



OCEAN WISE SEAFOOD
SCORING METHODOLOGY
AND RATING SYSTEM

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Ocean Wise Fisheries & Seafood Science Team

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ACRONYM LIST

ETP	Endangered, Threatened, or Protected Species*
FAM	Marine Stewardship Council Fisheries Assessment Methodology
OWS	Ocean Wise Seafood Program
MSC	Marine Stewardship Council
P1	Marine Stewardship Council Principle 1: Sustainable fish stocks
P2	Marine Stewardship Council Principle 2: Minimizing environmental impacts
P3	Marine Stewardship Council Principle 3: Effective management
PI	Marine Stewardship Council Performance Indicator
RBF	Marine Stewardship Council Risk Based Framework
SFW	Monterey Bay Aquarium Seafood Watch Program

***Bold text** at terminology's first use denotes its presence in the [Glossary](#)

SETTING THE OCEAN WISE SEAFOOD BAR FOR SUSTAINABILITY

SOURCES OF INFORMATION LEADING TO OCEAN WISE SEAFOOD RATINGS

To reduce effort duplication and limit confusion around multiple organizations assessing the same **seafood**¹, Ocean Wise Seafood (OWS) utilizes three main sources of information when developing **sustainable** seafood ratings:

1. OWS **wild capture fishery** and **aquaculture assessments**;
2. Monterey Bay Aquarium's Seafood Watch Program (SFW) fishery and aquaculture assessments;
3. Assessments of **eco-certified** seafood where assessment **Standards** have been benchmarked² to the Ocean Wise Seafood **Scoring Methodology and Ratings System**.

RECOMMENDATION METHODOLOGY AND RATINGS SYSTEM

OWS utilizes the program's **Scoring Methodology and Rating System** to communicate seafood's ecological sustainability. The Methodology and Ratings System consists of:

1. Numerical scoring for determination of ratings for seafood assessed using:
 - a. Seafood Watch Standards for **wild capture fisheries**, **salmonid-specific fisheries**, and **aquaculture** (SFW 2020a; SFW 2020b; SFW 2020c); or
 - b. Eco-certified seafood, excluding products sourced from Marine Stewardship Council certified fisheries; and
2. **Decision rules** for development of ratings as devised within an assessment **Standard** or as developed by the Ocean Wise Seafood program.

The Methodology and Rating System for determining OWS ratings from the aforementioned sources are unique to on the origin of the original assessment (i.e., which Standard was applied), and in the case of Marine Stewardship Council certified fisheries, the **flag(s)** of the certified fishery's **client group(s)**. The OWS Methodology and Ratings System undergoes review at regular intervals to ensure OWS incorporates best available science and continues to meet a global standard for generation and maintenance of seafood sustainability ratings. The review process for the Ocean Wise's use of numerical scoring is outlined in OWS (2020a), while the review process for ratings determined for Marine Stewardship Council certified fisheries is currently in development.

¹ **Bold text** at terminology's first use denotes its presence in the [Glossary](#)

² Further information regarding SFW eco-certification benchmarking available at <https://www.seafoodwatch.org/recommendations/eco-certified-seafood>

DEVELOPING OCEAN WISE SEAFOOD RATINGS

RATINGS RESULTING FROM OWS AND SFW ASSESSMENTS

ASSESSMENT STANDARDS

OWS and SFW use the same written assessment Standards to determine ratings for seafood sourced from [wild capture fisheries](#), including [salmonid-specific fisheries](#), and [aquaculture](#) operations (SFW 2020a; SFW 2020b; SFW 2020c). These Standards are developed and maintained by SFW and are considered by OWS as best-practice Standards for assessing seafood’s ecological sustainability, which ensures OWS ratings reflect both our guiding principles and program ethics (OWS 2020b).

SCORING METHODOLOGY AND RATING SYSTEM

SFW ratings are based on a traffic light system of red (‘avoid’), yellow (‘good alternative’), and green (‘best choice’), while OWS uses a binary system that assigns ratings as either **Ocean Wise Recommended** or **Not Recommended** (Figures 1 and 2). OWS and SFW assessments develop ratings by scoring **Factors** under each assessment **Criterion** (for detail see [Appendix 1](#)) to generate a final numeric **overall score** for seafood sourced from either wild capture fishery (including salmonid fishery) and aquaculture operations. This overall score is taken as the weighted geometric average of all assessment Criteria. Both OWS and SFW assess fisheries out to a maximum overall score of five (5), and aquaculture operations to a maximum overall score of ten (10). Each seafood rating is determined by its overall score and the presence of **critical score(s)** within the scoring of some Criteria, dependent on the assessment Standard (see [Appendix 3](#)). In addition, ratings for seafood produced by aquaculture utilize an additional decision rule, whereby no more than one Criterion may score less than 3.33 (equivalent to SFW ‘avoid’).

WILD CAPTURE FISHERIES

To be recommended by Ocean Wise, a seafood sourced from wild capture fisheries (including salmonid-specific fisheries) must have an assessment **overall score** of at least 2.8 out of 5 with no **critical scores**, which captures all SFW ‘best choice’ and high performing ‘good alternative’ recommendations.

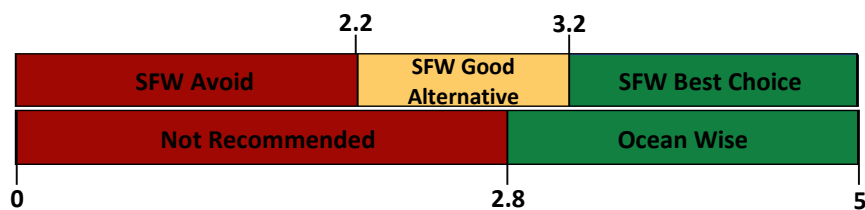


Figure 1. Comparison of OWS and SFW sustainability lines for wild capture fishery products.

