
Jennifer Stock: And welcome, good afternoon. My name is Jennifer Stock and I am the host for Ocean Currents. This show is once a month and we talk about different ocean topics, diving into this big, blue planet, talking about different science, research, discoveries, uses, anything ocean, I'm looking for it to bring to you live on the air on ocean currents. So, today's show is talking a little bit more about sustainable seafood. Historically, humans have eaten fish as long as humans have been on this planet.

However, something has changed over time. Our world population has expanded and expanded driving up the need for more food and so, we've turned to the sea, a seemingly endless resource, but in the recent century we've also started to see a drastic sea change. Recent science journals globally state that the ocean is in dire condition. If the long term trend continues, a majority of wild caught fish and seafood species are projected to collapse within the next 50 years.

Already researchers have found that 90 percent of all fish and seafood species in the world's oceans have been depleted within the past century and we as consumers certainly have a role in this and we'll be discussing this today. We're talking with Shelia Bowman from the Monterey Bay Aquarium Seafood Watch Program and we'll be exploring some of the topics around how we can eat seafood and purchase seafood while helping to keep the ocean or the health of the ocean in mind as we purchase. So, I'd like to welcome Sheila on live on the air. Sheila, are you with us?

Sheila Bowman: I'm here. Thank you, Jennifer.

Jennifer Stock: Hi! Thanks so much for coming on the air today.

Sheila Bowman: Thanks for having me. I'm looking forward to this conversation.

Jennifer Stock: Great. So, why don't you start by just giving us a little bit of an introduction to the Seafood Watch Program. How did it get set up? What are its main goals?

Sheila Bowman: Ok. Well, the seafood watch program is part of the Monterey Bay Aquarium and we've been around since around the year 2000. I think most people are familiar with us through our pocket guides, but really what we do is we're a team here of researchers who do a lot of work looking at fishery data, looking at data that are coming out of fish farming operations to put together recommendations

that consumers and businesses can use, as you were saying, when they are making decisions to purchase seafood.

So, it's interesting. We actually started with an exhibit at...the aquarium did in the late 1990's which was called "Fishing for Solutions." It was all about some of the issues around fisheries with issues like by catch and overfishing and habitat destruction and out of that exhibit came both the staff, but also our visitors concern with what fisheries should we support because they're doing good things and maybe what fisheries should we stay away from because they're not doing things in a way that's very environmentally friendly? So, for the last eight years we've been creating these recommendations for people.

Jennifer Stock: That's great. So, what are the main issues surrounding purchasing seafood these days and fisheries in general?

Sheila Bowman: Well, you know, it's really...there are two ways...two sources that we get seafood from, which is the wild fisheries that we're all familiar with and then fish farms who are sometimes called aquaculture. Each of those two sources has their own issues and if you're thinking about wild caught fisheries I think people traditionally think of people in wild fisheries and almost a historic romantic way with guys and fishing poles on boats and really, you know, as you were saying, it's changed so much in recent years to be really very industrialized, kind of, fishing that we see and so, as a result of some of those changes you are seeing issues...things like overfishing. We've become very, very adept at fishing large numbers of fish.

As I said, habitat destruction. Some of the gear we've developed actually can rake over the communities that are on the seafloor and really make it difficult for those communities to continue, you know, thriving and supporting sea life and the seafood that we like. Bycatch is an issue. Sometimes if you go out with big nets trying to get one type of seafood, you're going to end up with a lot of other animals in that net that you didn't intend and you can't eat. So, those are some of the issues around the wild fisheries.

If you're looking at things like farmed fish, it's more things like what are we feeding the fish in those farms? Are they carnivores that take other fish to feed those fish? Or are they vegetarian? How is the fish farm managing some of the byproducts? Things like fish poop and other products that come out of those farms. So, those are some of the things that we think about when we make our recommendations for farmed fish.

