

Ethically conscious cook

45 mins

Guides

About this activity

Too many fish are being taken out of the ocean. Learn about overfishing through fun games, then find out how to make sustainable fish choices for ethically conscious cooking.

Outcomes:

- Learn about the link between food choices and the environment
- Learn more about where food comes from
- Learn how to make sustainable fish choices

You will need:

For the Let's go fishing game:

- 2 large sheets of fabric

For Top 5 fish:

- Selection of menus from local takeaways or restaurants
- [Fish dish recording sheet](#)
- [Fish switch sheet](#)

For the Catch it if you can game:

- A spoon, pot and [Fishing catch sheet](#) for every person (or piece of paper)
- Bowl for each six filled with 30 dried peas, 30 popcorn kernels, 30 beads. You can use any items as long as they're sufficiently different.
- Extra peas, kernels and beads for refills. There are 2 refills (max 60) of each type for each group needed if none were taken out.

Overfishing means catching fish faster than they can reproduce. Nearly all the world's fish stocks are fully or over-exploited from fishing – too many fish are being taken out of the ocean.

Part 1 Let's go fishing

If you have time you could warm up with this game. Otherwise, skip this and go straight to Part 2.

1. Mark out a playing area and line everyone up on one side. These are the 'fish' who must run to the other side without being caught. Choose a 'fisher'. Their job is to catch fish by tapping them on the arm. Once a fish is caught, they're out of the game. Ask the group to run across the playing area. How many fish are caught?
2. Now change the rules. Fish who are caught turn into fishers. How many fish are caught?
3. Finally give large sheets to two pairs. How many fish can they catch in the sheets?
4. Talk about how many fish were caught by the different fishing methods. Link this to overfishing and the problems with too many fish being taken from the ocean.

Part 2 Catch it if you can

1. This game shows the effect of catching too many of one type of fish:
 - Give each six a bowl containing 30 dried peas (cod), 30 popcorn kernels (porpoise) and 30 beads (turtles)
 - Give each person a spoon (net) and pot (boat)
 - You'll fish 3 times for 20 seconds each time. The aim is to use the spoon to catch as many 'cod' as possible. Try to avoid porpoise or turtles, but if you catch them, put them in the pot too. The six that catches the most cod will win
 - Fish for 20 seconds, stop and record how many of each species each girl caught on the [Fishing catch sheet](#)
 - Top up the bowls by adding one new pea, kernel or bead for each one remaining in the bowl
 - Repeat this twice
2. When fishing is finished, add up the totals. Which group caught the most cod? What strategy did they use? What did everyone think about how quickly the number of cod could decrease, and what does this tell us about fishing?

Part 3 Top 5 fish

1. In small groups, look at a selection of takeaway or restaurant menus and record the fish used on the [Fish dish recording sheet](#).
2. What are the most common fish and seafood used in the dishes in the menus? 80% of the seafood we eat in the UK is made up of five species: cod, haddock, salmon, tuna, prawns. Is this the same in the restaurant menus? Talk about the problems this could create.

Part 4 Make a fish switch

The reliance on the same species is putting those fish populations at risk. What could we do to help the problem of overfishing? Take a look at the [Fish switch sheet](#) for ideas. Can you plan a menu using alternative fish?

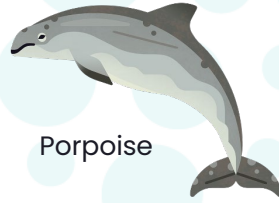
If you have time, you could make a [Fishy fridge magnet](#) and give it to someone who likes cooking. They could put the magnet on their fridge to encourage them to switch fish.

Fishing catch

Names in your group:



Cod



Porpoise



Turtle

Catch 1

	Cod	Porpoise	Turtles
Number caught			

Catch 2

	Cod	Porpoise	Turtles
Number caught			

Catch 3

	Cod	Porpoise	Turtles
Number caught			

Overall

	Cod	Porpoise	Turtles
Total caught			
Total left in bowl			

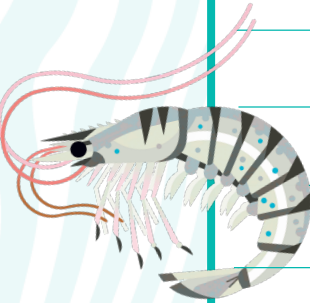


Fish dish recording sheet

Make a tally chart of the number of each type of fish.



