

Fish Landings in Shetland

2009

Newly published statistics from the Scottish Government indicate that a total of about 78,000 tonnes of fish and shellfish, worth some £73 million, were landed in Shetland in 2009. This weight is well below that landed in 2008, but the value is similar.

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 2009.

	Weight		Value	
	Tonnes	%	£ million	%
Whitefish	14,963	26%	£ 23.6	38%
Pelagic	40,448	70%	£ 33.2	53%
Shellfish	2,178	4%	£ 5.5	9%
Total	57,589		£ 62.3	

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 20,000 tonnes, with a value of about £11 million. The vast majority of these landings will have been of pelagic species.

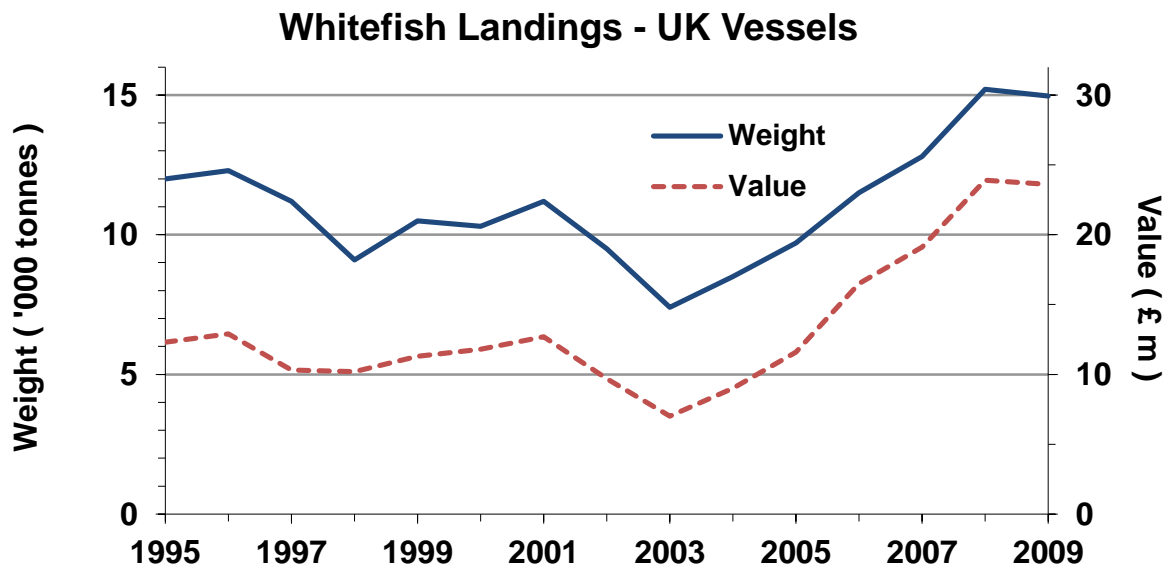
Total Landings in Shetland

From the above figures it is estimated that a total of about 78,000 tonnes of fish, with a value of some £73 million, were landed in Shetland in 2009. Of this, about 26% by weight and 15% by value were landed by foreign fishing vessels.

This total weight of landings is substantially less than in 2008 - down by about 36% - but the value is almost unchanged. Most of this decline was in landings of pelagic fish (down by 27%).

Whitefish Landings

A total of 14,963 tonnes of whitefish were landed in Shetland by UK vessels in 2009, slightly less than in 2008 (a decline of 2%). The value of these landings was £23.6 million, again very slightly less than in 2008 (a decline of 1%). These slight declines in landings follow several years of growth (see graph below) and are probably largely a result of result of restrictions in fishing activity under the cod recovery plan.



The slight decline in the weight of whitefish landed in Shetland by UK vessels contrasts with a small (5%) increase in Peterhead and an overall 10% increase across the whole of Scotland. There was a small (4%) decline in the value of whitefish landings in Peterhead but across the whole of Scotland it increased by 8%.

