

Fish Landings in Shetland

2008

Newly published statistics from the Scottish Government indicate that a total of 119,000 tonnes of fish and shellfish, worth £69 million, were landed in Shetland in 2008. This weight is similar to that in 2007, but the value is some 11% higher.

Landings in Shetland

The published statistics only provide detailed information for landings in Shetland by UK fishing vessels. Landings by foreign vessels, and hence total landings, have had to be estimated from information in the published statistics.

Landings by UK Vessels

As may be seen from the table below, landings by UK vessels were dominated by pelagic species (herring, mackerel, etc.). Whitefish (haddock, cod, monks, etc.), however, accounted for a higher proportion of the value of landings, reflecting the greater unit-value of these species. The same is true of shellfish, which have an even higher unit-value.

Weight and value of landings in Shetland by UK vessels in 2008.

	Weight		Value	
	Tonnes	%	£ million	%
Whitefish	15,226	21%	£ 23.9	39%
Pelagic	55,318	76%	£ 31.8	52%
Shellfish	2,222	3%	£ 5.4	9%
Total	72,766		£ 61.1	

Landings by Foreign Vessels

The published statistics do not give separate figures for landings in Shetland by foreign vessels, but from the available data it is estimated that in 2008 these amounted to about 46,500 tonnes, with a value of about £8 million. The vast majority of these landings will have been of pelagic species.

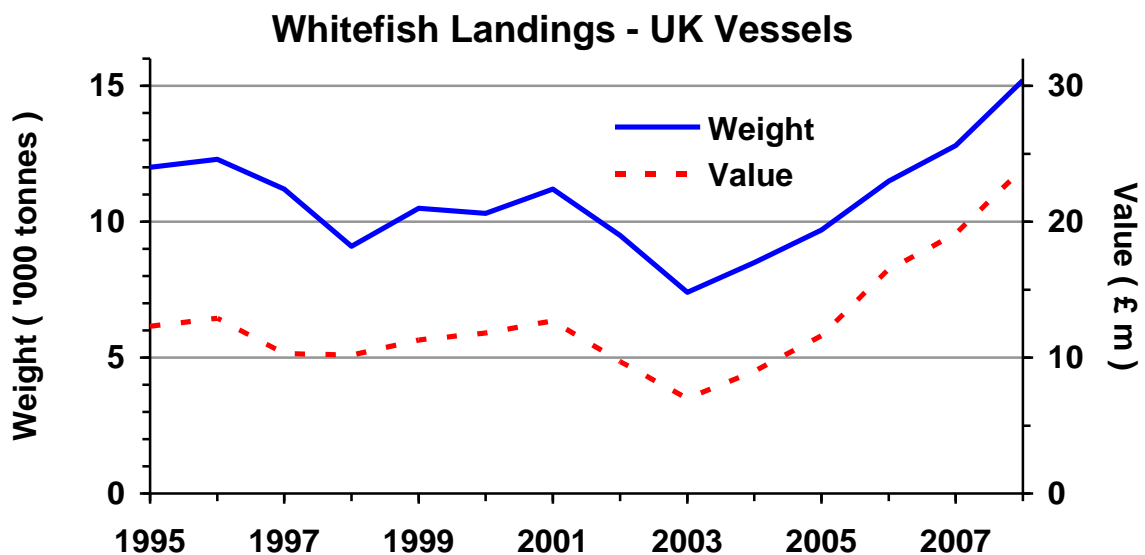
Total Landings in Shetland

From the above figures it is estimated that a total of about 119,000 tonnes of fish, with a value of about £69 million, was landed in Shetland in 2008. Of this, about 39% by weight and 12% by value were landed by foreign fishing vessels.

This total weight of landings is virtually the same as in 2007, but the value is about 11% higher.

Whitefish Landings

A total of 15,226 tonnes of whitefish were landed in Shetland by UK vessels in 2008, an increase of 19% from 2007. The value of these landings was over £23.9 million, up by 26% from 2007. These increases continued a trend seen since 2003 (see graph below). Since 2003 the weight of landings has doubled, while their value has increased by almost two and half times (240%).



For comparison, the 19% increase in the weight of whitefish landed in Shetland from 2007 to 2008 contrasts with an 11% increase in Peterhead, and a 3% increase in the rest of Scotland. Similarly, the 26% increase in the value of whitefish landed in Shetland contrasts with an increase of only 6% in Peterhead, and 1% in the rest of Scotland.

The overall average market price of whitefish landed in Shetland by UK vessels in 2008 was £1.57 / kg, compared to £1.49 / kg in 2007; an increase of just over 5%.

