



## Ocean Wildlife and Aldi UK & Ireland's Seafood Supply Chain

### Aldi UK & Ireland and Seafood Sustainability

Aldi is one of the fastest growing supermarket chains in the world. The more than 1,100 Aldi stores in the UK and Ireland are part of the Aldi South Group, which has over 6,900 stores across 11 countries (Germany, Austria, Switzerland, Slovenia, Hungary, Italy, USA, UK, Ireland, Australia, and China).

Aldi believe in delivering the best possible value for millions of families throughout the UK and Ireland, without compromising on quality. We are a global, responsible retailer, making changes to be better every day – whether that's being greener as a business, helping our shoppers live healthier lifestyles, or playing our part in creating a fairer society, we are working to drive positive change.

Aldi are committed to further increasing the products we source from UK and Irish suppliers, while working with suppliers to minimise the resource intensity of our products and the negative environmental impacts of their production.

Aldi UK & Ireland welcomes the evaluation of risks to marine endangered, threatened, and protected (ETP) species from fishery bycatch and will take action to address the issues that have been identified. Aldi UK & Ireland will continue to collaborate with Sustainable Fisheries Partnership (SFP), Birdlife International, and Whale and Dolphin Conservation to identify and address issues in the future and ensure, through procurement policies and other measures, that the company's seafood supply chain does not present unacceptable threats to marine wildlife.

### Fisheries and Bycatch

Bycatch, the catch of non-target species, is one of the most significant issues affecting the biological sustainability of marine fisheries. In particular, bycatch of endangered, threatened, and protected (ETP) species continues at a global and ecologically significant scale, despite an increase in the number of certified fisheries and improvement projects, and public attention to this issue.

Fisheries bycatch is a primary driver of population decline in many ETP species. These populations are at very low levels and are formally listed as endangered, threatened, or protected by international, national, and/or local jurisdictions.



Sharks and rays, seabirds, marine mammals, and sea turtles, all of which are ecologically important to ocean habitats, are at high risk of capture and harm in commercial fisheries. Many of these species are distributed across large geographic areas and overlap many fisheries. Many also have life-history characteristics that make them vulnerable to fishing-related mortality, such as slow growth, long reproductive cycles, and production of small numbers of offspring.

**One-third of the world's sharks and rays** are threatened with extinction.

**15 of the 22 species of albatross** are threatened with extinction.

**Less than 350 North Atlantic right whales** remain in the world.

Fisheries bycatch is recognized as the greatest threat to **all seven species of sea turtles**.

### **Bycatch Audit of Aldi UK & Ireland's Supply Chain**

[Sustainable Fisheries Partnership \(SFP\)](#), in conjunction with Birdlife International and Whale and Dolphin Conservation, conducted a review and assessment of the fisheries [disclosed by Aldi UK & Ireland through the Ocean Disclosure Project](#).

The three organizations collaborated to develop criteria to identify fisheries that could be considered high risk for interactions with sharks and rays, seabirds, marine mammals, and sea turtles.

These criteria include:

- The conservation status of the relevant bycatch species, as determined by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN)
- Bycatch rate and evidence of impact at a population level, or high likelihood of bycatch, based on gear type and overlap with susceptible species
- Scale of the specific bycatch problem, e.g., across the world versus limited to one fishery



- Whether the fisheries impact species with a very small range
- Whether the fisheries include cross-taxa bycatch
- Whether Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) certification has been suspended due to non-compliance with elements of Principle 2 in the MSC Standard.

## Key Findings and Recommendations

The audit identified the fisheries in the Aldi UK & Ireland supply chain that present the highest bycatch risks to sharks and rays, seabirds, marine mammals, and sea turtles. Aldi UK & Ireland understands that the issues identified in the audit signal a need to fully address risks to ETP species across all of its sourcing, and commits to working with suppliers to improve fishery management and implement recommended actions.

The risk assessment conducted as part of the audit demonstrates a range of potential bycatch impacts to ETP species from the fisheries that supply Aldi UK & Ireland. The audit identified a number of the fisheries as having the highest potential bycatch risk. A full list of these fisheries will be incorporated into the Aldi UK & Ireland Ocean Disclosure Project (ODP) profile.

SFP reviewed the results of the audit with Aldi UK & Ireland to determine where they can have the most impact by encouraging improvements to reduce ETP bycatch. The following are the top findings of this analysis and the fisheries where Aldi UK & Ireland should prioritize action:

- Alaska salmon set/drift gillnet fisheries pose a significant risk to seabirds.
- Icelandic cod/haddock trawl and longline fisheries pose a significant risk to seabirds and marine mammals.
- Canadian (American) lobster pot and trap fisheries pose a risk to marine mammals.
- Longline and FAD purse seine tuna fisheries pose a significant threat to sharks and sea turtles.



Several common themes also emerged from the analysis. These were presented to Aldi UK & Ireland with the following key recommendations, for work with their suppliers across various fisheries:

- Levels of bycatch monitoring are generally poor, and there is a need to adopt higher levels of observer coverage.
- There is an urgent need for a significant increase in the levels of bycatch incident reporting (which should be regular, detailed, and standardized). Data on bycatch needs to be placed in the public domain and be available to all stakeholders.
- There is minimal effort to continuously improve bycatch reduction. Bycatch mitigation should aim to adopt best practices at all times
- There is a clear need for a systematic examination of alternative gear options in fisheries where there are high bycatch risks, e.g. move away from gillnet fisheries.