

# ESTABLISHING AND LINKING GLOBAL FISH-TRADE INFORMATION NETWORKS



**WORKING FOR** the world's fisheries and aquaculture sector

**WORKING TO** establish information networks to promote fish-market access and trade

**WORKING WITH** fisheries sectors, academia and government agencies of 85 countries

**WORKING THANKS TO** Denmark, EU, USA, UK, Norway, France, Spain and other resource partners



**M**ore than a third of the world's fish production is traded internationally but, in the last decade, the nature of that trade has changed. Globalization and liberalization of markets, combined with economic growth in developing countries, rising local demand and the increased importance of aquaculture production, has had an enormous impact on the world's fisheries sector in general and on fish trade in particular. In addition, as trade has liberalized, the food chain has lengthened, increasing the need for quality-control regulations that ensure safe produce for consumers.

As the fisheries sector increasingly relies on regional and international trade for its sales, it has become crucial for those involved to have consistent, independent and trustworthy market information. FAO GLOBEFISH, established in 1984, is recognized as a global leader in gathering, assessing and disseminating information and analysis that levels the playing field for participants in today's global fish trade.

**The global export value of fish** and associated products has soared dramatically over recent decades, from US\$15 billion in 1980 to US\$130 billion today. Some 50 percent of that total comes from the developing world, where the net export revenue that countries receive from fish trade is larger than their exports of tea, rice, cocoa and coffee combined. At the same time, there have been dramatic changes in the fish supply and value chains, enormous growth in aquaculture, and tremendous improvements in logistics, distribution and packaging. In parallel, there also have been growing concerns over environmental issues and sustainability. GLOBEFISH, the FAO unit responsible for gathering, assessing and disseminating information and analysis of international fish trade, has almost three decades of experience in developing regional information networks. But it goes further, in providing a multiplier effect through coordination of the global FISHINFONetwork (FIN). This links six regional networks comprising 85 countries. It provides the type of up-to-date marketing and trade information needed by everyone – from government ministries to marketing-research institutes to the private sector – in making sure all links along the supply chain keep trade working smoothly.



*GLOBEFISH coordinates the Fish Information Network which links six regional fish market networks comprising 85 countries.*

### **EMERGING ECONOMIES INCREASE REGIONAL DEMAND FOR FISH PRODUCTS**

Traditionally, developing countries exported only to major developed country markets. Today, they are also likely to export within their own regions to meet the demands of regional consumers, especially in emerging economies of Latin America, Africa and Asia. In addition, a great deal of that export is now based on aquaculture, the fastest growing of all food-producing sectors which supplies almost half of the world's consumption of fish and fishery products.

### **CONNECTING LINKS OF THE FISH CHAIN WITH INFORMATION**

GLOBEFISH also plays a role in coordinating the global FISHINFONetwork (FIN), connecting six independent regional fish information services dedicated to developing the sector worldwide. These include INFOPECSA in South and Central America, INFOFISH in Asia and the Pacific, INFOPECHE in sub-Saharan Africa, INFOSAMAK in the Arab countries, EUROFISH in Eastern and Central Europe, and INFOYU in China.

Taken together, these regional services field more than 80 professionals in information and data processing, analysis and project management, who provide technical expertise and capacity building to the world's producers and exporters. GLOBEFISH also publishes regular analyses of the world's seafood markets through its key publications – the quarterly *GLOBEFISH Highlights* and the monthly *European Fish Price Report*. Its Commodity Updates cover the most widely traded seafood species and the GLOBEFISH Research Programme provides in-depth coverage of seafood markets.

In 2010, recognizing the increased importance of fisheries to its Members, FAO added a *Fish Price Index* to its other food indices and for the first time included fish in the OECD-FAO agricultural projections. The monumental growth of the fisheries and aquaculture sector in developing countries, and their contributions to national economies and local food security, have certainly benefited from the information services offered by GLOBEFISH and its partners in FIN. This shows what developing countries can accomplish in international trade when given an equal opportunity.

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