

New Brazilian Lobster Grounds Harvested

Brazilian fishermen have begun to fish new lobster grounds along the coast of the state of Bahia. The grounds are reportedly located about 300 km off the towns of Una, Canavieiras, Belmonte, and Porto Seguro. Over forty vessels deployed on the new grounds in late 1979 reported high yields.

Most of the fishermen have come from the states of Rio Grande do Norte and Paraíba, along with smaller numbers from Ceará¹. The fishermen report that they can catch as much lobster during 1 day on the new grounds as they previously caught during an entire week

¹Ceará is the center of the Brazilian lobster industry.

on their old grounds. In the first month of extensive commercial fishing effort catches totaled about 80 metric tons(t).

The state government of Bahia is interested in promoting the fishing industry to increase employment opportunities for local residents since the Bahians were not involved in the commercial lobster fishery. The Bahian Government, through offers of free land and financial assistance, hoped to attract firms interested in processing the lobsters in Bahia, thus creating jobs for local residents. Currently, the lobsters are landed at Canavieiras and Porto Seguro. There is a small domestic market created by local hotels, but most

of the catch is immediately packed in insulated boxes. The lobsters are then trucked to the port of Natal in Rio Grande do Norte state where they are processed for export, primarily to the United States. Bahia officials would like for the processing to be done within the state.

The Brazilian fisheries agency (SUDEPE) is also interested in the new grounds. SUDEPE is charting the grounds and SUDEPE technicians plan to study the lobster population to determine if any restrictions on the catch are needed to protect the stocks. Brazilian lobster regulations are currently not enforced off Bahia because the lobster fishery was previously a small-scale activity conducted by a small number of artisanal fishermen. The commercial fishermen who come from the states of Rio Grande do Norte and Paraíba assure SUDEPE that they are abiding by all lobster fishing regulations. They return berried and juvenile² lobsters to the sea and bring the lobster heads³ back to port where they are distributed free to anyone who wants them⁴. The Rio Grande do Norte and Paraíba fishermen, however, accuse fishermen from the state of Ceará, who generally have larger vessels, of not complying with those regulations, especially the one prohibiting fishermen from dumping the lobster heads overboard on the fishing grounds.

The National Marine Fisheries Service published a detailed background report on the Brazilian lobster industry in 1979, "The Brazilian Lobster Industry, 1976." A copy can be purchased for \$5.00 by ordering report number DIB-79-03-05 from NTIS, Springfield, VA, 22161. (Source: IFR-80/93.)



²Lobsters with tails less than 12 cm.

³The lobsters are deheaded at sea and preserved on ice. SUDEPE officials discourage the fishermen from dumping the heads on the grounds as the live lobsters avoid areas littered with large quantities of dead lobsters and the severed heads also attract sharks making it dangerous for the fishermen to work the grounds.

⁴Many villagers await the return of the fishermen. Some come to pick up orders placed the day before. Others come to get free lobster heads for cooking and one teenager places the lobster heads he obtains on anthills to clean them and then uses them to make jewelry.

Japanese Shrimp Import Trends, 1963-79, Noted

Japanese imports of frozen shrimp in 1979 registered an all-time high in both quantity and value with 158,672 metric tons (t) at ¥ 301,171 million (US\$1,375 million at ¥ 219=US\$1), according to the customs clearance data released by the Japanese Finance Ministry. The 1979 imports surpassed the previous high of 143,962 t and \$999 million set in 1978. The import price averaged for the year, at ¥ 1,898/kg (\$3.94/pound), was also a new record.

Since Japan liberalized its shrimp imports in 1961, purchases from foreign countries rose year after year save for brief lapses in 1968 and 1974. Shrimp imports in 1979 represented more than a thirteenfold increase over 1963. Annual import volumes in excess of 100,000 t have been maintained since 1973. Up to 1970, Mexico and Mainland China were major suppliers of shrimp to Japan. Since 1971, however, India and Indonesia have been leading suppliers and in 1979 these two countries together accounted for 43 percent of Japan's total shrimp imports. Mainland China was the third and Mexico the seventh major supplier in 1979, each with 12,082 t and 4,727 t, respectively.

Other important suppliers in 1979 were Australia with 10,955 t, Thailand with 9,294 t, Taiwan with 5,998 t, Hong Kong with 4,365 t, and Pakistan with 4,179 t. Imports for the year were also at a record high from India, Indonesia, Mainland China, Taiwan, Iran, Australia, Philippines, Sabah, Brazil, and Bangladesh. Imports from the United States were 285 t. (Source: FFIR 80-8.)