The overall average market price of whitefish landed in Shetland by UK vessels in 2009 was £1.58 / kg, virtually unchanged from 2008 (£1.57 / kg).

Whitefish landings in Shetland in 2009 were dominated by six species: cod, haddock, megrims, monks, saithe and whiting, which together accounted for 87% of the weight and 89% of the value of all whitefish landings (see table below). Other whitefish species landed in significant quantities included ling, lythe (pollack), skate & rays, hake and lemon sole.

Weight and value of landings of whitefish in Shetland by UK vessels in 2009.

	Weight		Value	
	Tonnes	%	£ million	%
Cod	2,431	16%	£4.25	18%
Haddock	3,099	21%	£3.59	15%
Megrims	677	5%	£1.94	8%
Monks	2,432	16%	£7.65	32%
Saithe	2,187	15%	£1.38	6%
Whiting	2,158	14%	£2.24	9%
Other Whitefish	1,979	13%	£2.56	11%
Total Whitefish	14,963		£23.60	

Shellfish Landings

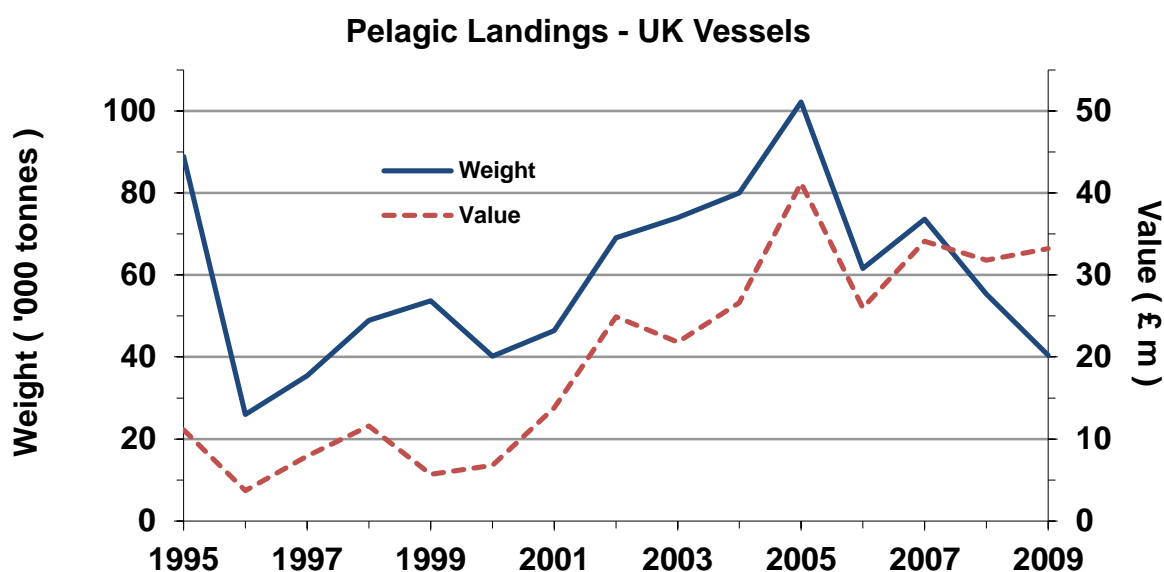
According to the published statistics, some 2,178 tonnes of shellfish (including nephrops and squid), with a value of about £5.5 million, were landed in Shetland in 2009. This represented a small decrease (2%) in the weight of landings, but a small increase (3%) in their value.

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

Pelagic Landings

A total of 40,448 tonnes of pelagic fish, worth £33 million, were landed in Shetland by UK vessels in 2009. The weight of these landings was substantially lower than in 2008 (a decline of 27%; see graph below) but their value was slightly higher (a 4% increase). These reductions were almost entirely in landings of herring and blue whiting (for reduction to fish meal); landings of mackerel were virtually unchanged.

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 published statistics.



Pelagic landings were dominated by mackerel (see table below), which accounted for 90% of landings by weight and 96% by value. Other than herring, no other pelagic species were landed in Shetland in any quantity by UK vessels in 2009.

