion	0 %

7% → 7%  
2009 2010

6th → 8th  
2009 2010

Sells 8 species from the Redlist

# TIME AND TUNA ARE RUNNING OUT

Tuna is reportedly North America's most popular seafood.<sup>1</sup> Canned tuna represents the largest seafood item sold by volume for many Canadian supermarkets and is worth around CAN\$2.8 billion per annum worldwide.<sup>2</sup> Connor Brothers (Clover Leaf brand) dominates the Canadian canned fish market with nearly a 46% share of the Canadian canned seafood market.<sup>3</sup>

The fish we call "tuna" is really a number of different predatory fish of varying biology and characteristics, distributed widely across the oceans of the world. Most canned tuna sold in Canada is a smaller species called skipjack, though the larger, more commercially valuable yellowfin and albacore tunas are also found in cans on the shelves of all of Canada's major retailers. Yellowfin is the main type of tuna sold fresh in Canadian supermarkets, but two chains still sell the highly prized and endangered bluefin tuna. Years of being overfished and badly managed has left tuna stocks around the globe in crisis. Total landings of the five main tuna species (skipjack, yellowfin, bigeye, albacore and bluefin) are stagnant at about 3.9 millions tonnes and seem unlikely to increase in the near future.<sup>4</sup>

The recently formed International Seafood Sustainability Foundation (ISSF), an organization that brings together the world's largest tuna processors including Connor Brothers, has adopted policies that speak in favour of science-based initiatives and sustainable management. However, many of its policies are not sufficiently far-reaching to meet the objectives of sustainable management of the world's tuna stocks, and so far it has fallen short on real action to protect marine life.

Some efforts have been made to address concerns related to tuna fishing methods. The familiar dolphin-friendly logo displayed on cans indicates that methods designed to prevent dolphin bycatch (the incidental capture of dolphins during tuna fishing) were employed. Reduction of turtle bycatch has also been achieved by certain companies in certain oceans, through the use of methods such as circle hooks and turtle sorting grids. But these measures alone are insufficient to ensure that the industry is sustainable in the long term. Many fishing products that are labelled dolphin-friendly still result in the bycatch of a host of non-target species, including turtles, sharks, rays, juvenile tuna and a huge range of other marine life. With the increasing use of Fish Aggregation Devices (FADs) – floating platforms placed at sea to which tuna and other species are instinctively drawn – and the ongoing prevalence of illegal catches of tuna, these problems are worsening.

Certain Canadian retailers (Loblaw and Walmart) have included commitments to avoid selling the products of illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing in their sustainable seafood policies. While this is an excellent step, much work remains to be done before it can be implemented. If retailers want to sell tuna in the future, they must ensure that tuna sources are not only legal but also sustainable and equitable, and they must start strongly communicating those requirements to the tuna industry.

Because the vast majority of canned fish in Canada is sold in stores, retailers, together with the tuna brands, have a key role to play in greening tuna fisheries. While Canadian retailers have so far taken very little action, they can follow the lead of certain UK supermarkets in selling only sustainable and equitable tuna and follow our recommendations below.

## Bluefin tuna

The population of Atlantic bluefin tuna is estimated to be less than 15 per cent of its historical abundance.<sup>5</sup> The southern bluefin tuna is listed as a critically endangered species because its populations have reached such low levels.

The bluefin tuna crisis is so critical that retailers must stop selling all bluefin tuna until stocks recover. Fortunately, Canadian retailers are already acting and bluefin has been removed from all stores, with the exception of Metro which plans to remove it by September 2010 and certain Loblaw stores.

## Bigeye and yellowfin tuna

Certain bigeye stocks are threatened with extinction. Worldwide yellowfin stocks have now also reached a state where over-fishing is suspected to be occurring in all oceans with many stocks in serious decline.<sup>6</sup>

Retailers should stop selling bigeye and yellowfin tuna until fishing of these species has been reduced to sustainable levels.

