



**Full Length Research Article**

**THE PLACE AND IMPORTANCE OF FISHERY COOPERATIVES IN AQUACULTURE MARKETING IN  
TURKEY: THE CASE OF ANTALYA**

**<sup>1</sup>Mustafa Tunca Olguner, <sup>2</sup>Serpil Yilmaz and <sup>2</sup>Evrin Beyhan Şen**

<sup>1</sup>Department of Fisheries Technology, Faculty of Fisheries, Akdeniz University, Dumlupinar Boulevard,  
07058 Campus, Antalya -Turkey

<sup>2</sup>Department of Basic Sciences, Faculty of Fisheries, Akdeniz University, Dumlupinar Boulevard,  
07058 Campus, Antalya - Turkey

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**ABSTRACT**

Fishery Cooperatives; are organizations that provides and serves about production, processing, storage and marketing issues of all kinds of aquatic products' partners and established to provide their needs of common fishing gears, supplies and equipment. Therefore, cooperative system is seen one of the most appropriate tool for eliminating the problems that aquatic products sector currently within, besides, to sustain aquatic products stocks and the fishermen communities (mostly fisheries are cooperative partners). In our country, there are still 574 fisheries cooperatives in 600 producer organization in aquatic products sector, while the number of shareholders are 30893, such cooperatives are not effective enough. Fishery cooperatives have got quite an important potential in order to watch over the benefits of the fishermen and to organize the fishing sector. All the authorities accept that a control system including an efficient self-control mechanism might even be established providing the active participation of the fishermen by means of the fishery cooperatives. In this study fishery cooperatives functions, members problems, expectations are examined comparatively within the example of Antalya province' cooperatives, despite all the problems experienced in the province of Antalya, the reason for reduction of activity will be discussed, still gradually increasing number of fisheries cooperatives.

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**INTRODUCTION**

Cooperative is some kind of an attempt, which many partners come together for providing economic, social and cultural needs at cost price in the best manner, use of mutual assistance and solidarity, services is kept at the forefront rather than the profit. Cooperatives aims, solidarity and cooperation in both economic and social fields. In economic terms, producer that produce commodities and services with its own resources, while allowing to reach local or wider markets, in the social sense contributing to the producers while they are performing activities that they come together for this purpose, finding a solution for the problems and to act together for achieving a common goal (Çıkin and Karacan, 1994).

**\*Corresponding author: Serpil Yilmaz**

Department of Basic Sciences, Faculty of Fisheries, Akdeniz University, Dumlupinar Boulevard, 07058 Campus, Antalya - Turkey

In the world, the first cooperative movement in England in 1816 in the town of Rochdale started with 28 entrepreneurs come together, the first co-operative was founded again in England in 1844. In the period before the republic, cooperative movement in our country started in 1863, after the declaration of the republic, 'Nominal Agricultural Associations Act' was adopted in 1924, and today this has been the basis of the Law on Agricultural Credit Cooperatives. With this law, the first cooperative was founded in Izmir in 1927 (Kocabaş, 2003). Fishery cooperative system, which started in 1942 in Turkey (Koçel, 1971 and Arısoy, 1974a), fishermen achieved cooperative-like creations in far more older years to arrange fishermen rights and for collaborate. Today, fishery cooperatives; marine and inland water fisheries and aquaculture and processing sectors are located in every part of the world. According to Cooperative Law No. 1163 fishery cooperatives are organizations that established to provide; all kinds of aquatic products production, processing, storage and

marketing issues and their partners need, to serve the common fishing gear, supplies and equipment. These cooperatives are mostly formed by traditional fishermen.

**MATERIALS AND METHODS**

In our country as of 1980 there are 229, in 1992 there are 262 fishery cooperatives present, and there were 574 active fishery cooperatives, 30893 shareholders and 16 unions by the year 2012 (Table 1).

**Table 1. Fishery cooperatives and shareholders in Turkey**

Years	Fishery Cooperatives	%	Shareholders	%	Fisheries Unions	%
2001	403	-	19381	-	5	-
2002	410	1,7	21762	10,9	8	37,5
2003	413	0,7	21719	-0,19	8	0,0
2004	424	2,6	23203	6,4	10	20,0
2005	461	8,0	24495	5,3	11	9,1
2006	490	5,9	24920	1,7	13	15,3
2007	504	2,7	27087	8,0	13	0,0
2008	522	3,4	28186	3,9	13	0,0
2009	528	1,1	28455	0,9	14	7,1
2010	547	3,5	28751	1,0	14	0,0
2011	560	2,3	30042	4,3	15	6,6
2012	574	2,4	30893	2,7	16	6,3

