HARVESTING CURRENCY

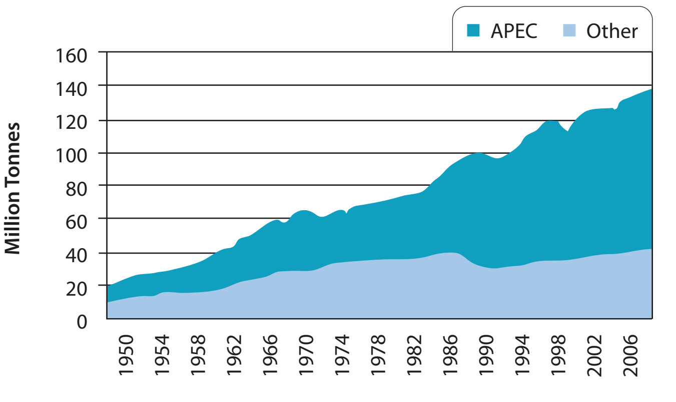
The importance of fisheries and aquaculture for APEC economies

Seafood in a traditional dish

In 2008, total world capture fisheries and aquaculture production reached a new record of almost 141 million tonnes. APEC economies account for 100 million tonnes of this total.

APEC economies clearly dominate the fish-producing sector, representing nine of the top ten fish producers globally. The share of APEC economies in total world capture fisheries is 65%, and in total world aquaculture production, the share is more than 80%. This is significant as global demand for fish and seafood products will increasingly be met by aquaculture operations. Fish farming already contributes half of the world's food fish supply.

FIGURE 1: World production (capture and aquaculture) APEC versus rest of the world



The socio-economic importance of the fisheries and aquaculture sector to APEC economies cannot be overestimated: it generates a significant source of revenue to economies across the region; it provides employment in remote locations where there are few employment opportunities; and it supplies a vital source of animal protein to food-deficit countries.

Intra-regional trade and exports in fishery products are extremely important. Japan and the United States obtain about 81% of their imports from other APEC economies, and about half of the European Union's imports come from APEC economies.

Trade requirements for fish and seafood products are rapidly changing. There are mandatory measures to meet health and sanitary requirements. Consumers and buyers are demanding documents that certify environmental, traceability and sustainability standards. Top export destinations also require certification that fish and seafood products be harvested in compliance with fishing laws.

To continue to access the world's fish and seafood markets, APEC economies will need to meet these regulations and other emerging standards. The APEC Fisheries Working Group helps APEC economies respond to these issues by supporting the development and regional implementation of global fisheries and aquaculture practices across the seafood value chain. The group also ensures that APEC economies have a strong voice internationally on fishery-related issues.

World fisheries production is almost equally distributed among three production areas: China; other APEC economies; and the rest of the world.

Pens at a salmon farm

Carp during feeding at a fish farm

GLOBAL SOURCE OF REVENUE


Shrimp and crab

Exports:

APEC economies account for approximately half of the world's fish exports in terms of value. In 2007, this amounted to USD 45.6 billion, which is a notable increase from 1976 values at USD 3.9 billion. Six of the ten top fish exporting economies are from the APEC region.

Fisheries also contribute significantly—at almost one fifth—to the creation of the agricultural GDP in some APEC economies. This share is significantly higher in Chile at 64% and Peru at 25%.

While the average share of fish versus agricultural exports is 15%, this figure is 67.5% in Brunei Darussalam and more than 40% in Chile; Japan; Peru; and Viet Nam. This is similar to the share of fish in total merchandise exports by APEC economies: while the average is 0.8%, the figure jumps to 8.5% in Viet Nam, 7.9% in Peru, 6.2% in Chile and 3.8% in New Zealand.

Major commodity exports are frozen fish fillets, such as Alaska pollock, tilapia, pangasius, hake and salmon, as well as frozen shrimp.

Intra-regional Trade:

With approximately 80% of the value of fish imports (USD 36.5 billion) originating from APEC economies, intra-regional trade in fishery products is extremely important.

The main importing economies in the region are Japan and the United States. Both obtain about 81% of their imports from other APEC economies, which were valued in 2006 at USD 11.4 billion in Japan and USD 10.9 billion in the United States. Canada and China are competing for the top position to the US market, while Thailand is a very close third supplier.

