

Japanese fish markets in 1992.

- The plan to introduce a system to provide Japanese consumers with information on fish and fishery products sold at the retail level is still under discussion. According to the draft plan, the Japanese Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries intends to introduce a labelling system to provide consumers with identification of the country of origin, whether the product is wild or farmed fish, whether imported in fresh or frozen form, thawed in Japan and the specific name of the species, e.g., "yellowfin tuna", "big-eye tuna", ... not simply "tuna".
- The Japanese Fishery Agency's salmon hatchery in Hokkaido has launched a program to release sockeye salmon smolt at the Kushiro River. While the southern limit for the sockeye salmon is said to be Etorofu Island, one of the northern islands occupied by Russia, fishermen in Hokkaido are greatly interested in this project, especially as a result of the total ban on the high seas salmon fishery.
- The Japanese Fishery Agency is planning to implement a 5-year project to research resources of shark. The Agency will request Japanese distant water tuna long line vessels not to throw away sharks caught by long lines as an unwelcome bycatch, but to bring them back to Japanese ports for collection of scientific data on shark resources. As shark meat is used for some fish paste products, fillet, etc., the market price was extremely low compared to the price of tuna and tuna fishermen do not like to bring back shark to Japanese ports. The Agency's policy is to investigate the utility of shark as a fishery resource as well as to cope with a criticism evoked in foreign countries against Japanese fishermen's treatment of shark on tuna fishing vessels.
- The following is a summary of the table of demand and supply of fish and fishery products in 1991, published by the Fisheries Agency in January 1993. This table provides a fairly clear overview of the gross Japanese fish consumption structure, which shows how imported fish and fishery products occupy an important position in total consumption.

	(Unit: 1000M/T)		
	<u>1991</u>	<u>1990</u>	<u>90/91</u>
(1) Domestic production	9,200	10,278	-9.8%
(2) Imports	4,320	3,823	13.0%
(3) Exports	980	1,140	-14.0%
(4) Inventory increase/decrease	406	67	
(5) Domestic consumption	12,202	13,028	-6.3%
(6) Foods (crude)	8,277	8,790	-5.9%
(7) Foods (net)	4,453	4,583	-2.8%