

15. Trader Joe's



Total Score

4.47



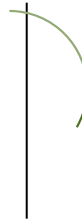
Policy

63.84



Initiatives

27.5



Transparency

29.5



Red list sales:  10

Banners: Trader Joe's

Background: Trader Joe's operates more than 300 stores in at least 23 states and prides itself on offering rock-bottom prices and a wide array of single-serving and prepared meals made with natural and organic ingredients. Trader Joe's buys directly from producers and offers a variety of grocery products under its own private label.

Greenpeace Comments: Trader Joe's score has remained virtually the same since last year due primarily to a lack of detailed communication. The company's isolationist tendencies make the identification of progressive initiatives difficult to say the least. Still, since announcing its sustainable seafood goals in 2010, Trader Joe's has been making slow but detectable progress. A customer shopping at Trader Joe's is today much more hard-pressed to find red list seafood items than he/she would have been two or three years ago.

In 2010, Trader Joe's made a public pledge to sell only sustainable seafood throughout the store by the end of 2012. Greenpeace is excited for this upcoming milestone and applauds Trader Joe's for taking on this substantial task.

Sustainable Seafood Policy: Trader Joe's seems to have an internal sustainable seafood policy in place, but the parameters are still not publicly available. The overarching goal of eliminating all unsustainable seafood products before 2013 does however necessitate a high degree of attentiveness to many of the relevant subjects outlined in the Greenpeace retailer survey, such as stock health and capture method for wild fisheries, feed content and waste management for farmed products, etc.

Greenpeace encourages Trader Joe's to offer its customers more information on the choices behind its product stream, and to elaborate on the benchmarks within its sourcing policy.

Seafood Sustainability Initiatives: This is an area of concern for Greenpeace given Trader Joe's commitment to a fully sustainable seafood inventory. The company is still not formally affiliated with any retailer groups, fishing industry groups, seafood companies, third-party auditors, or environmental conservation organizations working on seafood sustainability. The company has indicated that it is observing several developing aquaculture certification systems, but is not yet prepared to adopt a single standard.

Labeling & Transparency: Trader Joe's does not yet sufficiently label seafood products so that consumers can avoid purchasing destructively fished species, but it has begun to address this issue internally. A 2010 announcement by the company detailed plans to revisit its labeling practices, but this has not yet come to fruition. Greenpeace encourages Trader Joe's to push forward in this arena, as the company is highly vertically integrated and may be more easily able to augment labeling on a large scale than other, more conventional retailers.

Red List Seafood Sales: In the case of Trader Joe's, this is an area where Greenpeace both salutes progress and laments backsliding. The company has added Atlantic halibut—a species of extreme environmental concern—to its inventory, which is something that the company will have to reverse in order to meet its upcoming goal. At the same time, while Trader Joe's does still claim to stock items like Atlantic salmon, Greenland halibut, and Atlantic sea scallops, they are becoming extremely difficult to locate—this is hopefully a sign that the company is transitioning out of these product categories and substituting more sustainable options.

Trader Joe's most recent communication to Greenpeace disclosed the sale of ten of the twenty-two red list seafoods: Alaska pollock, Atlantic halibut, Atlantic salmon, Atlantic sea scallops, bigeye tuna, Greenland halibut, South Atlantic albacore tuna, swordfish, tropical shrimp, and yellowfin tuna.

