

## About lesser known beche-de-mer markets

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### Introduction

In the tropical Pacific, much attention has been given recently (Purcell et al. 2010; Purcell 2014a,b), following previous work (Conand 1979, 1990; Skewes et al. 2004), to beche-de-mer in the Indo-Pacific region. This contribution follows short observations already presented in SPC beche-de-mer information bulletins from other countries.

It appears that, in several markets, the traditional products coming from tropical Indo-Pacific species are no longer dominant and specific identification of the dry products needs special attention. It is therefore recommended that processors and scientists, in new beche-de-mer producing countries, develop small research projects on the changes in length and weight of the species during the different phases of processing. A few specimens per category of size (small, medium, large) would be necessary to establish the regression model for each species. Providing photos at the different stages would also be helpful.

### Reports

#### 1. Democratic People's Republic of Korea, market of Pyongyang

Very little is known about the present holothurian exploitation in this country. In the FAO report (Toral-Granda et al. 2008), Poh Sze quoted an anonymous report that landings declined in the 1985–1990 period and that the Oruji Nature Reserve was established in 1996 mainly for the conservation of sea cucumbers. From a recent tour, Figure 1 from the market of Wonsan shows processed dry *Apostichopus japonicus* in large bags sold at 25 euros and small ones at 10 euros.

#### 2. Democratic People's Republic of Korea

From FAO statistics, Poh Sze (Toral-Granda et al. 2008) quotes a decline of one third in the captures from 1995 to 2005 (around 1,100 t). From the same tour, in Pusan the same species is consumed raw. It

is called “gingseng of the sea” or “Hai-som” (Fig. 2). *Urechis unicinctus* is also consumed raw (Fig. 3).

#### 3. San Francisco

The Chinese community of San Francisco buys dry products of many species from many countries at prices up to USD 268 per pound (Fig. 4).

Translation of the Chinese names provided by marielle.dumestre@gmail.com.



Figure 1. Processed *Apostichopus japonicus* on Wonsan market (Image: M.J. Chalvin, 2014).



Figure 2. Live *Apostichopus* on Pusan market (Image: M.J. Chalvin, 2014).

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**Figure 3.** Live *Urechis unicinctus* belonging to the phylum Echiura on Pusan market (Image: M.J. Chalvin, 2014).



**Figure 4.** Sea cucumber in San Francisco (Image: J. Conand, 2014).

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