

# Seafood consumer information

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# Outline

- The Follow the Fish movement
- Oceana label report
- Oceana poll on seafood consumer information







## Policy context

There are no consumer information requirements for processed seafood and seafood in restaurants, no sustainability information is required for any seafood sold in the EU

Consumer information must be provided for fresh and frozen seafood (production method, species, fishing area, fishing gear)

These requirements as set by the CMO (Common Market Organisation) Regulation which is part of the CFP

With the updated Control Regulation, all seafood will be traceable by 2029 but information will not be available to consumers

Better labelling was mentioned by Commissioner Kadis in his written replies to MEPs' questions and his hearing

# Follow the Fish movement

- Coalition of stakeholders from the seafood supply chain
- Created in 2023
- Based in 9 EU Member States
- Seafood businesses, consumer organisations, chefs, restaurants, policy makers, and civil society...





# Demands of Follow the Fish

- Basic information such as **species, origin, fishing gear and production method** should be **required for all seafood products**.
- The food service sector (such as **mass-caterers, hotels and restaurants**) should also have to provide this **basic information** (species, origin, fishing gear and production method) **to their customers**.
- **Consumer information should specify the flag state** – the country of registration of the fishing vessel – for wild-caught seafood products.



# Follow the Fish signatories

**Algas La Patrona.** Cristina García, Owner & Managing Director.

**Aquatic Life Institute.** Christine Xu, Head of Fisheries Welfare.

**Chef.** Jordi Artal.

**Chef Liaison & Responsible Seafood Advocate.** Danielle Leoni.

**Chefs' Manifesto.** Keren Allen, Chef of Strategy & Special Projects.

**ClientEarth.** Anaïs Berthier, Head of ClientEarth Brussels.

**Coalition for Fair Fisheries Arrangements.** Béatrice Gorez, Coordinator.

**DECO Associação Portuguesa para a Defesa do Consumidor.** Ana Tapadinhas, Director General.

**Diversity Seafoods.** Paul O Boyle, Director & CEO.

**Earthworm Foundation.** Grégoire Jacob, Senior manager business partnership.

**EKPIZO.** Eleni Alevritou, Vice President MD.

**FEDEPESCA.** María Luisa Álvarez Blanco, General Manager.

**Federación Regional de Cofradías de Pescadores de Canarias.** David Pavón González, Manager.

**Federation of European Aquaculture Producers.** Javier Ojeda, Secretary General.

**Feedback EU.** Frank Mechielsen, Executive Director.

**Fish Tales.** Irene Kranendonk, Impact Manager.

**Freelandcook.** David Ariza, CEO.

**GastroBio.** Arnau Subías, Marine Scientist.

**Good Fish Benelux.** Adryan Rademakers, Director.

**La Pizza è Bella.** Stefano Napoli and Nadiya Isikova, Company Owners.

**Ejalonibu Imosan Slow Fish.** Oreyemi Babatunde Adenola.

**Low Impact Fishers of Europe.** Marta Cavallé, Executive Secretary.

**Member of European Parliament.** Mélissa Camara.

**Member of European Parliament.** Thomas Bajada.

**Mr. GoodFish.** Justine Delettre, Programme Officer.

**Mulleres Salgadas.** Dolores Gómez Ordoñez, Chairwoman.

**Oceana in Europe.** Pascale Moehrle, Executive Director.

**Organización de Productores de Pesca de Bajura de Bizkaia.** Aurelio Bilbao Barandica, Director.

**OURZ.** Immanuel Viridi, Head of Project Management.

**Planet Tracker.** François Mosnier, Head of Oceans Programme.

**PSQR.** Emanuel Greisen, Managing Director.

**Sciaena.** Gonçalo Carvalho, Executive Coordinator.

**SDG2 Advocacy Hub.** Paul Newnham, CEO.

**Seas At Risk.** Dr Monica Verbeek, Executive Director.

**Testachats.** Julie Frère, Domain Head Public Affairs & Media Relations.

**Woodcock Smokery.** Sally Barnes, Founder and Educator.

**WWF.** Ester Asin, European Policy Office Director.



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World's Oceans

**Defend your right  
to know what you eat**

**Let's make  
fisheries transparent**

**#FollowTheFish**





# Oceana label report

- Analysis of labels in Belgium, France and Spain
- 182 seafood products (fresh/frozen and processed) in supermarkets
- Species, production method, area of origin, fishing gear



## Introduction

The European Union (EU) is one of the three largest seafood markets in the world. With imports representing 70% of all seafood consumed in the EU,<sup>1</sup> it has one of the strongest legal frameworks globally to prevent illegally caught seafood from entering its market. Traceability requirements for fresh, frozen and smoked seafood products within the EU are also very strong, requiring key information such as species name, origin, catching method and production method to be passed along the supply chain all the way to consumers.