Jennifer Stock: I've seen a lot of recommendations... a lot of science communities looking at ways to reduce by catch and have you seen ways that we have been able to reduce by catch and just a reminder the by catch being things that we're not intending to take and it can be anywhere from fishes that are... this is for the listening audience... fishes that we don't intend to take or to sell and they accidentally are pulled up and also by catch being seabirds, marine mammals, and sharks, but have there been any ways we've been able to reduce by catch at all?

Sheila Bowman: Well, there are ways to reduce bycatch and some of the portions of this industry actually are looking at modifying their gear so that hooks are more appropriate for hooking fish, but don't do such a great job of hooking seabirds or sea turtles. Some of them are looking at things like net modifications. I think, perhaps, you may have heard of something called the turtle exclusion device which literally, if the turtle gets into the net, a turtle is big enough to get back out of the net, but the net's intended prey, which is small shrimp, are caught in the net. So, there are things that can be done with some of the different gear that we're using to make them, you know, a little bit less tendency to catch bycatch.

Jennifer Stock: And a lot of progress has been made, I think, just from the reading I've done, a lot of folks are trying to use this gear, but it sounds like it's not across the board yet as far as employing turtle excluder devices or using tope lines to prevent birds from going after gear. What do you think it would take to have more fishing companies employ more of these bycatch-reducing materials?

Sheila Bowman: Well, you know, here in the US, there are, I would say, more strict management on those kinds of requirements. So, the long-line fishery in the Pacific that catches tuna and swordfish has very strict quotas. If they catch more than a certain number of sea turtles in a year they close them down. So, the fishermen are really incentivized. Same thing with some of the US shrimp fishermen. So, I think one of the key things to sort of think about when you think about these devices, though, is they cost money. I mean, literally a turtle excluding device can cost several hundred dollars, but they also cost money in that they take, perhaps, you don't catch quite as many shrimp or catch quite as many of the fish you're after.

So, for some countries and for some fisheries they literally can't afford to do those sorts of things. So, sometimes people ask us, "Well, why are the US fisheries... tend to look a little better on your pocket guide recommendations?" And lots of times that's the

answer. It's because our government has required that these fishermen do something to help reduce by catch.

Jennifer Stock: Right and a lot of the animals are moving all over the place. They don't see those boundaries. So, let's go back to the aquaculture a little bit. It seems like there is some good aquaculture that's out there, maybe for the herbivorous fish and then there's some aquaculture that's getting some bad reps. Can we just discuss those two different types a little bit and go over what fish might be good, that is farmed and what fish might be bad? What are some of the good ones?

Sheila Bowman: Well, some of the good ones...there's a whole group of shellfish that are really good farmed products, you know, things like an oyster and a clam and a mussel. They really sort of stay where you put them and help clean the water. So, those tend to be really good candidates for farmed products. Other fish that are more vegetarian in nature like catfish and tilapia, those are also good candidates, but there are good products coming out of fish farms and I think that may be something that surprises some of your listeners this afternoon because people have really heard all the bad reps about farmed fish and they think everything farmed has got to be bad. So, if we can clear one thing up today, I think that would be a really good start.

Jennifer Stock: Now, with the good fish farms like catfish and tilapia, that's based on how it's practiced though because I've read about tilapia, the ones in the US are good, but if you purchase tilapia that is farmed from outside the US, there is some questionable environmental concerns in regards to those and how do you clarify those and how do you make consumers aware of that.

Sheila Bowman: Exactly and, you know, the nice thing is if a consumer carries their pocket guide, it's all listed on there because I know a lot of people are concerned and interested in how am I going to remember it? Well, our pocket guide are, you know, updated twice a year and they just...if people just carry that they're going to be in good shape. But, you're right, there are different ways that these fish are farmed that will have impact on where they end up on the list and US farmed tilapia is a good product where they are trying to reduce the amount of fishmeal being used and the number of fish that are escaping and those kinds of things and in other parts of the world, we're not seeing those developments yet. So, imported tilapia is on our red list.

