

FISHERY COUNTRY PROFILE	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations	FID/CP/ITA
PROFIL DE LA PÊCHE PAR PAYS	Organisation des Nations Unies pour l'alimentation et l'agriculture	 August 2005
RESUMEN INFORMATIVO SOBRE LA PESCA POR PAISES	Organización de las Naciones Unidas para la Agricultura y la Alimentación	

THE ITALIAN REPUBLIC

GENERAL ECONOMIC DATA

Land area:	301 270 km ²
Shelf area (to 200 m):	201 310 km ²
Length of continental coastline:	7 456 km
Population (2003):	57.4 million
GDP at purchasers' value (2003):	US\$ 1 465.9 million
GDP per head (2003):	US\$ 25 573
Agricultural GDP (2003):	US\$ 36.65 billion

Fisheries GDP (2002):	US\$ 4.9 billion
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FISHERIES DATA

Data for 2003	Production	Imports	Exports	Stocks variation	Total supply	<i>Per capita supply</i>
	tonnes liveweight					kg/year

Fish for direct human consumption	472 162	1 136 065	162 189	3	1 446 041	25.2
Fish for animal feed and other purposes	15 194					

Estimated employment (2002):	
(i) Preliminary sector including aquaculture):	60 700
(ii) Secondary sector:	29 300
Gross value of fisheries output (2002):	US\$ 1.9 billion
Trade (2003):	
imports:	US\$ 3 558 950 000 900 583 t
exports:	US\$ 453 515 000 119 416 t

FISHERY SECTOR STRUCTURE

The fishing sector in Italy employs about 90 000 workers and its annual turnover is about US\$ 5 billion. The sector's output in 2003 was 487 356 tonnes, comprising 60% from marine fisheries and 40% from aquaculture; inland fishery has just a minor role. The EU withdrawal policy led to a significant reduction in the Italian fleet capacity in the last five years. In the same period, the deficit in the balance of fish trade increased due less internal production, reduced exports and a strong increase in imports.

Marine Sub-Sector

Marine fishery is a multigear, multispecies fishery, with a highly heterogeneous fleet widely dispersed along the coast. The fleet is aging, with 45% of vessels >26 years old, and 29% between 15 and 25 years old.

In November 2004, the fleet consisted of 15 002 vessels according to the maritime authority's fishing licence archives, with a total power 1 250 353 kW and a registered total size of 213 240 GRT. The bulk of the fleet (10 751 vessels, 72% of the total) consisted of

artisanal vessels, generally <12 m LOA and <6 GRT, deploying various fixed gear (nets, longlines, traps, etc.) on the continental shelf.

The semi-industrial sector employs multipurpose vessels (1 954 vessels, 57 980 GRT, 316 579 kW), bottom trawlers (1 437 vessels, 67 167 GRT, 304 792 kW), hydraulic dredgers for bivalves (666 vessels, 8 722 GRT, 71 858 kW) and purse seiners for small pelagics (about 170 vessels). All these vessels operate generally within 20 nautical miles of the coastline.

Multipurpose vessels, which generally are between 6 and 50 GRT, are licensed to use various fishing gear, both on the shelf and upper slope areas. Bottom trawling is the most important fishery in terms of tonnage (51% of the total), engine power (41% of the total) and annual landings, employing vessels mostly <25 m LOA and <50 GRT. Hydraulic dredgers are mostly between 6 and 10 GRT, while the purse seiners are more varied, ranging from 6 GRT to >100 GRT.

Offshore fleets operating in the Mediterranean without restriction on maximum allowed distance from the coast comprise: tuna purse seiners (68 vessels, 5 886 GRT, 26 044 kW); bottom and pelagic trawlers (85 vessels, 14 879 GRT, 41 992 kW); and vessels using fixed gear (11 vessels, 2 264 GRT, 5 631 kW). The oceanic fleet is made up of 26 freezer-trawlers over 500 GRT (13 400 GRT, 30 299 kW), operating outside the Mediterranean Sea.

