

FISHERIES INDUSTRY IN IRAN

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STANJE RIBARSTVA U IRANU

Prošireni abstrakt

Fisheries activities in Iran are conducted through an official agent called *SHILAT*, which is an affiliated body to the Ministry of Jihad-e-Sazandegi. As a post-revolution structure, the Ministry itself is structurally composed of four major divisions as: *Fisheries, Livestock and Poultry, Forestry and Pastures, and Rural Industries*. The official functions assigned to the Ministry center around rural and coastal developments. As it will be postulated, fisheries, inter alia, is of great significance in national economy.

Development of fisheries industry has been the focus of prime attention in the I.R. of Iran. To this end, respective development objectives have been identified among which responsible fisheries management, as a unique concept, has increasingly been given a pivotal role. In particular, the national government, upon its Islamic teachings and international commitments has committed itself to observe such an international initiative and has strongly aimed at the rehabilitation of God-given resources so as to ensure sustainability as well as accessibility of them to the future generations. Hence, my required measures are always taken to guarantee the maximum availability through either preventing over fishing or creating a balance between fishing efforts, and resource recruitments. To enlighten the readers, some of the major areas of the Iranian Fisheries success are briefly underpinned as follows:

Production

During the post-revolution era, fisheries production has had an ever-increasing trend. Fisheries production has now exceeded 400 thousand Mt.; indicating a 1232% growth rate compared to that of 1978. Three major fisheries areas contributing a lot to the production of fisheries products are identifiable. Table 1 shows a cross-comparison of fisheries production as well as its future prospects.

cross-comparison of fisheries production as well as its future prospects

Area	1978	1998	by 2000
production in southern waters	25500	226500	350000
production in northern waters	3724	101500	142475
production in inland waters	3219	72000	875000
TOTAL	32443	400000	1367475

Employment

Creating employment opportunities mainly in fisheries areas is one of the paramount features of fisheries sector. Fisheries sector includes one percent of national employment, and about 122 thousand persons are directly engaged in this sector. It means that over 500 thousand people earn their living through fishing activities. (Table 2).

Table 2: Employment in Fishing (1989-1998).

Remarks	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998
Inland farmers and fishermen	9579	9923	10934	10204	10532	10921	11004	11630	10250	16661
Northern waters' fishermenn	11559	11330	11383	11772	11952	11610	7447	9864	11573	12515
Southern waters' fishermen	39633	42855	45872	60434	70729	74850	91397	86904	90358	92994
Total No. Of employees	60771	64108	69189	82410	93213	97381	111848	108398	112161	122170

Exports

In line with the government's economic policy to promote the exports of non-oil commodities, exports of fisheries products have received a prime importance. To meet the respective objectives, attempts are made to develop further marketing opportunities and processing industries so as to ensure the production of value-added products. Table 3 shows the details of fisheries exports.



Table 3: Value of Fisheries Exports (1989-I 998) \$1000

Products	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	2020
Caviar	40718	53211	52077	42004	31050	31863	39620	34530	33683	38360	57500
Sturgeon	2190	3335	3071	2807	1384	68v7	396	1384	1023.5	609	6000
Shrimp	6075	6600	5574	7800	7000	9000	3588	8664	8986	9567	14000
Canned products	NA	58	92	185	1000	225	90	-	365	-	-
Others	NA	414	544	2590	4372	10160.7	1157.1	4160.3	5658	3785	-
Total	48983	63618	61358	55386	44796	51935.7	44851.1	48738.3	49715.5	52321	

Development Plans

The Islamic Republic of Iran has passed its 1st 5- year development plan and is now on the verge of the 3rd one. One of the fruitful achievements of these plans to the fisheries industry has been the unprecedented participation of people, which has resulted in huge private investments in fisheries development. These plans have revolved around a number of key issues such as: resource exploitation, fish consumption, fish marketing, aquaculture, infrastructure development, research and training, and development of international and regional cooperations. The achievements in all these areas are promising.

Following the various initiatives, per capita consumption of fish has increased from 1Kg in 1987 to 4.6 Kg in 1998. On the other hand, exports of fishery products have always been followed up in line with the export policies of the government



Aquaculture is mainly concerned with farming four main species including sturgeon, cold and warm water fish species, and shrimp. Breakthrough occurred in this area is shown in Table 1.

Another key development area is the *infrastructure* establishment. In this area, Shilat has undertaken the construction of 26 fishing harbors with a projected handling capacity of 500000 Mt. by the end of the 2nd 5-year plan (1999). Furthermore, *research and training* are the key issues in fisheries development which center on stock-assessment, selective fishing methods, hydrology, fish processing, fish disease, and holding long and short-term training courses.

Last but not least, authorities have made comprehensive attempts to develop a *25-year long term development plan* for fisheries industry which intends to achieve specific targets in three main fisheries areas by 2020 as: increasing fish production, consumption, and exports.

Fisheries Society

Sustainable development of fisheries industry lies globally on the development of fisheries communities. Such *Nongovernmental organizations (NGOs)*, parallel to the public sector, participate in making fisheries policies and contribute to the materialization of a comprehensive development.