PNA COVID-19 Purse Seine Dashboard

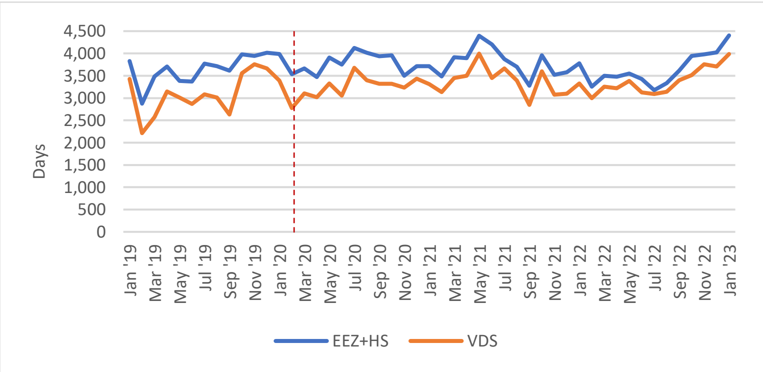
February 2023

Key trends:

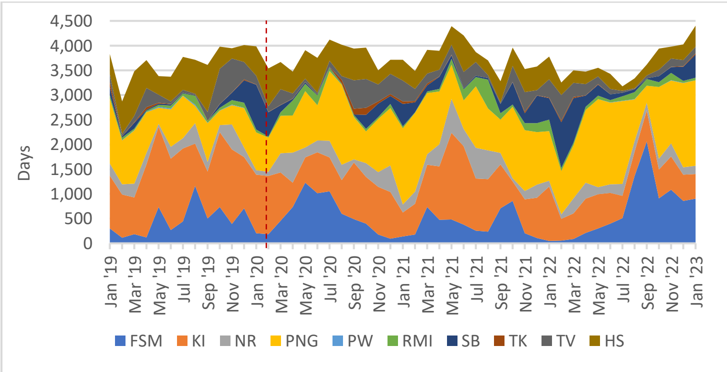
- Preliminary figures indicate that overall purse seine fishing effort rose in January, with fishing intensity (fishing days/calendar day) up to the highest level in the last twelve months. Note that January figures may be adjusted as NFDs are processed.
- Total purse seine catch (EEZs+HS) fell in January, down by around 22% on the December catch. Catch and effort remained concentrated in the west, with PNG and FSM collectively accounting for around 60% of total catch.
- Based on preliminary figures, fishing conditions deteriorated further in January with overall catch rate down by 28%. Highest catch rates were in TK and SB but only in TK and TV were catch rates higher than in December.
- Reported transhipment volumes significantly dropped in January, down by around 29% on the December figures. Reported volumes were highest in PNG and FSM. Note that transhipment volumes are not available for all vessels.
- Bangkok SKJ prices averaged $1,680 in January, marginally down on December prices, according to Thai Union figures. Singapore MGO price reduced to an average $908/mt in December. The differential between BKK SKJ price and Singapore MGO price widened, but remained below the 10-year average.
- Amongst PNA Parties, all countries (except Tokelau) have now experienced major COVID community transmission events at some stage during the pandemic, although new daily case numbers relative to population size are now low in each country. Amongst key SE Asian processing countries, case numbers are at low levels relative to population size.

Fishing effort

Overall effort (PNA EEZs+HS)



Distribution of effort (EEZs+HS)

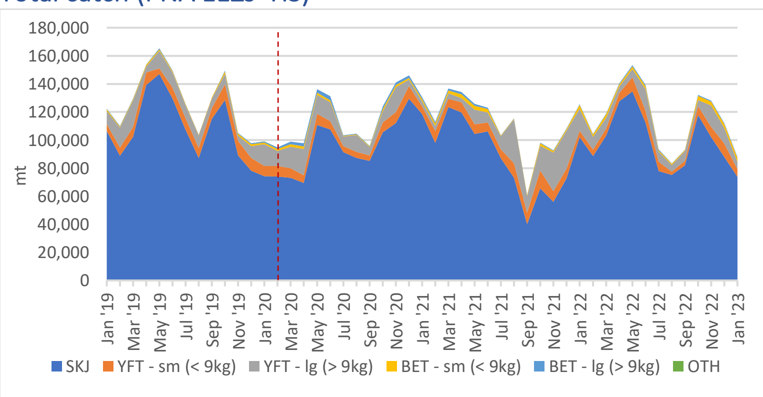


- Overall fishing effort (EEZ+HS) rose in Jan, up 9% on Dec (4,404 vs 4,024) and 16% higher than Jan 2022. Fishing intensity (fishing days/calendar day) rose to a new peak in Jan, accounted for mainly by the increase in HS (29%) and to a lesser extent in EEZs (4%). VDS usage at 3,985 days was 7% above Dec and 22% above the Jan 2015-22 period.

