

Salmon Gillnet and Seine

SPECIES TARGETED

Chum (*Oncorhynchus keta*)
Pink (*Oncorhynchus gorbuscha*)
Sockeye (*Oncorhynchus nerka*)

ABOUT

Pacific salmon belong to the family *Salmonidae*, genus *Oncorhynchus*. North Pacific salmon are found along the coast from California to Alaska and Russia. Chum, Pink and Sockeye are the major species targeted in the gillnet and seine fisheries in British Columbia (BC).



Sockeye salmon

Each species has its own unique flavour and flesh colour. Of the net species, sockeye is the most sought after because of its deep red firm flesh and rich flavour.

Chinook and Coho are major species targeted in the troll fishery ([see: Salmon Troll Infosheet](#)).

STOCK STATUS

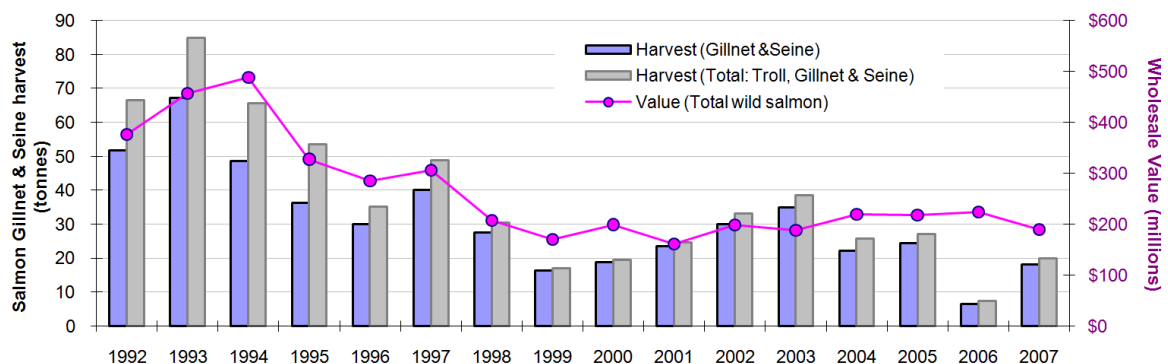
Stocks are reasonably stable although each species exhibits periodic swings in abundance. There are concerns with respect to specific runs including; Cultus Lake sockeye, Sakinaw Lake sockeye and Interior Fraser coho. These stocks have been designated as endangered by the Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada (COSEWIC) ([DFO - Fisheries Management](#)).

MANAGEMENT

BC's salmon gillnet and seine fishery is managed federally by Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO). As salmon are migratory, Canada and the US collectively manage allocation and other issues related to the salmon stocks under the Pacific Salmon Treaty. Harvest is regulated through a number of management tools such as season length, timed openings, gear and area restrictions, quotas, non-retention of certain species and allocation limits ([DFO - Fisheries Management](#)).

PRODUCT VALUE

In 2007, the wholesale value of BC harvested salmon was \$189.7 million. Alaska-caught salmon canned in BC accounted for an additional wholesale value of \$21.4 million ([BC Seafood Industry Year in Review](#)).



LIFE HISTORY

Pacific salmon are found all along the BC coast. Most salmon are produced from large rivers such as the Fraser River and its main tributaries, the Bella Coola River in the Central Coast, the Nass and Skeena Rivers in the North, and the Somass River flowing into Barkley Sound.

Pacific salmon are anadromous, breeding and spending varying portions of their early life in fresh water, then entering the ocean to feed until maturity. Each species has a different life history. Salmon spawn in fall and winter in gravel beds in streams from a hundred yards to over 1,000 miles from the sea. Eggs incubate for several months before hatching into alevins. Shortly after, they emerge from the gravel as fry. In the spring the juveniles either migrate to the sea where they spend up to five years depending on the species or rear in freshwater for one or two years before migrating to sea as smolts. In early summer of their maturing year salmon return to their home streams to spawn. After spawning salmon die.

Pink salmon live only two years and spend the least amount of time in freshwater. In southern BC the larger pink runs occur in odd-numbered years; the runs in even-numbered years are much smaller.

Chum salmon go directly to sea after hatching, live three to five years, spending most of their time at sea.

Sockeye, the most important commercial species in BC, live four to five years, spending one or two years in freshwater nursery lakes before they migrate to the ocean.

PRODUCTS

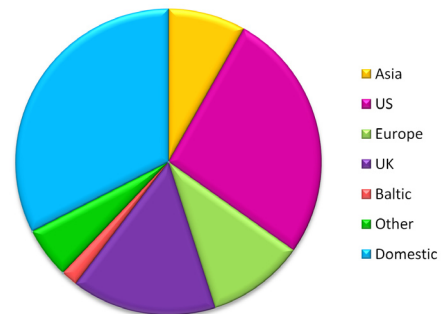
Most net caught salmon are sold fresh or are processed into variety of forms including canned, dressed whole, steaks and fillets. Most value-added are the smoked and canned products. Chum are important for their roe.

PRODUCT MARKET

Markets are species-specific and include Japan, United States, New Zealand, Australia and the United Kingdom.

MARKET TREND

World and domestic market demands for wild salmon remain strong.

**LINKS**

DFO - Fisheries Management Plans: www.pac.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/ops/fm/fishmgmt_e.htm

BC Seafood Industry Year in Review: www.env.gov.bc.ca/omfd/reports/index.html

Pacific Salmon Commission: www.psc.org

BCSeafood.ca: www.bcseafood.ca/index.php

Fish and Seafood Online: <http://www.ats-sea.agr.gc.ca/sea-mer/index-eng.htm>