

## **MODERN TRENDS IN THE ORGANIZATION OF DATA COLLECTION IN THE FISHERY STATISTICS IN CYPRUS**

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Data collection covers all landings by the sea fishing fleet in the ports of Cyprus. Sampling in the collection of catch data is used for the inshore fishery (i.e. boats of less than 10 meters length overall). The data recorded on the monthly coastal boat fishery reports are accurate as regards the catches and the species breakdown. The system is highly reliable. The Cypriot system of fishery statistics is very detailed. However, the sport fishery is not included in the statistics, although it is estimated to account for about 15 % of the total catch. Improvements could be made to the collection and processing of the data by the Fisheries Inspectorate Service. A computerized system of recording the data by the District Offices would substantially reduce the time spent in the Central Office in recording the data and would improve the possibilities for validation and verification of the data. The Department of Fisheries, Ministry of Agriculture, Natural Resources and Environment, is responsible for the collection and processing of fishery statistics. The collection of fishery statistics is based on the Fisheries Law, Cap. 135 and subsequent amendments of 1961 to 1964, as well as the Fisheries Regulations of 1990 to 1994, based on Article 6 of the Basic Law.

The Department of Fisheries has the responsibility for the transmission of fishery statistics to all international organizations and agencies.

The sources of data are:

Log-book sheets

Monthly coastal boat fishery reports

Production reports

Fish-food consumption reports

Prices reports

Personnel reports  
The Fishing Register  
Fishing licences

The details of collecting the data from the above sources are as follows:

*Log-books.* All trawlers must keep a log-book. Collection of data is carried out by daily return of log-book sheets, which all skippers are required to hand in prior to landing their catch. The log-book sheets are handed to officers of the Department, while landed catches are inspected upon landing, to ensure that they are weighed and recorded accurately.

Trawl log-books include the following information: identification of the trawler, place and depth of fishing, number of active fishing days, dates of the trip, port of landing, the total catch and breakdown of the catch by species and by quality. The log-books are collected every day by the Fisheries Inspectors and sent to the Central Office of the Department for the processing of the data.

*Monthly coastal boat fishery reports.* All the other vessels excluding the trawlers are classified as the inshore fishery fleet. Data on this fishery are collected by sampling. In this system a representative sample of the boat owners is provided with booklets and they are required to submit monthly coastal fishery reports. These inshore fishery reports include the following information: identification of the fisherman and the boat, the fishing station, fishing equipment (nets, type of nets and length, long-lines, etc.), daily and monthly total catch and the breakdown of the catch by species. The booklets are collected every month by the Fisheries Inspectors and sent to the Central Offices of the Department for processing.

*Aquaculture statistics:* Production reports, fish-food consumption reports, price reports, personnel reports. The collection of data on aquaculture is based on the information given by the farm owners/managers on reports on production, fish-food consumption, prices and personnel. These forms are provided to the farmers at the beginning of the year and are to be returned to the Department within three months. The production report includes detailed information on the production of table size fish, fry and eggs for local use and for export, as well as the fry stocked in the farm. These data are verified by Fisheries Officers (who regularly visit the farms and observe, consult and supervise their activities), from the export declarations of the farmers and from the statistics kept on the supply of dry food for the fish farms.

*Boat Registration forms:* all fishing boats with the tonnage of less than 15 tons (GRT) are registered in the Fishing Register, kept by the Fisheries

Department. Registration forms include the following information: boat characteristics (length, width, depth, type and construction material), engine data (type, construction, power), the fishing equipment (nets, traps, long lines), the mechanical and electronic equipment, as well as identification of the owners and the crew. Similar as well as additional data are submitted on registration of the trawlers which are larger than 15 tons (GRT). These vessels are registered in the Cyprus Register, administered by the Merchant Shipping Department.

*Fishing licences:* the fishermen apply for a fishing licence every year. Fishing licence applications include the following information: identification of the fishermen and crew (ages, addresses, ID insurances, etc.), boat and engine characteristics, fishing equipment, mechanical and electronic equipment (as above).

Thus, the information on the fishing fleet is obtained by processing the data given in the application forms for boat/trawler registration and for fishing licences, and is verified by the Fisheries Inspectorate Service. The trawlers and boats which operate with fishing licences issued by the Fisheries Department of Cyprus do not make landings in foreign ports; therefore data do not exist to be collected.

The inshore fishery fleet of Cyprus operates exclusively in the territorial waters of Cyprus. The same applies to the trawlers licensed to operate in the waters of Cyprus. However, during the closed season some trawlers travel for fishing in the areas around Egypt. These trawlers land their catches in Cyprus after being given landing permits and report their catch on log-book sheets. (In the statistics this catch is referred as catch from «international waters»). The log-book is the main source of information on the fishing area and is verified by the Fisheries Inspectors.

According to the system of the trading of fish, the prices of the various species and grades of fish are mostly fixed in Cyprus. Interviews with the first hand buyers and the skippers/fishermen give the prices of the landings of trawlers and of the inshore fishery. Estimations of the quantities, grades and species breakdown are not necessary for the trawl fishery because they are reported on the log-book sheets. For the inshore fishery the above data are estimated from the monthly coastal boat reports.

The prices of the aquaculture products are submitted on the Prices Reports to the Department of Fisheries every year by the fish farmers. Price Reports include the following information: maximum and minimum wholesale and retail prices of table-size and fry fish for every species sold in the local market and maximum and minimum price and total values for table-size fish, fry and eggs for each species exported.

The log-book sheets are collected on a daily basis and the monthly coastal boat fishery reports, on a monthly basis by the representatives of Fisheries Inspectorate Service located in the main fishing ports of Cyprus. These data are sent at regular intervals to the Statistics Section of the Department for computer processing and analysis. The statistical tables are completed in January/February of the following year. Official reports (which include all aspects of the fishery in Cyprus) are published in May/June every year.

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