

ROK Expands Catch of Large Whales

Since 1962 the annual catch of whales by the Republic of Korea has increased significantly according to the Office of International Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service. The total number of whales caught in 1973 was 886, compared to 252 in 1962, a 352 percent increase (Figure 1). Between 1969 and 1970, a record 75 percent increase was recorded.

Between 1962 and 1968, small whales

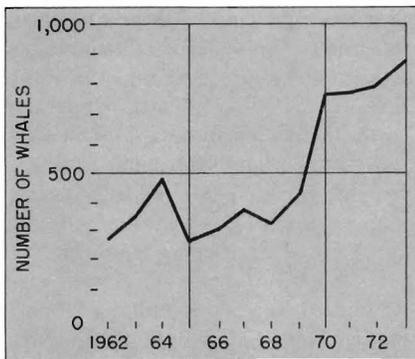


Figure 1.—Number of whales caught by the Republic of Korea, 1962-73.

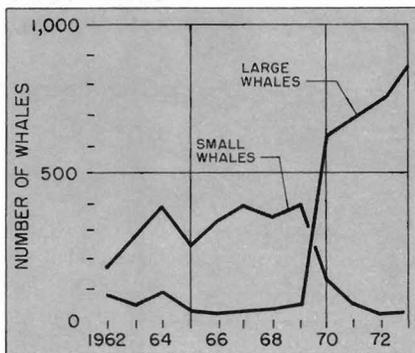


Figure 2.—Number of large and small whales caught by the Republic of Korea, 1962-73.

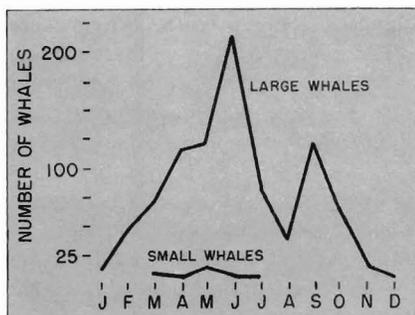


Figure 3.—Number of whales caught by the Republic of Korea in 1973, by month.

were the largest part of the overall catch; however, by 1969 this trend was reversed (Figure 2) and by 1973 a total of 43 large whales were caught for each small one (97 percent vs. 3 percent). Large whales are caught mainly between April and June, when 50 percent of the total is taken. The season for small whales is primarily from March to July, with the catch of May accounting for 60 percent of the total (Figure 3). In 1973, the minke whales comprised the major part of both the large and small whale catch.

Changes in demand and currency valuations have affected the annual landing values, which have fluctuated from year to year, thereby making it difficult to discern any particular trend. In 1973, the value of the Korean whale harvest was about \$252,000.

Low Prices Push Danish Cod into Meal and Oil

Significant quantities of cod landed early this year by Danish fishermen in Danish ports did not receive the minimum price set by the European Economic Community (EEC), and were taken off the market and sold for reduction to fish meal and oil according to the U.S. Embassy, Copenhagen, Denmark. Normally such fish would be processed into fresh fillets or frozen fillets and blocks. A major share of Danish exports of frozen cod blocks is exported to the United States.

The minimum price for gutted cod of the first three size categories, and for quality grades Extra A and B landed in Denmark, is 2.34 kroner per kilogram (about US\$0.19 per pound). Minimum prices are lower for smaller fish and for fish of lesser quality.

Cod landed by members of the Danish Producers Organizations (PO) is taken off the market if the quoted price is less than the minimum price. In addition, the cod cannot be exported as fresh or frozen fish because such exports would disturb normal market prices. Hence high-quality cod must be sold for reduction. Only PO members

(about two-thirds of the Danish fishermen) are guaranteed the minimum price for fish which they land. Fish landed by non-PO fishermen may be sold at less than the minimum price.

The sluggish export market in the United States and elsewhere, and unexpected heavy landings in Denmark are blamed for the low prices. The industry reportedly believed the situation to be temporary and expected prices to soon rise to at least the minimum price level.

Program Aids Canada Groundfish Industry

Canada's Minister of State for Fisheries Roméo LeBlanc announced a new short term federal government plan in December for Canadian fishermen, trawler operators and processors as a first step toward rehabilitating the Canadian groundfish industry. Expected to cost \$20 million, the programs were designed to keep the groundfish fleets in operation during the winter months while longer term solutions are sought. Studies are under way to restructure the fishing industry to make it more viable.

The Canadian fishing industry, like that of most fishing countries of the world, has been hard hit by escalating costs resulting from worldwide inflation, high fuel and gear costs, low landings and weak markets. As a result, fishermen's incomes have been adversely affected, companies have suffered substantially and many plants have operated on a part-time basis. While these factors, taken together, threaten the continuation of the Canadian groundfish industry, the longer term prospects look bright for Canadian fishermen, LeBlanc said.

The new \$20 million plan comprises three programs, the first of which was designed to lessen the immediate impact of rapidly rising costs faced by the frozen groundfish industry. This program applied to operations carried out from 1 January 1975 to 30 April 1975.

Second, to assist the reopening of seasonal plants this spring in northern Newfoundland, Labrador, and Quebec's lower north shore which suffered serious losses in the early season of 1974 because of late ice conditions,

working capital loans have been made available. This program was intended to assist only those plants which had exhausted their credit facilities as a result of the adverse ice conditions in 1974.

