

BITE-BACK
www.bite-back.com

ON ORANGE ROUGHY

In the last decade increased consumer demand for orange roughy has seen a massive rise in its availability throughout the UK. Since 1995, the Australian, New Zealand and Namibia caught fish now regularly feature on restaurant menus, supermarket shelves at fishmongers and in gastro pubs. It is this increasingly widespread availability and promotion that could spell the end of the line for orange roughy.

Demand for its meat is so high that orange roughy are being hunted to the brink of extinction. Already, some stocks of orange roughy are close to collapse and marine scientists have raised the alarm, declaring orange roughy as a threatened species. In New Zealand stocks have plummeted to just 20% of original sizes. Last year one fishery recorded a stock size as low as 3%.

Put very simply, too many people are eating orange roughy and these slow to mature and long-lived fish are at the frontline of a killing spree that is so unsustainable it can only be described as an underwater holocaust.

Graham Buckingham, campaign director at Bite-Back, the UK's fastest growing marine conservation organisation, said: "Orange roughy has almost been annihilated off the New Zealand coast and UK retailers are exasperating the problem by stocking these fish. If ever there was a wake-up call, this has to be it. Those who continues to buy and sell orange roughy are effectively endorsing its extinction."

Importantly, Bite-Back believes that retailers and restaurants can help manage the future of the world's fish populations, by making an intelligent decision about which species they sell and when. Working together, the law of supply and demand can be turned on its head to alter the dynamics of the fishing industry and help allow stocks of orange roughy and other vulnerable species to recover. If retailers stop selling it and consumers stop buying it, the motivation to hunt and kill threatened species is removed.

A RISING TIDE

Bite-Back is not alone in its recommendations. Other conservation groups around the world including the Marine Conservation Society, National Audubon Society, Sea Food Choices Alliance and the Monterey Bay Aquarium are also fearful for the future of orange roughy and each believe that we should avoid eating it.

NOT ENOUGH FISH IN THE SEA

Orange roughy are deep living species that can live until 140 years and doesn't reproduce until it reaches 30 years old. Constant fishing pressure means juvenile fish are being caught long before they can reproduce and maintain healthy stock levels.

In the last 10 years the number of adult, breeding age, orange roughy caught has fallen dramatically. There are no landing restrictions on orange roughy. Adults and juveniles are caught with equal disregard for future stocks since many have had no chance to reproduce and replenish stocks.

Yet, rather than recognising the problem, demand for orange roughy in the UK is at an all time high.

WORSE THINGS HAPPEN AT SEA

Modern fishing methods have seen the introduction of fiercely effective but indiscriminate fishing techniques that are severely changing marine eco-systems.

By carving everything in their wake, trawler boats from around the world are already responsible for destroying boulder fields, deep-sea corals and important breeding habits – some 10,000 years old – equivalent in size to Europe.

Now every restaurant or retailer that agrees to stop selling these fish will help raise the profile of this urgent issue, educate consumers, win the respect of customers and underpin Bite-Back's campaign to positively alter the way that the retail and fishing industries operate.

In return, Bite-Back will award partner-organisations with a unique Bite-Back accreditation and work to translate ethical decisions into valuable publicity.

TRADE WITH INTEGRITY

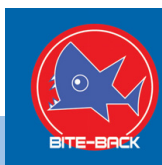
Alarming, five of the most threatened fish species in the world are readily available in the UK – swordfish, shark, marlin, monkfish and orange roughy.

Bite-Back, with your support, plans to change that.

Already Waitrose has chosen to drop orange roughy from its fish counters across the UK, because of Bite-Back's campaign.



HELP US REDUCE OVER FISHING OR THE FISHING WILL BE OVER



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