Problems on Compilation of Data on Fish and Fish Products

SANTOSO BIN KARTODIMEJO
Fish Inspection and Quality Control
Directorate of Fisheries, Indonesia

Introduction

Indonesia is an archipelago which consists of more than 17,000 islands. Fish is one of our major sources of protein and non-oil revenue for the country.

During the last ten years (1985 to 1994), total fish production increased from 3,395,562 tonnes in 1985 to 4,013,831 tonnes in 1994, representing an increase of almost 20% over this period. About 56.1% of the fish captured from marine and inland open waters is consumed fresh and the remaining 43.9% goes to fish processing plants, including drying/salting, fermenting, smoking, freezing, canning and fish meal.

The latest statistics available on types and quantities of fish products is for 1994.

Technical Procedure of Compiling Data

The Directorate-General of Fisheries, Indonesia has established a standard operating procedure for compiling data on fish and fish products. The procedure is outlined below :

1. Institutions

The Directorate-General of Fisheries (DGF) determines the aims and methodology of the survey and instructs the Provincial Fisheries Services to compile the data, analyze the data and produce the national fisheries statistics.

The Provincial Fisheries Services produces a survey form with reference to the instructions of the DGF and in turn supervise the District Fisheries Services to collect the data, analyse it and produce the provincial fisheries statistics.

The District Fisheries Services in turn supervises field operators, processes the data collected by the operators and make a report of district fisheries statistics. One copy of their report is submitted to the Provincial Fisheries Services and another copy is sent to the DGF. The field operators obtain the data directly from processing plants and fill up the prescribed questionnaire forms.

2. Types of Fisheries Data

Types of data collected can originate from the following fields :

1. Marine fisheries,
2. Open inland water fisheries,
3. Brackishwater culture, and
4. Fresh water culture, both in ponds and in rice plants.

Figures from first two include fish production and utilization.

3. Method of Collecting Data

Data on fish production can be obtained from fisheries industries, landing places, and fisheries villages.

As stated above, during the survey, field operators are provided with forms which are approved by the DGF. Data from landing places is collected by field operators once a week, either on a Monday or Wednesday.

It is realised that not all fish captured is always landed at these landing places, since such facilities are not available in certain areas, particularly in remote areas. However, these villages are important with respect to compiling data on fish production. Collecting data from these fishing villages is therefore carried out quarterly. In addition, all fisheries industries are required to submit reports on their production to the government monthly.

Problems of Compiling Data

1. Geographical condition of the country

As Indonesia is an archipelago comprising 17,000 small and big islands, it is indeed time-consuming to collect data on fish and fish products.

2. Lack of manpower

All field operators are civil servants of the Fisheries Service. They not only collect fisheries data, but also give other necessary services such as training and exhibition to the public and fisheries sector. The number of field operators is insufficient for all the duties given to them. This situation can sometimes lead to delays in requests for data.

3. Bureaucracy

Indonesia is a big country consisting of 27 provinces, 243 districts, and 5,556 villages. Any information/data requested has to go through bureaucratic procedures, from the lowest level (village authority) to the highest hierarchy of authority (viz. the respective Departments). It is also time-consuming to obtain data/information.

4. Confidentiality

With respect to utilization of fisheries resources, it is comparatively easy to obtain data on fish species and fish products from the fisheries industries. However, it is not the case with obtaining accurate quantitative information from them. It is believed that such information is privileged reserved and sometimes even considered as confidential to the field operators.

5. Type of products

Indonesian fish processors are commonly considered as traditional fish processors and modern fish processors depending on their processing technology used and their scale of production. With regard to traditional products, any given type of product may be made from fish of very different origins, while the fish species used as raw material, and the processing techniques may also equally be different from place to place. As a result, the quality of the products may vary among the producers. For this reason, it is difficult to establish codes of practice for traditional products. For the purpose of compiling this inventory of fish products, it is not easy to choose a product that can represent its specifications. The alternative is to detail all variations of the product, which is an equally unacceptable exercise.