National Fisheries Authority

JAMAICA FISHERIES:

Quarterly Statistics Report

Volume 3: Issue 4

JANUARY – MARCH 2025

National Fisheries Authority

Welcome

Dear Stakeholders,

We are pleased to present Volume 3 (Issue 4) Quarterly Statistics Report for the fisheries sector. This report provides valuable insights and data on the Jamaica Fisheries Sector.

As we continue to navigate the evolving challenges and opportunities in the fisheries sector, these statistics offer a comprehensive overview that supports informed decision-making and strategic planning. Whether it is tracking production volumes, export figures, or assessing the sustainability of our fisheries, this report aims to keep you well-informed.

Thank you for reading and your continued support. Together, we can ensure the long-term growth and sustainability of our fisheries.

Dr. Zahra Oliphant
Principal Director
Compliance, Licensing & Statistics Division

National Fisheries Authority

SCAN THE QR CODE TO BROWSE OUR CORPORATE WEBSITE

www.fisheries.gov.jm

VISION:
The NFA is a model of excellence in capture fisheries and aquaculture management and development.

MISSION:
To facilitate the sustainable development of the Jamaican fisheries sector, including aquaculture, through effective and efficient management, regulation, administration, and participatory governance for the benefit of all Jamaicans.

CORE VALUES:

Integrity	*Accountability*	*Transparency*	*Professionalism*
Fairness	*Respect*	*Goal Oriented*	*Teamwork*

Introduction

The mission of the National Fisheries Authority (NFA) is "to facilitate the sustainable development of the Jamaica Fisheries sector, including aquaculture, through effective and efficient management, regulation, administration, and participatory governance for the benefit of all Jamaicans". The fisheries sector is an important foreign exchange earner and a primary contributor to income, employment, food security and social and economic stability, especially in coastal communities. The NFA Statistics and Data Management Unit is required to collect, manage and appropriately use scientific data and information to inform the planning and decision-making process and fulfil the NFA's international reporting requirements.

Thus, one of the main activities of the NFA focuses on enhancing fisheries data collection throughout the island. Activities that have been undertaken to improve data collection systems and capabilities include improved training, expansion of the data collection team, use of technology, and development of a fisheries database. It is in this context that the Quarterly Statistics Report has been compiled to provide an information source for the sector and other stakeholders to access the most up-to-date fisheries statistical information that is available from the NFA. It is hoped that the publication will provide our stakeholders with a national picture of the licenced fishing fleet, fish production, number of licenced fishers, and socio-economic status of the sector and the economic importance of the fishery sector to Jamaica's economy.

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Photo 1: Fisheries Compliance, Licensing and Statistics Division Field and Extension Services Officers participating in a recent training exercise - Fish Species Identification.

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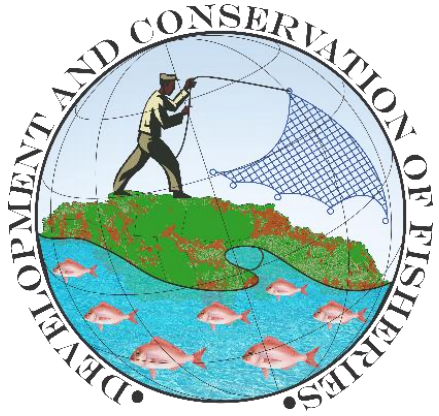


AGENCY OVERVIEW

Agency Overview

Our Core Business

We are a public sector agency responsible for the national regulatory & policy framework of/for fishing, conservation, management, and development of fisheries resources in Jamaica's fisheries waters & corresponding services delivery for sustainable fisheries management through the following functions.

Portfolio leadership and policy advice;

- Formulate, review, administer, and enforce the Fisheries Act, 2018;
- Formulate, align, review, Implement, monitor, and evaluate policies, strategies, plans, programs, and projects.
- Deliver extension advisory services through effective training, communication, awareness, and support to the fisheries stakeholders;
- Undertake applied research for sustainable fisheries resource management practices, commodity development, and marine resource conservation;
- Promote fisheries commodity development, utilization, and value-adding for food security and income generation;
- Strengthen global, regional, and national collaborative public and private sector, community, and industry partnerships on sustainable fisheries management and development and marine biodiversity and marine resource conservation;
- Maintain and comply with international bilateral and multilateral commitments.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES	STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES
Sustainable Fisheries and Aquaculture Management and Development in accordance with local and international obligations and best practices.	To increase the area of sanctuary cover of our coastal fisheries waters to 20,000 hectares by 2027.
	To increase percentage of fishers and fish farmers who are licensed, to 90% by 2027.
	To establish 6 additional management plans for capture fisheries and aquaculture by 2028.
	To develop underutilised fisheries and diversify aquaculture production by 2028.
Food and Nutritional Security	To triple fish production from Aquaculture to over 3500t by 2027.
Good Corporate and Fisheries Governance	To obtain ISO:9001 certification to strengthen the Authority's development into a world class organisation by 2026.
	For the NFA to be equipped with the requisite resources and infrastructure to function effectively as a statutory body by 2028.
	To strengthen the legislative framework by providing policy guidance for four key regulations to govern the fisheries and aquaculture sector by 2028.
Climate Smart and Resilient Fisheries	To introduce climate smart technologies and alternative livelihoods in fisheries by implementing 2 pilot programmes by 2027.
Economic and Social Viability of the Fisheries Sector	To increase the fisheries contribution to the GDP to J$35B, by 2027.
	To increase the percentage of fishers and fish farmers who are trained in fisheries and aquaculture management and production technologies by 100%, by 2028.

National Fisheries Authority Organizational Chart

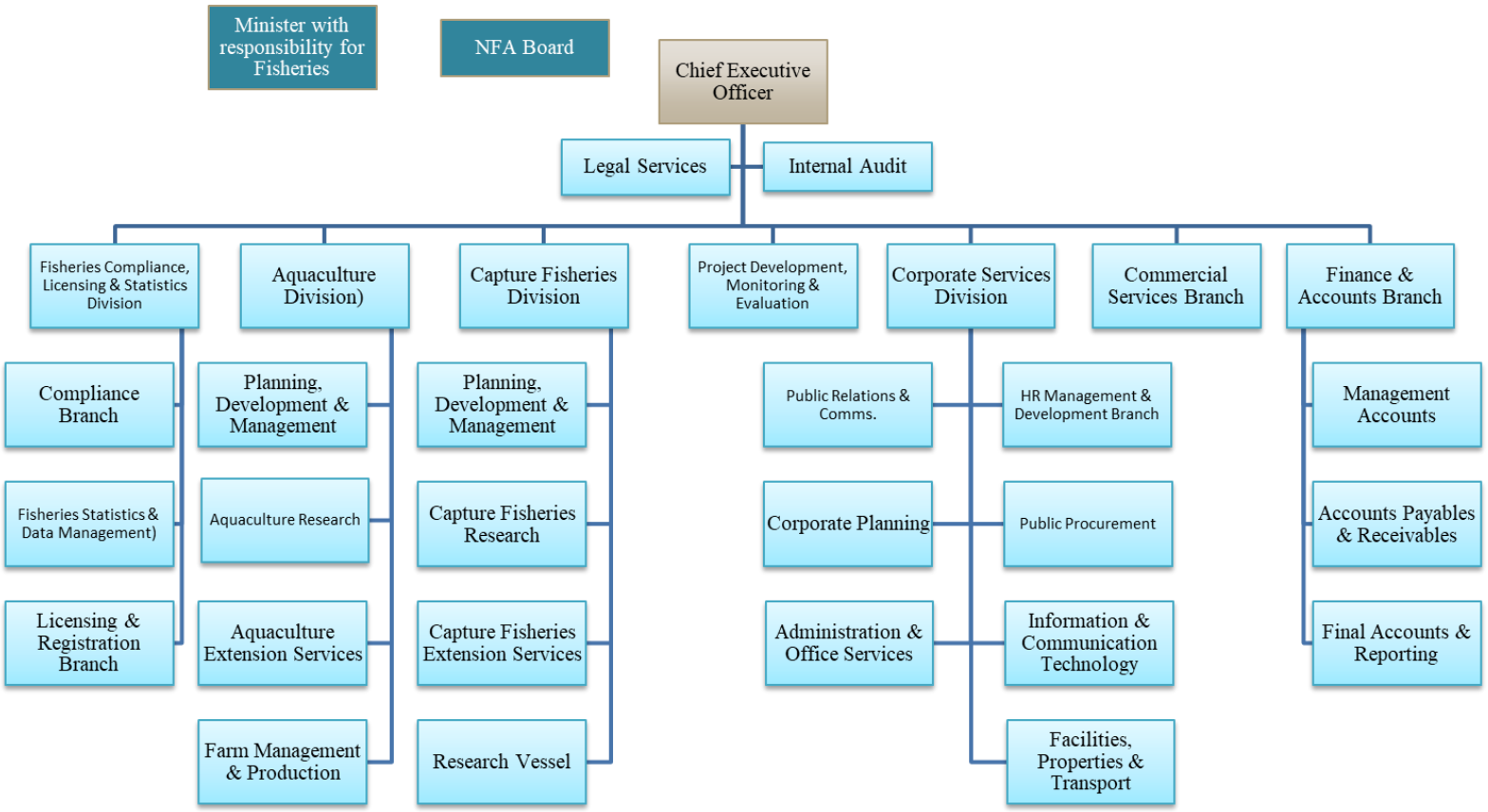


Photo 3: The NFA team joined the vibes at Hope Gardens for the Jamaica Agriculture Society (JAS) "Thank A Farmer Wellness Fair".

Big Splashes in Q4 2024/25

Contributions and Achievements

10 Quarterly Statistics Report published since 2022.

$1.7M+ In fines for FY 2024/25

6,000+ people who follow **NFA** on **social media**

2,169 Vessel Licences issued in FY24/25

In **Q4, 31%** of Fishers and vessel owners renewed their licence over the previous year.

USD 222M In earnings for marine production for FY 2024/25

1,700+ Compliance Site Visits

19 Outdoor Licensing sessions in Q4

11,846 Licences, Authorization and Permits issued

8,911 Fisher Licences issued in FY 24/25

597 acres In aquaculture production for Q4 2024/25.

