

Coronavirus response

EUMOFA's weekly data and trends analysis

Week 14

The fishery and aquaculture sectors are among the most immediately impacted by the crisis. EUMOFA is releasing a weekly COVID-19 bulletin in order to inform the sector as quickly as possible on the evolution of the markets along the entire value chain, based on the most recent data on first sales, production and trade of fishery and aquaculture products. The data and analyses proposed are accurate to EUMOFA experts best knowledge, but are of course subject to availability of information in the short-term and to intrinsic volatility of the current situation. Data and information provided do not aim to give complete coverage of the market, and so it is recommended to use them as a mere indication of ongoing trends.



FISHERIES

STILL LOW VOLUMES BUT DEMAND AND PRICES SHOW A POSITIVE TREND¹

The fishery sector is still struggling without the European HORECA market and limited airfreight capacity for exports. In general, lower landing volumes led to some positive trends in first sales prices in week 14 compared to the previous week, but overall the prices are lower than normal.

In **Spain**, during the first 3 weeks of containment (14th of March to 4th of April), [first sales in Galician auctions](#) decreased by 32% in volume and 64% in value, after a sharp drop of prices especially in the first week. In addition, the Spanish longliners targeting tuna, swordfish and shark have lost 90% of their outlet with the closure of the HORECA segment. Blue shark prices dropped by 34%, swordfish prices by 29%, shark prices by 54% and tuna prices by 44%. Fishermen's intention is to carry on fishing because wages have been paid in advance for the next fishing campaigns. [One important issue is the limited stocking capacity of fishermen, retailers and transformers lacking freezing capacities.](#)

In **France**, a share of small-scale fishing vessels continue to go out at sea for short fishing trips (few hours) with lower costs and the possibility to find direct/local outlets for their catch, but most offshore vessels still stay idle. However, the demand for fresh fish is improving in the retail sector and several species have already reached high prices due to low volumes landed.

¹ Weekly data on first-sale are conceived to be disseminated as rapidly as possible. For this reason, they only cover some representative products in a selection of locations in some countries. For more information on species, countries and locations covered, please see [here](#).

[FranceAgriMer data](#) on weekly auction sales (excluding the Mediterranean seaboard) show that for the 31 main species, the positive trend observed in week 13 was confirmed in week 14, although volumes were still very low compared to the same period last year (at around 20-30% of normal activity). However, some major commercial species have experienced strong price increases (+15% for Norway lobster, +18% for monkfish, +20% for whiting, +33% for rays and +23% for ling)

In **the Netherlands**, auction prices (first sale prices) increased from week 13 to week 14. In general, the increase in prices was a result of a rise in demand from both export and domestic markets before the Easter holidays. The positive price trend led to leniencies on the restrictions regarding sole fisheries in both week 14 and week 15. The limited peeling capacity in Morocco persists and brown shrimp fisheries remained closed in week 14. [In week 15, shrimp fisheries will be open for 72 hours starting Monday 10 am.](#)

In five auctions in **Denmark** (Hanstholm, Hirtshals, Strandby, Skagen and Grenaa), the unusual low volume on Monday 30th March was compensated by higher sales the rest of the week. Total volumes sold during week 14 were down by 19% from week 13, but up by 16% from week 12. The prices are still fluctuating from day to day, but the weekly average price in week 14 is up by around 10% compared to both week 12 and 13. However, due to the sharp drop of demand for Norway lobster at EU level, the [Danish Fishermen's Association](#) (DFPO) have recommended different limitations to fisheries for the period 3rd April to 19th April.



AQUACULTURE

TYPICAL FOODSERVICE SPECIES ARE STRUGGLING

In Galicia, the **mussel** sector has experienced a 77% turnover decrease in March 2020, mostly because of the closure of restaurants and the absence of alternative outlets. This has resulted in the [suspension of working contracts and part time work in bivalves' farms of Galicia.](#)

In wholesale markets of [Rungis](#) in France and [Rome](#) in Italy, farmed **seabass** and **seabream** prices were stable in week 14 compared to week 13.

In **Germany**, [the carp sector is developing take-away and home delivery services](#) to compensate for the loss of foodservice sector outlets, especially in view of the Easter holidays.

Market prices for **Scottish salmon** continue to decline. Industry sources address fall in market prices with practically [no demand in the foodservice segment.](#) Over the last few weeks, prices of Scottish salmon have followed those of **Norwegian salmon**. According to the [Nasdaq Salmon Index](#), spot prices of fresh whole salmon of Norwegian origin averaged 4,52 EUR/kg in week 14 – down 0,5% from week 13.



PROCESSING

RETAIL DEMAND FOR FROZEN, CANNED AND SMOKED PRODUCTS ON THE RISE

One of the main changes in the retail sector in many Member States has been the closure of fresh counters in large retail shops. In many Member States, fresh seafood in retail shops is now only available as pre-packed products.

For most processors selling to retailers the demand is reportedly strong (especially for canned, frozen and smoked fish) and the supply chains are now working well. For processors processing for other segments the situation seems the opposite.

The **salmon smoking industry** in **Poland** reports strong demand from large scale retailers in the period up to the Easter break and most companies are trying to produce at full capacity. In **France**, the smoking industry (mainly salmon) reports higher volatility in demand and the overall activity is estimated to be close to full capacity.

The **tuna canning industry** in **France** has no supply issues and is running close to its full capacity. The **Italian** food company Bolton Group reports an [increase in canned tuna sales](#) of up to 46,5% as a result of the outbreak.

