

Marine Stewardship Council

# Global Impacts Summary Report 2013

Monitoring and Evaluation



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## Who we are

The Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) is a global non-profit organisation set up to help transform the seafood market to a sustainable basis. Our ecolabel and fishery certification program recognise and reward sustainable fishing practices. We work with fisheries, seafood companies, scientists, conservation groups and the public to promote the best environmental choice in seafood. Our vision is of the world's oceans teeming with life, and seafood supplies safeguarded for this and future generations.

## What the MSC ecolabel means

When you see the MSC ecolabel on a fish or seafood dish, you can be sure that it comes from a certified sustainable wild-catch fishery. All MSC ecolabelled seafood comes from fisheries that have been independently certified as meeting the strict MSC environmental standard for sustainable fishing and can be traced right back to the MSC certified sustainable fishery where it was caught. Whenever seafood is sold with the MSC ecolabel, every business in the supply chain must meet the MSC standard for seafood traceability and have a current MSC Chain of Custody certificate to prove this.

## What is the MSC Global Impacts Report

The objective of the Global Impacts Report is to gain a clear understanding of the environmental and organisational impacts of the MSC's certification and ecolabelling program. The report presents objective data, organised into 22 indicators, which enable an understanding of how well the MSC is achieving its objectives. The indicators, developed in consultation with MSC's stakeholders, measure the impact that the MSC is having on certified fisheries and the market for sustainable fish.

The document you're reading now is a summary of the full report. It's the first time that the MSC, through a new team within the Standards Department, has produced a report that measures, quantitatively, the environmental and organisational impacts of the program. The MSC believes it's important to show people the impact we're having.

The report covers the period from when the MSC began, in 1999, until 31 December 2012.



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# Main findings of the Global Impacts Report

## The MSC standard measures the performance of a fishery by examining 31 key attributes. These measure the status of the fish population targeted by the fishery (Principle 1), the impact of the fishery on the environment and other marine organisms (Principle 2) and how well the fishery is managed (Principle 3).

Across all 31 attributes the number of certified fisheries that meet or exceed the MSC 'best practice' score of 80 (on a scale of 60 to 100) has been increasing over the last five years. Fisheries that score below 80 must improve their performance to the 80 level within five years. They do this by completing an agreed action plan.

– Around 50 per cent of action plans for improvement have been completed within three years of certification. The rate of fisheries completing their action plans has slightly increased since 2008.

– There are now 188 certified fisheries, with 106 more in different stages of the assessment process. Almost 1100 action plans have been created and almost 400 have been completed since 1999, delivering improvements across 101 fisheries.

– For fisheries certified against the 2008 assessment standard ('default assessment tree', N=124), the key attribute that has generated the highest number of improvement plans across all fisheries is the creation of robust harvest control rules, which determine how a management system should respond in different situations (41 per cent of fisheries). A substantial number of improvement plans have also been generated for information on the impacts of fisheries on Endangered, Threatened and Protected (ETP) species (35 per cent of fisheries), and for reduction of the impact of fisheries on seabed habitat (27 per cent of fisheries).

– MSC certification is still gaining importance as a market-based tool as shown by an increase in number of certified fisheries (390 per cent), Chain of Custody certificates (180 per cent) and ecolabelled products in the market (710 per cent) since 2008.

– MSC certified fish represents around 7 per cent of the global total of wild-capture seafood. Chain of Custody certification is held by companies in 57 countries and almost 20000 ecolabelled products are available in 106 countries.