15,622.54 MT Marine fish production in FY 2024/25

23% Increase in new Licence applications YoY for the 30-49 age group

36% Increase in licence renewal applications YoY for the 50+ age group

614.07 MT Aquaculture fish production for FY 2024/25 valued at **USD 4.1M**

IrieFINS

REGULATORY PERFORMANCE OVERVIEW

Overview of the Fisheries Sector in Jamaica

Jamaica, covering approximately 10,992 square kilometers within the vibrant Caribbean Sea, is endowed with rich marine resources that underpin its dynamic fisheries sector. This sector is primarily divided into two key sub-sectors: Capture Fisheries, which involves harvesting marine life directly from the ocean, and Aquaculture, a growing industry focused on sustainable fish farming. Together, these sub-sectors play a vital role in ensuring food security, generating employment, and supporting economic development, making the fisheries industry a crucial component of Jamaica's maritime heritage and national progress.

The Major Categories of Fishing

The offshore fisheries mainly involve the use of longline gear targeting tuna (eg: bluefin, yellowfin, and mahi), but a wide variety of species are caught for both local and overseas consumption. Several factors, including the number of active vessels, oceanographic conditions, and fish movement, determine the amount of catch in offshore fisheries.

Photo 4: Great Bay Fishing Beach in St. Elizabeth.

Jamaica's coastal fisheries extend across a variety of habitats, including cays, reefs, deep slopes, and nearby open waters, providing a rich environment for marine life. Fishermen utilize a range of gear—such as lines, nets, and traps—to effectively harvest a diverse array of finfish. Most fishing vessels in these waters are modest in size, averaging nine meters or less, and are equipped with various gear types to maximize their catch. This combination of diverse habitats, fishing techniques, and vessel sizes reflects the dynamic and adaptable nature of Jamaica's coastal fisheries.

Jamaica's coastal artisanal fisheries primarily serve local consumption needs. Fishers typically sell their catch to fish vendors. These artisanal landings mainly take place at fishing villages along the coastline, with some smaller contributions from riverine fisheries. All artisanal catches are intended for the domestic market, although certain high-value species like conch and lobsters are exported.

Jamaica's aquaculture sector is relatively small compared to the capture fishery sector. Harvests of farmed freshwater finfish in Jamaica consist mainly of freshwater tilapia.

Fishing Vessels

Fishing vessels in Jamaica are a cornerstone of the fishing industry, impacting economic stability, cultural identity, and food security. Balancing traditional practices with modern sustainable fishing techniques is essential for the future viability of Jamaica's fisheries sector. Continued investment in infrastructure, training, and sustainable practices will help enhance the overall effectiveness and sustainability of the fishing vessel fleet in Jamaica.

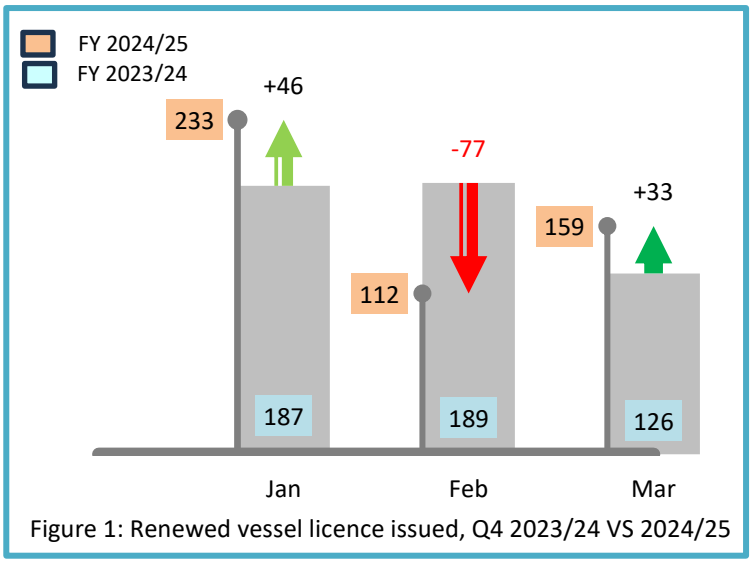


Figure 1: Renewed vessel licence issued, Q4 2023/24 VS 2024/25

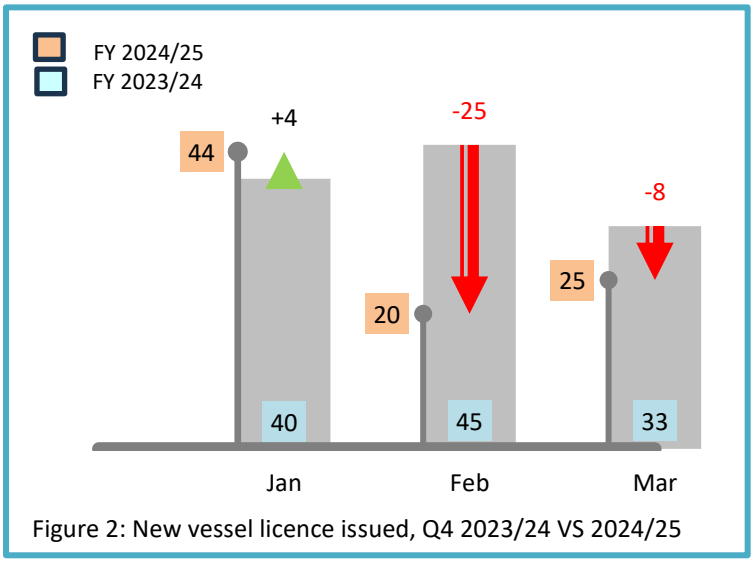


Figure 2: New vessel licence issued, Q4 2023/24 VS 2024/25

Figure 2 indicates a 10% increase in new vessel licences issued in January 2024/25 compared to January 2023/24 (from 40 to 44). In February 2024/25, there was a 55% decrease (from 45 to 20) compared to the previous year. Conversely, March 2024/25 saw a 24% decrease in new licences issued, moving from 33 to 25. Overall, Q4 2024/25 experienced a decline compared to Q3 2024/25 and YoY Q4 2023/24, of 17% and 24% respectively.

In Q4 2024/25, renewed vessel licenses showed mixed results in Figure 1: January saw a 24% increase (187 to 233), and February recorded a significant decline of 40% (189 to 112) compared to the previous year. meanwhile, March experienced a 26% increase (126 to 159) year-over-year. Overall, Q4 2024/25 recorded a 4% increase compared to Q3 2024/25 and 0.4% YoY Q4 2023/24.

Photo 5: [3rd L] Mrs. Anginette Murray (NFA's Statistician & Data Manager) conducting Conch biological sampling training with the South-Western Region data team.

	JANUARY	FEBRUARY	MARCH	TOTAL
ARTISANAL	220	102	168	**490**
INDUSTRIAL	4	2	4	**10**
RECREATIONAL	6	6	7	**19**
**CAY	44	22	6	**72**
SPORTS CHARTER	2	0	0	**2**
TEMP VESSEL CERTIFICATE				**0**
CONCH				**0**
TOTAL	**276**	**132**	**185**	**593**

Table 1: NUMBER OF BOAT LICENCES ISSUED BY CATEGORY, JANUARY TO MARCH 2025.

** Cay Licences are issued at the start of the year.

The "Artisanal" category dominates Jamaica's licensing landscape, representing the majority of licenses issued each month. Over the three months, a total of 593 licenses were granted, with an impressive 489—accounting for 82%—belonging to artisanal fishers. This indicates that artisanal fishing is a dominant sub-sector in the Jamaican fishing industry. The other categories, including "Industrial," "Recreational," "Cay," "Sports Charter," "Temp Vessel Certificate," and "Conch," have significantly fewer licences issued compared to the "Artisanal" category. This suggests that these sub-sectors are smaller in scale, which leads to lower numbers. There are noticeable differences in the number of licences issued across the three months. January recorded the highest number of licences issued, followed by March, and then February.

The high number of artisanal licences suggests that this sector is critical to the livelihood of many Jamaicans, contributing significantly to local economies and food security. The variations in licence numbers across the three months highlight the importance of considering seasonal factors and their potential impact on fishing activities. Figure 3 highlights FY24/25 performance, recording an overall 4% increase in vessel licence issued YoY.

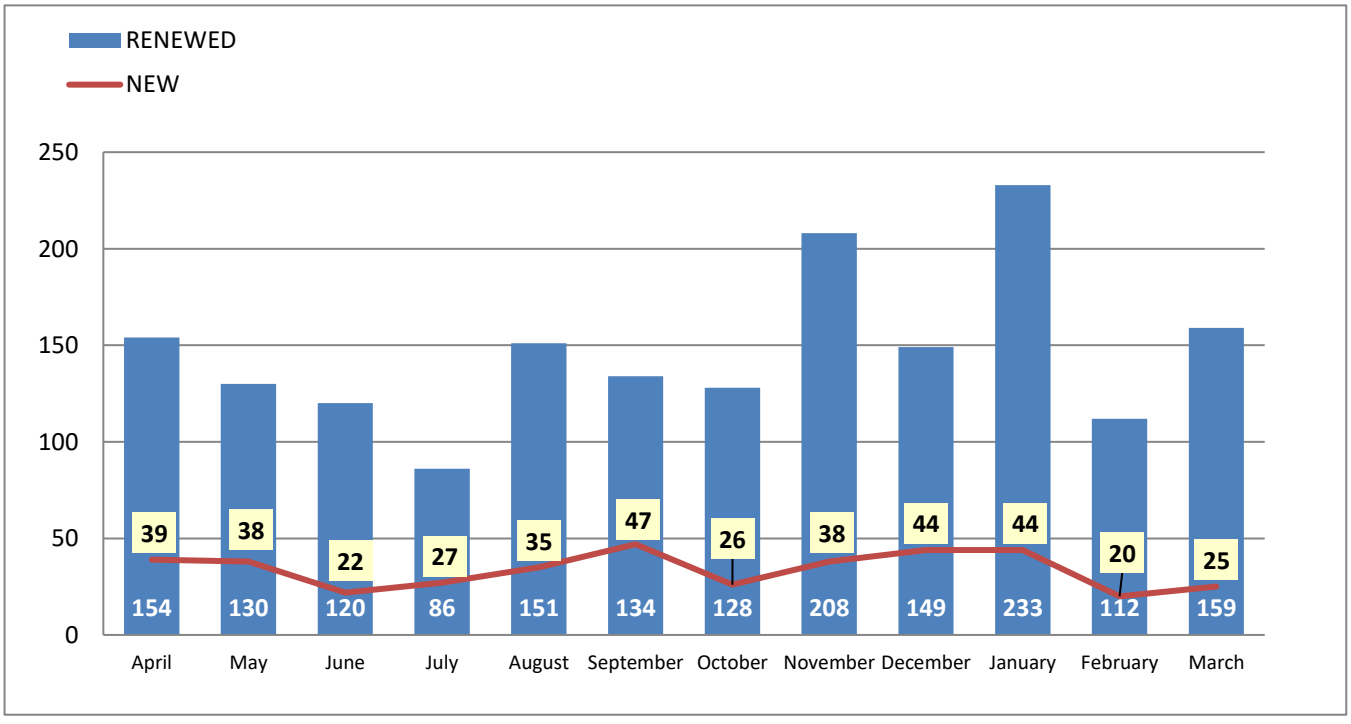


Figure 3: Vessel license issued per month in FY 24/25.