AQUACULTURE

To be recommended as Ocean Wise, seafood sourced from aquaculture operations must have an overall score of at least 5.5 out of 10, cannot have a critical score for any Criterion, and cannot have more than one Criterion scoring less than 3.33, which is equal to the SFW avoid.

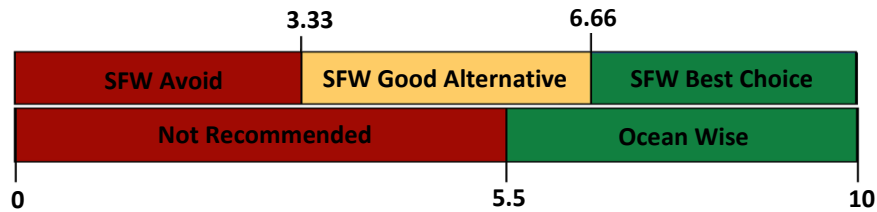


Figure 2. Comparison of OWS and SFW sustainability lines for seafood sourced from aquaculture operations.

DEVELOPING RATINGS FOR SEAFOOD SOURCED FROM MARINE STEWARDSHIP COUNCIL CERTIFIED FISHERIES

ASSESSMENT STANDARDS

OWS ratings for Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) certified fisheries are possible due to benchmarking carried out by Seafood Watch. The benchmarking process compared the two programs' assessment Standards and established a Seafood Watch assessment Overall Score for all fisheries meeting certification requirements under the Marine Stewardship Council Fisheries Assessment Methodology (FAM)³.

SCORING METHODOLOGY AND RATING SYSTEM

The Seafood Watch benchmarking exercise assigned an Overall Score of 2.38 out of 5 across Marine Stewardship Council certified fisheries. This Overall Score is below the OWS Line for recommendation of seafood sourced from wild capture fisheries (2.8 out of 5) (Figure 3).

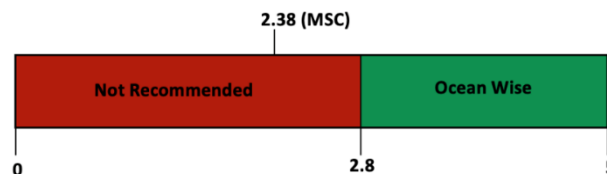


Figure 3. Comparison of OWS Line and Marine Stewardship Council benchmark scoring

³ Benchmarking results apply only to MSC certified fisheries assessed using the standard FAM methodology in assessment of P1. It does not cover certified fisheries where the [Risk-Based Framework](#) (RBF) was used to score target species (under PI 1.1.1.). As the RBF and FAM were considered by SFW to merit the same scores under P2, use of RBF for P2 assessment is covered by benchmarking.

Further, Marine Stewardship Council Principle 2 was found to lack hard limits on quantifying and mitigating impacts of bycatch on **endangered, threatened, or protected species (ETP)**, resulting in a benchmarking score of ‘red, very high concern’ for Marine Stewardship Council Principle 2 (Figure 4). As a result, OWS uses a series of decision rules to ensure Ocean Wise recommended seafood sourced from Marine Stewardship Council certified fisheries meets the OWS sustainability threshold for recommendation.

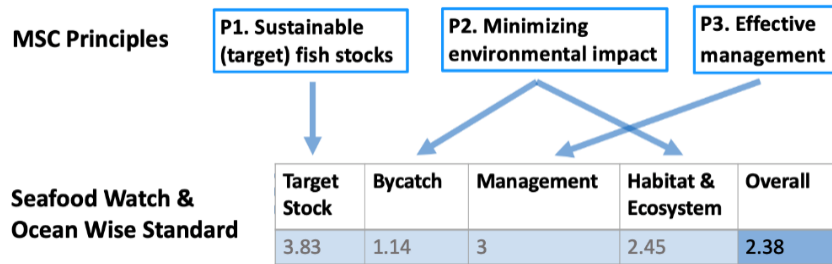


Figure 4. Mapping and scoring of Marine Stewardship Council Principles to SFW Criteria.

DECISION RULES FOR MARINE STEWARDSHIP COUNCIL CERTIFIED FISHERIES

Ocean Wise seafood recommends **ALL** seafood sourced from Marine Stewardship Council certified fisheries **EXCEPT** in cases where **ANY** of the following situations apply for a **unit of certification (UoC)**:

- The unit of certification (UoC) has **open condition(s)** relating fishery interactions with **endangered, threatened, or protected (ETP) species**; *AND/OR*
- The MSC **Risk Based Framework (RBF)** was used to score MSC Standard **Principle 1**; *AND/OR*
- There is a formal **stakeholder objection(s)** to a certification; *AND/OR*
- The certified **client group** is involved in recent or ongoing lawsuit(s) relating directly to fishing activity; *AND/OR*
- There is any **rightsholder** objection to a certification (Canadian fisheries only).

DEVELOPING RATINGS FOR BENCHMARKED ECO-CERTIFICATIONS (EXCLUDING MSC)

ASSESSMENT STANDARDS

Development of OWS ratings for eco-certified seafood sourced from aquaculture operations is possible using the SFW criteria to guide the assignment of scores to specific combinations of eco-certifications x species x region x harvest/culture method and do not provide broad coverage across an eco-certification (except in the case of Marine Stewardship Council certified fisheries as discussed [above](#)).

