



Fig. 11. Every single bit of the shark fin is removed and processed immediately after landing. There is a huge demand for shark fins regardless of the shark species, or their size, throughout SE Asia.

Bibliography

[1] <http://www.fao.org/fi/agreem/codecond/ficonde.asp>

[2] <http://www.afcd.gov.hk/fisheries/eng/capture.htm>

Epilogue: on the one hand, ecologists and conservationists would like to see reduction in fishing efforts, and stock recovery; on the other, governments have to consider the social side and living conditions of fishermen by allowing and facilitating them to fish more. It seems a true dilemma in fisheries management. As we all know, the fishery industry in Hong Kong is somewhat getting close to its 'sunset'. In 2004, there were only 9,500 fishermen (0.14% of 6.7 million of people) in Hong Kong [2]. In my opinion, our fishermen are less united and not as well-organised as Taiwanese fishermen; hence any transformation of the industry is rather difficult. Although our Government has been supporting and subsidising the fishermen for many years, our fishery development is still far behind counterparts like Taiwan. In Hong Kong, it is a bit late to develop distant water fisheries. So far, there is only one company directly engaged in distant water fishing. Building advanced vessels will require a large amount of money (@ billions \$) while the operators must be well-educated in both ocean science and engineering. Probably, it is not a viable option for the traditional fishermen in Hong Kong. What is the way forward for our fishermen? This is an important but a difficult question for the Government, fishermen, politicians and academics. The Taiwanese model may offer us some useful insights.



SWIMS tidings....

It has been a very busy time at SWIMS since the last *Porcupine!* hit the press. In March we had the pleasure of a visit by Sir John Swire. Sir John was the driving influence at the Swire Group behind the establishment of SWIMS and officiated at both the opening ceremonies of the Swire Marine Laboratory in 1990 and of the Swire Institute of Marine Science in 1994. It was therefore a great pleasure to show Sir John around the renovated facilities and to update him on SWIMS development and future directions. Sir John, and his brother Sir Adrian, always make the effort to visit SWIMS and chat with staff and students when they are in Hong Kong reaffirming their support and commitment to SWIMS.

SWIMS has been a pretty full house over the summer – with student Research Assistants helping projects at Hoi Ha Wan and on fish larval surveys, as well as the normal variety of student projects. We are extremely grateful to all the cheerful volunteers, too numerous to mention, who populated SWIMS in the summer. We also had our fair share of student visitors, including Tilly Thoreson and Tom Gallagher (Bangor University UK) who joined Olivia Stark (Oldendorf, Germany). Olivia has been working at SWIMS for the last year on the impacts of fishing on sea urchin populations. We also welcomed visiting scientists, including Dr Giacomo Santini (Firenze University Italy) who worked with Avis Ngan on limpet behavioural modeling and Ryan Hechinger (University of California Santa Barbara, USA) who investigated parasites in mud snails. Dr Santini gave a seminar at SWIMS, as did Prof Mike Kingsford (James Cook University, Australia).

The most recent SWIMS event was a special Symposium on the Physiology of Marine Organisms (SEMO) attended by over 60 delegates and held in September. The ecophysiology of marine organisms is a research area that which we are developing at SWIMS and this symposium attracted speakers from all major tertiary institutions in Hong Kong, as well as colleagues from the UK, Italy and Brunei. The talks were very well received and achieved their aim of stimulating collaboration and links among participants. Following the Symposium, Drs David Morritt (London University, UK) and Maui de Pirro (Firenze, Italy) stayed on to work on the impact of summer monsoons on intertidal organisms with staff at SWIMS.

Finally – congratulations to ex-SWIMS colleagues Dr Andy Cornish, who has recently become the Director of Conservation at World Wide Fund for Nature HK, and Dr Benny Chan recently appointed as an Assistant Professor at the Research Centre for Biodiversity, Academia Sinica, in Taiwan – we look forward to collaborating with both Andy and Benny in the future!

Gray A. Williams
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