Fisher's Licence

Individual fishing licences are a key tool for managing the fishing industry. They help regulate fishing activities, monitor fishing practices for sustainability, and protect marine resources. Licence fees contribute to government revenue, which can be used to support fisheries research, management, and conservation efforts.

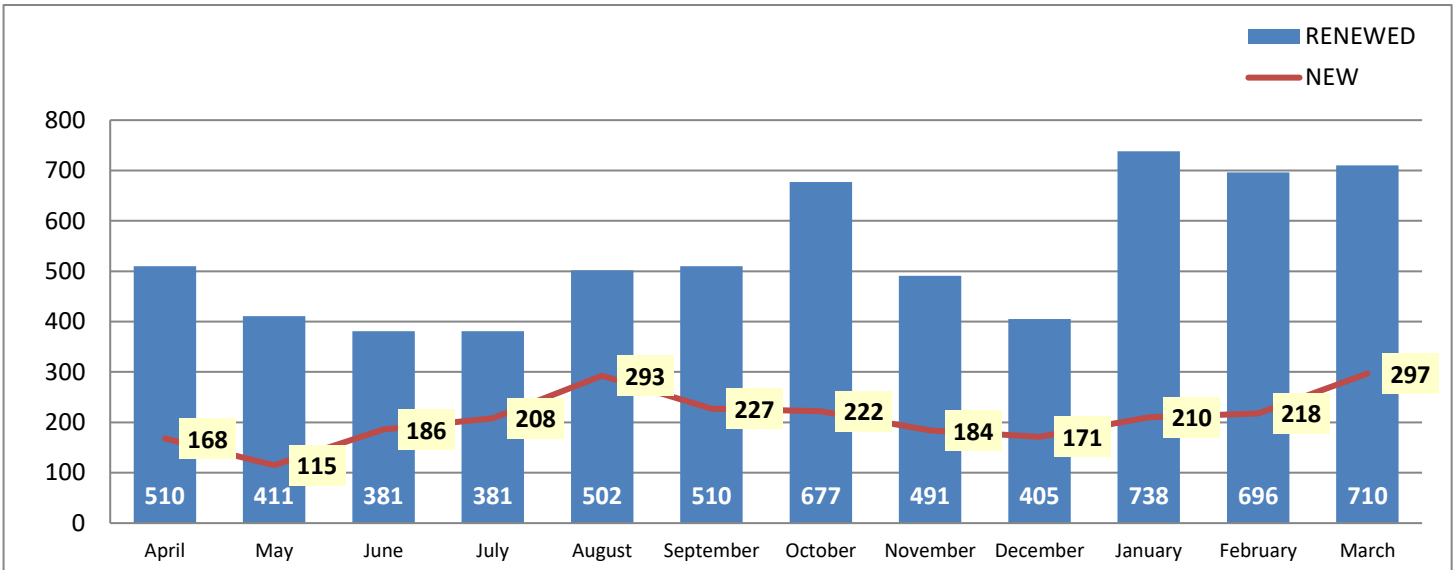


Figure 4: The graph represents the number of Fisher licences issued in FY 24/25.

A total of 2869 licences were issued to individual fishers in Q4 2024/25, representing a 33% increase when compared to Q3 2024/25. The graph in Figure 4 depicts the number of fishing licences issued in FY 2024/25, categorized by "Renewed" and "New" categories. Renewed licences peaked in January with 738 and dropped to their lowest in June and July at 381, before rising to 710 by March. New licences were highest in March at 297 and lowest in May at 115.

YEAR	% renewing license from the previous year
2017	
2018	19%
2019	26%
2020	24%
2021	25%
2022	20%
2023	38%
2024	59%
**2025	39%
	Average: 31%

** Jan-Mar

Table 2: FISHER & VESSEL LICENCES RENEWAL % ISSUED FROM 2018-2025. (EXCLUDING TEMPORARY PERMITS).

Table 2 presents data on the percentage of fisher and vessel licences renewed compared to the previous year from 2017 to **2025. The renewal rate shows a general upward trend, starting at 17% in 2017 and increasing to 39% in **2025. Notably, there are more significant increases in renewal percentages from 2019 (19%) to 2020 (26%) and from 2022 (30%) to 2023 (38%). The average renewal rate over these years is 31%. This upward trend indicates a growing retention of licence holders over the period, with the most substantial increase occurring in 2024. The rise in renewal rates is also attributed to enhanced compliance activities to encourage licence renewal and ensure adherence to the Fisheries Act.

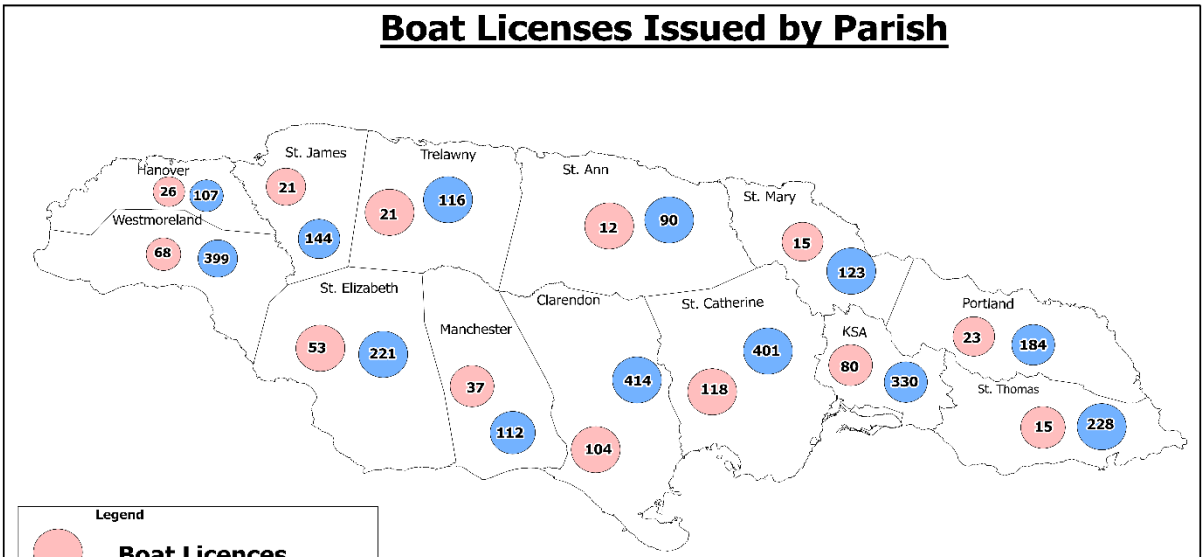


Figure 5: Vessel and Individual Licences issued by parish in Q3 2024/25.

Compliance

Jamaica's fishing industry is actively working to improve adherence to regulations, despite ongoing challenges such as operating without licenses, using restricted gear, and exceeding catch limits. There are also issues with some fishers underreporting their catches, complicating efforts to monitor fish stocks and enforce quotas effectively and accurately. In response, the National Fisheries Authority (NFA) has taken several steps to promote sustainable practices and fair competition, including establishing closed seasons for specific species, implementing catch quotas, and increasing patrol activities through the NFA Compliance Unit. The Authority has also introduced penalties for violations through enacting The Fisheries Act, 2018, to serve as a deterrent against non-compliance.

These measures have produced encouraging results, highlighted by an overall 39% renewal rate compared to the previous year. Such proactive initiatives are vital for fostering sustainable fishing practices and safeguarding the long-term health of Jamaica's aquatic ecosystems.

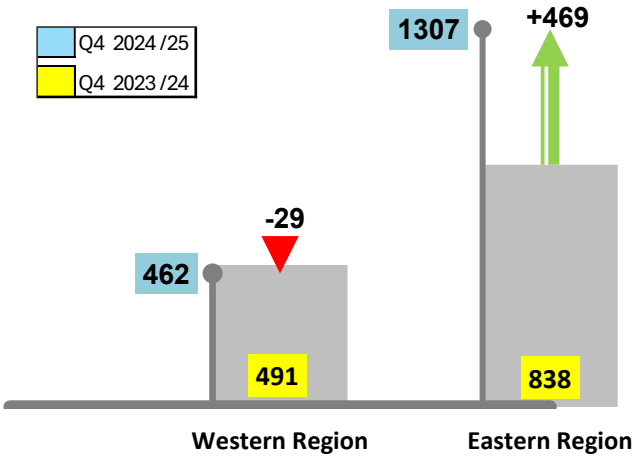


Figure 6: Site visits conducted by the Compliance Unit By region, Q4 2023/24 vs. Q4 2024/25.

Photo 6: NFA Fisheries Inspector training for the Lucea Harbour Fish Sanctuary, certificates being presented by Marine Police Sergeant Charles Campbell.

The graph (Figure 6) compares the number of site visits conducted by the Compliance Unit in Jamaica during the fourth quarter of 2023/24 and 2024/25, separated by region (Western and Eastern). Overall, there was a 33% increase in site visits by the compliance team, 1,329 in Q4 2023/24 compared to 1,769 in Q4 2024/25. When combining both regions, there were 440 more site visits executed in Q4 2024/25 compared to Q4 2023/24. This suggests an overall YoY increase in compliance activity by the Compliance Unit.

