



Sustainability Criteria



The following sustainability criteria were developed as part of the Sustainable Seafood Initiative Menu Assessment Program. Sustainable Seafood Initiative partners may submit their menu for an assessment of the sustainability of the seafood items; the results serve as an educational tool for chefs and restaurants. These criteria are meant to be simple and transparent, providing non-scientists with a basic explanation of seafood sustainability. At the same time, they are meant to give a comprehensive overview of both wild and farmed seafood sustainability issues.

Wild Seafood Products

Stock Status:

- Is the stock status known? If so, is the population overfished or experiencing overfishing?
- If overfished, is the stock under a rebuilding plan?

Fishery Management Plan:

- Has a stock assessment been conducted? How recent is it?
- How comprehensive are the data?
- Who is responsible for managing the fishery and what regulations are in place?
- Is enforcement of these regulations effective?

Ecosystem Impacts:

- How is the product harvested?
- Does the gear interact with or harm the sea floor or other marine habitat?
- Is there bycatch in the fishery? If so, what is the impact on those populations and is bycatch being minimized to the extent practicable?

Farmed Seafood Products

Production System:

- Is the species native to the region?
- What system is used to raise the product and how does it interact with the surrounding environment?

Inputs:

- What is the farmed animal fed? If fishmeal and oil are used, are they used efficiently and minimized? From where is it sourced?
- Are chemicals used (i.e. pesticides, antibiotics etc.) and how much?

Outputs

- How is waste from the aquaculture system controlled and measured? Is it impacting the surrounding environment?
- What is the likelihood and history of escapes from the farm? How have or might those escapes impact the surrounding environment?

Government Regulations

- Who is responsible for managing the environmental impacts of the aquaculture operations? What regulations are in place for monitoring and controlling impacts?