

# Be **Ocean Wise** about meal choices

## ■ **Vancouver Aquarium** program encourages restaurants to serve fish that is harvested responsibly

By **CHUCK POULSEN**  
The Daily Courier

That Chilean sea bass tastes yummy, but there's something fishy about the way it's caught.

Representatives of the **Vancouver Aquarium** were at the Cactus Club in Kelowna Tuesday to launch its program to protect endangered seafood from diners who don't know the difference.

The **Ocean Wise** program puts the emphasis on sustainable seafood fisheries, warning customers that the fish they are eating may be endangered.

"The restaurants partner with the **Vancouver Aquarium** to bring sustainable seafood options to the consumer," said Cactus Club

spokesperson Dan Close.

"When I'm looking to create a dish, I'll take my seafood choice to the aquarium and ask whether this is something that is sustainable. They'll do the research if they don't already have it.

"Then we can work with our suppliers and get the right thing on the menu."

Chilean sea bass is a popular choice of diners, but it's near the top of the list for overfishing.

"The real name of Chilean sea bass is Patagonian toothfish, but a marketing person decided nobody wanted to eat a fish named that," said Jason Boyce, manager of conservation at the aquarium. "It's a really nice fish to cook, but it's not well regulated, so there is a lot of pirate fishing. The population is on the edge of collapse."

He said a good substitute for Chilean sea bass is sable fish, found off the B.C. coast.

Orange roughy, which was very popular a few years back, is a deep-water, long-living fish that is also

endangered, said Boyce.

"It's trawled with huge nets, and it's overfished," he said. "They can live 150 years. It takes a long time for one to grow.

"Another good example of a fish close to extinction is sharks. All species of shark are close to extinction or threatened. That has a lot to do with shark fin soup."

Some farmed seafood is allowed under the program, such as rainbow trout and most shellfish. Atlantic salmon from B.C. farms and tiger prawns from Asian operations are not.

Those fish that qualify as **Ocean Wise** are abundant and managed and harvested in ways that limit the bycatch of other fish that might be endangered.

Originally launched in Vancouver in 2005, **Ocean Wise** now has 80 participating restaurants.

Customers in the Okanagan can expect to see the **Ocean Wise** logo in restaurants this summer. Old Vine Restaurant at Quails' Gate is also a participant.