Photo 7: Mr. Richard Barco, the NFA's Chief Compliance Officer (Eastern), explains during an interview the necessary requirements for vessel markings to ensure compliance with the Fisheries Act.

Photo 8: NFA Compliance officer performing vessel inspection activities at a mooring site

The higher increase in site visits was said to be driven by a focus on the below-listed activities for the compliance team. These were:

- Increased sensitization and education sessions.
- Non-compliance or suspected violations.
- Specific initiatives targeting compliance.

The overall increase in site visits demonstrates the Compliance Unit's commitment to ensuring that the Fisheries Act and its regulations are adhered to within the fishing sector.

Table 3: FINES FOR OFFENCES UNDER THE FISHERIES ACT – 2018, FROM 2019 TO **2025.

2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	**2025	TOTAL
$2,642,000	$180,000	$1,145,000	$9,156,000	$4,806,700	$2,320,000	$140,000	$20,389,700

** January - March

Table 3 displays the data on fines collected from breaches of the Fisheries Act from 2019 to 2025. The total amount collected over these years is $20,389,700. The highest annual collection was in 2022, with $9,156,000, indicating a significant increase from 2021's $1,145,000. For the year 2024, $2,320,000 was collected in fines, representing 11% of the 6-year total of $20,389,700.

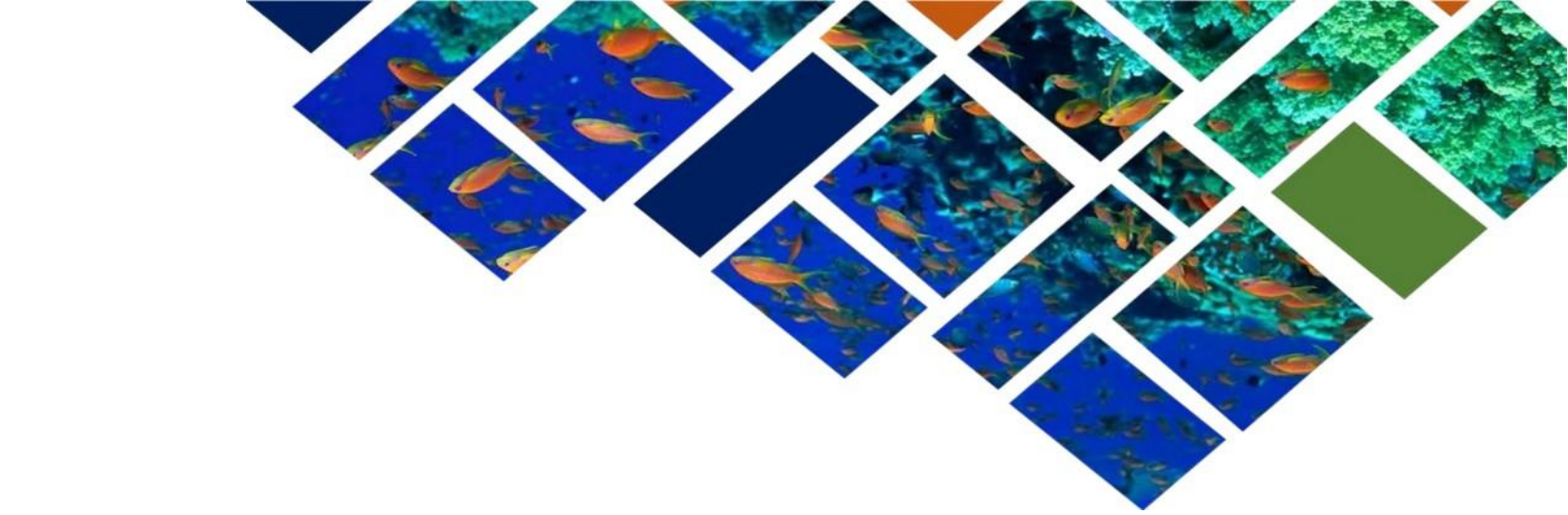
NFA In-field Activities

Photo 9: Representatives from our Capture Fisheries and Aquaculture Divisions were on hand to share insights and engage with the public.

Photo 10: NFA Fisheries Inspector training for the Lucea Harbour Fish Sanctuary, facilitated by Dr. Zahra Oliphant, Principal Director, and Ms. Denelia Alvaranga, Legal Officer.

Photo 11: Roxann Taylor from the NFA demonstrating ornamental fishing to a group of enthusiastic students during a recent outreach event in Kingston.

Photo 12 [L-R]: DeHaan Brown, Senior Director of Aquaculture Research at the NFA; Mrs. Avery Smikle, Principal Director of the Aquaculture Division; and Mrs. Tahjmani Rose-Fagan, Senior Director of Project Development, Monitoring, and Evaluation, visited the Mitchell Town community to evaluate one of Jamaica's largest fish ponds, which has been inactive for some time, and to discuss the scope of work for its renovation.



PRODUCTION PERFORMANCE OVERVIEW

Marine Production

The data collection system for the artisanal fisheries is predicated on landings at individual beaches, with the average number of days fished per month being 20 days. The fishing beaches are sampled in accordance with the annual sampling plan, and based on the data collected, production estimates are computed. The artisanal fish production is diverse and includes finfish species (such as snappers, parrotfish, jacks, grunts), lobster, and conch.

Data collection during the period under review recorded over 405 species of fish being caught, compared to 375 species over the previous quarter (Q3 2024/25), reflecting an 8% increase. The Sardines (*Sardinella* spp.), Black Jacks (*Caranx lugubris*), and Herring (*Opisthonema oglinum*) continue to account for most of the catch. The popular food fish Snapper showed high species diversity with over eleven different species being identified, including Dog, Glasseye, Grey, Lane, Mutton, Red, Silk, Vermillion and Yellowtail.

PARISH	SNAPPER	PARROT	DOCTOR	DOLPHIN FISH	JACK	GRUNT	BARACUDA	TUNA	MACKEREL	GROUPER	WRENCHMAN	TARPON	BUTTER FISH	KING FISH	MARLIN
St. Ann	✓	✓	✓	X	✓	X	✓	X	X	✓	✓	X	✓	X	✓
St. Mary	✓	✓	X	✓	✓	X	X	✓	✓	✓	X	X	X	X	✓
St. James	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Trelawny	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	✓	✓
Westmoreland	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
St. Elizabeth	✓	✓	✓	✓	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	✓	✓	✓	X
Clarendon	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	X
Manchester	✓	✓	X	X	✓	✓	X	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	X	✓	X
St. Catherine	✓	✓	✓	X	✓	✓	✓	X	✓	X	X	✓	✓	X	X
Portland	✓	✓	X	✓	✓	X	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	X	✓	✓	✓
KSA	✓	✓	✓	X	✓	✓	✓	X	✓	✓	X	✓	✓	✓	X
Hanover	✓	✓	X	✓	X	✓	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	X	✓	X	✓
St. Thomas	✓	✓	✓	X	✓	✓	X	X	✓	✓	X	✓	✓	✓	X

Table 4: COMMON FISH VARIETY CAUGHT PER PARISH IN Q4 2024/25.

Table 4 shows the common fish varieties caught per parish in Jamaica during the fourth quarter of 2024/25. Snapper and Parrot Fish were the most common as they were caught in all the Parishes. Most fish varieties are caught across various parishes, suggesting a diverse fishing landscape in Jamaica. Notably, Dolphin Fish and Grouper are only caught in a few parishes. The presence or absence of certain species in specific parishes indicates potential differences in resource availability and ecological conditions.

FY 2024/25		Marine Production Estimate			Value Summary			Value Summary USD		
	Month	Weight (MT)	Qtrly Fig (MT)	Quarter	Estimated Value J$	Qtrly Estimate J$	Quarter	Estimated Value USD	Qtrly Estimate USD	Quarter
2024	April	1,282.71		1st Quarter FY24/25	2,900,822,819.68		1st Quarter FY24/25	18,577,155.43		1st Quarter FY24/25
	May	839.33			1,908,095,637.83			12,155,798.16		
	June	1,221.35	3,343.39		2,753,391,053.71	7,562,309,511.23		17,688,494.50	48,421,448.09	
	July	723.28		2nd Quarter FY24/25	1,637,778,161.87		2nd Quarter FY24/25	10,475,076.19		2nd Quarter FY24/25
	August	1,092.48			2,478,374,338.48			15,822,103.80		
	September	1,943.14	3,758.90		4,419,981,169.85	8,536,133,670.20		28,141,991.40	54,439,171.39	
	October	1,358.96		3rd Quarter FY24/25	3,089,997,737.25		3rd Quarter FY24/25	19,681,514.25		3rd Quarter FY24/25
	November	1,374.56			3,125,470,482.10			19,907,455.30		
	December	1,243.76	3,977.28		2,828,047,276.86	9,043,515,496.21		18,013,039.98	57,602,009.53	
2025	January	1,404.15		4th Quarter FY23/25	3,172,406,541.88		4th Quarter FY23/25	20,335,939.37		4th Quarter FY23/24
	February	845.61			1,925,311,531.56			12,246,749.77		
	March	1,753.81	4,003.57		3,946,139,997.83	9,043,858,071.27		25,399,974.24	57,982,663.38	
	TOTAL	15,083.14	15,083.14		34,185,816,748.90	34,185,816,748.90		218,445,292.39	218,445,292.39	

Table 5: ESTIMATED MARINE FINFISH PRODUCTION (MT) AND VALUE (USD), FY 2024/25.

Table 5 shows an increase in both the weight of fish caught and the estimated value of those catches throughout 2024. This suggests an increase in fishing activity or more successful catches, potentially driven by seasonal factors, higher demand for specific fish, or improved fishing methods. The fish production data for FY 2024/25 shows a total marine finfish production weight of 15,083.14 metric tons. The estimated value of this production is approximately JMD34B, translating to around USD 218 M. The data suggests significant production in certain months, with September standing out, indicating a peak production period that contributed substantially to the annual total. For January–March 2025, marine finfish production was 4,003.57 MT (Table 5), which yields an approximate value of USD 57.9 Mil or JMD$ 9.04 billion (Table 5).