To learn more about the specific methodology employed in these benchmarking exercises consult the [SFW Eco-certification webpage](#). Methodology for generating a rating for eco-certified seafood (excluding those sources from Marine Stewardship Council certified fisheries) is identical to that described in the [ratings resulting from Ocean Wise Seafood and Seafood Watch Assessments](#) section above.

FISHERIES CRITERIA

The Seafood Watch [Standard for Capture Fisheries](#) is applied to assess seafood sourced from wild capture fisheries against four Criteria (Figure 4) to determine if:

- Abundance of **target** and **incidentally captured stocks**/species is maintained over the long term at levels that sustain the species; ability to fulfill its **ecological role**;
- The fishery has a management system in place that enforces all local, nation and international laws, utilizes best available scientific advice to inform management decisions, utilizes stakeholder inclusion in the management process, and adheres to the **precautionary approach** to responding to changing conditions; and
- The fishery impacts the productivity, diversity, **structure**, and **function** of habitats and the greater ecosystems.

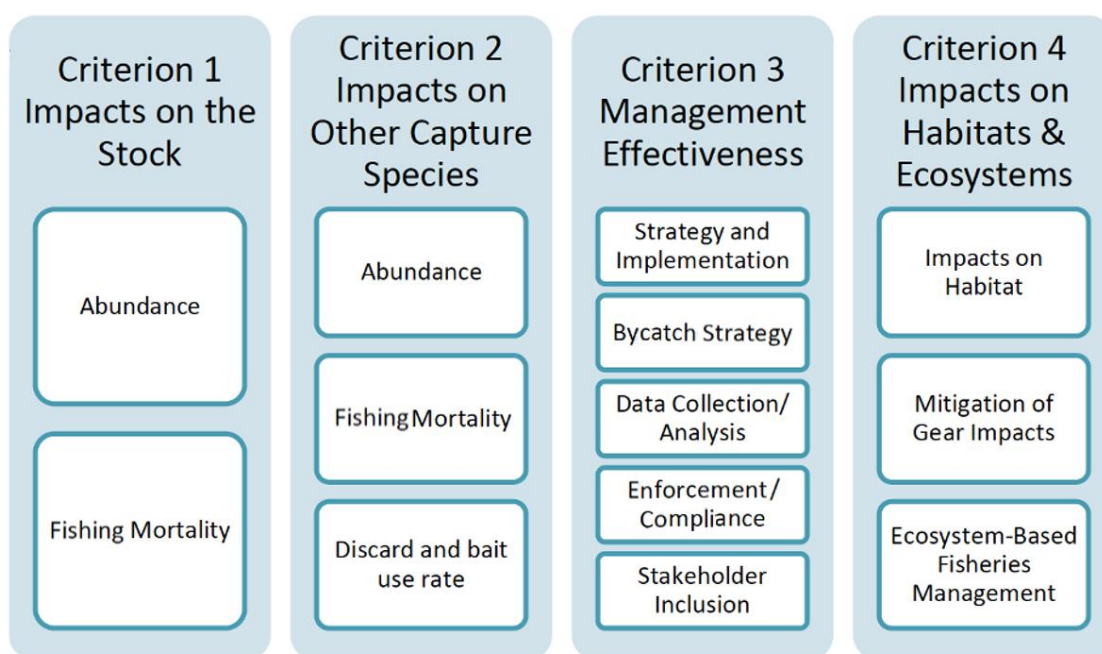


Figure 4. The four Criteria and thirteen associated Factors within the SFW Standard for Fisheries (SFW 2020d).

SALMONID FISHERY CRITERIA

For salmonid species, SFW utilizes a [modified version of the Standard for Fisheries](#) which includes an additional assessment Criterion (C5X) to account for the significant variation in salmonid fisheries from typical wild capture fisheries and the impacts of this variation on the ecological sustainability of harvest opportunities (Figure 5). This additional Criterion provides opportunity for consideration of the impact of harvest supplementation in the form of artificial hatchery production in addition to the other Factors discussed above.