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- Jennifer Stock:* Now, how about the more carnivorous fish that you were talking about. I'm assuming salmon is the biggie?
- Sheila Bowman:* Right. Salmon is the biggie that a lot of us are familiar with, but I'm sure some of you are starting to hear about the farmed tuna situation. So, it's not just salmon. Salmon just sort of paved the way for some of these other carnivores and I guess I would ask you to think about, you know, what other carnivores you and I eat. We don't eat a lot of carnivores. So, we're talking about fish that need other fish protein to survive and grow. So, just by definition, if you think about eating a carnivore, you're talking about, you know, it takes 100 pounds of anchovies to make, you know, ten pounds of salmon or 15 pounds of salmon. So, you're using wild fish in large numbers to feed to a farmed fish to get actually less fish than you started with. Does that make sense?
- Jennifer Stock:* Yes, it does.
- Sheila Bowman:* You're losing protein in that equation. You could have eaten 100 pounds of anchovies yourself, but by feeding them to the salmon, you end up with only about 15 pounds of salmon.
- Jennifer Stock:* And are these anchovies farmed as well or are those taken from the wild?
- Sheila Bowman:* Right now, the majority are taken from the wild. There are some, you know, fish farmers who are looking at other products, even including things like chicken, soy, other proteins to try to kind of address this concern that, you know, raising farmed fish is actually taking, you know, having a larger impact on ocean fish. So, I do believe there's people out there that are thinking about raising fish to feed to their farmed fish, but right now it's not happening on any large scale.
- Jennifer Stock:* Now, most of these are Atlantic salmon and where do you find these Atlantic salmon farms? Are these all on the east coast in the Atlantic Ocean.
- Sheila Bowman:* Well, you know, I think that's an excellent thing to point out that most of the farmed salmon that's out there is Atlantic salmon that's being farmed. So, even though we have Pacific salmon, they're bringing the Atlantic salmon over here when they farm it in the Pacific, mostly because Atlantic salmon are a little tougher, they grow a little more quickly. So, they're just a more robust candidate for fish farming. So, you can find these fish farms... we see them up in the British Columbia area, in Washington state. We've heard

about them in Chile, down even, you know, other places around the world. I just heard about Tasmania is now farming Atlantic salmon, Gotland, Ireland. So, this animal is getting all around as people have developed this fish farm

Jennifer Stock: That's interesting. Watersheds all around the world, but most concerning is up north in the Pacific northwest where there are healthy salmon runs and potential escapees. Have we had any evidence of these farmed salmon competing with native salmon in the northwest?

Sheila Bowman: Well, you have to know that they are Jennifer, right? You have to know that they are because they're escaping in large numbers, and millions of them are escaping a year. We know that by a direct report from the farmers themselves and just like any species that comes into a habitat, it's going to be a new species. You might consider it an invasive species, but it's going to have an impact on everybody else who's already been there. So, imagine if you're a Pacific salmon and the next thing you know, you've got this other fish about your same size, your same shape who likes to eat the same thing as you do all of a sudden living in your habitat. There is going to be competition.

It is going to impact those native Pacific salmon populations.

Jennifer Stock: It's pretty interesting. It's scary. How about the tuna ones? Where are the tuna farms? I've seen them off the coast of Mexico. Where else around...are there any in the United States?

Sheila Bowman: I don't believe yet in the US, but Baja off the Pacific Coast of Mexico there's a few. I know that they're doing some of it down around Australia. I saw a show on the Discovery Channel a few months ago now on the tuna farms down there and they literally go out in the ocean and find large schools of small tunas, catch them in nets, bring them, you know, hundreds of miles back to these fish farms and raise them up to be adult tuna. So, they're going out to the wild to get their tuna.

Jennifer Stock: I see you point about the negative net profit in protein by extraction more from the wild to create these farmed fish.

Sheila Bowman: It's a whole food pyramid thing that we're all familiar with. The farther up the pyramid you eat, you know, the less protein there is up there.