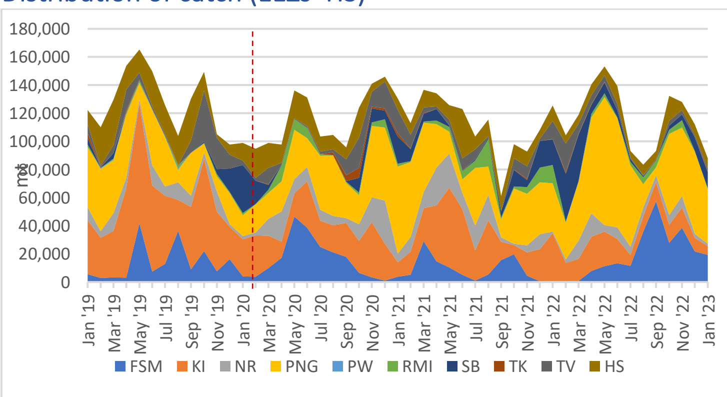
Effort concentration continued to be in the West with highest in PNG (39%) and FSM, accounting for 60% of overall effort in Jan. Except for KI EEZ, all other EEZs as well as HS, recorded increases in effort. Effort increases in FSM, NR, RMI and TV reversed the Dec down trends while increases in PNG, SB, TK and HS followed from the Dec uptrends.

Catch

Total catch (PNA EEZs+HS)



Distribution of catch (EEZs+HS)

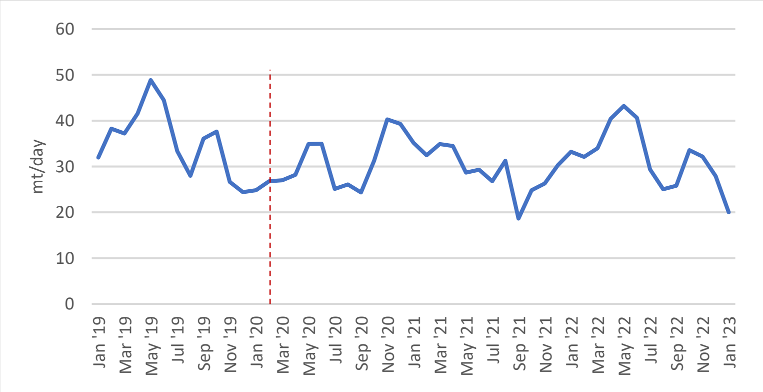


- Total catch (EEZ+HS) declined 22% in Jan (87,939t vs 112,185t) despite the increase in effort as this was overwhelmed by the decline in overall catch rate and SKJ, YFT and BET catches decreased. Total catch for Jan is the second lowest in the last 12 months, 30% lower than Jan '22 and 26% below 2019-22 average.

- The changes in the distribution of catch amongst EEZs broadly reflected shifts in effort and the deterioration/improvements in catch rates across EEZs during the month. Catches in RMI, SB, TK and TV registered significant increases while catches in FSM, KI, NR, PNG and HS recorded decreases.

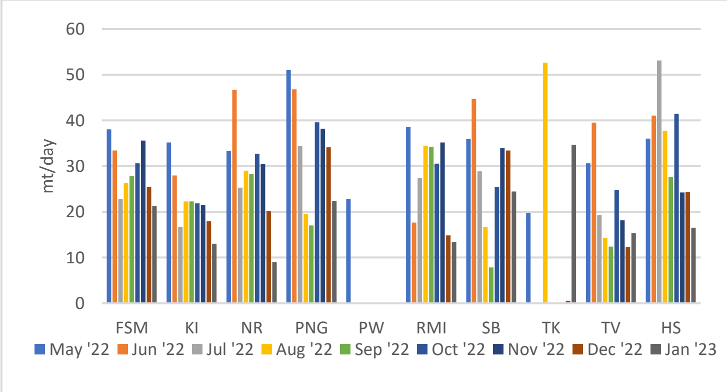
Catch rates

Overall (PNA EEZs+HS)



