

REVIEW OF PELAGIC WET FISHERIES 1974

Total commercial landings of pelagic wet fishes increased in 1973, then decreased in 1974 (Table 1). The increase in 1973 was principally a result of growth of the anchovy reduction fishery. The decrease in 1974 reflected a decrease in landings of anchovies during the second half of the 1973-74 season and a late start by fishermen in the 1974-75 season. Landings of Pacific sardine and Pacific mackerel were almost nil, apparently as a result of compliance by fishermen with moratoria on those species.

TABLE 1
Landings of Pelagic Wet-Fishes in California in Tons; 1964-74

Year	Sardine	Anchovy	Pacific Mackerel	Jack Mackerel	Herring	Market Squid	Total
1964.....	6,569	2,488	13,414	44,846	175	8,217	75,709
1965.....	962	2,866	3,525	33,333	258	9,310	50,254
1966.....	439	31,140	2,315	20,431	121	9,512	63,958
1967.....	74	34,805	583	19,090	136	9,801	64,489
1968.....	62	15,538	1,567	27,834	179	12,466	57,646
1969.....	53	67,639	1,179	25,961	85	10,390	105,307
1970.....	221	96,243	311	23,873	158	12,295	133,101
1971.....	149	44,853	78	29,941	120	15,756	90,947
1972.....	186	69,101	54	25,559	63	10,030	104,993
1973.....	76	131,919	28	10,308	1,410	6,031	149,772
1974*.....	4	82,585	31	11,038	2,609	11,817	108,084

* Preliminary.

Northern Anchovy

The increase in anchovy landings for 1973 was a result of growth of the anchovy reduction fishery. Total landings for the 1973-74 reduction season were the highest in the 10 year history of the fishery (Table 2). Higher prices, ranging from \$41 to \$57.50 per ton of raw fish, and greater availability of anchovies than in the previous season stimulated more effort in the fishery.

TABLE 2
Anchovy Landings for Reduction in the Southern and Northern Permit Areas 1965-66 through 1973-74 in Tons

Season	Southern Permit Area	Northern Permit Area	Total
1965-66 ^A	16,468	375	16,843
1966-67 ^B	29,589	8,021	37,610
1967-68 ^C	852	5,651	6,503
1968-69 ^D	25,314	2,736	28,050
1969-70.....	81,453	2,020	83,473
1970-71.....	80,095	657	80,752
1971-72.....	52,052	1,374	53,426
1972-73.....	73,167	2,352	75,519
1973-74.....	109,207	11,380	120,587

^A November 12, 1965, through April 30, 1966.

^B October 1, 1966, through April 30, 1967.

^C September 15, 1967, through May 15, 1968.

^D August 1 through May 15 (this season continues to date).

Landings in the northern permit area reached the

10,000 ton quota by the end of October 1973. At the request of Monterey processors, a 5,000 ton addition to the quota was authorized by the Fish and Game Commission, and the boundary between the northern and southern permit areas was moved approximately 50 miles north to Pt. Buchon. Landings for the northern permit area totaled 11,380 tons by the end of the season.

The southern permit area quota of 100,000 tons was met and the season closed for that area on February 28, 1974. This marked the first time in the 10 year history of the reduction fishery that the quota was reached. In March, the Fish and Game Commission increased the southern permit area quota to 120,000 tons with the provisions that no fish could be taken within 12 miles of the mainland and that the season would close 2 weeks early on April 30. Fishermen landed an additional 9,207 tons by the end of the shortened season.

A total of 15 boats, comprised of 2 purse seiners and 13 lampara boats, landed anchovies for reduction in the northern permit area. Thirty-eight boats landed anchovies for reduction in the southern permit area. Of this total, 35 were purse seiners and 3 were lampara boats. One purse seiner went aground and broke up at Port Hueneme in September.

The 1974-75 anchovy season began slowly in the southern permit area. No anchovies were landed at Terminal Island canneries due to a price dispute until the end of October. By the end of 1974, landings totaled 43,938 tons for the southern permit area and 4,134 tons for the northern permit area. Although the southern area quota reverted back to 100,000 tons, the 1973-74 northern area quota remained at 15,000 tons. Live bait fishermen had a poor year in 1973 when many of their catches consisted of "pinheads" (young of the year). Those "pinheads" apparently returned in 1974 as yearlings and helped to create an excellent year for bait fishermen. With very few exceptions, anchovies were large and readily available all year.

Pacific Sardine

A new law which prohibits the take of Pacific sardines for any purpose until the estimated spawning biomass reaches 20,000 tons went into effect in 1974. The law provides for an incidental catch not to exceed 15% of a boatload or lot, and sardines so captured may only be canned or reduced. Reported such landings totaled 4 tons in 1974 compared with 76 tons in 1973.

Jack Mackerel

Jack mackerel landings for 1974, although slightly higher than 1973 landings, continued to fall far below

a 12 year mean of 26,661 tons (Table 3). The relatively poor catches for 1973 and 1974 were possibly a result of poor weather (especially in 1973), lower effort due to greater availability of anchovies, and increased fuel costs. In January 1974, the largest cannery taking mackerel at Terminal Island burned down, an event which substantially reduced daily mackerel orders. Fishermen received \$90 to \$100 per ton in 1973 and \$115 per ton in 1974. Most of the jack mackerel landed in 1973 and 1974 was caught at San Clemente Island and Cortes Bank.

TABLE 3
Commercial Landings of Jack Mackerel in California
in Tons; 1963-74

Year	Annual landings	Mean annual landings
1963	47,721	
1964	44,846	46,284 (1963-64)
1965	33,333	41,967 (1963-65)
1966	20,431	36,583 (1963-66)
1967	19,090	33,084 (1963-67)
1968	27,834	32,209 (1963-68)
1969	25,961	31,317 (1963-69)
1970	23,873	30,386 (1963-70)
1971	29,941	30,337 (1963-71)
1972	25,559	29,589 (1963-72)
1973	10,308	28,082 (1963-73)
1974	11,038	26,661 (1963-74)

Pacific Mackerel

A moratorium on the commercial take of Pacific mackerel as part of management legislation enacted

in 1972 is still in effect. Although up to 18% by weight of a boatload or lot may contain incidentally caught Pacific mackerel, fishermen are complying with the moratorium. Reported landings totaled only 28 tons in 1973 and 31 tons in 1974.

Market Squid

Market squid landings for 1974 almost doubled those for 1973. Totals of 6,031 tons and 11,718 tons were landed for 1973 and 1974 respectively. The low 1973 total reflects the poor year for squid fishermen at Monterey. Statewide, fishermen received \$27 to \$200 per ton in 1973, but the majority of squid catches brought \$50 to \$60 per ton. Prices paid in 1974 ranged from \$50 to \$200 per ton with \$60 to \$80 per ton most commonly paid.

Pacific Herring

Pacific herring landings totaled 2,609 tons for 1974 compared with 1,410 tons for 1973. Almost all herring landed both years was taken in San Francisco, Monterey, and Tomales Bay. In 1974, a quota of 450 tons was imposed on the Tomales Bay fishery by the State Legislature, and for the first time the number of participating vessels was limited. The Tomales Bay quota was met on January 11 after only 8 days of fishing. A quota of 500 tons per spawning season was imposed on the San Francisco Bay herring fishery as well. That quota was met and the season closed on January 31 after approximately 2 weeks of fishing.

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