

National Trust Food Policy: Sustainable Seafood

This note explains the rationale behind the procurement and promotion of sustainable seafood by the National Trust. It is primarily aimed at National Trust staff, National Trust Enterprises (NTE), concessions and consumers at National Trust properties.

The guide should be used:

- *when buying seafood for catering and retail*
- *as a basis for menu setting*
- *when engaging external contractors and new lettings for food outlets*
- *as a basis for new letting agreements to food businesses and external caterers.*

Key points

- The National Trust recognises that many seafood species are at risk of overexploitation. In line with its sustainability principles the NT should confine its menu of seafoods to the most responsibly managed stocks.
- This guide recommends the best seafoods to choose in respect of sustainability of supply, environmental impact on marine habitats and other species and avoidance of unnecessary or inefficient transportation.
- The National Trust is guided by the Marine Conservation Society regarding seafood sustainability issues and we are working with our national suppliers to ensure a range of sustainable seafood choices are available from the [recommended](#) supply list.
- From 2007 onwards, we will aim to ensure that none of the seafoods featured on the [prohibited](#) list are sold by NTE catering or retail operations. All products featured on the prohibited list have already de-listed from our central seafood supplier.
- To help consumers recognise the most sustainable seafoods on offer, all seafood available from NT outlets should be clearly labelled with common names of species used as well as the area of origin and the method of fishing or harvesting used.
- Clear messages regarding sustainable seafood will be made available via the website and at points of sale where appropriate.
- Guidance will be issued and updated as necessary, and the NT will be continually working with suppliers to source the most sustainable seafood available.
- Catering staff will be updated with guidance and training concerning sustainable seafood. Training & development chefs will encourage the use of recommended seafoods in menus.

1.0 Background

Seafood (fish and shellfish) plays a relatively minor but highly visible part of the overall food procurement of the National Trust's outlets and properties. The National Trust's Food Sourcing Policy 2006 confirmed that environmental sustainability should be a key factor for all food used in the Trust's catering and retail operations.

1.1 General principles

This note is designed to provide clear guidance regarding the sustainability of different seafoods based on species, origin of stock and method of capture / aquaculture.

The Marine Conservation Society manages an up to date list of 'fish to avoid' and 'fish to eat' based on these issues. More detail is available on <http://www.fishonline.org/information/>.

Some species that appear on the MCS 'list to eat' do not feature on the recommended NT list due to other factors such as distance from the UK (unnecessary food miles). There is a presumption against air-freighted seafood such as fresh tuna due to the unnecessary fuel costs associated with air transport.

The recommended list currently includes 30 types of fish and shellfish and includes five Marine Stewardship Council certified species. It is possible that more seafoods will be able to be recommended in future. The NT guidance will be reviewed as new information is gathered or new sustainable fish stocks become available.

The attached prohibited list is based on the Marine Conservation Society's 'fish to avoid'. NT outlets should not purchase species on the prohibited list. It is recognised that external functions may request seafoods from the prohibited list. In that event, efforts should be made to recommend alternatives and explain why the NT is following a sustainable seafood sourcing policy. If this fails to satisfy clients, then contact can be made directly to the NT Head of Agriculture, Central Catering Development Manager or Central Food Procurement Manager who will be able to advise further.

Top five seafoods

The majority of fish consumption in the NT has to date been canned tuna, farmed Atlantic salmon, North Atlantic prawns, haddock and mackerel. There is no need to stop using these products, but we may try and source the most sustainable supplies

Tuna

In 2005 – 2006 the NT used over 16,440 kg of canned tuna. Canned tuna is a staple component of sandwiches and salads. All canned tuna procured by the NT centrally is skipjack or yellowfin tuna and is labelled as dolphin safe. This tuna is caught by a combination of pole and line methods (which have little impact on other species) and long-lines and purse seine nets which can lead to bycatch.

The NT will be working with M&J Seafoods to establish product lines of only pole and line caught tuna possibly from the Maldives. As these become available, they will become dedicated product lines and tuna caught by long-lines and purse seine fisheries will be de-listed.

Tuna alternatives?

Instead of tuna, canned Pacific red or pink salmon from Alaska is available and is certified as a sustainable fishery by the [Marine Stewardship Council's](#) environmental standard for well-managed and sustainable fisheries. Canned Alaskan salmon has nearly 10 times more omega-3 than canned tuna.

Farmed Atlantic salmon

Fresh Atlantic salmon used in NTE catering is mostly farmed in Scotland, Norway, Iceland and Ireland. In the period 2005/6, NTE purchased over 2,860 kg of fresh and frozen salmon.