Whitefish landings in Shetland in 2008 were dominated by six species: cod, haddock, megrims, monks, saithe and whiting, which together accounted for 87% of the weight and value of all whitefish landings (see table below). Other whitefish species landed in significant quantities included ling, pollack (lythe), hake and lemon sole.

Weight and value of landings of whitefish in Shetland by UK vessels in 2008.

	Weight		Value	
	Tonnes	%	£ million	%
Cod	1,808	12%	£3.43	14%
Haddock	4,144	27%	£5.03	21%
Megrims	600	4%	£1.76	7%
Monks	2,647	17%	£7.18	30%
Saithe	1,890	12%	£0.97	4%
Whiting	2,190	14%	£2.43	10%
Other Whitefish	1,947	13%	£3.13	13%
Total Whitefish	15,226		£23.94	

Shellfish Landings

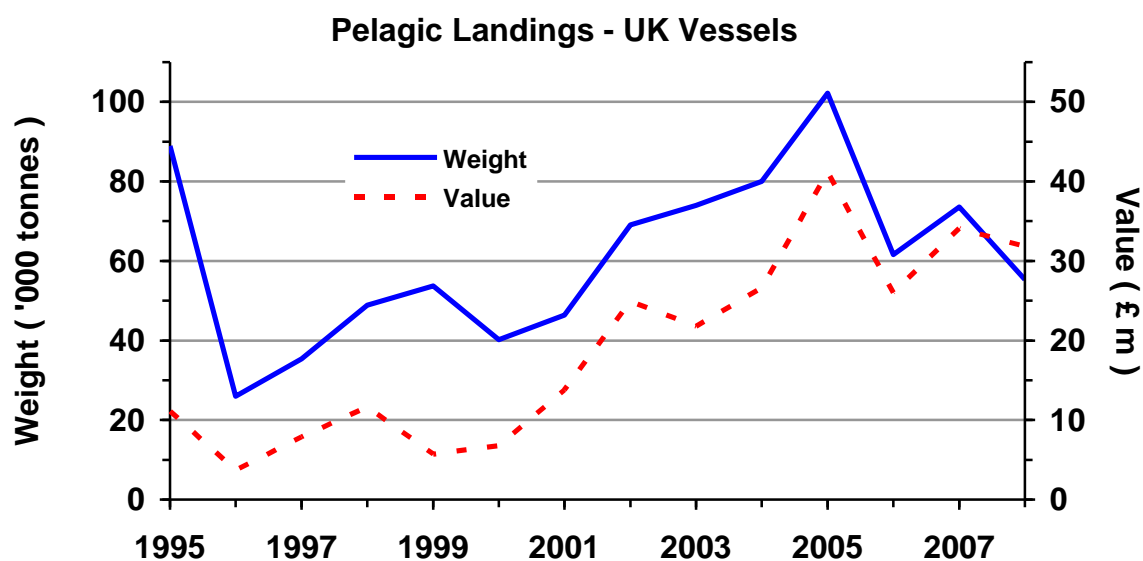
According to the published statistics, some 2,222 tonnes of shellfish (including nephrops and squid), with a value of about £5.4 million, were landed in Shetland in 2008. This represented an increase of 19% in both the weight and value of shellfish landings.

Disregarding nephrops and squid, which are landed by whitefish vessels, shellfish landings were dominated by crabs and scallops.

Pelagic Landings

A total of 55,318 tonnes of pelagic fish, worth £32 million, were landed in Shetland by UK vessels in 2008. These landings were significantly lower than in 2007 (see graph below), with the weight down by 25% and the value by 7%. These reductions are probably at least partly a result of reductions in quotas in 2008 (by 9% for mackerel and 40% for herring).

A substantial quantity of pelagic fish would also have been landed in Shetland by non-UK vessels but these landings are not detailed in the statistics.



Pelagic landings were dominated by mackerel and herring (see table below), which together accounted for 89% of landings by weight and 96% by value. The balance is made up of blue whiting and a very small quantity of horse mackerel and other pelagic species, which were landed for reduction to fish meal (hence their relatively low values).

Weight and value of landings of pelagic fish in Shetland by UK vessels in 2008.

	Weight		Value	
	Tonnes	%	£ million	%
Herring	12,708	23%	£3.17	11%
Mackerel	36,294	66%	£28.0	85%
Blue Whiting	6,064	11%	£0.62	3%
Other Pelagic	252	0%	£0.06	0%
Total Pelagic	55,318		£ 31.8	

Comparison of Trends in Shetland and Scotland

The table below compares changes in the weight and value of landings in Shetland from 2007 to 2008 with those in the rest of Scotland. Overall, Shetland did much better than the rest of Scotland in terms of whitefish landings, but less well in terms of pelagic landings. For all landings, Shetland saw a greater decrease in weight than the rest of Scotland, but an increase in value.

