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# FACT SHEET

## Fishery industry in Hokkaido

### 1. Introduction

1.1 The Panel on Food Safety and Environmental Hygiene, at its meeting on 9 March 2010, requested the Research and Library Services Division to provide information on the fishery industry in Hokkaido. This fact sheet gives a general overview of the topic.

### 2. Overview of the fishery industry in Japan

2.1 In Japan, the fishery industry contributed to less than 1% of the Gross Domestic Product in 2007<sup>1</sup>. The primary role of the fishery industry is to provide a stable supply of fishery products for domestic consumption. Domestic production supported 62% of Japan's national consumption of fishery products in 2007<sup>2</sup>.

2.2 Fishery production in Japan has dwindled since the late 1980s due to a decline in resources level of the Japanese fishing grounds and Japan's withdrawal from the fishing grounds of neighbouring countries' 200-mile fishing zones<sup>3</sup>. The total amount of fishery production was 5.72 million tons in 2007, comparing to 7.49 million tons in 1995<sup>4</sup>. The total value of fishery production was ¥1,654 billion (HK\$109.8 billion) in 2007, with marine fisheries and marine aquaculture production accounting for 95% of the production value<sup>5</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (2010).

<sup>2</sup> Statistics Bureau, Japan (2009).

<sup>3</sup> Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (2009).

<sup>4</sup> Statistics Bureau, Japan (2009).

<sup>5</sup> 農林水産省，大臣官房統計部(2009年)。

### 3. Overview of the fishery industry in Hokkaido

3.1 Hokkaido, having a land area of 83 457 sq km, is the largest prefecture of Japan. As at October 2008, Hokkaido had a population of 5.54 million, accounting for about 4% of the total population of Japan<sup>6</sup>. Hokkaido is surrounded by the Pacific Ocean, Sea of Okhotsk and Sea of Japan with a coastline of 3 054 km, which is 9% of the country's coastline<sup>7</sup>.

3.2 In 2007, there were 15 480 fishery establishments in Hokkaido, down from 23 222 in 1988. The fishery industry engaged 26 590 employees in 2007, and most of them were males (86%) and aged 40 or above (78%). Statistics on the structure of the fishery industry in Hokkaido in 2007 are summarized in **Table 1**.

**Table 1 – Statistics on the structure of the fishery industry in Hokkaido in 2007**

	Hokkaido	Percentage of Japanese total
Number of fishing ports	285	9.8%
Number of fishery establishments <sup>(1)</sup>	15 480 <sup>(2)</sup>	12.7%
Number of persons engaged in the fishery industry	26 590	13.0%
Number of powered fishing boats for marine fisheries	30 750	10.4%

Notes: (1) Figures are as at 2006.

(2) 88% were small establishments managed by individual fishermen, 9% were jointly managed by groups of fishermen, and 3% were managed by companies, fishery co-operatives or the government.

Sources: 北海道政府 (2009 年) and Statistics Bureau, Japan (2010).

<sup>6</sup> Statistics Bureau, Japan (2009).

<sup>7</sup> 北海道政府 (2009 年)。

3.3 In line with the overall trend in Japan, the fishery production of Hokkaido has declined since the late 1980s<sup>8</sup>. In 2007, the fishery production of Hokkaido was 1.474 million tons, contributing to around 26% of the Japanese total. The total value of fishery production, accounting for only marine fisheries and marine aquaculture production, was ¥311.4 billion (HK\$20.68 billion), accounting for about 19.8% of the Japanese total<sup>9</sup>. Statistics on the fishery production of Hokkaido by types of fishery activities in 2007 are shown in **Table 2**.

**Table 2 – Statistics on the fishery production of Hokkaido in 2007**

	<b>Production volume (‘000 tons)</b>	<b>Production value (¥ billion (HK\$ billion))</b>
Marine fisheries	1 307	269.8 (17.92)
Marine aquaculture	156	41.6 (2.76)
Inland water fisheries and inland aquaculture	11	Not available
<b>Total</b>	<b>1 474</b>	<b>311.4 (20.68)<sup>(1)</sup></b>

Note: (1) Figure accounts for production of marine fisheries and marine aquaculture only.

Source: 北海道政府(2009年)。

3.4 The top three types of fishery products in terms of total production volume in 2007 were: scallop (27% of total production volume), Alaska pollack (14.2%) and salmon (12%). The top three types of fishery products in terms of production value were: salmon (21.9% of total production value), scallop (21.7%) and seaweed (8.9%)<sup>10</sup>. Scallop was the main marine aquaculture product, accounting for 80% of the production volume<sup>11</sup>.

3.5 In 2007, 1 097 business establishments engaged in the processing of fishery products in Hokkaido, employing 33 440 persons. The total production of processed fishery products in 2007 was 0.8 million tons, contributing to 20.8% of the Japanese total. The total value of shipments was ¥707.2 billion (HK\$46.96 billion), accounting for 20.8% of the Japanese total<sup>12</sup>.

<sup>8</sup> In 1988, the fishery production of Hokkaido was 3.135 million tons.

<sup>9</sup> 北海道政府(2009年)。

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

<sup>11</sup> 農林水産省，大臣官房統計部(2008年)。

<sup>12</sup> 北海道政府(2009年)。

3.6 As at March 2008, there were 1 730 registered establishments in the recreational fishing business in Hokkaido, operating 1 906 fishing boats<sup>13</sup>. The government imposes control on the fishing areas, timing, tools and methods of recreational fishing to protect the fishery resources of Hokkaido.

#### 4. Policy on promoting the fishery industry in Hokkaido

4.1 The recent development of the fishery industry in Hokkaido has been affected by a number of factors such as the declining level of fishery resources, decreasing domestic demand on fishery products, rising fuel costs, decreasing number and aging of fishery workers, competition from imported products and falling product prices<sup>14</sup>.

4.2 In order to revive the fishery industry in Hokkaido, the Hokkaido government enacted the *Hokkaido Fishery Industry Promotion Act* in March 2002 and introduced the Fishery Industry Development Plan in March 2003<sup>15</sup>. Under the administration of the Department of Fisheries and Forestry, the Development Plan aimed to revitalize the fishery industry and provide stable domestic supply of safe and quality fishery products. As specified in the Development Plan, the Hokkaido government has targeted to increase the annual fishery production from 1.474 million tons in 2007 to 1.72 million tons in 2017<sup>16</sup>.

4.3 The following key development directions were set in the Fishery Industry Development Plan:

- (a) promoting proper management and use of fishery resources;
- (b) promoting aquaculture production by developing new technology, improving production efficiency, and strengthening facilities of the fisheries;
- (c) improving the management of fishery establishments and enhancing their capital equipment to increase productivity;

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<sup>13</sup> 北海道政府(2009年)。

<sup>14</sup> Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (2009) and 北海道水産林務部(2008年)。

<sup>15</sup> The first phase of the Development Plan was introduced in March 2003 and the second phase was introduced in March 2008.

<sup>16</sup> 北海道水産林務部(2008年)。

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- (d) strengthening the distribution and food safety monitoring systems to ensure freshness and quality of fishery products;
  - (e) enhancing competitiveness of Hokkaido fishery products in the domestic and overseas markets;
  - (f) promoting preservation of the ecosystem when developing the fishery industry;
  - (g) improving the environment and infrastructure of the fishing villages;
  - (h) promoting technological development in the industry;
  - (i) providing support to female and older workers in the industry and attracting young prospective workers to join the industry; and
  - (j) educating the public about the fishery industry and stimulating their interest in fishery products.

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