



Australian Government  
Department of Agriculture,  
Water and the Environment  
ABARES

# Australian fisheries and aquaculture statistics 2020

Research by the Australian Bureau of Agricultural and Resource Economics and Sciences

Australian fisheries and aquaculture statistics

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August 2021



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### Note

Commercial fish and invertebrates are referred to in this report by the names specified in Australian Fish Names Standard AS 5300-2019. For more information please see the [About this report](#) on the ABARES website.

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# 1) At a glance

## Snapshot of Australian fisheries and aquaculture

**\$3.15b**

↓ 2%  
in 2019–20



### Production

Production value decreased largely resulting from reduced production of Rock Lobster (due to the COVID-19 outbreak restricting export demand and limiting alternative markets) and reduced production of several wild-caught species in state and territory fisheries.

**\$1.41b**

↓ 8%  
in 2019–20



### Exports

Export value decreased as a result of reduced demand for Rock Lobsters during Chinese Lunar New Year that coincided with the initial outbreak of COVID-19.

**\$2.20b**

↓ 4%  
in 2019–20



### Imports

Reduced imports was driven by a reduction in Crustaceans and Molluscs imports following subdued demand conditions as a result of COVID-19 related lock downs.

**335kt**

of seafood  
was consumed  
in 2019–20



### Consumption

Apparent seafood consumption decreased in 2019–20. Imports accounted for 62% of consumption, a decrease from previous years.

**17,000**

people employed  
in 2019–20



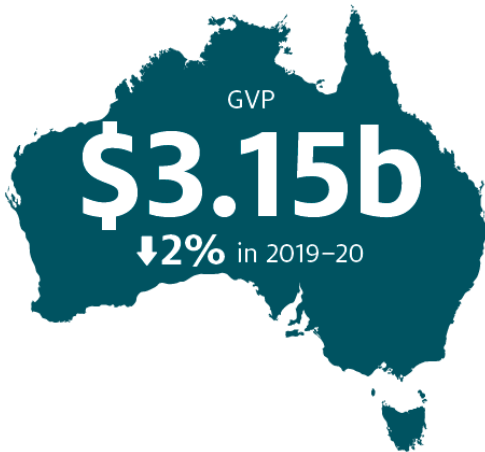
### Employment

10,000 people were employed in wild-catch fisheries and 7,000 people were employed in aquaculture.

Note: 2019–20 figures are preliminary. Source: ABS, ABARES

## 2) Australian fisheries and aquaculture production

### Australia

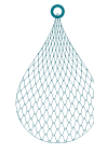


#### Australian fisheries and aquaculture production



**Aquaculture GVP increased by 10% to \$1.60 billion**, accounting for 51% of total GVP

**Aquaculture volume increased by 11% to 106,139 tonnes**, accounting for 38% of total volume



**Wild-catch GVP decreased by 12% to \$1.58 billion**, accounting for 49% of total GVP

**Wild-catch volume increased by 0.3% to 179,261 tonnes**, accounting for 62% of total volume

Note: 2019–20 figures are preliminary. Wild-catch and aquaculture figures may not sum to total GVP and volume presented due to rounding and adjustment for Southern Bluefin Tuna caught in the Commonwealth Southern Bluefin Tuna Fishery as an input to farms in South Australia.  
Source: ABARES

### New South Wales



Note: 2019–20 figures are preliminary.  
Source: ABARES

#### Key species



Prawns (wild-catch)



Eastern Rock Lobster (wild-catch)



Oysters (aquaculture)

	2018–19		2019–20p	
	Value (\$m)	Volume (t)	Value (\$m)	Volume (t)
Wild-catch	106	12,451	105	11,642
Aquaculture	76.0	4,694	84.6	4,827
<b>Total</b>	<b>182</b>	<b>17,145</b>	<b>189</b>	<b>16,469</b>



## Victoria



Note: 2019–20 figures are preliminary.  
Source: ABARES

### Key species



Abalone  
(wild-catch and  
aquaculture)



Southern Rock Lobster  
(wild-catch)



Barramundi  
(aquaculture)

	2018–19		2019–20p	
	Value (\$m)	Volume (t)	Value (\$m)	Volume (t)
Wild-catch	71.6	4,222	62.3	2,928
Aquaculture	59.6	3,327	59.7	3,016
<b>Total</b>	<b>131</b>	<b>7,549</b>	<b>122</b>	<b>5,943</b>

## Queensland



Note: 2019–20 figures are preliminary.  
Source: ABARES

### Key species



Prawns  
(wild-catch and  
aquaculture)



