

Title: **Can Current Supply Figures Support the Nutritional Recommendation of Fish Consumption in Iran? A Case-Study of the Challenges in Front of A Nutrition Policy**

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Abstract: "Fish consumption twice per week" recommendation has been adopted in many countries, including Iran, by Nutrition experts. Data derived from food balance sheets (FBSs) and national household food consumption surveys (NHFCSs) show that fish consumption has been increased in the last 20 years in Iran. The gap between supply and recommendation figures in order to analyze the feasibility of this policy however needs to be determined. In this study, we took current figures of fish supply and consumption in Iran and calculated the amount of fish needed to support the recommendation of fish consumption. Data obtained from FAOSTAT-FBSs in 1980-82, 1990-92 and 2000-02, and NHFCS reports in 1992-95 and 2001-03. Fish supplies needed to fulfill the nutritional policy were calculated based on 120 and 180 gr/caput/wk scenarios. Sharp increase happened in the average fish supply from 1980s to 1990s, but slowed down afterwards. In early 2000, fish availability and intake were 4.73 and 4.43 kg (as raw-whole fish)/capita/year, respectively. The amount of fish required to fulfill the recommendation were however calculated as 10.97 and 16.43 kg/caput/yr based on the two scenarios, respectively. This study reveals that the gap between present fish consumption and the amounts for nutritional goal is still big. Whether bridging this gap in terms of feasibility, ecological, environmental and logistical burdens is attainable, needs more evaluation. Nutrition educators should be aware of the effects of their campaigns on the nationwide food policy as well as on issues such as consumer demand, prices, and environment.