

Kingdom of Morocco



Ministry of Agriculture
and Maritime Fisheries

*"Fishing,
a well-established
tradition in Morocco"*



Department of Maritime Fisheries
B.P. 476, Agdal, Rabat, Morocco
Phone : (+212) 537 688 295 - Fax : (+212) 537 688 294
E-mail : contact@moroccanseafood.com
Web site : www.moroccanseafood.com


MOROCCAN SEAFOOD
Naturally



Morocco, a rich marine tradition

Morocco is endowed with fisheries resources which are considered a national pride. No wonder then if Morocco, a country that occupies a place among the champions of the fishing industry, possesses an exceptional natural heritage, including seas along with multiple and various soils, all bearing a strong identity, quality products, authenticity and tradition.

Raw or processed, Moroccan fish products are the result of a maintained and constantly renewed know-how.

Moroccan artisanal, inshore and offshore fishing contributes largely, as it has done for ages, to the image of excellence of Moroccan seafood, which asserts itself day by day as a rich source of a good quality.



Authenticity First and Foremost !

Morocco is committed to guarantee the authenticity of fishery products, with respect for the principles of quality, identification, transparency and traceability.

Sought after by the most demanding markets, Moroccan fish products combine naturalness, authenticity and tradition, which give them their flavour and a guaranteed quality.

Synonymous with safe investment, the Moroccan sea's reputation has been built through the authenticity of the species living in it, and which have become over time quality emblems, and real references both to consumers and to specialists of marine oceanography.



The authentic flavours of Moroccan marine world.

The marine diversity found in the waters of the Kingdom offers a range of products renowned for their quality and authenticity such as the Moroccan sardines, Moroccan anchovies, or the Moroccan octopus.



Moroccan Sardine... The authenticity par excellence

The *Sardina pilchardus* (Walbaum, 1792) is a species known and internationally recognized: it's the traditional sardine, commonly described as the "true sardine," the one that has been appreciated from time immemorial.

This recognition, on a strong competitive market, is related to the expertise of Moroccan professionals who have devoted years of effort to make it appealing to consumers.

The Moroccan Pilchardus sardine is a delicate nutritious and healthy product. This pelagic species which is really delicate is highly appreciated, in terms of taste and flavour, by connoisseurs of the world marine treasures.

Moroccan Sardine ... A rare find

Sardina pilchardus Walbaum has a very high economic importance: indeed, other countries are trying to use neighbouring species under the name of sardine and thus to benefit from its commercial reputation. Morocco, which is a privileged member of the International Committee of the Sardine Pilchardus (CISAP), that includes Portugal, Spain and France, continuously mobilizes its efforts to defend its authentic sardine to curb the invasion of international markets by "fake "sardines.

Furthermore, Morocco has always emphasized the specific qualities of the Moroccan sardine and the Mediterranean basin, and began long campaigns to promote and defend Moroccan Pilchardus sardine with other European countries in order to raise awareness among Member States of the Codex Alimentarius commission to the rightness of the case it defends.

To strengthen its position, Morocco has set up, thanks to the contribution of scientific and national professionals, stringent health standards, and has invested heavily in advanced production tools. Testing and safety procedures have been developed especially for the preservation of the authenticity of the "*Sardina pilchardus* Walbaum".

The Moroccan octopus... the specific taste for excellence

Because it is natural and healthy, *Octopus vulgaris* (Moroccan octopus) enjoys a growing success, locally and abroad, with consumers showing a great enthusiasm for this product.

The Moroccan octopus, which is an essential species in the fishery due to its economic and social importance, has an interest and an investment granted only to priority species. The resources devoted to its study and research on it have been growing for years. The Moroccan octopus is described as "authentic" by its natural environment, not forgetting the tracking, monitoring and control required for an iconic species.

Fresh or frozen, as an ambassador representing the Moroccan cephalopod everywhere, from Europe to Asia, the Moroccan octopus is highly regarded and sought after by gourmets for its organoleptic qualities. It is present in the Atlantic waters of Morocco, which provide ideal temperatures, and depths rich with gravel and nutrients, favouring its development.

A daily tradition

The Moroccan sea has known, because of its strategic geographical location, a succession of civilizations that had a strong influence on human and cultural levels.