The fishing capacity of the Italian fleet has fallen very sharply since 1999, particularly following the decommissioning scheme under the EU Multi-Annual Guidance Programme (MAGP IV), which aimed to reduce fishing fleets to adjust fishing effort to the volume of available fishery resources.

In the last five years, 4 795 vessels have been removed from the fleet, leading to a reduction of 18% in terms of engine power (kW). A large part of the decommissioned vessels were coastal bottom trawlers, which decreased by 1 916 units in the period 2002–04. The decommissioning measure is financed within the EU structural programme named SFOP (EU Regulation No. 2792/99).

Inland fisheries

Italy has about 20 000 km² of lakes, reservoirs and rivers. In 2003, the recorded national output of freshwater fish was 4 379 t. The number of authorized professional fishermen was about 400, located mostly in northern Italy, operating through 37 cooperatives. Most production came from the region of Lombardia, with 2 773 t in annual landings. The catch comprised cyprinid fishes (about 20%), salmonids (10%), pikes and bass (5%), eels (3%), with the rest of the catch pooled in official statistics as “other fishes”.

Aquaculture

Aquaculture in Italy has two main sectors. The first is based on coastal lagoon management, from culture-based fisheries to extensive (*vallicoltura*); the second one involves intensive rearing systems, in both inland freshwater bodies and the open sea.

The sector is characterized by the farming of a wide range of different species and use of varied technologies, reflecting the diversity of available sites.

Annual production more than doubled between 1986 and 2001, from 100 000 t to 218 000 t. This output increase was due to the development of intensive practices in the culture of euryhaline species, basically gilthead seabream (*Sparus aurata*), European seabass (*Dicentrarchus labrax*) and Manila clams (*Tapes philippinarum*), that could tolerate a range of salinities. This positive trend was reversed in subsequent years and in 2002 annual

output decreased to 191 662 t, worth € 519 million.

The prevailing cultured species (2003), in production volume terms, are mussels (100 000 t, of which 25 000 t come from natural banks) and Manila clams (25 000 t). Among finfish the main species are trout (38 000 t) seabass (9 600 t), seabream (9 000 t), eel (1 550 t) and mullets (3 000).

Mussels are traditionally cultured using the pole-suspended row technique in protected and lagoon areas, and in the open sea using long-line systems. Manila clams have undergone a rapid increase in production from the mid-1980s to the mid-1990s, thanks to rationalized fishing techniques and restocking in confined coastal areas, mainly located in the Po delta.

CATCH PROFILE

The catch composition of Italian marine fisheries is extremely heterogeneous, reflecting both the different gear in use in various fishing grounds and the high biodiversity of aquatic resources.

The main species groups are the small pelagics – anchovy (*Engraulis encrasicolus*) and sardine (*Sardina pilchardus*). Among demersal fish, the most abundant species landed are red mullet (*Mullus barbatus*) and hake (*Merluccius merluccius*).

An important portion of total Italian landings is cephalopods, comprising cuttlefish (*Sepia officinalis*), octopus (*Octopus vulgaris*), and horned octopus (*Eledone cirrhosa*). The deep-water rose shrimp (*Parapenaeus longirostris*) and the spottail mantis shrimp (*Squilla mantis*) are the most important crustaceans landed.

Among large pelagics, the main species landed are bluefin tuna (*Thunnus thynnus*), albacore (*Thunnus alalunga*) and swordfish (*Xiphias gladius*).

Hydraulic dredgers land about 12 500 t/year of bivalves, that come mostly from the northern Adriatic.

A significant proportion of annual Italian landing come from Puglia (24.5%) and Sicily (21%), followed by the central-northern Adriatic Sea (28.8%). The Tyrrhenian area yields about 21% of annual landings.

Bottom trawling accounting for 39.5% of the total landings, followed by small-scale fishery (28%) and multipurpose vessels (16%). Small-scale fishery landings showed a higher average value (€ 6.5/kg) compared with bottom trawling (€ 6.0/kg), multipurpose vessels (€ 5.1/kg) and tuna vessels (€ 4.9/kg). The lowest values, between € 1 and 2/kg, are seen for purse seiners and pelagic trawlers.

