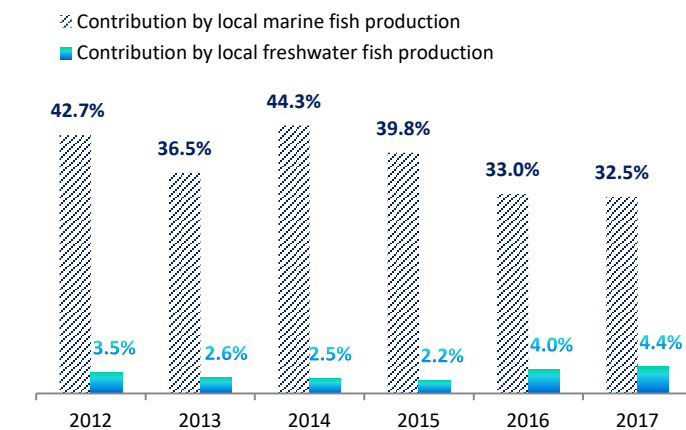




Fisheries in Hong Kong

Figure 1 – Contribution of local production of marine and freshwater fish⁽¹⁾ to total consumption, 2012-2017



Note: (1) The figures account for live, fresh, and frozen fish products.

Figure 2 – Production by the capture fisheries sector, 2013-2018

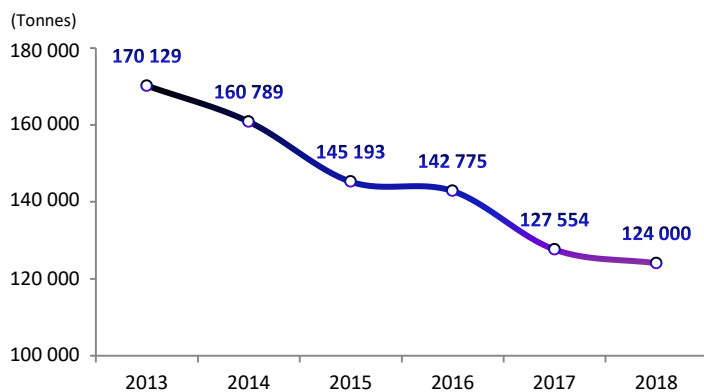


Figure 3 – Number of patrols⁽¹⁾, arrests and convictions against illegal fishing activities

| | 2014-2015 | 2015-2016 | 2016-2017 | 2017-2018 | 2018-2019 ⁽²⁾ |
|---|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|--------------------------|
| No. of patrols by AFCD | 1 402 | 1 497 | 1 562 | 1 592 | 1 388 |
| No. of patrols as joint operations | 49 | 38 | 63 | 65 | 66 |
| No. of illegal fishing cases discovered | 56 | 44 | 75 | 30 | 31 |
| No. of arrests (rate of arrest) | 36 (64%) | 31 (70%) | 22 (29%) | 12 (40%) | 7 (23%) |
| No. of convictions (rate of conviction) | 28 (50%) | 30 (68%) | 14 (19%) | 8 (27%) | 5 (16%) |

Notes: (1) This excludes patrols in marine parks and reserves.
(2) Figures are accurate as at end-January 2019.

Highlights

- In Hong Kong, the fishing industry comprises **capture fisheries, mariculture, and pond fish culture**. It provides a steady supply of marine and freshwater fish, accounting for 32.5% and 4.4% of the total consumption respectively in 2017 (**Figure 1**). The contribution of local production of marine fish to the total consumption declined in recent years, consequential to depleting marine resources and competition from other overseas markets. On the other hand, the contribution by local freshwater fish production has remained fairly stable at 2.2%-4.4% over the same period.
- Capture fisheries involves commercial fishing operations in Hong Kong waters and/or the South China Sea. Since end-December 2012, the Government has implemented a trawl ban in Hong Kong waters to restore depleted marine resources. As a result, production by the capture fisheries sector decreased from 170 129 tonnes in 2013 to 124 000 tonnes in 2018 (**Figure 2**).
- In order to alleviate the impact of the trawl ban on fishermen's livelihood, the Government has introduced a one-off financial assistance scheme including ex-gratia payments for affected trawler owners, voluntary buy-outs of affected inshore trawlers, and one-off assistance for affected local deckhands and fish collector owners. With the assistance scheme, some inshore trawler owners have switched to operate in the Mainland, while others have moved on to other forms of fishery and/or withdrawn from the industry.
- The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department ("AFCD") has enforced the ban on illegal fishing and trawling activities through regular and targeted patrols, as well as joint operations with the Marine Police, Marine Department and relevant Mainland authorities. In recent years, the number of patrols by AFCD increased from 1 402 in 2014-2015 to 1 592 in 2017-2018 (**Figure 3**). Yet, the rates of arrest and conviction have generally been on the decline over the same period, prompting concerns over the effectiveness of AFCD's enforcement actions.