Jennifer Stock: For those just tuning in, I'm talking with Sheila Bowman from Seafood Watch from the Monterey Bay Aquarium and we're talking about sustainable seafood and we've just been talking about fish farming a little bit. How about, we've been talking about the guide...I'd like to talk about the guide in a little bit, but as far as...for those folks that don't have the guide, is there a way to find out when you are purchasing seafood if it's farmed, if it's sustainably raised? Is there really any way? I've gone to places and asked when I didn't have my guide with me and they typically come up with like this word like, "Oh yeah, this is organic salmon." Which is always an interesting one. Of course, there's many more questions. What can people do if they don't have a guide to try to find out more about their purchase?

Sheila Bowman: Well, a couple things. First of all, to address your thought on the organic salmon, there is no organic standards for seafood at all today. So, anybody that calls any seafood item organic is absolutely...they're either using an international guideline...they're not using US standards for that. So, it's not really something you can put all your faith in, but where can people get guides? You know, I think the most important thing you said there, Jennifer, is people need to ask. Be asking at their grocery store, be asking at their restaurants. It's important that these folks who sell our food know where it comes from and can tell us about that and, of course, you can always pick up a pocket guide on our website at seafoodwatch.org, but we have this new service for those folks that have web-enabled cell phones or some kind of personal device.

If you go to seafoodwatch.org on your cell phone, the list pops right up for you there as well. So, that's another resource if you have it out at the store. You can just kind of pop in there and take a look at the recommendations.

Jennifer Stock: So, if you're caught off guard without your guide, you have an online version. That's neat. The overall purpose of seafood watch is consumer pressure. What are some examples of consumer pressure working to help with these fisheries?

Sheila Bowman: Well, there's a number of examples. I mean, you could go back to the tuna situation in the 70's with the dolphin-safe tuna, which was kind of the classic example of consumers saying that's enough. We don't want to see that kind of industry practice anymore. We've also seen in more recent years similar kinds of success stories around the Atlantic swordfish when they did give swordfish a break. Boy, about 15, 20 years ago now and it really stuck in

peoples' minds that, you know, giving those fish a break for a short period of time can result in allowing them to rebuild their populations and come back. You can enjoy Atlantic swordfish today probably because of that campaign 20 years ago.

So, there's a lot we know that consumers can do and I think that it's really important that we not only put our money behind the good guys and spend money supporting the people who are on our green list making the best choice, but tell some folks about what you're doing. I think that each of us, if we could tell four or five people, this movement could grow and we could have more consumers doing a lot more asking of questions and businesses would respond. Restaurants and businesses would respond to consumer demand.

Jennifer Stock:

One thing I've encountered when I've tried sharing this with folks that I know...one of the common responses I get is, "This is cheaper." And they're very concerned about price as most of us are and they just can't see past that and I'm curious as to what would you say to someone like that that is more concerned about the price and so they'd rather pay for the cheaper salmon, the Atlantic salmon or something that's farmed unsustainably on the red list? What's a good response for them to help them start to see what could be a better purchase?

Sheila Bowman:

Well, you know for the last six months or so, and this gets into not only our food systems, but everything from, you know, kids toys to all kinds of different products we use. I think consumers are starting to realize that cheap doesn't necessarily mean that there's not costs somewhere down the line for us and it's becoming, I think, a little bit more en vogue for people to not just go for the lowest priced item, to think about what the other costs might be. If you've been to the aquarium, we have an exhibit on sustainable seafood called the "Real Cost Cafe." So, we may not pay as much money for farmed salmon in cash, but what we're going to pay in environmental damage and potentially the loss of those Pacific salmon populations...those are other costs that we have to think about and the real costs are pretty high on some of those products that are on the red list.

Jennifer Stock:

Yeah, I think that the age old question of having people see the longer, bigger picture with a lot of these programs.

Sheila Bowman:

Exactly.

