

Choosing fish better, every day

FOR EDUCATORS

For teachers, science centre educators, NGO facilitators and youth workers who want to build genuine food literacy around sustainable seafood without lectures, guilt or greenwashing.



A note on education

The goal of education around sustainable seafood is not to tell people what to think. It is to create the conditions in which they can discover it for themselves. This guide helps you design sessions that do exactly that.

Produced by Three o'clock

Co-creation and behavioural design partner of the Mr.Goodfish 3.0 consortium. Three o'clock designed the nudging framework in this guide, working with pilot partners Nordnorsk Vitensenter (NNV) in Norway, the Cyprus Marine and Maritime Institute (CMMI) in Cyprus, and Nausicaá, Centre National de la Mer in France to test activities with real participants across schools, science centres and community settings.

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The educator's role in sustainable food behaviour

Educators have a different relationship to behaviour change than food service operators. A canteen manager influences consumption without the participant noticing, the choice architecture does the work silently. An educator works with participants directly: the activity is the intervention, and the participant is an active agent in it.

This means two things. First, the activity must be genuinely engaging and not a lesson disguised as an activity. Second, the goal is not compliance but discovery: participants who arrive curious and leave wanting to try something are worth far more than participants who have been told the right answer.

What is a nudge?

A nudge is a small change in how options are presented that makes one choice easier, more visible, or more normal, without removing alternatives. In educational settings, you are helping participants understand how nudges work and practice designing them. The activity itself is not always the nudge but it is the learning experience that makes participants more likely to make or advocate for better choices

What is a situation?

A situation is a repeated behaviour pattern that explains how people make food choices and not who they are. In this guide, each situation describes a specific barrier that an educational activity can address. Choosing the right situation means understanding what is actually getting in the way for your participants and not what you want to teach them.

Core facilitation principles

- 1 Start with experience, not explanation. Taste, touch, and do before discussing.
- 2 Ask before telling. 'What did you notice?' before 'Here is what this means.'
- 3 Never make past choices feel wrong. Curiosity, not guilt, is the engine of change.
- 4 Let sustainability emerge from the session, don't open with it.
- 5 One clear learning goal per session. Trying to change everything changes nothing.

Which situation are your participants in?

Before choosing an activity, identify the barrier that is most relevant for your specific group. This will vary by age, context, and prior experience. The right situation is the one that honestly describes what is getting in your participants' way.

→ Select the situation. Your participants...



Have never thought about why some fish are always on the menu and others never are.

Situation A - Automatic choices on page 4



Avoid unfamiliar fish and stick to the same 2-3 species regardless of season.

Situation B - Unfamiliar species on page 5



Are anxious about cooking fish, wasting money, or getting it wrong.

Situation C - Waste and cost anxiety on page 6



Switch off when environmental or sustainability topics are introduced.

Situation D - Sustainability fatigue on page 7



Have tried mussels or seaweed but would never buy them themselves.

Situation E - Low-impact as niche on page 8



“Participants don’t notice they have a choice”

Situation A

Automatic choices

What participants are experiencing:

People choose what is easiest and most visible, sometimes without conscious reflection. In an educational setting, this translates to participants not questioning the food environment around them and why certain fish are always present, why others never appear. Building awareness of defaults and choice architecture is the learning goal: not guilt, but critical understanding of how environments shape decisions.

Facilitation principle

*The goal is curiosity, not guilt.
Frame the discovery as:
'someone designed this and that
design shapes what you choose.'*

*The question is who, why, and
what you would do differently.
Avoid framing participants' past
choices as wrong.*

Activity types that work for this situation

- 1 Menu and counter redesign challenge**
Participants redesign a fish counter or canteen menu to make a sustainable species the easiest choice. Applies the concept of defaults directly. Works well for ages 12+. Design challenge format keeps engagement high.
- 2 Observation exercise**
Participants visit or observe a real food environment (canteen, market, supermarket fish section) and map what is most visible, most prominent, and pre-selected. Discuss: who designed this, and why?



Tested in real-life: in Germany, pupils learn to spot the supermarket's sales tricks

Germany's Federal Centre for Nutrition (BZfE) offers a free, well-rated classroom unit, "*Verkaufstricks im Supermarkt - Mit mir nicht*" ("Supermarket sales tricks - not with me"), for roughly ages 12–15. Over several lessons, often including a supermarket excursion, pupils map and analyse the strategies a store uses to steer what shoppers pick: placement, layout, the route through the aisles. They work in groups, discuss and present, building a stronger understanding of how a designed environment shapes consumers' choice.



