

## **Tropical tuna landings in Thai fishing ports during 2013 - 2022**

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### **Abstract**

Tuna products are Thailand's highest export product and have a high value. Thailand is the world's leading producer of tuna products. Most tuna is imported from both the Indian Ocean and the Pacific Ocean. There are many species of imported tuna, including tropical tuna such as Skipjack tuna Yellowfin tuna and bigeye tuna, which are imported as the main proportion of the total volume. Most imports are frozen and chilled tuna. During the period 2013 - 2022, the highest volume of imported was skipjack tuna followed by yellowfin tuna and bigeye tuna, which is related to the import value. In 2022, a total of 755,589.70 tons of tropical tuna was imported, valued at more than 1,475 million US dollars. The imported proportion was 81.21% of skipjack tuna, followed by yellowfin tuna at 15.04% and bigeye tuna at 3.74%, respectively.

**Key words:** Tropical tuna, skipjack tuna, yellowfin tuna, bigeye tuna, import value

## **Introduction**

Tuna products are Thailand's highest export product and are highly valued. Thailand is the world's leading producer of tuna products. Because Thailand has no Thai-flagged vessels operated outside Thai waters. Most tuna is imported from both the Indian and Pacific oceans. There are many species of imported tuna, including tropical tuna such as Skipjack tuna Yellowfin tuna and bigeye tuna, which are imported as the main proportion of the total volume. Most imports are frozen and chilled tuna.

In 2021, there is a report from Global Tuna Production and Trade. Currently, the world's export volume of tuna products has reached 2.8 million tons, valued at approximately 8,828 million USD, of which Thailand has an import volume of approximately 720,000 tons, accounting for 21% of the world's import volume and the export volume is approximately 495,000 tons, accounting for 17.7% of the world's export volume. As for the Thai tuna industry, most of it is imported raw materials for processing. and export processed tuna products to countries in all regions of the world. With a total value of up to 1,893 million USD, Thailand is the number one country in the world in importing raw materials and exporting tuna products.

Thailand is one of the world's largest exporters of tuna products which are of great importance in terms of economic value and intensive international trade. During 2020 - 2022, the total amount of tuna products exported from Thailand across the world ranged from 122,274 – 157,059 tons per year with an average export of 136,780 tons per year. At the same time, the export value of tuna products ranged from 0.5 – 0.7 billion USD per year with an average of 0.60 billion USD per year. The products include canned, pouch, and loin tuna as well as pet food.

This paper describes the trend of Tropical tuna landings in Thai fishing ports during 2013 - 2022, specifically bigeye tuna, yellowfin tuna, and skipjack tuna along with statistics on exports of tuna products and the value of exports over the past 10 years of Thailand.

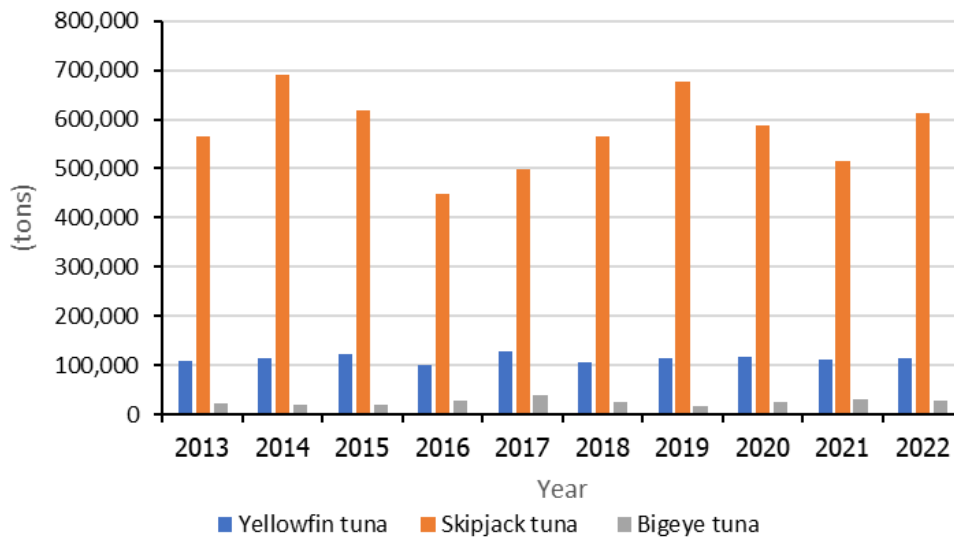
## **Material**

The data used included the data collection of Import and export volume (ton) and value (billion USD) between 2013 to 2022 from landings in Thai fishing ports. which has been recorded and collected by the Fisheries Department of Thailand

