



# Wild Capture Fisheries

SOURCING POLICY

blueYou

# Wild Capture Fisheries

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|---------------------------|---|
| <b>Scope of Policy</b>    | This policy refers to all seafood origins and supply chains from wild capture fisheries |
| <b>Applicability</b>      | All wild-caught seafood products packed under the Blueyou brand                         |
| <b>Version</b>            | V 3.0 October 2023  |
| <b>Replaced Version</b>   | V 2.0 April 2020  |
| <b>Revision Frequency</b> | Annually  |
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# 1. Blueyou's Commitment and Policy Summary

Wild seafood harvested in our oceans, rivers and lakes is a unique and healthy source of protein for more than three billion people. Revenues from wild capture fisheries and upstream seafood processing are a vital source of livelihood for coastal communities and contribute to economic development and reduction of poverty in many countries of the global South. Productivity and harvest revenues from wild capture fisheries directly depend on the status of fish stocks and healthy aquatic ecosystems. Global fisheries can thrive when our oceans, rivers, and lakes flourish.

Despite existing challenges in managing wild aquatic resources more sustainably and responsibly, Blueyou firmly believes that seafood from wild capture fisheries is an important contribution to the protein supply of future generations – and that supporting fisheries in their journey towards sustainable and regenerative harvesting models should be a key priority for policymakers and seafood companies alike.

Blueyou's sourcing policy for wild caught seafood is based on five pillars: **(1)** Empower community-based, traditional fisheries which depend on local, healthy fish stocks as basis for their daily food supplies and livelihoods and support them in being active stewards of local aquatic resources; **(2)** Actively drive more transparent, responsible practices across wild capture fisheries supply chains and exclude seafood from illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) catch in Blueyou's supply chains; **(3)** Focus on fisheries with low environmental and climate footprint and high potential for contributing to healthy aquatic environments and nature-positive outcomes; **(4)** Give sourcing preference to fisheries origins which use selective, low impact capture gear, reducing by-catch of vulnerable species and critical habitat impact to a minimum and **(5)** Develop community-based, Fair Trade seafood harvesting systems which generate fair value, social inclusion, and provide livelihoods for coastal communities to thrive.

## 2. Background and Rationale

Seafood from wild capture fisheries is an important contributor to the transformation of global food systems towards more sustainable and regenerative food harvesting systems: Many wild-caught seafood origins have a significantly lower ecological footprint, than land-based, animal protein sources while contributing higher nutritional values. Considering the regenerative potential of aquatic ecosystems, seafood from well-managed, low-impact fisheries will play an important role in future diets by respecting the dimensions of planetary boundaries as defined in ecological footprinting, such as biodiversity and the depletion of natural stocks, Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions (carbon footprint), land use, freshwater use, and eutrophication. The carbon footprint is the fastest-growing footprint component and is estimated to represent 60% of humanity's overall ecological footprint<sup>1</sup>. Food supply chains are estimated to cause 26% of anthropogenic GHG emissions, and an additional 5% are caused by nonfood agriculture and other drivers of deforestation<sup>2</sup>. Reducing food system GHG emissions is therefore central to meeting global emission targets. GHG emissions in fisheries are caused by fuel use for fishing and pelagic capture fisheries have the lowest Product Carbon Footprint (PCF), while flatfish and crustacean fisheries produce the highest, broken down to unit weight of the resulting edible seafood portion<sup>3</sup>.

The sustainable management of natural stocks is furthermore of high importance as the trends in the depletion of these stocks have been concerning: The percentage of commercial stocks that are fished at unsustainable levels has increased to 35% on the global average, while in some regions it might exceed 67%<sup>4</sup>. Fisheries could increase production by better management that would allow stocks to recover that are currently overfished. Rebuilding overfished stocks to the biomass that enables them to deliver their Maximum Sustainable Yield (MSY) could increase fisheries production by 18-19% globally (or 16.5 MMT per year), equating to 53 billion US\$ additional profit and 619 MMT additional ocean biomass relative to the status of stocks today<sup>5</sup>. Healthy oceans cannot only provide more fish, nutrition, and economic value for communities, but they also function as the planet's most important carbon sink, acting as a key buffer for climate change.