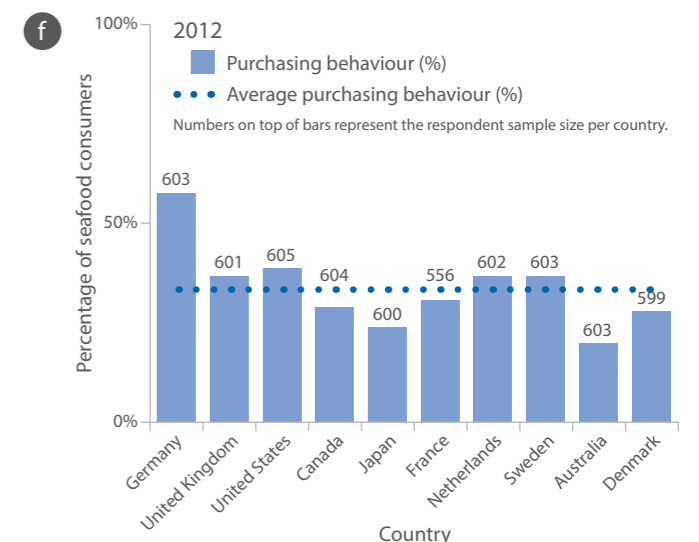
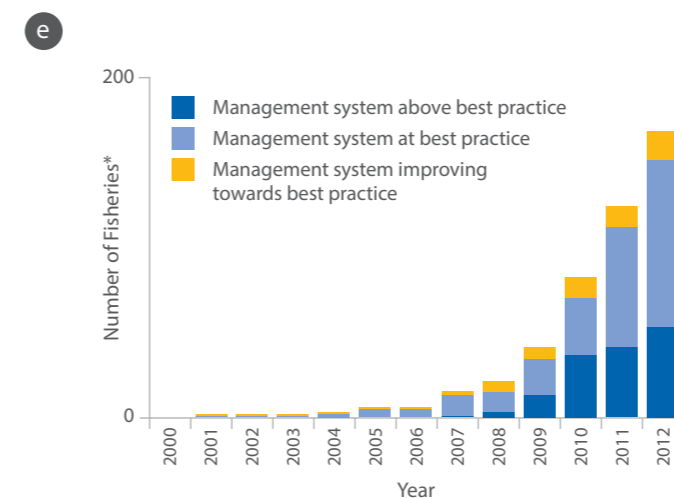
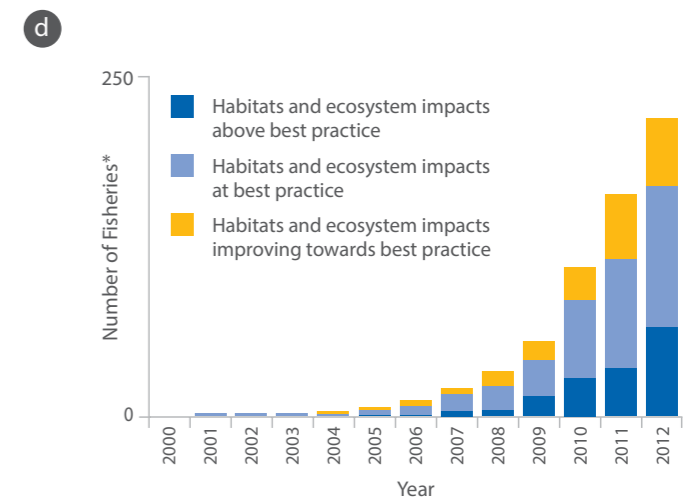
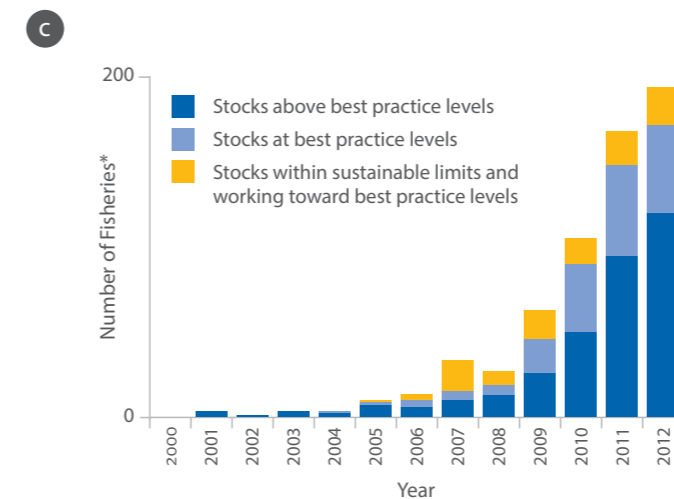
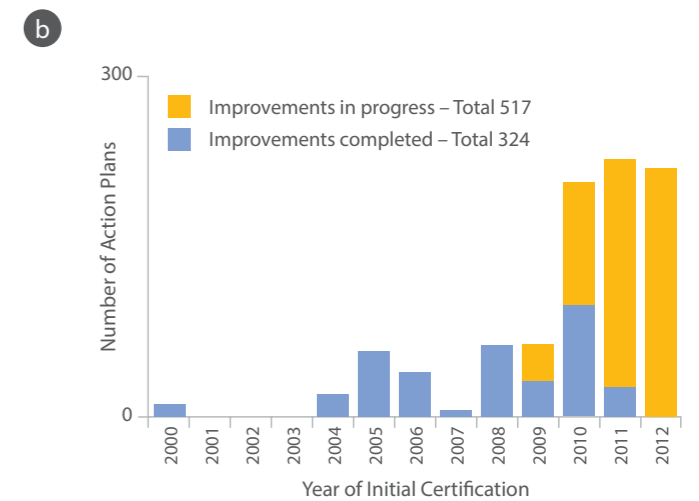
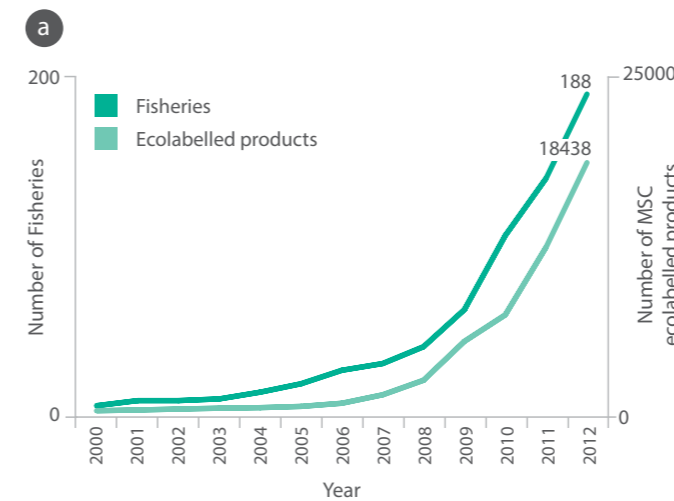
– The MSC program is gaining recognition from consumers. Logo recognition and recall has generally increased between 2010 and 2012. Purchasing behaviour in some countries has also seen a boost, reflecting consumers' positive response to seafood sustainability claims. Consumers can be assured that when they buy fish carrying the MSC logo does come from an MSC ecolabelled fishery; DNA testing based on both population and species level test conducted in 2012 indicated practically no mislabelling of MSC ecolabelled products (less than 1%).

