

Global Aquaculture Economic Facts

- The U.S. is the third largest consumer of seafood in the world, but only 11th in volume of aquaculture producers.
- During the past three decades, the number of fishers and aquaculturists has grown faster than the world's population, and employment in the fisheries sector has grown faster than employment in traditional agriculture.
- In 2004, an estimated 41 million people worked as fishers and fish farmers, accounting for 3.1 percent of the 1.36 billion people economically active in agriculture worldwide and representing a growth rate of 35 percent since 1990.
- The great majority of fishers and fish farmers are in developing countries, principally in Asia. Significant increases over recent decades, in particular in Asia, reflect the strong expansion of aquaculture activities.
- In 2004, the number of fish farmers accounted for one-quarter of the total number of fish workers.
- The contribution of aquaculture to global supplies of fish, crustaceans, mollusks and other aquatic animals continues to grow, increasing from 3.9 percent of total production by weight in 1970 to 27.1 percent in 2000 and 32.4 percent in 2004.
- Aquaculture continues to grow more rapidly than all other animal food-producing sectors. Worldwide, the sector has grown at an average rate of 8.8 percent per year since 1970, compared with only 1.2 percent for capture fisheries and 2.8 percent for terrestrial farmed meat production systems over the same period.
- Production from aquaculture has greatly outpaced population growth, with per capita supply from aquaculture increasing from 0.7 kg in 1970 to 7.1 kg in 2004, representing an average annual growth rate of 7.1 percent.
- World aquaculture (food fish and aquatic plants) has grown significantly during the past half-century. From a production of below 1 million tons in the early 1950s, production in 2004 was reported to have risen to 59.4 million tons, with a value of US\$70.3 billion.
- This represents an average annual increase of 6.9 percent in quantity and 7.7 percent in value over reported figures for 2002.
- In 2004, countries in the Asia and the Pacific region accounted for 91.5 percent of the production quantity and 80.5 percent of the value.
- Of the world total, China is reported to account for 69.6 percent of the total quantity and 51.2 percent of the total value of aquaculture production.

*Source: United Nations' Food and Agriculture Organization
World Review of Fisheries and Aquaculture, 2006 Report*

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