



VeriFish

The sustainability indicator framework to communicate responsible aquafood production and consumption patterns

VeriFish addresses the need for standardised, verifiable information on sustainability, nutritional value, provenance, and potential health risks of aquafood. By offering a comprehensive framework of indicators and guidelines, VeriFish simplifies the complex landscape of choices in choosing these foods.

VeriFish.info

The importance of Sustainable Aquafood

In today's world, sustainable seafood is more critical than ever. Sustainable practices ensure that we can enjoy the health benefits of these foods while preserving the environment for future generations. By choosing sustainably sourced seafood, we support responsible industry practices that help maintain fish populations, protect marine habitats, and reduce the environmental impact of our consumption.

What do we mean when talking about sustainable aquafood?

Sustainability and nutrient values

Citizens need trustworthy information on sustainability and nutrition. While seafood is a good source of high-quality protein and other nutrients, its sustainability varies. Understanding these differences empowers consumers to make healthier and environmentally responsible choices. VeriFish provides a framework with verifiable indicators to help identify sustainable seafood options.

Provenance

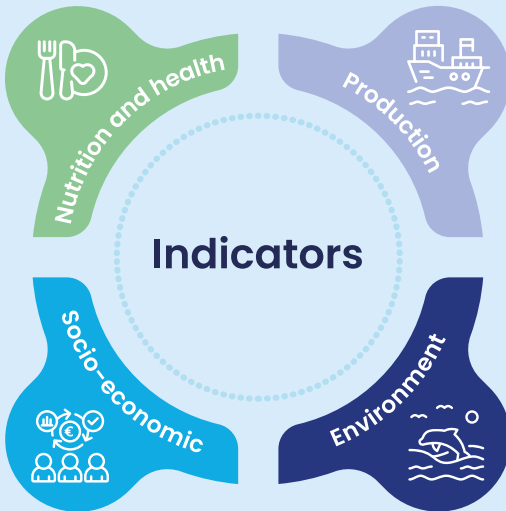
Understanding the origin of seafood is essential for assessing sustainability. Locally sourced seafood typically has a lower carbon footprint and benefits local economies. However, poor labelling can lead consumers to unknowingly select products that harm overfishing and ecosystems. VeriFish addresses this issue by providing clear information about origin.

Potential health risk and benefits

Aquafood has many health benefits but can also pose risks due to contaminants like mercury, microplastics, and harmful bacteria. VeriFish aims to provide more transparent information about the safety and health benefits of seafood, enabling consumers to make informed choices and enjoy seafood confidently.

VeriFish Indicator Framework: Enhancing Environmental Sustainability of Fisheries

VeriFish will enable integration of indicators from various sources and provide recommendations for seafood businesses on how to present information about different products for consumer groups.



The VeriFish framework enables scoring information from different sources based on reliability and presents key information about seafood products in a standardised manner. Aspects include definitions, methods, sources, and indicators for sustainability, origin, and health sourced from organisations like the FAO, EuroFIR, and FISHBASE to ensure validity.

Fisheries and Aquaculture

VeriFish indicator framework addresses both captured fishery and aquaculture products.

Fisheries are essential for sustainable seafood but good management practices are key to maintaining fish populations and preventing resource depletion. Challenges like overfishing, bycatch, and habitat destruction need to be addressed to help protect ocean health and ensure fish stocks remain viable.

Aquaculture, or fish farming, can help meet growing demand for seafood and ease pressure on wild fish stocks provided they are managed sustainably. However, aquaculture faces challenges like habitat degradation, water pollution, and disease. Sustainable practices, and tools like the VeriFish app, are crucial for ensuring farmed seafood remains environmentally friendly and safe, simplifying the complex landscape of aquafood consumption.

VeriFish Web Application

By converting the VeriFish indicator framework into an easy-to-navigate format, the VeriFish web app will provide comprehensive information to guide users towards informed choices. It will describe the status of stocks, biological characteristics of species, environmental data, and nutrient content as well as how these relate to health benefits. The entry point of the web app will be a QR code, allowing users to access detailed product information, including labels, indicators, descriptions, and links to resources.

Guidelines and visuals

To facilitate understanding and use of indicators, users will be able to view them as a spider/radar chart that supports connections among desires and possible solutions that are otherwise difficult to understand. It will allow users to integrate local, seasonal, or health concerns with wider sectoral environmental impact mitigation plans, sustainability of the fisheries, and EU-wide nutritional data.



VeriFish will also deliver comprehensive guidelines on how to use indicators to help retailers and producers communicate the sustainability of their products.

Towards a standardised approach to sustainable seafood communication

One of the key deliverables of VeriFish is a European good practice recommendation, providing a standardised approach for communicating about sustainable seafood.

- 🌀 For citizens, it will provide clear and trustworthy information to help make informed choices.
- 🌀 For retailers and producers, it will offer a standardised method for showcasing sustainability of their products, helping build consumer trust and loyalty.
- 🌀 For policymakers, it will help with design, implementation, and review of regulations and initiatives.

Who's VeriFish for?



Seafood retailers (HoReCa)

Insights into the environmental and nutritional value of aquatic food and help them inform customers as well as make better business decisions.



Fisheries associations and Producer Organisations

Raise awareness and communicate environmental, biological, and social indicators describing aquafood sustainability using clear metrics shared by value chain participants.



Aquaculture associations and Producer Organisations

Communicate environmental, biological, and social indicators describing aquafood sustainability to value chain players through clear, common metrics.



Consumers and consumer associations

Increase awareness of the health benefits, nutritional value, and sustainability of aquatic food, helping consumers make planet- and human-friendly choices.



European Citizens

Verified, comprehensive, and multilingual information about aquafood and support responsible and informed decisions about sustainability, biodiversity, seasonality, nutrition, and health.



Policy stakeholders & funding agencies

To raise awareness about the need for transformative policies to effectively communicate sustainable aquafood practices using data from the entire value chain.



Children

Educate through social media, engaging “understanding game” products about sustainable aquafood, thereby shaping attitudes about sustainable production and consumption behaviours.



Standard Good Practice Organisations

Coordinate standardisation experts and develop common criteria for promoting sustainable marine food consumption across the entire aquafood value chain.

Join VeriFish: Empowering Sustainable Aquafood Practices Together

VeriFish is pulling together a Community of Practitioners interested in supporting the development of the indicator framework.

Do you want to help us better communicate the importance of seafood sustainability and stay informed on the latest developments in sustainable seafood practices?

Join the **VeriFish CoP**

Subscribe to the **VeriFish newsletter**

Follow us



Co-funded by
the European Union