



Tuna

Increased global demand for semi-processed raw material

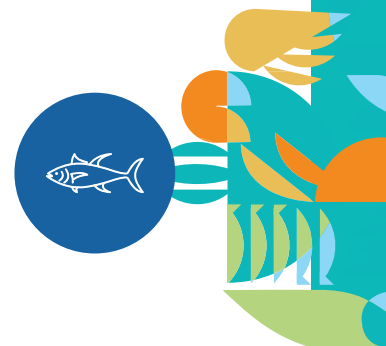
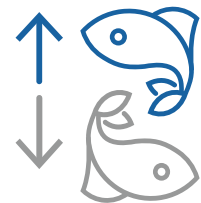
During the first half of 2025, tuna canners in Southeast Asia and Europe imported less raw fish in favour of cooked loins for processing end-products. This trend continued through the third quarter of the year amid reduced demand from the largest market, the United States of America, where imports from several countries became subject to a new raft of expanded tariffs which came into effect in early August. Globally, consumer demand for the higher-value non-canned tuna was moderate during January–June, but improved during the summer holiday season in July–August.

Supplies

On average, tuna catches throughout 2025 have been holding steady in the Western and Central Pacific, the world's largest tuna fishery, amid ongoing challenges such as the need for better management. Skipjack tuna (which accounts for 57 percent of global tuna catches) is in healthy condition. Yellowfin and bigeye tuna stocks are stable, though under pressure, with some regions showing signs of localized overfishing.

Between 1 July and 15 August 2025, a ban on deploying, servicing, or setting on FADs was enforced across the Western and Central Pacific, resulting in lower catches. However, the frozen skipjack price in the area was stable at USD 1 500 per tonne during this period, increasing only in October and November 2025.

Catches of yellowfin have been low in the Indian Ocean through much of 2025. This caused a drop in the supplies by the Spanish tuna fleet to tuna canners, who bought more cooked loins during the first half of 2025.



Trade and markets, by product group

During January–June 2025, healthy demand for canned and processed tuna (HS code 160414), particularly from North America and Europe, resulted in increased global imports totalling 890 304 tonnes valued at USD 4.78 billion, against 756 682 tonnes worth USD 4.27 billion in the first half of 2024.

In the high-value non-canned tuna segment, imports of frozen tuna fillets and steaks for sashimi and non-sashimi usage also saw a year-on-year rise of 16.84 percent in quantity at 111 448 tonnes, valued at USD 1.22 billion (+28.42 percent) during the first half of the year. Japan, the United States of America, Spain, the Republic of Korea and Portugal were the leading importers. In contrast, global imports of fresh tuna declined by 11.62 percent year-on-year at 38 543 tonnes.

Frozen raw materials for canning and other uses

During the review period, tuna canners in Asia and Europe imported less whole frozen fish and more cooked frozen loins; consequently, global imports of raw frozen tuna fell to 932 271 tonnes during the first half of 2025, down by 8.82 percent year-on-year. Thai imports of whole frozen tuna showed the biggest decline of 17.48 percent, at 378 432 tonnes. Imports of this product form also declined in Viet Nam (-8 percent) but increased in Côte d'Ivoire (+50 percent), the Philippines (+33.33 percent) and Japan (+19.35 percent).

Imports of semi-processed raw material (cooked loins) were 20 percent higher in the European Union (120 557 tonnes) procured by Spain, Italy, Portugal and France. Ecuador was the main supplying country with about one-third of total exports; other main suppliers of this product group were China, Indonesia, Philippines, Viet Nam and Papua New Guinea. EU imports of cooked loins also increased from Solomon Islands, Guatemala and Colombia during this period to compensate for the lower catches by the domestic tuna fleet, especially those in the Indian Ocean where yellowfin has reportedly been scarce so far this year.

In Thailand, imports of cooked loins were 16 percent higher year-on-year at 39 479 tonnes during January–June 2025; China (26 358 tonnes; +13.04 percent), Indonesia (8 467 tonnes; -1.17 percent) and Viet Nam (3 998 tonnes; +119.54 percent) were the main suppliers.

Higher-value, non-canned tuna

Global demand for higher-value, non-canned tuna has been stable across the key markets in 2025. In Southeast Asia and the Far East, demand for fresh and frozen tuna increased in the first half of 2025, primarily driven by sustained demand for sashimi-grade tuna fillets utilized in the foodservice sector, especially in Japanese restaurants across the region.

Global tuna imports

Canned tuna	+17.6% ↑
Fresh tuna	-11.6% ↓
Frozen tuna fillets	+16.8% ↑

In contrast, importers in North America and Europe focused on non-sashimi-grade tuna fillets and steaks, targeting both retail distribution channels and the hospitality industry.