### What does the MSC think about the results

*"This is an exciting period in the MSC's history. The period 2008-2012 saw a large number of fisheries come forward for assessment and the report clearly shows that these fisheries are making significant progress in their performance across the board. Improvements are being made 'on the water' for both target and non-target species, supported by improved management and information. The indicators also show that strategies used by the MSC are contributing significantly to providing the drivers – the market and access incentives – for fisheries to come forward for MSC assessment and make the improvements necessary to meet the MSC standard requirements. The number of MSC certified fisheries, products and companies continues to grow. Our expectation is that this report will provide a valuable resource for all stakeholders in understanding how the MSC program is operating, and will help us all create a program that delivers the vision that we jointly have for the oceans."*

David Agnew, Standards Director

Figure 1. Sample of environmental and program indicators extracted from the Global Impacts Report: (a) Number of fisheries and ecolabelled products over time; (b) number of action plans in progress and completed over time for initial assessments only; number and proportion of fisheries\* at minimum sustainable levels and improving towards best practice, at best



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# What does MSC certification mean for fisheries

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## Gambia tonguesole fishery

The Ba Nafaa project is a partnership of individuals and organisations which are working towards achieving MSC certification for the Gambian tonguesole fishery. The project is funded by USAID and implemented by the University of Rhode Island (URI) in partnership with WWF West Africa Marine Eco-Regional Programme, the Government of Gambia, the Gambian Artisanal Fisheries Development Agency (GAMFIDA) and Atlantic Seafood (a main exporter of sole from Gambia).

'Kaufland' is one of the biggest food retailers in Germany. It has been engaged with the MSC program for some years and continuously expands its MSC labelled offer. In October 2011, Kaufland ran a three-week point of sale campaign in over 100 of its shops throughout the country to raise awareness for sustainable fishing and the MSC ecolabel. As part of the campaign, Kaufland donated 50 cents of Euro per kilo of MSC labelled fish (sold at its fresh fish counters) to the Ba Nafaa project.

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## "Our Sole, Our Wealth, Our Lives."

This is the vision of the Gambian Sole Fishery Co-management Plan

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With stakeholder support, the tonguesole fishery has introduced various measures to improve the sustainability of the fishery. Among those measures is the development of a management plan for the fishery, the implementation of a research plan and for stock assessments.

The Kaufland donation, with the support of Atlantic Seafood, will also contribute to projects that will make the fishers' daily lives easier, such as buying rescue boats, cool boxes and pushcarts. Those measures will also help improve the quality of the fish, thus potentially leading to higher prices for the fishers.

Kaufland also aim to promote Gambian tonguesole among German consumers as an alternative fish to be available in the counter. It's hoped that, if the fishery eventually becomes certified to the MSC standard, Kaufland will offer tonguesole from this community-based fishery to its customers in Germany.

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## "The great value of the MSC pre-assessment is that it provides a route-map for achieving sustainable management."

Dr. Kathy Castro of URI

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## European plaice

European plaice are bottom dwelling flatfish that inhabit the cold, shallow, saline waters of the North Sea. The North Sea is one of the most utilised marine areas in the world. Over the last ten years, around 43 per cent of the plaice landed was by fishing vessels from the Netherlands, followed by the United Kingdom (UK) with 24 per cent and Denmark with 17 per cent.

The Ekofish Group is one of several plaice fisheries in the North Sea. The fishery was required to implement several action plans for improvement, including additional information on the harvest strategy, retained non-target species and discarded species, with the ultimate goal of attaining a less uncertain and more precautionary management. In addition to working towards those specific action plans to improve management and minimise impact on non-target species, this fishery went a step further by partnering with other fisheries and local NGOs to support the creation and avoidance of new no-take zones as a new measure to reduce fisheries' impact.

Ekofish was also the first North Sea plaice fishery to get certified, triggering the full assessments of Osprey Trawlers plaice fishery, the Danish fishery and the Dutch CVO plaice and sole fishery. All these fisheries have now introduced a comprehensive catch sampling program to get a better picture of the entire catch composition including discards.



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