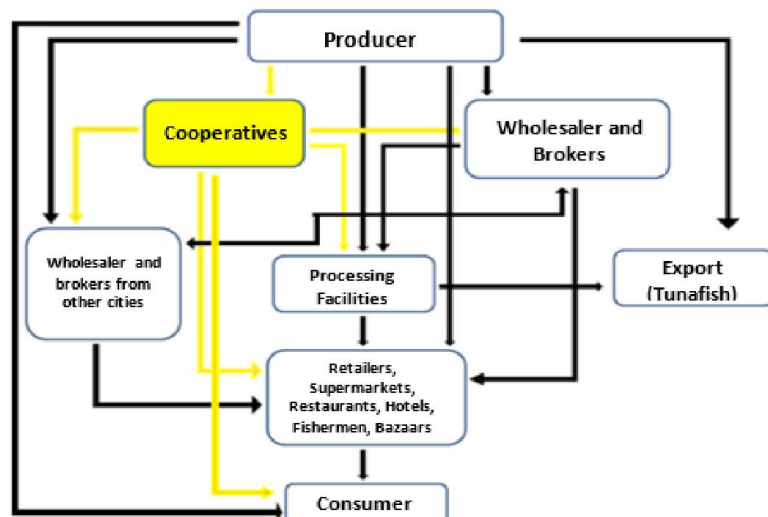
As seen on Figure 1, fishery cooperatives in Antalya is 15, except 3 of them (Kale, Beymelek and Güzelbağ) the rest 12 fishery cooperatives are fully active. In Antalya province active cooperatives' members are totally 543, which is the 1.75% of total fishery cooperatives' members in Turkey. The oldest and still fully operational fishery cooperative in Antalya province was founded in 1969 is Alanya Fishery Cooperative, the newest cooperative was founded in 2009 which is Aksu Fishery Cooperative.

**Problems of fishery cooperatives in Antalya**

Marketing is just one of the activities of cooperatives. However, fisheries cooperatives can play a role in the marketing and benefits to member fishermen is very important. Because almost all of the products bought in the area, a cooperative which equipped with the necessary market information, especially common in the sale of fish, by secret agreements that made between the buyers can eliminate the problem of low prices. However, one of the issues that most of the fishermen complains about the difficulties encountered in fish marketing is the biggest problem for fishermen; fish is sold under its value. On Figure 2, cooperatives place were given in fishery products marketing channels in Antalya



**Figure 1. Fishery cooperatives in Antalya province**



**Figure 2. Fishery products marketing channels in Antalya**

province. According to this, fisheries cooperatives that they buy from producer, can be marketed directly to Antalya province wholesalers and brokers, wholesalers and brokers in other provinces, retailers and consumers. However, significant differences were observed between production value and amount of production as there is not a linear relationship between them. In fact, the impression was obtained that the average price of the products remained almost unchanged in recent years. During the investigation of water products prices, despite the rising production costs, lagged behind the rise in inflation, therefore the profitability and sustainability of production in the sector has been identified as major problems.

## RESULTS

Fishery products which sold through cooperatives are especially more profitable for large-scale aquaculture businesses. Because cooperatives have some advantages compared to brokers. Cooperatives keeps sales cut lower, so marketing costs will become a little lower. Does not happen any problem about the confidence, because fish seller and the fishermen is in the same formation (Ünal and Yercan, 2006).

Antalya Province' cooperatives revenues are, membership fees, funds in case of a new member, charges from outside vessels when there is a port, whereas, electricity, water, heating, cleaning, rent, maintenance, repair, insured workers' wages, accountant fees, stationery and notary costs, contribution to education taxes etc., buying and selling fish costs, cannot afford such expenses. (In Antalya Province a total of only 5 workers insured).

Other problems of cooperatives in Antalya can be summarized briefly as follows;

- Fishing ban is not regional, absence of the space for auction,
- The fishermen prefer to sell to brokers rather than cooperative,
- Narrowing of the field of fishing, problems with the trawl vessels about the fishing field,
- Tourism (narrowing of the fishing field and insured workers),
- Lack of the support of the government, bank credit difficulties,
- Lack of the Ministry of Maritime which will only interested in fisheries and fishermen,
- Lack of fixed space and tools,
- The cooperatives failed to provide technical and economic support that their members required,
- Members of the non-fishing source of income, experienced problems in performing legal proceedings,
- Cooperative members' participation in meetings is low,
- Problems about collecting member fees.

All these added to the problems that arising from the management cooperatives are unable to perform their duties. In fact, 50% of the cooperative's chairmen are elementary school, 34% of middle school, 8% of high school and 8% of university graduates, while 75% of cooperative's vice presidents are elementary school graduates, and no higher

education institutions are available. Accordingly, if we briefly summarize the expectations of fisheries cooperatives in Antalya; creating fish sale places, regional regulation of fishing ban period, introduce quotas on the amount of caught fish, more deterrent penalties for that do not obey the ban and people of the region encouraged consumption of fishery products.

## DISCUSSION

In our country we cannot say that fishery cooperatives are effective enough. In fact, looking at the marketing of fishery products values, only 2.2% of the seafood is marketed by the cooperatives and associations. However, according to researches, first degree major problem of the vessel owners are; marketing, decrease in demand, price instability and insufficiency of aquaculture industry. Which should have been the primary objectives of the cooperatives, in studies, marketing activities like product marketing, grading, standardization etc. ranked 4<sup>th</sup> or 5<sup>th</sup>. On the other hand, fishermen, failed to show the expected acceleration in the cooperative movement, of which there are many fisheries cooperatives were unable to carry out the organizational goals. Cooperatives that organized under the fishery cooperatives which consists mostly the owner of small vessels, wrong planning, unfair competition, insufficiency and improper use of support and incentives, lack of education, there are significant problems such as inability to work together.

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