

British supermarket chain stops cod sales

28 March 2006

Asda, Britain's second-largest supermarket chain, says it will stop selling North Sea cod in about three months.

Asda, owned by Walmart, told The Independent it is taking the action because of a dramatic drop in natural fish stocks due to overfishing. The sale of North Sea cod is expected to be suspended by July.

Asda officials said they've been criticized by British environmentalists for selling endangered fish, such as cod, that are heading toward commercial extinction, the newspaper reported.

Asda says it plans to follow Walmart's example, selling only fish certified by the Marine Stewardship Council, the London body that checks global fisheries for sustainability and legality. The move could place Asda among Britain's most ethical supermarkets for fish, The Independent said.

Asda officials say they believe the entire North Sea should become a marine conservation zone to halt overfishing, with commercial fishing limited to local boats.

The retailer also announced it will drop swordfish within the next four months, having already removed shark, skate wings, ling, dogfish and Dover sole from its counters, The London Telegraph reported.

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APA citation: British supermarket chain stops cod sales (2006, March 28) retrieved 20 January 2021 from <https://phys.org/news/2006-03-british-supermarket-chain-cod-sales.html>

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