Type of fish	Number of dishes
Salmon	
Cod	
Haddock	
Prawn	
Canned tuna	
Fresh tuna	
Sea bass	
Other	



Can you switch fish?

The most-eaten fish in the UK are salmon, cod, haddock, prawn and canned tuna. We eat so much of these fish that the stocks are in danger of running out. Try to switch your fish choices to be more sustainable. Check your fish choices at the [Good Fish Guide](#).

Can you switch fish?



The problem

93% of the world's fish stocks are fully or over-exploited from fishing. Some fish are as endangered as the Bengal tiger!

- 80% of the seafood we eat in the UK is made up of five species: **cod, haddock, salmon, tuna and prawns.**
- Some fishing methods like trawling and dredging can cause lasting damage to the seabed and marine habitats. Longlines and gill nets can accidentally catch vulnerable species like turtles and sharks.




















What you can do

Seafood has a much smaller carbon footprint than most land-based proteins. If fish farming is well managed, it will play an important role in supplying future populations with food.

- **Avoid red rated fish**, as they could be endangered, caught using damaging methods of fishing or farming, or there could be illegal activity involved in catching or farming it.
- **Use the Good Fish Guide** when choosing fish and seafood. It has all the advice you need to choose sustainable seafood. You can find it at mcsuk.org/goodfishguide.
- **Buy fish with eco labels:**



Try new fish!

Instead of...	Why not try...		
 Cod	 European Hake	 Coley	 Plaice
 Haddock	 European Hake	 Coley	 Farmed turbot
 Salmon	 Rainbow trout	 Plaice	
 Prawns	 Langoustine	 Brown crab	
 Tuna	 Mackerel	 Wild-caught sardines	

Find the Best Choice seafood near you

MARINE CONSERVATION SOCIETY

Buy local, Support local



Langoustines

West of Scotland

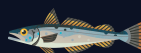
Pot/Creel



Dover sole

Bristol Channel

Demersal otter trawl



Hake

Cornwall

Gill or fixed net



King scallop

Lyme Bay Hand-dived



European lobster

Jersey Pot/Creel



Brown crab

Shetland

Pot/creel



Megrim

North Sea (north)

Demersal otter trawl



Haddock

North Sea

Demersal otter trawl/
Demersal seine net/
Longline



Dab

North Sea

Demersal otter trawl/
Demersal seine net



Plaice

English Channel (east) & North Sea

Demersal otter trawl

Best Choice

UK farmed seafood



Mussels

Suspended Rope Culture / Bottom Culture



King & Queen scallops

Suspended Rope Culture / Bottom Culture



Rainbow trout

Freshwater ponds



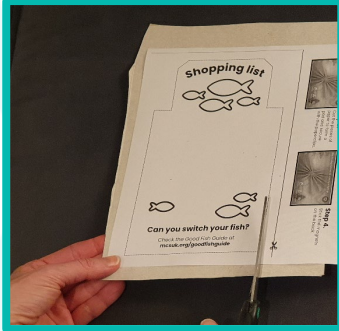
Atlantic halibut

Onshore open-circuit system

Make a fishy fridge magnet

You will need:

- A copy of this template
- Piece of card e.g. cereal box
- Small magnets
- Pens or pencils
- Two paperclips
- Sheets of paper
- Glue
- Scissors



Step 1

Place this template on a piece of card and cut out the shape.



Step 2

Stick the card to the paper and colour in the fish.



Step 3

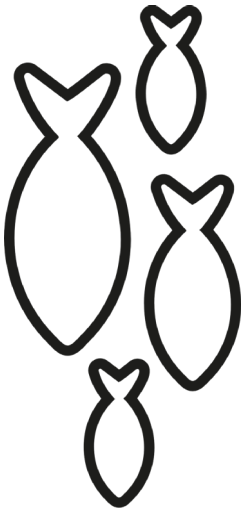
Stick the magnet to the card on the back.



Step 4

Decorate the magnet. Cut the pieces of paper to form a pad and secure with the paperclips.

shopping list



Can you switch your fish?

Check the Good Fish Guide at
mcsuk.org/goodfishguide