LANDING SITES

Landing sites and sales are fragmented and widespread along the coast. Of a total of 800 landing sites, 75% are simple mooring sites, such as natural shelter, beaches and small docks used by artisanal vessels; the rest are harbours. The main fishing harbour in terms of volume landed is Mazara del Vallo (SW Sicily), followed by Ravenna (N Adriatic), Ancona (central Adriatic), Bari (S Adriatic), Palermo (SW Tyrrhenian Sea) and Chioggia (N Adriatic).

FISHING PRODUCTION MEANS

Fishing effort is not homogeneously distributed along the coasts but it is more concentrated in some areas, principally the Straits of Sicily and the Adriatic.

The largest fleet is located in Sicily, with 2 353 vessels, accounting for 22% of the national fleet.

Most of the artisanal vessels (65%) are concentrated in south Italy (Sicily, 2 564 vessels; Campania, 1 081 vessels; Puglia, 1 043 vessels; and Calabria, 803 vessels) and Sardinia (1 118 vessels). They are equipped to use different fishing gear during the year, and often in the same day. Most used are fixed nets (trammel nets, combined trammel-gillnets, and gillnets) and longlines to target a large number of species. Fishing areas are located on the continental shelf, generally down to 100 m depth, and within 6 nautical miles of the coast.

The most important areas for trawling are Sicily and Adriatic Sea. Bottom trawlers show a high variability in the fishing areas exploited, which may change in the same day from the continental shelf to the middle slope, up to 700 m depth. Trawler landings are therefore characterized by a high number of species of fish, decapod crustaceans and cephalopods, in various commercial categories.

Sicily hosts 40% of purse seiners, which target basically anchovy (*E. encrasicolus*); another 36% is spread along the Tyrrhenian coasts; and the rest of the fleet is located in the central-southern Adriatic. Pelagic trawlers and hydraulic dredgers are concentrated along the Adriatic coast.

MAIN RESOURCES

The main target species vary according to fleet segment. The most important commercial species for bottom trawlers are hake (*M. merluccius*), red mullets (*Mullus* spp.), Norway lobster (*Nephrops norvegicus*), deep-water rose shrimp (*P. longirostris*), spottail mantis shrimp (*S. mantis*), octopus (*O. vulgaris*), horned octopus (*E. cirrhosa*) and squids (*Loligo vulgaris* and *Illex coindetii*). The fishery for red shrimps (*Aristeus antennatus* and *Aristaemorpha foliacea*) is particularly important in the Tyrrhenian, Straits of Sicily and Ionian Sea.

Artisanal vessels target a wide number of species, both demersal and pelagic, such as cuttlefish, octopus, scorpionfish (*Scorpaena* spp.), lobster (*Palinurus elephas*), hake, sole (*Solea vulgaris*), sparids and serradids, swordfish, tuna-like fishes, etc.

Purse seiners and pelagic trawlers target basically small pelagics, such as sardine and anchovy. The tuna fishery exploits red tuna and, to a lesser extent, albacore.

Among bivalves, the main target species for hydraulic dredgers are clams (*Tapes* spp., *Chamaelea galina* and *Callista chione*).

MANAGEMENT APPLIED TO MAIN FISHERIES

Italian fisheries policy is strongly conditioned by EU regulations through the Common Fisheries Policy (CFP), based on the following principles: protection of resources; adjustment of (structure) facilities to the available resources; market organization; and definition of relationships with other countries.

In conformity with subsidiarity principles decided within the EU, Italy has adopted integrative and complementary tools for the realization of specific management policy.