## Result and discussion

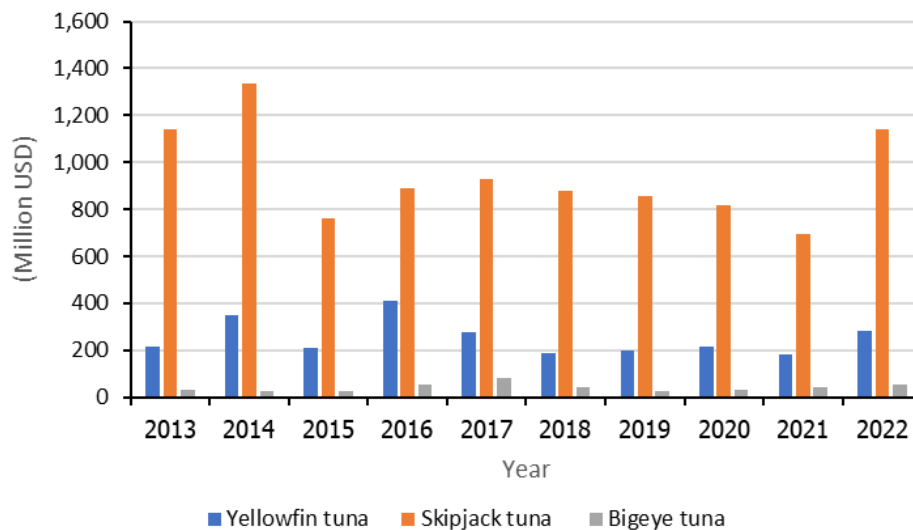
### 1. Statistics on landing of Topical tuna

The Volume of tropical tuna landings during 2013 - 2022 totaled 7,163,441 tons, with skipjack tuna being the largest. Next are yellowfin tuna and bigeye tuna. Total volumes over the past 10 years were 5,778,874.52 tons, 1,132,491.96 tons, and 252,074.79 tons, respectively. In 2022, skipjack tuna imports reached 613,634 tons, followed by 113,660 tons of yellowfin tuna and 28,295 tons of bigeye tuna. (Figure 1)



**Figure 1** Tropical tuna landings in Thai fishing ports during 2013 - 2022

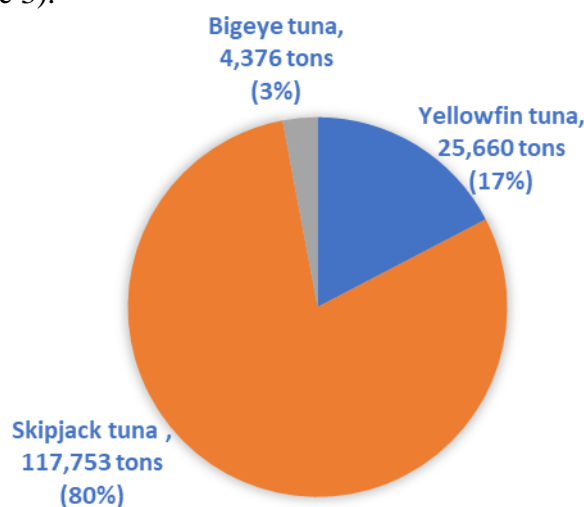
The volume of skipjack tuna is likely to increase significantly in 2022, while the volume of yellowfin tuna and bigeye tuna has been the same each year for the past 10 years. Meanwhile, the import value of Tuna is trending in the same direction. The highest tuna import values are skipjack tuna with 1,140.93 million USD, yellowfin tuna with 282.99 million USD and bigeye tuna with 51.56 million USD in 2022. (Figure 2)



**Figure 2** Value of tropical tuna imported in Thailand during 2013-2022

## 2. Proportion of imported tropical tuna species

In 2022, a total of 147,789 tons of tropical tunas caught in the Indian Ocean were imported to Thailand. Skipjack tuna was the main species accounting for 117,753 tons followed by yellowfin tuna and bigeye tuna, 25,660 tons and 4,376 tons respectively. Most of the imported tuna were unloaded from carrier vessels by purse seiners and longliners landing at Thai fishing ports. (Figure 3).