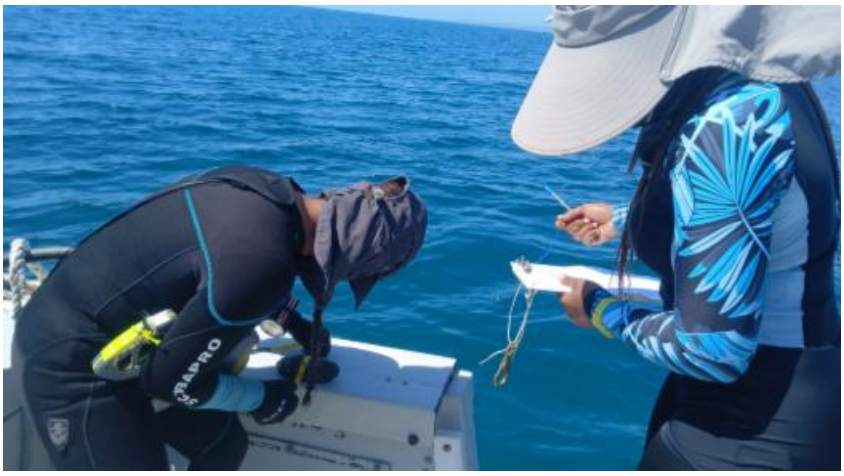


Photo 13: The NFA Capture Fisheries Research Team conducting a Sea Cucumber survey at sea.

Fishery	2024									2025			Total	% Composition
	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	January	February	March		
Atrisanal finfish	1,282.71	839.33	1,221.35	723.28	1,092.48	1,943.14	1,358.96	1,374.56	1,243.78	1,404.15	845.61	1,753.81	**15,083.16**	96.55
Sea Cucumber										6.52			**6.52**	0.04
Industrial Conch	79.1	136.62	28.38	31.59									**275.69**	1.76
Industrial Spiny Lobster*				2.67	21.51	2.74	77.62	39.16	31.96	26.33	6.95	48.23	**257.17**	1.65
Total Marine Production	**1361.81**	**975.95**	**1249.73**	**757.54**	**1113.99**	**1945.88**	**1436.58**	**1413.72**	**1275.74**	**1437.00**	**852.56**	**1802.04**	15,622.54	**100**

** Reported weight for whole, tail and head meat*

Close Season

Table 6: Marine fish production (MT) trend by fishery type, FY 2024/25.

In FY 2024/25, Jamaica's marine fish production demonstrated varied performance throughout the year, reflecting the dynamics of both artisanal and commercial fisheries. April recorded 1,361.81 MT, but production fluctuated in subsequent months. May experienced a sharp decline to 975.95 MT, representing a decrease of approximately 28%. June rebounded with a production of 1,249.73 MT, marking a 28% increase from May. As the year progressed, July's production declined by 39% to 757.54 MT, when compared to June, while August and September continued the trend of variability. The quarterly performance highlighted this inconsistency, with the first quarter totalling 3,343.39 MT, the second quarter of 3,758 MT exhibited a higher production due to fluctuations in environmental conditions and fishing activities.

Artisanal fishers played a significant role in the financial year 2024/25 performance, contributing a considerable portion of the total catch. The close season implemented for certain species aim to protect breeding populations and enhance sustainability.

Upon the season's opening, there was a marked increase in production, particularly for species like conch, where catches surged as fishers capitalized on the opportunity. Overall, the financial year highlighted the importance of monitoring both production trends and the ecological impact of fishing practices to ensure the long-term health of Jamaica's marine resources.

The cause of the marginal increase in Q4 marine fish production compared to Q3 remains undetermined. Nevertheless, the Authority has initiated a deep dive analysis to explore potential factors contributing to this marginal rise. This investigation aims to enhance understanding and inform future strategies within the fisheries sector. For FY 2024/25, artisanal finfish production totalled **15,083.16 MT**. Sea cucumber was reported in only January of the financial year 2024/25, amounting to **6.52 MT.** Industrial conch production showed a steady in-season production performance from **79.1 MT** in April to **31.59 MT** in July, peaking at **136.62 MT** in May. The total production of marine resources for FY 2024/25 was **15,622.54 MT**. Artisanal finfish is by far the largest contributor to marine production, making up the bulk of the total catch, accounting for **96.55%** of total marine production. Jamaica's lobster fishing season closes from April 1st to June 30th, allowing lobster populations to regenerate, while the conch fishery closes from August 1st through the end of February.

Fishery	2024 (USD)									2025 (USD)			Total	% Contribution
	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	January	February	March		
Atrisanal finfish	$ 18,577,155	$12,155,798	$17,688,494	$10,475,076	$15,822,104	$28,141,991	$19,681,514	$19,907,455	$18,013,040	20,335,598.01	12,246,544.19	25,399,547.87	$ 218,444,319	98.20
Sea Cucumber										161,052.48			$ 161,052	0.07
Industrial Conch	$ 514,140	$ 888,050	$ 184,496	$ 205,353									$ 1,792,039	0.81
Industrial Spiny Lobster*				$ 21,348	$ 172,100	$ 21,936	$ 620,979	$ 313,262	$ 255,714	$ 210,668	$ 55,607	$ 385,891	$ 2,057,506	0.92
Total Marine Production	**$ 19,091,295**	**$13,043,848**	**$17,872,991**	**$10,701,777**	**$15,994,204**	**$28,163,927**	**$20,302,493**	**$20,220,717**	**$18,268,754**	**$20,707,318**	**$12,302,152**	**$25,785,439**	**$ 222,454,916**	**100.00**

Table 7: Estimated value (USD) for marine fish production (MT) by fishery type, FY 2024/25.

Biological Data for Marine Species

Lobster

2024		Carapace Length (cm) Average	Tail Length (cm) Average	Telson Length (cm) Average	Body Depth Length (cm) Avg	Whole Weight (g) Average	Tail Weight (g) Average
Sample	1383						
male	576	7.07	20	6.16	5.21	639.18	261.87
female	481	6.69	20.33	6.23	4.88	558.18	229.57
Tar	127	6.08	10.85	3.63	4.42	620.31	
Scratched	198	5.41	9.51	3.29	3.82	633.83	

Table 8: BIOLOGICAL SAMPLING OF SPINY LOBSTER 2024 SUMMARY.

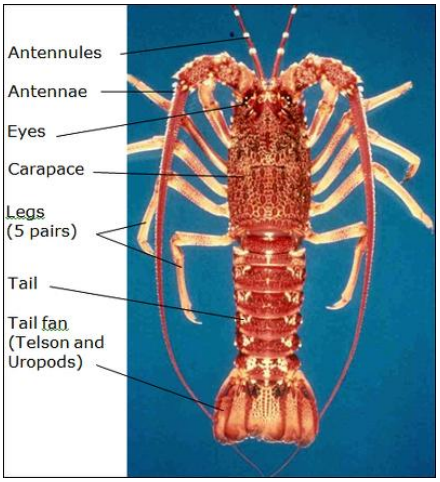


Photo 14: Labelling of a Caribbean spiny lobster. *Image credit: factanddetails*.

The 2024 lobster biological data measurements indicate notable differences between genders. Males show an average carapace length of 7.07 cm, while females average 6.69 cm. Similarly, the average tail length for males is 20 cm, compared to 20.33 cm for females. Whole weight also reflects these differences, with males averaging 639.18 g and females 558.18 g. The measurements for the "Tar" group average 6.08 cm for carapace length and 620.31 g for whole weight, indicating smaller sizes compared to both genders.

The t-test was performed to compare the size of male and female lobsters, focusing on carapace length and tail length. Males have an average carapace length of 7.07 cm, while females average 6.69 cm. For tail lengths, males average 20 cm, and females average 20.33 cm. The results showed that the difference in carapace length is significant, meaning that male lobsters are noticeably larger than females. This larger size can help males be more successful in mating, which is important for producing healthy offspring. In contrast, the difference in tail length may not be significant, as it might not affect their reproductive success as much. Overall, understanding these size differences helps in managing lobster populations better, ensuring that there are enough mature males for mating, which supports a healthier and more sustainable lobster population.

A total sample size of 2,765 lobsters, consisting of 576 males and 806 females, the male-to-female ratio is approximately 1:1.4. This indicates that for every male lobster caught, there are about 1.4 female lobsters. Consequently, the likelihood of randomly catching a female lobster is around 58.2%, while the probability of catching a male lobster is approximately 20.8%. This relatively balanced ratio suggests a healthier population structure, which can positively influence mating dynamics and reproductive success within the species. Understanding this ratio is vital for effective management strategies aimed at sustaining lobster populations.

Conch

YEAR	Samples	Male %	Female %	Avg Weight - 50% (g)	Avg Weight - dirty (g)
2021	818	37%	61%	223.89	0
2022	3361	41%	59%	128.08	142.60
2023	3759	42%	58%	136.50	175.16
2024	4219	43%	57%	130.99	135
TOTAL	**12157**				

Table 9: BIOLOGICAL SAMPLING RESULTS OF INDUSTRIAL CONCH LANDED FROM 2021 TO 2024.

The male-to-female ratio in conch samples over the four years reveals significant trends in population demographics. In 2021, males comprised 37% of the total samples, while females accounted for a dominant 61%. This trend shifted slightly in 2022, with males increasing to 41%, indicating a potential adjustment in the population structure. However, in 2023, the male percentage had a marginal increase to 42%, with females at 55%. By 2024, the ratio remained similar, with males at 43% and females at 57%. This consistent predominance of females suggests an imbalance that could impact reproductive dynamics, necessitating management strategies to ensure a sustainable population.

The average weight data offers critical insights into the health of the conch population over the years. The "Avg Weight - 50%" indicates a decline from 223.89 g in 2021 to 130.99 g in 2024, suggesting that conchs are either growing at a slower rate or that there is a higher population density of juveniles impacting overall averages. Additionally, the "Avg Weight - Dirty" reflects a similar downward trajectory, decreasing from 142.60 g in 2022 to 135 g in 2024. This decreasing trend in both weight metrics raises concerns about the underlying factors affecting the growth and health of the conch populations, which may be linked to environmental stressors or changes in migration patterns. The persistent predominance of females, coupled with declining weights, highlights potential risks to reproductive success and overall population viability. It emphasizes the necessity for ongoing monitoring and further research into the factors contributing to this decline, ensuring that the population remains sustainable in the long term.

