

MOROCCO

With some 3,500 km of coastline, Morocco possesses a wealth of fish resources. The benthic species constitutes an important element of marine fish production. It consists primarily of white fish (hake, bream, capelin, umbrina, gurnard), cephalopods (poult, cuttlefish, squid, octopus) and crustaceans (shrimp, lobster, crawfish). White fish are sold fresh on the local market, but are also exported to Italy, Spain and France. Cephalopods are for the most part exported to Japan.

The other element of fish production is the pelagic species, which basically comprises sardines, mackerel, anchovies, horse mackerel and tunnies. This species constitutes Morocco's most abundant coastal resource. Pelagic fish are primarily destined for processing industries. Annual exploitable stocks of Moroccan marine species total some 1.5 million tons of benthic and pelagic fish.

Marine fish production totalled 590,769 tons for an approximate value of C\$580 million. The figure for coastal fish landings was 442,931 tons for a value of approximately C\$190 million. The deep-sea fishing catch was 147,838 tons for an approximate value of C\$389 million. Moroccan seafood exports rose to 149,138 tons for an approximate value of C\$560 million. Almost 90% of these exports go to Japan, Spain, Italy, Portugal and France, with Japan accounting for 40% of the total.

From 1981 to 1991, Moroccan consumption of fresh fish averaged 135,518 tons per year. Over the past five years, the annual average has been 155,297 tons, indicating an upward trend. Moroccan per capita fish consumption is approximately 8 kg per year, with major regional disparities.

As a major producer and exporter of fish and seafood, Morocco imports very few of these products for domestic consumption. In 1992, only 21 tons were imported, including 14,000 kg of anchovies and 5,000 kg of smoked salmon. However, there is another type of importation (referred to as "temporary") that is not destined for the Moroccan market. These imports, most of which originate in Mauritania and Guinea, are destined for the processing industry; the products are then re-exported.

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