



Report Summary:

Puerto Rico's Ocean Economy Data

The six business sectors that depend on the ocean for their existence make up what is known as the ocean economy. An economic report funded by NOAA's Office for Coastal Management describes this information in detail for the U.S. Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico. This handout summarizes information for Puerto Rico.

Understandably, the report found that Puerto Rico is more reliant on ocean-related activity than most U.S. states. National employment statistics show that ocean industries support about 7 percent of the total employment, 3 times more than the average of 2 percent for ocean and Great Lakes states.

| Ocean Sectors | Establishments | Employment | Total wages (\$) |
|----------------------------|----------------|----------------|-------------------------|
| Living Resources | 14 | 10 | \$145,331 |
| Marine Construction | 19 | 642 | \$19,816,175 |
| Marine Transportation | 123 | 3,406 | \$103,046,969 |
| Offshore Mineral Resources | 43 | 17 | \$334,582 |
| Ship and Boat Building | 5 | ND | ND |
| Tourism and Recreation | 4,091 | 62,645 | \$798,495,848 |
| Ocean Economy | 4,295 | 66,720 | \$921,838,905 |
| Total Economy | 48,513 | 929,764 | \$24,903,000,000 |
| Ocean Economy Share | 9% | 7% | 4% |

Note: "ND" represents data that are "non-disclosed" for privacy purposes for industries below a certain size.

However, these figures do not capture the true level of ocean dependence here because many business activities are not captured in the national employment statistics, including self-employed workers, ocean activities not registered under traditional ocean sectors, and the partially ocean-dependent activities such as retail shops. By adding these activities to the total using locally obtained data, ocean job figures for Puerto Rico increase from 67,000 to nearly 156,000.

| Ocean Employment | National Statistics | Incorporating Additional Information | Percent Difference |
|----------------------------|---------------------|--------------------------------------|--------------------|
| Living Resources | 10 | 4,093 | +40,830% |
| Marine Construction | 642 | 4,023 | +527% |
| Marine Transportation | 3,406 | 11,961 | +251% |
| Offshore Mineral Resources | 17 | 0 | N/A |
| Ship and Boat Building | ND | ND | N/A |
| Tourism and Recreation | 62,645 | 135,578 | +116% |
| Ocean Economy | 66,720 | 155,655 | +133% |

Note: "ND" represents data that are "non-disclosed" for privacy purposes for industries below a certain size.

Details for each sector are provided on next page.

Living Resources Sector

Bureau of Labor Statistics reports:

- **9** fish and seafood markets, supporting **10** employees and **\$145,000** in wages
- **1** seafood and product preparation and packaging company

Local sources show more businesses and jobs in this sector:

- **42** fishing associations operate as seafood markets
- **32** fish and seafood markets
- **1,129** licensed fishermen
- **868** active fishermen, including **638** captains and **230** helpers
- **2.3 million** pounds of fish caught in Puerto Rico, resulting in **\$6.9 million** in commercial wholesale value and **\$20.7 million** in retail sales

Some of the following programs also provide fisheries-related services:

- **8** environmental and conservation organizations, supporting **170** employees and **\$5.6 million** in wages
- **64** government conservation programs, supporting **2,448** employees and **\$82.8 million** in wages
- **39** environmental consulting businesses, supporting **267** employees and **\$9.7 million** in wages
- Marine Life Science Program and Sea Grant Program at University of Puerto Rico

Marine Construction Sector

Bureau of Labor Statistics reports:

- **19** marine-related construction businesses, supporting **642** employees and **\$19.8 million** in wages

Government agencies that manage contracts and permits for marine construction activities:

- Puerto Rico Ports Authority

Some of the following businesses also perform marine construction services:

- **28** surveying and mapping businesses, supporting **81** employees and **\$1.9 million** in wages

Marine Transportation Sector

Bureau of Labor Statistics reports:

- **13** deep sea freight businesses, supporting **42** employees and **\$1.3 million** in wages
- **5** marine passenger transportation businesses
- **50** marine transportation services businesses, supporting **1,840** employees and **\$60.4 million** in wages
- **57** warehousing businesses, supporting **1,524** employees and **\$41.3 million** in wages

Many other contributors in both public and private realms are also predominantly ocean-dependent:

- **9** seaports and about **100** employees, supported by Puerto Rico Ports Authority
- **3** ferry and cargo operations, and **210** employees, supported by Maritime Transportation Authority
- **16** state transportation programs, supporting **3,895** employees and **\$144 million** in wages
- **58** freight arrangement businesses, supporting **718** employees and **\$24 million** in wages
- **2** water taxis commuting passengers between islands
- **2,440** individuals working in water-related transportation
- Local operations of the large cargo companies, which are headquartered in Florida

Offshore Mineral Resources Sector

Bureau of Labor Statistics reports:

- **36** limestone, sand and gravel businesses

Local sources confirm that there is very little activity within this sector:

- Offshore mineral extraction is prohibited in Puerto Rico
- Most sand and gravel for construction use is extracted from rivers and is not ocean related

Ship and Boat Building Sector

Bureau of Labor Statistics reports:

- **2** ship building businesses and **3** boat building and repair businesses

Local sources show more businesses than revealed in the employment statistics:

- **8** boat building businesses
- **18** boat repairing businesses listed on Puerto del Rey Marina's website
- Companies and individuals provide air conditioning, woodworking, and welding services for ships and boats

Tourism and Recreation Sector

Bureau of Labor Statistics reports:

- **200** hotels and lodging places, supporting **5,582** employees and **\$112 million** in wages
- **3,755** eating and drinking places, supporting **56,105** employees and **\$669 million** in wages
- **135** businesses, **898** employees, and **\$16.8 million** in wages supported by marinas, scenic tours, boat dealers, zoos and aquaria, RV parks and campgrounds, and other amusement and recreation services

Local sources identify many more hotels and lodging services:

- **250+** hotels endorsed by Puerto Rico Tourism Company
- **~2,700** Vacation Rental by Owner
- **25** casino hotels, supporting **7,904** employees and **\$201 million** in wages
- **960** lessors of residential buildings, offices of real estate agents and brokers, residential property managers, and all other traveler accommodations businesses
- **3.2** million overnight visitors, many of whom do not stay in hotels

Local sources show a greater number of ocean-related recreational activities:

- **135** adventure and nautical tour operators endorsed by Puerto Rico Tourism Company
- **2,664** individuals work for nature parks and historical landmarks
- **~100,000** recreational fishermen
- **\$72 million** spent by anglers on marine recreational fishing

Many other economic activities depend heavily on ocean tourism:

- **247** air transportation, taxi, passenger car rental, and travel agencies
- **29** motion picture and video production businesses
- **1.2 million** people arrived on cruise ships; **\$198.2 million** spent by cruise-ship lines, passengers, and crews
- **2.4% (\$2.4 billion)** of gross domestic product is directly tourism related, with total impact amounting to **7.3% (\$7.4 billion)**