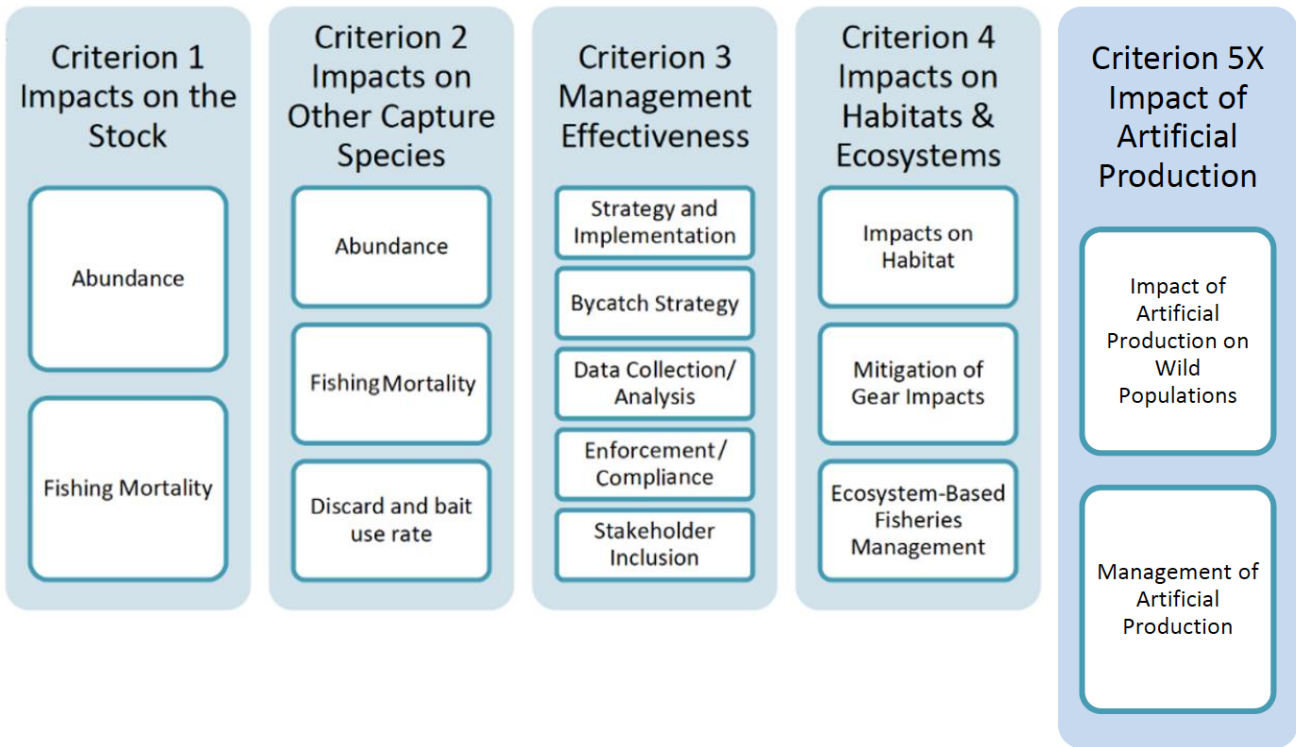


Figure 5. The five Criteria and fifteen associated Factors in the SFW Standard for salmonid fisheries (SFW 2020d).

AQUACULTURE CRITERIA

The Seafood Watch [Standard for Aquaculture](#) includes a set of ten Criteria that are used to assess the ecological sustainability of seafood cultivated in different production systems at different operational scales (individual farm to international). This Standard includes three exceptional Criteria (8X, 9X, and 10X) that are not relevant to all aquaculture production, but which are used to assess Factors identified as significant concerns within production practices where they are relevant (Figure 6). In contrast to the scoring of all other Factors within Criteria 1-7 (which are scored positively to contribute to the Overall Score), Criteria 8X – 10X are assessed negative scores which are subtracted from the seafood’s Overall Score for those production methods where it is assessed. For more information regarding the scoring of all Criteria refer to (SFW 2020a).