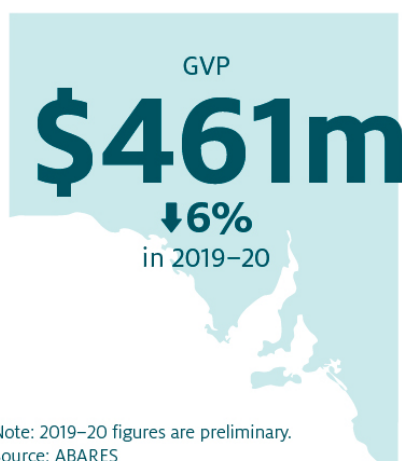
Coral Trouts  
(wild-catch)



Barramundi  
(wild-catch and  
aquaculture)

	2018–19		2019–20p	
	Value (\$m)	Volume (t)	Value (\$m)	Volume (t)
Wild-catch	159	17,425	155	16,927
Aquaculture	115	7,941	161	9,573
<b>Total</b>	<b>273</b>	<b>25,365</b>	<b>317</b>	<b>26,500</b>

## South Australia



Note: 2019–20 figures are preliminary.  
Source: ABARES

### Key species



Southern Rock Lobster  
(wild-catch)



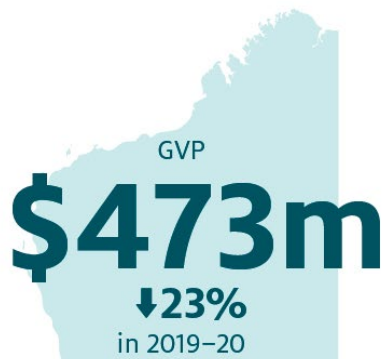
Southern Bluefin Tuna  
(aquaculture)



Prawns  
(wild-catch)

	2018–19		2019–20p	
	Value (\$m)	Volume (t)	Value (\$m)	Volume (t)
Wild-catch	277	49,145	232	48,422
Aquaculture	212	16,070	229	17,472
<b>Total</b>	<b>488</b>	<b>65,216</b>	<b>461</b>	<b>65,894</b>

## Western Australia



Note: 2019–20 figures are preliminary.  
Source: ABARES

### Key species



	2018–19		2019–20p	
	Value (\$m)	Volume (t)	Value (\$m)	Volume (t)
Wild-catch	519	20,421	388	20,031
Aquaculture	91.8	2,508	84.7	1,732
<b>Total</b>	<b>610</b>	<b>22,929</b>	<b>473</b>	<b>21,763</b>

## Tasmania



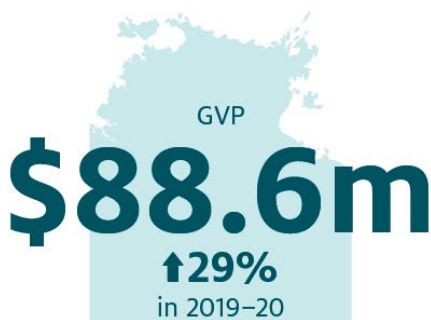
Note: 2019–20 figures are preliminary.  
Source: ABARES

### Key species



	2018–19		2019–20p	
	Value (\$m)	Volume (t)	Value (\$m)	Volume (t)
Wild-catch	187	15,733	160	12,803
Aquaculture	866	61,014	931	69,519
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,053</b>	<b>76,747</b>	<b>1,091</b>	<b>82,322</b>

## Northern Territory



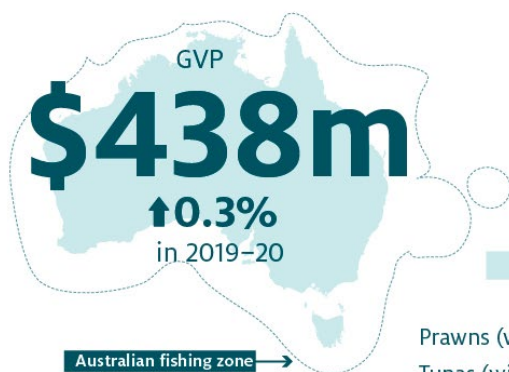
Note: na not available. 2019–20 figures are preliminary.  
Source: ABARES

### Key species



	2018–19		2019–20p	
	Value (\$m)	Volume (t)	Value (\$m)	Volume (t)
Wild-catch	38.5	5,926	40.5	5,857
Aquaculture	30.0	na	48.1	na
<b>Total</b>	<b>68.5</b>	<b>5,926</b>	<b>88.6</b>	<b>5,857</b>

## Commonwealth fisheries



Note: 2019–20 figures are preliminary.  
 Source: ABARES

### Key species



Sharks and Rays  
 (wild-catch)



Finfish  
 (wild-catch)



Prawns  
 (wild-catch)

	2018–19		2019–20p	
	Value (\$m)	Volume (t)	Value (\$m)	Volume (t)
Prawns (wild-catch)	126	8,691	86.6	6,153
Tunas (wild-catch)	66.5	9,125	72.7	8,692
Other species	245	35,584	279	45,807
<b>Total</b>	<b>437</b>	<b>53,400</b>	<b>438</b>	<b>60,652</b>










