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# Italy

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# Italian Fishery Report

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**Report Highlights:**

**General Information:**
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## OVERVIEW

Italy is considered to be a major seafood market with a population of 60 million and an estimated per capita consumption of fish and seafood of about 20 Kilos. Despite recent improvements in the aquaculture sector, Italy still remains heavily import dependent. The Italian fishery industry represents only 0.1% of Italy's Gross Domestic Production (GDP) due to a declining fish stocks and a fragmented fishing industry. Domestic fish production continues to decline, therefore Italy relies heavily on imports to bridge the gap between steady consumer demand and reduced national output. A recent analysis from Ismea (Institute of Services for the Agricultural & Food Market) reports that in 2009 Italian fish production was about 475,000 tons.

**Table 1. Italian Marine Production (metric tons)**

| | Species | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | FISH | | | SHELLFISH | | | TOTAL |
| | Anchovies, Herrings & Mackerels | Tuna | Other | Squids, Octopus & Cuttlefishes | Other | Crustaceans | |
| Timeframe | | | | | | | |
| 2007 | 77,940 | 14,542 | 88,273 | 21,526 | 48,872 | 25,493 | 276,646 |
| 2008 | 59,204 | 12,639 | 74,076 | 16,387 | 42,468 | 22,234 | 227,008 |
| 2008 Jan-Oct | 52,585 | 10,178 | 73,497 | 13,859 | 26,963 | 17,862 | 194,944 |
| 2009 Jan-Oct | 63,660 | 10,708 | 81,023 | 14,339 | 20,297 | 20,258 | 210,285 |

*Source: ISTAT (Italian Official Statistics Institute) – Oct 2009*

## ITALIAN MARINE PRODUCTION

The Italian fishing sector is highly fragmented along its 4,634 miles of continental coastline, due to a diverse fishing fleet with vessels operating both in the Adriatic and Mediterranean Sea. In recent years marine caught fishery levels have declined. In 2009 68% of Italy's Mediterranean catch was comprised of fish, mollusks and crustaceans. In 2009 the Italian fishing fleet was the second largest in the EU in terms of number of vessels (13,301) and the fourth in terms of tonnage (182,000 tons). A weak internal demand and competition from imported products are among the main reasons for stable production prices for many of the species caught in 2009. During the first months of 2010 the estimated turnover was $313 million.

**Table 2. Italian Fishing Fleet**

| Year | Number of Vessels | Total Gross Registered Tonnage (GRT) | Total Engine Power KW |
|---|---|---|---|
| 2006 | 14,093 | 207,201 | 1,195,438 |
| 2007 | 13,780 | 196,998 | 1,153,021 |
| 2008 | 13,683 | 196,313 | 1,149,081 |
| 2009 | 13,301 | 182,000 | 1,096,000 |

*Source: ISMEA (Institute of Services for the Agricultural & Food Market)*

## FRESHWATER FISHERIES

Italy has over 20,000 square km of lakes, reservoirs and rivers. The freshwater fish market is stable at 13.2% of the total fish market volume. The first quarter of 2010 shows an increase in demand for trout, white trout and salmon.

## AQUACULTURE

Aquaculture in Italy has two main sectors. The first is based on coastal lagoon management, from culture-based fisheries to extensive (*vallicolture*); the second one involves intensive rearing systems, in both inland freshwater bodies and the open sea. Specifically, the sector can be divided into four different farming systems: extensive farming (inland plants), semi-extensive farming (inland plants), intensive farming (inland and offshore plants) and mussel culture (long lines). Farms are scattered throughout the Italian territory, mainly in the southern regions and in the Adriatic. The development of marine farming around the Mediterranean basin is due to the application of intensive production systems, particularly cages.

According to the latest Api (*Italian Fish Farmers Association*) data aquaculture production in 2009 was over 74,000 tons, valued at $675 million, and employed more than 15,000 people. With regards to freshwater aquaculture, Italy currently has over 900 aquaculture facilities, mainly located in northern Italy (Veneto). Southern Italy however, is expanding its' aquaculture capabilities, especially in the Abruzzo and Puglia regions. Industry sources report that production of freshwater fish is an important part of Italian and European aquaculture, but the products have a relatively low market value in relation to production costs, and thus, producers' profit margins are low. Moreover, market demand for freshwater species, other than trout and carp, is currently rather limited throughout Europe. However, the recent introduction of new production technologies, including water re-circulation systems, should help the sector.

