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| **Bibliography** | Amepou, Y.; Chin, A.; Foale, S.; Sant, G.; Smailes, O.; Grant, M.I. (2024) Maw money, maw problems: a lucrative fish maw fishery in Papua New Guinea highlights a global conservation issue driven by Chinese cultural demand, In: Conservation Letter, 1-8, URL: https://doi.org/10.1111/conl.13006 |
| **Associated conference** |  |
| **Abstract / Content summary** | Fish maw (teleost swim bladder) is a dried seafood product valued highly by Chinese cultures in East Asia, though global supply chains are poorly understood. Here, we describe the rapid development of a fish maw fishery in a low-income nation to illustrate how globalization can affect sustainability. In Papua New Guinea (PNG), fish maw developed into a fishery valued at ∼$831,000 USD annually between 2014–2018. Its development has been driven by Asian expatriates, who provide market access and fishing gear to local communities. The highest valued local species, scaly croaker Nibea squamosa, has a maximum value of $15,615 USD kg−1 (dried) at first-point-of-sale, potentially the highest first-point-of-sale fish maw product globally. Its value has led to high incidental catch rates of threatened species in an area that is a globally significant conservation stronghold. International trade databases need to recognize fish maw as a high value and globally traded product and consider a specific fish maw commodity code to assist nations in identifying emerging fish maw fisheries. Additionally, the Convention on the International Trade of Endangered Species of Flora and Fauna (CITES) could assist in protecting vulnerable fish maw species and facilitate management practices for incidentally caught threatened species. |
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