The main management instrument for the sector is the National Plan for Fishing and Aquaculture, introduced under Act 41/82, which is reviewed every three years. The management measures currently in place are mainly designed to assure sustainable exploitation of the resources, to limit fishing effort, to protect ecosystem biodiversity, to develop aquaculture and to apply the principles of the FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries. The main objectives of the National Plan for 2003–2006 are:

- Rationalization of the sector to achieve a correct balance between fishing effort and available resources. This objective should be reached both through a reduction in fleet capacity, as provided for by the EU decommissioning scheme under MAGP, and through the adoption of technical measures, such as time-based closures. An enhanced involvement of stakeholders in the management process is considered of paramount importance for the achievement of objectives.
- Rationalisation of the administrative regulatory system, including through the devolution of competences to local administrations (Regions).
- Improving the degree of food self-sufficiency through regulations aimed at a correct use of coastal and pelagic waters, the development of mariculture and fish culture in general, and protection and valorization of national production.
- Preserving employment levels.

The main technical measures regulating fishing in Italian seas concern minimum sizes for fish, crustaceans and bivalve molluscs; mesh regulations; restrictions on the use of fishing gear; and regulations for special fisheries, i.e. coral, fry, underwater fishing and bivalve fishing. Towed gears are not allowed in the coastal area in less than 50 m depth, or within a distance of 3 nautical miles from the coastline. A seasonal closure for trawling, generally during summer, has been established since 1993. In 2003, an obligatory interruption measure was adopted specifically for Adriatic trawlers.

In Italy, Marine Protected Areas (MPA) have recently been the focus of particular attention from both the scientific community and environmental interests, leading to the institution of more than 20 national MPAs, distributed along the entire peninsula. A Ministerial Decree of 20 June 2003 established the institution of zones of biological protection aimed at reducing fishing effort on juveniles of important commercial species (e.g. hake).

In conformity with EU regulations, Italy, like the other EU members, has applied the Multi-Annual Guidance Programme (MAGP), which deals with the reduction of fishing fleets to adjust fishing effort to the volume of available fishery resources. This reduction should be achieved by removing a certain number of fishing vessels from the fleet (through demolition, transfer to a non-EU country by the creation of joint ventures, or by donating the vessel to a scientific research institute).

Following the 2002 CFP reform, a new system for limiting the fishing capacity of the EU fleet entered into force on 1 January 2003. This system replaced the MAGP and gives more responsibility to the Member States in achieving a better balance between the fishing capacity of their fleets and the available resources.

A Ministerial Circular of 07 October 2004 laid down a plan that aims at reducing fishing effort, particularly by encouraging a reduction in fishing vessels operating within 6 nautical miles of the baseline and using trawl nets.

Trawling is subject to an interruption of fishing activity on Saturdays and Sundays, but no restrictions are currently in force for the other fleet segments.

Tuna fishery is regulated by the regional management body (International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas – ICCAT) which establishes annual maximum allowable catch quotas for the Italian fleet. Fishing of bivalves with dredges is regulated by Ministerial Decree 21 July 1998, which established consortia for bivalve mollusc fishing. The consortia will determine fishing hours, closed seasons and catch quotas for each species.

No output control measures have been implemented for trawling and small-scale fishery.

INLAND SUB-SECTOR

Freshwater fishery is managed both at the national and at different local levels. National legislation concerns both the general policy framework for fishing sector and the quality of inland waters. Regions (*Regione*) establish fishing periods and general fishing rules (minimum fish size, gear permitted, etc.), allowing local administrations (*Provincia*) to modify in a more restricted way the regional legislation. The Provinces also managed restocking procedures.

RECREATIONAL SUB-SECTOR

Recreational fishing involves more than 750 000 boats and about 1 500 000 fishermen (1996). The most commonly fished species were bogue (*Boops boops*), mullet (*Liza* spp. and *Mugil cephalus*), striped seabream (*Diplodus* spp.), horse mackerel (*Trachurus* spp.), seabream, tuna and mackerel (*Scombrus scomber*).

Legislation restricts gear types, sets gear specifications and maximum daily allowed catches, while not requiring fishing licences in marine waters. The most popular recreational fishing gears are rod and line, tuna fishing line and hand-lines. There are no data on annual catch in recreational fisheries.

AQUACULTURE SUB-SECTOR

In 2000 there were 205 active fish farms in Italy, mostly concentrated in northern Italy. Most farms (74%) cultured euryhaline and marine species, while the rest were involved in the farming of freshwater species, primarily trout.