In contrast to fresh seafood, traceability requirements for processed products like canned tuna and fish fingers remain weak. This is a significant problem, as these products are very popular in the EU. For example, in 2021, 93% of French households bought canned seafood products.<sup>2</sup> Processed seafood represents 22% of fishery and aquaculture products consumed in the EU.<sup>1</sup> According to a 2021 Eurobarometer survey on consumption habits, nearly one third of respondents eat tinned fishery and aquaculture products once or twice per month.<sup>2</sup> Certain popular processed products, particularly shrimps, prawns, and tuna, are of particular concern for traceability, because they have a higher risk of being associated with illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing or human rights violations.<sup>4</sup>



Labels on fresh and frozen fish and aquaculture products must indicate the species (including the scientific name), catch location, and fishing gear, while processed seafood such as canned tuna, canned sardines, and surimi are exempt from these requirements.



This means that consumers do not have basic information about their seafood, such as which species they are eating. For example, a canned product might simply be labelled "tuna", which could refer to any of 14 different tuna species, including overfished stocks. Additionally, there is no labelling requirement for information on the origin of the product, which prevents consumers from being able to choose to avoid certain regions for political, environmental, or human rights concerns. Similarly, information about fishing gear, especially if sufficiently precise, can inform consumers about associated environmental impacts, such as the risk of seabed damage or bycatch of protected species like turtles or cetaceans, or of juvenile fishes.

Seafood supply chains are complex and often span multiple continents before reaching consumers. In addition, seafood products are the most globally traded animal protein in terms of trade value.<sup>3</sup>





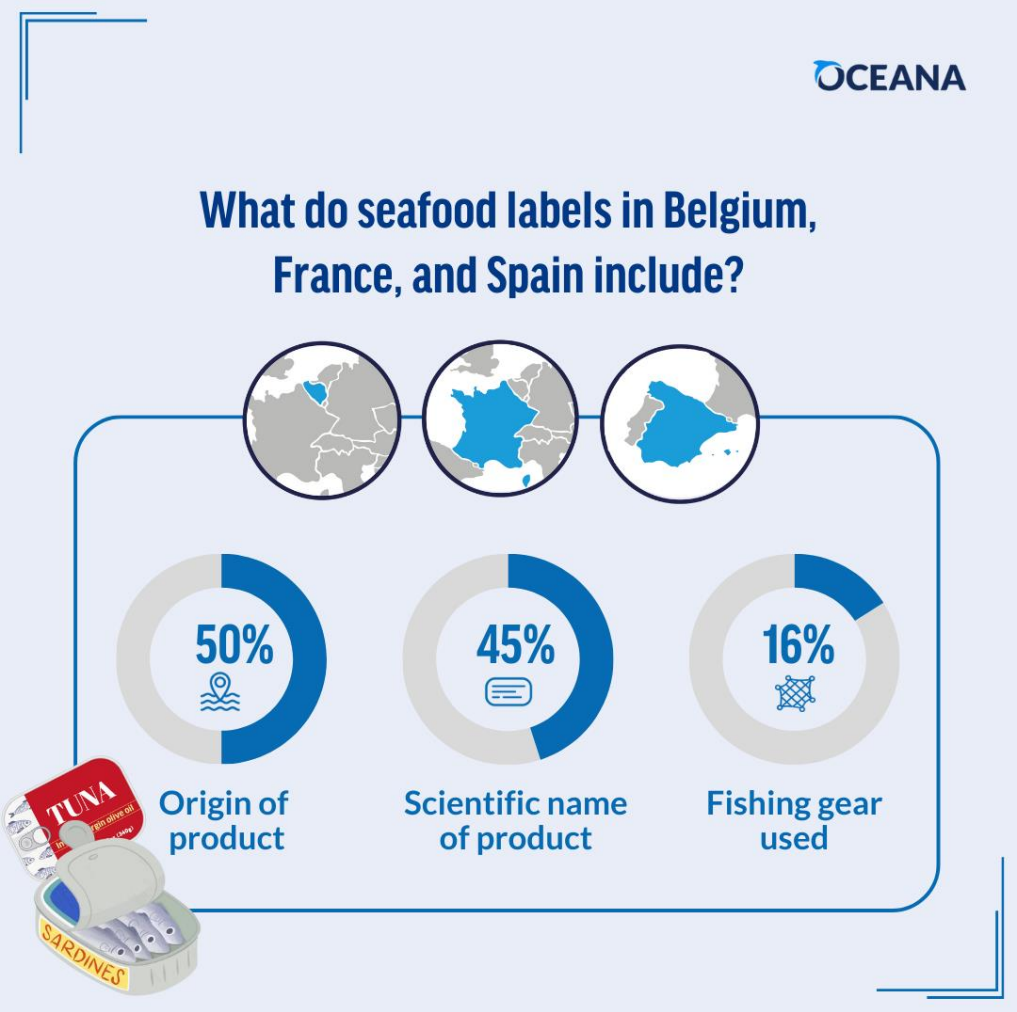
## Why this analysis?

