

During the 70's, the pelagic industry was largely concentrated in the Northern part of Chile (Ist through IV Regions), but in the last 10 years has developed very strongly through the VIII th Region. This Region has been the forefront of developing, improving and expanding the fishing industry. The industry there is devoted to increasing both the protein content of fish meal and widening the fishing areas beyond the 80 to 100 miles strip now being exploited. The mackerel constitutes the core of the landing with 75%. The anchovy, sardine and hake represented 19%. The landing of mackerel shows an increase of 5%, even though there is a substantial increase in the size of the fleet, but with marked decreases in the capture of sardines and hake.

The pelagic industry employs in excess of 10,000 workers to run and maintain its fishing fleet. In 1988 there were 326 vessels fishing pelagic species. The southward movement of the industry is reflected in the number and size of new vessels. Due to the fact that weather is worse and more unpredictable in the south than in the north, vessels are forced to spend more time at sea. The fishing fleet in the southern has added larger vessels, which also are capable of reaching more distant fishing grounds.

The processing industry for fish meal, fish oil and canned fish products, employs some 5,000 workers. Canneries are largely concentrated in the Ist and VIII th Regions, other types of processing facilities are located in the III rd and IV th Regions. Canned production of fish is shared between the local and export markets. Frozen products made of pelagic species have little popularity in most markets.