**Japan imports of fresh and frozen tuna
January–June (1000 tonnes)**

Products	2023	2024	2025	% change 2025/24
Fresh, whole/dressed	2 361	1 908	1 727	-9.49
Frozen, whole	70 325	60 068	71 568	+19.14
Fillet, frozen	28 153	34 817	37 805	+8.58
Total, including others	100 839	96 793	111 100	+14.78

Source: Author’s own elaboration based on GTT. 2025. Global Trade Tracker. [Cited 1 October 2025]. www.globaltradetracker.com

During January–June 2025, global imports of fresh chilled tuna were lower than the corresponding period in 2024, but increased for frozen fillets, steaks and loins. The year-on-year decline for fresh tuna, at 38 543 tonnes, was by 11.6 percent. Among the top five markets, imports increased in the United States, Spain and Portugal, but declined in Thailand and Japan.

Demand for frozen tuna fillets, the most favoured category in higher-value tuna trade, has remained firm across many markets in 2025. In Southeast Asia and the Far East, imports of the product increased, particularly in Japan, the Republic of Korea, Thailand and China, largely driven by sustained demand for sashimi-grade tuna fillets utilized in the foodservice sector, especially in Japanese restaurants. In contrast, importers in North America and Europe focused on non-sashimi-grade tuna fillets and steaks, targeting both retail distribution channels and the hospitality industry.

Japan

In addition to a general declining trend in the domestic consumption of sashimi tuna, the Japanese traditionally avoid eating raw fish during the warm summer months (June–July). Nevertheless, Japan remains the world’s largest market for sashimi tuna. Overall demand has been steady during the first half of 2025, supported by visiting tourists from other Asian countries.

Supplies of large-sized Atlantic bluefin from the United States and Canada, weighing 150–250kg/fish, rose in 2025. Likewise, imports of air-flown Southern bluefin tuna from New Zealand and Australia increased in the market.

Local demand for sashimi tuna improved during Obon, a traditional festival celebrated in mid-August when families gather to honour their ancestors.

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United States of America

In the United States, consumer demand for non-canned tuna improved during the summer months with good sales opportunities in the retail and restaurant trade. During January–June 2025, imports of frozen fillets were higher than the same period the previous year. Similarly, combined imports of high-value fresh and frozen tuna, including frozen fillets, amounted to 36 916 tonnes, 16.12 percent higher year-on-year.

**USA imports of fresh and frozen tuna
January–June (1 000 tonnes)**

	2023	2024	2025	% change 2025/23
Fresh, Whole/dressed	11.77	11.35	12.62	11
Frozen, whole	2.24	2.02	2.04	1
Fillet, frozen	16.33	17.90	22.25	24
Total	30.35	31.27	36.92	18.05

Source: Author's own elaboration based on GTT. 2025. Global Trade Tracker. [Cited 1 October 2025]. www.globaltradetracker.com

Official data for July 2025 is not yet available but according to some reports, imports of frozen fillets rose during that month as US tuna traders procured additional supplies before elevated import tariffs came into effect in August 2025.

Europe

The European tuna market (all types) is valued at approximately USD 15.3 billion in 2025, reflecting its significant role in global fisheries trade. While canned tuna dominates due to convenience, long shelf life and affordability, higher-valued non-canned tuna (frozen and fresh) products are gaining attraction, especially in the foodservice and premium retail segments.

In the EU fresh tuna trade, overall imports declined from 12 700 tonnes in January–June 2024 to 9 500 tonnes in the first half of 2025. However, imports of fresh bluefin, generally used in the sushi and sashimi trade in Japanese restaurants, were 35 percent higher at 2 641 tonnes during the review period.

Strong demand for frozen tuna fillets continued in the market during this period, resulting in a 38 percent rise in imports at 29 143 tonnes, year-on-year.

China

The surge in domestic tourism in China has increased business opportunities in the restaurant sector, particularly in the sashimi tuna trade.

During the first half of 2025, imports of fresh and frozen tuna increased by 37 percent year-on-year at 1 554 tonnes, which included 812 tonnes of fresh and frozen bluefin and 434 tonnes of deep-frozen fillets. Specific to fresh Atlantic bluefin and Southern Bluefin tuna, the import growth was 35 percent over the same period in 2024, at 693 tonnes. Japanese restaurants in China were the main customers of these products.

