

20-FISHERIES

There are three types of commercial fisheries in New Caledonia : lagoon fishing, coastal fishing, and open sea fishing.

- **Lagoon fishing**, within the lagoon waters, is undertaken aboard small vessels. Catches include fish species, crustaceans (crab, crayfish), shell fish (in particular **troca**) and **sea cucumber**. Scallops have not been harvested since 1999 when the Sodexo company ceased all activities. Products from these small-scale fishing operations are sold on both local (fish and crustaceans) and export markets for sea cucumbers and troca shell. Dried sea cucumber annual export tonnage rarely exceeds 100 tonnes, with these products going mainly to Asian countries. With regard to troca shell, an average 70 tonnes are sold each year, almost exclusively to Italy (and more recently to Japan, Vietnam, and Madagascar).

- **Coastal fishing** occurs outside the lagoon to 12 miles out from the reef, aboard multipurpose vessels exploiting the resources on the outer reef slope to catch deep and open sea species in territorial waters. The entire catch is sold on the domestic market.

- **Deep sea or open sea fishing** occurs in the EEZ, aboard long liner vessels targeting tuna species, marlin, mako sharks and swordfish.

Lastly, recreational and self-sufficiency fishing, although difficult to quantify, is estimated at 3 500 tonnes per year, and is mainly done inside the lagoon.

Commercial fishing vessels must have a **navigation licence**, a **commercial fisheries permit** and a **crew roll** ; those fishing in the EEZ must have a **fishing licence**. Seamen are trained at the **Sea trades school**.

- ▶ **Trocas**. Shell fish used in the manufacture of buttons and jewellery.

- ▶ **Sea cucumber**. Also known as holothurians, sea cucumbers are echinoderms, long in shape like a cucumber, with skin rich in proteins and minerals salts. They are boiled, eviscerated, then their tegument ("skin") is either sun-dried, smoked or both, prior to sale.

- ▶ **Open sea fishing**. See 20.2, **EEZ**. See 2.1.

- ▶ **Navigation licence**. Any vessel fitted out for commercial fishing must have a navigation licence, issued upon inspection by the Maritime affairs department ; the licence is an authorisation to navigate.

- ▶ **Commercial fisheries permit**. Authorisation issued by the province allowing a vessel to be operated for commercial purposes. See 20.2.

- ▶ **Crew roll**. Declaration of crew members embarking on fishing vessels, lodged with SMMPM.

- ▶ **Fishing licence**. Free and compulsory authorisation issued by the government (deliberation n°237 dated August 1, 2001 relative to the implementation of fisheries policy in New Caledonia), to vessels wishing to operate in the EEZ.

- ▶ **Sea trades school**. Established in 1991, it provides initial training for merchant navy certificates, as well as ongoing vocational training in the maritime sector.

SOURCES

[1] Direction des Technologies et des Services de l'Information (DTSI), disponible sur : www.affmar.gouv.nc

[2] Service de la Marine Marchande et des Pêches Maritimes (SMMPM), données statistiques sur la pêche.

Service de la Marine Marchande et des Pêches Maritimes (SMMPM), *Mémento sur la réglementation des pêches maritimes*, juin 2006.

Délibération n°237 du 1^{er} août 2001 relative à l'instauration d'une politique des pêches en Nouvelle-Calédonie, JONC n°7567 du 21 août 2001, Imprimerie Administrative, Nouméa.