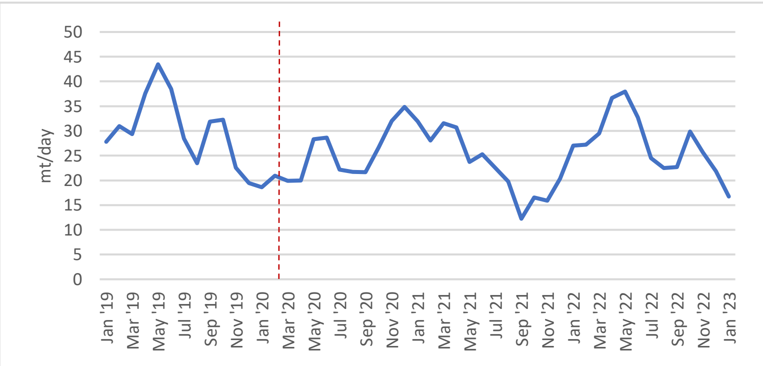
- Overall catch rate declined by 28% in Jan compared to Dec (20.0t vs 27.9t). The Jan overall catch rate was lower by 40% against the Jan ’22 (33.2t) and 38% lower against the 2019-2022 average (32.1t). Recent catch rates are preliminary and may be adjusted as NFDs are processed and additional e-reporting is received.

Catch rate by zone (EEZs+HS)



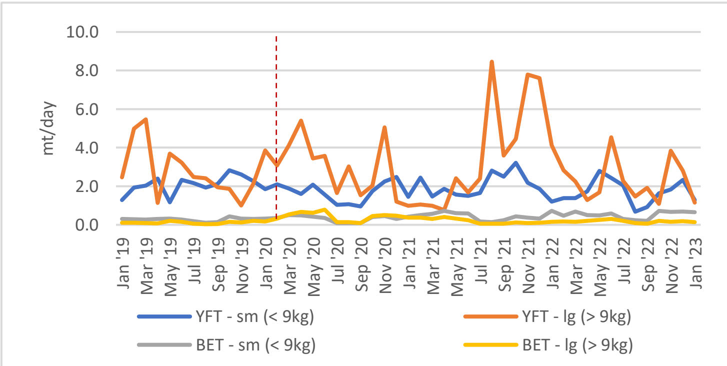
- January figures indicate that catch rates varied across the region, with rates highest in TK (34.7t) and SB (24.5t). Catch rates in all EEZs declined during the month except for TK and TV. The FSM and SB catch rates were driven down to above 20t/day while in other EEZs and HS to between 9.0t and <17t/day.

Skipjack



- SKJ catch rate declined 23% to ~17t/day in Jan that follows from successive declines of ~15% in Dec and Nov. Given the weight of SKJ in the catch composition, it accounted for 18 percentage points of the overall decline of 28% for the month. The Jan SKJ catch rate is one of the low points over the 2019-’22 period (the lowest was in Sep ’21 (~12t/day).

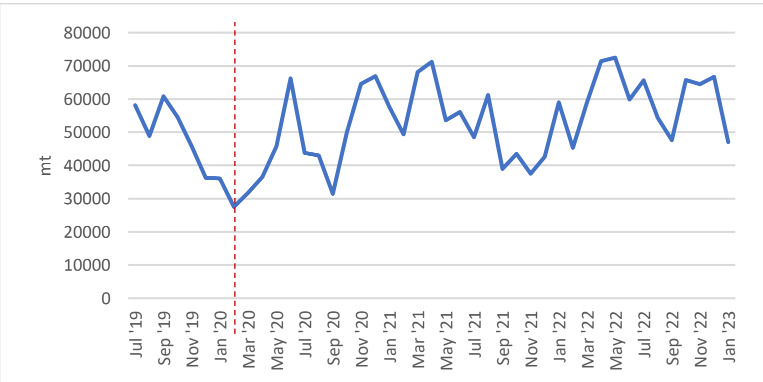
Other species



- Catch rates for other species showed significant deteriorations especially for YFT during Jan with large YFT catch rate down 59% (27% decrease in Dec), small YFT down 45% (-27%) while large BET showed a 26% decrease (+16%) and small BET down 4% (-1%). The declines in YFT rates contributed ~10 percentage points while BET rate declines were neglible to the decline in overall catch rate of 28% for the month.