Traditions passed down through generations and great biodiversity made the Moroccan sea a rich showcase of aquatic species that are rooted in the culinary habits and practices.

The attachment of Moroccan people to their sea and the countless species it contains has fostered the emergence of a "Fishing Morocco" performing model.

 Over time...

Since ancient times, the activity of fishing and its related activities of processing and preserving fish are strongly present on the Moroccan coast. Moreover, we find traces of it thanks to archaeological vestiges in several points along the coast between the mouth of Loukkos and Essaouira.



They love their sea and like fishing there!

Morocco has two coast borders: one to the north, and the other to the west.

To the north is the beautiful Mare Nostrum, the Mediterranean, and to the West, the vastness of the Atlantic Ocean, two huge tanks of aquatic treasures for Moroccan fishermen for centuries.

Moroccan fishermen have established over generations special relationships and bonds with their sea. These links focus primarily on the fishing activities, as we can see from ancestral and modern fishing ports where boats from the past are anchored alongside those of the present time.

The testimony of a story

A long time ago, sea fishing was practiced only by some fishermen in small boats rowing in parts of the Moroccan coast. Then it developed with the construction of the first wharfs in artificial harbours, this gave impetus to the maritime exploitation and the birth of a fishing industry.

1918 is considered to be the beginning of the modern Moroccan fishing; it appeared with the development of motor boats and small rowing boats and sailing. They landed that year about 350 tons of fish, including 230 tons of sardines, anchovies, mackerel, tuna and bonito.

From the 20s, the Moroccan sea fishing became emancipated and developed through the system of Moroccan territorial waters, the rules to preserve the marine ecosystem as well as the legislation on fishing and the right of fishing.

Many sardines salting and canning institutions were set up since 1925, the year when a real industry of the Moroccan fishing started to be implemented.

In the early 30s, Morocco worked on the modernization of fishing vessels and increasing their capacities, which allowed a steady increase in the volume of catches from 1957. Meanwhile, sea fishing acquired more and more importance in the national economy.

In the end of 60s, sea fishing was booming and the structuring of the sector allowed its revitalization and its spectacular development, through the implementation of a number of incentive measures with a view of promoting and developing the marine fisheries sector.

At the dawn of the 80s, Morocco assigned to maritime fishing ambitious goals ranging from increasing food security and generating employment to its integration into the economic and social plan.

The Moroccan sea fishing, which is constantly renewed, has been committed during recent decades in a growing industrialization and in the organization of large oceanographic research.

Today, this sector is structured by including the implementation of administrative systems, legal and appropriate financing that allowed it to strengthen its capacities and means of enhancing national maritime heritage. Thus, all of these measures have enabled the gradual modernization of marine fisheries, promotion and modernization of the fishing industry, not to mention the intensification of marine scientific research and maritime training.





Fishing in Morocco, a deeply rooted tradition

Historically, Morocco's relationships with the sea have been of three distinct types: a trade route, an area of belligerency and finally a source of livelihood for a portion of its population. Of these three types, the latter is certainly the best known.

Knowledge of the fishing tradition in Morocco, about the exploitation of maritime resources of our country and its fishing communities, remain unanimous. The presence of such activity and related industries of processing and conserving fish, has been rightly witnessed on the Moroccan coast since antiquity.

Research dating from the XVI century that chronicle the fish wealth of the Moroccan sea, and those dedicated to fishing communities scattered along the Moroccan coast, back to the years 1920-1930, concluded that Morocco is a fishing nation with a tradition of fishing.





Moroccans inherited an authentic fishing tradition, illustrated by sailing boats which were reported until the 1960s in Cape Beddouza area, and rowing boats that were operational until 1985.

In addition, several fishing gear are listed across the country, and that attests for this tradition: some are almost gone, as is the case of the hawk and the harpoon, and others who are still used as beach seine, trawl, long-line, lockers, octopus pots ...

Fishing in Morocco has shown a great capacity for adaptation. In two decades, the technological level in fisheries has changed in a remarkable way. This dynamic is still ongoing, illustrated by the fishing fleets, coastal and offshore craft, modern ports, fish markets, processing factories, ...