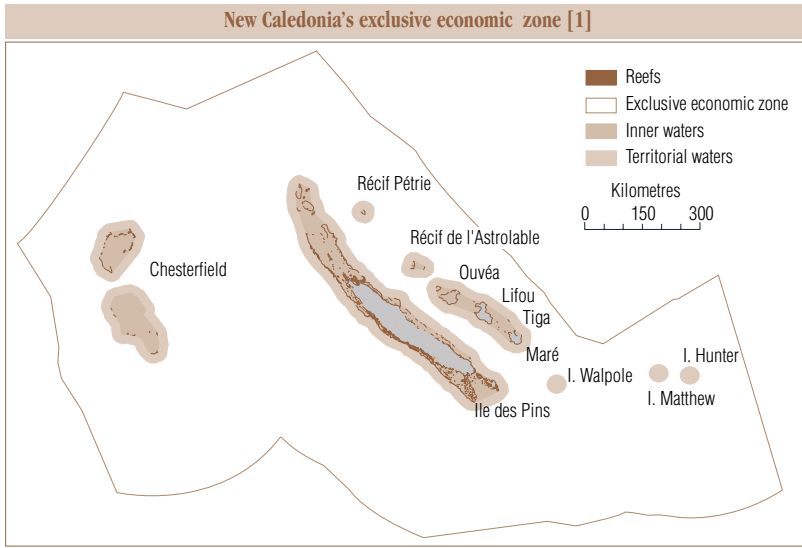
SEE ALSO

Service des Affaires maritimes, de la Marine Marchande et des Pêches Maritimes : www.affmar.gouv.nc

Secrétariat général de la Communauté du Pacifique (CPS), division des ressources marines : www.spc.int

École des Métiers de la Mer : www.emm.nc

ZONECO : www.zoneco.nc



Commercial fisheries organisation [2]

	Fishing area	Technique used	Campaign duration	Vessel characteristics	Catch species	Markets
Open sea fishing	EEZ	Long line	1 - 2 weeks	Vessels 16 to 29m, fresh fish,	Tuna and associated species	50% export, 50% local market
Coastal fishing	Outside the lagoon, up to 12 miles out from the reef	Dragnet, long line, reel, fishing around DCP (a)...	1 day - 1 week	Multipurpose vessels, gross register average 16 tonnes	Deep sea and coastal open sea species	Local market
Lagoon fishing	Inside the lagoon, out as far as and including the reef	Net, dragnet, trawling...	1 day	Less than 10m; outboard motor driven	Spangled emperor, pink eared emperor, mullet, troca, sea cucumber...	Local market, except for troca and sea cucumber exports

(a) Fish Concentrations.

Commercial and open sea fishing vessels [2]

	Vessels		Average register tonnage		Average power rating	
	2004	2005	2004	2005	2004	2005
Lagoon fishing	191	182	2.7	2.8	77.9	84.5
Coastal fishing	9	8	18.0	16.3	252.2	250.0
Open sea fishing	30	26	75.7	76.7	427.3	432.9
Total	230	216	32.1	31.9	252.5	255.8

Units : number, tonnage, hp

Vessels and crews* by province [2]

	Seamen		Vessel	
	2004	2005	2004	2005
Lagoon and coastal fishing	440	379	201	191
Southern province	190	165	95	75
Northern province	202	128	95	78
Loyalty islands province	48	86	11	38
Open sea fishing	162	162	29	25
Southern province	102	102	19	16
Northern province	60	60	10	9
Total	602	541	230	216

* Any person having been to sea at least one day in the year.

Unit : number

Catch volumes* [2]

	1990	1995	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Coastal fishing	23	60	41	32	23	20	19	na
Deep water species	14	38	35	26	18	17	12	na
Tuna and associated species	9	22	6	6	5	3	7	na
Lagoon fishing	2 495	1 313	1 467	1 402	1 049	1 295	1 249	na
Fish	852	522	713	691	498	489	281	na
Crustaceans	35	23	36	23	17	13	28	na
Shell fish	135	38	7	9	6	7	9	na
Sea cucumber (fresh weight)	1 294	480	615	489	450	687	811	510
Troca shells	179	250	96	190	78	99	120	153
Open sea fishing	1 459	1 420	1 987	2 064	2 211	2 466	2 618	2 474
Albacore tuna	na	332	895	1 020	1 165	1 111	1 469	1 592
Yellow fin tuna	na	750	250	570	572	754	631	448
Bigeye tuna	na	92	517	128	189	142	90	76
Others	na	246	325	346	285	459	428	358
Self-sufficiency and recreational fishing (estimate)	2 000	2 500	3 500	3 500	3 500	3 500	3 500	3 500
Total	5 977	5 293	6 995	6 998	6 783	7 281	7 386	na

* Excluding Loyalty islands province, with a declaration rate for fisherman of less than 50%.

