

Eating Fish Responsibly

Why we care

Fish can be a healthy source of protein in your diet, and salmon is a Pacific Northwest staple. However, overfishing and destructive fishing practices have depleted many fish stocks. Farming isn't always the answer. It takes about three pounds of smaller fish to raise one pound of farmed salmon. Crowded fish pens produce large amounts of waste that pollute surrounding waters and facilitate the spread of disease requiring farmers to use antibiotics. Escaped farmed salmon can spread diseases to wild fish. Even if fish are wild-caught, fishing methods may result in a high percentage of by-catch, including sharks, sea turtles, and juvenile fish. In the tropics, shrimp farms pose a grave threat to mangrove forests. These dense thickets of salt-tolerant trees and shrubs protect coastlines and absorb carbon, but more than 35% has already been lost.

Simple, positive change

- Use the Monterey Bay Aquarium [Seafood Guide](#) when purchasing fish in a store or restaurant. It lists the best and worst choices based on sources that are overfished and/or caught or farmed in ways that harm marine life. Pacific Cod (AK), shrimp (US farmed), and sole (US) are among the best choices.
- Greenpeace has ranked major U.S. [supermarkets](#) based on the sustainability and social responsibility of their seafood.
- For canned tuna, select Wild Planet (carried by New Seasons) or Whole Foods brand. Familiar brands such as StarKist, Bumble Bee, and Chicken of the Sea rank among the worst according to [Greenpeace](#).
- Avoid eating shrimp (prawns) from the tropics because of the threats to mangroves.

Questions or feedback? Contact Jeanne Roy at jeanne@earthleaders.org.