Repository of educational content: Ready-to-use session plans for this situation are available at <https://www.mrgoodfish.com/en/ressources/>



“Participants stick to what they know”

Situation B

Unfamiliar species avoided

What participants are experiencing:

When confronted with unfamiliar species, participants experience social uncertainty: they do not want to be wrong in public. They also face practical uncertainty: what does it taste like, how do you cook it, is it acceptable to people like them? Educational activities that address this barrier work by reducing the social risk of trying something new, e.g. through tasting before naming, shared experience and cultural storytelling.

Facilitation principle

Never ask participants to compare the new species to a familiar one in a way that invites negative comparison. Frame the tasting as discovery: 'What do you notice?' not 'Is this better than salmon?'. Curiosity before judgement.

Activity types that work for this situation

- 1 Blind tasting session**
Participants taste two or more species without knowing what they are, then share first impressions before the reveal. Consistently the most effective format for shifting stated preferences. Works across all ages and requires minimal equipment.
- 2 Species storytelling and passport-making**
Participants research or are told the story of a local species: where it lives, how it is caught, who eats it, what it tastes like. They create a 'species passport'. Builds familiarity and cultural connection before any tasting or cooking.
- 3 Cooking workshop with local species**
Hands-on preparation of a species participants have not cooked before, inside a familiar dish format. The familiar dish reduces the social risk. The new species becomes unremarkable through doing.



Tested in real-life: in France, "*De la mer à mon assiette*," a Nausicaá species-discovery activity

In this Nausicaá's school activity, held in its Blue Academy space, pupils discover North Sea species through imitation games, mime and song, then take on a role-play as a seafood seller welcoming customers, presenting the day's products and explaining how to choose responsibly. Meeting the species playfully, before any pressure to get it "right," is the move: familiarity lowers the social risk of the unfamiliar. Teachers leave with follow-up materials to extend and evaluate the session in class.



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“Participants worry about wasting money or food”

Situation C

Waste and cost anxiety

What participants are experiencing:

The perceived cost of getting it wrong, financially and practically, stops people before they start. In educational settings, participants (especially young people cooking for the first time, or adults managing tight budgets) benefit from activities that build practical confidence: portioning, using the whole fish, stretching one ingredient across two meals. The goal is competence, not courage.

Facilitation principle

Lead with competence and curiosity, not frugality or sustainability.

‘Did you know you can make a stock from the bones in 20 minutes?’ is more motivating than ‘we should reduce food waste.’

Activity types that work for this situation

- 1 Whole fish, zero-waste cooking**
Participants use every part of a fish in a cooking workshop: fillet, head and bones for stock, skin for crispiness, lesser-used parts as bonus dishes. Framed as culinary discovery, not waste reduction. Builds confidence and reframes the economics of buying a whole fish.
- 2 Budget cooking challenge**
Participants plan and cook a meal for a set budget using a local or unfamiliar species. Includes calculating cost per portion vs kilo. Makes the affordability of sustainable species concrete and memorable.
- 3 Two-meals-from-one-fish recipe workshop**
Participants cook one larger piece of fish twice: once as the main meal, once as a leftover dish the following day. Removes the waste anxiety by making the leftover the plan.



Tested in real-life: Norwegian students cook monkfish from head to tail

Student volunteers from UiT The Arctic University of Norway co-designed a cooking workshop for their peers around monkfish, locally abundant, rarely chosen. Participants cooked several dishes from a single fish, including lesser-used parts like the liver, framed as culinary discovery rather than waste reduction. 24 participants from 12 nationalities took part, and the dominant barrier they reported was not disinterest but simply not knowing how to start. Using the whole fish stretches one purchase across several meals, lowering the cost per meal and cutting what gets thrown away.



Repository of educational content: Ready-to-use session plans for this situation are available at <https://www.mrgoodfish.com/en/ressources/>

FOR EDUCATORS

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“Participants disengage when the topic is framed as an obligation”

Situation D

Sustainability fatigue

What participants are experiencing:

Participants, especially teenagers and adults, have developed a reflexive resistance to environmental messaging. They switch off when they feel they are being told what to think. Educational activities that address this barrier work through the back door: taste, story, local identity and play. The sustainability connection emerges from the experience, not the other way around. The facilitator’s job is to create the conditions for self-discovery.

