

International Fish Trade Profile: Philippines

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INTRODUCTION

The Philippines has vast water resources comprising an extensive coastline of 36,289 km in length and about 2200,000 km² of marine water area, including the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ). The country shares its maritime borders with Taiwan in the north, Viet Nam in the west, Indonesia in the south, and Malaysia in the southwest. The country is geographically located at the apex of the Coral Triangle, a global center of marine biodiversity.

The endowments from aquatic resources support the economy and food security of the country. In 2015, the fisheries sector employed over 1.6 million people and contributed 1.5% and 1.7% at current and constant prices, respectively, to the country's gross domestic products (GDP). The fish consumption in 2017 was 40 kg/capita, equivalent to 12.8 % of the total food intake.

The fisheries sector in the Philippine is categorized as commercial, municipal (marine and inland), and aquaculture. As defined in the Republic Act 8550 (Philippine Fisheries Code of 1998) as amended by the Republic Act 10654, commercial fisheries include all fishing operations that use vessels of over 3.1 GT. Municipal fisheries (traditional, artisanal, subsistence or small-scale fisheries) involves the use of vessels 3 GT or less and fishing operations.

FISHERIES PRODUCTION

For several years, the Philippines was among the top fish producing countries in the world. In 2017, the total fisheries production was approximately 4.3 million MT with the value of US\$ 4.8 billion (**Figure 1**). The aquaculture sub-sector contributed the highest volume of about 2.2 million MT (52 % of total production) and the production of the different aquaculture systems in the Philippines is shown in **Figure 2**. The production of municipal fisheries was about 1.1 million MT (26 % of total production) and commercial fisheries contributed almost 1.0 million MT (22.0 % of total production). However, the decreasing amount of total fisheries production from 2015 to 2017 could be due to prolonged hot weather conditions, typhoons and rough seas, banned fishing equipment, and ice-ice disease and epiphytes of seaweeds.

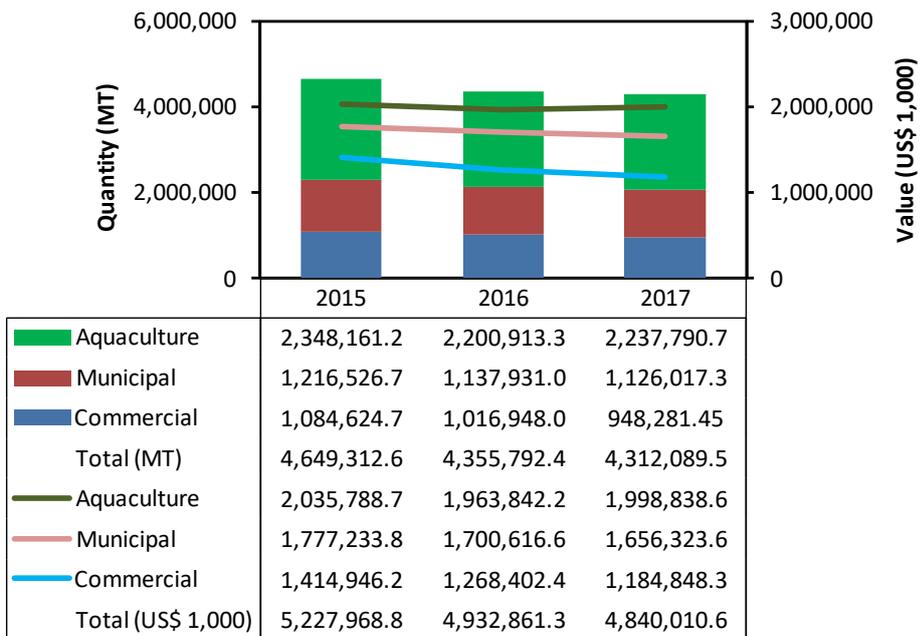
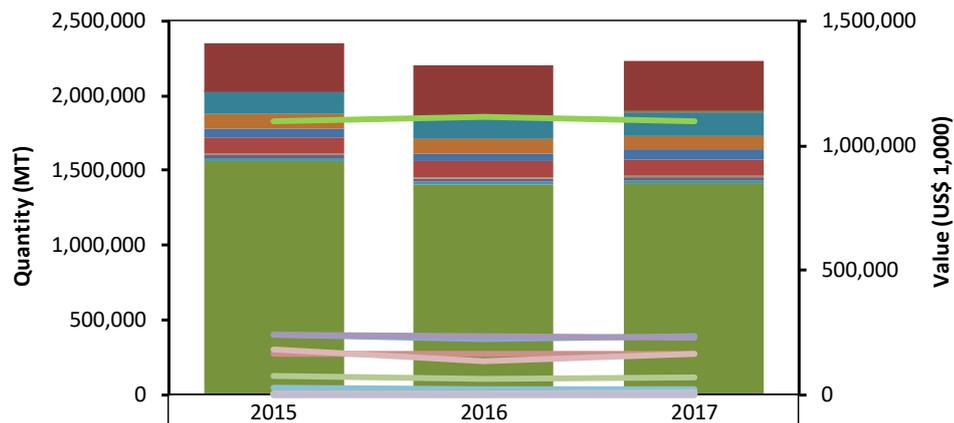