Third, to help meet world food shortages, the Canadian government moved to provide increased amounts of canned groundfish products to Canadian food aid programs. The programs are administered by the Fisheries Prices Support Board through the Regional Offices of the Department.

Finland Marks New 8-Mile Contiguous Fishing Zone

Effective 1 January 1975, Finland established an 8-nautical-mile Contiguous Fishing Zone adjacent to its 4-nautical-mile Territorial Sea, reports the American Embassy in Helsinki. Where the zone overlaps the territorial sea or fishing zone of another nation, a center line will be drawn equidistant between each state.

Finland has claimed the exclusive right to supervise all fishing activities within the zone. Provisions have been made, however, to allow those states bordering the Baltic, which have traditionally fished within the zone, to continue to do so until 31 December 1976. In addition, Danish, Icelandic, Norwegian, and Swedish citizens shall have the right to fish for domestic consumption and recreational purposes within the zone without time limitations.

Japan to Buy Red Crabs from Mexico

The Japanese trading firm Nippon Heiwa Boeki, Tokyo, has concluded a contract with the Mexico Fisheries Public Corporation to purchase 100,000 tons of red crabs, described as "Lan-gostilla", annually over a three-year period according to a report in *Suisan Keizai Shimbun*. The red crabs, which have a body length of 10-12 centimeters (3.9-4.7 inches), occur along the entire western coast of Baja California. They reside in the bays and inlets from January to July and move offshore during August-December where they are preyed upon by certain whales. The Mexican Government estimated the red crab population to be around one million tons and, based on the assumption that a 10 percent harvest would not en-

danger the population, sought users to effectively utilize the resource.

The Japanese firm plans to build refrigeration, drying, and processing plants at San Carlos in southern Baja California costing about 1,000 million yen (approximately US\$3.4 million at 290:1). The San Carlos-based enterprise will purchase the red crabs harvested by the Mexican corporation's boats which began fishing in March. Until the plant is completed, existing facilities will be used. Plans call for shipping the red crabs to Japan where they will be initially processed into animal feed although future technological developments may open up other uses for them.

Norway Proclaims Trawl-Free Zones

The Norwegian Government proclaimed three no-trawling zones in the Norwegian and Barents Seas early this year following negotiations with several foreign governments whose fishermen would be affected. The zones, to protect coastal fishermen and their gear, extend up to 35 miles from shore¹ and will be closed to foreign trawling from mid-fall to early spring, according to Norinform, the Norwegian Information Service.

Norway originally sought four trawl-free zones with longer closure periods², but to gain acceptance of the major fishing nations affected (USSR, France, United Kingdom, Federal Republic of Germany), its negotiators made some concessions. These included deletion of the proposed Nysleppen zone, a reduction of the Jennegga-Malangsrunden zone by about one-seventh, and in policing policy. Norwegian fisheries surveillance vessels will have the power to board and inspect foreign vessels encountered in the prohibited areas, but they can only request them to leave the zones. Prosecution of offenders is up to their respective national authorities.

The trawling ban will last for five months in each zone: 1 October-1 March in the Nordbanken-Øverbanken zone; 1 November-31 March in the Hjelmsøybanken zone; and 20

October-20 March in the Jennegga-Malangsrunden zone.

Norinform also reports some disappointment in Norwegian fishing circles with some of the concessions as well as satisfaction with the fact that the zones have been recognized in principle. The Norwegian Government's next step is the extension of the fishing limits off northern Norway to 50 nautical miles. This move will not be unilateral, according to Norwegian Minister Jens Evensen, but will be achieved through negotiations which could take the rest of the year.

Japan's Per Capita Meat, Fish Consumption Grows

Japan's per capita fish and shellfish consumption in 1973 was 34.3 kilograms (75.6 pounds), 2.4 percent above the 33.5 kilograms (73.8 pounds) per person in 1972 according to data compiled by the Japanese Agriculture and Forestry Ministry and published in *Suisan Tsushin*. The increase was attributed to larger saury and sardine landings. Per capita meat consumption in 1973 was 16.2 kilograms (35.7 pounds), a 5.2 percent gain over 1972. Pork and poultry meat consumption increased though beef and whale meat consumption declined. The self-sufficiency rate for meats was 78 percent compared with 81 percent in 1972.

Norwegian Marketer Sees Less Fish, More Money

The Norwegian fish marketing organization Frionor Norsk Frossenfish A/L recorded a drop of about 13,000 tons in the quantity of fish products sold during the financial year ending 30 June 1974. Despite this, the company had an increase in gross earnings of 30 million kroner. The company thus reached a total turnover of nearly 600 million kroner for the approximately 70,000 tons of Frionor products which were sold in nearly 30 different markets during 1973-74. During the financial year ending 30 June 1973, the company sold about 83,000 tons of fish products. The transition to a higher degree of processing of the company's products is given as the primary reason for the value of output rising 5.5 percent at the same time as the quantity produced has sunk by nearly 20 percent.

Source: Norinform.

¹Norway has a 12-mile fisheries limit.

²See "Norway Seeks Partial Cod Trawling Ban," *Marine Fisheries Review*, Feb. 1975, 37:2 (44).