## Skipjack tuna

Skipjack is the highest volume tuna fishery in the world and is primarily caught using massive nets in "purse seining" fleets. While stocks are more abundant than those of most other tuna species, the huge overcapacity in purse seining fleets is now undermining both the sustainability of the stocks and the economic viability of the industry itself. The FADs used in the purse seining fleets targeting skipjack are now threatening the survival of the more vulnerable bigeye and yellowfin stocks since large quantities of juveniles of these species are caught as bycatch.

All skipjack tuna caught by purse seiners using FADs should be rejected as unsustainable.

## Albacore

Stocks in some oceans are overfished while others are not.

Retailers should exercise extreme care in purchasing skipjack or albacore tuna, because of widespread illegal fishing and unfair returns to developing coastal states. They are advised to examine their products and supply chain with care, and seek best-practice sustainable and equitable supplies, especially those originating from well-managed fisheries using pole-and-line, hand-line and troll-fishing methods.

- [http://www.goldseal.ca/products/index.asp?view=canned\\_salmon](http://www.goldseal.ca/products/index.asp?view=canned_salmon)
- As cited in Glitner Bank Tuna Seafood Industry Report, August 2007, p. 32: <http://englishm5.s/?gluggi=freet&id=33429>
- Nielsen, All Channel \$ share, 52 weeks to January 16, 2010, cited in <http://www.cloverleaf.ca/en/company/about-us/>
- Intrafish Industry Report, Tuna : An Industry in Transition. Ben DiPietro, 2008.
- International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas. Extension of the 2009 SCRS Meeting to Consider the Status of Atlantic Bluefin Tuna Populations with Respect to CITES Biological Listing Criteria
- Marsh, J. (2006a) Seafood Watch Seafood Report: Yellowfin tuna (*Thunnus alba*)

## UK retailers leading the way

The pole-and-line method is a traditional tuna fishing method well-suited for the use of coastal communities. This simple way of catching tuna with a hook and line attached to a long pole has the potential to be the cleanest and most environmentally sound method of fishing skipjack if bait fisheries are well managed, since bycatch levels can be low and fishing can be stopped at any stage if undersized fish are being caught.

In the UK, two retailers (Marks & Spencer and Sainsbury's) have moved to using exclusively pole-and-line caught tuna in their home brands. Sainsbury's brand tuna is currently sourced from pole-and-line fishery in the Maldives, each fish being landed individually. Because of the limited technology and investment required this fishing method allows for participation from coastal communities such as those in the Pacific and has the potential to create badly needed jobs.



Yellowfin tuna in Honiara's market, Solomon Islands

## Supermarkets and marine reserves

There is an unassailable scientific consensus that a large-scale network of global marine reserves is needed to safeguard the world's marine ecosystems to allow recovery and enable them to withstand changes associated with climate change and ocean acidification. Greenpeace is calling for 40 per cent of the world's oceans to be protected in no-take marine reserves, with the other 60 per cent to be managed sustainably. In the Western Central Pacific ocean, where close to half the world's tuna is fished<sup>1</sup>, Greenpeace supports Pacific Island countries in their fight to close vast areas of Pacific high seas as marine reserves, and regain control over the tuna resources currently dominated by foreign fishing fleets.

Retailers can help the creation of marine reserves in several ways. In the UK, the Co-operative Group took a stand, asking their customers to support Marine Reserves by voting for their favourite among a number of proposed reserve sites around the UK and contacting their MP to ask for support.: [www.co-operative.coop/ethicsinaction/takeaction/Marine-Reserves/](http://www.co-operative.coop/ethicsinaction/takeaction/Marine-Reserves/). In Canada, where less than 0.6 per cent of the oceans is protected and progress on marine reserves is progressing at a snail's pace, Greenpeace is calling on retailers to tell suppliers and governments that they support a representative network of marine reserves and prefer to purchase seafood from fisheries that are actively involved in designing and establishing such reserves.

<sup>1</sup> Ben diPietro, Tuna: An industry in transition. IntraFish Industry Report, Nov 2008.



