
FACT SHEET

Fishery industry in Hokkaido

(as at 30 August 2010)

1. Introduction

1.1 This fact sheet provides an overview of the fishery industry in Hokkaido.

2. Overview of the fishery industry in Hokkaido

2.1 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 Japan¹. Hokkaido is surrounded by the Pacific Ocean, Sea of Okhotsk and Sea of Japan with a coastline of 3 085 km, which is 9.1% of the country's coastline².

2.2 In 2008, 14 780 fishery establishments engaged in marine fisheries and marine aquaculture in Hokkaido, down from 23 222 in 1988. The marine fisheries and marine aquaculture activities engaged 33 568 employees in 2008, and most of them were males (86%) and aged 40 or above (74%)³. Statistics on the structure of the fishery industry in Hokkaido in 2008 are summarized in **Table 1**.

¹ Statistics Bureau, Japan (2009).

² 北海道政府(2010年)。

³ Ibid.

Table 1 – Statistics on the structure of the fishery industry in Hokkaido in 2008

	Hokkaido	Total in Japan	Percentage of total in Japan
Number of fishing ports ⁽¹⁾	284	2 917	9.7%
Number of fishery establishments ⁽²⁾	14 780	115 196	12.8%
Number of persons engaged in the fishery industry ⁽³⁾	33 568	221 908	15.1%
Number of powered fishing boats for marine fisheries	30 062	289 456	10.4%
Number of fisheries cooperative associations along coastal areas ⁽⁴⁾	77	1 166	6.6%

Notes: (1) Figures are as at January 2009.

(2) Figures only cover establishments engaged in marine fisheries and marine aquaculture.

(3) Figures only cover persons engaged in marine fisheries and marine aquaculture.

(4) Figures are as at 2007.

Sources: Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (2010) and 北海道政府(2010年).

2.3 In line with the overall trend in Japan, the fishery production of Hokkaido has declined since the late 1980s⁴. In 2008, the fishery production of Hokkaido was 1.474 million tons, contributing to around 26% of the total in Japan. The total value of fishery production, accounting for only marine fisheries and marine aquaculture production, was ¥295.8 billion (HK\$22.36 billion), accounting for about 19.2% of the total in Japan⁵. Statistics on the fishery production of Hokkaido by types of fishery activities in 2008 are shown in **Table 2**.

⁴ In 1988, the fishery production of Hokkaido was 3.135 million tons.

⁵ 北海道政府(2010年)。

Table 2 – Statistics on the fishery production of Hokkaido in 2008

	Production volume (‘000 tons)	Production value (¥ billion (HK\$ billion))
Marine fisheries	1 314	262.0 (19.80)
Marine aquaculture	151	33.8 (2.56)
Inland water fisheries and inland aquaculture	9	Not available
Total	1 474	295.8 (22.36)⁽¹⁾

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

Source: 北海道政府(2010年).

2.4 The top three types of fishery products in terms of production volume in 2008 were: scallop (30.4% of the total production volume), Alaska pollack (13.6%) and Hokke fish (ホッケ) (11.7%). The top three types of fishery products in terms of production value were: salmon (21.2% of the total production value), scallop (19.3%) and seaweed (9.4%)⁶. Scallop was the main marine aquaculture product, accounting for 78% of the production volume⁷.

2.5 Propagation of fishery resources by re-stocking of fish seedlings is commonly adopted by coastal fishery operators for management of the fishery resources. Such activities contributed to around 37% of the total fishery production in Hokkaido in 2008⁸.

2.6 In 2008, 1 079 business establishments engaged in the processing of fishery products in Hokkaido, employing 32 726 persons. The total production of processed fishery products in 2008 was 0.743 million tons, contributing to 19.1% of the total in Japan. The total value of shipments was ¥700.2 billion (HK\$52.9 billion), accounting for 20.6% of the total in Japan⁹.

⁶ 北海道政府(2010年)。

⁷ 農林水産省，大臣官房統計部(2009年)。

⁸ 北海道政府(2010年)。

⁹ Ibid.

2.7 As at March 2009, there were 1 530 registered establishments in the recreational fishing business in Hokkaido, operating 1 675 fishing boats¹⁰. The government imposes control on the fishing areas, timing, tools and methods of recreational fishing to protect the fishery resources of Hokkaido.

3. Policy on promoting the fishery industry in Hokkaido

3.1 The recent downturn 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.

3.2 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 2003¹¹. 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 2008 to 1.72 million tons in 2017¹².

3.3 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;
- (d) strengthening the distribution and food safety monitoring systems to ensure freshness and quality of fishery products;

¹⁰ 北海道政府(2010年)。

¹¹ The first phase of the Development Plan was introduced in March 2003 and the second phase was introduced in March 2008.

¹² 北海道水産林務部(2008年)。

- (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 fishery industry;
- (i) providing support to female and older workers in the fishery 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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