Aquaculture Production

In FY 2024/25, the Aquaculture sector had an average production area of approximately 592 acres. The total number of registered fish farms stood at 114, including hatcheries and Production. Aquaculture Production was 614.07 MT for FY 2024/25, with the 4th Quarter (January – March) recording 130 MT of food fish production.

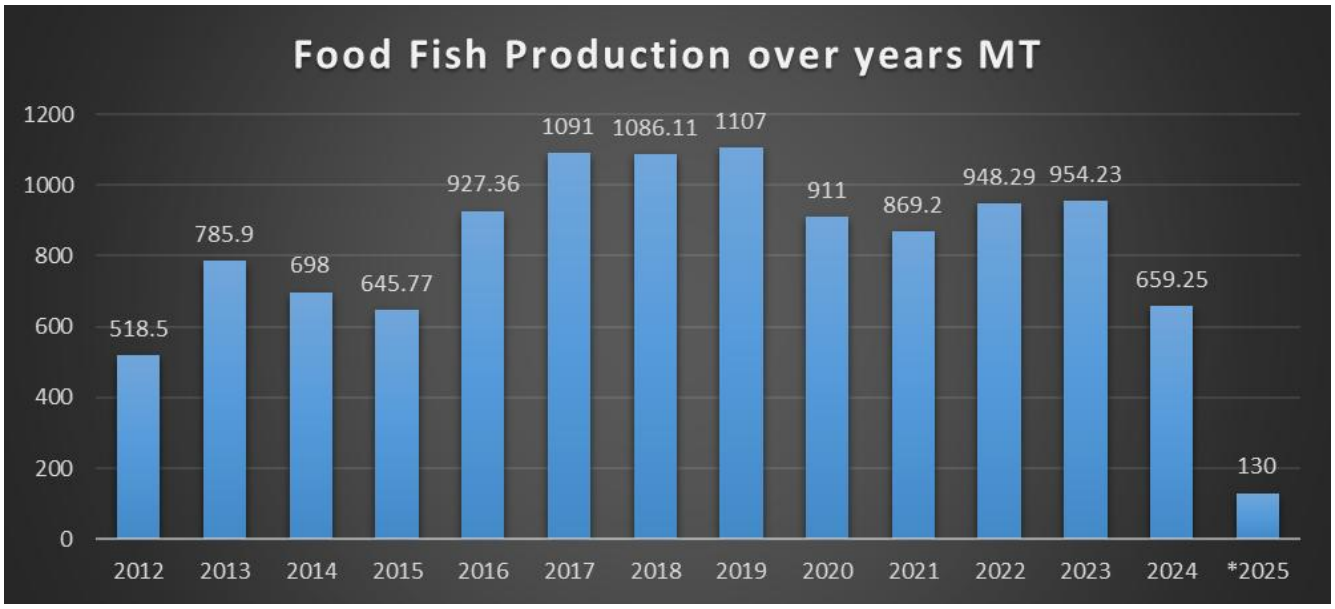


Figure 8: Aquaculture production in MT from 2012 to 2025.
* 2025 – January - March

Photo 15: NFA's Aquaculture team provides guidance to fishers of 'Western Supreme Oysters' on how to deploy oyster spats.

Photo 16 (L-R): NFA's Calese Hare, Aquaculture Research Officer, in discussion with State Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries & Mining Hon. Franklin Witter at an agriculture show in St. Mary.

Figure 8 illustrates the trends in food fish production from 2012 to 2025. During FY 2024/25, a total of 614.07 MT of food fish were farmed, with an estimated value of USD 4.1 million or JMD 635.5 million. Notably, tilapia production declined by 31% in FY 2024/25 compared to FY 2023/24. Conversely, aquaculture seed stock increased by 82% during the same period relative to the previous fiscal year. The observed disparity between the increase in feedstock production and the decline in overall production can be attributed to two primary factors:

A) Large-scale fish farmers typically produce their own feedstock, and the reported feedstock figures reflect only those produced by the NFA.

B) The industry experienced the exit of a major fish farmer during this reporting period, impacting overall production metrics.

In comparing aquaculture production performance between FY 2024/25 and FY 2023/24 recorded a 31% decline thus raising concerns about the state of the sector. Significant factors contributing to this decline include farmers inadequately feeding their fish ponds, which has adversely affected growth rates, as well as the exit of a major fish farmer in St. Elizabeth. In response, the National Fisheries Authority Aquaculture Division will be increasing its sensitization campaign to educate fish farmers on the importance of adequately feeding their fish ponds and the economic benefits of improving this practice.

Photo 17: Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries & Mining Hon. Floyd Green engages the NFA's team at their Oyster Bar.

FY 2024/25	Total Acres	Current Acres in Production	Acres in Production %	Total Harvest (MT)
April - June	839.06	599.61	71%	173.3
July – Sept.	720	593.46	82%	165.1
Oct. – Dec.	750	592.86	79%	145.6
Jan. – Mar.	750	597.01	80%	130

Table 10: AQUACULTURE TOTAL PRODUCTION ACREAGE AND HARVEST TOTAL FOR FY 2024/25.

In FY 2024/25, Jamaica's aquaculture sector demonstrated a nuanced performance characterized by a correlation between total production and the acreage in use. The total acres in production for the year averaged around 596.07, with varying levels of production throughout the quarters. For instance, during the January-March period, production reached 130 MT, with a total acre utilization of 80%. However, as the year progressed, this percentage fluctuated; the April to June quarter declined to 71%, resulting in a total production of 599.61 MT. This correlation indicates that while the acreage is a critical factor, other variables also significantly impact overall production levels.

Total harvest for FY 2024/25 saw fluctuations with a reported total of 173.1 MT in the first quarter, decreasing to 165.1 MT in the second quarter, which represents a decline of approximately 5%. The third quarter experienced a further dip, with production at 145.6 MT, with 79% of total acres in use. By the final quarter, total production further declined to 130 MT. These variations in total harvest reflect the complexities within the sector, emphasizing the need for improved practices to enhance productivity and optimize the use of available acreage.

Parishes	Acres
St Catherine	479.81
Clarendon	87.45
St Elizabeth	11
Westmoreland	3.35
Hanover	9
St Thomas	2.5
St Ann	2
Portland/ St Mary	4.5

Table 11: AQUACULTURE ACRES IN PRODUCTION BY PARISH FOR FY 2024/25.

Photo 18: NFA's Extension Officer Dowen Wynter conducting extension service to a local fisher in Portland.

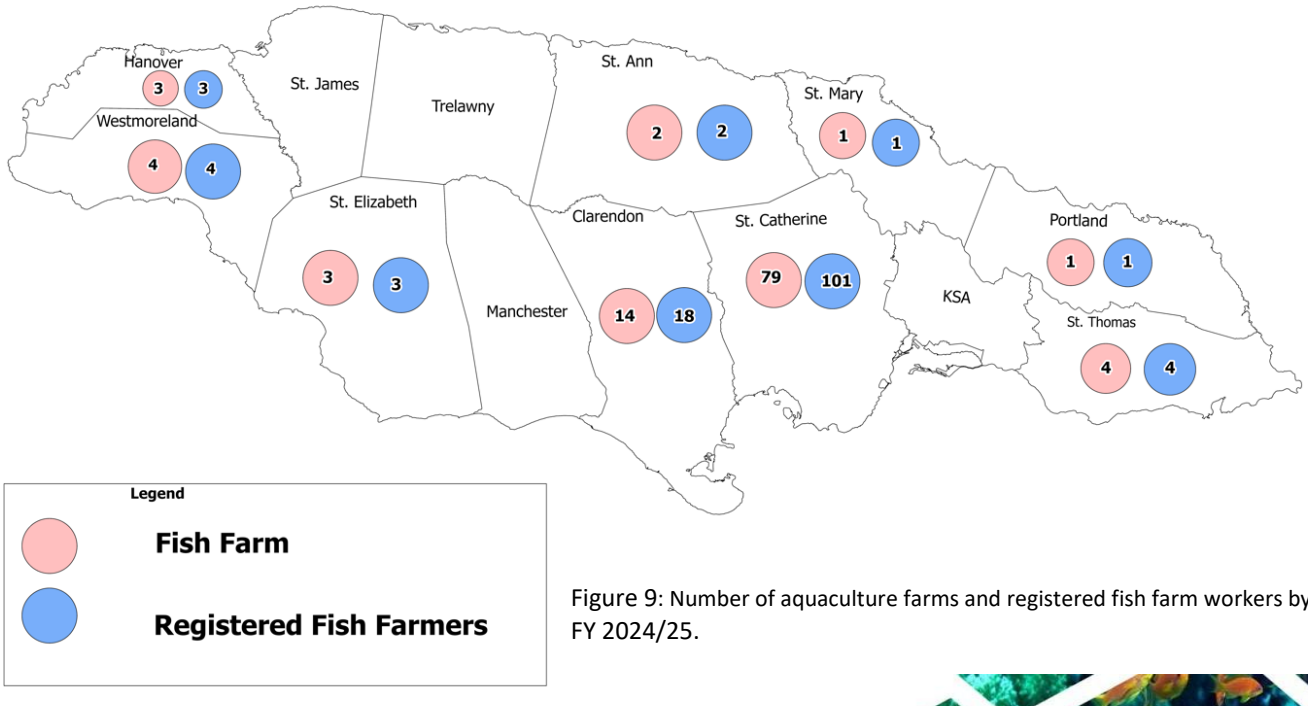


Figure 9: Number of aquaculture farms and registered fish farm workers by parish, in FY 2024/25.

