WE CAN'T EVEN GET JAPAN TO STOP WHALING…

And now we're going to have to try to get them to give up Maguro sushi.

> Fearing that the oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico will deal a severe blow to the bluefin tuna, an environmental group is demanding that the government declare the fish an endangered species, setting off extensive new protections under federal law.
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> [snip]
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> Both the Bush and Obama administrations tried to win greater international protection for the bluefin, but their efforts were derailed by opposition from countries like Japan, where a single large bluefin can sell in the sashimi market for hundreds of thousands of dollars. (The tuna fish sold in cans comes from more abundant types of tuna, not from bluefin.)
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> The bluefin uses the Gulf of Mexico as a prime spawning ground, and the gulf is such a critical habitat for the animal that fishing for it there was banned in the 1980s. But after spawning in the spring and summer, many tuna spend the rest of the year roaming the Atlantic, where they are hunted by a global fishing fleet.
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> The environmental advocacy group, the Center for Biological Diversity, in Tucson, filed the request under the Endangered Species Act in late May. If the petition is granted, a process that could take years, the endangered listing would require that federal agencies conduct exhaustive analysis before

> taking any action, like granting drilling permits, that would pose additional risk to the fish.

Frankly, I think a campaign to put bluefin tuna on the endangered species list would be beneficial for a number of reasons. If a bunch of elites have to give up their Maguro sushi, it'll highlight both the problem with overfishing generally and the concrete way in which our oil-addicted lifestyle endangers the little perks of life we love (and don't get me wrong—I love Maguro sushi too).

Which will it be? Give up your SUV, or give up your favorite sushi?

In the meantime, there are two things you can do to help.

The Center for Biological Diversity, which is leading this effort, has been one of the best environmental groups responding to the BP Disaster. You might help them in any way you can.

And check your seafood choices for sustainability before you eat it. The Monterey Bay Aquarium has a great online tool (with pocket tools available) that provides recommendations for seafood choices based both on sustainability and health hazards, like mercury. In addition to bluefin, it also recommends you avoid Hamachi.

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