## Exports

### EXPORTS

#### Major export markets

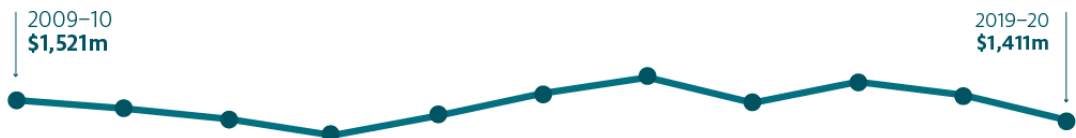
		2018–19	2019–20p
	China	\$889m	\$770m
	Japan	\$213m	\$215m
	Hong Kong	\$175m	\$136m
	United States	\$55.1m	\$70.5m
	Singapore	\$43.3m	\$40.8m

#### Key product groups



	2018–19	2019–20p
Rock Lobsters	\$752m	\$543m
Tunas	\$152m	\$165m
Salmonids	\$118m	\$191m
Other product groups	\$508m	\$511m
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$1.53b</b>	<b>\$1.41b</b>

#### Value of exports



Note: Graphs are presented in \$2019–20 dollars. All other values are presented in nominal dollars. Totals may not add due to rounding. **m** million. **b** billion.  
Source: ABS

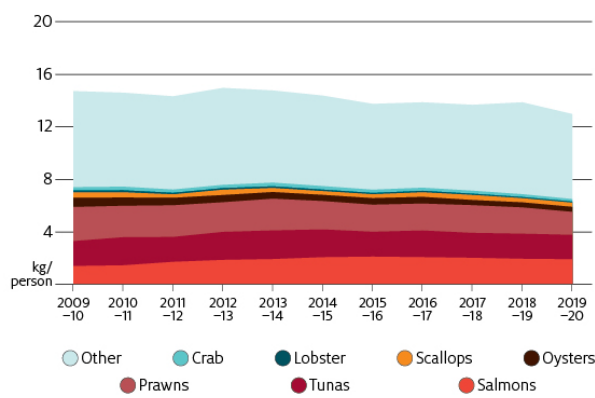
# 4) Seafood consumption in Australia

Total apparent consumption of seafood in Australia was  
**335kt**  
 in 2019-20

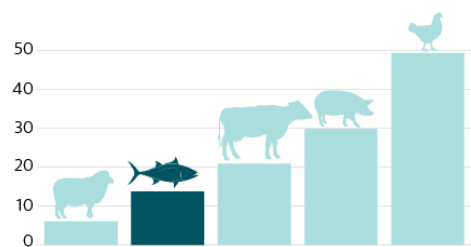
Import share of consumption



Consumption per person (kg) by commodity



Apparent consumption (kg), per person, 2019-20



Source: ABARES

## Total apparent consumption of seafood in Australia

**Table 1 Apparent consumption of seafood, Australia, 1998–99 to 2019–20**

Year	Total apparent consumption (tonnes)	Apparent consumption (kg per person)	Import share of consumption (%)
1998–99	238,968	12.7	55.4
1999–2000	240,150	12.6	57.9
2000–01	247,194	12.8	58.1
2001–02	247,797	12.7	58.9
2002–03	273,533	13.9	60.1
2003–04	308,691	15.5	60.8
2004–05	302,105	15.0	61.6
2005–06	296,784	14.5	63.5
2006–07	311,595	15.0	63.7
2007–08	312,991	14.7	63.3
2008–09	303,470	14.0	63.7
2009–10	322,735	14.6	64.3
2010–11	324,077	14.5	65.3
2011–12	324,506	14.3	66.0
2012–13	345,383	14.9	66.1
2013–14	346,311	14.8	68.6
2014–15	342,096	14.4	66.5
2015–16	332,277	13.7	67.0
2016–17	340,864	13.9	66.4
2017–18	341,272	13.7	64.9
2018–19	351,914	13.5	62.9
2019–20	334,615	12.4	61.9

Source: ABARES

# 5) Employment in Australian fisheries and aquaculture 2019–20

## Latest employment estimates

In 2019–20...