Figure 1. Fisheries production of the Philippines in 2015-2017 by quantity (MT) and value (US\$ 1,000)

Source: BFAR, 2017



Brackishwater fishpond	323,629.00	337,582.24	343,793.25
Brackishwater fish cage	1,171.99	978.88	927.79
Brackishwater fish pen	832.22	2,086.18	2,765.27
Freshwater fishpond	147,569.40	145,655.32	156,465.15
Freshwater fish cage	94,723.06	97,568.86	95,699.48
Freshwater fish pen	60,833.27	56,610.84	62,805.43
Marine fish cage	105,606.47	106,257.36	106,770.58
Marine fish pen	11,148.66	11,307.24	11,019.69
Oyster farm	20,260.80	19,512.36	22,944.37
Mussel farm	15,949.13	18,774.55	19,208.62
Seaweed farm	1,566,361.70	1,404,519.23	1,415,320.79
Small farm reservoir	72.05	56.68	66.86
Rice fish	3.46	3.59	3.49
Total (MT)	2,348,161.21	2,200,913.33	2,237,790.77
Brackishwater fishpond	1,100,163.67	1,115,863.00	1,096,874.35
Brackishwater fish cage	2,861.62	2,299.65	2,221.02
Brackishwater fish pen	1,924.63	4,658.60	5,793.92
Freshwater fishpond	240,335.72	219,347.84	231,494.19
Freshwater fish cage	164,833.73	162,893.68	165,856.06
Freshwater fish pen	72,523.88	60,665.64	69,034.64
Marine fish cage	238,342.19	232,207.73	227,742.20
Marine fish pen	24,667.08	23,987.31	22,981.20
Oyster farm	3,944.91	4,381.77	5,155.18
Mussel farm	4,698.38	5,898.63	6,870.89
Seaweed farm	181,358.13	131,539.27	164,709.35
Small farm reservoir	128.09	93.39	100.53
Rice fish	6.74	5.77	5.15
Total (US\$ 1,000)	2,035,788.78	1,963,842.27	1,998,838.68

Figure 2. Production of different aquaculture systems of the Philippines in 2015-2017 by quantity (MT) and value (US\$ 1,000)

Source: PSA, 2017

INTERNATIONAL FISH TRADE

Figure 3 shows the major fishery products exported by Philippines in 2014-2016. In terms of quantity and value, tuna was the top exported commodity dispensed as fresh/chilled/frozen, smoked/dried, and canned. The major markets for tuna include the USA, Japan, and the UK. Seaweeds ranked second and its major markets are the USA, China, and France. Third in rank were crabs (live, frozen, fresh/chilled) and its fat and meat (prepared/preserved). Shrimp/prawn ranked fourth with Japan, USA, and France as the major destination countries. Fifth is the octopus exported as live, fresh/chilled, frozen, and dried/salted or in brine.