Conventional farmed salmon has environmental problems including dependence on wild caught fish to provide feed, pollution and escapes to the wild affecting wild populations. For these reasons, procurement should switch to the most environmentally responsible farmed salmon, specifically, **Freedom Food assured or organic certified**. Salmon farmed under these standards are kept at lower stocking rates than conventional farms causing less health and pollution problems. Organic farming ensures that all of the fish meal must come from sustainable sources, with 50% of fish protein derived from fish processing waste for human consumption. The Freedom Foods supplier to M&J seafoods – 'Natural Choice' uses the same fish meal as organic.

We will endeavour to ensure that Freedom Foods and Organic Salmon is available from our central suppliers and we will aim to phase out conventionally farmed salmon.

All smoked salmon purchased by NTE in 2005/6 was conventionally produced. Recently, the Dart Smokehouse in Cornwall has started producing smoked Freedom Food salmon. This is being used in Devon & Cornwall and currently we are trying to secure Freedom Food smoked salmon more widely through M&J seafoods.

Prawns

The volume of prawns purchased in 2005/6 was 2,040 kg. The recommended prawns are coldwater Atlantic prawns. Although these do result in a limited bycatch of bottom dwelling animals, this fishery is considered far less damaging and less energy intensive than tropical farmed prawns that rely on intensive production in areas of high environmental importance, particularly natural mangrove swamps.

Frozen prawns are marketed by volume of ice glaze added. The best value for sandwiches (to avoid buying water) for sandwich making is coded D111. This will be the default North Atlantic prawn available from M&J.

The most environmentally sustainable prawns are probably pot-caught in the UK with little or no bycatch and no damage to the sea floor. The Trust licences a pot caught prawn fishery in north Wales and will be investigating the possibility of procuring pot caught prawns in future.

Tiger prawns, King Prawns, Crevettes

All the above are similar species of warm water prawns from the tropics. Where tiger prawns are demanded, an acceptable alternative would be shell on North Atlantic Prawns or langoustine tails.

Crayfish

Freshwater crayfish supplied to the catering trade as 'crayfish tails in brine' are mainly sourced from China. An acceptable alternative for Chinese crayfish would be shell on North Atlantic Prawns.

Haddock

Haddock is not on the recommended list. Although stocks are generally healthy, some of the capture methods can lead to bycatch. We will be working with suppliers to isolate the best options that may feature on the fish to eat list in future. Good alternatives from the recommended list would include coley, pollack and whiting.

Mackerel

South West (Devon & Cornwall) handline caught fish are Marine Stewardship Council certified. We will be working to ensure that SW handline mackerel is available and sourcing the same for smoked mackerel is possible.

National Trust: RECOMMENDED Fish list

updated August 2006

	Species	Origin	Method of capture	Comments	Notes
1	Bib or Pouting	NE Atlantic	Any	Recommended	
2	Black Bream or Porgy or Sea Bream	Cornwall, NW England, NW Wales	Any	Recommended	
3	Brown or Edible Crab	South Devon, Cromer, Llyn Peninsula	Pot or creel only	Recommended	
4	Clam	NE Atlantic	Hand gathered	Recommended	
5	Cockle	MSC certified Burry Inlet, SW Wales	Hand gathered	Recommended	
6	Cod, Atlantic	Scotland	Organically farmed only	Recommended	
7	Coley or Saithe	NE Arctic and North Sea	Any	Recommended	
8	Dab	NE Atlantic	Any	Recommended	
9	Dover Sole	MSC certified NE Atlantic	Any	Recommended	
11	Gurnard, Grey and Red	NE Atlantic	Any	Recommended	
12	Herring or Sild	MSC certified / Thames / North Sea / E English Channel	Any	Recommended	
13	Lemon Sole	Cornwall	Otter trawled	Recommended	
14	Lythe or Pollack	Cornwall	Line caught	Recommended	
15	Mackerel	MSC certified Cornwall	Line caught	Recommended	
16	Mussel	NE Atlantic	Hand harvested or farmed	Recommended	
17	Oyster, Pacific or Atlantic	NE Atlantic	Hand harvested or farmed	Recommended	
18	Pilchard or Sardine	Cornwall	Any	Recommended	
	Prawn, Common	Llyn Peninsula, North Wales	Creel caught	Recommended	
19	Salmon, Atlantic	Shetland, NW Scotland	Organically farmed or Freedom Food certified	Recommended	
	Salmon, Pacific	MSC certified Alaska		Recommended	Canned / frozen product sea freight
20	Scallop	NE Atlantic	Dive harvested only	Recommended	Not dredged
21	Scampi or Langoustine	W Scotland	Pot caught	Pot caught best option	
22	Sea bass	Cornwall	Line caught and tagged	Recommended	
23	Spider Crab	N.E. Atlantic	Pot caught only	Recommended	
24	Trout, Brown / Rainbow	Freshwater, UK	Organically farmed	Recommended	
25	Tuna, Skipjack	Pacific Western & Central and Maldives	Pole & line, handline or troll-caught	Recommended	Canned tuna only (frozen or fresh tuna not appropriate for NT menus)
26	Tuna, Yellowfin	Pacific Western & Central and Maldives, Atlantic	Pole & line, handline or troll-caught only	Recommended	(as above)
	Tuna, Skipjack / Yellowfin	Ghana, CE Atlantic Ocean, Pacific, Thailand, Seychelles, Indian Ocean, Indonesia	Dolphin Friendly, Pole & Line, Long line and purse seine	Permitted until Pole & line only becomes fully available	Canned tuna only (as above)
27	Whiting	English Channel	Any	Recommended	
28	Winkle	N.E. Atlantic	Hand gathered	Recommended	