Facilitation principle

The most important facilitation principle for this situation: do not start with the environmental problem. Start with what is good, local, and interesting today. Let the responsible consumption and sustainability connections emerge from the session. If you open with ‘we need to talk about overfishing’, you have already lost part of the room.

Activity types that work for this situation

- 1 Pillars of the Sea game session**
The cooperative board game makes the links between fishing, consumption, and ocean health tangible through play. No lecture needed as the game structure creates the understanding. Debrief questions guide the connection to real-world choices without moralising.
- 2 Taste-first, learn-second session**
Participants taste a local or low-impact species framed entirely through sensory experience and cultural story. Sustainability is introduced only after the positive tasting experience. The sequence matters: tasting, curiosity, information.
- 3 Food provenance investigation**
Participants trace the origin of a familiar fish (e.g. salmon in a school canteen) vs a local seasonal alternative: distance travelled, method of production, supply chain. Inquiry-based: they find the information rather than being told it.



Tested in real-life: Cypriots make lionfish as culinary discovery, not environmental duty

Rather than opening with the biodiversity threat posed by invasive lionfish, facilitators framed it as a new local ingredient: something interesting, something local, something the participants could be among the first to try. The environmental context emerged from the tasting and the discussion.



Repository of educational content: Ready-to-use session plans for this situation are available at <https://www.mrgoodfish.com/en/ressources/>



“Participants see mussels, seaweed and shellfish as someone else’s food”

Situation E

Low impact options as niche

What participants are experiencing:

Participants know about mussels, seaweed and farmed bivalves but have never cooked them at home. These feel like restaurant food, health-food territory, or culturally unfamiliar. Educational activities address this by making these ingredients feel a common standard: embedding them in familiar dishes, repeated encounters, and practical cooking that removes the preparation mystery. The goal is not to make participants feel good about eating sustainably, yet it is to make the ingredient feel unremarkable.

Facilitation principle

Avoid framing these ingredients as the virtuous or responsible choice. Present them as interesting, affordable, and delicious, and let that be enough.

The environmental benefit is real and can be mentioned, but it should never be the lead. If participants feel they are being asked to make a sacrifice, the activity has not worked.

Activity types that work for this situation

- 1 Familiar recipe remix**
Participants take a recipe they already know and cook it with a low-impact ingredient swapped in or added: mussels in pasta, seaweed flakes in bread, oysters in a starter. Familiar format, new ingredient. The dish stays theirs and the repertoire quietly expands.
- 2 Shellfish from scratch**
Beginner-friendly session focused entirely on one low-impact ingredient: how to buy it, how to prepare it, how to cook it simply. Demystifies the preparation step that stops most people buying fresh mussels or clams.
- 3 Supermarket vs fish counter comparison**
Participants compare the availability, price, and presentation of low-impact options at a supermarket vs a fishmonger or market. Builds awareness of access gaps and how to navigate them with shelf-stable alternatives.



Tested in real-life: in Spain, mussels are an everyday staple, not a niche choice

In Galicia, mussels are farmed on floating rafts (bateas) in the Atlantic rías and are an everyday, affordable staple cooked simply at home - most classically as *mejillones al vapor*, steamed with lemon, white wine and bay leaf. Spain is the world's third-largest mussel producer, after China and Chile, and Galician mussels hold Protected Designation of Origin status (*Mejillón de Galicia*); the growth of raft farming is what popularised mussels in Spain and made them a staple on many tables.



Repository of educational content: Ready-to-use session plans for this situation are available at <https://www.mrgoodfish.com/en/ressources/>

The Mr. Goodfish3.0 educational content repository

Learning Scenario, ages 5-6



An illustrated story follows Mr. Goodfish as he decides which fish to keep and which to return to the sea, opening up the basics of the seafood system and responsible choices. Followed by free play (colouring, kitchen and fishing play) and an optional cooking and tasting activity. [LINK](#)

Pillars of the Sea



Cooperative board game (3-6 players, ages 12+) in which players take the roles of scientists, fishers, policymakers and coastal communities and work together to balance four pillars, biodiversity, economics, social fairness and health, across Europe's six seas. Full session plans: setup instructions, facilitation guide, debrief questions, difficulty variants, and curriculum links for science, geography and food technology. [LINK](#)

Learning Scenario, ages 7-8



Children become fishers, fishmongers and chefs in a hands-on market that traces seafood from sea to plate and introduces the diversity of edible species. Includes a lower-resource "connect the dots" alternative and a take-home cooking activity. [LINK](#)