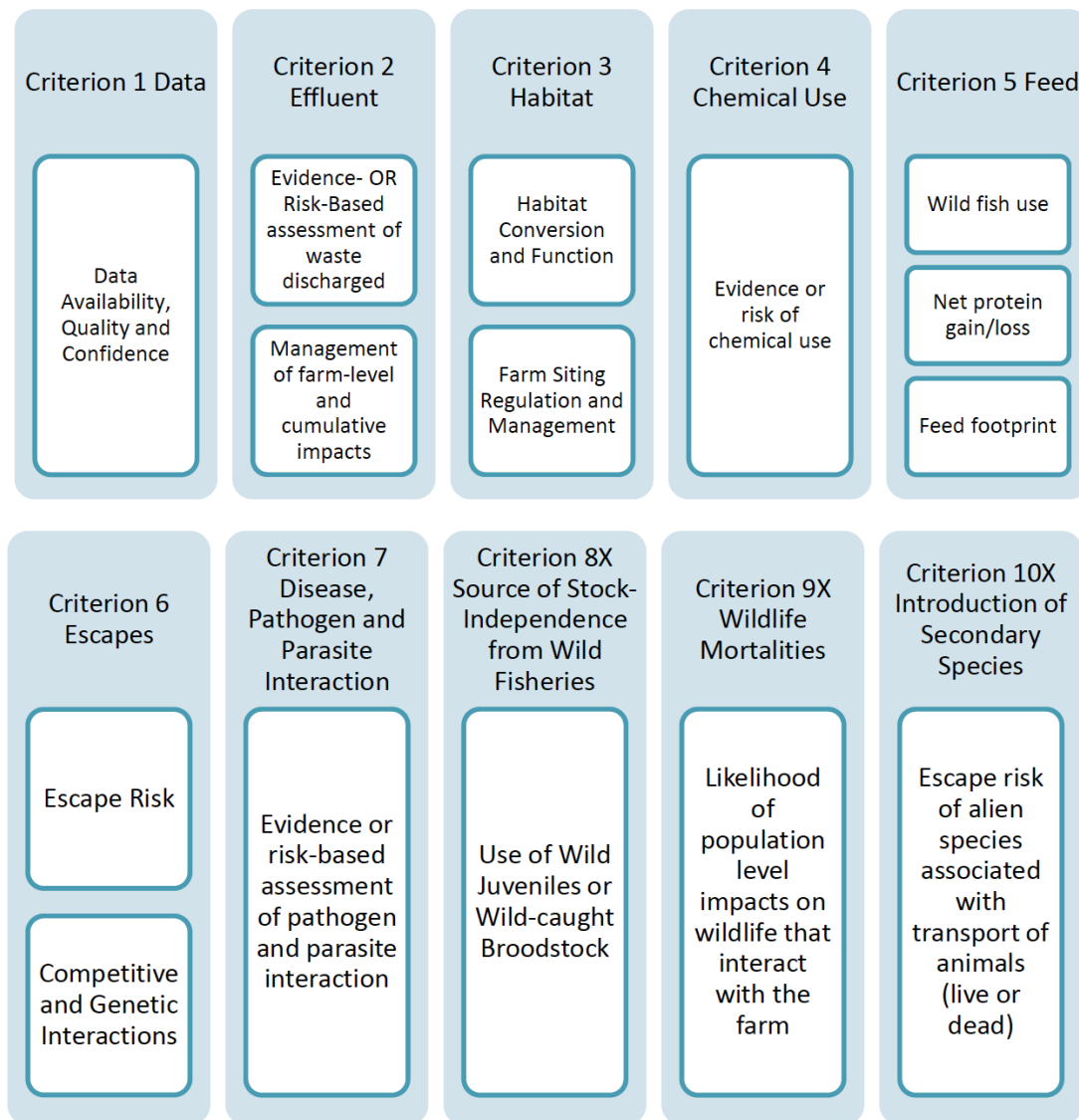


Figure 6. The five Criteria and fifteen associated Factors in the SFW Standard Aquaculture (SFW 2020d).

APPENDIX 2: COMPARING OWS AND MARINE STEWARDSHIP COUNCIL STANDARD SCORING

SCOPE OF A SEAFOOD RATING

Seafood assessed using Seafood Watch assessment Standards: SFW Standards specify each wild capture fishery seafood rating based on a unique combinations of harvested species x location x method.

Seafood assessed using Marine Stewardship Council assessment Standards: MSC certified seafood is assessed at the Unit of Certification (UoC) level (species x location x method x client group) with each unique combination resulting in a single rating (i.e., one rating for each UoC). As a MSC certified fishery can be composed of multiple UoCs (e.g., multiple client groups, species targeted, or locations of fishing activity), OWS ratings occur at the UoC level.

SCORING SUSTAINABILITY

The final SFW assessment score for each seafood comes as a single Overall Score, derived as the weighted average of the four SFW Criterion scores, with individual Criteria scored as the weighted average of Criterion Factor scores. Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) certification assessments are scored to three final Principle Level Scores obtained as the average across performance indicators composing each of the three Principles of Assessment.

In contrast to Ocean Wise's binary ratings scoring (<2.8 = Not Recommended, ≥ 2.8 = Ocean Wise Recommended), the Marine Stewardship Council utilizes a traffic light scoring system where performance indicators and Principles are assessed as a FAIL (resulting in failure to certify), unconditional pass (score ≥ 80) which MSC defines as global best practice, or conditional pass (score $\geq 60 \leq 80$) (Figure 6). Performance indicators scoring a conditional pass are assessed one or more conditions that assign timelines and client group actions to maintain certification.

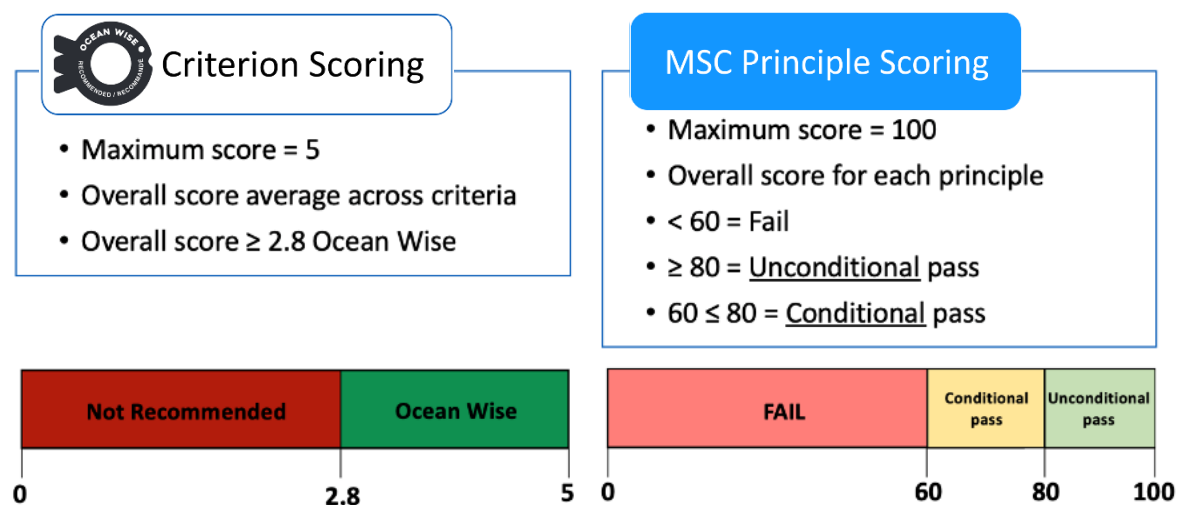


Figure 7. Variation in scoring procedure between OWS and the Marine Stewardship Council.