## WHAT'S IN A LABEL?

When a shopper approaches a seafood counter at most supermarkets in Canada, there is much guesswork to be done. Is this salmon from B.C. or elsewhere? Is it wild? Are those dredged scallops or farmed? Is this frozen cod Atlantic or Pacific? Was it fished using bottom trawls? If you are given information about better choices but the products do not tell you what you need to know to make that choice, what's a shopper to do?

In order for retailers to be able to provide the appropriate information on products, they must first obtain that information from suppliers. The suppliers must then be able to trace the product in question back to the ship or farm. Traceability is lacking in much of the seafood supply chain. As a result, fraud and mislabelling are being discovered within the retail sector, further confusing the customer and causing unsustainable and even illegal seafood to be on sale, even with the best of intentions on the part of the retailer.

To ensure that shoppers can get what they are seeking, Greenpeace is advocating for the following information to be made available from ship or farm to seafood product label.

- The specific common and scientific (Latin) name (e.g. Pacific sardine (*Sardinops sagax*))
- The specific area and/or country of catch or farming (e.g. British Columbia, Canada)
- The production method or fishing method/gear type (e.g. wild caught, purse seine)

For retailers, labelling is easiest to control on the fresh product, and in Canada this is where retailers have been making the greatest progress. But retailers need to also push their suppliers of canned and frozen product to provide more information, beginning with their private label brands. This can also help inform seafood assessors that seek to determine whether certain Redlist species/groups on sale actually come from more sustainable stocks or fishing/farming methods and are therefore not in fact red-graded and can be considered delisted by that chain.

Some retail chains, however, have been sourcing from companies that make the extra effort to provide key information on their products. The UK's Sainsbury's chain provides a good example with their "Sainsbury's basics" and "viva tuna" tuna brands. Labels provide the common name, the fishing method, the country of origin and a dolphin-friendly logo for their more sustainable pole-and-line caught skipjack tuna.

Here in Canada, some supermarkets are already selling some tuna with better labels. For example, the "Wild Planet" tuna brand not only includes the common name and fishing method, but the country of catch, the country of processing, a dolphin-friendly logo, a no-longlines logo and a turtle-safe logo to display

the destructive fishing elements they are working to avoid. And all this information fits nicely on a small can. Customers wishing to seek additional information about the tuna they buy from Wild Planet can do so on the company's website, which indicates the criteria used in sourcing the tuna, information not provided by the bulk of the tuna market.

Tuna cans with such general labels as "tuna, product of Thailand" are unacceptable: although it is difficult to be sure, it is likely that they contain species that are overfished, illegally fished, and destructively fished using methods that threaten stocks not only of tuna but also of other vulnerable and endangered species. This is the case with much of the tuna currently found in stores.

Governments place a great deal of importance on health and nutrition information on the labels of food products. They must now attach the same importance to sustainability information, because without healthy oceans there will be no seafood to label. Retailers have a role to play in pushing governments for better labelling laws across the board and by setting a good example in their stores.



Examples of seafood labelling including common and scientific names, gear type and catch area.

# GLOSSARY

**Aquaculture Certification Council (ACC):**

An aquaculture certification body created through the Global Aquaculture Alliance (GAA). Farmed species are certified based on a series of GAA standards.

<http://www.aquaculturecertification.org/>

**Aquaculture Dialogues:**

A series of eight roundtables initiated by the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF). The dialogues bring together over 2,000 stakeholders to develop standards aimed at minimizing the key negative environmental and social impacts of 12 farmed species. When finalized, the standards will be used in a certification scheme.

**Certification body (CB):**

Legal or administrative entity tasked with performing certifications. May also be called an “inspection body.”

**Chain of custody:**

The path taken by raw materials, processed materials and products, from the ship to the store.

**Common Vision for Sustainable**

**Seafood:** Developed through the Conservation Alliance for Seafood Solutions, the Common Vision is a guide to environmentally responsible seafood for businesses which identifies six critical actions companies can take to ensure a healthy seafood supply to their businesses.