ECONOMIC PERFORMANCE OVERVIEW

Socio-Economic Status

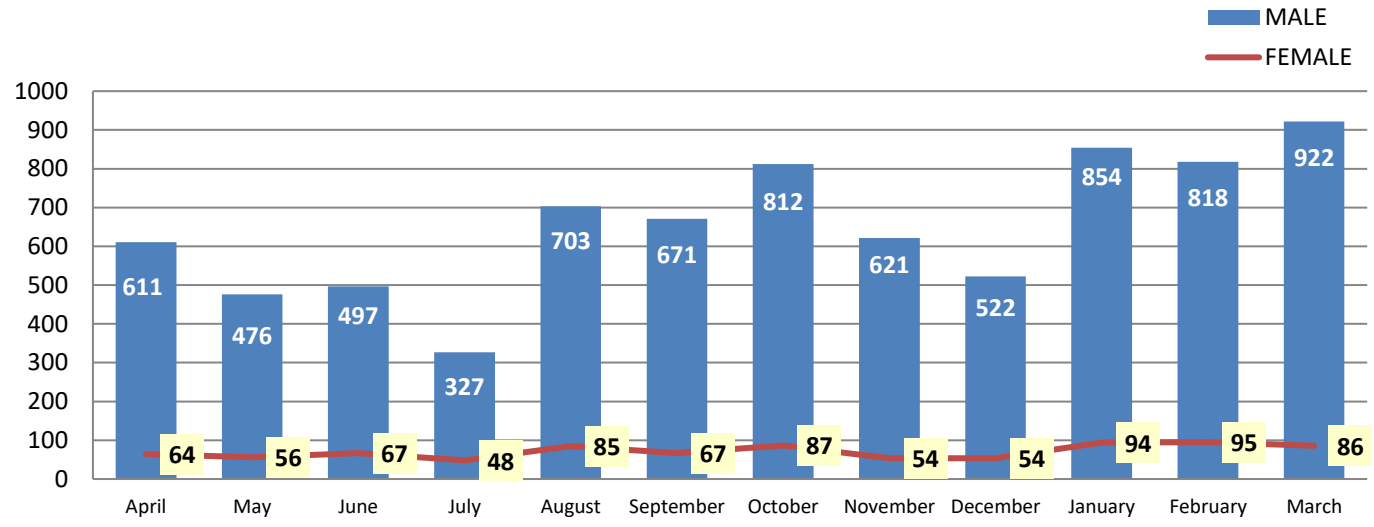


Figure 10: GENDER OF FISHERS RECEIVING LICENCES IN FY 2024/25.

The graph illustrates the distribution of male and female fishers receiving licenses throughout the financial year 2024/25, highlighting notable trends in the male-to-female ratio. In April, there were 611 males and 64 females, resulting in a significant male predominance. March saw a peak in licences, with a total of 922 males and 86 females, reflecting a growing trend in male participation. However, as the year progressed, the numbers fluctuated, with notable declines in female participation in July (48), despite a slight recovery in subsequent months. By December, the male count was 522, while the female count dropped to 54, indicating a consistent disparity in licensing trends. Nevertheless, for the reporting period January-March, recorded above average performance for both genders, males peaking at 922 in March and females in February at 95.

Throughout the year, the total number of licenses issued reveals a stark contrast between male and female fishers. By the end of March, the cumulative totals show 7,834 males and 857 females, resulting in a male-to-female ratio of approximately 10.18:1, indicating that there are about 10 males for every female licensed fisher. This disparity highlights the challenges faced in achieving gender balance within the fishing industry, as females consistently represent a smaller percentage of licensed fishers. The fluctuations in monthly data suggest that while male participation remains robust, efforts may be needed to encourage and support female fishers to ensure a more equitable representation in the sector moving forward.

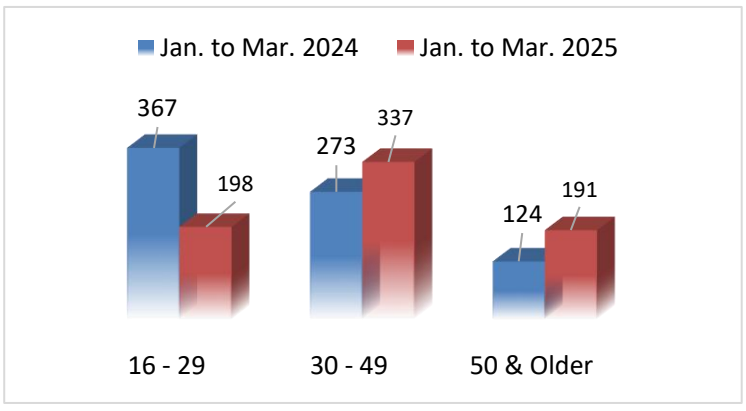


Figure 11: AGE OF NEW FISHERS APPLICATION Q4 2023/24 vs Q4 2024/25.

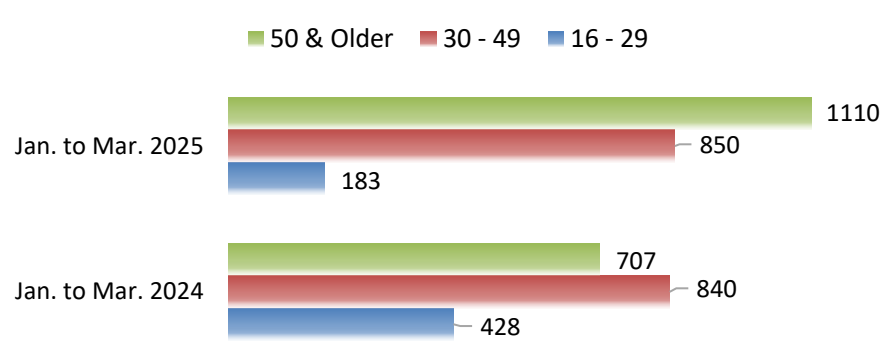


Figure 12: AGE OF RENEWAL FISHERS APPLICATION Q4 2023/24 vs Q4 2024/25.

The analysis of the two graphs comparing new and renewed fishers from January to March 2024 and 2025 reveals significant shifts in age group distributions. For new licenses, the 16-29 age group recorded a decline from 367 in 2024 to 198 in 2025, reflecting a decline of approximately 46%. The 30-49 age group experienced a rise, increasing from 273 to 337, which represents an increase of about 23.4%. The 50+ age group recorded an increase, moving from 124 in 2024 to 191 in 2025, indicating an increase of around 54%. These trends suggest a continued interest among the middle and 50+ aged fishers, while the decline in the younger age group cohort doesn't necessarily reflect a decline in interest. The 2024 numbers were recorded during the increased sensitization campaign for the NFA online registration platform, IRIEFINS.

In contrast, the renewed licenses reveal varied trends across age groups. The 16-29 age group experienced a decline of approximately 57.2%, dropping from 428 in 2024 to 183 in 2025. However, the 30-49 age group recorded a minuscule increase of 1%, from 840 to 850. Additionally, the 50+ age group also experienced an increase of approximately 36%, rising from 707 in 2024 to 1110 in 2025. These trends highlight the need for targeted efforts to boost renewal rates among younger fishers while demonstrating that the older and middle-aged fishers are renewing their licences, suggesting that strategies to engage and support these groups are effective.

Photo 19: NFA's LICENSING & REGISTRATION UNIT CONDUCTING FISHER REGISTRATION.

Gross Domestic Product (GDP) Status

The fisheries sector has shown remarkable growth in recent years, particularly in 2022 and 2023, with a notable impact on both agriculture and overall GDP. The sector continues to grow steadily, as reflected in 2024, with fisheries remaining a vital driver of agricultural growth. Its increasing contribution to GDP underscores its growing significance in the national economy. Sustainable management and market adaptation will be key to maintaining this positive trend in the coming years.

GDP Contribution Based on Basic Prices (excluding taxes and subsidies on products) - $'Million							
Total GDP	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
	15,650.65	15,810.81	13,880.88	14,670.67	17,100.04	19,420.00	20,586.00
Agriculture, Forestry & Fishing	1,014.84	1,018.94	1,004.30	1,087.60	1,185.94	1,117.90	1,752.70
Fishing	94.58	111.02	109.04	90.16	116.29	209.68	207.53
% Contribution of fishing to Agriculture	9.32%	10.90%	10.86%	8.29%	9.81%	18.76%	11.84%
% Contribution of fishing to total GDP	0.60%	0.70%	0.79%	0.61%	0.68%	1.08%	1.01%

Table 12: GDP CONTRIBUTION (USD $' MILLION) BY THE FISHERIES SECTOR TO AGRICULTURE AND JAMAICA'S GDP.

The table detailing GDP contributions indicates a notable decline in the fishery sector's contribution to agriculture and Jamaica's overall GDP between 2023 and 2024. In 2023, the fishing sector contributed approximately $209.68 million, which represented about 18.7% of agricultural contributions and 1.08% of total GDP. However, by 2024, this contribution dropped to $207.53 million, reflecting a decrease in percentage contribution to agriculture to approximately 11.8% and a minimal percentage decline of 0.06% for total GDP. The decline in overall production for the sector was a result of a decline in Aquaculture. However, marine production saw a marginal increase over previous year.

The consistent percentage of total GDP suggests that while the absolute contribution has seen a slight decline, the overall economic impact relative to GDP remains stable. Continued monitoring and strategic planning will be essential to mitigate the effects of such natural disasters in the future and to enhance the resilience of the fishery sector within Jamaica's broader agricultural framework. Addressing these challenges will be crucial for sustaining the fishery sector's contribution to both agriculture and the national economy.

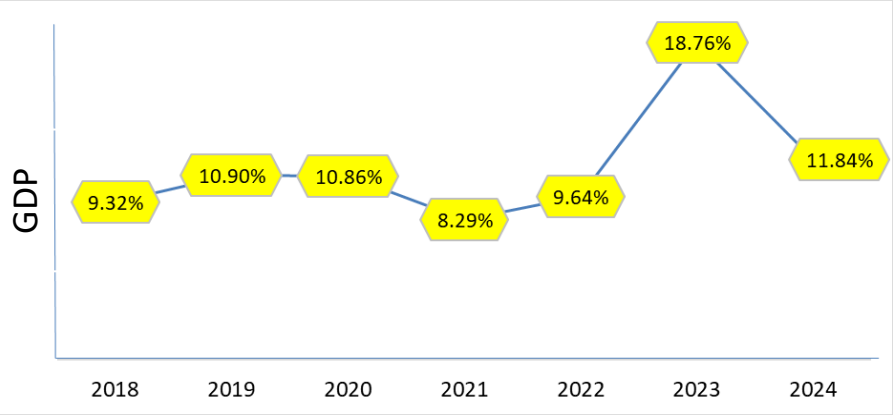


Figure 13: THE PERCENTAGE CONTRIBUTION OF FISHING TO THE AGRICULTURE SECTOR FROM 2018 TO 2024.

