

## Solomon Islands

### *Employment*

Unlike the national accounts, there appears to be relatively good employment data in the Solomon Islands. This is largely due to the recent national census in 1999 and a labor market survey in 1998.

Preliminary data from the 1999 national census (Table B6.03) shows:

**Table A2.48: Employment in Solomon Islands, 1999**

Category	Total in Solomon Islands Economy	People in “Fishing and Related Activities”	Men in “Fishing and Related Activities”	Women in “Fishing and Related Activities”
Population 14 years and over currently active in paid work	57,472	3,367	2,935	432
Population 14 years and over currently active in unpaid work	111,905	5,506 <sup>a</sup>	5,113 <sup>a</sup>	393 <sup>a</sup>
<b>Total</b>	<b>169,377</b>	<b>8,873</b>	<b>8,048</b>	<b>825</b>

<sup>a</sup> Main unpaid activity is fishing.  
Source: 1999 National Census.

Employment in fish processing is not included in the “fishing and related activities” figures of Table A2. 48 above. The census data shows that 2,861 people had paid work in the “manufacture of meat, fish, fruit, vegetables, oils, and fats,” but no further disaggregation by industry is given.

The 1998 Labour Market Survey (Statistics Office 2000b) shows that 1,412 people (1,356 males and 56 females) were employed in fishing in the private sector and government. The total number of employed people in the Solomon Islands was given as 34,061.

The two studies above gave somewhat different results:

- 3,367 in paid fishing employment out of 57,472 total paid employment in the 1999 census: fishing was therefore responsible for 5.86% of the total paid employment.

- 1,412 employed in fishing out of 34,061 total employed in the 1998 Labour Market Survey: fisheries was therefore responsible for 4.15% of the total people employed.

Gillett et al. (2001) examined the tuna-related employment (both fishing and processing) in the Solomon Islands in 2000. The results of the study are presented in Table A2.49:

**Table A2.49: Employment in Tuna-Related Activities in Solomon Islands, 2000**

Type of Fishing Employment	Number of People Employed
Local Pole and Line Vessels	750
Local Purse Seine Vessels	135
Local Longliners	240
Cannery	1,450
Sashimi Handling/Processing	40
Artisanal Fishing Vessels	100
Crew on Foreign Fishing Vessels	138
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,853</b>

Source: Gillett et al. (2001).

It was stated that the 2,853 people employed in activities related to tuna represent about 10.8% of all employed people in the Solomon Islands.

An FAO estimate (Visser 1997) shows about 100,000 full-time, part-time, or occasional fishers in the Solomon Islands in the early 1990s.

It should be noted that the four studies cited above largely do not reflect the recent problems caused by the major social unrest in the country.

***Volumes and Values of Fish Harvests***

There have apparently been no specialized surveys to quantify the production of small-scale fishers in the Solomon Islands. The numerous estimates available use indirect sources to arrive at production figures. These include:

- Cook (1988) states: "Virtually no data have been collected on the artisanal and subsistence fisheries in the past, apart from the irregular reports of fish purchases and sales through the fisheries centers and substations. Current estimates of the artisanal and subsistence production are based on a 1983 estimate of 40.0 kg per capita consumption, giving a national production of 6,000 to 12,000 tonnes."
- Dalzell et al. (1996), using information from three sources from the early 1990s, estimate annual volumes (and values) of subsistence fisheries to be 10,000 mt (US\$8,405,660) and of coastal commercial production to be 1,150 mt (US\$4,343,811).
- The World Bank (1995), citing Skewes (1990), indicates subsistence production in the Solomon Islands to be 12,690 mt.
- The World Bank (2000) estimates (sources and methods not specified) that subsistence production in the Solomon Islands consists of 8,817 mt of finfish and 4,747 mt of shellfish, for a total of 13,564 mt.
- Gloerfelt-Tarp and Williams (1999) indicate that the country's subsistence fisheries are in the order of at least 18,000 mt annually.
- Preston et al. (1998) state that "the production of seafood in rural areas was estimated at 9,125 mt annually." (Note: Both seafood and rural are subsets of larger aggregates of production.)

Preston et al. (1998) contain fish price information for the small-scale fisheries from a variety of sources:

- A 1993 rural household income and expenditure survey calculated that the average value for non marketed fishery products was SI\$2.84 per kg.
- The retail price of fish in Honiara in 1996 ranged from SI\$4.00 to SI\$9.63 per kg.

Fisheries Division (1994) indicates that during the early 1990s the industrial-scale inshore tuna baitfishery took an average of 2,000 mt of fish, worth SI\$2,000,000.

Other sources are used for the estimation of production of large-scale fisheries:

- Fisheries Division unpublished data indicates 73,328 mt for off-shore locally-based vessels and 948 mt for offshore catches in the Solomon Islands zone in 1999 by foreign-based vessels.
- SPC catch and effort logsheet database with adjustments shows a catch in the Solomon Islands zone in 1999 of 73,493 mt for all fleets (local and offshore based).
- Oreihaka (2001) reports that the 1999 tuna catch in the Solomon Islands zone was 47,240 mt, remarkably different from that in the SPC database and in the Fisheries Division’s unpublished data.

