

Türkiye eyes record seafood exports in 2026 on China market reopening

24 April 2026 | News

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Türkiye is targeting \$2.5 billion in seafood exports by 2026, signaling an ambitious next phase for one of its fastest-growing agri-food sectors. The goal builds on strong momentum in 2025, when exports surpassed \$2.2 billion, marking an 11 per cent year-on-year increase and reinforcing the country's position as a rising force in global seafood trade.

Industry leaders point to early 2026 performance and improving market access as key drivers behind the outlook. The reopening of the Chinese market in late 2025 is expected to significantly expand export volumes, with China now identified as a priority destination alongside the United States. Türkiye's seafood products already reach 110 countries, reflecting a broad and diversified export base.

The country's export footprint spans major markets including Russia, Italy, the Netherlands, Greece, the United Kingdom, Japan, and the United States. This geographic spread has helped insulate the sector from regional demand fluctuations while enabling consistent growth across multiple high-value markets.

Türkiye's competitive edge is underpinned by a robust fishing industry and an expansive fleet of more than 4,500 licensed vessels. Turkish operators are active across a wide geographic range, extending beyond domestic waters to international fishing zones along the coasts of Africa and the Middle East. This operational scale has strengthened supply capabilities and supported the sector's export ambitions.

Globally, Türkiye is estimated to rank among the top 10 seafood exporters, while holding a leading position in Europe, second only to Norway. Continued investment in fleet capacity, processing infrastructure, and international partnerships is expected to further enhance its standing.

The sector is also stepping up its global engagement through trade platforms. Turkish exporters recently participated in Seafood Expo Global in Spain, the world's largest seafood trade fair, with a strong national presence complemented by independent company participation. The event highlighted Türkiye's growing visibility and competitiveness in international seafood markets.

Looking ahead, the industry sees untapped opportunities in new regions, including markets where Turkish exporters have yet to establish a presence. As global demand for seafood continues to rise, Türkiye is positioning itself to capture a larger share by leveraging scale, market diversification, and renewed access to key destinations.