

## NEWS RELEASE

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# LEADING OCEAN CONSERVATION GROUPS OFFER ADVICE ON CHOOSING SUSTAINABLE SUSHI

*Blue Ocean Institute, Environmental Defense Fund, Monterey Bay Aquarium  
collaborate to promote ocean-friendly selections*

Sushi lovers nationwide will soon have a way to make seafood choices that please the palate and safeguard the world's ocean wildlife.

On October 22, three leading ocean conservation organizations – Blue Ocean Institute, Environmental Defense Fund and the Monterey Bay Aquarium – will make available to the public, color-coded consumer guides ranking popular sushi selections based on whether they are prepared using seafood that's caught or farmed in ways that harm the ocean or pose a health risk to people.

While the consumer guides – in print, online and mobile device versions – differ in appearance, they are based on similar data, and offer one consistent message: Sushi choices by individual consumers have an impact on the future of the ocean.

“For the first time, sushi lovers have tools that enable them to join the growing movement of those making ocean-friendly choices that protect life in the seas now and for generations to come,” said Julie Pareles, executive director of Blue Ocean Institute ([www.blueocean.org](http://www.blueocean.org)).

“These new guides not only enable sushi lovers to choose fish that are caught or farmed responsibly, they also highlight selections that are healthy for them and their families,” said Tim Fitzgerald, marine scientist for Environmental Defense Fund ([www.edf.org](http://www.edf.org)).

“The reality is quite simple,” said Sheila Bowman, Seafood Watch outreach manager at the Monterey Bay Aquarium ([www.montereybayaquarium.org](http://www.montereybayaquarium.org)). “If you care about the future of the oceans, you'll avoid red-listed sushi.”

For sushi aficionados, that means both pleasant surprises – and some disappointments. Popular items like bluefin tuna (*hon maguro/kuro maguro*) and freshwater eel (*unagi*) are firmly on the “red” list, as is farmed salmon (*sake*). These species are either overfished, farmed with aquaculture methods that pollute the ocean, or caught using methods that destroy ocean habitats or kill large amounts of other sea life.

Items like wild-caught Alaska salmon (*sake*), farmed scallops (*hotate*) and Pacific halibut (*hirame*) are more sustainable choices, in part because they come from abundant, well-managed fisheries or – in the case of scallops – are raised using sustainable aquaculture methods.

All three guides offer a substantially consistent message about the best selections, as well as the fish to avoid when choosing sushi.

“While we consider similar factors in assessing each fishery, we each tabulate the environmental information in slightly different ways,” said Kate McLaughlin, Blue Ocean Institute’s Seafood Program Director. “That results in subtle variations for a handful of rankings.”

“The differences are minor,” Bowman said. “Regardless of which sushi guide people rely on, everyone from chefs to consumers now has a very clear picture of what their sushi choices mean for ocean wildlife.”

All three guides incorporate human health recommendations from Environmental Defense Fund, and fish that contain levels of mercury or PCBs that may pose a health risk to adults or children are flagged. Fisheries researchers from the Blue Ocean Institute and Monterey Bay Aquarium evaluated the seafood species included on the guides. The Monterey Bay Aquarium seafood rankings are the basis for items selected by Environmental Defense Fund for inclusion in its sushi guide.

Beginning October 22, Blue Ocean Institute sushi guides will be available at [www.blueocean.org](http://www.blueocean.org); Environmental Defense Fund guides at [www.edf.org/seafood](http://www.edf.org/seafood); and Monterey Bay Aquarium Seafood Watch sushi guides at [www.seafoodwatch.org](http://www.seafoodwatch.org)

Blue Ocean Institute, Environmental Defense Fund, and Monterey Bay Aquarium are also part of a larger consortium of marine conservation organizations known as the Conservation Alliance for Seafood Solutions ([www.solutionsforseafood.org](http://www.solutionsforseafood.org)). In May, the consortium released its “Common Vision for Environmentally Sustainable Seafood,” promoting steps companies can take to develop and implement comprehensive corporate policies on sustainable wild-caught and farmed seafood.

(See below for pocket guide cover images)

### **About Blue Ocean Institute**

Blue Ocean Institute works to inspire a closer relationship with the sea through science, art and literature.

Blue Ocean translates science into information people can understand and use to take action on behalf of the ocean. Blue Ocean's *From Sea to Table* program shares reliable information that enlightens personal choices and helps restore living abundance in the sea. In addition to wallet-sized seafood guides, Blue Ocean provides FishPhone, the nation's first sustainable seafood text messaging service (text FISH and the species name to 30644 for instant information). Additional programs focus on art and poetry, training chefs in sustainable seafood practices, and research and writing about ocean-related climate and chemistry change.

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

### **About the Environmental Defense Fund**

A leading national nonprofit organization, Environmental Defense Fund represents more than 500,000 members. Since 1967, Environmental Defense Fund has linked science, economics, law and innovative private-sector partnerships to create breakthrough solutions to the most serious environmental problems.

For more information, visit [www.edf.org](http://www.edf.org). Related link: [www.edf.org/seafood](http://www.edf.org/seafood)

### **About the Monterey Bay Aquarium**

The mission of the nonprofit Monterey Bay Aquarium is to inspire conservation of the oceans. Through its award-winning exhibits, education programs and cutting-edge marine research, it has established itself as a leader among aquariums worldwide. It is consistently ranked as the No. 1 aquarium in the United States and the top aquarium for families. It has reached more than 43 million visitors, and tens of millions more through its website and through outreach programs like Seafood Watch. The Aquarium's Sustainable Seafood Initiative works to transform the seafood market in ways that support sustainable fisheries practices and fish-farming operations. [www.montereybayaquarium.org](http://www.montereybayaquarium.org), [www.seafoodwatch.org](http://www.seafoodwatch.org)