**Figure 3** Proportion of imported tropical tuna species caught in the Indian Ocean, 2022

When comparing import volumes for tropical tuna, skipjack tuna is the main species accounting for 80% of the Indian Ocean catch, followed by yellowfin tuna with 17% and bigeye tuna with 3% in 2022.

The Indian Ocean skipjack tuna catch was 114,690 tons in 2018 and dropped to 72,834 tons in 2019 which has been on an up-and-down trend until now. The volume of yellowfin mackerel caught from the Indian Ocean was 32,263 tons in 2018 and has continued to decrease in 2019 until now. Bigeye tuna catches reached 6,700 tons in 2018 and have continued to decline in 2019 - 2021 and are likely to recover in 2022. (Table 1)

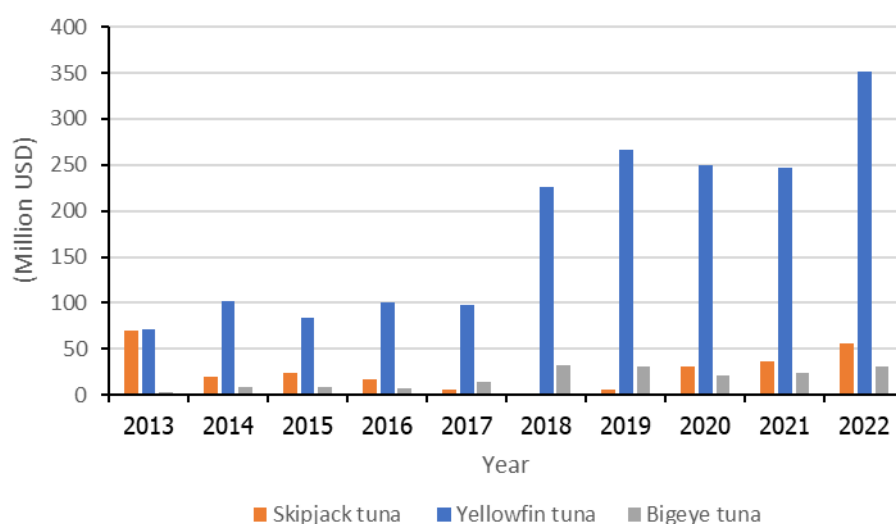
**Table 1** Tropical tuna import volumes by source during 2018 - 2022

Species	Volume: tons									
	2018		2019		2020		2021		2022	
	Indian ocean	Other	Indian ocean	Other	Indian ocean	Other	Indian ocean	Other	Indian ocean	Other
Skipjack tuna	114,690	450,088	72,834	604,360	100,413	488,298	67,842	447,689	117,753	495,881
Yellowfin tuna	32,263	72,196	24,544	89,322	25,334	90,848	27,265	83,411	25,660	88,000

Bigeye tuna	6,700	18,401	2,288	14,462	2,270	23,817	1,269	29,730	4,376	23,919
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### 3. Export value of tropical tuna

The value of local tuna exports between 2013 and 2022 totals 2,248 million USD. Yellowfin tuna is the most valuable at 1,799 million USD. This was followed by skipjack tuna and bigeye tuna, with 267 million USD and 182 million USD, respectively (Figure 4)



**Figure 4** Export value of tropical tuna in 2013-2022

Thailand's main tuna export is processed tuna. Especially canned tuna Next is frozen fish. Yellowfin tuna is the main raw material for producing canned tuna. Therefore, the export value is higher than the import volume. Next is skipjack tuna and bigeye tuna. From the graph showed the trend of export value of yellowfin tuna products is increasing every year. While the export value of skipjack tuna was high in 2013, it decreased gradually until 2018 and increased from 2019 until now.

### Conclusion

There are 3 main types of tropical tuna landing in Thailand: skipjack tuna. yellowfin tuna and bigeye tuna of which skipjack tuna has the highest quantity and has a tendency to continually increase, which is in line with the import value. There are many sources of imported tuna. The imported volume of tuna caught from the Indian Ocean accounts for an average of 20% – 30% of the total. The imported tuna is frozen tuna used as raw material in the processing industry. Tuna products with high volume and value are those from yellowfin tuna. Followed by skipjack tuna and bigeye tuna, respectively.

## **References**

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