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## MEDIA FACTSHEET

United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)

### Aquaculture at a glance\*

#### Global aquaculture production

Global aquaculture production of food fish (finfish, crustaceans, molluscs and other aquatic animals for human consumption) has continued to show strong growth, increasing from 47.4 million tonnes in 2006 to 52.5 million tonnes in 2008.

The global aquaculture production of aquatic plants from aquaculture, mostly seaweeds, increased from 14 million tonnes in 2006 to 15.8 million tonnes in 2008. Aquatic plants are cultured for human consumption as well as non-food uses.

#### Top producers

Among the world's top ten aquaculture producers, eight are in Asia. **China** is by far the leader, accounting for 62% of world food fish aquaculture production in 2008 (32.7 million tonnes). The other major aquaculture producing countries in 2008 are **India** (3.5 million tonnes), **Viet Nam** (2.5 million tonnes), **Indonesia** (1.7 million tonnes), **Thailand** (1.4 million tonnes), **Bangladesh** (1.0 million tonnes), **Norway** (0.84 million tonnes), **Chile** (0.84 million tonnes), **Philippines** (0.74 million tonnes) and **Japan** (0.73 million tonnes).

#### Value of production

The value of worldwide aquaculture production of food fish was USD 98 billions in 2008, of which, USD 77.6 billions (79.2%) was from Asian.

The value of aquaculture production of aquatic plants in 2008 was USD 7.4 billions with Asia contributing more than 99% of the total..

#### Employment

In 2008, the total number of fish farmers **world-wide** was about 11 million people. In **Asia**, farming of fish represents an important source of employment with more than 10 million people employed directly in 2008.

#### Leading species (production)

By weight, more than half of the world aquaculture production was **freshwater fishes** (55%), followed by **molluscs** (25%), **crustaceans** (10%), **diadromous fishes** (6%), **marine fishes** (3%), and **other aquatic animals** (1%).

The production of **freshwater fishes**, at 28.8 million tonnes in 2008, consists of various carps (20.6 million tonnes), other freshwater fishes (5.4 million tonnes) and tilapias (2.8 million tonnes). Clams and cockles ,oysters mussels and scallops collectively contributed 89% of **molluscs** production. Marine shrimps and prawns contributed two third of the **crustaceans** production .while freshwater crustaceans account for just over a quarter.

**Silver carp** and **grass carp** are the two most cultured species in terms of production quantity (3.8 million tonnes each in 2008), while **Whiteleg shrimp** and **Atlantic salmon** fetched the highest value (USD 9 billion and USD 7.2 billion, respectively).

#### Growth and contribution to total production

Aquaculture's contribution to total fish production has steadily grown. In 1960, total production from aquaculture was 1.7 million tonnes, accounting for 4.7% of total fish production (from both capture and aquaculture) in that year. In 1985 it was 8.0 million tonnes (9.3%). In 2008 it reached 52.5 million tonnes (36.9%).

Overall the sector grew at an average rate of 8.5% per year between 1985 and 2008.

#### Contribution to food supply

Aquaculture's contribution to world fish supply now represents 64.1% of molluscs, 76.4 % of freshwater finfishes, 68.2 % of diadromous fishes including salmons, and 46.4 % of shrimps and prawns. In addition, 93.8% of algae were produced from aquaculture with significant portion directly consumed as human food in Asia.

All together, 45.6% of all food fish consumed by humans is sourced from aquaculture in 2008, up from 9.1% in 1980, 18.6% in 1990 and 33.8% in 2000.

\* Figures are for 2006 unless otherwise noted.

## **Consumption & diet**

In 2007, total per capita (pc) consumption of fish in the world was estimated at 16.8/kg, with fish accounting for 15.8% of the global population's intake of animal proteins and 6.1% of all proteins consumed.

Consumption in **Asia** was about 18.4/kg/pc, with fish having a share of about 21.9% of total animal proteins and 7.0% of total proteins.

## **Most traded species**

In 2008, total exports of fish and fishery products reached the record of USD 102 billion. It is not possible to determine the share of farmed products as the classification used internationally to record fishery trade statistics does not distinguish between products of wild and farmed origin. However, undoubtedly products derived from aquaculture production contribute an increasing share of total international trade in fishery commodities, with species such as shrimp and prawns, salmon, molluscs, tilapia, catfish (including *Pangasius*), seabass and seabream. Many of the species that have registered the highest export growth rates in the last few years are produced by aquaculture.

## **Major exporters and importers**

Top producers, including China, Viet Nam, Indonesia, Thailand, Norway and Chile, represent also the top exporters of farmed products, while the United States, the European Union and Japan are the main markets for fishery

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