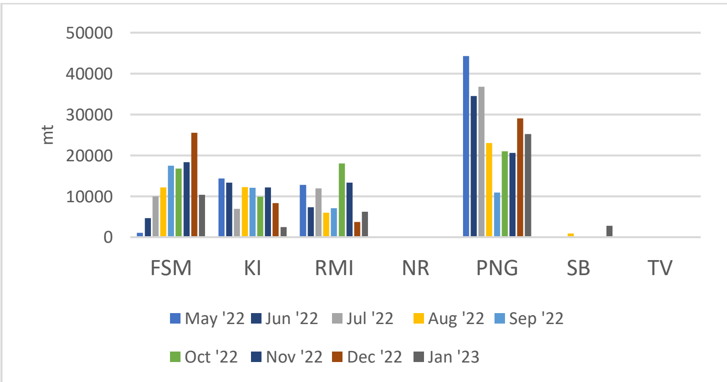
Reported Transhipment

Volume



- Reported transhipment volumes in PNA ports in Jan was 29% lower than in Dec volumes (47,064 vs to 66,687t). Note that transhipment volumes for some vessels are not available, so the figures reported here represent a sub-set of overall volumes.

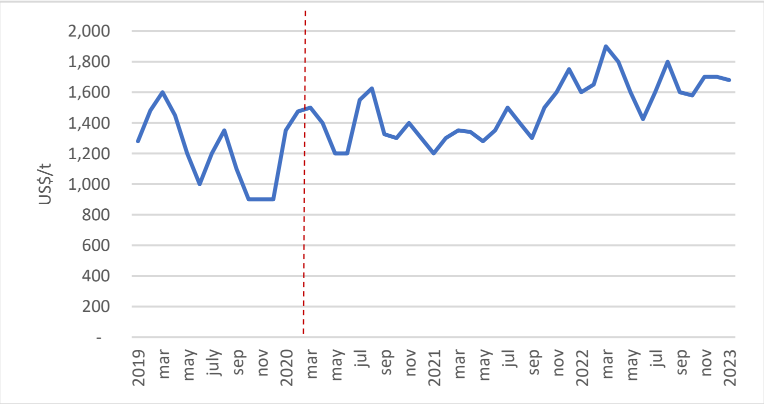
Location



- Reported transhipment volumes concentrated in the west in Jan, as in Dec, with highest volumes in PNG and FSM consistent with effort and catch concentration, though at much lower volumes. Transhipment in KI substantially reduced while in RMI increased. SB reported some activity as well.

Prices

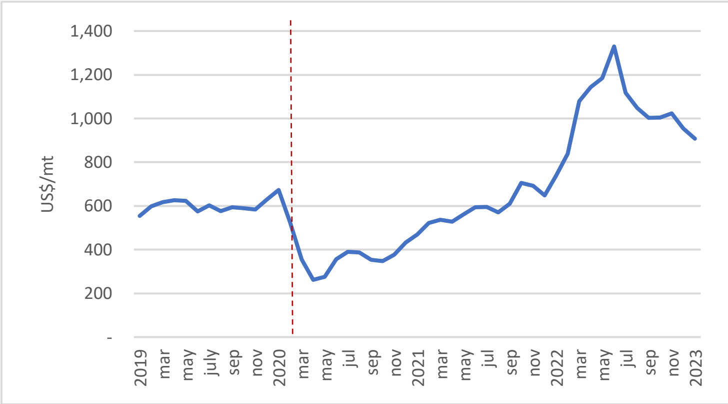
SKJ Price



https://investor.thaiunion.com/raw_material.html

- Bangkok SKJ prices as reported by Thai Union marginally declined to $1,680 in Jan, which is 5% above the Jan ’22 price of $1,600 and only marginally higher than the preceding 12-month average of $1,663.