Fisheries in Hong Kong (cont'd)

Figure 4 – Production and size of the mariculture sector in 1990 and 2007-2018

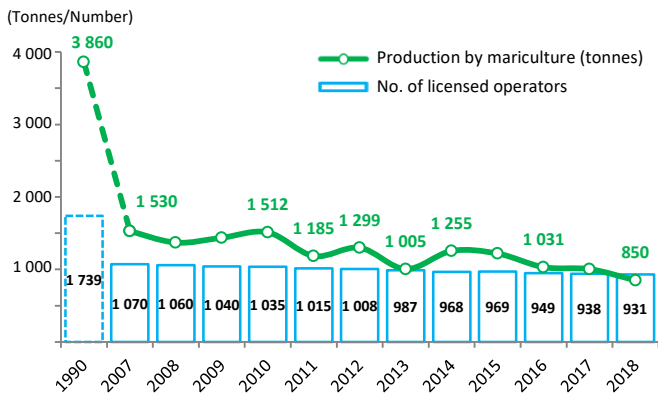


Figure 5 – Production and size of the pond fish culture sector, 2005-2018

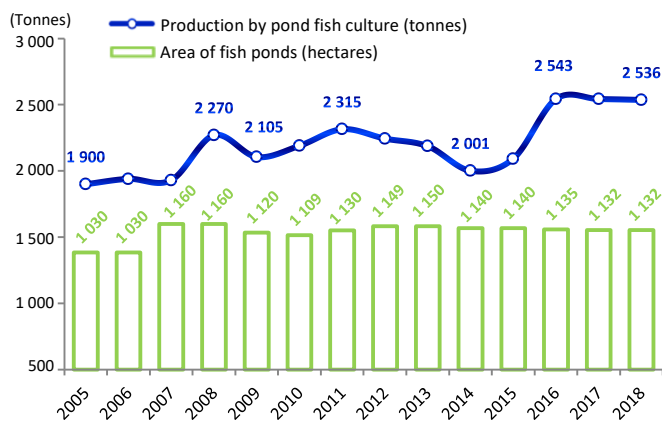


Figure 6 – Number of projects and amount approved under the Sustainable Fisheries Development Fund⁽¹⁾

| Nature of project | No. of projects approved | Total amount approved (HK\$ million) |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Aquaculture | 7 | 45.9 |
| Recreational fishing/training | 3 | 10.0 |
| Research and development | 1 | 3.4 |
| Oyster culture | 1 | 3.0 |
| Capacity building project | 1 | 0.8 |
| Equipment Improvement Project ⁽²⁾ | 8 | 50.5 |
| Total | 21 | 113.5 |

Notes: (1) Figures are accurate as at October 2019.
(2) The Equipment Improvement Project was set up in 2017 under SFDF.

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Highlights

- Mariculture involves rearing of marine fish by floating rafts in designated fish culture zones ("FCZs"). At present, there are 26 FCZs occupying some 209 hectares of sea area. The mariculture sector has been on the decline since 1990 (Figure 4), when the Government imposed a moratorium on designation of new FCZs and issuance of marine fish culture licences.
- The advent and adoption of less polluting mariculture methods in recent years has helped improve the prospects for the mariculture sector. The Government recently proposed to lift the moratorium by designating new FCZs and issuing new marine fish culture licences, where priority is given to entrants who adopt modern fish farming technology. It is estimated that the new FCZs may help boost local supply of fresh seafood by up to 5 000 tonnes per year.
- In Hong Kong, there are some 1 132 hectares of fish ponds mainly located in the northwest New Territories. The majority of these fish ponds are engaged in polyculture of carp and grey mullet. The Government supports the sector through the implementation of voluntary accreditation and registration schemes in 2005 and 2007 respectively to help fish pond operators enhance the quality and safety of their product. Reflecting the recent falling imports of freshwater fish, production by the pond fish culture sector increased from 2 001 tonnes in 2014 to 2 536 tonnes in 2018 (Figure 5).
- In an effort to assist the fishing industry move towards more sustainable and high value-added operations, the Government also established the HK\$500 million Sustainable Fisheries Development Fund ("SFDF") in 2014 for aquaculture development, fishing operations in the South China Sea, marketing of local fisheries products, equipment improvement to enhance productivity, etc.
- As at October 2019, SFDF had only approved 21 projects with a total funding of HK\$113.5 million (Figure 6). Against this, AFCD has carried out a review of SFDF in 2018 to encourage more applications and shorten the processing time through enhanced publicity, promotion and supervision.

Data source: Latest figures from the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department.

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