More detail is available on <http://www.fishonline.org/information/>. This list will be reviewed as new information is gathered and updated on the intra and internet.

National Trust: PROHIBITED Fish list

updated August 2006

	Species	Origin	Method of capture	Comments	Alternatives
1	Alfonsinos / Golden Eye Perch	Any	Any	Not permitted	none
2	American Plaice	North West Atlantic	Any	Not permitted	none
3	Anchovy	Bay of Biscay	Any	Not permitted	
4	Argentine or Silver Smelt	Any	Any	Not permitted	none
5	Black Scabbardfish	Northern Stocks	Any	Not permitted	none
6	Blue Ling	NE Atlantic	Any	Not permitted	coley, pollack
7	Brill	North Sea	Any	Not permitted	Line caught sea bass
8	Chilean sea bass / Patagonian Tooth fish	Southern hemisphere	Any	Not permitted	none
9	Cod, Atlantic	Atlantic	Any (unless organically farmed*)	Not permitted	coley, Pollack, Whiting
10	Dogfish / Spurdog	Any	Any	Not permitted	none
11	Dover Sole	From depleted stocks	Any	Not permitted	MSC certified Dover Sole, Lemon sole
12	Eel, European	Any	Any	Not permitted	none
13	Greater Forkbeard	Any	Any	Not permitted	none
14	Grouper	Any	Any	Not permitted	none
15	Hake, European	Southern Stocks	Any	Not permitted	none
16	Halibut, Atlantic	Any	Any	Not permitted	none
17	Halibut, Greenland	Any	Any	Not permitted	none
18	Ling	From deepwater Stocks	Any	Not permitted	none
19	Marlin, Blue / Marlin, IndoPacific / Marlin, White	Any	Any	Not permitted	none
20	Monkfish (Anglerfish)	Any	Any	Not permitted	none
21	Nursehound	Any	Any	Not permitted	none
22	Orange Roughy	Any	Any	Not permitted	none
23	Plaice	Any	Any	Not permitted	MSC certified Dover Sole, Lemon sole
24	Rat or Rabbit fish	Any	Any	Not permitted	none
25	Ray	Any	Any	Not permitted	none
26	Red / Blackspot Bream	Any	Any	Not permitted	none
27	Redfish or Ocean Perch	Any	Any	Not permitted	none
28	Roundnose Grenadier	Any	Any	Not permitted	none
29	Salmon, Atlantic, Wild	Atlantic	Wild caught	Not permitted	Organically farmed or Freedom Food farmed salmon
30	Scampi or Langoustine	Atlantic	Trawl caught from Portugal	Not permitted but unlikely to be sourced	Pot or creel caught, or trawl caught from Northern Europe
31	Sea bass	Atlantic	Trawl caught	Not permitted	Handline caught sea bass
32	Shark	Any	Any	Not permitted	none
33	Skate	Any	Any	Not permitted	none
34	Snapper (Mutton, Cubera, Northern Red)	Tropics	Any	Not permitted	none
35	Sturgeon	Any	Any	Not permitted	Avruga (herring eggs)
36	Swordfish	Any	Any	Not permitted	
37	Tiger Prawn	Tropical	Any	Not permitted	North Atlantic Prawn, pot caught langoustine
38	Tuna, Albacore, Skipjack, Yellowfin	Any	Long-line and purse seine caught	To be de-listed as soon as pole and line becomes available	Canned Pacific Salmon, Freedom Food or organic Atlantic Salmon
39	Tuna, Bluefin, Bigeye	Any	Any	Not permitted	none
40	Turbot	Any	Any	Not permitted	Organically farmed turbot
41	Tusk (Torsk)	Any	Any	Not permitted	none
42	Wolffish	Any	Any	Not permitted	none