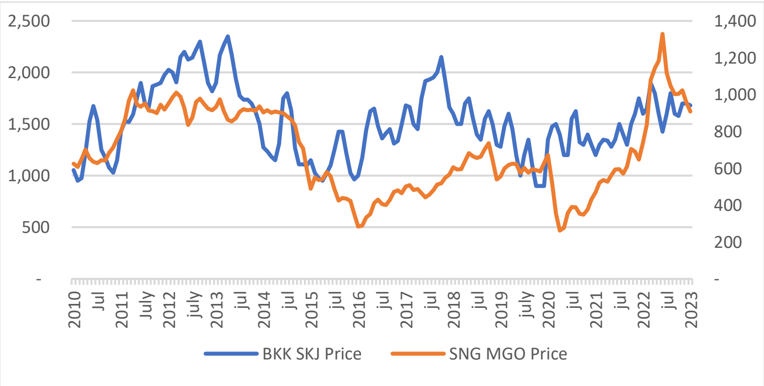
Fuel price



https://shipandbunker.com/prices/apac/sea/sg-sin-singapore#MGO

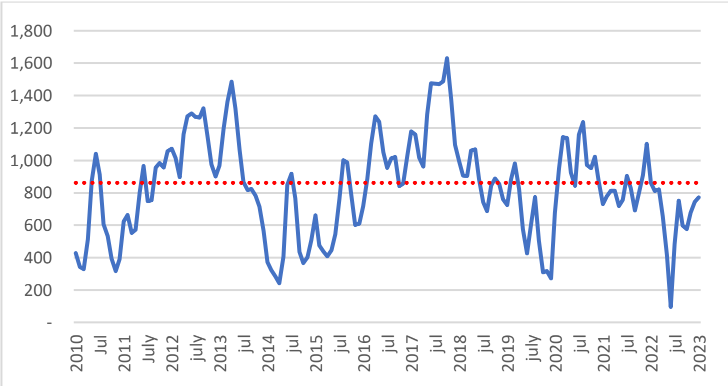
- Singapore MGO price declined further in Jan to $908/mt from US$955/mt in Dec. The downtrend has continued into mid-Feb with average price at US$856/mt.

BKK SKJ Price vs Fuel price (US$/t)



- In Jan, the Singapore MGO price line and SKJ price diverged further due to the fall in fuel price as BKK SKJ price remained broadly stable.

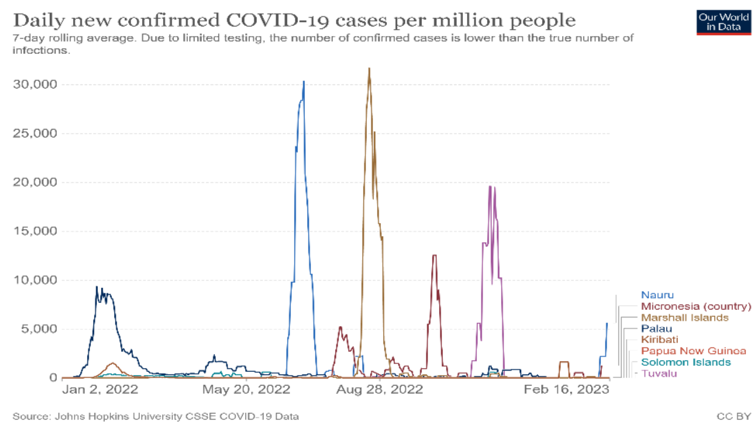
Price differential (US$/t) (BKK SKJ – Fuel)



- The differential between BKK SKJ price and Singapore MGO increased in Jan to US$772, up from US$745 in Dec. The differential remains below the 10-year average of $862.

COVID-19 cases

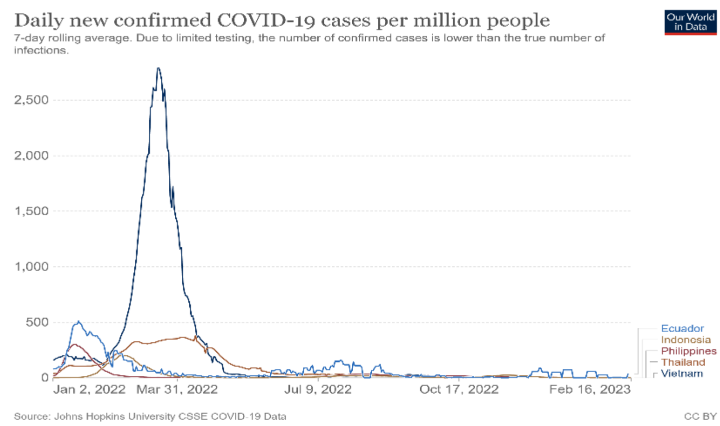
Daily confirmed cases – Pacific Island countries



https://ourworldindata.org/covid-cases

- Between Dec 31 ’22 and Feb 18 ’23, reported new cases in PNA countries are mostly insignificant relative to respective population sizes. The highest reported number of cases was in Nauru at ~70.