FIGURE 2: Value of APEC economy fishery product imports from other APEC economies (USD billion, 2006)

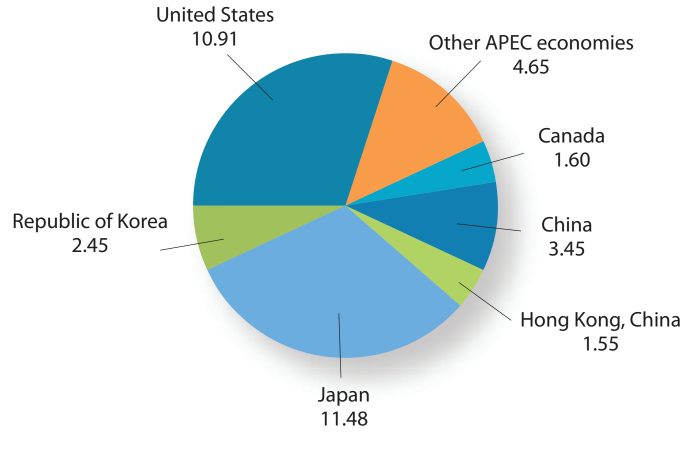
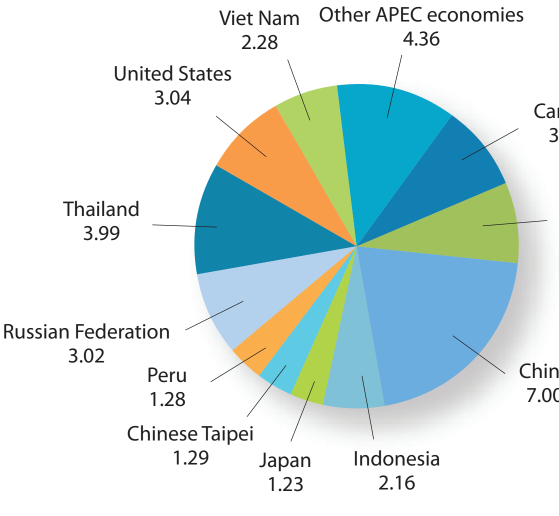


FIGURE 3: APEC economy exports of fishery products to other APEC economies (USD billion, 2006)



China is by far the main fish exporter to other APEC economies: in 2006, 82% of its total fish exports went to other APEC economies at a value of USD 7.5 billion. Thailand ranked second with 77% of total fish exports traded intra-regionally (valued at USD 4 billion) followed by the Russian Federation, Canada, the United States, Chile, Viet Nam, Indonesia, Chinese Taipei, Peru and Japan.


Fishing vessels in a harbour

Offloading anchovies

Pacific-caught fish for sale

External Trade:

The European Union represents 20% of total fishery product exports by APEC economies, and market share is growing. EU fishery product imports from APEC economies grew to USD 8.7 billion in 2007 from USD 4.5 billion in 2003, representing about half of the fishery products that the EU imported externally in 2007.

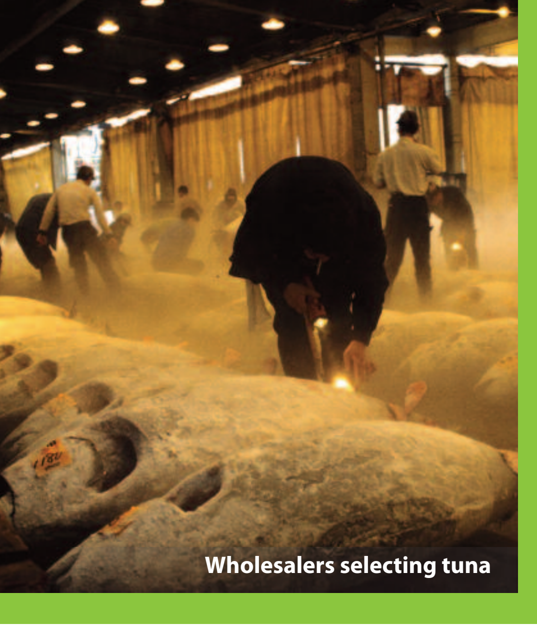
China is the main APEC fishery product exporter to the EU, worth more than USD 1.7 billion in 2007. The United States ranks second, followed by Viet Nam, Thailand, Chile, Canada, Peru and the Russian Federation.