Note: Unless otherwise credited, material in this section is from either the Foreign Fishery Information Releases (FFIR) compiled by Sunee C. Sonu, Foreign Reporting Branch, Fishery Development Division, Southwest Region, National Marine Fisheries Service, NOAA, Terminal Island, CA 90731, or the International Fishery Releases (IFR) or Language Services Daily (LSD) reports produced by the Office of International Fisheries Affairs, National Marine Fisheries Service, NOAA, Washington, DC 20235.

Japanese frozen shrimp imports (t) by country of origin, 1974-79.

Country of origin	1974	1975	1976	1977	1978	1979
India	19,898	29,942	26,901	25,803	31,580	38,757
Indonesia	19,385	21,060	25,510	25,701	28,338	29,621
China, Mainland	9,483	9,768	5,569	3,749	9,197	12,082
Mexico	4,580	4,085	5,235	4,184	7,860	4,727
Thailand	6,314	8,837	9,849	2,760	8,377	9,294
China, Taiwan	3,245	3,395	3,241	4,389	5,567	5,998
Pakistan	2,305	2,951	3,892	3,889	3,675	4,179
Korea, South	3,127	2,932	4,673	2,574	2,461	2,219
Malaysia	2,619	2,392	3,877	3,392	2,827	3,131
Iran	854	651	803	515	815	996
Australia	5,189	4,663	6,189	7,742	7,546	10,955
Hong Kong	4,051	4,140	4,627	5,993	4,608	4,365
Cuba	3,193	3,548	1,693	1,417	919	1,125
Kuwait	236	379	1,031	572	635	485
Vietnam	2,154	1,639	2,356	2,760	2,411	1,794
Philippines	1,521	1,109	2,081	2,393	2,791	3,701
Nigeria	771	867	831	1,060	1,060	564
Sabah	1,728	1,515	2,296	2,505	2,328	2,728
Bahrain	1,227	1,014	974	1,041	1,031	239
Brazil	855	391	770	1,595	2,597	2,921
Liberia	611	330	320	270	212	181
Guyana	762	939	900	1,067	1,176	875
Cameroon	809	474	386	217	88	170
Singapore	517	345	336	489	374	326
United States	130	68	332	454	479	285
Bangladesh	220	339	565	865	1,170	1,694
U.S.S.R.	1,294	0	0	0	1,861	261
Total (including other countries)	103,311	113,672	123,334	124,780	143,962	158,672

Japanese frozen shrimp imports (in metric tons, value in US\$1,000), by leading countries, 1963-79.

Year	India	Indonesia	China ¹	Mexico	Total ³	Value
1963	n.a. ²	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	11,708	23,475
1964	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	18,167	31,437
1965	851	n.a.	5,875	5,210	21,011	35,938
1966	993	n.a.	11,769	4,889	36,156	60,085
1967	2,147	15	5,004	7,995	44,466	79,732
1968	3,164	661	3,769	5,769	35,204	78,079
1969	4,864	2,604	4,136	5,511	48,886	121,748
1970	6,210	3,684	6,248	7,210	57,146	137,026
1971	9,702	8,223	4,990	6,520	78,874	214,591
1972	12,812	13,824	3,519	5,407	88,120	291,943
1973	21,903	18,764	4,475	8,839	117,474	429,845
1974	19,898	19,385	9,483	4,580	103,311	404,024
1975	29,942	21,060	9,768	4,085	113,672	464,527
1976	26,901	25,510	5,569	5,235	123,334	738,986
1977	25,803	25,701	3,749	4,184	124,780	790,806
1978	31,580	28,338	9,197	7,860	143,962	998,581
1979	38,757	29,621	12,082	4,727	158,672	1,375,210

¹Mainland China
²n.a. = not available

³Total is for all countries.

Norwegian Forsees Severe Problems for Cod Stocks

The cod fisheries in the entire North Atlantic area are on the way to catastrophe, a Norwegian scientist predicts. The last two recorded strong year classes—1973 and 1975—are in the process of being out-fished already before they have reached maturity. All in all, the stocks are reduced by an entire 80 percent, according to

Norinform, the Norwegian Information Service.

This was predicted by marine researcher Arvid Hylen at the Institute of Marine Research in Bergen, after having participated in a long-term research trip in the area. On the trip, Hylen ascertained that 1980 was also a very poor year class.

The severe overtaxing of the year classes 1973 and 1975 has created a very serious situation, says Hylen, who claims that trawl fishing has, to a much

too large extent, concentrated exactly on these two year classes; he forecasts a considerable shortage of cod moving toward Lofotbankene in north Norway in years to come.

The entire resources situation was to be taken up at a meeting of the International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES) in Copenhagen in October. As soon as possible, the mesh width of trawling nets should be effectively increased in order to hinder over-fishing of small fish, Hylen recommended.