Daily confirmed cases – Processing countries



https://ourworldindata.org/covid-cases

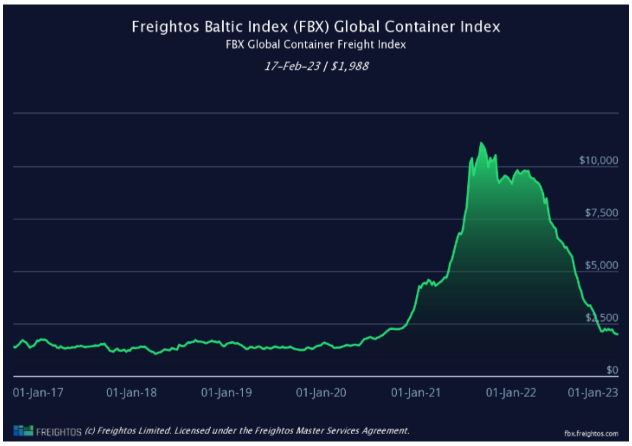
- New daily case numbers across all main processing countries remain at low levels relative to population size.

Other issues:

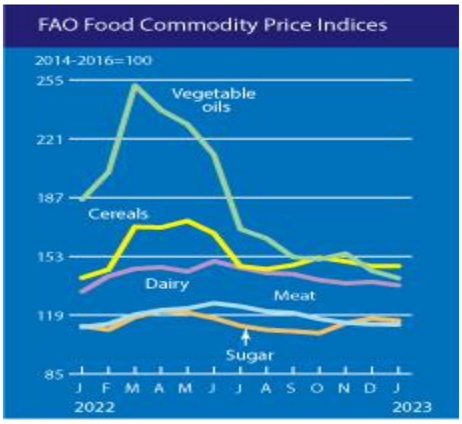
- According to SPC data[1], amongst the PNA Parties, all (except Tokelau) have now experienced high levels of COVID community transmission at some point throughout the pandemic. And, there were no new daily cases between mid-December '22 and mid-Jan '23 across all Parties.

- SPC report (updated 13, February '23) shows that rates of vaccination in the Pacific are generally very high, with each of NR, PW, TV, TK and KI achieving 100% double dose vaccination rates amongst PNAParties. Vaccination rates in PNG remain very low[2].

- The FBX global container freight index for a 40ft container down trended to $2,062 by end Dec; currently sitting at $1,998 as at 13th Feb '23[3].



- The FAO Food Price Index, following nine successive monthly declines from the peak in March '22 to December '22, declined further in January '23, ~0.8% lower than in December '22, ~18% lower than the peak in March '22 and ~3% lower than the Jan '22 index. The decline in the January '23 index was primarily driven noticeably by the decline in vegetable oils with contributing declines in dairy and sugar commodity price indices. Cereals and meat commodity indices were stable[4].



Notes:

- Data on catch, effort, catch rates and transhipment is based on electronic reporting through iFIMS as at 16th February, 2023. Updates to previous monthly data have been made as follows: Effort data – January to December 2022; Catch data – June to December 2022; Transhipment data – December 2022. Some data therefore may have changed due to more information having been added over time. Figures for January 2023 should be considered preliminary.
- The EEZs+HS effort figures in the fishing effort graph do not include a VDS vessel size adjustment factor. The actual VDS usage figures are adjusted for vessel size. HS days may include some non-fishing time. HS effort figures are those for the eastern high seas and HSPs 4 and 5.
- A dashed-red line has been on many graphs at February 2020 to provide an indication of the time in which COVID-related restrictions were becoming more common globally and regionally.

[1] https://www.spc.int/updates/blog/2022/10/covid-19-pacific-community-updates#CurrentStatus
[2] https://www.spc.int/updates/blog/2022/06/covid-19-pacific-community-updates#CurrentStatus
[3] https://fbx.freightos.com/
[4] https://www.fao.org/worldfoodsituation/foodpricesindex/en/