The most common form of farming system for euryhaline species is the traditional extensive (*vallicoltura*) system (65 farms), followed by intensive systems, both in sea cages (20 farms) and inland ponds (19 farms). There are also 7 hatcheries that produced only fry. Other farms have adopted mixed strategies using more than one type of farming system. Seed production strongly increased during the 1980s and 1990s, in response to the growing demand for fry for intensive and semi-intensive farms, reaching a production of 152 million fry of euryhaline and marine species in 1999.

Tuna farming has been expanding in recent years in the Mediterranean, including Italy. The culture aims to produce tuna suitable for the Japanese market, and both fresh and frozen farmed tuna are exported to Japan.

Currently, the aquaculture sector, after a phase of sharp increase in production between the mid-1980s to the late 1990s, is stabilizing. Competition has increased, and prices and margins have significantly diminished, demanding additional efficiency in the productivity system and new technologies. Moreover, the sector suffers from additional costs associated with enforcement of environmental legislation that obliges fish farms to reduce their impact on the surrounding environment.

The National Plan for Fishing and Aquaculture within Act 41/82 established the following priorities for development of the sector: reduction in environmental impact of farming systems; diversification of production; formulation of new distribution strategies by producer associations; and improvement in product quality. The Act also requires that priorities be formally reviewed every three years.

POST HARVEST USE

Fish utilization

Most Italian catches are intended for human consumption. Nearly all catches from the Mediterranean are marketed fresh, chilled or canned, whereas most catches from distant waters are frozen.

Domestic fish supplies are supplemented by substantial imports of fresh and frozen products for direct human consumption, and frozen products (mostly tuna) as raw material for the processing industry. Considerable quantities of fishmeal are imported for animal feed.

The processing industry has increased production since 2000, producing 128 400 t in 2003, with a corresponding market value of € 730 million. The major processed products are tuna canned in oil (89 000 t, representing 69% of total production); anchovies, both salted and as fillets in oil (20 500 t); and shell clams (2 400 t). Most raw material is imported, as little is available locally. Imports of processed products are increasing, whereas exports are decreasing.

Aquaculture products are mostly sold fresh and whole, but some products are processed, such as trout, which are also sold filleted or smoked, and other minor products are produced by the fish farmer in order to add value to the product. The increase in cultured fish production during the last decade has brought about more competition and a downward trend in sale prices. Indeed, Italy has become the reference market in the Mediterranean for fresh products from seabass and seabream production. Italy imports huge quantities of seabass and seabream from other Mediterranean countries, mainly Greece, followed by Turkey.

Fish markets

Fishery and aquaculture products are distributed by wholesale fish traders and only a minor part is sold directly by fishermen or farmers. Nationally, there is a limited overlap between products from aquaculture and fisheries, because the volumes of catches of cultured species do not represent any competition on the market, and capture fisheries mainly target species that are not suitable or economically viable for aquaculture.

FISHERY SECTOR PERFORMANCE

The Italian fishing industry is reaching full production from all finfish, crustacean and mollusc resources. Serious stock depletions have occurred for most of the main commercial species, and vessels have therefore reduced their catch per unit effort in recent years. Fishing production peaked at the end of the 1990s, declining in the last four years as a result of both resource overexploitation and EU withdrawal policy.

A reduction in full-time job equivalents of 8 600 units occurred in the period 2000–02. The segments mainly affected were small-scale fishery and coastal trawling. Also, labour productivity, measured in terms of gross value added per employee, has declined in recent years due to increasing costs, particularly fuel and other running costs.

The uncertainty affecting the market and the stagnation of demand has led aquaculture operators to diversify the species on offer and to improve the quality of fish-farming products, rather than increasing production capacity itself.

Economic role of fisheries in the national economy

The fishing sector value (€ 5 billion) corresponds to about 0.44% of the Italian GDP.