- Processed products = 1/5 of seafood consumed in the EU
- 1604/1605 products not covered by CMO consumer information requirements
- Processed foods linked to human rights violations and illegal fishing
- Assess how well CMO is implemented
- Look for good practices
- In top 10 seafood consuming countries



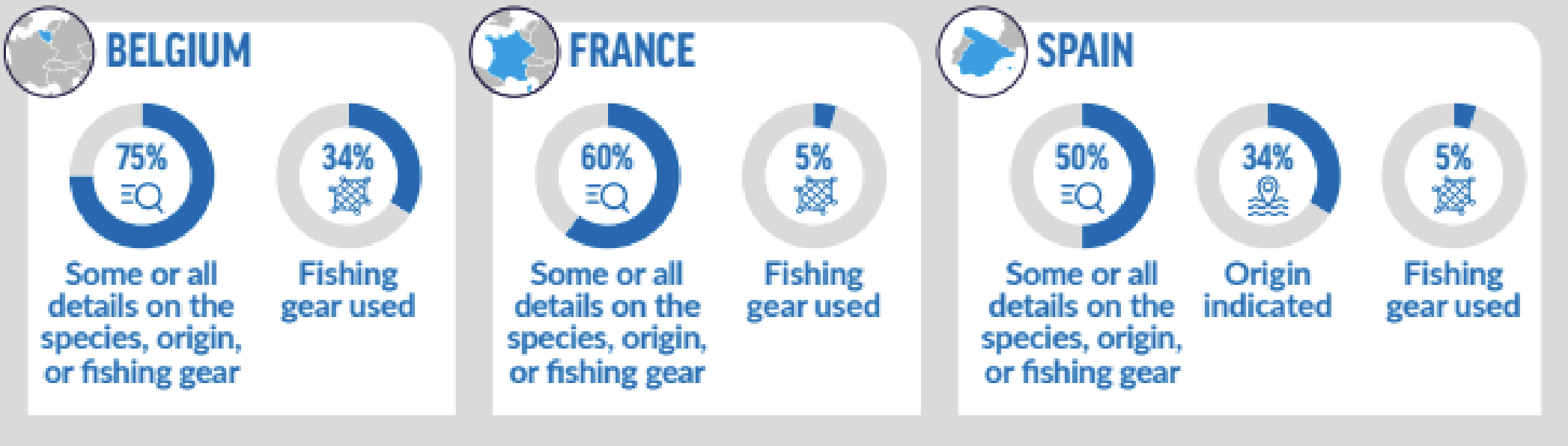
# Results of Oceana label report

For 38% of processed products in the 3 countries, it is impossible to know the species, the origin, or the fishing gear





# Country-specific results



## Good practices – example from Belgian Supermarket (German company)

### COD FISH FINGERS IN ORGANIC CRISPY BREADING

tracking code 102311713

pack size 250g



#### TRACKING DETAILS

Scientific Name	Gadus morhua
fishing method	<a href="#">Seine nets: Snurrewade</a> , <a href="#">Seine nets: Beach seine</a>
catch date	January 17th - May 3rd, 2023
Captured by	MSC-F-31223
Ship	Norwegian fishing fleet
fishing area	Northeast Atlantic (FAO 27)
sub-fishing area	Northeast Arctic





