

Marine Exports Volume

November 2016

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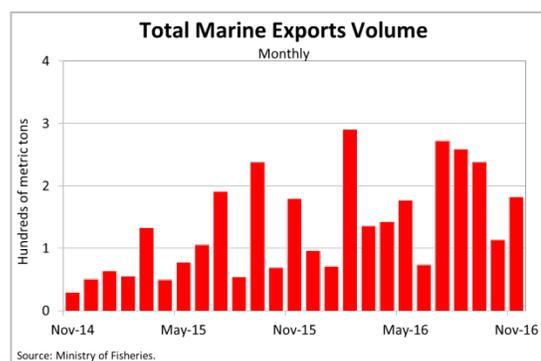
	Nov 16	Oct 16	Sep 16	Aug 16
Total Volume (metric tons)	182.4	113.3	238.2	259.2
Tuna	156.8	102.5	219.5	235.5
Snapper	15.67	7.29	13.4	12.6
Other	9.9	3.5	5.4	11.1
Aquarium Products (pieces)	10,480	6,350	9,614	6,893

Note: Numbers may not add up to the total volume due to rounding error.

Marine exports picked up after a low month

Marine exports

Following October when marine products¹ declined, exports in November 2016 increased by 69.1 tonnes (61.0%). There were only four marine products exported during the month. The exports of tuna remained the highest, which rose over the month by 54.3 metric tons (53.0%), followed by an increase in snapper and



shark meat by 8.4 metric tons (115.0%) and 2.5 metric tons (72.2%) respectively. In November 2016, snapper recorded its highest exported volume of 15.7 metric tons compared to previous months of 2016. Additionally, after months of low to nil seaweed exports, November 2016 recorded the second highest volume of 4.0 metric tons exported seaweed compared to 16.8 metric tons in March 2016.

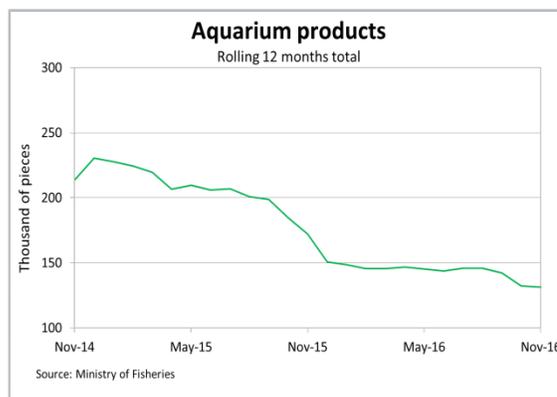
High exports of tuna, snapper, and shark meat during the year to November 2016, contributed to the annual growth of 786.1 metric tons (62.1%) in total marine exports. Tuna exports was the largest contributor to the annual growth, which increased by

¹ Excluded aquarium products

768.1 metric tons (70.8%). This was followed by snapper and shark meat which increased by 28.1 metric tons (33.0%) and 16.9 metric tons (35.5%) respectively.

Aquarium exports

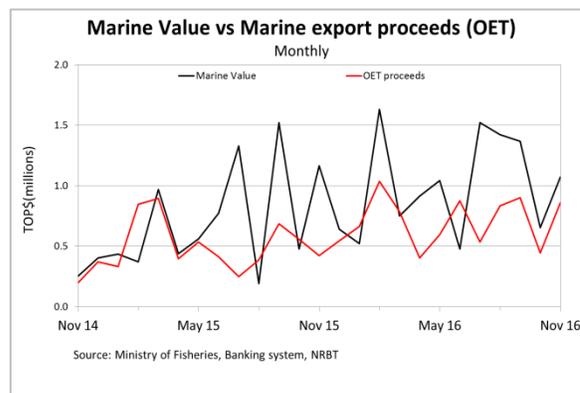
Total aquarium exports rose significantly over the month by 4,130 pieces (65.0%) due to an increase in all exported categories of the aquarium group. Exports of invertebrate increased the most by 1,913 pieces (61.9%), followed by live hard coral with 1,391 pieces (89.3%). Exports of soft coral, shell fish, and live fish also rose by 385 pieces (35.3%), 271 pieces (169.4%), and 170 pieces (37.9%) respectively. This is the first time for the Ministry of Fisheries to report exported 5,209 pieces of live clams with an estimated value of \$0.5 million.



On the contrary, total exported volume of aquarium products fell over the year by 40,754 pieces (23.7%). This was driven by lower exports of invertebrate which fell by 37,387 pieces, live fish declined by 8,409 pieces, and shellfish decreased by 2,696 pieces. On the other hand, exports of soft coral increased by 5,878 pieces and live hard coral rose by (1,860 pieces) rose over the year.

Exports Proceeds

The Ministry of Fisheries estimated the total value of the marine exports² proceeds to be \$1.1 million in November 2016. However, \$0.9 million was reported by the banking system for export of fisheries and other marine products. The proceeds for the month were \$0.4 million (93.4%) more than that of October which is in line with the increased volume and pieces of total marine exports.



² Both marine and aquarium products

Over the year, the 62.1% growth in total marine exports coincided with a \$2.4 million (39.1%) rise in the total proceeds received. The strengthening of the US dollar and the Japanese Yen against the Tongan pa'anga supported the higher export receipts during the year, as the main export countries are the US, Japan and Hawaii. According to the liaison with individuals involved in the sector, the weather conditions during the year and the increased number of fishing vessels supported by the Government Development loan scheme maintained the annual growth.

Outlook

The National Reserve Bank of Tonga (NRBT) continues to expect the fisheries sector will grow, with tuna exports being the main contributor. The Ministry of Fisheries' plans to expand the pearl industry, and new markets available for seaweed exports in the coming year would contribute to the expected 5.3% growth in the fisheries sector for 2016/17. This is supported by the first Fisheries Sector Plan that the Ministry of Fisheries is determined to implement. In November 2016, the Ministry conducted a 2 day workshop, taking the first steps to implementing this plan. The key focal points included in this plan are to develop the Special Management Areas program, particularly on coastal and commercial fisheries and also the economic development of commercial fisheries and aquaculture. This sector also continues to benefit from the consumption tax and custom duty exemptions on oil and fishing gear, as well as the Fisheries Development and Export Fund (FDEF) initiatives by the Government through its Government Development Loans, which is facilitated by the Tonga Development Bank.

	Marine Export Volumes				Year-ended		Share of total Sample ave.
	Nov 16	Oct 16	Sep 16	Aug 16	Nov 16	Nov 15	
Total Marine Products (in metric tons)	182.4	113.3	237.4	259.2	2,050.9	1,266.5	100.0
Shark Meat	5.9	3.4	5.4	11.1	64.5	47.6	3.1
Snapper	15.67	7.29	12.6	12.6	111.6	85.2	5.4
Tuna	156.8	102.5	219.5	235.5	1,853.7	1,085.5	90.4
Others	4.0	0.1	0.0	-	21.0	48.2	1.0
Total Aquarium Products (in pieces)	10,480	6,350	8,049	4,380	124,071	172,239	100.0
Livefish	619	449	1,116	427	9,380	18,677	7.6
Invertebrate	5,005	3,092	4,256	2,125	69,261	108,960	55.8
Live Hard Coral	2,949	1,558	1,551	800	25,598	26,382	20.6
Shellfish	431	160	-	40	2,652	5,688	2.1
Soft Coral	1,476	1,091	1,126	988	17,180	12,532	13.8

Source: Ministry of Fisheries