Demand

During 2000–03, consumer's demand was affected by the rising price of fish. Fish

consumption decreased by 10% in 2002, but recovered in 2003. Consumption per capita of fish products is about 25 kg/year.

Supply

The total supply of fish products for Italian market, including imports, is about 1.4 million tonne per annum. In value, Italy is the fifth largest import market.

In 2003, fish imports amounted to 900 500 t, while exports were 119 500 t. Most of the fish products are imported from EU countries (52.3%), namely Spain (19%), France (7.1%), Denmark (7.0%), The Netherlands (5.5%) and Greece (4.8%). Imports from non-EU countries, principally south and central American countries (Chile, Argentina, Peru and Ecuador) rose 22% in weight terms in 2003 compared with 2002. Also, imports of cephalopods and processed fish from Thailand have been increasing in recent years. The main fish products imported are molluscs (28.1%), followed by processed fish (22.5%), frozen fish (17.0%), fresh fish (13.8%) and crustaceans (8.8%). Fish products for animal feed or other purposes made up about 10% of total fish-related imports.

The bulk of exports go to Spain (41.6%), France (12.5%), Germany (8.6%) and Greece (6.9%).

EMPLOYMENT

Total employment in the fishing sector is estimated at about 90 000 people, that can be split by sub-sector as follow: 52 000 in fishing; 8 700 in aquaculture; 6 500 in the processing industry; 2 300 in shipyards and maintenance; and 20 500 in distribution and sales.

RURAL DEVELOPMENT

Fishery development sector

Constraints

Italian fishing capacity is decreasing due to the EU measures in place from the early 1990s to 2002 under the MAGPs.

Fish consumption is constrained by the lack of local fresh fish and by increasing prices.

The growing demand for fish products is increasingly met by imports, with consequent reduction in self-sufficiency for Italian fisheries products (according to data for 2003, the trade deficit in fisheries products was € 6 563 million).

The potential for aquaculture development is currently reduced by uncertainties regarding the market and stagnation of demand. This situation has led aquaculture operators to diversify the range of products on offer and to improve the quality of fish-farming products rather than to increase production capacity itself.

Development prospects and strategies

Sustainability of marine fisheries is directly related to achieving a correct equilibrium between fishing effort and available resources, where not already achieved.

The Sixth National Plan for Fishing and Aquaculture defines the main strategies for the development of the sector.

The increased demand by Italian consumers for value added products indicates one of the most promising opportunities for future development of the sector.

RESEARCH

Most basic fisheries and aquaculture research is undertaken by several university laboratories. Other public institutes (including the National Research Council (CNR – *Consiglio Nazionale delle Ricerche*); Central Institute for Scientific and Technological Research Applied to the Sea (ICRAM – *Istituto Centrale per la Ricerca scientifica e tecnologica Applicata al Mare*); and the Italian National Agency for New Technologies, Energy and the Environment (ENEA – *Ente per le Nuove tecnologie, l'Energia e l'Ambiente*)) carry out research on applied aspects and organize data collection. The major laboratories for marine fisheries research are the CNR centres in Ancona, on the Adriatic Sea, and in Mazara del Vallo, on the Sicilian Channel. Applied research is also performed by private cooperatives that belong to producer associations. Fishing economics data and financial, operating and marketing information are collected by ISTAT (*Istituto Nazionale di Statistica*), ICRAM, and the private agency IREPA (Institute for Economic Research in Fishery and Aquaculture – *Istituto Ricerche Economiche per la Pesca e l'Acquacoltura*).

The main national sources for financing research projects on fisheries- and aquaculture-related topics are the Ministry of Agriculture (*Ministero per le Politiche Agricole*) and CNR.

Research on demersal resources is based on trawl surveys carried out annually since 1985 in the Italian EEZ. There are two main projects: the GRUND project, funded by the Italian Ministry of Agriculture, and the MEDITS programme, financed by EU since 1994.

Starting in 2002, there has been a National Programme for the collection of fishery data relevant to the CFP on the basis of EU Regulations 1543/2000 and 1639/2001.