Weight and value of landings of pelagic fish in Shetland by UK vessels in 2009.

	Weight		Value	
	Tonnes	%	£ million	%
Herring	3,956	10%	£1.2	4%
Mackerel	36,441	90%	£32.0	96%
Other Pelagic	0	0%	£0.0	0%
Total Pelagic	40,448		£ 33.2	

Comparison of Trends in Shetland and Scotland

The table below compares changes in the weight and value of landings in Shetland from 2008 to 2009 with those in the rest of Scotland. While landings in Shetland generally declined, those in the rest of Scotland increased.

Percentage changes from 2008 to 2009 in weight and value of landings by UK vessels in Shetland and the rest Scotland.

	Shetland		Scotland	
	Weight	Value	Weight	Value
Whitefish	- 2%	- 1%	+ 13%	+ 10%
Pelagic	- 27%	- 1%	+ 1%	+ 27%
Total	- 21%	+ 2%	+ 4%	- 0%

Shetland's Share of Scottish Landings

Overall, Shetland accounted for just over one-quarter by weight of all landings by UK vessels in Scotland in 2009, and 18% 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 fish landings decreased from 2008 to 2009.

Weight and value of landings in Shetland by UK vessels in 2008 and 2009 as % of landings in Scotland.

	2008		2009	
	Weight	Value	Weight	Value
Whitefish	18%	20%	16%	18%
Pelagic	41%	43%	33%	38%
Shellfish	3%	3%	3%	4%
Total	26%	17%	21%	18%

In 2009, Shetland was second only to Peterhead, in terms of both weight and value, for landings by UK vessels of whitefish and pelagic species, and for all landings (see Table below).

Weight and value of landings in Shetland and other leading Scottish ports by UK vessels in 2009.

	Whitefish		Pelagic		All Species	
	Weight (tonnes)	Value (£ m)	Weight (tonnes)	Value (£ m)	Weight (tonnes)	Value (£ m)
Shetland	14,963	£23.6	40,448	£33.2	57,589	£62.3
Aberdeen	1,876	£2.1	11	£0.0	3,510	£6,073
Peterhead	41,193	£49.0	66,925	£44.3	111,865	£101.4
Fraserburgh	8,889	£10.9	13,766	£10.1	36,311	£48.4
Scrabster	11,204	£18.8	7	£0.0	15,541	£25.5
Other Ports	17,444	£25.2	476	£0.0	52,524	£107.8
All Ports	95,569	£129.6	121,633	£87.8	277,340	£351.5

Prices in Shetland

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

Average prices (£/kg) in 2009 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	£1.75	£1.16	£3.15	£1.04	£1.75	£1.58
Aberdeen	£1.76	£1.03	---	£1.11	£1.11	£1.13
	+1%	-11%	---	+7%	-36%	-28%
Peterhead	£1.81	£0.97	£3.17	£1.08	£1.26	£1.19
	+4%	-16%	+1%	+4%	-28%	-25%
Scotland (exc. Shetland)	£1.80	£0.97	£3.15	£0.99	£1.41	£1.37
	+3%	-17%	+0%	-5%	-19%	-13%

Although prices for cod and monks tended to be lower in Shetland than elsewhere in Scotland, those for haddock 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 430 fishermen in Shetland in 2009, of whom 246 were 'regularly employed'. This is a reduction of 43 (9%) in the total number of fishermen from 2008, and of 11 (9%) in the number of 'regularly employed' fishermen.

Landings in 2010

Official statistics for fish landings in Shetland in 2009 will not be available until September 2011. However, preliminary data (from Shetland Seafood Auctions) indicate that the total weight of whitefish sold through Shetland fish markets in the first nine months of 2010 (Jan' - Sept') was 9% less than in the same period of 2009. The value of whitefish landings over the same period were down by 4%.

Data for pelagic or shellfish landings in 2010 are not available at this time.

Further Information

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

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2010/09/15155811/0>

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 when ready.

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

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