Unit : tonne

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The story of open sea fishing in New Caledonia began in the 1960s, when Japanese, Taiwanese and Korean long liners fished off the coast of New Caledonia. Subject to fisheries agreements from 1978 onwards (establishment of the EEZ), these operations slowed significantly in the latter half of the 1990s and ceased permanently from 2001. The local **long liner** fleet began developing from the 1980s, but it was not until after 2000 that a significant increase was seen, with fisheries capacity doubling in the space of 5 years. The open sea fishing industry, which generates approximately 230 direct jobs and turnover in the vicinity of 7.5 million Euros, of which 40% exports, remains extremely fragile, given its dependence on natural variations and the international economic situation. Open sea fishing nonetheless offers significant development potential, with its high value product that generates much employment both on land and at sea. The major problem confronting the industry is an under-utilised fleet, with less than two thirds of vessels regularly landing fish.

Since 2003, an observatory responsible for socio-economic surveillance of New Caledonia's open sea fishing industry has operated within the **Merchant navy and maritime fisheries department**, itself responsible for implementation of fisheries policy as defined by the government of New Caledonia.

Species targeted by this fishery are :

- Albacore tuna (*thunnus alalunga*), sold on the local market or shipped in freezer cargo to the canneries in Samoa.
- Yellow fin tuna (*thunnus albacares*), partly sold on the local market, or for the premium sushi quality catch, shipped fresh to the Japanese market, and sometimes frozen.
- Bigeye tuna or bachi tuna (*thunnus obesus*) : sold partly on the local market, it is the rarest of species, the best seller in Japan, air freight exported as fresh product.
- Other species : marlin, swordfish, mako...

► **Long liners.** The long line comprises a master line several kilometres long, to which are attached lines (called "avaçons") booked and baited with sardine, herring or octopus. In New Caledonia, a tuna long line carries between 1 600 and 2 000 hooks, being about 30 hooks set between 60 buoys. It takes a tuna boat 3 to 4 hours to deploy the long line, which is left to drift for approximately four hours, then hauled in.

► **Department of maritime affairs, merchant navy, and fisheries.** Combined State (Maritime affairs) and New Caledonian (SMMPM : Merchant navy and maritime fisheries department) authority, answering to both the High Commissioner for the Republic (Ministry of Transport, Infrastructure, Tourism and the Sea, and Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries) and the government of New Caledonia. Given the powers allocated under the organic law, authority in terms of marine resources and fisheries is exercised at several levels.

- The State exercises authority resulting from international conventions, and is responsible for the safety of vessels and seamen (article 21 of the organic law).
- New Caledonia is responsible for legislation and exercise of exploration rights, exploitation management and preservation of biological and non-biological natural resources in the EEZ (article 22). In this role it awards fishing licences (See 20.1).
- The Provinces are responsible for legislation and exercise of exploration rights, exploitation management and preservation of biological and non-biological natural resources in inner waters, including those in bays and harbours, their ground and underground ; the underground and overlying waters of the territorial sea (articles 45 and 46). As part of their powers in terms of economic development, the provinces award commercial fishing permits (see 20.1).

SOURCES

[1] Service de la Marine Marchande et des Pêches Maritimes (SMMPM), données statistiques sur la pêche.

[2] Service de la Marine Marchande et des Pêches Maritimes (SMMPM), *La commercialisation des poissons hauturiers dans le grand Nouméa*, octobre 2004.

[3] Direction Régionale des Douanes de Nouvelle-Calédonie (DRDNC), statistiques relatives aux exportations.

Service de la Marine Marchande et des Pêches Maritimes (SMMPM), *Le secteur de la pêche hauturière en Nouvelle-Calédonie*, octobre 2002.

Service de la Marine Marchande et des Pêches Maritimes (SMMPM), *La filière hauturière en 2004*.

Service de la Marine Marchande et des Pêches Maritimes (SMMPM), *Le secteur de la pêche hauturière en Nouvelle-Calédonie, situation actuelle et perspectives*, année 2001.