<http://www.solutionsforseafood.org/cv1>

**Conservation Alliance for Seafood**

**Solutions:** An alliance of over a dozen conservation organizations from the United States and Canada that pursue a common vision for sustainable seafood and work together using a range of approaches to bring conservation expertise to companies that buy and sell seafood.

<http://www.solutionsforseafood.org/>

**FishWise:**

A non-profit organization that aims to improve the sustainability and financial performance of seafood retailers, distributors, and producers. Positioned between the seafood industry and marine conservation organizations, FishWise works to create trust between seafood vendors and their customers, enabling businesses to sell more sustainable seafood, more profitably. FishWise joins business imperatives with leading ocean conservation strategies. [www.fishwise.org](http://www.fishwise.org)

**Food Marketing Institute (FMI):**

The FMI conducts programs in public affairs, food safety, research, education, and industry relations on behalf of its 1,500 member companies including food retailers and wholesalers in the United States and around the world. <http://www.fmi.org/>

**Hand-line:**

A type of fishing that uses lines and hooks from a stationary or moving boat. This method is more selective than other types of fishing in terms of species and size, and provides high-quality fish. The method can be used on spawning fish as they normally only bite after completion of spawning.

**Longlining:**

A fishing technique that uses a main horizontal line with branches of shorter lines and baited hooks that are pulled through the water at various depths.

**Marine Stewardship Council (MSC):**

The MSC runs a labelling scheme that certifies fisheries it deems sustainable or as making efforts to become sustainable. Companies wishing to use the MSC seal on their products undergo a chain of custody certification process that guarantees traceability of MSC-labelled seafood. <http://www.msc.org/>

**Ocean Wise:**

A Vancouver Aquarium conservation program created to educate and empower consumers about the issues surrounding sustainable seafood. Ocean Wise works directly with restaurants and markets, helping them make more ocean-friendly buying decisions, which are highlighted on their menus and display cases with the Ocean Wise symbol. <http://www.vanaqua.org/oceanwise/>

**Pole-and-line:**

A fishing method in which surface schooling fish are attracted to a vessel and driven into active feeding behaviour by throwing bait into the water and spraying water onto the sea surface to simulate the escape of small prey. Poles and lines with barbless hooks are used to hook the fish, including surface-schooling tuna such as skipjack and albacore.

**SeaChoice:**

A comprehensive seafood markets program with the primary goal of fostering sustainable fisheries in Canada and abroad. SeaChoice is comprised of five environmental organizations (Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society [CPAWS], David Suzuki Foundation, Ecology Action Centre, Living Oceans, Sierra Club Canada [BC Chapter]) that work together through a coalition entitled Sustainable Seafood Canada to raise public awareness of the threats to oceans and the solutions that sustainable fisheries offer.

<http://www.seachoice.org/>

**Sustainable Fisheries Partnership**

**(SFP) :** A non-profit project that provides strategic and technical guidance to seafood suppliers and producers, helps convene them together with other like-minded companies in Fishery Improvement Partnerships, and builds consensus around specific improvements in policies, marine conservation measures, and fishing and fish-farming practices.

[www.sustainablefish.org](http://www.sustainablefish.org)

**Sustainable Seafood Working Group:**

A working group of the FMI consisting of supermarket executives charged with developing guidelines, best practices, case studies, and other resources to help the supermarket industry address seafood sustainability issues and capitalize on sustainability trends.

**The Sustainability Consortium:**

An independent organization of diverse global participants who work collaboratively to build a scientific foundation that drives innovation to improve consumer product sustainability through all stages of a products life cycle.

<http://www.sustainabilityconsortium.org>

**Trawling:**

Pulling a large, open-mouthed fishing net through the water or along the sea floor, with the net kept open by a heavy beams or doors.

**Trolling:**

A fishing method using one or more baited lines towed by a boat.



# GREENPEACE

Greenpeace is an independent, campaigning organisation which uses non-violent, creative confrontation to expose global environmental problems, and to force the solutions which are essential to a green and peaceful future.

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