

DOMESTIC FISHERY

Salt-water fish constitute one of Hong Kong's most important primary products, as more than 150 fish species of commercial importance frequent the waters of the adjacent continental shelf. Domestic marine fishing provides approximately 75 percent of the fresh fish and seafood consumed in Hong Kong, while pond fish farmers produce about 15 percent of the freshwater fish eaten. Boat dwelling fishermen have moved onshore in increasing numbers in recent years while mechanisation of the fishing fleet has reduced the need for large crews. In 1991, there were 4500 fishing junks of various sizes and designs, 93 percent of which were motorised. Fish ponds covering over 1300 hectares are mainly located in the north western areas of the New Territories where they are increasingly being crowded out by the development of new towns.

LANDINGS

Total landings for the Hong Kong fleet have been stable around 235,000 metric tonnes since the late 1980's. Landings dropped from a high of 242,510 metric tonnes in 1989, down to 234,493 metric tonnes in 1990. Apart from the Hong Kong presence in international fishing zones, the Hong Kong fleet focuses its efforts around the islands and to a smaller extent in Chinese territorial waters, but only after obtaining licences from the Chinese government with a requirement that some of the landing are discharged at Chinese ports.

SPECIES

The most recent statistics for the Hong Kong domestic catch are Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) data for 1990. Nominal landings for that year indicate approximately 57 different species categories accounted for within the national catch. Leading species in order of importance for Hong Kong included: 1) Marine fishes nei, *Osteichthyes* (108,598 metric tonnes); 2) Threadfin breams, *Nemipterus spp.* (20,752 metric tonnes); 3) Bigeyes nei, *Priacanthus spp.* (18,303 metric tonnes); 4) Lizardfishes nei, *Synodontidae* (12,377 metric tonnes); and, 5) Natantian decapods nei, *Natantia* (11,492 metric tonnes).

EXPORTS

Hong Kong exports of fishery products jumped significantly from 1987 to 1990, totalling US\$694 million, up from US\$512 million in 1987. Based on FAO statistics, total fisheries exports for 1990 equalled 254,995 metric tonnes. Broken down by the seven main commodity groups, total exports were as follows: 1) fish, fresh, chilled or frozen (126,005 metric tonnes); 2) crustaceans and molluscs (74,656 metric tonnes); 3) fish meals (44,315 metric tonnes); 4) fish, dried, salted or smoked (4,163 metric tonnes); 5) fish, canned (3,280 metric tonnes); 6) crustaceans and molluscs, canned (2,522 metric tonnes); and, 7) fish oils (54 metric tonnes).

PROCESSING SECTOR

Most of the domestic fisheries landings are sold fresh, however, Hong Kong does possess a fairly significant processing sector. A feature of this sector is its involvement in re-processing imported seafood products. As mentioned previously, many imported seafood products are shipped to Hong Kong where they are further processed, or packaged for re-export to other Asian countries and the European markets. The processing facilities generally import block, frozen products which are thawed and sold fresh, or further processed with added-value for export markets.