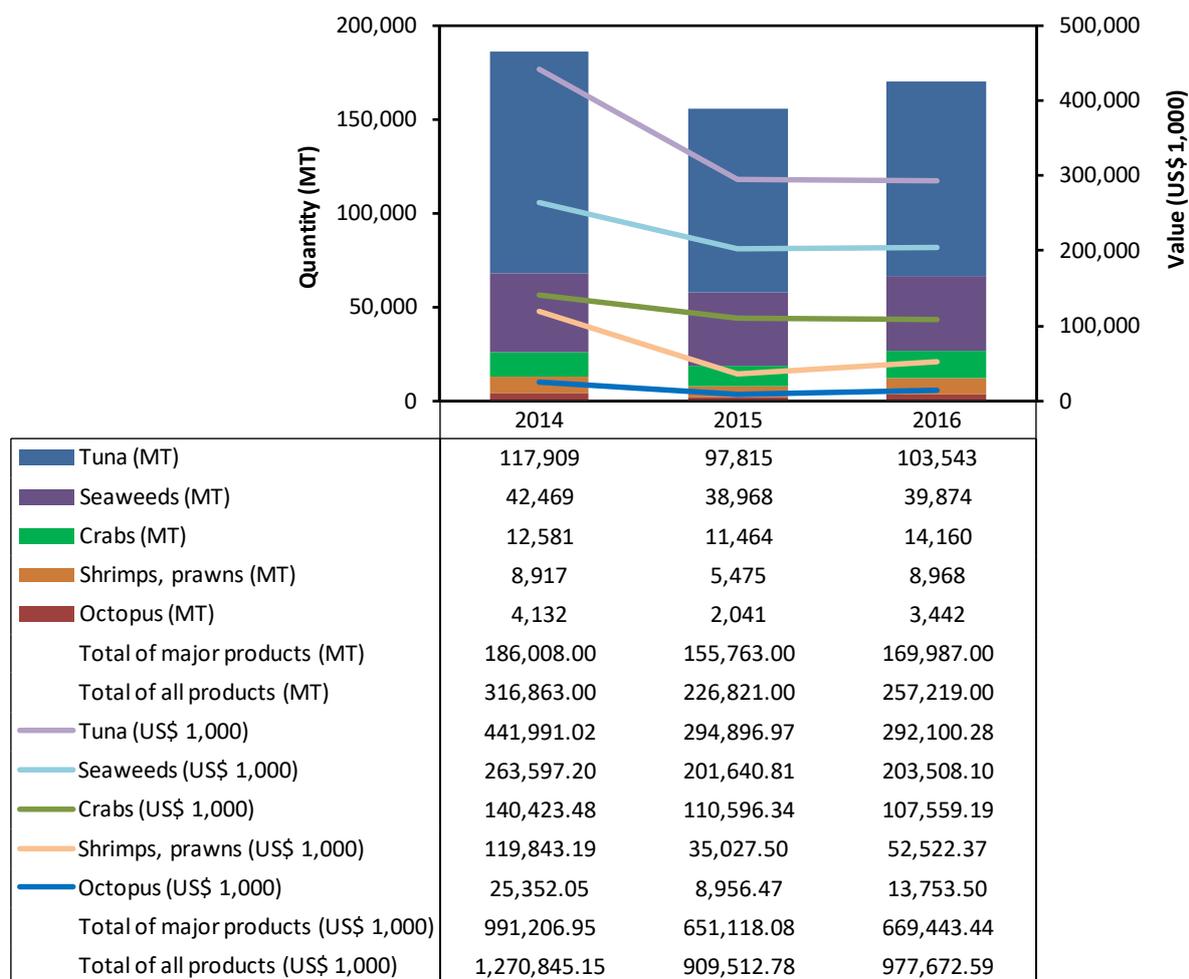


Figure 3. Major fishery products exported by the Philippines in 2014-2016 by quantity (MT) and value (US\$ 1,000)