APPENDIX 3: OCEAN WISE SCORING AND DECISION RULES

Table 1. Wild capture fisheries

Ocean Wise Rating	Assessment Source	Scoring / Decision Rules	Justification
Ocean Wise Recommended	OWS or SFW Assessment	Assessment overall Score ≥ 2.8 and no critical scores *	Assessed sources scoring greater than minimum score or which meets decision rule requirements for recommendation. Recommended sources are aligned with OWS guiding principles & are ecologically sustainable (well managed; cause minimal harm to habitats, greater ecosystem, & non-target species).
	MSC Certified Fishery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No open ETP[†] condition(s) and/or No risk-based framework (RBF) for Principle 1 (P1) and/or No formal stakeholder objection(s)[‡] and/or No ongoing or recent litigation and/or Canada Only: No rightsholder objection(s) 	
	Eco-certified fishery (excluding MSC)	SFW Rating Overall Score ≥ 2.8 and no critical score(s) *	
Not Recommended	OWS or SFW Assessment	Assessment Overall Score < 2.8 and/or critical score(s) *	Assessed sources scoring less than minimum score or which does not meet decision rule requirements for recommendation. Not Recommended sources are not aligned with OWS guiding principles & ecologically unsustainable due to uncertainty & high risk of impacts, critical conservation concerns, &/or insufficient management.
	MSC Certified Fishery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Open ETP[†] condition(s) and/or Risk-based framework (RBF) for Principle 1 (P1) and/or Formal stakeholder objection(s)[‡] and/or Indigenous objection exists and/or Ongoing or recent litigation and/or Canada Only: Rightsholder objection(s) 	
	Eco-certified fishery (excluding MSC)	SFW Avoid Rating or Overall Score < 2.8 and/or critical score(s) *	

*Critical scores are defined within the scoring of SFW assessment criteria (i.e., Impacts on other capture species: WCF-C2, Management: WCF-C3 &/OR C3.1 &/OR C3.6, Impacts on the habitat and ecosystem: WCF-C4 &/OR C4.3 as defined within the SFW (2020b) and SFW (2020c)).

† MSC is currently the only fishery eco-certification body for which OWS wild capture fishery scoring has been assessed by the Monterey Bay Aquarium Seafood Watch Program.

‡ Conditions surrounding MSC Principle 2.3, endangered, threatened, or protected (ETP) species.

‡ The MSC objection procedure is described within [Annex PD](#) of the MSC Fisheries Certification Process. (MSC 2020)

Table 2. Aquaculture (cultured seafood)

Ocean Wise Rating	Assessment Source	Scoring / Decision Rules	Justification
Ocean Wise Recommended	OWS or SFW Assessment	Assessment Overall Score ≥ 5.5 and no critical scores* and/or Criterion scoring < 3.33 (SFW red)	Assessed sources scoring greater than minimum score required for recommendation. These sources are aligned with our guiding principles & are ecologically sustainable (well managed; cause minimal harm to habitats, greater ecosystem, & wild populations).
	Eco-certified operation	SFW Ratings Overall Score ≥ 5.5 and no critical scores* and/or Criterion scoring < 3.33 (SFW red)	
Not Recommended	OWS or SFW Assessment	Assessment Overall Score < 5.5 and/or critical score(s)* and/or Criterion scoring < 3.33 (SFW red)	Assessed sources scoring less than minimum score required for recommendation. These sources are not aligned with our guiding principles & and are ecologically unsustainable due to uncertainty & high risk of impacts, critical conservation concerns, &/or impacts on wild populations & habitats.
	Eco-certified operation	SFW Avoid Rating; Overall Score of < 5.5 and/or critical score(s)* and/or Criterion scoring < 3.33 (SFW red)	

*Critical scores are defined within the scoring of SFW assessment criteria (i.e., Impacts on other capture species: WCF-C2, Management: WCF-C3 &/OR C3.1 &/OR C3.6, Impacts on the habitat and ecosystem: WCF-C4 &/OR C4.3 as defined within SFW (2020a)).

GLOSSARY

AQUACULTURE

Farming or culture of aquatic organisms (e.g., fish, crustaceans, molluscs, aquatic plants). This includes practices where human intervention within the rearing/culture process is used to enhance production through actions such as (but not limited to) feeding, protection from predators, and stocking.

The practice of farming/culture implies either individual or corporate ownership over the cultured stock and its scope includes development and operation of aquaculture systems, facilities, and practices, facility siting, production of aquatic organisms, and their transport. (FAO 2020)

AQUACULTURE OPERATION(S)

A (commercially managed) venture that farms aquatic organisms. (MSC 2019)

ASSESSMENT(S)

Peer-reviewed, open-access, published literature that details the evaluation of a **wild capture fishery** or **aquaculture operation** against **Criteria** or **Principles** within a program's **Standard(s)**.

BYCATCH

The **incidental capture** of aquatic organisms as a direct result of fishing, external to a fishery's impacts on **targeted species** towards which fishing effort is directed. The term does not refer to aquatic organisms released alive within recreational catch-and-release fishery management.

Bycatch may be retained through sale or personal use or returned to the aquatic environment as discards (including both economic and regulatory discards). Ocean Wise Seafood classifies all discards, including the live release of organisms as bycatch unless there is valid scientific evidence of high post-release survival and no documented evidence of negative impacts at the population level.

CLIENT GROUP(S)

A company, group of companies or other entities holding a **Unit of Certification** (UoC or entities identified by the client as covered by and/or able to access the certificate). In cases where the client group does not fully control all fishing activity on a **stock**, achievement of any **conditions** placed on the fishery may be dependent on the actions of other parties, and thus outside their control (though some forms of influence may also be possible). (MSC 2019)

CONDITION(S)

Within the assessment of an MSC certified fishery, a condition is classified as a requirement for the client group(s) to achieve a specific outcome within a specified timeframe to achieve an MSC **performance indicator** score of eighty (80) out of one hundred (100) total possible points and maintain **certification**. In cases where the client group does not fully control all fishing activity on a **stock**, the achievement of any **conditions** placed on the fishery may be dependent on the actions of other parties outside of the client group's control. (MSC 2019)

CRITERIA

Science-based performance metrics against which the ecological sustainability of a wild capture fishery or aquaculture operation is determined through a Seafood Watch or Ocean Wise Seafood **assessment**. Criteria of Assessment are specific to the Standard applied.