For French processors specialized in the foodservice sector, loss in activity is estimated at -60%). The worst situation is experienced by the **shrimp** cooking sector as a significant share of companies is dependent on the foodservice sector. The loss in turnover is estimated at -70% compared to usual activity in this period.

According to Rabobank, the **shrimp** sector will be one of the hardest hit seafood sectors due to the strong drop of demand. Moreover, since many shrimp farmers were reluctant to re-stock their ponds, the price decline during the pandemic is likely to result in a steep rise if supply collapses in the second half of the year - provided the market returns to normal.

Important shrimp suppliers to the EU, **India and Ecuador**, are under strict lockdowns with negative effects on both production and trade. In Ecuador, the prices to farmers decreased to a level below production costs in week 14.



WHOLESALE

MORE STABILITY IN PRICES AND INCREASED EFFORTS TO SELL DIRECTLY TO END CONSUMERS

With the shutdown of the HORECA sector, there seems to be a general trend with many wholesalers trying to target consumers directly, either by opening shops to consumers or marketing their products through different online channels (including social media) and offering home-delivery. (e.g. in [Brittany, Nouvelle-Aquitaine and Occitanie regions in France](#), the website of the [Centro Agroalimentare di Roma](#) and in [Germany](#).)

In Spain, according to FEDEPESCA (10.000 fish shops and 25.000 workers in Spain), fishmongers' turnover has decreased by 30% on average and for some fish shops down to - 70%. One of the main factors is the closure of the hospitality industry, as it represented about 20% of the turnover of fishmongers. [Fishmongers are then developing online/by phone/Whatsapp sales and home delivery.](#)



TRADE AND LOGISTICS

AIRFREIGHT CAPACITY STILL A BARRIER BUT THERE IS INCREASING DEMAND FOR FRESH SEAFOOD PRODUCTS FROM CHINA

According to [Seabury Consulting](#), cargo capacity on the trade lanes between Europe and Africa and Europe and South America are around 60% lower in both directions compared with the previous year. Between Europe and Pacific Asia, the capacity is down by around 30%.

Reports from China state that both consumption markets and the processing industry is gradually opening and returning to "normal". Weekly trade data from Norway show an increase in export to China back to around the same level as the same period last year. The increase seen for Norwegian salmon on the Chinese market is also good news for EU seafood exporters targeting the Chinese market, as it indicates a step towards market recovery.



TRADE -EXTRA EU IMPORTS

WEEKLY DATA OBSERVATION²

In week 13 of 2020, both volume and value of extra-EU imports continued to decline. Compared with week 12, volume decreased by 2% and value by 9%.

Preservation of imported products	Variation week 13 vs week 11	Variation week 13 vs week 12
Fresh	-25%	-12%
Frozen	+25%	+11%
Prepared - Preserved	-22%	-15%

Imports of fresh products recorded the second lowest volume since the beginning of the year. They mainly regarded whole salmon and cod.

The volumes of imports of **prepared/preserved** (mainly miscellaneous shrimps) products were very close to that recorded in the same week of 2019: 5.718 tonnes in 2019 against 5.644 tonnes (-1%) in 2020.

EU imports of **frozen products** (mainly Alaska pollock fillets) in week 13 of 2020 totalled 25.044 tonnes, a 41%-increase compared with the same period of 2019.

Salmon: its value continued to show a downward trend with a 16%-decrease, linked with a decline in imported volumes from Norway (-5%). To be noted that also the import weekly price went down from 6,07 to 5,68 EUR/kg (-7%), despite NOK appreciation (+2%).

Cod: a significant drop both in value and volume was registered (-28% and -30%, respectively). The decreases involved all of the main countries of origin, especially Norway (-29%), Russia (-49%) and China (-80%).

Skipjack tuna: it recorded the most significant downward trend of the week: its value dropped by 36%, while its volume by 21%. To be noted that the import weekly price went down from 3,73 to 3,05 EUR/kg (-18%), despite USD appreciation (+3%).

Alaska pollock: volumes and values increased significantly (+ 30% and +34%, respectively), due to increasing imports from China, linked with CNY appreciation (+3%).

As regards currencies of top suppliers, between 22nd and 29th of March:

- EUR depreciated against USD (-3%), NOK (-2%), CNY (-3%), and GBP (-1%)
- EUR appreciated against ISK (+1%).

To learn more about the situation on the market, [you can access most recent weekly data \(up to week 13 of 2020\) for extra EU imports in Europe.](#)

² This analysis is based on weekly import data for a selection of 135 couples of CN-8 products and country of origin collected from the EU Commission – DG TAXUD. The complete list of products can be found here: https://eumofa.eu/documents/20178/24415/Metadata+1+--+DC+--+Annex+1_selected+products.pdf/e6f4d2ef-f1f0-418d-94e4-c98fc623ad14

For any question or comment, do not hesitate to contact EUMOFA (contact-us@eumofa.eu).

ABOUT [EUMOFA](#)

The European Market Observatory for fisheries and aquaculture (EUMOFA) is a market intelligence tool on the European Union fisheries and aquaculture sector, developed by the European Commission. It aims to increase market transparency and efficiency, analyses EU markets dynamics, and supports business decisions and policy-making. EUMOFA enables direct monitoring of volumes, values and prices of fisheries and aquaculture products, from the first sale to retail stage, including imports and exports. Data are collected from EU countries, Iceland, Norway, United Kingdom and from EU institutions and updated every day.