In monetary terms, using an exchange rate of USD 1 to JMD 155.65, the fishery sector's contribution in 2023 translates to approximately 33.12 billion JMD, while the 2024 contribution equates to around 32.80 billion JMD. This slight decrease in monetary value, despite the stable percentage of total GDP, underscores the importance of the fishing sector within Jamaica's economy. Continued investment and support for recovery initiatives will be necessary to restore the fishing sector's output and enhance its contribution to both agriculture and the national economy.

Fish Price Index

The local market for marine fish was dominated by reef fish and offshore pelagic species, as these are the primary target species. Prices remained stable throughout the period despite the passing of Hurricane Beryl and other adverse weather. The table provides a valuable snapshot of common marine fish prices at the national level.

PARISH	SNAPPER	PARROT	DOCTOR	JACK	GRUNT	BARACUDA	TUNA	WENCHMAN	KING FISH
St. Ann	$1,100	$1,100	$950	$900	$950	$900	$1,200	$950	
St. Mary	$1,000	$1,100	$900	$950	$900	$950	$1,100	$900	
St. James	$1,150	$1,150	$950	$1,000	$900	$900	$1,150	$1,000	$900
Portland	$1,100	$1,200	$900	$950	$850	$950	$1,100		$1,000
Trelawny	$1,100	$1,150	$900	$950	$900	$1,000		$950	$950
Westmoreland	$1,200	$1,100	$950	$900	$900	$950	$1,100	$950	$900
St. Elizabeth	$1,100	$1,000	$1,000	$950	$850	$950			$950
St. Catherine	$1,200	$1,200	$1,000	$1,000	$900	$950		$950	$1,000
Kingston	$1,200	$1,300	$950	$950	$950	$900			$950
Hanover	$1,100	$1,200	$950	$950	$900	$950	$1,300	$1,000	$950
St. Thomas	$1,000	$1,000	$950	$900	$850	$950		$900	$1,000
AVERAGE	**$1,114**	**$1,136**	**$945**	**$945**	**$895**	**$941**	**$1,158**	**$950**	**$956**

Table 13: THE AVERAGE PRICE AT FIRST PURCHASE FROM FISHERS BY PARISH DURING THE PERIOD JAN. – MAR. 2025.

(lowest prices highlighted in green and highest in red for most common).

The analysis of average fish prices across various parishes in Jamaica during the period from January to March 2025 reveals notable disparities in pricing. St. Thomas recorded the lowest average price at $944, making it the most affordable location for consumers. In contrast, Hanover exhibited the highest average price at $1,033, highlighting a 9% difference compared to St. Thomas. Other parishes, such as St. Catherine and Kingston, also reflected higher prices, averaging around $1,000, while Westmoreland and Trelawny maintained prices closer to the average, at $994 and $988, respectively. This range showcases the variability in fish prices influenced by local supply, demand, and regional fishing conditions.

Overall, the average fish price across all parishes was approximately $1,000. The price variations indicate that while some areas offer more affordable fish options, others may impose higher costs due to factors such as availability and transportation expenses. The significant price difference between the cheapest and most expensive parishes underscores the need for consumers to consider purchasing fish in bulk to afford them an opportunity to negotiate a bulk price.

Understanding these dynamics can help inform purchasing decisions and highlight the economic factors affecting fish prices in Jamaica. Snapper and Parrot fish were the most expensive fish across all parishes, with prices ranging from $1,000 to $1,300. Grunt had the lowest prices, with a range of $850 to $950. There's a noticeable consistency in pricing across parishes, with relatively small price differences between locations for each fish.

Regarding specific fish species, the snapper fish in Kingston and St. Catherine is priced at $1,200, making it less affordable compared to other options, particularly since St. Thomas offers it for $1,000, which is the cheapest location for both parrot fish and snapper. Meanwhile, the parrot fish in Kingston costs $1,300, positioning it as one of the more expensive choices. Other species, such as the jack fish, are on average around $950, which is competitive in pricing. The grunt fish has the lowest average price at $895, making it the cheapest option overall, which represents a price difference of approximately 30% when compared to the parrot and snapper fish. The parrot fish at $1,136, snapper at $1,114, and tuna at $1,158 record the highest average prices. This pricing analysis highlights the diversity in fish species availability and their associated costs, emphasizing the economic factors influencing consumer choices in the Jamaican fish market.

Photo 20: Local seafood restaurant price board displaying varied seafood cuisines for sale.
Source: Travel Archives

CONCLUSION

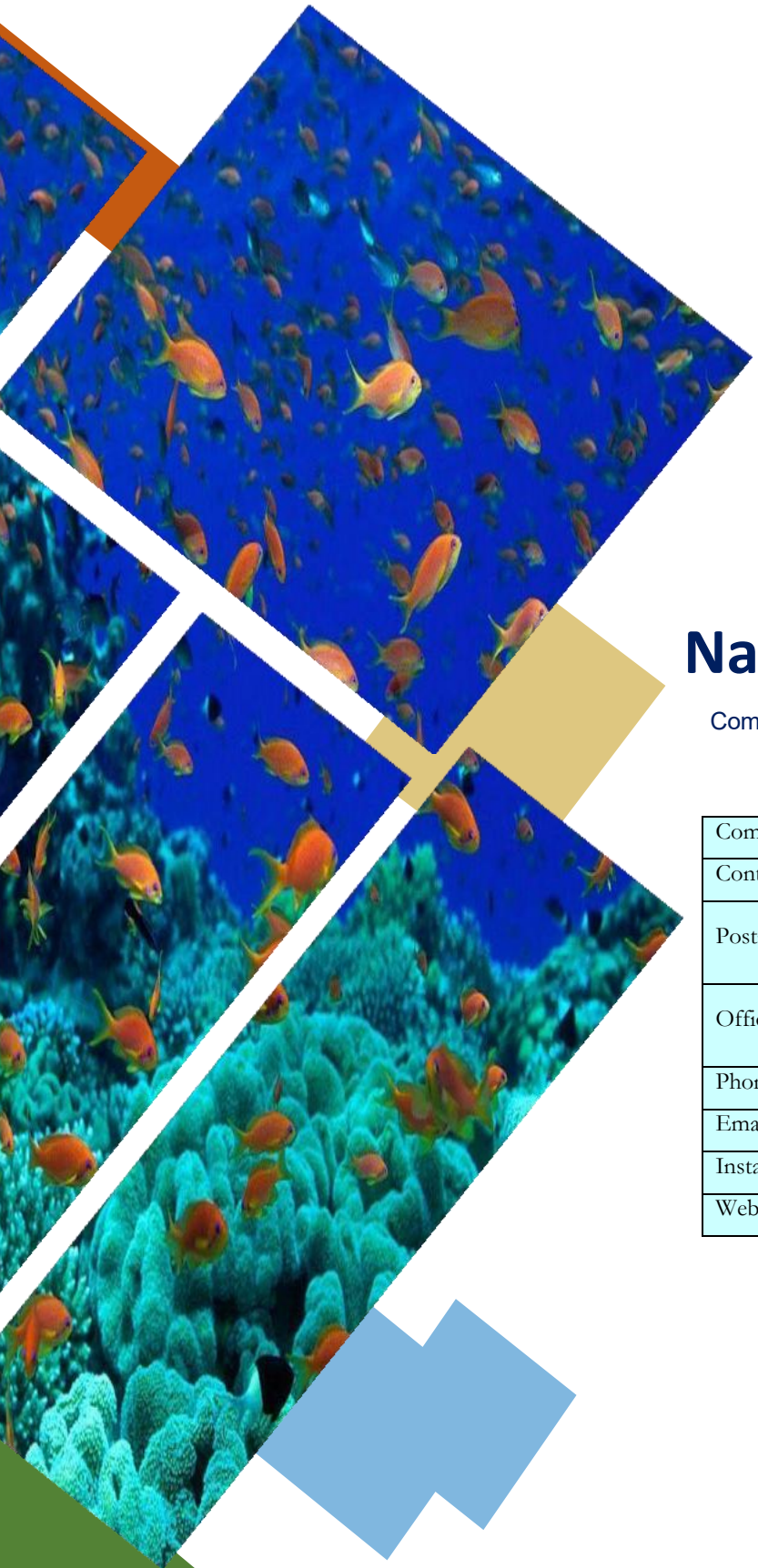
In conclusion, the Jamaican fisheries sector has demonstrated significant achievements and resilience over the past year, reflecting the National Fisheries Authority's (NFA) commitment to sustainable development. The sector has seen a substantial contribution to Jamaica's economy, with marine production earnings reaching USD 222 million for the financial year 2024/25. This underscores the sector's importance as a major foreign exchange earner and its role in ensuring food security and socio-economic stability, particularly in coastal communities.

The report highlights notable improvements in licensing activities. There was a 23% increase in new licence applications among the 30-49 age group, indicating a continued interest from middle-aged individuals in the fisheries sector. Additionally, license renewals rose by 36% in the 50+ age group, suggesting continued engagement and compliance within the sector for the industry's most senior fishers. The artisanal fishing category remains dominant, accounting for a significant 98% of licences issued, which emphasizes its critical role in supporting local economies and food security.

The aquaculture sector has experienced a decline in overall production for FY 2024/25, yet it holds significant potential for future growth. To harness this potential, the NFA's Aquaculture Division has expanded its technical team to enhance sensitization, training, and research activities. These efforts aim to bolster the sector's development and contribute to Jamaica’s economic diversification.

Overall, the Jamaican fisheries sector continues to show growth potential, with a 4% increase in vessel licences being renewed year-over-year. The NFA's efforts to enhance compliance and data collection, alongside a robust focus on sustainable practices, have been pivotal in these achievements. As the sector continues to evolve, ongoing investments and strategic initiatives will be essential to ensure its sustainability and continued contribution to Jamaica's economy.

As we look ahead, the continued collaboration between the NFA and various stakeholders will be essential in overcoming the challenges that lie ahead. By fostering partnerships and promoting participatory governance, we can collectively enhance the sustainability and profitability of the fisheries sector. Together, we can ensure that Jamaica's rich marine resources are preserved for future generations while supporting the livelihoods of those who depend on them.



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