CRITICAL SCORE(S)

Seafood Watch **assessment criterion** denoting very severe conservation concerns, applicable to a subset of assessment criteria specific to the SFW **Standard** in assessment (SFW 2020a; SFW 2020b; SFW 2020c). A critical score for any **Factor** of assessment triggers an ‘avoid’ Seafood Watch **rating** and Ocean Wise **Not Recommended rating** for the assessed **seafood**.

DECISION RULE(S)

A set of logical statements of the type “if [condition], then [decision]” used to determine a **seafood rating**. Decision rules used by Ocean Wise Seafood for ratings development are provided **above**.

ECO-CERTIFICATION(S)

Procedure by which an independent auditor (a.k.a. Certification Assessment Body) gives written or equivalent confirmation that a product, process, or service meets the specified environmental requirements of a third-party Standard. It may or may not include use of an **eco-label**. (MSC 2019)

ECO LABEL(S)

A label that adheres to the principles described in ISO 14020:2000 Environmental Labels and Declarations General Principles. The Type III Environmental Label trademarked by a **certification** scheme and licensed for use on products and to promote products certified by a certification body accredited to the certification scheme. (MSC 2019)

Ocean Wise Seafood does not identify as an eco label.

ECOLOGICAL ROLE

The trophic role of a **stock** within the ecosystem under consideration in an assessment. (MSC 2019)

ECOSYSTEM / HABITAT FUNCTION

The range of services provided to an organism through its given environment, including, but not limited to, the role this environment plays in mediating trophic interactions, reproduction, shelter, feeding, and influencing the behaviour of organisms. (MSC 2019)

ECOSYSTEM / HABITAT STRUCTURE

The arrangement of physical and biogenic formations that support plant and animal communities. (MSC 2019)

ENDANGERED, THREATENED, OR PROTECTED (ETP) SPECIES

1. Within the context of Ocean Wise and Seafood Watch sustainability assessments

Taxa in danger of extinction and whose survival is unlikely if causal factors continue operating. Included are taxa whose numbers have been drastically reduced to a critical level or whole habitats have been so drastically impacted that they are deemed to be in immediate danger of extinction (FAO 1998a).

The classification includes taxa listed under CITIES Appendix 1 or listed as “endangered”, “critically endangered”, or “threatened” by the IUCN, or by an international, national, or state government body (e.g., Canada’s Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada (COSEWIC), and Species at Risk Act (SARA) (SFW 2020b). In Seafood Watch assessments, the designations also may refer to marine mammals listed as “strategic” under the United States Marine Mammal Protection Act if they are listed because “based on the best available scientific information, [the stock] is declining and is

likely to be listed as a threatened species under the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (ESA, 16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.) within the foreseeable future.”

Note: If there is more recent information to suggest that the status of the population under consideration is healthier than suggested by IUCN, for example from a data-limited stock assessment, and the IUCN assessment is greater than 10 years old the IUCN status can be overridden. If local wildlife protection listings, for example the U.S. Endangered Species Act or Canadian Species at Risk Act, are being used to override the IUCN listing, the local status must be based on biological evidence rather than a political decision not to list the species (SFW 2020b).

2. Within the context of Marine Stewardship Council Certified fisheries

Species protected by national legislation and/or binding international agreements to which the jurisdictions controlling the fishery under **assessment** are party. Species listed under Appendix I of CITES shall be considered ETP species for the purposes of the MSC assessment, unless it can be shown that the **stock** of the CITES listed species impacted by the fishery under assessment is not endangered. (MSC 2019)

FACTOR

Equivalent to a MSC **assessment performance indicator**, these sub-criteria collectively account for each SFW assessment **Criterion** within the associated SFW Standard and represents the level at which performance of a **wild capture fishery** or **aquaculture operation** scored by the assessor.

FLAG

Refers to the State to which a boat is legally registered. (Restrepo 1999)

FISHER(S)

A gender-neutral name for a person participating in a **fishing** activity. An individual who takes part in fishing conducted from a fishing vessel, a floating or fixed platform, or from shore. Does not include fish processors or traders. (FAO 1998)

FISHERY

See **wild capture fishery**.

INCIDENTAL CAPTURE

See **bycatch**.

MARINE STEWARDSHIP COUNCIL (MSC) STANDARD

A document established by consensus and approved by the Marine Stewardship Council, that provides for common and repeated use, rules, guidelines or characteristics for fishing or their results (MSC 2019). It is applied by independent auditors (i.e., not MSC employees) to assess the ecological sustainability of a given fishery.

NO RECOMMENDATION

Seafood for which a **sustainability assessment** is not available to determine a **rating** (i.e. information required to determine if the **fishery** or **aquaculture operation** can be recommended is not available). Does not indicate a seafood product is or is not sustainable.

NOT RECOMMENDED

Ocean Wise Seafood designation denoting where the OWS Scoring Methodology and Rating System has determined a **seafood** does not meet the **sustainability** threshold for **recommendation** because of its **assessment overall score** and/or associated **decision rules**.

OBJECTION (WITHIN MSC PROCESS)

Refers to the procedures described within the MSC fisheries certification process [Annex PD](#).