Until 1975, 850,000 t of cod per year were caught by Norwegian fishermen in the North Atlantic area. In 1979, the quota was reduced to 700,000 t, but only 425,000 t were caught. Hylen says that the strength of the existing year classes of cod in the area is today only one-fifth of what it was previously, and he emphasizes the enormous problems this creates for both the fisheries and the fish-processing industry. This pattern of overtaking must be changed, he says.

Canada Moves to Curtail Foreign Catch Misreports

Foreign fishing vessels convicted of misreporting their catches in Canada's 200-mile fishing zone now face increased penalties, Fisheries and Oceans Minister Roméo LeBlanc has announced. He said that the department has implemented more stringent measures to deal with misreporting violations by foreign fishing vessels licensed to operate in the Canadian 200-mile zone.

"Misreporting of catches could seriously undermine the management of the fishery and cause severe damage to the fish stocks we're trying so hard to rebuild," said the Minister.

Seven charges of misreporting of catches had been laid in the courts by late September 1980 by the Department of Fisheries and Oceans. In one case, a foreign captain, convicted of misreporting his catch by some 90 tons, was fined \$2,000 and had his excess catch confiscated.

Foreign vessels fishing in Canada's 200-mile zone are inspected regularly

to ensure their compliance with Canadian licence requirements. Charges of misreported catches have usually been based on estimates by Fisheries inspectors while on board the vessels, which are then brought to port for inspection and measurement by experts in this field.

To bring misreporting practices under control, the new measures provide that when a cargo of salted fish is involved, the entire cargo may be subject to offloading to establish accurately the amount on board, and to obtain evidence for trial. It is difficult to estimate the weight of salted fish since the volume of the fish shrinks at each stage of the curing process.

When court proceedings have been initiated for the misreporting of any species of fish, the Crown may press for confiscation of the entire catch on board, rather than only the alleged amount misreported, said LeBlanc.

If a captain has been convicted of misreporting a catch, the licence to operate his vessel in the Canadian zone will be cancelled for the remainder of the year in which the offense was committed, and no licence will be issued for the following year.

Canadian Fisheries Adopts Metric Units

It probably won't matter to the fish, but fishing in Canada is taking on a metric look. It matters to the fishermen, however, for they'll be measuring weight in kilograms instead of pounds; temperature in Celsius instead of Fahrenheit; and capacity in liters instead of gallons.

Most distance measurements will also be in kilometers instead of miles, but surface distance on navigational charts will continue in nautical miles; the 200-mile zone will remain in miles; and marine weather forecasts will continue in knots (nautical miles per hour).

Canada has adopted the metric system along with 98 percent of the countries of the world who are either now metric or who are converting to it. The metric system is considered important for continued Canadian exports to these countries.

Japan's Early 1980 Fish Imports Down 18 Percent

Japan's imports of fishery products during the first 6 months of 1980 amounted to 361,115 metric tons (t) valued at ¥ 301,216 million (\$1,287 million at ¥ 234=US\$1) on a customs clearance basis, according to the Finance Ministry of Japan. This is a decrease of 18 percent in quantity from the same period last year.

By species, jack mackerel and salted herring roe imports dipped heavily. Jack mackerel at 1,141 t were down 92 percent from the comparable 1979 imports of 11,880 t, while salted herring roe at 1,717 t were down 2,431 t or 58 percent. Salmon imports for the period declined by 30 percent in quantity and 27 percent in value. Imports of salmon roe declined as much as 54 percent from the 1979 record to June. Imports of Alaska pollock roe only totaled 44 percent of the comparable 1979 level.

On the upside, herring imports to June 1980 rose 1.9 times to 16,081 t from last year's 8,100 t. Imports of Spanish mackerel, at 3,808 t, were up 32 percent. Live adult eel imports increased to 7,793 t, up 26 percent over the comparable 1979 period.

Meanwhile, 1980 shipments of air-freighted fresh "jumbo" bluefin tuna from the U.S. east coast to Japan reportedly totaled only about 100 fish to the end of July, approximately one-third of the total shipments for the same period last year. The decrease was due in part to high exvessel prices and in part to stagnant wholesale prices.

Exvessel prices on the U.S. east coast began at around \$2.20/pound in late June and rose to \$2.50/pound in mid-August. Wholesale prices at the Tokyo Central Wholesale Market on August 11 were reported to be between a high of ¥ 2,500/kg (\$5.09/pound at ¥ 223=US\$1) and a low of ¥ 1,300/kg (\$2.64/pound), averaging around ¥ 1,800/kg (\$3.66/pound). The break-even prices currently accepted among the Japanese importers are \$2.50/pound for exvessel price and ¥ 2,800/kg (\$5.70/pound) for wholesale price. (Source: FFIR 80-8.)