FISHERY SECTOR INSTITUTIONS

Overall responsibility for the fishery industry is in the hands of the Direzione Generale della Pesca e dell'Acquacoltura, forming a part of the Ministry of Agriculture. In addition, other ministries supervise certain public activities related to fishery monitoring and control. They are the Ministry of Defence, with its Coast Guard, the Italian Navy and separate militia (*Carabinieri*) force; the Ministry of the Interior, with the State Police; the Ministry of Economy and Finance, with its own policy force for economic matters (*Guardia di Finanza*); and the Ministry of Health, responsible for public health and veterinary services.

Administrative duties are carried out at regional and local levels by the coastal administration (*Capitanerie di Porto; Guardia Costiera*), which is organized hierarchically.

Fishermen unions

The three cooperative associations that represent most fishers and shellfish producers are Lega Pesca, Federcoopescas and Associazione Generale Cooperative Italiane. These together bring together 1 251 cooperatives and 39 415 fishers. All these organizations are represented on the Fisheries Committee of the General Directorate for Fisheries and Aquaculture, and in local administrations.

Associazione Piscicoltori Italiani (API) is the reference point for fish farmers.

INTERNET LINKS

www.politicheagricole.it Ministero delle Politiche Agricole e Forestali

www.europa.eu.int/comm/fisheries/ European Commission's Directorate-General for Fisheries

www.guardiacostiera.it Capitaneria di Porto – Guardia Costiera

www.legapesca.it Lega Pesca – National Association of Fishery Cooperatives

www.federcoopescas.it Federcoopescas

www.agcipesca.it Associazione Generale Cooperative della Pesca

www.api-online.it Associazione Piscicoltori Italiani

www.irepa.org IREPA ONLUS, Istituto di Ricerche Economiche per la Pesca e l'Acquacultura

www.pesca.ismea.it ISMEA fishing and aquaculture

www.icram.org Central Institute for Marine Research

www.cnr.it Italian National Research Council

www.istat.it National Institute of Statistics

www.sibm.unige.it Italian Society of Marine Biology

www.cibm.it Centro Interuniversitario di Biologia Marina, Livorno

www.dister.unige.it University of Genoa: DIP. TE.RIS. Dipartimento per lo studio del territorio e delle sue risorse

www.dipbau.bio.uniroma1.it/web/index.htm University of Rome "La Sapienza" Department of Animal and Human Biology

www.zoologia.uniba.it University of Bari: Department of Zoology

www.mobilia.it/lbmpfano Marine Biology Laboratory of Fano

www.teseo.it/biologia.marina Marine Biology Laboratory of Bari

www.uniroma2.it/biologia University of Rome Tor Vergata, Department of Biology

GENERAL LEGAL FRAMEWORK

The main legislation governing Italian fisheries consists of Law 963/1965 and Decree of the President of the Italian Republic no. 1639/1968 regarding "Regulation for the execution of the law of 14 July 1965, no. 963, concerning the discipline of marine fishing".

These statutes also contain delegation provisions for the adoption of subsequent secondary legislation for specific sectors. This secondary legislation includes other regulations (*decreti legislativi*) adopted by the whole executive, and ministerial decisions (*decreti ministeriali*) adopted by the individual competent ministries.

Coastal Italian regions also have some legislative competencies, especially those with a more autonomous status (*Regioni a statuto speciale*, namely Sicily; Sardinia; and Friuli-Venezia Giulia).

Fishery management is based on Law no. 41 of 1982. This act is aimed at promoting the rational utilization and enhancement of marine biological resources through an equitable development of sea fishing. To these ends, the Ministry of Agriculture approves three-year national fisheries plans concerning the management of biological resources, the promotion of production and placing on the market of fishery products.

With regard to the legal framework regulating aquaculture activity and protecting the environment, the most significant act is Law no. 152, which deals with water quality management and control. Legislative Act no. 66 of 1993, Legislative Act no. 110 of 1995 and Legislative Act no. 47 of 1997 were promulgated in order to control the use of drugs in reared animals, with the primary aim being protection of the health of human consumers.