

Marine Exports Volume

September 2017

Release date: 27 December 2017

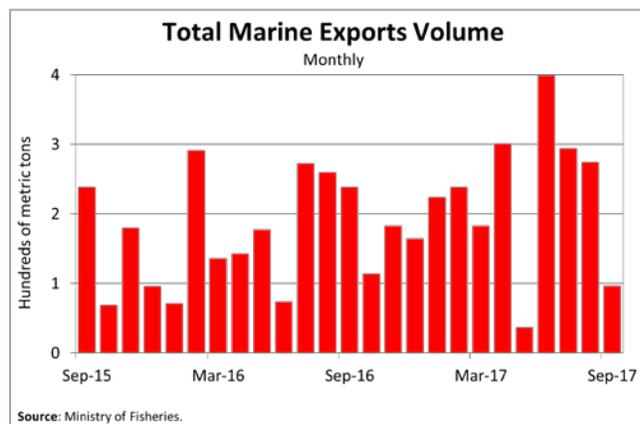
	Sep 17	Aug 17	Jul 17	Jun 17
Total Volume (metric tons)	96.5	274.0	293.9	398.5
Tuna	70.2	254.2	279.9	378.7
Snapper	6.2	9.8	11.0	10.5
Others	20.2	10.0	3.0	9.4
Aquarium Products (pieces)	7,358	10,649	7,634	11,471

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

Lower marine products exported in September 2017

Marine products

After three consecutive months of high volume in marine exports, it slowed over the month. Total exported marine products¹ fell by 177.5 metric tons (64.8%) during the month. The marine exports for the month was also higher than what was recorded in May 2017. This trend reflects that it is normal for the volume of marine exports to fall very low after months of high marine exported volume. The export of seaweed rose by 17.4 metric tons but was outweighed by the decline in all other exported marine products. This was attributed to seasonality which drives lower catch during the month, and less fishing boats that returned with their catch for the month.



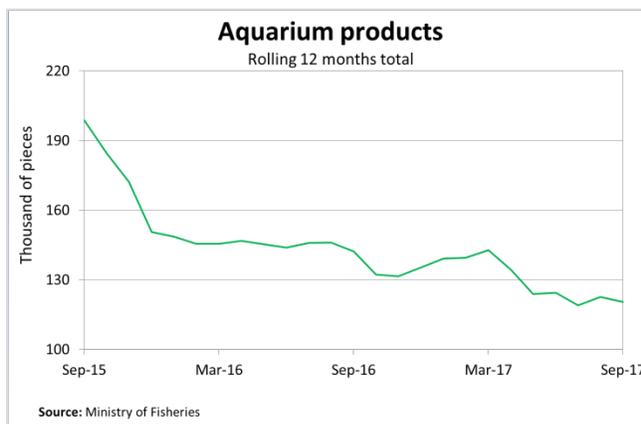
However, total marine products exported rose by 499.5 metric tons (24.9%) over the year to September 2017 largely driven by a 462.3 metric tons (25.5%) increase in tuna exports.

¹ Excluded aquarium products

This was followed by the export of snapper and seaweed which rose by 39.9 metric tons (36.6%) and 4.5 metric tons (26.9%) respectively. This outweighed a decrease in the export of shark meat, shark fin, and reef fish.

Aquarium exports

The total aquarium exports continued to decline over the month by 3,291 pieces (30.9%) driven by lower exports of all aquarium products except invertebrates. The export of invertebrates slightly rose by 786 pieces (27.1%). Aquarium products that declined over the month included live hard coral by 1,581 pieces, live fish by 1,337 pieces, soft coral by 724 pieces, and shellfish by 435 pieces.

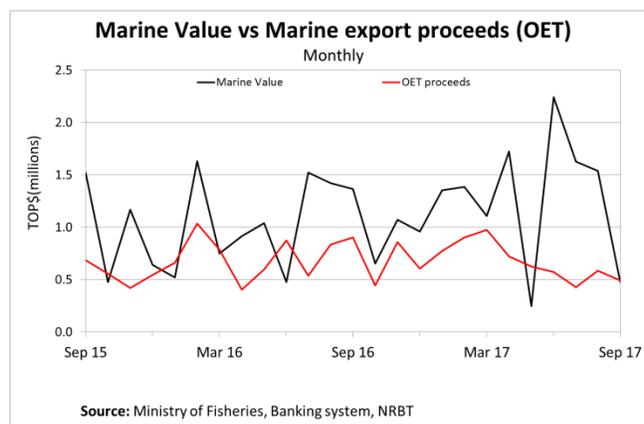


Similarly, total exported aquarium products fell over the year by 21,780 pieces (15.3%). This was due to lower

export of invertebrates (15,348 pieces), live fish (2,923 pieces), live hard coral (2,922 pieces), and shellfish (702 pieces) over the year which outweighed a 115 increase in pieces of exported soft coral.

Export Proceeds

The Ministry of Fisheries estimated the total value of the exported fisheries products to be \$0.5 million in September 2017. This coincided with a \$0.5 million reported by the banking system that was received for the export of fisheries products. However, the export proceeds fell by \$0.1 million (15.7%) over the month which is in line with the decline in aquarium pieces and volume of marine



exports. The United States remained the highest export destination for the marine exports followed by Japan, and New Zealand.

In year ended terms, total marine exports proceed declined by \$0.2 million (2.1%) to a total of \$8.0 million.

Outlook

The Reserve Bank expects that the fisheries sector will continue to grow, with tuna exports being the main contributor. The duty exemptions policy on oil and fishing gear and the initiatives of the Government's Fisheries Development and Export Fund (FDEF) through the Government Development Loans facilitated by the Tonga Development Bank, is also expected to support growth in the Fisheries sector. There are various other initiatives facilitated by the Ministries of Fisheries such as supporting the growth in the mabe pearl industry operating in Ha'apai which is expected to improve income and livelihood of the people as well as the Ministry's export proceeds.

Marine Export Volumes							
	Month-ended				Year-ended		Share of total Sample ave.
	Sep 17	Aug 17	Jul 17	Jun 17	Sep 17	Sep 16	
Total Marine Products (in metric tons)	96.5	274.0	293.9	398.5	2,504.8	2,005.3	100.0
Shark Meat	2.7	10.0	3.0	9.4	61.8	69.1	2.5
Snapper	6.16	9.78	11.0	10.5	148.8	108.9	5.9
Tuna	70.2	254.2	279.9	378.7	2,272.7	1,810.4	90.7
Others	17.4	-	0.0	-	21.6	17.0	0.9
Total Aquarium Products (in pieces)	7,358	10,649	7,634	11,471	120,486	142,266	100.0
Livefish	291	1,628	890	1,045	9,543	12,466	7.9
Invertebrate	3,685	2,899	3,446	5,120	63,652	79,000	52.8
Live Hard Coral	1,785	3,366	1,617	2,914	26,174	29,096	21.7
Shellfish	175	610	300	200	2,512	3,214	2.1
Soft Coral	1,422	2,146	1,381	2,192	18,605	18,490	15.4

Source: Ministry of Fisheries