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- Jennifer Stock:* So, what about algae? I didn't see any algae on the list and maybe because it's not an animal, but algae is eaten by several folks and there have been unsustainable practices that I've read about in the past. How does Seafood Watch view algae?
- Sheila Bowman:* Well, that's a very interesting question. We don't really consider that at all. That's a great question. I don't have really an answer for you on that. I haven't heard about unsustainable seaweed practices.
- Jennifer Stock:* Well, just thinking about the way they reproduce, if you scrape off an algae colony, they won't be able to reproduce because algae reproduce by spores. So, but I've read of some practices, I believe up in Mendocino there's a good place where...I don't know the name of the company, but they harvest in such a way where they're really rotating how much they take and where they take it and there hasn't been an impact, I mean, I don't know for sure, but I'd just be curious around the world, we do have nori and lots of other types of algae that are vital parts of the habitat and I haven't seen much about it. It makes me think, well, maybe there's not a problem, but...
- Sheila Bowman:* That's interesting. When you said that, mostly I did think of, you know, off Japan they do have huge algae farms, but they tend...and they're not the most, perhaps, pretty things to look at in your offshore waters, but you know, they just kind of are there and they're natural, not natural, but a native species and I hadn't really thought about that. So, that's a great question.
- Jennifer Stock:* Maybe it's something to look into. Well, great. So, if you are a consumer or you're at a restaurant, what are the top three questions...a restaurant or a market...what are the main three questions you would want to know about your seafood choice?
- Sheila Bowman:* Well, you know, again, kind of referring back to the pocket guide, it depends on what you're most interested in eating. So, for example, if you're into having some salmon the most important question is is it farmed or is it wild? And in this time of year it's a little more difficult to get wild salmon. So, when I see salmon on a menu this time of year I'm always very curious about it even if it says wild salmon, I think, "Hmm..where are they getting that from this time of year."
- But there's other things. If you're interested in eating shrimp there's is this a US product or is this an imported product and that's where the question would be important. So, you have to sort of know what you're interested in eating, check out the pocket guide and see

what the criteria sort of says on there. If it lists shrimp, US farmed or wild as a good alternative, that's the one you're after.

Jennifer Stock: Okay, so there's a couple of questions you can think of right away: If it's farmed or wild, if it's US or imported, and seasonality. Is this really an in-season fish?

Sheila Bowman: Seasonality is very interesting. You know, sometimes it's very interesting to find out how it was caught if you can and again, you know, sometimes, Jennifer, these questions are good just to ask just to find out what the product is. What are you eating? Where was it caught? Who caught it? Where does it come from. Sometimes what we hear with fresh fish is this is something that came from the other side of the world and so, those are things to consider yourself. You know, when I heard about that Tasmanian salmon I thought, "Oh boy, not only farmed salmon, but how many food miles? How much fuel is being used to get that?"

Jennifer Stock: Exactly. I think that's a big question that I've just started thinking about. There's so much talk about CO2 and emissions and seafood is one of the big ones.

Sheila Bowman: Yes.

Jennifer Stock: Not even internationally, but locally as well. We have to burn fuel to go get fish, wild-caught fish, versus some of the aquaculture practices. So, there's a lot of tradeoffs and consumers just really need to think about the big ones in order to make a good choice.

Sheila Bowman: Exactly.

Jennifer Stock: Well, listen. We're going to come up on a break here just about 1:30 and I hope you'll stay with us and we'll talk a little bit more about the guide and how to translate it a little bit on the half hour. So, please, Sheila, stay on the line with us and we'll be back in just a little bit.

Sheila Bowman: Great.

Jennifer Stock: Thank you. For those just tuning in, you're listening to Ocean Currents and my name is Jennifer Stock. We're talking about sustainable seafood today with Sheila Bowman from the Seafood Watch program at the Monterey Bay Aquarium and we will be back in just a few moments.

