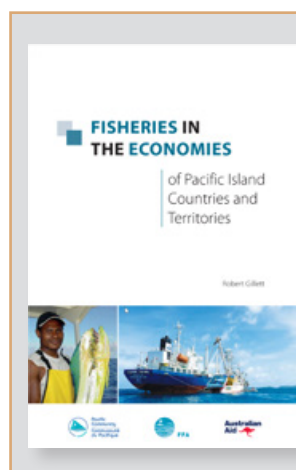
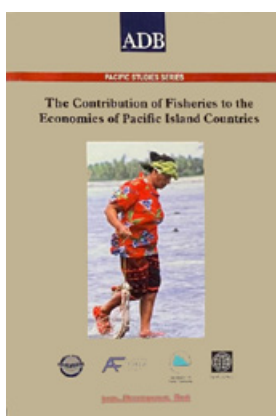


A study of the benefits from fisheries in the region

In 2001, 2008 and 2016, the Pacific Community (SPC) and various regional agencies and donors were involved with studies that brought together various types of information on the benefits from fisheries to Pacific Island countries and territories. This work, known as “Benefish”, was written up into a series of three books: 1) *The contribution of fisheries to the economies of Pacific Island countries* (2001), 2) *Fisheries in the economies of Pacific Island countries and territories* (2008), and 3) *Fisheries in the economies of Pacific Island countries and territories* (2016).

Each book has a chapter for each Pacific Island country and territory covering the following topics:

- Recent annual fishery harvests: values and volumes covering six fishery production categories.
- Fishing contribution to gross domestic production: the current official fishing contribution, how it is calculated, and a production approach recalculation based on annual harvest levels obtained during the study.
- Fishery exports: amounts, types, and the ratio to all exports.
- Government revenue from the fisheries sector: access fees and other revenue.
- Fisheries employment.
- Fisheries contribution to nutrition.



A digital copy of the 2016 book is available at:
https://www.spc.int/sites/default/files/word-presscontent/uploads/2016/11/Gillett_16_Benefish-fisheries-in-economies-of-pacific-countries.pdf

Some of the more surprising facts to emerge from the 2016 Benefish study were:

- The 2014 tuna catch in the Kiribati was 40.7% of the regional total and was valued at about USD 1 billion.
- 52.7% of all employment in the region directly related to the tuna industry occurs in Papua New Guinea.
- The volume of production from the coastal commercial fisheries of Samoa in 2014 approached that of PNG. The volume of production from the coastal commercial fisheries of Fiji is almost twice as much as that of PNG despite having a population almost 9 times greater than Fiji.
- 93% of the value of all aquaculture in the region is produced in two French territories, French Polynesia and New Caledonia.
- In only 6 countries of the region is aquaculture significant (i.e. production value is greater than 5% of that of coastal fisheries) – all but one of those countries (Cook Islands) are territories.
- American Samoa’s fishery exports are about 47% of the fishery exports from all the other countries and territories combined. PNG’s fishery exports are valued at about 41% of all the fishery exports from all the other independent countries combined.
- The total amount of fishery exports from the region fell about 42% in real value in the 2007–2014 period. The fall in the value of canned tuna exports from American Samoa was responsible for about 37% in the total regional decline.
- In just the period 2007–2014 (which coincided with the period when the Vessel Day Scheme was introduced and became fully operational) access fees for foreign fishing increased 279%.
- Four countries of the region received access fees in 2014 that equated to more than USD 1,000 per capita.

Following recommendations from members to SPC at various regional meetings, SPC is supporting an update of the Benefish work. This study will be similar to the previous studies, but a few changes have been made based on lessons learnt from the last study. A Pacific Islander has been recruited to work with the main consultant, with the idea that the person will learn how the study is carried out and will hopefully be able to do similar work in the future. Information will be collected and analysed on the impacts of COVID and climate change on fisheries in the region.

This work is expected to be published in mid-2023.