

## A Revised Map of Danish Fishing Grounds

A Note by A. Edward McLeish

Incorporated into a recent investigation of some of the patterns and problems of Danish sea fishing and the fishing industry was a map, which attempted to illustrate the relative importance of the major Danish fishing grounds.

The material for the quantities of fish landed and for the map of relative values in 1960 (fig. 1) was obtained in the 1960 edition of "Fiskeriberetning", published by the Ministry of Fishing.

### Fish Catch Landed in 1960 (by weight)

One of the constant features of national studies of sea fishing is the distinction between various scales of operation. A factor which influences the size and significance of any port will be the weight of fish landed in any one year, and table 1 details the landings at seven large Danish harbours in 1960. All these ports are of great importance in the overall pattern. Thus, the three W. ports of Esbjerg, Hvide Sande and Thyborøn; the four N. Vendsyssel harbours at Hirtshals, Strandby, Frederikshavn and Skagen, and the port of Neksø on Bornholm, together landed over 85 % of the total catch in Denmark, while Esbjerg alone landed over 39 %. At the same time and on the basis of weight alone, 45 ports landed only 15 %. 19 of these landed under 1000 tons p.a., and 23 landed from 1—4000 tons. It is interesting also to notice the comparatively small landings on Sjælland — 14,200 tons — in relation to the 1960 population of this island of c. 1.8 million. Of this catch, Hundested, Gilleleje and Sjællands Odde accounted for about 65 %. On the other hand an admirable situation among the well-stocked fishing grounds of the E. Baltic helps to explain the landing of 19,000 tons on the island of Bornholm.

Landings by weight, however, are not by any means conclusive evidence of a prosperous fishing industry. The relative values of the catch play a part in the explanation.

### Relative Values 1960

In terms of the value of catch landed at Danish harbours, the proportion originating in the 17 fishing banks of the North Sea are by far the most important (some 46 % of the total). A second group (12—14 %) consists of the Skagerrak, Kattegat and E. Baltic, while the remaining five fishing grounds, (the Sound, W. Baltic, Blet Sea,

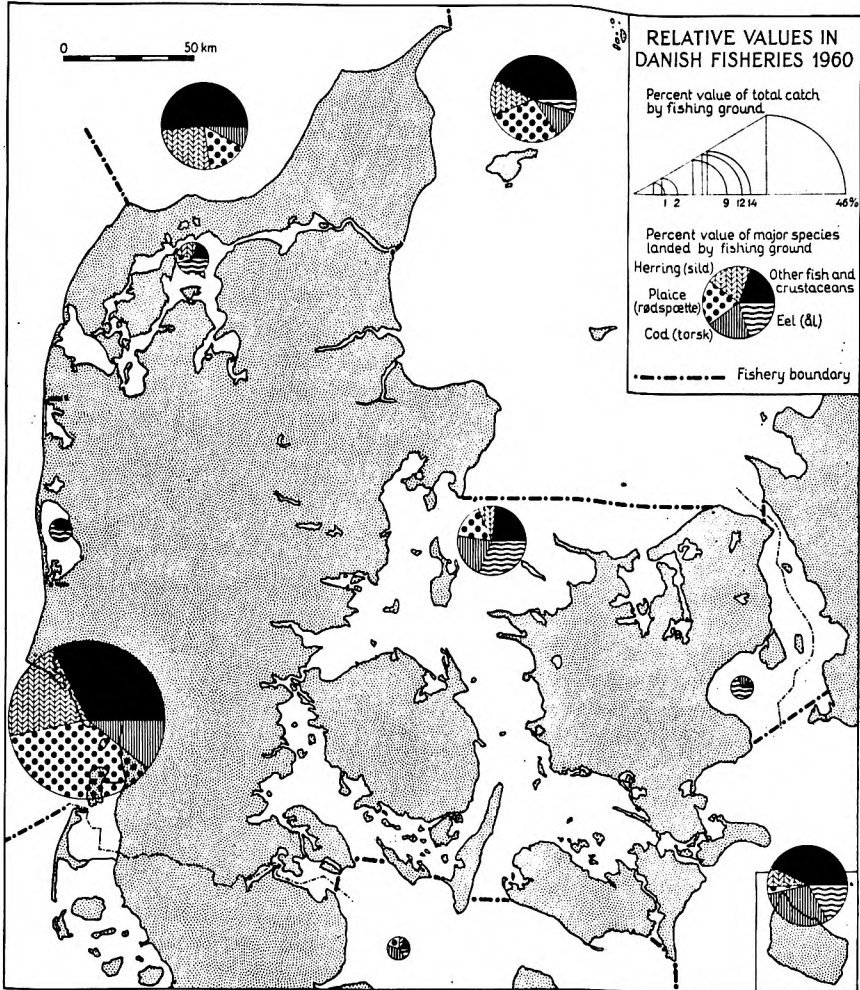
Table 1.  
Features of the Fish Landings at Seven Danish Ports 1960.

	Esbjerg		Hvide Sande		Tyborøn		Hirtshals		Skagen		Frederikshavn		Grenå	
Total Landings (All Boats - 1000 kg.)	194,174		8,549		42,694		87,777		116,282		12,808		5540 = 467,824	
Total Value (All Boats - 1000 kr.)	60,570		12,372		27,353		42,458		57,570		9,202		5591 = 215,116	
Species	Weight %	Value %	Weight %	Value %	Weight %	Value %	Weight %	Value %	Weight %	Value %	Weight %	Value %	Weight %	Value %
Herring . . .	36	20	17	3	23	6	62	60	58	45	35	14	25	11
Plaice . . . . .	7	35	43	47	18	5	3	9	1	6	11	30	12	27
Cod . . . . .	3	7	10	7	9	14	2	4	2	4	5	7	27	24
Common Sole . . . . .	—	5	9	27	—	1	—	—	—	—	1	11	1	3
Other . . . . .	55	35	21	16	51	75	33	29	39	45	49	39	35	35

Ringkøbing & Nissum Fiords, and Limfjord) contribute only a small proportion to the whole. On the other hand all the fishing grounds contain certain valuable species. Thus, from the North Sea plaice and herring yield 57 % of the total; from the Skagerrak and Kattegat herring equals 25 and 27 % respectively; eels are a highly valuable species in the Belt Sea (31 %), the Sound (70 %) and Ringkøbing and Nissum Fiords (61 %); while cod is the most valuable fish caught in the W. Baltic (40 %).

From these remarks it can be suggested that the scale of operation, the quantities, qualities, and types of sea fish landed are significant factors in discussions of sea fishing and fish processing at the national level.

Nevertheless, the influence and inter-relationship of the physical background should never be neglected, in particular in a country like Denmark. The exposure to strong winds and a related multiplicity of dune landscapes on the West coast of Jutland; the diversified glacial and sub-glacial East coast; and the high degree of fragmentation associated with the agglomeration of islands in E. and SE. Denmark; these are all factors which help to explain the differences in type and number of harbours around the coast.



Finally, comparison of statistical data over time must not be ignored, and the figures and map for 1960 may be usefully compared with a similar one compiled by Professor, Dr. Phil. Axel Schou in the late 1940s.

**LITERATURE**

Schou, Axel (1948): Economic-Geographical Map of Denmark. Scale 1:300.000. Geodetic Institute.  
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