Currently, the strategy chosen by the Italian aquaculture sector is based on the quality of products and manufacturing processes. Looking at the diversification of production in fish farming, in recent years new valuable species (such as white seabream, sharpsnout seabream, yellowtail amberjack and meagre) have been introduced. Italian aquaculture has derived substantial economic advantage from the introduction of neglected and alien species (e.g. rainbow trout, Philippine clam, Japanese oyster).

Although a wide range of species are raised, only three have a significant role in the total national fish:

trout (55.3% in 2009), sea bass (13.2%) and sea bream (12.9%). Trout showed an increase in 2009 production over the previous year (+4.1%) positively influencing the overall result of the sector (+2.3%). Although facing a period of stagnation (due to weak domestic and external demand), the trout segment is still one of the most productive and profitable, and its production is about 50% of total fish production in Italy. Actually rainbow trout represents more than 90% of the inland aquaculture production in Italy.

## PROCESSING

In recent years fish processing, conservation and fish-based product production have declined partly because the Italian processing industry only utilizes a few species (anchovies, sardine and mackerel). The Italian canned tuna industry has drastically downsized as large companies have shifted their investments to countries with a larger availability of raw material for processing. The reduction of tuna catches has also caused an increase in production costs forcing Italian businesses to become more dependent on imports. The result is that Italy, which used to be self sufficient in canned tuna production, now imports large quantities of fish from Spain. In 2009, the tuna industry imported more than 37,000 tonnes of tuna loins, and almost 16,600 tons of frozen tuna. The seafood processing sector in Italy is now mainly in preserves, and specifically tuna based preserves. The frozen fish industry in 2009 produced only 23 thousand tons of frozen fish products, 7% less than in 2008, worth just over $135 million. In 2009 stagnating demand, dependence on foreign imports for the supply of raw materials and competitive foreign products have negatively influenced the sector.

## CONSUMPTION

Fish consumption in Italy is still below the EU average level. During the first six months of 2009 fish consumption has recorded an increase mainly due to a major demand for anchovies, trout and salmon. In 2009 household purchases of fishery products showed a reduction of 2.6%, due to a lower demand for fresh fish. According to industry estimates total demand in 2010 will decrease by 6%. Specifically, the demand for fresh fish will decrease by 6% while frozen fish will decrease by 5%. Per capita fish consumption in 2010 was 21 kilos.

**Table 3. Sales of Fish and Seafood by Category in Italy: Total Volume 2007-2010 (000 tonnes)**

| | 2007 | 2008 | 2009 | 2010 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Crustaceans | 31.9 | 31.9 | 33.0 | 32.1 |
| Fish | 401.7 | 390.5 | 405.2 | 403.1 |
| Molluscs and Cephalopods | 107.2 | 107.7 | 111.5 | 107.6 |
| Fish and Seafood | 540.9 | 530.1 | 549.6 | 542.9 |

*Source: Euromonitor International*

**Table 4. Forecast Sales of Fish and Seafood by Category in Italy: Total Volume 2011-2014 (000 tonnes)**

| | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 |
|---|---|---|---|---|

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Crustaceans | 32.0 | 32.0 | 32.3 | 32.4 |
| Fish | 399.1 | 395.1 | 400.7 | 401.0 |
| Molluscs and Cephalopods | 107.1 | 106.4 | 105.4 | 104.2 |
| Fish and Seafood | 538.2 | 533.5 | 538.4 | 537.6 |

*Source: Euromonitor International*

**TRADE**

In 2008 the Italian fish trade balance was $4.3 million due to a decrease in imports. The decrease was mainly due to a fall in domestic demand. In 2010 total Italian imports of fishery products increased by 1.6% in volume. Specifically, while imports of processed fish products showed a slight decline, fresh products increased by 1.3%, due to an increase in imports of mussels, salmon and bass. Most of the imports were from EU27 countries, mainly Spain, Greece, Denmark, Netherlands and France. Italian imports cover a wide range of products. Tuna, hake, cod, cephalopods and shrimps account for over half of total imports. Although Italy has one of the lowest levels of frozen food consumption in Europe in contrast a high percentage of seafood imports are actually frozen. With regards to fresh products, in 2009 Italy continued to dominate the EU market with a demand for seabass and seabream. Italy's import volumes were 40,000 tons most of which imported from Greece and Turkey.