Blueyou's policy gives preference to community-based small-scale fisheries because they are of lower impact, socially and culturally important in many regions across the world and play a critical role in global food security and livelihoods. Traditional small-scale fisheries are often self-governed by the communities and their socio-cultural expectations in a manner that protects natural resources, rather than being managed by external national or international authorities. The communities' interest in protecting their local resources is genuine because they directly depend on them. Fishing therefore forms a key component of the identity of many fishing peoples and for coastal communities, fishing is a way of life.

1 Lin et al., 2018: Ecological Footprint Accounting for Countries: Updates and Results of the National Footprint Accounts, 2012-2018, Resources

2 Poore & Nemecek, 2018, Reducing food's environmental impacts through producers and consumers, Science

3 Gephart et al., 2021, Environmental performance of blue foods, Nature

4 The State of World Fisheries and Aquaculture 2022

5 Ye et al. 2013: Rebuilding global fisheries: the World Summit Goal, costs and benefits, Fish and Fisheries

Indeed, community-based small-scale fisheries generally have a lower climate footprint than their industrial counterparts: Small-scale fisheries are estimated to use only 11% of the total fuel for catching fish, although they catch nearly half of the fish globally. Industrial fishing fleets, - often heavily subsidized -, use the remaining 89% of global fuel consumption. Additionally, almost all the fish caught in small-scale fisheries are destined for direct consumption, whereas still today, 20% of industrial fish catches are reduced to fish meal and animal feed. In addition, industrial fisheries typically cause high bycatch and produce substantial discards, while in community-based small-scale fisheries, the entire catch is used.

Empowering fishing communities for improved access to markets and added value is key to realizing prosperous and resilient coastal communities that can become active stewards of the ocean. Without prosperous communities, there are no sustainable fisheries. The fisheries' transition in line with the theory of change of Blueyou's fishery policy therefore comes through direct engagement with community-based fisheries and is supported and incentivized by markets and value chains.

### 3. Strategic Network Partners and Organizations

Blueyou actively engages, partners, and collaborates with various organizations for the implementation of this policy. Our strategic network of collaboration partners includes the following organizations and initiatives:

- Sustainable Fisheries Partnership (SFP)
- Fair Trade USA Seafood Program
- Better Seafood Philippines (BSP) and Blue Seas Philippines
- Conservation Alliance for Seafood Solutions (CASS)
- Blue Food Assessment (BFA)

# 4. Policy Requirements and Standards

| Requirements and Standards   | Performance Objectives   |                                  |
|------------------------------|--|----------------------------------|
| 1. Legal compliance          | Blueyou strives to be in full compliance with all national and international laws and regulations in the primary fishery sector and the secondary seafood processing industry. Blueyou actively promotes best practices and compliance and supports fishery stakeholders, seafood raw material suppliers, and local authorities in the effective implementation of existing laws, regulations, ordinances, and their corresponding local enforcement systems.  | Minimum standard for all origins |
| 2. IUU avoidance             | Blueyou does not commercialize wild-caught seafood that originates from illegal, unregulated, and undocumented (IUU) fisheries. Blueyou adopts its business processes to support measures that contribute to avoiding and fully excluding IUU origins, in coordination with fishery stakeholders and Fishery Improvement Projects (FIP). Such measures include (1) the registration and licensing of vessels, (2) effective documentation and monitoring of catch and landings, (3) enforcement of operational fishery regulations such as temporal or spatial closures, allowed gear, minimum catch size limits, and Total Allowed Catch (TAC) limits, and (4) the implementation of effective traceability systems throughout fishery supply chains. | Minimum standard for all origins |
| 3. No destructive gear       | Blueyou does not source seafood that is caught using destructive gear on sensitive habitats or Vulnerable Marine Ecosystems (VMEs). Destructive gears are gears that directly interact with the seabed or that have an ecosystem impact that goes beyond removing fish (e.g. bottom trawls, dredges, dynamite, or cyanide fishing, etc.). Sensitive habitats or VMEs are defined by their role in ecosystem functioning with a complex and unique structure that is highly susceptible to degradation and slow in its recovery to disturbances (e.g. coral reefs, sponge reefs, seamounts, hydrothermal vents, seagrass beds, or other areas that are important for breeding and feeding or serving as nurseries).                                     | Minimum standard for all origins |
| 4. Selective gear preference | Blueyou gives sourcing preference to capture gears and methods that catch target species selectively, i.e. with minimal bycatch and discards.  | Minimum standard for all origins |
| 5. Stock status              | Blueyou does not procure seafood from stocks that are considered overfished based on a scientific stock assessment unless there is an effective fishery management framework in place that will likely result in the recovery of the respective stocks (on the basis of the same stock assessment). If a stock is considered overfished and the success of a recovery plan appears uncertain, sourcing of the respective fishery products is only acceptable if the source is a traditional, community-based fishery segment of low impact that has a minor contribution (< 20%) to total stock mortality.   | Minimum standard for all origins |

