

FISHERY COUNTRY PROFILE

Food and Agriculture
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PROFIL DE LA PÊCHE PAR PAYS

Organisation des Nations
Unies pour l'alimentation et
l'agriculture

**RESUMEN INFORMATIVO
SOBRE
LA PESCA POR PAISES**

Organización de las Naciones
Unidas para la Agricultura y
la Alimentación

THE REPUBLIC OF YEMEN**GENERAL ECONOMIC DATA**

Area:	about 555 000 km ²
Water surface:	about 700 000 km ²
Shelf area (fishing grounds):	about 41 000 km ²
Length of coastline:	about 2 350 km
Population:	about 17 620 000
GDP at market prices (1998):	US\$5 195 million
NDI <i>per caput</i> (1998):	US\$275

FISHERIES DATA**Commodity balance (1999):**

	Production	Import	Export	Total supply	<i>Per caput supply</i>
	Ton liveweight				Kg/year
Fish for direct human consumption	123 252	3 678	11637	115293	6.5

Fish for animal feed and other purposes	-	-	-	-	-
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Estimated employment (1998):	
Governmental sector:	3 178
Artisanal; Sector:	41 322
Gross value of fisheries input (1999):	US\$ 125 million
Trade (1999):	
Value of imports:	US\$ 40 million
Value of exports:	US\$ 19.8 million

STRUCTURE AND CHARACTERISTICS OF THE FISHERY INDUSTRY

Marine fisheries

The fisheries activities in Yemen include (a) Artisan and (b) Industrial.

a) Artisanal. It is estimated that the artisan fisheries sector has 41 322 fishermen utilizing 9 157 boats (8 475 boats with outboard engines, 682 with inboard engines). The boats used by the traditional fisheries are of 3 types: Arbi (large sanbouks 12 - 15m long with 150 - 250 hp diesel engines); ghadifa (10m long) and Hori (6 - 8m long) with 15 - 75 hp outboard engines. The arbi (sanbouks) are built of either wood or fiberglass. The ghadifa and hori are built of fiberglass.

The purchase of new boats, fishing gear and engines is frequently subsidized by the Agriculture Encouragement and Fishing Production Fund (EAFPF), or by loans from the Cooperative Credit Bank. The artisan fishermen use different fishing methods depending upon the target species and season. These include seines, handlines, gillnet and trap.

The total catch of the traditional sector in 1998 was 108 205 tons. The most important species included tunas, large jacks, sardines, mackerel, barracuda, snappers, solefish, shrimp, lobster and cuttlefish.

b) Industrial. There are 23 fishing companies in the industrial sector working in Yemen waters, 11 in the Red Sea and 12 in the Aden Gulf and the Arabian Sea. These companies caught 17 858 tons of fish in 1998, principally demersal fish and cuttlefish.

In 1998 the industrial fishing fleet included 131 boats, 63 in the Red Sea and 68 in the

Gulf of Aden and the Arabian Sea. The total catch was 17 858 tons, 4 186 in the Red Sea and 13 669 in the Gulf of Aden and the Arabian Sea. These boats are allowed to operate in the Red Sea beyond six miles from shore, and five miles from shore in the Gulf of Aden and the Arabian Sea. These fishing companies are all privately-owned, and are both foreign and local.

The government has created two fishing ports, and built a considerable number of fisheries facilities along the coast, including cold storage facilities, ice plants, workshops, fuel depots, processing and packaging facilities and fishing gear stores. The private sector is now contributing to the development of the fisheries sector, and some investors have built ice plants, cold storage facilities, fish markets, canning factories, processing facilities, etc.

Inland fisheries

There is no inland fishery in Yemen, because there are no rivers or lakes in the country.

Utilization of the catch

The fish products that are caught by the industrial fishing fleet are frozen at sea in whole form. These products are usually transshipped to the Chinese and European markets, and some are also sold to Arab countries.

The artisan fish products are sold fresh or frozen in the local markets. Shark meat is usually salted and dried for sale in the interior region in the country. Significant quantities of fresh fish are transported in refrigerated trucks or packed in ice and trucked to Saudi Arabia, Egypt and Jordan. Some sardines are sold locally in Hadramout but most of the catch (approximately 30 000 tons) are dried on the beach and used as cattle feed. A number of private sector companies export live lobsters to Dubai. Cuttlefish caught by local fishermen are sold fresh to private companies that process them and export them frozen to European countries.

State of the industry

The fishing industry has made significant progress during the past twenty years. Fish production from the artisan sector has been improved through government subsidy programmes funded by the Fisheries Development Projects and the Agriculture Encouragement and Fisheries Production Fund, which have provided subsidies for fishermen for the purchase of modern fishing boats, fishing gear and equipment including winches, traps, fish preservation boxes and high-powered engines. The development of the industry has been supported by the Government's construction of ports, roads, radio communications networks, ice plants, workshops and cold storage and other necessary facilities throughout Yemen. About 85% of the country's fish resources are being exploited by the artisan sector, while 15% are being exploited by the industrial sector.