GLOBAL SOURCE OF EMPLOYMENT

In APEC economies, the fisheries and aquaculture sector employs approximately 26.2 million fish harvesters and fish farmers, which comprise 60% of the world's total fisheries workforce. Employment numbers vary widely, with more than 12 million in China and 4 million in Viet Nam to 110 thousand in Malaysia and 16 thousand in Papua New Guinea

The sector offers employment for people living in remote and rural locations, where employment opportunities are limited. With 90% of APEC fish harvesters and fish farmers employed in small-scale activities, the sector also plays a vital role in the livelihood of 24.2 million people.

Carp is the main species produced by APEC economies; anchovies rank second. Other important species include tunas, bonitas and billfishes in wild capture industries, and salmon, shrimp and pangasius in farm operations.



Wholesalers selecting tuna

FIGURE 4: Sector Employment in APEC economies

Australia	16,000
Brunei Darussalam	6,000
Canada	80,000
Chile	120,000
China	12,100,000
Hong Kong, China	18,000
Indonesia	2,400,000
Japan	210,000
Republic of Korea	130,000
Malaysia	110,000
Mexico	270,000
New Zealand	1,500
Papua New Guinea	16,000
Peru	125,000
Philippines	2,000,000
Russian Federation	370,000
Singapore	400
Chinese Taipei	350,000
Thailand	3,691,000
United States	140,000
Viet Nam	4,000,000
TOTAL	**26,153,900**

Figures based on SOFIA and FAO fisheries country profiles, available for different years.

Preparing fresh seafood

GLOBAL SOURCE OF FOOD

For more than 2.9 billion people, fishery products provide at least 15% of their animal protein intake. This figure increases to 18.5% for people in low-income and food-deficit countries.

Fish also supply important traditional ingredients in the daily diets of many APEC populations, including for fish sauce and fish-based condiments. Economies in Asia, in particular, place greater importance on fish in total protein intake, with people in Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia and the Philippines eating fish more often to meet their animal protein needs.

Estimated in 2003 at 27.3 kg per person, the consumption of fishery products in the APEC region is 65% higher than the world average of 16.7 kg. This figure is also increasing, with per capita intake doubling over the last 40 years in Australia; Hong Kong, China; and Indonesia. In the Republic of Korea, liberalisation of import policy led to a jump in fish consumption from 13.3 kg in 1961 to over 50 kg in 2003.

TRENDS AFFECTING MARKET ACCESS

There are three main trends affecting fisheries and aquaculture trade market access: increased health and sanitary requirements for fish and seafood product handling; labelling and documentation to certify environmental, traceability and sustainable fishery and fish farming standards; and requirements designed to reduce illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing activities.

To a large extent, these trends are being driven by major fish import economies. To export fish and seafood products to the EU or US, for example, APEC economies must comply with various documentation requirements. This may include the need for documents about where the fish or seafood product comes from and how it was produced. Effective 1 January 2010, fish exporters to the EU must also provide catch documentation which certifies that the catch was legally harvested.

In addition, major retailers of fish and seafood products are increasingly demanding sustainability and traceability documentation and labels. The US supermarket chain Wal-Mart and United Kingdom retailers, such as Sainsbury and Waitrose, prefer to buy fish and seafood products with Marine Stewardship Council and Aquaculture Certification Council sustainability certification. These labels are earned through extensive processes that examine scientific information and fisheries and aquaculture management plans and activities.

Fish market

APEC FISHERIES WORKING GROUP

The day's harvest

The APEC Fisheries Working Group helps economies respond to these market access challenges by supporting the development and regional implementation of global fisheries and aquaculture practices across the seafood value chain. Its vision is well-managed and sustainably used fisheries and aquaculture that yield optimal economic value to APEC communities.

The strength of APEC is in its focus on regional collaboration and consensus about problems and their solutions, particularly, as they relate to the promotion of economic growth through a commitment to open trade, investment and economic reform. This includes the fisheries and aquaculture sector.

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For more information, visit www.apec.org/apec/apec_groups/som_committee_on_economic/working_groups/fisheries.html.

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