

Marine Exports Volume

May 2018

Release date: 5 October 2018

	May 18	Apr 18	Mar 18	Feb 18
Total Volume (metric tons)	81.4	8.3	51.4	48.0
Tuna	53.6	4.4	39.9	38.1
Snapper	8.8	3.9	5.2	5.6
Other	19.1	0.0	6.4	4.3
Aquarium Products (pieces)	15,465	17,559	34,352	16,689

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

More fish was exported during the month

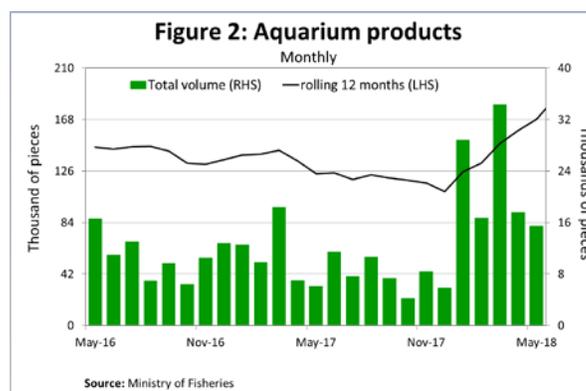
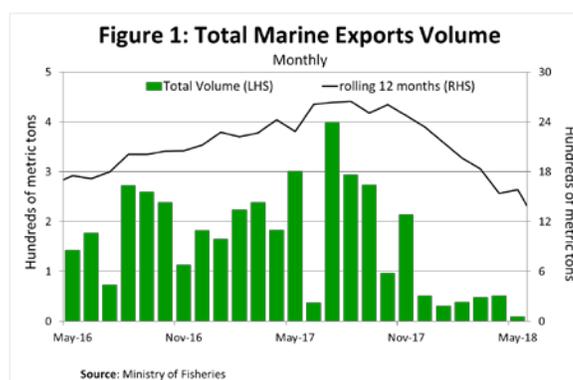
Marine products

The total exported marine products¹ significantly rose over the month by 73.1 metric tons to a total 81.4 tonnes. This was attributed to foreign fishing vessel which returned with their catch for export. Tuna exports increased the most by 49.2 metric tons, followed by a 16.8 metric tons rise in seaweed. Snapper and shark meat increased by 4.8 metric tons and 2.3 metric tons respectively.

However, the total exported marine products declined by 699.8 metric tons (30.6%) over the year to May 2018 attributed to a 669.0 metric tons (32.5%) decrease in tuna exports. The trend was mainly due to foreign vessels registered to fish the Tongan waters. This was followed by a 66.5 metric tons and 18.5 metric tons fall in the export of snapper and shark meat respectively which outweighed a rise in the volume of exported seaweed.

Aquarium exports

The total aquarium exports continued to decline over May compared to the previous two month. However, this is above the monthly average of 14,727 pieces for May in the past five years. Lower exports over the month was due to lower exports of invertebrates by 7,272 pieces (44.8%) which outweighed an increased in all other exported aquarium products. According to the Reserve Bank's liaison program, sea tide conditions is a contributing factor that affects the amount of aquarium products caught during the month.

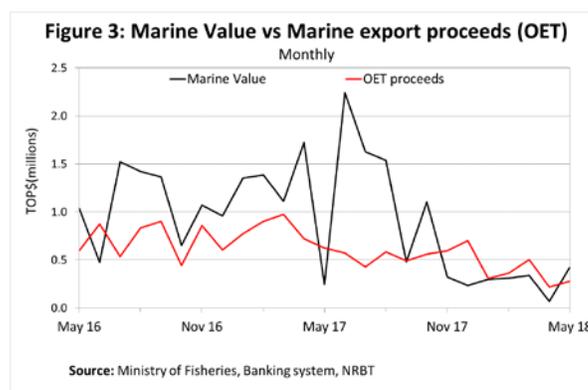


¹ Excluding aquarium products

Nonetheless, the total exported aquarium products rose over the year by 44,496 pieces (35.9%) due to a 50,279 pieces (74.4%) increase in exported invertebrates followed by a 1,014 pieces increase in shellfish. This was partially offset by a decline in the export of live hard coral, soft coral, and live fish over the year.

Export Proceeds

The Ministry of Fisheries estimated the total value of the exported fisheries products to be \$0.4 million in May 2018 compared to a \$0.3 million of total proceeds reported by the banking system for the export of fisheries products. This is a \$0.1 million (28.0%) increase from last month, coinciding with the rise in the total marine exports (Figure 3). The United States remained the highest source country for these marine exports receipts followed by Hawaii, Australia, Singapore and Great Britain. In year ended terms, total marine export proceeds declined by \$3.4 million (38.1%) to a total of \$5.6 million coinciding with the annual decline in marine exports.



Outlook

The Reserve Bank expects the volume of fisheries export to decline in the near term due to less foreign vessels with higher operation capacity which are available to fish the Tongan waters. However, the on-going initiatives from the Ministry of Fisheries may help to increase and sustain the supply of fisheries product and contribute to increase the total exports. Such initiatives include the Seafood Export Market Development including Market Development for Pearl which explores new markets to increase opportunities for fisheries exporters and pearl farmers in both Vava'u and Ha'apai. The Aquaculture Management and Development plan include consists of preparations towards developing and improving of the seaweed planting and marketing. Additionally, the National Strategy on Aquatic Biosecurity which deals with biological risks in aquatic environments. The fisheries sector continues to benefit from the duty exemptions policy on fuel 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.

Marine Export Volumes							
	Month-ended				Year-ended		Share of total Sample ave.
	May 18	Apr 18	Mar 18	Feb 18	May 18	May 17	
Total Marine Products (in metric tons)	81.4	8.3	51.4	48.0	1,585.7	2,285.5	100.0
Shark Meat	2.3	-	2.8	4.3	48.7	67.2	3.1
Snapper	8.76	3.92	5.2	5.6	90.5	157.0	5.7
Tuna	53.6	4.4	39.9	38.1	1,388.2	2,057.2	87.5
Others	16.8	0.0	3.6	-	58.2	4.2	3.7
Total Aquarium Products (in pieces)	15,465	17,559	34,352	16,689	168,379	123,883	100.0
Livefish	978	183	529	322	7,780	10,215	4.6
Invertebrate	8,968	16,240	27,991	14,830	117,840	67,561	70.0
Live Hard Coral	3,241	527	3,016	719	22,720	26,141	13.5
Shellfish	410	-	584	194	2,837	1,823	1.7
Soft Coral	1,868	609	2,232	624	17,202	18,143	10.2

Source: Ministry of Fisheries