In summary, selectively using the above information and the knowledge of current developments, a crude approximation of the Solomon Islands annual fisheries production in recent years is given in Table A2.50:

**Table A2.50: Estimated Annual Fisheries Production of Solomon Islands, late 1990s**

<b>Fishing Sector</b>	<b>Volume (mt)</b>	<b>Value (SI\$)</b>
Coastal Subsistence	13,000	39,000,000
Coastal Commercial <sup>a</sup>	3,200	9,200,000
Offshore Locally-based	73,328	335,000,000
Offshore Foreign-based	948	4,000,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>90,476</b>	<b>387,200,000</b>

mt = metric ton; SI\$ = Solomon Islands dollar.

<sup>a</sup> Includes the industrial baitfishery (2,000 mt worth SI\$2,000,000).

### *Fishery Exports and Imports*

The latest official export figures are given in CBSI (2000):

**Table A2.51: Official Annual Fisheries Exports of Solomon Islands, 1995–1997**

Exports	1995	1996	1997
Frozen Fish	38,944 mt SI\$73,987,000	23,127 mt SI\$50,355,000	26,176 mt SI\$59,490,000
Fish Smoked	846 mt SI\$6,443,000	899 mt SI\$6,134,000	945 mt SI\$6,447,000
Fish Canned	9,914 mt SI\$65,281,000	5,945 mt SI\$48,830,000	7,524 mt SI\$63,882,000
<b>Total Fish</b>	<b>49,704 mt</b> <b>SI\$145,711,000</b>	<b>29,971 mt</b> <b>SI\$105,319,000</b>	<b>34,645 mt</b> <b>SI\$129,819,000</b>
<b>Marine Shells</b>	<b>212 mt</b> <b>SI\$5,568,000</b>	<b>23 mt</b> <b>SI\$330,000</b>	<b>113 mt</b> <b>SI\$2,027,000</b>

mt = metric ton; SI\$ = Solomon Islands dollar.  
Source: Central Bank of the Solomon Islands (2000).

According to Table A2.51, the total fisheries exports would appear to be SI\$131,846,000 in 1997. However, there are several categories of fisheries exports besides the four listed by the Central Bank in Table A2.51 above (the “total fish” category is the sum of the previous three categories). Fresh fish (tuna and bottomfish), beche-de-mer, shark fins, and trochus bottom blanks are among the categories not included. IMF (1994) commented that “export data is processed manually by the Statistics Office using a classification system with only about 20 items.”

Gillett (1997), in examining the 1996 fishery exports of the Solomon Islands, stated that:

A scrutiny of official export data shows there are likely to be errors and omissions. There is no category for fresh tuna exports. One company indicated an export of 3,000 mt of fresh tuna which, if correct, would have a annual value approaching SI\$100 million... It is con-

cluded that the official statistics available during the visit to the Solomon Islands underestimate the importance of fish exports from the country.

ADB website gives the 1997 total exports for the country as US\$177,300,000.

Anonymous (2001c) gives chilled fish exports data from 1997 to 2000:

**Table A2.52: Estimated Annual Exports of Chilled Fish in Solomon Islands, 1997–2000**

Export	1997	1998	1999	2000
Chilled Fish (mt)	2,759	2,152	1,485	816
Chilled Fish (SI\$)	18,150,389	9,604,488	5,648,693	2,918,978

mt = metric ton; SI\$ = Solomon Islands dollar.  
Source: Anonymous (2001c).

Anonymous (2001c) also gives information on all fishery exports:

**Table A2.53: Estimated Annual Fisheries Exports of Solomon Islands, 1997–2000**

Export	1997	1998	1999	2000
Tuna Exports <sup>a</sup> (mt)	37,209	41,157	25,903	816
Tuna Exports (SI\$)	148,477,714	33,013,685	11,165,969	2,918,978
Non-Tuna Fishery Exports (mt)	829	755	722	107
Non-Tuna Fishery Exports (SI\$)	15,325,453	14,371,633	12,918,881	2,813,770
<b>All Fishery Exports (mt)</b>	<b>38,038</b>	<b>41,912</b>	<b>26,625</b>	<b>923</b>
<b>All Fishery Exports (SI\$)</b>	<b>163,803,167</b>	<b>47,385,318</b>	<b>24,084,850</b>	<b>5,732,748</b>

mt = metric ton; SI\$ = Solomon Islands dollar.

<sup>a</sup> Includes the categories referred to as frozen, canned, smoked, fishmeal, and chilled.

Source: Anonymous (2001c).

Preston (2000), using FAO trade data, indicates that in 1995 the Solomon Islands imported 107 mt of fishery products. The FAO food balance sheets for 1999 show 81 mt of fishery imports.

### *Access Fees*

ADB (1998b), quoting Fisheries Division sources, states that license fees paid by foreign fishing fleets were SI\$2.8 million in 1991, SI\$3.5 million in 1992, SI\$8.3 million in 1993, SI\$6.89 million in 1994, SI\$6.53 million in 1995, and SI\$1.99 million in 1996.

It is estimated that US\$273,458 was received by the Solomon Islands in 1999 for access under the US tuna treaty and FSM arrangements.

### *Levels of Marine Resource Consumption*

Various estimates of annual per capita fish consumption in the Solomon Islands have been made:

- Cook (1988), citing a 1983 estimate: 40.0 kg
- Skewes (1990), presumably in the late 1980s: 34.6 kg
- Preston (2000) in 1995: 32.7 kg
- The FAO Food Balance Sheet in 1999: 32.2 kg

### *Exchange Rates*

Solomon Islands dollar (SI\$) to the US dollar (US\$) as per ADB average-of-period rate:

1995	–	3.4059
1996	–	3.5664
1997	–	3.7169
1998	–	4.8560
1999	–	4.8381
2000	–	5.1100

