

New tool for assessing the benefits, risks and sustainability of the consumption of fish

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Once users have selected their weekly menu, together with the population group they belong to, they can click on the tabs to find out about the nutrient and contaminant intake of consuming each species. FishChoice provides advice in the form of a traffic light so that users can eat the fish species they have selected in a sustainable fashion (for example, it indicates if a species is in danger or what type of fishing methods should be used). Credit: URV

Researchers from the Universitat Rovira i Virgili's (Tarragona/Spain) research group TecnATox have optimized the website FishChoice, which helps to consume fish and seafood in a sustainable fashion and not just maximize benefits and minimize risks. The tool has been developed in the framework of a project funded by the European Commission's program H2020.

In a context of increasing world demand for [fish](#) and [seafood](#), sustainable and innovative solutions need to be found that improve the dietary safety and value of fish and seafood. This is the main aim of the project SEAFOODTOMORROW (Nutritious, safe and sustainable seafood for consumers of tomorrow), in which the research group TecnATox takes part alongside 34 other institutions from 15 European countries.

The URV research group has optimized the [tool](#) FishChoice, created as part of the project ECsafeSEAFOOD (Priority environmental contaminants in seafood: safety assessment, impact and [public perception](#)). The new version of the tool guides consumers so that they can get the maximum benefit from eating fish and seafood—in terms of nutrient intake—while it reduces exposure to chemical pollutants and aims for consumption to be sustainable. The new version has kept two options: one designed for the [general public](#), the other designed for nutrition and [health professionals](#), industries and researchers. Both versions can be accessed from the website www.fishchoice.eu.

Users of FishChoice select the country where they are and, as a function of this choice, the tool shows the species of fish and seafood that are habitually eaten out of a total of 64, 40 more than in the first version. The other species are shown on a secondary level. Fish products are also included: for example, fish soup, fish paté or smoked salmon. Once

users have selected their weekly menu, together with the population group they belong to, they can click on the tabs to find out about the nutrient and contaminant intake of consuming each species.

The tool compares the intake results with the thresholds established by the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) in terms of the minimum amount of nutrients recommended and the maximum amount of contaminants that can be tolerated. If users do not respect these limits, they are sent a warning. Finally, FishChoice provides advice in the form of a traffic light so that users can eat the fish species they have selected in a sustainable fashion (for example, it indicates if a species is in danger or what type of fishing methods should be used).

The website is available in 25 official languages of the European Union, among which are Catalan, Spanish and English. The application will soon be available as a download for mobile phones.

TecnATox has created and optimized FishChoice, with the support of EuroFIR, a non-profit organization dedicated to drawing up and harmonizing nutritional data on food on a European scale. The company AquaTT is involved in marketing the tool to ensure that it is used to maximum advantage and can be accessed by all those interested.

More information: www.fishchoice.eu

Provided by Universitat Rovira i Virgili

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