

CHINA

There were 4.9 million peasant households engaged in fish raising and 400,000 specializing in fishing in 1985. Only a small proportion of the available coastal waters (20 percent, or 1 million hectares) and 3 million of the 5 million hectares of freshwater surface are being used for fisheries; however, fish stocks are already under a significant threat from constant overfishing. The deep sea fishing fleet is expanding its activities around the world. Chinese people have a very strong taste for fisheries products, but in China the per capita aquatic products consumption rate is only 9.6 kg per year, ranking China about 100th in the world.

The China National Fisheries Corporation (CNFC) operates an ocean fishing fleet composed of 100 trawlers and freezer-processing ships. More than half the fleet (and also its biggest ships) is currently operating in the West Africa region (Morocco, Senegal, Nigeria, Guinea Bissau, Sierra Leone, Mauritius). The rest of the Chinese fleet is spread out in North America (Alaska, region of the Bearing Sea) and in South America (Argentina). CNFC caught 80 percent of all the fish harvested by Chinese vessels in foreign seas (100,000 tons) last year. The fleet generally catches the following species in those regions: West Africa-slate cod croaker, hairtail and porgy; South America-right-eyed flounder (flatfish), grouper and silvery pomfret (butterfish).

According to the Ministry of Agriculture, China is the third largest aquatic products producer country in the world, after the USSR and Japan. China's fish output was approximately 10.6 million tons in 1988, of which 62,000 tons, worth \$969 million US was exported. In 1987, the overall most productive provinces (freshwater and seawater products combined) were Guangdong (1.7 million tons), Zhejiang (1.2 million tons) and Shandong (1.1 million tons). The main seawater aquatic products were Black scraper (407,210 tons), hairtail (393,606 tons), Round scad (344,753 tons) and mussel (312,680 tons). The main seawater fishery culture were prawns and shellfish. China exported more than 62,000 tons of fisheries products in 1988, with Japan and Hong Kong being the principal markets with 1/3 of total sales going to each country. Less than 25 percent of all aquatic products exported by China are processed (the bulk being refridgerated or frozen, with very small quantities canned, dried, salted, or for animal feed and medicine). Consequently, fresh fish makes up more than 75 percent of the 62,000 tons of aquatic products exported by China in 1988.

Despite the fact that Canada is the world's leading exporter of fisheries products with sales totaling \$2.8 billion Cdn in 1988, Canada sold only \$1.2 million Cdn worth of aquatic products to China the same year, only 0.04 percent of Canadian exports. On the other hand, according to China's Customs Statistics, China imported a total of 26,700 tons of aquatic products in 1988, valued at \$92 million US. Therefore, this means that Canada only shares 1.3 percent of China's aquatic products import market.