SEE ALSO

ZONECO : www.zoneco.nc

Service des Affaires Maritimes, de la Marine Marchande et des Pêches Maritimes : www.affmar.gouv.nc

École des Métiers de la Mer : www.emm.nc

Secrétariat général de la Communauté du Pacifique (CPS), division des ressources marines : www.spc.int

20.2 OPEN SEA FISHING

Long liner activity [1]

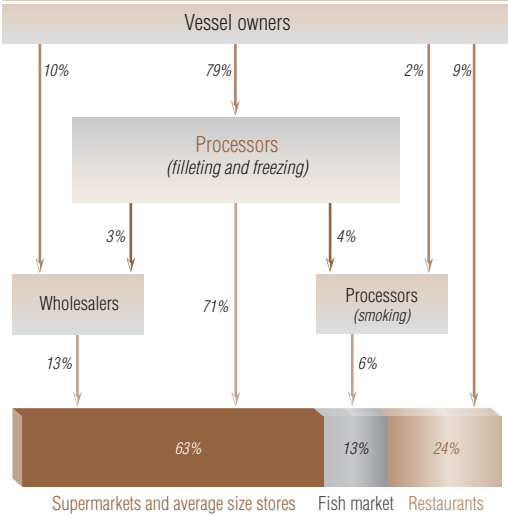
	2003	2004	2005
Licences issued	29	29	27
Licensed vessels not used	2	2	4
Vessels having landed fish during 3 months or less	4	2	2
Vessels having landed fish between 4 and 8 months	1	6	4
Vessels having landed fish during 9 months or more	22	19	17

Unit : number

Long liner deployment [1]

	2003	2004	2005
Number of tides ended	506	507	407
Number of days at sea	5 224	5 096	4 108
Days at sea/total days (%)	51	52	49
Number of days fishing	3 386	3 399	2 836
Days fishing/ total days (%)	33	34	34
Thousands of hooks used	6 236	6 029	4 959

Marketing of open sea fish in Greater Nouméa [2]

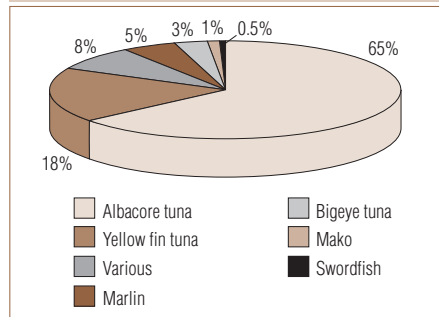


Average production by operating vessel [1]

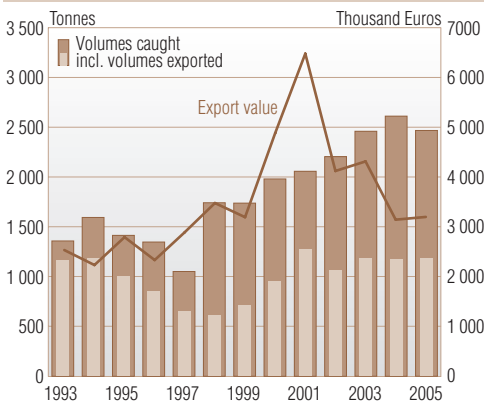
	2003	2004	2005
Albacore tuna	40	54	69
Yellow fin tuna	27	23	19
Bigeye tuna	5	3	3
Marlin	4	4	5
Swordfish	1	1	1
Mako	1	1	1
Various	10	9	9
Total	88	95	108

Unit : tonne

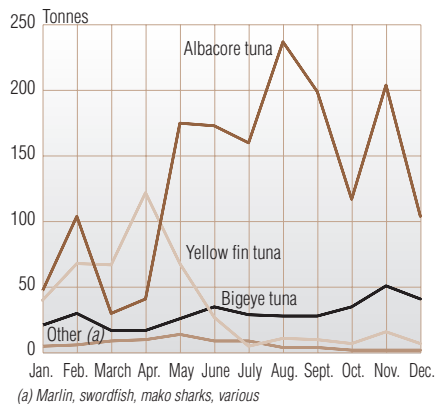
Species fished in 2005 [1]



Catch and exports from open sea vessels [1 and 3]



Monthly catches by species in 2005 [1]



(a) Marlin, swordfish, mako sharks, various