

United Kingdom, Sainsbury's remains the largest retailer with MSC certified products

New figures from the Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) show that the UK's largest retailer of MSC certified products remains Sainsbury's, followed by Waitrose, which have both strengthened their sustainable seafood offer. Meanwhile, discount supermarket Lidl has achieved the third place.

Lidl has more than doubled its range of sustainably sourced seafood over the last year, proposing its customers from herring fillets to Scottish mussels in white wine sauce.

More than half of the chain's wild-caught seafood range (79 out of 148 products) now carries the MSC's blue tick ecolabel, which gives shoppers an independent assurance that the product has been fished sustainably and is traceable from ocean to plate.

Sainsbury's, which has held the first place for six years, now offers its shoppers a record-setting 200 MSC labelled products - more than twice the number offered by any other UK retailer.

Currently, 76 per cent of Sainsbury's wild-caught seafood has been MSC certified as sustainable, and the supermarket has made a commitment to independently certify 100 per cent of its seafood as sustainable by 2020.

On the other hand, Waitrose has long been committed to sourcing sustainably and within the last 12 months, it has achieved MSC certification for several new products, including tuna niçoise sandwiches and salads that are served in Waitrose cafés.

Aldi also increased its commitment to ecolabelled seafood last year, now offering 54 products that are MSC certified as sustainable, a far bigger range than most of the 'big four' and more than some grocers known for their ethical sourcing, such as M&S and the Co-op, which itself added nine more MSC product lines last year.

An independent consumer research shows that more than two thirds of UK shoppers believe it is important for supermarkets to sell sustainably caught seafood, and consumers are more likely to trust independent ecolabels than brands' own sustainability claims.

However, three of the UK's biggest supermarkets – Asda, Morrisons and Tesco – along with M&S, actually sell fewer MSC certified seafood products now than they did a year ago.

UK shoppers can now choose from more than 1,100 MSC labelled products – more than twice as many as in 2012 – including popular species such as cod, haddock, salmon and tuna, branded products including Birds Eye fish fingers, as well as health supplements, pet food and baby food.

Source : <http://fis.com/fis/worldnews/worldnews.asp?l=e&ndb=1&id=81984>