(Music)

Jennifer Stock: You're listening to KWMR, 90.5 FM in Point Reyes Station, 89.7 in Bolinas and live on the web at www.kwmr.org. KWMR is supported by the Dance Palace Community Center located on the corner of 5th and B streets in Point Reyes Station. Member-supported, the Dance Palace offers classes, events, and facility rentals for the communities of West Marin. Membership information, volunteer opportunities and event schedules are available at thedancepalace.org or 663-1075. Thanks for tuning in, today. You're listening to Ocean Currents and my guest today is Sheila Bowman from Seafood Watch with the Monterey Bay Aquarium. When we return, we'll talk a little bit more about how to make better choices and using the Seafood Watch guide from the Monterey Bay Aquarium. Please stay with us.

(Music)

Jennifer Stock: I have Sheila Bowman on the line with us and Sheila, I'd like to talk a little bit more about the Seafood Watch guide. You mentioned earlier that the guide is updated twice a year and can we just review again, what types of data does the staff at seafood watch use to create the good list, the not so good list, and the red list?

Sheila Bowman: Okay, well, we look at each species that's on our list, each seafood item, with a number of different kind of criteria in mind and it really depends if its wild or if it's farmed, but if you're looking at wild fisheries, we look at how much habitat destruction might be involved when the fish are caught. We look at, is the fishery overall well-managed? Is our government making sure you're not taking too many, leaving enough in the water to reproduce. We look at how much bycatch there is. We look at just sort of the overall impact on the fish population.

So, we have researchers here that use fishery data to put all of those recommendations together for us and they're all posted on our website, which is really a great place for people to go and look. You know, check out your favorite seafood and see what's going on. You can learn a lot just off our website.

Jennifer Stock: Yeah. I saw that there was actually a document that shows all of the types of criteria and questions that are answered to decide where that fish speaks and I have seen them move. They've moved from the green to the yellow and vice versa. So, a little bit more about the yellow category. I think it stands for a better choice,

better than red, but it's one of those things that I fall right in the middle on. I don't know if I should go with the yellow, you know? Is it really...would it be really helping if I chose a yellow-listed animal. What is the real guidance for the yellow area? Would you prefer people to go green?

Sheila Bowman: Well, the way we look at it, the first thing we ask people to do is to just take all of those red lists, avoid those items...if people could take those off of their menus, quit eating those, that would be a great first step. So, then what are they left with? Well, hopefully between the green and the yellow lists there's quite a few things to eat there, but we always, if we're given the option, we like to say to people. "Okay. Maybe choose something off of that green list." The reason it's the best choice is those are the fishermen and the fish farmers who are really doing exceptional work. So, if you think about your dollars supporting the farmers and the fishermen who are out there, if you can think about using your dollars to support the real people doing the best work, then you want to shop off of the green list. That kind of leaves the yellow list as fish that are, you know, we call them good alternatives.

They're ok choices. They're good for once in a while if there's not a green list item that you like, you can eat something off of the yellow list, but we tend to think of it as, sort of, special occasion food. You don't eat off of there all the time.

Jennifer Stock: Okay. That's good. Now, if I'm in a restaurant and I see..this has happened to me quite a few times. I have my list with me. I'm pretty good about that. I'm faithful to my list, but I see things on the menu that are not sustainably harvested or farmed and so, generally avoid it, but then when I leave that restaurant I'm left with an impression that I want them to know they could make better choices. What are some resources for me as a consumer that I could use to help educate places that I would want to go eat?

Sheila Bowman: Well, you know, I think you make a really important point, Jennifer, that a lot of people have not even thought about seafood. So, we talk with restaurants regularly and these restaurants might be into cage-free and organic and free range and all kinds of artisanal products that are better for us and better for our planet, and they may not have even thought about their seafood. It's just not something that is as easy for these folks to kind of understand. So, we find that consumers actually do a really nice job of introducing these ideas to chefs so when you go into a restaurant, give them a pocket guide.

We also have other things available on our website where you can leave behind other cards and other bits of information that can help these chefs get maybe what might be their first awareness that there's a problem.

They may not even know that Chilean sea bass...that there's issues around that.

