

DOMESTIC FISHERY

France has 2,700 km of shoreline: 2,075 km on the Atlantic Ocean and the English Channel, and 625 km on the Mediterranean Sea. Fishing is a very old tradition. French production has currently stabilized at around 800,000 tonnes, including seaweed, mussels and oysters.

France possesses several dozen fishing ports, the largest of which are Boulogne-sur-Mer, Lorient and Concarneau, which alone account for nearly one-third of the country's production. Three different types of fishing activity coexist in the ports: the inshore fishery, in which small vessels go out on trips of less than 24 hours; the mid-shore fishery, with vessels making week-long trips to the Irish Sea or the North Sea; and the industrial deep-sea fishery operating off Africa and America. The French fleet had a total of 7,139 vessels as of December 31, 1992.

The main species caught by the domestic French fishery are listed in order of tonnage landed for 1992: frozen tuna, fresh tuna, pollock, cod, whiting, sardines, hake, ling, mackerel, monkfish, cuttlefish, skate, anchovy, herring, sole, horse mackerel, rock lobster, plaice, crab, scallops, haddock, and cockles. Most fish, except tuna, is landed fresh. But in the case of some species (pollock, cod, herring, haddock and horse mackerel), substantial quantities of frozen fillets are also landed.

Marine and freshwater aquaculture are also widely practised. In 1992, production totalled: mussels (59,000 tonnes); oysters (134,500 tonnes); and trout (30,000 tonnes).

Various other fish-farming projects involving salmon, bass, sturgeon, shrimp and other species are also under development. A state institution called IFREMER (Institut Français de Recherche pour l'Exploitation de la Mer) conducts research in the fish products sector. IFREMER has signed a cooperation agreement with Fisheries and Oceans Canada, and participates actively in the advancement of French aquaculture. For inland aquaculture, the responsible agencies are ITAVI and CEMAGREF.

The French fisheries are administered on an EU-wide basis. The EU Fisheries Council, acting on behalf of the member states, decides on administrative measures relating to the Union, third countries and international waters; for example, it sets the fishing quotas for the various species in the different zones.