

The Place of Fisheries in Markets and Food Security in an Urbanizing World: Outlook for East Asian Countries

Nireka Weeratunge
The WorldFish Center

This paper will assess changes in fish supply and demand in the context of urbanization processes in coastal areas of East Asian countries. The growth of urban centers and high concentrations of population along the coasts have negative impacts on fisheries production, leading to contamination and depletion of stocks due to pollution and overfishing. Concurrently, increased rural-urban migration and the growth of urban populations with higher purchasing power increase the demand for fish. Urban lifestyles also result in changes in patterns of consumption, taste and values, including preferences for safe fisheries produce. While East Asian countries have relatively high rates of fish consumption per capita compared to the rest of the world, these countries are also at the forefront of the global fish trade that supplies markets in Europe and North America. Fish play an important but often under-acknowledged role in food security in East Asia. The paper will focus on conceptual issues emerging from the current dynamics of fish supply and demand, and their implications for meeting food security needs, especially among the poor, in the context of urbanization.



23-27 November • Manila, Philippines