



# Monterey Bay Aquarium Seafood Watch

## New and Updated Ratings

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**Finalization Session: January 10, 2024 Release Date: February 5, 2024**

**New Ratings**

Species	Scientific Name	Location	Method	Rating	Justification
Herring, Atlantic	<i>Clupea harengus</i>	United States - Northwest Atlantic Ocean (Atlantic herring fishery)	Small mesh bottom trawls	Avoid	Atlantic herring caught in the U.S. with small mesh bottom trawls is rated Avoid due to red <b>Other Species</b> and <b>Habitat &amp; Ecosystem</b> ratings. Atlantic herring stocks are depleted and have been since the early 2010s, but overfishing isn't occurring per the most recent assessment. This fishery also catches overexploited Atlantic mackerel. Management is rated moderately effective overall. Measures are in place to rebuild the herring stocks, but their effectiveness is uncertain. In addition, this fishery's impacts on river herring and shad populations are unknown, though the incidental catch of these species has declined in recent years. Atlantic herring and mackerel are considered key forage fish (prey for larger predators) in this ecosystem by Seafood Watch standards. While measures to account for herring's important ecological role have been implemented, similar measures are not in place for mackerel. Trawling primarily occurs over more resilient sandy and muddy habitats.

**Updated Ratings**

Species	Scientific Name	Location	Method	Previous Rating	Updated Rating	Justification
Herring, Atlantic	<i>Clupea harengus</i>	United States - Northwest Atlantic Ocean (Atlantic herring fishery)	Midwater trawls	Good Alternative	Avoid	Atlantic herring caught in the U.S. with midwater trawls has been downgraded to an Avoid rating due to red <b>Other Species</b> and <b>Habitat &amp; Ecosystem</b> ratings. Atlantic herring stocks are depleted and have been since the early 2010s, but overfishing isn't occurring per the most recent assessment. This fishery also catches overexploited Atlantic mackerel. Management is rated moderately effective overall. Measures are in place to rebuild the herring stocks, but their effectiveness is uncertain. In addition, this fishery's impacts on river herring and shad populations are unknown, though the incidental catch of these species has declined in recent years. Atlantic herring and mackerel are considered key forage fish (prey for larger predators) in this ecosystem by Seafood Watch standards. While measures to account for herring's important ecological role have been implemented, similar measures are not in place for mackerel. Midwater trawls have minimal habitat impacts.

Species	Scientific Name	Location	Method	Previous Rating	Updated Rating	Justification
Herring, Atlantic	<i>Clupea harengus</i>	United States - Northwest Atlantic Ocean (Atlantic herring fishery)	Purse seines	Best Choice	Good Alternative	Atlantic herring caught in the U.S. with purse seines has been downgraded to a Good Alternative due to yellow <b>Target Species</b> and <b>Management</b> and green <b>Other Species</b> and <b>Habitat &amp; Ecosystem</b> ratings Atlantic herring stocks are depleted and have been since the early 2010s, but overfishing isn't occurring per the most recent assessment. Management is rated moderately effective overall. Measures are in place to rebuild the herring stock, but their effectiveness is uncertain. Atlantic herring is considered key forage fish (prey for larger predators) in this ecosystem by Seafood Watch standards, and measures to account for its important ecological role are in place. No other species of concern are caught in this purse seine fishery, and habitat impacts are minimal.
Mackerel, Atlantic	<i>Scomber scombrus</i>	Canada - Northwest Atlantic Ocean	Purse seines	Avoid	Avoid	Atlantic mackerel caught in Canada with purse seines continues to be rated Avoid due to red <b>Target Species</b> and <b>Habitat &amp; Ecosystem</b> ratings. The Atlantic mackerel stock is depleted and has been since the late 1990s, but overfishing isn't occurring per the most recent assessment. Management is rated moderately effective overall. A rebuilding plan is in place for Atlantic mackerel, but it's uncertain if the stock will be rebuilt within the anticipated timeframe. Atlantic mackerel is considered key forage fish (prey for larger predators) in this ecosystem by Seafood Watch standards, and measures to account for its important ecological role haven't been implemented. No other species of concern are caught in this purse seine fishery, and habitat impacts are minimal.
Mackerel, Atlantic	<i>Scomber scombrus</i>	United States - Northwest Atlantic Ocean (Atlantic mackerel fishery)	Midwater trawls	Avoid	Avoid	Atlantic mackerel caught in the U.S. with midwater trawls continues to be rated Avoid due to red <b>Target Species</b> and <b>Habitat &amp; Ecosystem</b> ratings. The Atlantic mackerel stock is depleted and has been since the late 1990s, but overfishing isn't occurring per the most recent assessment. This fishery also catches overexploited Atlantic herring. Management is rated moderately effective overall. Measures are in place to rebuild the mackerel stock, but it's uncertain if it will be rebuilt within the anticipated timeframe. In addition, this fishery's impacts on river herring and shad populations are unknown, though the incidental catch of these species has declined in recent years. Atlantic mackerel and herring are considered key forage fish (prey for larger predators) in this ecosystem by Seafood Watch standards. While measures to account for herring's important ecological role have been implemented, similar measures are not in place for mackerel. Midwater trawls have minimal habitat impacts.