Students' cooking workshops



Beginner-friendly, hands-on sessions for university students, centred on a local or unfamiliar species. Replicable framework tested with monkfish in Norway. Includes a species selection guide, prep instructions, facilitation notes and debrief questions. [LINK](#)

Learning Scenario, ages 9-11



Teams reconstruct the supply chain of common products (fish fingers, canned tuna, smoked salmon), then run a hands-on overfishing simulation to see how fishing pressure affects fish stocks. Connects seafood consumption, human health and marine biodiversity. [LINK](#)

Recipes



Simple, replicable seafood recipes to pair with any scenario or workshop, selected for sustainable, seasonal and locally available species. [LINK](#)

The Mr.Goodfish3.0 educational content repository

Want to contribute an activity?

If you have developed a workshop, lesson plan, or any teaching material connected to sustainable seafood, the MGF3 team welcomes contributions.

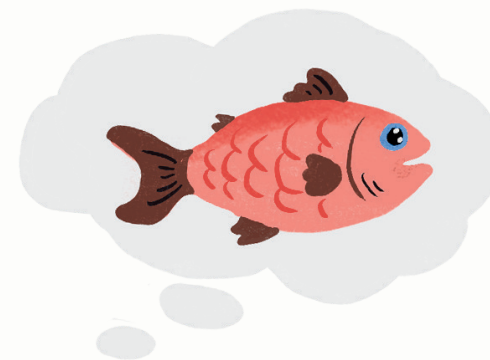


Contact us at <https://www.mrgoodfish.com/en/contact-us/> with a short description of the activity and where it was tested.



Plan your session

Use this template to design your session before you deliver it. A session without a clear learning goal and a way to assess whether it worked is hard to improve and hard to share with others.



One session, one learning goal.

- Trying to address too many barriers in one session reduces the impact on all of them.
- Be honest about what your group actually needs and plan the session around that.
- Do needs assessment to acquire understanding about the educational and skill gaps.

After the session

- Note what worked and what did not while it is fresh.
- Ask one question to assess learning: 'Is there one thing you'd try differently at home or in the canteen?'
- If something worked particularly well, document it and share it with the MGF3 network.
- If the session did not land, return to the situation selector as it may be a different situation than you thought.



Share your session: send us a photo and a few lines about your activity together with a session plan to mrgoodfish@nausicaa.fr. We'll add it to the repository for public use.

When posting about it on social media: feel free to tag Mr.Goodfish and use the hashtag #MrGoodFish.

My session plan

Setting	<i>e.g. classroom, science centre, after-school club, community workshop, school canteen event</i>
Audience who and how many	<i>e.g. 28 students aged 12–14 / community group of 15 adults / mixed family event</i>
Duration	<i>e.g. 45 minutes / full afternoon / 2-hour workshop</i>
Situation choose one	A - Choices are automatic - build awareness of defaults and environments B - Unfamiliarity - reduce the social risk of trying new species C - Waste and cost anxiety - build confidence in preparation and use D - Sustainability fatigue - reach through taste, story, and local identity E - Low-impact options as niche - normalise through repetition and cooking
Activity type from repository	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Learning scenarios (ages 5–6)• Learning Scenarios (ages 7–8)• Learning Scenarios (ages 9–11)• Pillars of the Sea, the MGF3's cooperative board game session• Cooking workshop with and for university students• Creative session on using and adapting MGF3 recipes
Species to feature	<i>Which local or seasonal species will you centre the session on? Why this one for this group?</i>
Learning goal <i>one only</i>	<i>What do you want participants to be able to do or think differently after the session?</i>
Materials needed	<i>List what you need to prepare or download from the activity repository</i>
How I will know it worked	<i>What will you observe, hear, or ask at the end of the session?</i>

My notes



Setting and audience	
Situation identified	
Activity chosen	
Species featured	
What worked	
What to change next time	
Participant response (one quote or observation)	

About

Since its launch in 2010 by Nausicaá, Acquario di Genova and Aquarium Finisterrae, the European Mr.Goodfish programme has worked to raise public awareness about the responsible consumption of seafood. By publishing seasonal recommendations developed by marine resource specialists, the programme encourages consumers to choose abundant and responsibly sourced species, helping to protect vulnerable fish stocks and preserve marine biodiversity.

Since 2017, the initiative has also expanded its guidance to include sustainable aquaculture products, reinforcing its commitment to responsible seafood choices across Europe.

