

UiS develops global fish price index

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Fish is a bigger traded commodity on the world market than both meat and grain. In 2009 the fish got a representative index thanks to the University of Stavanger's research community.

A fish price index was employed for the first time in June 2009 by the United Nations' Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO). Researchers at the University of Stavanger, Norway, have contributed to this pioneering project.

In its quarterly "Food Outlook" publication, the FAO issues a summary of price and production developments for important foodstuffs like meat, rice, grain, sugar and milk. The fish price index - called "FAO Globefish-UiS' price index" - was included in the June issue in 2009 for the first time.

Behind the "UiS"-part of the name, stands a group of University of

Stavanger researchers. The project is headed by professor Frank Asche and former assistant professor Sigbjørn Tveterl's, both key players in producing the index.

Tricky index

Fish is a bigger traded commodity on the world market than both meat and grain. But with its large spectrum of different products, it is also a fragmented commodity. Producing a superior index to encompass all varieties has therefore been a challenging task. In spite of these difficulties, FAO's has requested a fish price index, similar to those on other foodstuff. Until it is now accepted by the FAO, the job has taken almost four years to complete.

“Bearing in mind that there are several hundred varieties of seafood, we have sought to arrive at a representative index, which will be accepted as a standard by all countries,” says professor Frank Asche.

For the time being, this is a trial project connected to UiS, but the index will later be given a neutral name, he adds.

Having the index accepted is a professional recognition of the University of Stavanger's research community, Asche thinks. The Food Outlook is distributed to professionals, researchers and politicians worldwide, and is the key information source on global food production and markets.

Provided by University of Stavanger

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