



The Impacts of COVID-19 pandemic on the seafood industry

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Abstract:

The impacts of COVID-19 on the seafood industry vary, so we are going to summarize some of these important issues in this paper. Unfortunately, the consumption of seafood has been decreased in some countries, partly because of misconceptions regarding the risk of viral transmission. Although, at present, there is no evidence that the novel coronavirus can be infected with aquatic food animals. Also, many of the other factors including disruptions in transportation, trade, labor and lack of demand for fresh seafood have been affecting the seafood industry. The fresh fish and shellfish supply chains were severely impacted by the lockdown of the foodservice sectors (e.g. hotels, restaurants and caterers, including school and work canteens). The processing sector also closed down due to reduced/lost consumer demand. This has had a remarkable impact, especially on women, who form the majority of the workforce in the post-harvest sector. Transportation and logistical challenges related to closure increased costs and delays, affecting industries such as salmon and tuna. Once markets open again, the fish and seafood that has been produced would abruptly come to market, which makes prices fall and consequently, farmers have to sell below production prices. In aquaculture, there is growing evidence that unsold produce will increase live fish stocks and therefore higher costs for feeding as well as a greater risk of fish mortalities. In contrast, due to dropping in demand, and resulting price falls, capture fishery production in some countries has been stopped or significantly declined, which may positively influence wild fish stocks in the short term.

Keywords: COVID-19, Seafood industry, Fish