Jennifer Stock: So, who's the best person at a restaurant to leave that information for? The management? The chef or who would you want to leave that for exactly?

Sheila Bowman: I, you know, I do a lot of speaking with chefs. I don't think that most folks when they go in a restaurant can get to the chef. So, a manager is a really good option. If the owner is around...I think that's probably your most optimal contact person. I've also left information with...I just did the other day...just with my server and just said, "You know, if you could pass this along," and sure enough I got a phone call within a couple of days here. So, I just want to tell people that when they leave pocket guides for restaurants and when they tell people, you know, to look into their seafood and learn a little more, we do hear from those restaurants.

Jennifer Stock: That's great. I'm glad to hear that. I was concerned that if I put that down that maybe it will just go and be forgotten and if I make that effort I really want it to count. So, that's good to hear. Now, as a coastal resident, I appreciate the maritime heritage and the small fishing towns that we have along the coast and it's really what attracts people to come here from afar, but I see it dwindling away to big corporate fishing industries and how can we support more small, local, independent, commercial fishermen in our purchasing and how do we know where they're selling.

Sheila Bowman: Well, now that is a trickier question. We don't really get into a lot of that kind of information on our pocket guide. So, that's when you kind of have to keep your ears open to where, you know, here we are off the California coast...what do we hear about? What are the fishermen out there doing? You know, we have a very large fishery for squid off our coast. Certain times of the year those are coming in in good numbers. I think everyone knows when we heard this year about Dungeness crab season being pushed back. So, you know, part of it's just kind of keeping your ears open and knowing what's out there and reporting those products as they come into season.

You know, the salmon season will be opening up in the next few months, presumably. We had some problems with salmon this last year, but, you know, those are the times when you can support local fishermen is when those fish are seasonally coming available and they're out there catching them.

Jennifer Stock: That's good and how about for folks that are travelling internationally. Last year, I had a chance to be in Europe and I was really perusing the menus, interestingly, just thinking about where is this all food coming from. For folks travelling internationally, what are some recommendations for them for seafood purchasing since it's out of US waters, typically.

Sheila Bowman: We have a couple of things that we recommend. All of our pocket guides are for different regions for the US, but we do have our national pocket guide which is kind of a more general recommendation that would work anywhere in the US and so, a lot of those species could...you could also use that if you were travelling. It's got, you know, tuna and swordfish and some of the most popular fish are on that, but then there's also other countries that are doing different pocket guides. So, the same work that we're doing here in the US is being done in other parts of the world. So, if you go to our website, we actually have a resources section that really talks about and gives you specific links to organizations in Canada and throughout Europe and Australia and Asia and even Africa where you can download pocket guides that you can use for your travel, which I think is pretty cool.

Jennifer Stock: That's great. Is there a difference between these...I've seen different pocket guides in the United States, different marine conservation organizations have their pocket guides. Are they all generally the same? That's kind of confusing to me, a little bit. I haven't looked to compare them, but are they all generally the same.

Sheila Bowman: Well, I'm going to say yes and no. I mean, generally they are the same, but sometimes different organizations have a slightly different priority or methodology. So, I know I've seen some pocket guides where they really try to incorporate not just the health of the animals and the ocean, but also the health factors for the fish if you eat it. So, if you start to look at those things as they combine, then sometimes you're going to get a pocket guide that looks different than ours.

Jennifer Stock: Got it. There are a little different...

Sheila Bowman: You kind of have to know what you're looking at. Our pocket guide is really about...you know, we don't even...it's funny, we call it Seafood Watch, but we really try to get people to think about fish, fish and fish populations as opposed to just thinking about, you know, seafood that we eat. There's sort of a distinction between the animals and their habitat and just the part that we see when we have dinner, but our priority is really just the environment and the oceans and the fish that live there. Some other organizations have different priorities, you know? So that's sort of what you have to kind of keep your eye on as you're looking at these different pocket guides and I know sometimes people feel confused about that. I just, I think if you grab a pocket guide and kind of go with it then you're going...they're all pretty similar in what they're saying.

