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Providing information to consumers about the farmed or wild origin of fish

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Project 2.3 SEA-INFOCOM

Background and objective

- **Production method** and **origin** are issue of **mandatory** labelling
- **Compliance is often poor**, e.g. in Belgian supermarkets, production method and origin are not mentioned on 60% and 40% of the seafood products, respectively (*Euroconsumers / Test-Achats*, 2006)

- SEAFOODplus **exploratory** study: poor consumer awareness farmed/wild
- Confirmed by SEAFOODplus consumer **survey** (*Brunsø et al.,* supra)

- **Limited** cognitive capacity, will-power and interest in info processing
- Risk for **information overload** with potential adverse impact

Today's food labels are information cue high density areas

Mandatory information about farmed/wild …

- occupies room on the seafood label
- does it entail market differentiation potential ?
- among which consumer segments ?

Research method

- **SEAFOODplus consumer survey**
  - 15 November - 15 December 2004
  - Self-administered questionnaires
- **Samples**
  - Representative for age and region within each of five country
  - Belgium n=852; Netherlands n=809; Denmark n=1,110; Spain n=1,000; Poland n=1,015; Total **n=4,786** respondents
- **Relevant topics**
  - Interest in information cues on fish labels, a.o. farmed/wild
  - Expected benefit from receiving more information
  - Attitude, behaviour, knowledge, socio-demographics

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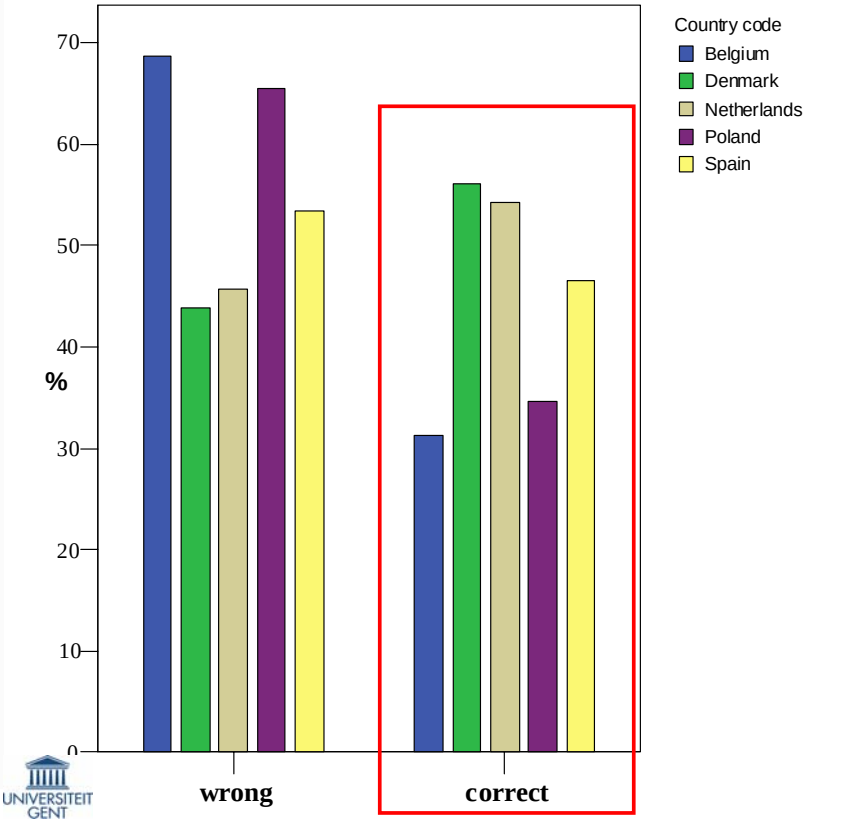
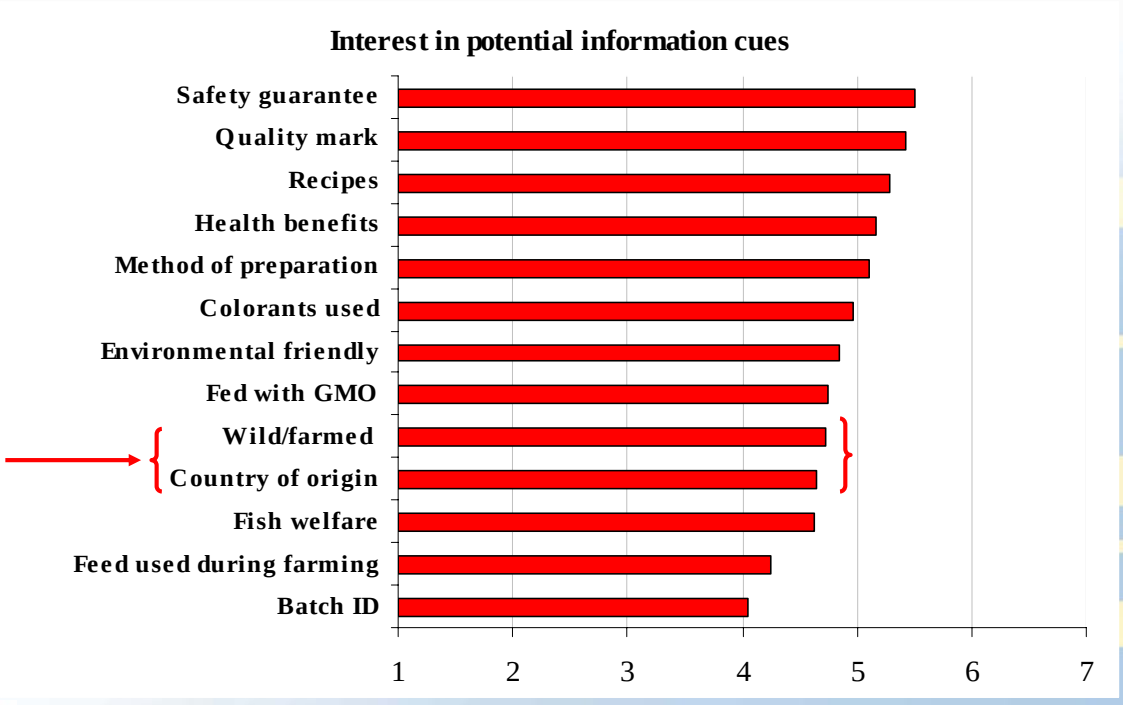
More than half of the fish we buy is farmed fish (No)