Source: BFAR, 2017

The total quantity of imported fishery products in 2014 was more than 300,000 MT with the total value of about US\$ 300 million. The three major commodities were fish (chilled/frozen), prawn feeds; and flour, meals and pellets made of fish, crustaceans, and mollusks. The imported chilled/frozen fish consist of tuna, mackerel, and sardines, and tuna was the highest in quantity and value among the three fish commodities. Tuna is supplied by Papua New Guinea, Taiwan, China, South Korea, and Japan.

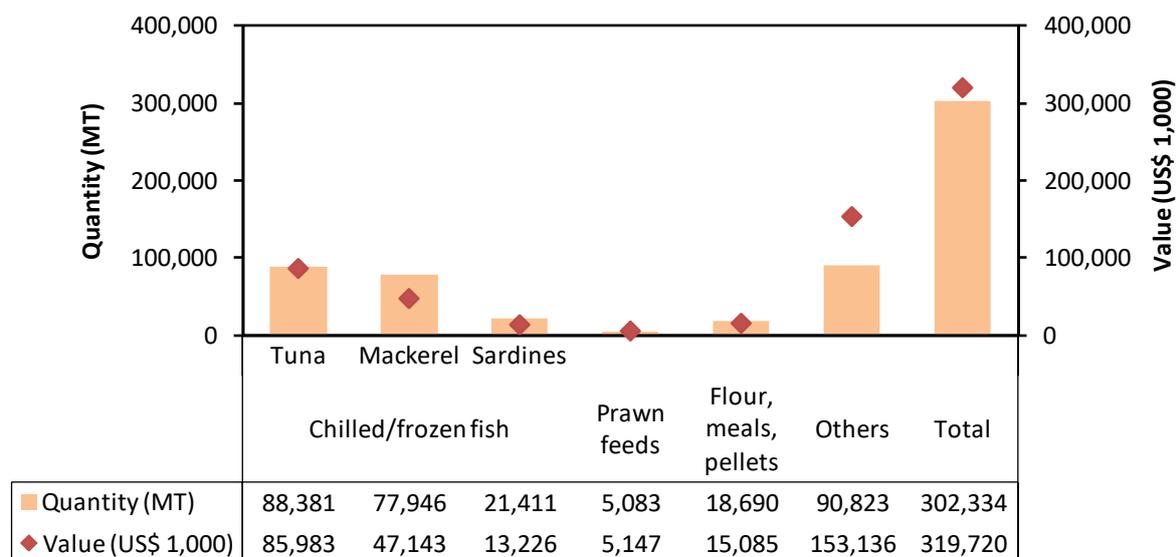


Figure 4. Major fishery products imported by the Philippines in 2014 by quantity (MT) and value (US\$ 1,000)

Source: BFAR, 2016

FISH TRADE POLICIES

The Philippines has free trade agreements with China, India, Japan, Republic of Korea, and Australia and New Zealand under the ASEAN framework. Also, the country has joined and committed to the following global organizations and agreements related to international fish trade:

- World Trade Organization (WTO)
- General Agreement on Trade and Tariff (GATT)
- Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC)
- ASEAN Trade in Goods Agreement (ATIGA)
- Philippines-Japan Economic Partnership Agreement (PJEPA)
- Philippines-European Union Free Trade Agreement (PH-EU FTA)
- ASEAN Economic Community (AEC)

Moreover, a number of different regulatory bodies in the Philippines are supported by specialist commissions which focus on specific technical matters such as meat inspection and biosafety. **Table 1** shows the government agencies and their responsibilities while **Table 2** highlights the sections and rules of the Philippine Fisheries Code of 1998 as amended by the Republic Act 10654 related to fish trade.

