

Fisheries Economy

Prof. Dr. Hasan Hüseyin ATAR
Prof. Dr. Nilsun DEMİR

Product Markets

- In the evolvment of the commercial fisheries of any country, the role of product markets is a leading and decisive one. The initiation, adaptation and expansion of fishery production is constrained by opportunities for the sale of products that may be derived from resource stocks available to the country's fishing industry. Specification of products with respect to type, form and quality is established by market requirements - ultimately in accordance with the preferences of consumers served by the marketing system.

- Fishery products fall into two broad categories, viz. food products and industrial products, i.e. fishmeal, oil, etc., the former of which is usually although not invariably the more important. Food products of the fisheries may be classified generically as follows:
 - Fresh or chilled, i.e. non-frozen (round, dressed, filleted, etc.)
 - Frozen (untreated, breaded, cooked, etc.)
 - Cured: smoked, salted, dried, etc.
 - Canned (plain and variously treated)
 - By-products: roe, pate, etc.

- Market outlets are differentiated according to the class of product demanded - the class normally being differentiated in turn by fish species. Canned products have a relatively long shelf-life (several years), cured and frozen products an intermediate one (months), and fresh products one of a few days or even hours. As a rule, therefore, distant markets cannot be served effectively with fresh fish products excepting certain “luxury” products that can bear the cost of air-freight.

- The taste of consumers also may dictate the conditions, with reference to intrinsic quality, grading and workmanship, under which fish must be caught and the derived products prepared. If these conditions cannot be met, marketing opportunity is thereby forfeited. When marketability requires that fish be frozen, cured or canned, economies of scale in organization and in processing and trading operations come into play and the size of the product market or markets becomes a determinant of developmental potential and possibilities.

- The demand for fishery products is determined in part by cultural history, i.e. it is based on an “acquired” taste, and, as most studies have shown, it tends to be inelastic as to price and income in the short term. To some extent, however, it appears also to be influenced (a) by fashion, e.g. dietary fads, and (b) by the price and availability of both complementary and competing food products.

- In the more affluent countries, where as much as two thirds of fish consumption is accounted for by the institutional (including hotel/restaurant) demand, as distinguished from the household demand, aggregate demand sometimes responds to the rise and fall in general economic conditions. It is therefore, to be regarded as in some degree amenable to manipulative and expansionary effort by producers and traders.