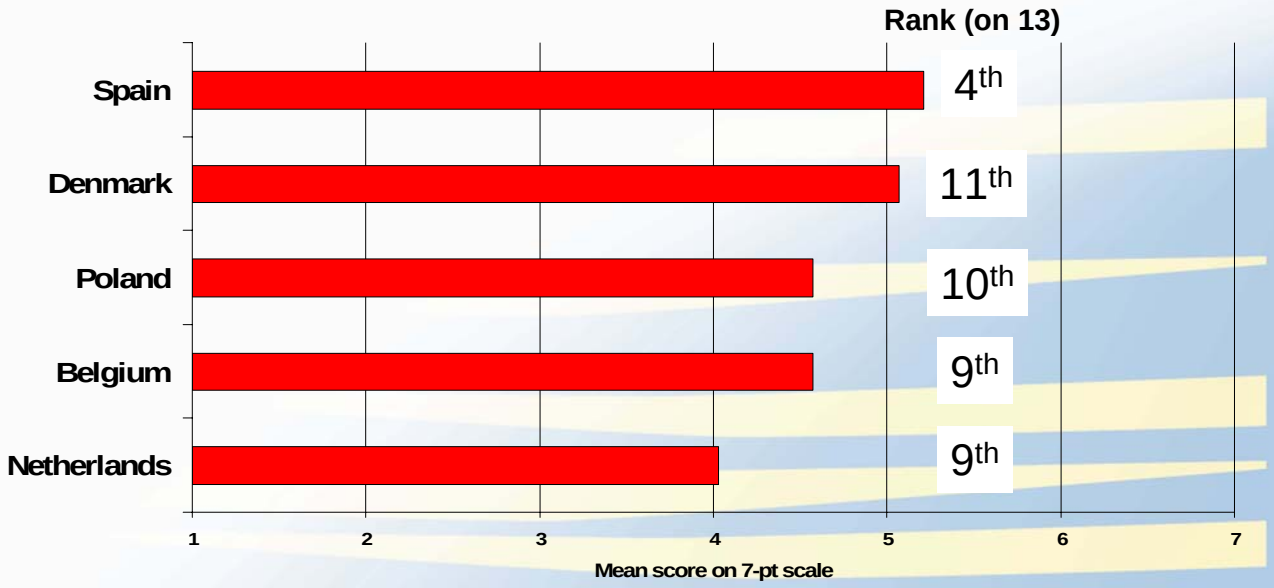
Total sample : 44.8% correct

Highest degree of uncertainty

Interest in farmed / wild relative to other information cues (total sample, n=4,786)