OCEAN WISE LINE

Part of the **Ocean Wise Seafood Scoring Methodology and Rating System** it is the numeric threshold for Ocean Wise **Recommendation** for **seafood** assessed by SFW **assessment Standards**. The Ocean Wise Line for seafood sourced from **wild capture fisheries** is an **overall score** of 2.8 out of 5 with no **critical scores**. The Ocean Wise line for **aquaculture** products is an overall score of 5.5 out of 10 with no critical scores and no more than one criterion scoring <3.33. (See OWS 2020a)

OCEAN WISE RECOMMENDED

Ocean Wise Seafood designation denoting where the Ocean Wise **Scoring Methodology and Rating System** has determined a **seafood** meets the **sustainability** threshold for **recommendation** as a result of the associated fishery or aquaculture assessment **overall score** and/or associated **decision rules**.

OVERALL SCORE

The final assessment score for **seafood(s)** assessed utilizing Seafood Watch **Standard(s)** for **assessment**. Used in combination with applicable **decision rules** to determine the recommendation for a seafood as **Ocean Wise Recommended** or **Not Recommended**. The total possible overall score for **wild capture fisheries**, including salmonid specific fisheries is 5. The total possible overall score for aquaculture is 10. More details see [above](#).

PERFORMANCE INDICATOR

Equivalent to a SFW **Factor**, this is the lowest level of sub-criterion within the MSC assessment scoring tree and represents the level at which performance of a **seafood** is scored by the assessor. (MSC 2019)

POLICYMAKER(S)

Refers to government employees and those with explicit decision-making power within the management of a resource.

PRECAUTIONARY APPROACH

Involving application of prudent foresight, accounting for uncertainties inherent in **fisheries** and **aquaculture** systems and the greater environment and the need for fisheries managers to act with incomplete knowledge upon which to base management decisions. (FAO 1996)

PRINCIPLE(S)

A fundamental element in the MSC Fisheries **Standard** used as the basis for calculating the overall score for each **Unit of Certification** of the fishery in assessment.

RATINGS/RECOMMENDATION(S)

Tool for measuring and communicating **fishery** and/or **aquaculture operation** performance to government, producers, NGOs, business partners, and other **stakeholders**. Ratings/recommendations for specific **seafood** is derived through **assessment** of a wild capture fishery and aquaculture operation's ecological performance against program assessment **Standards**.

RIGHTSHOLDER(S)

Term often used to identify Indigenous groups that have a legal right to access a resource and participate in the decision-making process.

RISK BASED FRAMEWORK

Guidelines used by the Marine Stewardship Council to score the 'outcome' of **performance indicators** in cases where insufficient information is available to score a wild capture fishery's ecological performance using the default Marine Stewardship Council scoring guideposts. (MSC 2019)

SCORING METHODOLOGY AND RATING SYSTEM

The set of **decision rules** and numeric scoring used by the Ocean Wise Seafood program to communicate seafood's ecological **sustainability** against the program's sustainability bar. It consists of:

- a. The **Ocean Wise Line** for determination of **rating** for seafood sourced from **wild capture fisheries** and **aquaculture operations** assessed using Seafood Watch **Standards**; and
- b. **Decision rules** for development of recommendations based on Marine Stewardship Council certified fisheries.

SEAFOOD

Whole or part of organisms (e.g., fish, molluscs, crustaceans, algae) derived from aquatic environments (i.e., caught or cultured in marine and freshwater habitats) that are consumed by humans.

STOCK(S)

A self-sustaining population (e.g., finfish or invertebrates) that is not strongly linked to other populations through interbreeding, immigration, or emigration. Ideally, the management unit of "stock" should correspond to a discrete biological unit. However, often the fisheries management unit of "stock" may not be the same as the biological unit. (SFW 2020b)

STAKEHOLDER(S)

Any person or group with an interest or claim (whether stated or implied) which has the potential of being impacted by or having an impact on a given project and its objectives. Stakeholder groups that have a direct or indirect "stake" can be at the household, community, local, regional, national, or international level. (MSC 2019) Typically these are private organizations (private companies or non-governmental organizations) that seek to influence the governance of a given resource, while **policymakers** refers to government employees and those with explicit decision-making power. The term **rightsholders** is often used to identify Indigenous groups that have a legal right to access a resource and participate in the decision-making process.

STANDARD(S)

Formal written framework developed by a third-party organization to which **assessment** of the relative **sustainability** of **fishery** and **aquaculture operations** is measured. Standard may refer to the Seafood Watch Assessment Standards (SFW 2020a; SFW 2020b; SFW 2020c) or the [MSC Standards for Sustainable Fisheries](#)

(MSC 2020a). Assessment of **wild capture fisheries** and **aquaculture operations** against a Standard serves as the basis for Ocean Wise **seafood** recommendations as part of the Ocean Wise **Scoring Methodology and Rating System**.

SUSTAINABLE / SUSTAINABILITY

Seafood that is ecologically sustainable (i.e., sourced from **fisheries** or **aquaculture operations** whose direct activities do not cause or lead to undesirable changes in the biological productivity, biological diversity, or ecosystem **structure** and **functioning** from one human generation to the next). NRC 1998)

TARGET SPECIES

Species that are primarily sought by **fishers** in a particular fishery through directed fishing effort. **Note:** Target species can be refined as primary or secondary target species depending on the volume caught.

UNIT OF CERTIFICATION

The unit entitled to receive an MSC certificate. The target **stock(s)** combined with the fishing method or gear type(s), vessel type(s) and/or practices, and the fishing fleets or groups of vessels, or individual fishing operators (i.e., **client group(s)**) pursuing that stock. (MSC 2019)

WILD CAPTURE FISHERY

The sum (or range) of activities associated with catching or harvesting a given aquatic organism prior to processing. (FAO 1997)

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