Percentage changes from 2007 to 2008 in weight and value of landings in Shetland and the rest Scotland.

	Shetland		Scotland	
	Weight	Value	Weight	Value
Whitefish	+ 19%	+ 26%	+ 3%	+ 1%
Pelagic	- 25%	- 7%	- 13%	+ 4%
Total	- 18%	+ 6%	- 6%	- 0%

Shetland's Share of Scottish Landings

Overall, Shetland accounted for just over one quarter of all landings by UK vessels in Scotland in 2008 by weight, and 17% by value (see Table below). The discrepancy arises because of the relatively greater amount of lower value pelagic species landed in Shetland. In general, Shetland's share of Scottish whitefish landings increased from 2007 to 2008, while its share of pelagic landings fell.

Weight and value of landings in Shetland by UK vessels in 2007 and 2008 as % of landings in Scotland.

	2007		2008	
	Weight	Value	Weight	Value
Whitefish	16%	17%	18%	20%
Pelagic	45%	45%	41%	43%
Shellfish	3%	3%	3%	3%
Total	28%	17%	26%	17%

In 2008, Shetland was second only to Peterhead, in terms of both weight and value, for landings of whitefish and pelagic species, and for all landings (see Table below).

Weight and value of landings in Shetland and other leading Scottish ports in 2008.

	Whitefish		Pelagic		All Species	
	Weight (tonnes)	Value (£ m)	Weight (tonnes)	Value (£ m)	Weight (tonnes)	Value (£ m)
Shetland	15,226	£23.9	55,318	£31.8	72,766	£61.1
Aberdeen	2,571	£3.2	2,773	£0.3	7,598	£9.2
Peterhead	39,348	£50.8	70,635	£39.3	113,397	£100.4
Fraserburgh	9,914	£12.1	6,570	£3.1	28,251	£52.1
Scrabster	8,228	£14.0	1	£0.0	12,633	£20.8
Other Ports	8,847	£16.0	79	£0.1	48,466	£107.1
All Ports	84,134	£120.0	135,376	£74.6	283,111	£350.7

Prices in Shetland

The table below compares the average prices (total value / total weight) of selected whitefish species landed in Shetland with Aberdeen, Peterhead and the rest of Scotland.

Average prices (£/kg) in 2008 of cod, haddock, monks and whiting, for all four species combined, and for all whitefish, landed in Shetland, Aberdeen, Peterhead and all of Scotland except Shetland. The percentages show the differences in prices from Shetland as percentages of the price in Shetland (a negative % indicates that the price is lower than in Shetland).

	Cod	Haddock	Monks	Whiting	Cod, Haddock, Monks & Whiting	All Whitefish
Shetland	£1.90	£1.21	£2.71	£1.11	£1.68	£1.57
Aberdeen	£2.00	£1.13	£2.75	£0.94	£1.26	£1.26
	+5%	-7%	+1%	-16%	-25%	-20%
Peterhead	£2.14	£1.13	£2.71	£1.06	£1.39	£1.29
	+12%	-7%	0%	-4%	-17%	-18%
Scotland (exc. Shetland)	£2.16	£1.09	£2.80	£0.97	£1.49	£1.39
	+14%	-10%	+3%	-12%	-11%	-11%

Although prices for cod and monks tended to be lower in Shetland than elsewhere in Scotland, those for haddock and whiting were higher. Overall the average market price of whitefish landed in Shetland was markedly higher than in Aberdeen, Peterhead or the rest of Scotland.

Employment in Fishing

According to the official statistics there were 473 fishermen in Shetland in 2008, of whom 257 were 'regularly employed'. This is a reduction of 55 (11%) in the total number of fishermen from 2007, and of 95 (27%) in the number of 'regularly employed' fishermen.

Landings in 2009

Official statistics for fish landings in Shetland in 2009 will not be available until September 2010. However, preliminary data for whitefish landings in Shetland (from Shetland Seafood Auctions) indicate that the total weight and value of whitefish sold through Shetland fish markets in the first eight months (Jan' - Aug') of 2009 were very similar to those during the same period of 2008.

Data for pelagic or shellfish landings in 2009 are not available at this time.

Further Information

The full published Scottish Fisheries Statistics 2008 are available online at:

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/Doc/284286/0086304.pdf>

A more detailed analyses of landings in Shetland, and by the Shetland fleet, using unpublished data from by the Scottish Government will be carried out and circulated before the end of the year.

For further information please contact me at the NAFC Marine Centre.

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16th September 2009