Imports of shelf-stable deep-frozen tuna fillets (mostly bluefin and bigeye) increased sharply in China from 184 tonnes in January–June 2024 to 534 tonnes in the same period in 2025. Malta, Türkiye, the Republic of Korea, Viet Nam and Indonesia were the main suppliers. During January–July 2025, cumulative imports of fresh bluefin tuna, predominantly supplied by Spain, amounted to 667 tonnes as compared to 479 tonnes in the same months the previous year. The recent lifting of restrictions on Japanese seafood imports is expected to further support demand for high-value bluefin from that country, to cater to the 125 000 Japanese restaurants operating in China.

Other Asia-Pacific countries

Similar to Japan and China, the popularity of frozen tuna fillets in the Asia-Pacific region has increased, with the estimated regional imports during January–June 2025 exceeding 15 000 tonnes. The leading importers were the Republic of Korea, Philippines, Viet Nam, Thailand, Malaysia and Singapore.

China imports

Fresh and frozen tuna +37% ↑

Frozen tuna fillets (deep frozen) +190% ↑

Canned and processed tuna

In comparison with the fresh and frozen tuna trade, the global import trend for canned and prepared tuna (HS 160414) was on the upswing during January–June 2025.

Steady prices and stable supply of raw materials created better sales opportunities for producers, exporters and importers of semi-processed and processed tuna in the global market. Imports increased in North America, Europe, the Near East and the Asia-Pacific, in favour of canned tuna processors and exporters in Southeast Asia, Latin America and Europe.

In Asia, exports of canned and processed tuna increased from Thailand, Indonesia and Viet Nam, but declined from China and the Philippines. Among the European producers, exports increased from Spain, Portugal and France, but declined from Italy. In Latin America, exports increased from Ecuador, El Salvador and Peru but reduced from Mexico.

**World top exporters of canned/processed tuna
January–June (1 000 tonnes)**

	2023	2024	2025	% change 2025/24
Thailand	218.87	264.05	270.89	+2.59
Ecuador	114.98	143.23	164.22	+14.65
China	53.37	92.03	84.34	-8.36
Spain	55.32	58.70	58.75	+0.07
Philippines	42.32	51.97	46.36	-10.80
Indonesia	34.13	35.66	36.60	+2.62
Netherlands (Kingdom of the)	25.73	26.95	25.52	-5.30

Source: Author's own elaboration based on GTT. 2025. Global Trade Tracker.
[Cited 1 October 2025]. www.globaltradetracker.com

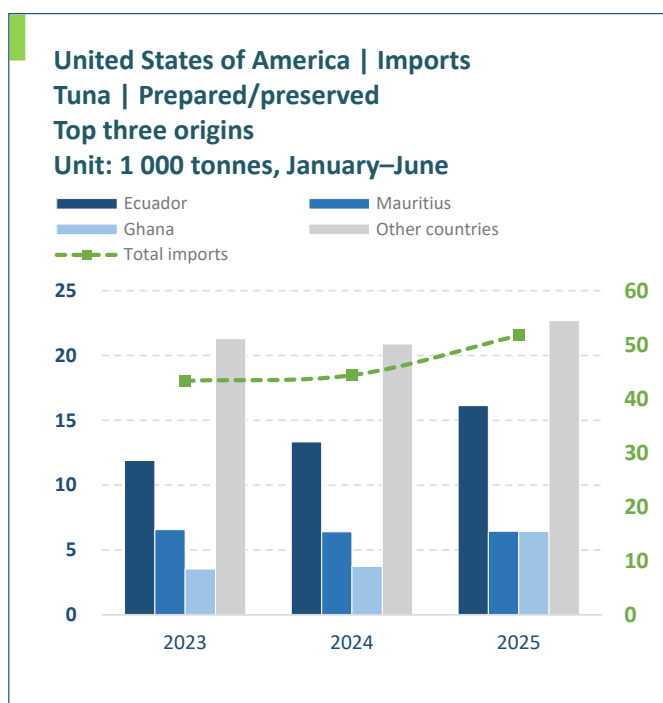
**World top importers of canned/processed tuna
January–June (1 000 tonnes)**

	2023	2024	2025	% change 2025/24
United States of America	112.16	109.23	127.94	+17.13
Spain	81.57	84.28	107.84	+27.95
Italy	75.28	69.39	75.29	+8.50
Germany	39.95	42.42	52.79	+24.47
France	50.70	47.38	51.98	+9.71
United Kingdom	43.32	44.36	51.71	+16.56
Netherlands (Kingdom of the)	32.26	32.65	42.06	+28.81

Source: Author's own elaboration based on GTT. 2025. Global Trade Tracker.
[Cited 1 October 2025]. www.globaltradetracker.com

The Americas

In January–June 2025, imports of ready-to-eat tuna products in the United States were at a three-year high at 127 940 tonnes, representing an increase of 17.13 percent year-on-year. Imports from the top source, Thailand, rose by 16.98 percent at 62 843 tonnes followed by Viet Nam (+25 percent; 15 304 tonnes), Ecuador (+56.12 percent; 12 768 tonnes), Indonesia, Fiji and Peru, but declined from Mexico. There was a significant rise in exports from Spain to the United States (+151.15 percent at 2 050 tonnes) which comprised high-value ready-to-eat products.