The fisheries sector is considered to be the third in order of importance in Yemen's economy. Its total contribution to the country's GDP is approximately 15%. It is estimated that more than 220 000 people depend on fishing as their principal source of income.

Fish is a major and growing food item in Yemen. Inasmuch as fisheries resources are renewable, they can be exploited to a far greater degree in order to meet both local and export market demand. In addition, the fisheries sector is expected to absorb a greater proportion of the national workforce in the future.

Demand

Yemen, with its large population, understands the importance of increasing the annual

fishing catch in order to help guarantee food security for its people. This can be achieved in two ways; first, by renewing the stock assessment studies in order to know what stocks are available at present; second, by studying the offshore fish species in the EZ, particularly migratory fish such as tuna, mackerel and marlin and by exploiting mesopelagic fish. Subsequently, the exploitation of the country's fish resources must be both rational and sustainable.

DEVELOPMENT PROSPECTS

In 1973 and 1975, the research vessel Dr. FRIDTJOF NANSEN carried out two stock assessment surveys in Yemen waters in the Aden Gulf and the Arabian Sea, and he estimated the biomass of the fish at 2 230 000 tons (in 1973) and 754 000 tons (in 1975).

In 1989-1990 however, the Marine Sciences and Resources Research Centre (MSRRC), with the assistance of the former Soviet Union's Ictiolog vessel, carried out a stock assessment survey in the three-mile zone of Yemen's territorial waters in the Gulf of Aden and Arabian Sea. This study estimated the biomass of small pelagic fish (sardines, small mackerels and anchovies at 450 000 tons, mainly distributed in the Hadramout, Almahara and Aden regions. The biomass of demersal fish was estimated at 458 000 tons, while the biomass of fish that were not intended for the local market, or of fish to be used for fishmeal (lizard fish, catfish, butterfly, ribbon fish etc.) was approximately 247 000 tons, and the biomass of shrimp, lobster and cuttlefish was estimated at 20 000 tons.

No complete stock assessment studies have been carried out in the Red Sea. Some figures are available however with regard to the stock of certain fish species. In 1985, Abuhilal estimated the allowable catch of coast shrimps at 270 tons, while Walezak and Gudmundsson estimated the catch at 2 000 tons. In 1972, Agger estimated the annual catch of sea bream at 700 tons. In 1975, Walezak and Eddie estimated the annual catch of demersal fish at about 28 500 tons. The MSRRC estimated the annual catch of demersal fish in the Red Sea at about 45 000 tons. Certain reports have indicated that there are abundant stocks of mesopelagic fish in Yemen waters, but no figure was given.

The "Beach Pollution Study on the North Coast of the Gulf of Aden, 1996", which was carried out by the MSRRC, Sana'a and Aden Universities, indicated that five species of marine turtles inhabit this area.

These are: the green turtle, leatherback, hawksbill, loggerhead and ridley turtles. The West Aden region is considered to be a feeding area, while the Sharma region, (Hadramout Gov.) is considered to be a hatching area.

Seven species of sea cucumber inhabit Yemen waters. The commercial species, the sandfish (*Holothuria sabra*), is mainly caught in the west area of the Aden Gov. (in Rasalara and Khor Umera).

RESEARCH

Fisheries research in Yemen is carried out by the Marine Science and Resources Centre (MSRRC), which was established in Aden in 1983. The MSRRC research programmes have been designed to provide the data and information needed for decisions with regard to the development and management of marine resources in Yemen. This information will also serve the private sector companies involved in fishery production, aquaculture and other fishing activities.

The MSRRC has been assigned the role of providing this research, and it has already carried out a number of fisheries research projects and programmes covering different

areas, such as fisheries resources assessment and surveys, marine biology, environment and aquaculture. The MSRRC research projects and programmes have recently undergone some changes, given the urgent need of studying the problems facing both the industrial and artisan fisheries sectors. Important results in the aquaculture sector have been achieved by the Agriculture Encouragement and Fisheries Production Fund (EAFPF).

In 2001, the EAFPF supported the MSRRC by providing it with 31 million Yemeni rials for its Aquaculture Research Centre, in order to be able to carry out experiments in shrimp aquaculture.

AID

The Government of the Republic of Yemen has declared the development of fisheries to be a major priority. It intends to place particular emphasis on improving the capabilities of the artisan fisheries sector and modernising it by providing the most advanced fishing gear and technology, as well as by offering young people the training they need to work in this sector.

LINKS

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