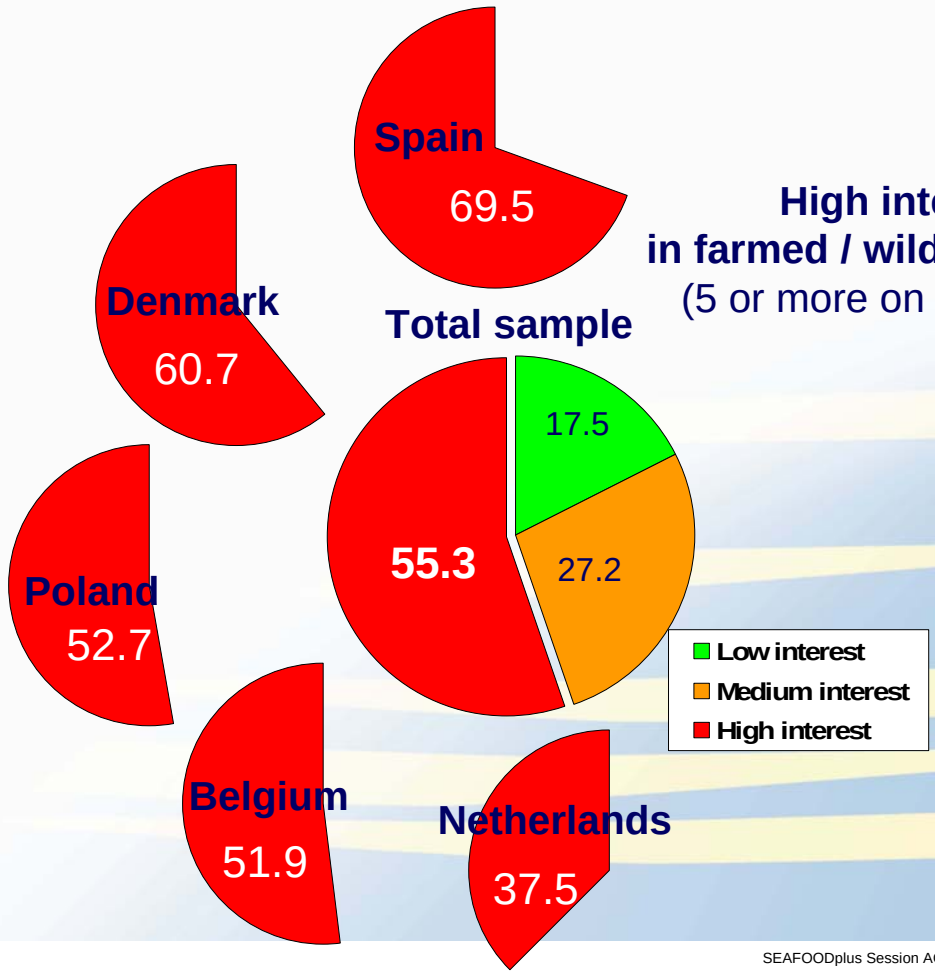


Interest in farmed / wild by country



High interest in farmed / wild by country

(5 or more on 7-pt scale)



Profiling consumers with low/high interest in information about farmed/wild (1)

- **Socio-demographics**

	Low	High
Age (years)	40.4	43.2
% Female	72.5	77.5

- **Fish consumption behaviour** (frequency per month)

	Low	High
At home	3.05	5.44
Out of home	0.83	1.20

Profiling consumers with low/high interest in information about farmed/wild (2)

- **Attitude** (mean scores on 7-pt scales)

	Low	High	
General attitude towards fish	5.13	5.80	
Involvement with fish	4.16	5.20	
Importance of fish ethics	4.83	5.87	
Eating fish is risky	2.85	2.80	Not significant
Risk perception w.r.t. fish	2.41	2.42	Not significant

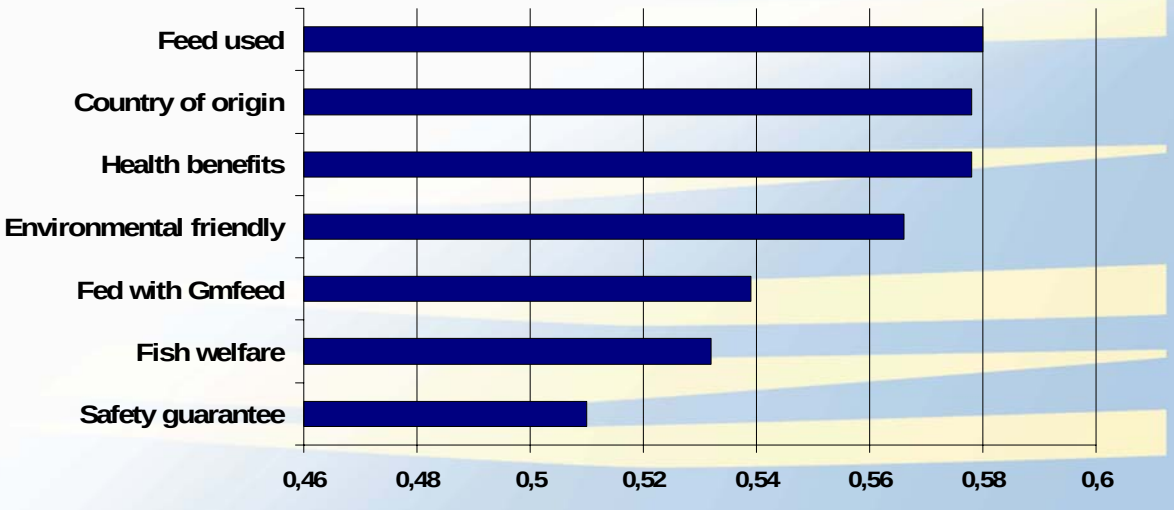
Profiling consumers with low/high interest in information about farmed/wild (3)