**Table 5. Total Italian Imports and Exports of Fish and Seafood Products**

**By Volume (Tons)**

| | **2009** | | **2010** | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **COUNTRY** | **Import** | **Export** | **Import** | **Export** |
| United States | 6,885 | 938 | 9,745 | 905 |
| EU 27 | 482,788 | 108,484 | 507,456 | 110,612 |
| World | 911,766 | 128,842 | 938,016 | 129,955 |

*Source: Coeweb*

**Table 6. Total Italian Imports and Exports of Fish and Seafood Products**

**By Value (USD)**

| | **2009** | | **2010** | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **COUNTRY** | **Import** | **Export** | **Import** | **Export** |
| United States | 67,076,512 | 7,837,927 | 77,313,577 | 8,954,066 |
| EU 27 | 2,912,796,611 | 579,638,199 | 3,106,464,910 | 573,999,382 |
| World | 4,977,574,908 | 667,554,106 | 5,242,027,236 | 654,398,290 |

*Source: Coeweb*

In hopes of diversifying themselves from competitor import products Italy has been initiating labelling and marketing strategies aimed at identifying Italian products from foreign imports.

**Table 7. Italian Imports from the United States**

**By Volume (Tons)**

| | 2008 | 2009 | % Change |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Lobsters** | 3,537 | 3,890 | 10 |
| **Cuttle Fish & Squid** | 1,261 | 964 | -23.57 |
| **Pacif Salmon** | 808 | 903 | 11.82 |
| **Mackerel** | 478 | 414 | -13.3 |

*Source: GTA*

**Table 8. Italian Imports from the United States**

**By Value (USD)**

| | 2008 | 2009 | % Change |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Lobsters** | 54,811,924 | 52,907,240 | -3.47 |
| **Pacif Salmon** | 2,822,695 | 4,448,447 | 57.6 |
| **Cuttle Fish & Squid** | 4,143,152 | 2,973974 | -28.22 |
| **Fish Fillets** | 1,442,662 | 1,575,268 | 9.19 |

*Source: GTA*

**Table 9. PSD Table (Volume – 000 tonnes)**

| **Fish and Seafood Products** | **2009** | **2010** | **2011** |
|---|---|---|---|
| | **Est 2009/2010** | **Est 2010/2011** | **Forecast 2011/2012** |
| | Post Data | Post Data | Post Data |
| Production | 475 | 478 | 479 |
| Imports UE | 468 | 491 | 493 |
| Imports extra UE | 443 | 447 | 449 |
| TOTAL Import | 911 | 938 | 942 |
| **Total Supply** | 1,386 | 1,416 | 1,421 |
| Consumption | 1,257 | 1,286 | 1,290 |
| Exports UE | 106 | 108 | 110 |
| Exports extra UE | 23 | 22 | 21 |
| TOTAL Export | 129 | 130 | 131 |
| Losses | - | - | - |
| **Total Distribution** | 1,386 | 1,416 | 1,421 |

**EU COMMON FISHERIES POLICY**

Italy's fish and seafood industry follows the EU Common Fisheries Policy (CFP). The CFP was established in the mid-1980s to reduce over-fishing and to ensure that the EU maintained a strong and competitive fish and seafood industry.

Regulations within the policy address four main issues:

- preserve depleting fish stocks, particularly cod;
- control the size and efficiency of fishing fleets to avoid over fishing;

develop a common marketing policy for fishery products within the EU to facilitate trade; and

- gain international co-operation to achieve the policy's objectives.

The Common Fisheries Policy (CFP) was reviewed in 2002. The new base Regulation entered into force January 1, 2003, and includes a provision that the European Commission (EC) shall report to the Council and the European Parliament on the chapters on conservation and fishing capacity before the end of 2012.

For further information on the CFP please see the EU website http://europa.eu.int/comm/fisheries/pcp/pcp_en.htm.

