



Slow Food Facts

‘Catch me if you can’



Fish: it's a slippery issue

Like many natural resources, the world's fish populations are declining due to overfishing and mismanagement, pollution and climate change. In the past 30 years, global fish consumption has doubled and wild fish populations simply can't keep up with demand. Although Aquaculture (the farming of fish, shellfish and plants) is often presented as a sustainable alternative to wild-caught fish, it is heavily criticised for its detrimental impact on coastal ecosystems, the amounts of fishmeal used (made from wild fish), and excessive use of antibiotics and chemicals which may impact our health. There is also the labelling issue in Australia. We love our seafood, and generally want to buy sustainable, locally caught fish. However, while most of us think we're eating Australian seafood, around 72% of what we eat is actually imported from overseas.

Australia's weak labelling laws mean we're eating in the dark

Australia's weak seafood labelling laws mean we can't be sure what we're eating when we buy cooked seafood. Our current country of origin labelling laws only apply to raw seafood and do not cover fish sold in restaurants, fish-and-chips shops or hotels. More detailed and honest labelling of all seafood would help us all to make more sustainable choices. When it comes to sustainable choices, there is more. Did you know most people only buy 5 of the 70-80 fish species that are caught in one catch?

What you can do

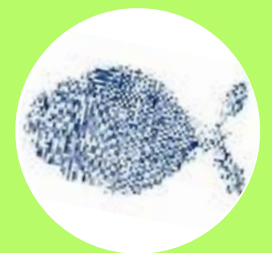
1. Individually we can't solve this global problem and we need politicians to do the right thing and strengthen national and international law. However, you can 'vote with your fork': be informed, know your fishermen, ask where your fish comes from and how it was caught. Buy local/seasonal.
2. Consider eating other varieties, not just salmon, prawns and tuna. Also, smaller forage fish (like anchovies or sardines) recover more quickly and consume less to reach maturity than top-level predators. And they're delicious too!
4. There are good guides or apps to help you make more sustainable seafood choices. Also consider watching Matthew Evans "what's the catch" (via SBS-on-demand) for more background info.

For more information visit our website (www.slowfoodaustralia.com.au) or Facebook page (@SlowFoodAustralia) or get in touch with your nearest Slow Food community.

Australians love their seafood and generally want to buy sustainable, locally caught fish. Yet **72% of all seafood Australians eat is imported from overseas.**



Intensive industrial fishing has the capacity and the technology to permanently damage fragile marine ecosystems by removing fish at an alarming rate. **It is estimated that 80% of the current world's fish stocks are being depleted at or above their capacity.**



Enormous quantities of fish (around 30 million tons) and other marine life forms are thrown back into the sea dead or wounded because there is no market or quota for them. This is both an environmental tragedy and an incredible waste of food.