- **Knowledge / Information** (mean scores on 7-pt scales)

	Low	High
Objective knowledge	**2.68**	**3.11**
Certainty "More than half of …"	**3.11**	**3.43**
Subjective knowledge	**2.79**	**3.82**
Interest in traceability	**2.76**	**4.31**

Profiling consumers with low/high interest in information about farmed/wild (4)

- **Other information cues** (Pearson correlation coefficient **r**)



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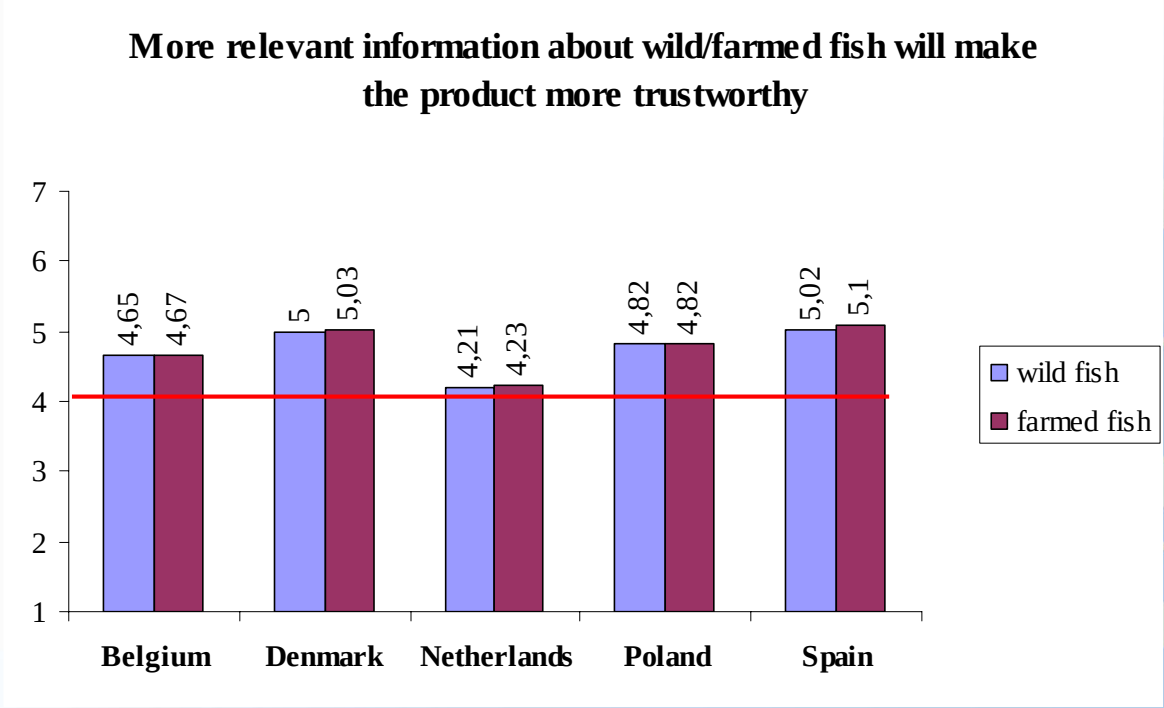
Consumers seem not to distinguish benefits from Information, whether for wild or farmed fish



Conclusions

- **Mandatory** inclusion of “production method” farmed/wild
- **Not top-of-interest** among consumers, except **Spanish**
- Not appealing to eventual **fish risk perception**
- **Differentiation potential** among:
  - **Heavy** and **more involved** fish consumers
  - **More knowledgeable** consumers
  - Consumers interested in **ethics, sustainability, traceability**

A better life with seafood…

www.seafoodplus.org