In 2024, Mr.Goodfish entered a new phase through the European project “Mr.Goodfish3.0: Co-creating Solutions for Sustainable Seafood Consumption”, funded by the European Union under the Horizon Europe programme.

During three years, the project will enhance and expand the Mr.Goodfish app, combining scientific expertise with social, cultural and economic perspectives gathered through collaboration with stakeholders, citizens and seafood professionals across Europe.

Supported by a consortium led by Cyprus Marine & Maritime Institute, the initiative aims to reach 30 million European citizens, promote

responsible seafood practices in all EU Member States, and strengthen awareness through educational campaigns, partnerships and multilingual tools adapted to regional ecosystems and consumption habits.

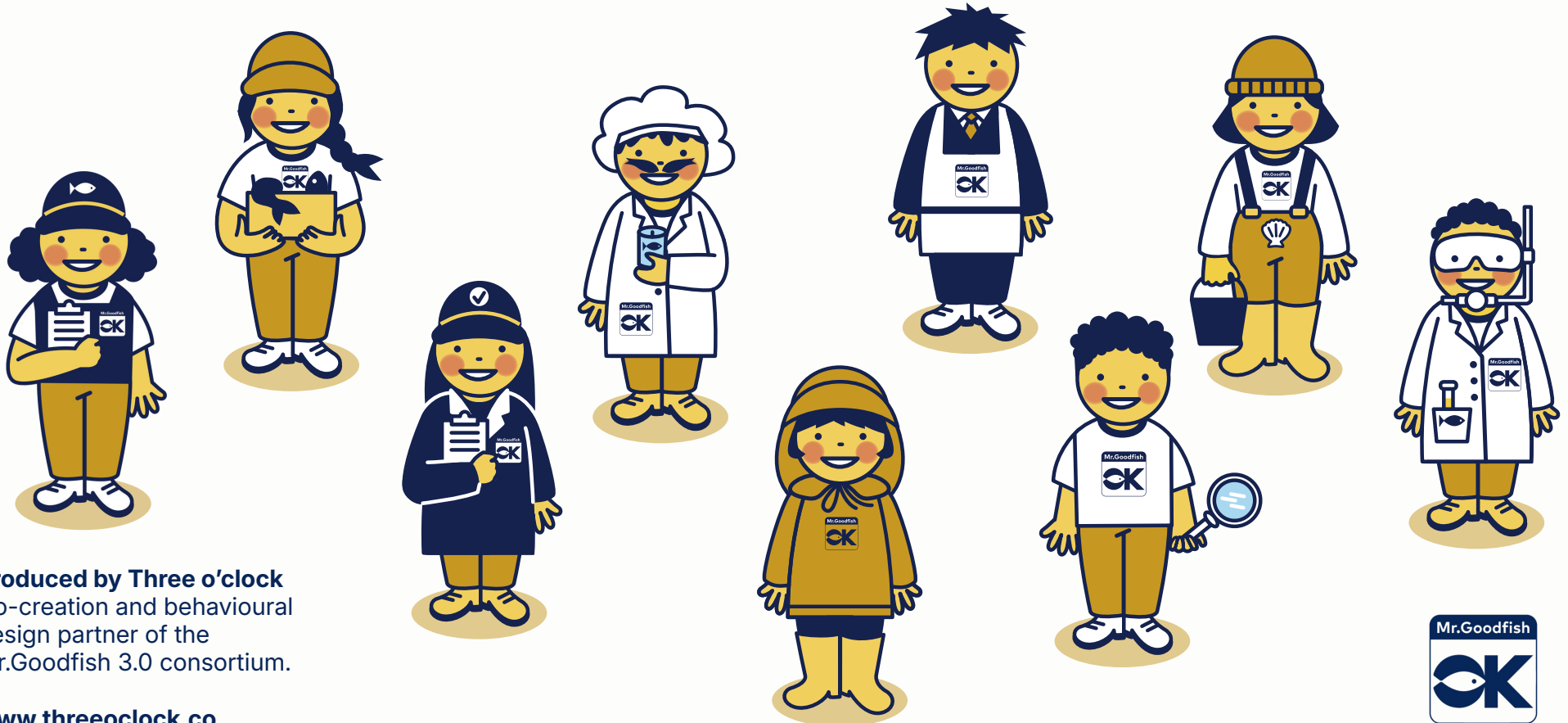
Learn about Mr Goodfish 3.0 project

<https://www.mrgoodfish.com/en/>



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