



## **Bento Sushi Responsible Seafood Policy**

### **Supporting more sustainable fishing practices**

### **Our Responsibility**

As a business, we have always been passionate about sourcing the freshest and highest quality sushi and seafood possible. Sourcing high quality responsibly sourced seafood has always been important to us and is now also one of our strategic priorities.

With 90% of the world's fish stocks now being overfished and with seafood comprising a significant portion of our food & beverage spend each year, we recognize that we have an important role to play in safeguarding the future of our oceans. Healthy marine ecosystems are critically important not only to our business but to over 3 billion people around the world who depend on the oceans for their primary source of protein. Fishing is also a major source of employment around the world, with 200 million people directly or indirectly employed in fisheries.

As the world's population and reliance on fish as a source of protein and employment increases, the pressure on our oceans will only be exacerbated. As a business we have a responsibility to use our purchasing power and brand influence to drive positive change, working with fisheries to improve their processes, that will help to protect our oceans and ensure that future generations can continue to enjoy seafood in the way we do today.

### **Our Seafood**

We have long standing relationships with our seafood suppliers and **business clients**, who continuously work with us as partners to ensure we are adhering to our standards for certification which are outlined below:

- Salmon (Sushi grade)- ASC or BAP 4Star, BRC, Trace Register
- Salmon (fully cooked)- MSC or ASC | BAP, BRC
- Smoked salmon (minced and sliced) - MSC or ASC | BAP, BRC
- Shrimp (Ebi, Tempura, Cooked)- BAP 4 Star, BRC, SMETA, Trace Register
- Tuna (Sushi grade- Saku, Ground, Poke)- MSC, SMETA, BRC
- Surimi (stick, shredded)- MSC, SMETA, BRC

We are continuously striving to increase our sustainability ratings and accountability strategies through various certifications processes. We acknowledge that this is a lengthy and on-going process and therefore have high demands and expectations from our suppliers as we aim to source only sustainable and MSC certified products.

## **Our Priorities**

This section of our Sustainable Seafood Policy sets out our responsible seafood priorities and outlines how we will make sourcing decisions. It accompanies and should be read in conjunction with our Sustainability Policy and Sustainable Sourcing Guide for Suppliers.

### **1) TRACEABILITY**

Without precise details of what species of fish we are buying and where exactly it comes from (amongst many other considerations) it is impossible to know if our seafood is responsibly sourced.

To ensure that our seafood is in compliance with our policies, we work with our suppliers to better understand exactly how we source, to ensure we can verifiably trace all of our fish back to their source (whether fishery or farm).

### **2) TRANSPARENCY**

Being honest, open and fair is important to us as a business. As set out in our Sustainability Policy, we promise to be trustworthy, transparent and honest about what we can achieve *and* what we can't achieve when it comes to sustainability. For seafood this means:

- Being open regarding the species, source of fish, location, and capture or farming method of the fish we source and making this information publicly available
- Seeking feedback from our suppliers and other stakeholders on our sustainability policies and being open to them challenging us, where they feel we can and should do more
- Making our policies and a summary of any risk assessments publicly and readily available (so not hidden in the depths of a corporate website etc.) and actively engaging with our suppliers in their development and the achievement of the targets there

### **3) CLEANER HEALTHIER SEAS**

We want to improve the overall health of our seas, not just protect the species within them. This means using natural resources and materials more carefully and applying the waste hierarchy and a more circular economy approach to everything we do (See our associated sustainability policies for more details). A particular focus for us here is to work with suppliers to minimise packaging and plastic use, maximise reuse opportunities and encourage responsible disposal of products and items at end of life (avoiding lost or "ghost" fishing nets which can kill considerable numbers of marine species including sharks, etc.).

## **4) RISK ASSESSMENTS**

To verify the status of the fisheries or farms from which we source, we will conduct an annual risk assessment and will base our future sourcing decisions on the outcome of this risk assessment.

Criteria within our Risk Assessment Model include:

### **Vulnerable Species**

We avoid buying species inherently vulnerable to exploitation, such as those listed as Endangered or Critically Endangered

### **Stock Status**

We aim to buy seafood from fish stocks that are well managed and in a healthy state. Where the stock status of a product is not known we will work with suppliers and/or endeavour to use alternative recognized sources of information to understand more about stock levels.

### **Capture Method**

Different gear types can have varied impacts depending on their design, where they are used and what they are catching. We recognize that gear variance is why the same species may have different sustainability rankings or eco-certifications, depending on how it was caught. Likewise, different species caught by the same gear type can have different sustainability concerns.

## **5) CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT**

In cases where we identify that sustainability performance should be improved, our preference in the first instance (so long as not relating to any serious sustainability breach) is to actively engage with such fisheries (whether via a formal or informal Fishery or Aquaculture Improvement Project), via our suppliers rather than to immediately cease sourcing from these suppliers. We will support our suppliers to engage in improvement projects that have a defined goal, workplace and timescale.

The seafood industry is constantly changing. Advances in gear technology, best practices, and management, mean that over time, responsibly fished/farmed and sustainable seafood should become more accessible. Through carrying out annual risk assessments and through adopting the priorities set out in this policy we aim to achieve our responsible sourcing targets and continuously improve our sustainability performance.

## **6) COMMUNICATING CLEARLY & INFLUENCING OTHERS**

We want our guests to be able to trust the seafood that they buy from us is responsibly or sustainably sourced and we want to encourage greater knowledge and engagement about the importance of sustainable seafood and will be providing training for all of our teams as well as provide information to our clients and customers in a variety of methods (eg: website, in-store, on the product).

We will also work collaboratively with other businesses, NGOs and international organizations to address any systemic issues in the seafood industry that cannot be solved by us alone and will use our purchasing and brand power where we can to help protect the future of our oceans.

**We will review and update this policy on at least an annual basis.**