Species	Scientific Name	Location	Method	Previous Rating	Updated Rating	Justification
Mackerel, Atlantic	<i>Scomber scombrus</i>	United States - Northwest Atlantic Ocean (Atlantic mackerel fishery)	Small mesh bottom trawls	Avoid	Avoid	Atlantic mackerel caught in the U.S. with small mesh bottom trawls continues to be rated Avoid due to red <b>Target Species</b> and <b>Habitat &amp; Ecosystem</b> ratings. The Atlantic mackerel stock is depleted and has been since the late 1990s, but overfishing isn't occurring per the most recent assessment. This fishery also catches overexploited Atlantic herring. Management is rated moderately effective overall. Measures are in place to rebuild the mackerel stock, but it's uncertain if it will be rebuilt within the anticipated timeframe. In addition, this fishery's impacts on river herring and shad populations are unknown, though the incidental catch of these species has declined in recent years. Atlantic mackerel and herring are considered key forage fish (prey for larger predators) in this ecosystem by Seafood Watch standards. While measures to account for herring's important ecological role have been implemented, similar measures are not in place for mackerel.. Trawling primarily occurs over more resilient sandy and muddy habitats.
Shrimp, Whiteleg	<i>Litopenaeus vannamei</i>	Nicaragua	Ponds	Avoid	Avoid	Whiteleg shrimp farmed in Nicaragua in ponds continues to be rated Avoid due to red <b>Habitat</b> , <b>Chemicals</b> , and <b>Escapes</b> ratings. Most of Nicaragua's shrimp farms are located in the Estero Real, an ecologically important and biodiverse region comprised of mangroves, salt flats, lagoons, and wetlands. Since the late 1980s, the Estero Real has been greatly reduced due to shrimp farm construction, and this habitat conversion is still ongoing as of 2022. Furthermore, management of high-value habitats and enforcement of regulations is poor. Information about the industry's use of antimicrobials and other chemicals is also lacking. Most shrimp ponds are located in flood-prone areas, and escaped shrimp could potentially impact the genetic fitness of wild whiteleg shrimp populations. However, information on escapes and impacts on wild shrimp is limited as well.
Snapper, Bluestriped	<i>Lutjanus kasmira</i>	U.S. - Hawaii, Eastern Central Pacific Ocean	Handlines and hand-operated pole-and-lines	Good Alternative	Best Choice	Bluestriped snapper caught in Hawaii with handlines and hand-operated pole-and-lines remains a Best Choice due to green <b>Target Species</b> , <b>Other Species</b> , and <b>Habitat &amp; Ecosystem</b> ratings. The harvest of bluestriped snapper isn't an ecological concern in Hawaiian waters because it's a nonnative species. In addition, there are no significant bycatch impacts. Management is rated moderately effective overall. While there are no major concerns, very limited measures are in place for bluestriped snapper and other species caught in this fishery. Habitat impacts are minimal, and some policies are in place to protect the ecosystem, though information on their effectiveness is also limited.

Species	Scientific Name	Location	Method	Previous Rating	Updated Rating	Justification
Snapper, Bluestriped	<i>Lutjanus kasmira</i>	U.S. - Hawaii, Eastern Central Pacific Ocean	Surrounding nets, Gillnets and entangling nets	Best Choice	Best Choice	Bluestriped snapper caught in Hawaii with gillnets or surrounding nets has been upgraded to a Best Choice due to green <b>Target Species</b> and <b>Habitat &amp; Ecosystem</b> and yellow <b>Other Species</b> and <b>Management</b> ratings. The harvest of bluestriped snapper isn't an ecological concern in Hawaiian waters because it's a nonnative species. However, entanglement of endangered Hawaiian monk seals is a moderate concern even though population-level impacts are unlikely. Management is rated moderately effective overall. While there are no major concerns, very limited measures are in place for bluestriped snapper and other species caught in this fishery. Also, mitigation measures to reduce monk seal entanglements are in place, but their effectiveness is uncertain. Habitat impacts are minimal, and some policies are in place to protect the ecosystem, though information on their effectiveness is also limited.

## To Be Archived

Species	Scientific Name	Location	Method	Previous Rating	Justification
Snapper, Blacktail	<i>Lutjanus fulvus</i>	U.S. - Hawaii, Eastern Central Pacific Ocean	Handlines and hand-operated pole-and-lines	Best Choice	Significant volumes are not harvested.
Snapper, Blacktail	<i>Lutjanus fulvus</i>	U.S. - Hawaii, Eastern Central Pacific Ocean	Diving	Best Choice	Significant volumes are not harvested.
Snapper, Blacktail	<i>Lutjanus fulvus</i>	U.S. - Hawaii, Eastern Central Pacific Ocean	Surrounding nets	Best Choice	Significant volumes are not harvested.