Table 1. Philippine government agencies and their responsibilities related to fish trade

Government agency	Responsibilities
Food and Drug Administration (FDA) under the Department of Health (DOH)	- ensures the safety of processed food products
Bureau of Agriculture and Fisheries Product Standards (BAFPS) under the Department of Agriculture (DA)	- formulates and enforces standards of quality in the processing, preservation, packaging, labelling, importation, exportation, distribution, and advertising of fresh and primary agricultural and fishery products - provides assistance in establishing the scientific basis for food safety, trade standards and codes of practice, and harmonizes them with internationally accepted standards and practices

Government agency	Responsibilities
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - serves as the National Enquiry Point for Codex Alimentarius and other food safety and standards regulatory bodies - monitors and disseminates information on international developments in food safety
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) • Bureau of Animal Industry (BAI) • Bureau of Plant Industry (BPI) all under DA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the main regulatory bodies that monitor the safety aspects of imported agriculture and food products
Fisheries Post-Harvest Technology Division of BFAR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - issues commodity clearances (<i>i.e.</i>, import permits) and other requirements for the import of fish and fishery products

Table 2. Sections and rules of the Philippine Fisheries Code of 1998 related to fish trade

Section and rule	Details
Section 61. Importation and exportation of fishery products	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - export of fishery products shall be regulated whenever such exportation affects domestic food security and production: Provided, that the exportation of live fish shall be prohibited except those which are hatched or propagated in accredited hatcheries and ponds - to protect and maintain the local diversity or ensure the sufficiency of domestic supply, spawners, breeders, eggs and fry of the milkfish, prawn and other endemic species, as may be determined by the DA, shall not be exported or caused to be exported by any person - fishery products may be imported only when the importation has been certified as necessary by the DA, in consultation with the FARMC, and all the requirements of this Code, as well as existing rules and regulations have been complied with. Provided, that fish imports for canning/processing purposes only may be allowed without the necessary certification, but within the provision of Section 61 (d) of this Code - no person shall import and/or export fishery products of whatever size, stage or form for any purpose without securing a permit from the DA - the DA in consultation with the Fisheries and Aquatic Resources Management Council (FARMC) shall promulgate rules and regulations on importation and exportation of fish and fishery/aquatic resources with the Government's export/import simplification procedures
Section 62. Trade-related measures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - standards for weights, volume, quality and other measurements for all fishery transactions and trade shall be set by the DA - all fish and fishery products for export, import and domestic consumption shall meet the quality grades/standards and labelling and information requirements as determined by the Department - the Local Government Unit (LGU) concerned shall, by appropriate ordinance, penalize fraudulent practices, and unlawful possession or use of instrument of weights and measures - the DA may prescribe trade-related measures to reduce or eliminate trade in fish and fishery products derived from illegal, unregulated and unreported (IUU) fishing

Rule 62.1. Standards	- the standards for weights, volume, quality and other measurements for all fishery transactions and trade shall be based on the Philippine National Standards (PNS) set by the DA-Bureau of Agriculture and Fisheries Standards (DA-BAFS) and by the DA-BFAR as well as international standards set by Codex Alimentarius Commission. The DA-BFAR, the DA-BAFS and the National Fisheries Research and Development Institute (NFRDI), shall collaborate in the establishment, development and updating of relevant standards for fish and fishery products
Rule 62.2 Updating of trade-related measures	- the DA-BFAR shall update, if necessary, existing trade-related measures such as the catch certification scheme, to reduce or eliminate trade in fish and fishery products derived from illegal, unregulated and unreported fishing

CONCLUSION AND WAY FORWARD

The fish trade policies stipulated by the government of the Philippines serve as guide for the exporters, importers, and other stakeholders to efficiently facilitate business undertakings. Further studies should be done to boost the fisheries sector of the country by collaborating with other countries for awareness on existing fish trade policies of respective countries. Data analyses on the current issues on trade in fisheries is also vital for future policy planning and management towards sustainable international fish trade, and eventually achieve the UN SDG 14 Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development.

REFERENCE

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