



What do German consumers think about labelling, seafood guides and other information about (sustainable) seafood?

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Consumers' information needs



- Fish market very diverse and complex from a consumers' point of view
- Consumers need information in order to make decisions in line with their preferences
- But consumers are frequently overstrained by the information offered



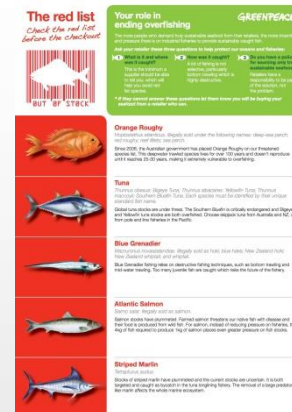
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Communication about seafood

- Mandatory indications
- Sustainability labels
- Seafood guides
- Sustainability policies of the retail



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Analysis of...

- how consumers perceive different information offers and if they use them
- how consumers perceive sustainability policies of the retail

Recommendations for the consumer communication of (sustainable) seafood



What we have done

- 3 focus groups with in total 29 participants in Brunswick and Hamburg
 - 66% women
 - 62% no college or university degree
 - 83% consumed fish every week
 - 62% look for sustainable fish
- Thematic content analysis

Perception of mandatory indications

- Use and awareness of indications was limited
- But generally appreciated...
 - increase transparency → trust
 - support informed decisions
- Most used indications
 - commercial designation
 - geographic origin
- Critique
 - hard to find
 - uninformed service personal



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Perception of sustainability labels

- Many participants stated to use sustainability labels in their purchase decision
- Labels as indication of quality and sustainability
- Online information about labelling schemes expected in addition to labels on/nearby products



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Perception of sustainability labels

- Multitude of labels overstrains participants
- Wish for one simple, unified indication like the EU organic label
- Trust in a sustainability label declines if widely present





Perception of sustainability labels

- But skepticism towards labels (including organic ones):
 - is compliance regularly controlled?
 - possible misuse due to
 - private bodies issuing labelling schemes
 - certification bodies paid by producers
- Wish for
 - independent and periodic third party control

Perception of seafood guides

- Majority of the participants was unaware of the existence of seafood guides
- If participants knew seafood guides, they mostly mentioned online applications
- Perception ranged from useful to too complicated
- Further critique
 - inconsistency between guides
 - credibility of NGOs?



Bente Stachowske / Greenpeace

Perception of sustainability policies of the retail



- Welcomed addition to sustainability labels
- Comfortable → reduces search efforts
- But:
 - policies might increase prices
 - can retailers control whole value chain?
 - who does control the commitment of the retail?



WWF Supports EDEKA in Expanding Sustainability

EDEKA will help to preserve the environment and natural resources for future generations. The WWF, one of the world's biggest independent nature conservation organisations, provides EDEKA as a partner with sound scientific advice in its efforts to improve sustainability in its operations.



Edeka.de

We Get Involved

The objective in this partnership is to achieve a significant reduction in EDEKA's ecological footprint. Vital measures include improved preservation of natural resources along the entire process chain, the expansion of the range of environmentally compatible products, and clear labelling for more sustainable alternative products.



Links

Organic Products

edeka.de/wwf (German)

wwf.de/fischerei (German)

Download

WWF Progress Report 2015
12.59 MB
PDF



Perception of existing information

- Consumers are used to the existence of sustainability labels
 - expected as quality indicator
- Sustainability policies by the retail mostly welcomed
- Minimal use of seafood guides
- Existing information appreciated
 - but information fatigue
 - increase in information at point of sale unnecessary/
potentially counterproductive

Recommendations for an improved communication



- Mandatory indications:
 - display of the geographic origin at the front of the package
 - better informed service personal
- Sustainability labels:
 - homepages are a must-have (informative and easily understandable)
 - if a label is widely present at the market → efforts are needed to sustain trust (e.g., steady improvement of underlying standards)
- Seafood guides:
 - need to reduce complexity, increase convenience

Suggestion for increasing the consumption of sustainable fish



- Combining sustainability policies of retailers with sustainability labels
 - Addresses different consumer groups, those who...
 - actively look for labels
 - want to rely on retailers



Thanks!



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