Source: Author's own elaboration based on GTT. 2025. Global Trade Tracker. [Cited 1 October 2025]. www.globaltradetracker.com

Imports in Canada amounted to 18 484 tonnes during the first half of 2025, 5.75 percent higher than the same period in 2024.

In Latin America, canned tuna imports increased in Colombia (19 346 tonnes), Peru (13 172 tonnes) and Argentina (12 169 tonnes), but declined in Mexico (9 285 tonnes).

The European Union

In the European Union, imports of semi- processed and ready-to-eat tuna products totalled 420 470 tonnes during the first six months in 2025, up by 19.31 percent year-on-year. Of this total, 28.57 percent (120 557 tonnes) comprised imports of cooked frozen tuna loins into Spain (974 161 tonnes), Italy (25 777 tonnes), Portugal (14 103 tonnes) and France (3 404 tonnes) to produce ready-to-eat products. Other large importers were Germany, the Kingdom of the Netherlands, Belgium and Poland, which mostly purchased ready-to-eat canned tuna and other preparations.

European Union imports of prepared and preserved tuna, by country of origin, January–June, 2023–2025 (1 000 tonnes)

	2023	2024	2025
Canned or preserved tuna			
Ecuador	62.88	75.44	100.51
Spain	59.47	58.14	64.43
China	24.51	32.46	33.32
Other countries	203.19	186.13	222.20
Total imports	350.05	352.16	420.47

Source: Author's own elaboration based on GTT, 2025. Global Trade Tracker. [Cited 1 July 2025]. www.globaltradetracker.com

Near East and North Africa

January–June 2025 exports of canned tuna from Thailand to the Near East and North Africa (NENA) are indicative of the market trends in that region. Among the top five destinations, increases were noted for Libya and Egypt; however, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates and Israel recorded declines.

Asia-Pacific

Thailand has emerged as the Asia-Pacific's largest buyer of semi-processed cooked frozen loins (HS code 160414) for processing and export of ready-to-eat products. Imports of this product group in Thailand reached nearly 40 000 tonnes during the review period, up by 16.17 percent year-on-year.

Japan's value as the largest market for canned tuna in the Asia-Pacific, was evaluated at USD 1 356 million, supplied by domestic production and imports. The product is used in homes for preparing salads, rice bowls and sandwiches, supported by extensive demand from all age groups in the country.

In the first half of 2025, imports of canned tuna in Japan totalled 33 706 tonnes, unchanged from the corresponding period in 2024. The main suppliers were Thailand, Indonesia, Philippines and Viet Nam. Meanwhile, Spain has carved out a niche market in Japan for value-added products.

Imports of canned tuna in Australia, the second largest importer in the Asia-Pacific region, also increased marginally during the review period at 22 823 tonnes against 22 547 tonnes year-on-year. At the same time, imports of canned tuna were lower in Malaysia, the Republic of Korea and Singapore due to unsold inventories in those markets.

Prices

As of late October 2025, the delivery price for frozen skipjack from the Central and Western Pacific to Thailand had shot up by 13–15 percent at USD 1 650–1 700 per tonne, after staying flat at USD 1 500 per tonne during the July–September low fishing season.

During January–September 2025, Thailand recorded a 19.23 percent decline in whole frozen tuna imports year-on-year, while imports of semi-processed cooked frozen loins increased by 3.57 percent, reaching 58 420 tonnes during this period.

Outlook

Landings of tuna are expected to improve from October in the Western and Central Pacific Ocean; this may lead to some softening in the currently high price level of USD 1 650–1 700 per tonne.

The expanded US tariff rates which became effective in August 2025 remain a matter of serious concern for Southeast Asia's tuna exporters. Orders from US buyers are slow, and these higher tariffs are likely to further affect demand for high-value non-canned tuna during the year-end festival season.

In Japan, the extension of summer weather to October and the delayed onset of autumn temperatures has impacted demand for tuna in the HORECA (hotel, restaurant and catering) sector.

Elsewhere in Southeast Asia and the Far East, demand for sashimi tuna is likely to increase in the catering trade during the year-end/Gregorian New Year as well as the Lunar New Year festival season.