**Labeling**

EU legislation requires that all food, including seafood, must have a label that includes the name under which the product is sold, the list of ingredients (in descending order of weight), net quantity of pre-packed food ingredients in metric unit, date of minimum durability (except for fresh produces), any special storage conditions or conditions of use (except for fresh produces), and the name of the manufacturer, packer or EU seller (except for non-packed fresh produce). In addition, EU regulation 2065/2201 specifically outlines labeling requirements for fishery and aquaculture products.

All products offered for retail sale in the EU must be properly labeled with the following information:

1. Species commercial name;
2. Production method used: "caught in…" for wild fish, "farmed" or "cultivated", for aquaculture products;
3. Catch area must be listed: for products caught at sea a reference to areas (FAO zones), for products caught in freshwater a reference to the country of origin, for farmed products a reference to the country in which the product undergoes the final development stage.

In addition to the EU requirements, listed above, producers may voluntarily choose to give additional information, such as production methods or nutritional elements.

**Organic farmed fish**

Regulation 710/2009 outlines procedures for aquatic production, and specifically deals with the organic and non-organic production, including animal welfare conditions. In December 2005 the EU Commission adopted a proposal for a new regulation concerning organic fish farming production. This proposal intended to improve clarity for both the consumers and the farmers. In 2007 the EU agreed an updated framework for organic production and labelling which included aquaculture. From July 2010 the EU organic logo is now obligatory for all organic pre-packaged food products within the European Union (the gradual placing of the new logo on the market will last until 2012). It is also possible to use the logo on a voluntary basis for non pre-packaged organic goods produced within the EU or any organic products imported from third countries.

**Table 10. English/Italian and Latin Scientific Names of Fish and Shellfish**

| ***English*** | ***Italian*** | ***Latin*** |
|---|---|---|
| Anchovy | Alice | Engraulis encrasicholus |
| Herring | Sarda | Clupea harengus |
| Mackerel | Sgombro | Scomber scombrus |
| Tuna | Tonno | Thunnus thynnus |
| Needlefish | Aguglia | Belone belone |
| Eel | Anguilla | Amguilla anguilla |
| Bullet tuna | Biso | Auxis rochei eudorax |
| Boga | Boga | Boops boops |
| Gurnard | Capone | Eutrigla gurnadus |
| Mullet | Cefalo | Chelon labrosus |
| Grouper | Cernia | Ephinepelus guaza |
| Dentex | Dentice | Dentex dentex |
| Goby | Ghiozzo | Gobius |
| Big-scale sandmelt | Latterino | Antherina mochon |
| Jack | Leccia | Lichia amia |
| Cackerel | Mendola | Maena maena |
| Cod | Merluzzo | Gadus |
| Umbrine | Ombrina | Umbrina cirrosa |
| Ox-eye | Orata | Sparus auratas |
| Sea bream | Pagello | Pagellus bogaraveo |
| Atlantic bonito | Palamita | Sarda sarda |
| Dogfish | Palombo | Mustelus mustelus |
| Blue whiting | Potassolo | Micromesistius poutassou |
| Sword fish | Pesce spada | Xiphias gladus |
| Anglerfish | Rana pescatrice | Lophius piscatorius |
| Ray | Razza | Raja |
| Turbot | Rombo | Psetta maxima |
| White bream | Sarago | Diplodus |
| Sole | Sogliola | Solea vulgaris vulgaris |
| Sea bass | Spigola | Dicentrarchus labrax |
| Horse mackerel | Sugarello | Trachurus |
| Red mullet | Triglia | Mullus |
| Squid | Calamaro | Loligo |
| Octopus | Polpo | Octopus vulgaris |
| Cuttlefish | Seppia | Sepia officinalis |
| Mussel | Cozza | Mytolus edulis |
| Little octopus | Moscardino | Ozoena moschata |
| Tuttler | Totano | Illex illecebrosus |
| Clam | Vongola | Arenomya arenaria |
| Crawfish and Lobster | Aragosta e Astice | Palinarus vulgaris e Homarus gammarus |
| Crayfish and Prawn | Gambero bianco e | Penaeus schmitti e Penaeus Kerathurus |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | mazzancolla | |
| Tiger prawn | Gambero rosso | Aristeus antennatus |
| Mantis shrimp | Pannocchia | Squilla mantis |
| Prawn | Scampo | Nephrops norvegicus |

**EXCHANGE RATE** : $1 = €1.39 (March 2011)