## Requirements and Standards

## Performance Objectives

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|--|--|---|
| 6. Size limits and reproduction  | Where minimal size limits are not in place or not meaningful, Blueyou defines and implements minimal commercial size limits to include adult but exclude juvenile organisms in its sourcing, ensuring that organisms have exceeded the size of maturation before capture with a high probability (> 80%), thereby avoiding growth overfishing.   | Minimum standard for all origins  |
| 7. Promotion of community-based fishery origins and Fair-Trade certification | Blueyou gives sourcing preference to seafood harvested by traditional, community-based fishery origins. Blueyou develops partnerships with local stakeholders to supply fishing communities and supports improving their fisheries management towards healthier stocks. Blueyou actively develops Fair-Trade models with community-based fisheries, promotes Fair-Trade (FTUSA) certification on global seafood markets and works with other existing initiatives to empower community-based fishery systems.  | More than 80% of all wild capture seafood origins are small-scale communities-based operations by Dec 2026  |
| 8. Continuous improvement in FIP frameworks                                  | Blueyou actively promotes and supports initiatives for improved management and regulation of fisheries and supports programs that address the development of fishery management systems and effective enforcement frameworks. Blueyou actively reaches out and partners with Fishery Improvement Projects (FIPs) and creates enabling and market-incentivized conditions for driving change in fisheries reform. For the commercialization of products from FIPs, Blueyou uses the guidance and criteria for credible and effective FIP defined by CASS <sup>6</sup> , monitored and evaluated by fisheryprogress.org <sup>7</sup> . | Minimum standard for all origins  |
| 9. Certification   | Blueyou actively works with third-party verification, assessment, and certification schemes to credibly identify and verify sources of sustainably caught seafood. Blueyou promotes and adopts standards which have been developed in line with ISEAL-Alliance criteria such as the Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) for sustainably managed fisheries or the FTUSA seafood certification program. Also, Blueyou aligns its sourcing decisions with existing fishery assessment schemes such as Monterey Bay Aquarium's Seafood Watch™, giving sourcing preference to their "Best Choice"-ranked products, respectively.             | > 90% of all wild capture seafood origins are subject to certification by independent ISEAL Alliance schemes such as MSC and Fair-Trade USA [Minimum standard in place] |

<sup>6</sup> Conservation Alliance for Seafood Solutions

<sup>7</sup> FIP progress tracking on [www.fisheryprogress.org](http://www.fisheryprogress.org)

## 5. Implementation of Policy

This policy is implemented by Blueyou’s impact and science team under the lead of the technical fisheries director, in close collaboration with sourcing and quality management.

## 6. Key Impact Metrics and Reporting

### Key Impact Metrics (KIM)

- Share of fishery origins from small-scale, community-based operations
- Number of small-scale fishermen in Blueyou’s programs
- Number and share of fishery origins using highly selective gear
- Number and share of non-overfished vs. overfished origins
- Number of FIP collaborations
- Number and share of certified origins by ISEAL scheme (MSC, FTUSA)
- Number of FTUSA certified fishery projects and origins

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### Impact Monitoring

Annually by April 30

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### Reporting

Annual impact report by Blueyou, published on official website

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