

## Fisheries and aquaculture sector records highest growth in agri-food activities

The fishing and aquaculture sector of Mexico achieved a production of 1.8 million tonnes in 2017, a figure that places it as the sector with the highest growth (7 per cent) among those of agri-food activities, informed the head of the National Commission of Aquaculture and Fishing (CONAPESCA), Mario Aguilar Sánchez.

When referring that in the production records up to 2016 the figure was 1.75 million tonnes, commissioner Mario Aguilar pointed out that it is a remarkable growth considering that both in the country and in the international context there is a process of stabilization and non-growth of volumes captured in marine waters, which is why aquaculture is being promoted, which in Mexico produced 393,000 tonnes.

He highlighted that 25 per cent of the volume captured in Mexico has been certified under a rigorous sustainability process, when the average level is 12 per cent worldwide.

He also said that given the importance that the production of high-quality food such as fish and seafood represents for the Mexican Government, resources for MXN 1,295 million (USD 71.2 million) have been allocated between 2013 and 2017 to update 1,160 high-sea vessels, which represent 57 per cent of the largest fishing fleet that supports 38,280 direct and indirect jobs.

He also indicated that 18,061 coastal vessels (more than 32 per cent of the smaller fishing fleet) have been updated, with the replacement of engines, vessels, coolers and radio communication equipment, in which MXN 715.4 million (USD 39.3 million) was invested, supporting the employment of 54,183 coastal fishermen and their families.

CONAPESCA head also announced the completion of 236 infrastructure works between 2013 and 2017, with an investment of MXN 1,004 million (USD 55.2 million) for 236 works and infrastructure studies, benefiting approximately 169,000 people.

Recognizing the work of more than 300,000 fishermen and fish farmers in the national territory, Mario Aguilar said that this has made it possible for productivity to grow, with 1.8 million tonnes worth MXN 38,000 million (USD 2,089 million) that places Mexico in the 17th place in the fishing production ranking and 24th in aquaculture production one.

He explained that in the international context, Mexico ranks 3rd as an octopus producer; 4th as a tuna one; 7th as a shrimp one, and 7th as a sardine one; and at the national level the main species by volume were: sardine, shrimp, mojarra (bream), tuna and anchovy.

"With these data it is evident why in Mexico seafood and aquaculture products continue to position themselves in the Mexicans' diet, as endorsed by the fact that in the present administration increased 3.7 kg per capita consumption of fish and aquaculture products, when changing from 8.9 kg in 2012 to 12.6 kg in 2016, with which our country reached the sexennial goal established by the World Health Organization (WHO), which recommends the per capita consumption of 12 kg of fish per year," Aguilar finished.

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