# Good practices – example from France



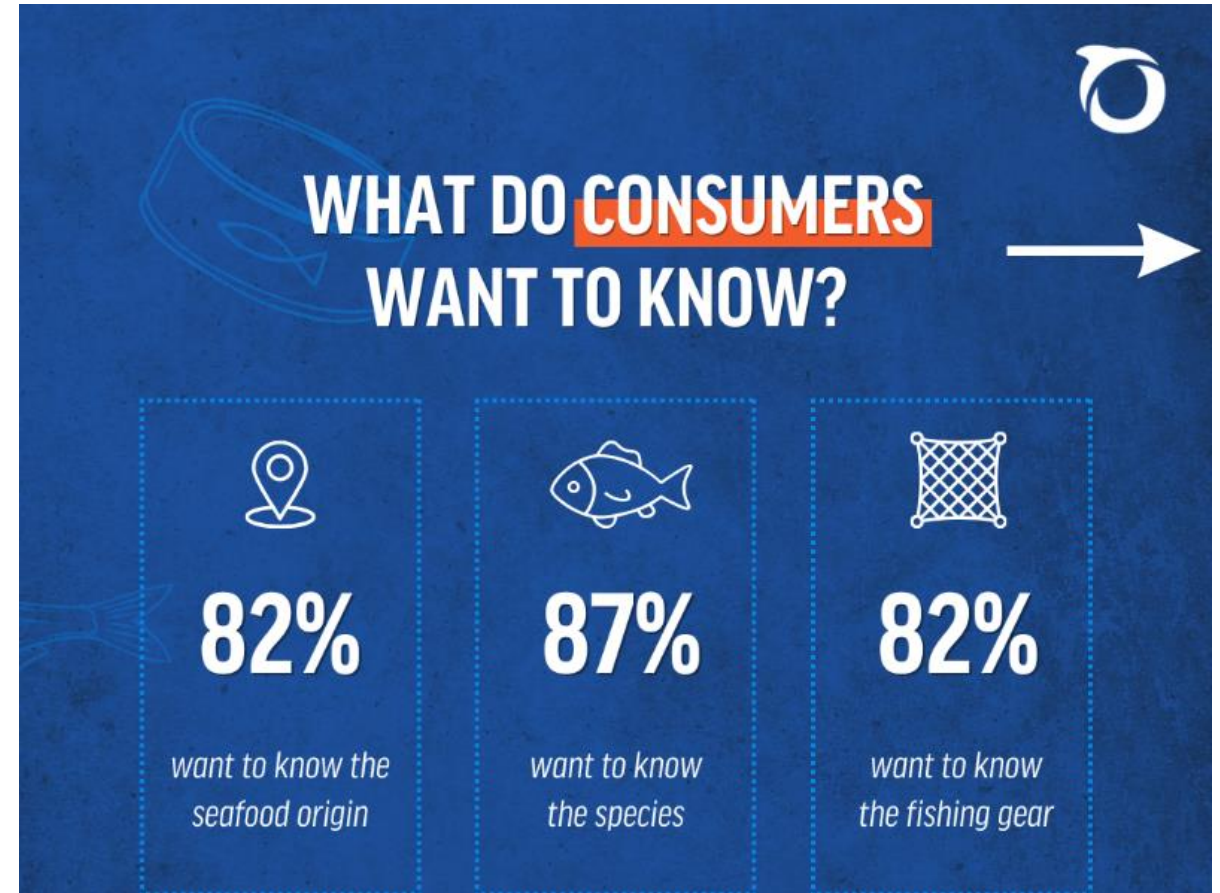
# Good practices – example from Spain





## Oceana poll

- Belgium, Cyprus, France, Spain
- September/October 2024
- 3,679 people interviewed
- 79% consider it important to know if the fish they eat is overexploited or not
- 81% want to have information on the impact of the fishing method on the marine environment and the bycatch risk of sensitive species like turtles or dolphins



# Oceana recommendations

Oceana urges the Commission to revise the CMO Regulation to:

- **Expand its scope to include processed seafood products**
- **Require science-based sustainability information to be displayed on all seafood products**
- **Expand its scope to include the food service sector**





A wooden cutting board is held by two hands, displaying a cooked octopus, charred peppers, a small bowl of herbs, and lemon slices. The octopus is the central focus, with its tentacles curled. The charred peppers are on the left, and the lemon slices are on the right. A small wooden bowl with herbs is in the upper left. The background is a blurred outdoor setting.

**Any questions?**





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