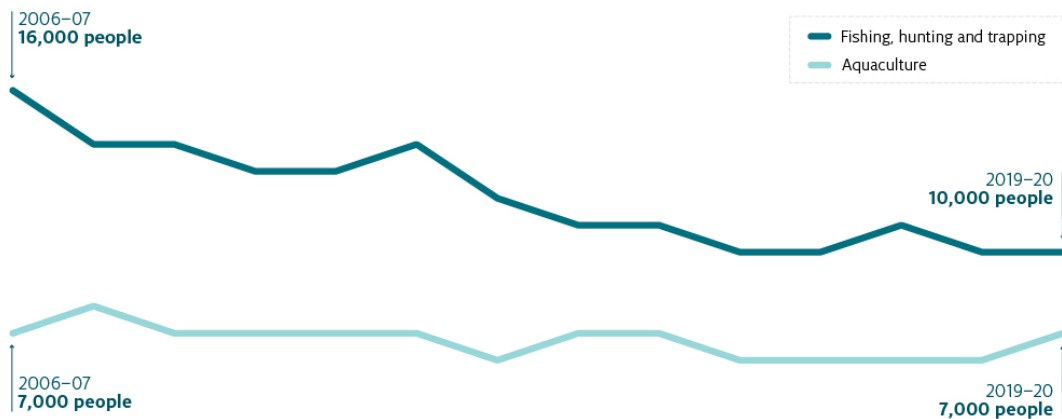
...of the 17,000 people employed in the fishing, hunting and trapping sector and the aquaculture sector combined, the fishing, hunting and trapping sector employed **10,000 people**.



...of the 17,000 people employed in the fishing, hunting and trapping sector and the aquaculture sector combined, the aquaculture sector employed **7,000 people**.

Source: ABARES

### Employment in fishing, hunting and trapping and aquaculture sectors



Source: ABARES

Notes: Data represent estimates derived using a combination of data collected by the ABS and business tax data sourced from the Australian Tax Office. Data do not include Finfish and seafood wholesaling and processing. 'Fishing, hunting and trapping' includes the industries: Rock Lobster and Crab potting; Prawn fishing, line fishing; fish trawling, seining and netting; fishing, hunting and trapping; other fishing. 'Aquaculture' includes the industries: offshore longline and rack aquaculture; offshore caged aquaculture; onshore aquaculture; other aquaculture.

Source: ABS (2021); ABARES.



## Estimates from Census 2016

TABLE 2 Estimated employment in the Australian commercial fishing and aquaculture industry, 2016 <sup>a</sup>

Category	NSW	Vic.	Qld	SA	WA	Tas.	NT	ACT	Aust. <sup>b</sup>
	(no.)	(no.)	(no.)	(no.)	(no.)	(no.)	(no.)	(no.)	(no.)
Aquaculture	84	142	118	156	92	139	8	0	737
Onshore aquaculture	106	104	334	152	74	120	17	0	913
Offshore longline and rack aquaculture	453	19	103	220	77	532	3	0	1,406
Offshore caged aquaculture	32	29	11	40	11	794	0	0	912
Rock lobster and crab potting	42	66	81	189	544	164	12	0	1,106
Prawn fishing	64	0	167	76	61	0	14	0	392
Line fishing	6	7	12	18	4	3	0	0	58
Fish trawling, seining and netting	11	11	28	22	3	0	0	0	80
Fishing, hunting and trapping	260	196	276	89	99	45	18	7	997
Other fishing	673	299	710	574	380	316	173	0	3,144
<b>Fishing and aquaculture total</b>	<b>1,731</b>	<b>873</b>	<b>1,840</b>	<b>1,536</b>	<b>1,345</b>	<b>2,113</b>	<b>245</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>9,745</b>
Seafood processing	202	173	221	321	266	349	5	0	1,536
Fish and seafood wholesaling	668	625	604	191	258	109	16	7	2,477
Processing and wholesaling total	870	798	825	512	524	458	21	7	4,013
<b>Grand total</b>	<b>2,606</b>	<b>1,667</b>	<b>2,668</b>	<b>2,047</b>	<b>1,875</b>	<b>2,586</b>	<b>282</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>13,755</b>

<sup>a</sup> Industries are consistent with the Australian and New Zealand Standard Industrial Classification (ANZSIC) 2006 (Trewin and Pink 2006).

<sup>b</sup> Total national employment in commercial fishing and aquaculture industries includes a small number of persons employed in external territories of Australia. Total national employment may be different from combined state and territory employment because the ABS randomly adjusts some small values published in the Census of Population and Housing to avoid release of confidential data.

Source: ABS (2016).

## 6) Additional information and resources

For more information and compendium products related to this edition of Australian fisheries and aquaculture statistics please visit the ABARES fisheries and aquaculture statistics web page. Alternatively, follow the links listed below.

### Compendium data for this report

- [Australian fisheries and aquaculture statistics 2020](#)

### About this report

- [Broad areas covered](#)
- [Rounding](#)
- [Species notes](#)
- [Applying the Australian Fish Names Standard](#)

### Economic concepts used in this report

- [Fisheries gross value of production \(GVP\)](#)
- [Measurement of fisheries trade products](#)
- [Difference between real and nominal values](#)
- [Calculating apparent seafood consumption](#)
- [Economic geography in Australian fisheries and aquaculture statistics](#)

### Other useful information

- [Glossary](#)
- [Acronyms and units](#)
- [Fish name concordance](#)

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