Jennifer Stock: And if you pick one up, that's a great start as it is.

Sheila Bowman: It's a great start and if you don't like what it says on the seafood watch guide, you're probably not going to pick one that has our red list items on the green list. The news is the news.

Jennifer Stock: Yeah. So, real quickly, we're just running up to, running out of time here, but what about this upcoming event, the Cooking for Solutions event, at the Monterey Bay Aquarium on May 16th and 17th. Can you give us a little background on that.

Sheila Bowman: Well, I'm so glad that we have a chance to talk about that, especially for your audience, being so close by. We do Cooking for Solutions every year. It's this...our seventh annual event. It's a fabulous several days worth of programs, and galas, and specialty tours and that Saturday we have a kind of open house in the aquarium where anyone who pays admission can come in and have salmon tasting and kind of see everything that's going on. Gene Burns is in the aquarium that day doing his show live. So, it's...we do have a website. It's called cookingforsolutions.org and you can go in there and take a look at all of the events, but this year we have Alton Brown coming in. We're very excited. He's from the Food Channel.

We have Darina Allen who is sort of the Alice Waters of Ireland and she's coming in. We just have a lot of great chefs, both local chefs that come in, Stewart Roysas is coming from Rubicon up there in San Francisco and I'll tell you, it's a great way to eat sustainable seafood and other sustainable products, you know, poultry and all kinds of good things. It's not just all fish, lots of sustainable wines, some organic wines.

Boy, it's fabulous. It's really a great chance to realize that eating good, sustainable seafood does not mean torturing yourself because there's great food, tasty food.

Jennifer Stock: That sounds like a wonderful event. I wish I could go.

Sheila Bowman: Come, Jennifer! Come on down!

Jennifer Stock: I would assume some of this has a cost. Are there events that are also free to the public or...

Sheila Bowman: The event on Saturday comes, kind of, with your aquarium admission. Our gala that we do on Friday night, which is one of the probably premier pieces of this week is \$115 for the general public and \$95 for our aquarium members that are up your way and we have a number of, like I said, on Saturday, we have some cooking demonstrations in the aquarium that some of those come for free. We have some of these tours where people can go out and we call them Food and Wine adventures. They go around to different houses and places down this way and those are priced individually. So, it's all on the website. It's really all listed pretty nicely there at cookingforsolutions.org.

Jennifer Stock: Wonderful. Great. Great information, Sheila. Thank you very much for spending your afternoon with us and sharing your information about purchasing sustainable seafood. I know for me, I've had some burning questions about what can I do? I'm in a restaurant! And I see this salmon and I can't believe it's still Atlantic salmon and it's still on the menu and I really want to do something. So, I think you really provided some good ideas for consumers today to help get more involved as we have this wonderful way to use our dollar in a positive way and I just want to thank you again. So, thanks again.

Sheila Bowman: Well, thanks for having me Jennifer and I just hope everybody will take an opportunity to just rethink their seafood choices.

Jennifer Stock: Thank you so much, Sheila.

Sheila Bowman: Thank you.

Jennifer Stock: Seafoodwatch.org is the place to go. You can download a guide off the internet. You can compare east coast to west coast to national and learn about some of the information that they use to make these green lists and red lists in regards to purchasing seafood. So, that pretty much wraps it up today. I'm running out of time here,

but I just wanted to say thank you for joining me. We learned about opportunities for purchasing seafood in a more sustainable way. The main questions you can ask yourself if you don't have your seafood guide on you at the time is, "Is this animal farmed or wild?" Or, "Is it a US product or is it imported?" And, "How was this animal caught? What type of method?" Those are the main types of questions you should be thinking about when purchasing seafood and check out seafoodwatch.org to take a look at that guide and see what's on there. These are great ways to be making a positive difference as a consumer in the health of the oceans.

(Music)

Jennifer Stock:

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