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# Shrimp in transition: Why Indonesia is industryâ??s new benchmark

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**Halfway into 2025, the global shrimp industry is entering a new phase of competitive realignment. Indonesiaâ??s May export performanceâ??a 27 per cent year-on-year (YoY) rise in volume and 33 per cent increase in valueâ??signals a strategic shift that goes beyond opportunistic trade acceleration. With 89,224 metric tons exported from January through May valued at $756 million, Indonesia is not only consolidating its global presence but also diversifying its product portfolio and export destinations in a calculated bid to counterbalance potential U.S. trade actions. The export surge places Indonesia on a fresh growth trajectory, even as established powerhouses like Ecuador and India grapple with cost structures, climate risks, and shifting market demands.**

According toÂ *Shrimp Insight Analysis*, Indonesiaâ??s YTD figures reflect not just quantity but also discernible progress in product sophistication. Cooked and marinated shrimp exports surged by 61 per cent YoY in May and 37 per cent YTD, indicating a push towards higher-margin, value-added segments. Meanwhile, raw Vannamei exports, the countryâ??s volume mainstay, rose 20 per cent YTD. Breaded shrimp followed with a respectable 8 per cent growth, while raw P. monodon

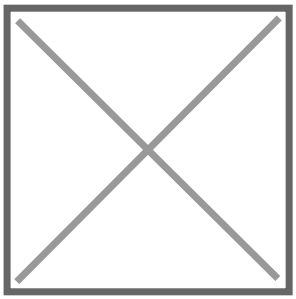
exports continued their multi-year slide, falling 14 per cent YTDâ??a symptom of broader species transition and shifting aquaculture economics.

Market-wise, Indonesiaâ??s shipments to the U.S. totaled nearly 60,000 MT in five monthsâ??up 14 per cent YoY and accounting for two-thirds of its global exports. Japan, the second-largest destination, absorbed 13,359 MT, up 7 per cent YTD. Meanwhile, a rebound in China (+21 per cent YTD) and a 63 per cent surge in EU-27 exports highlight Jakartaâ??s efforts to widen its demand footprint beyond the U.S., potentially insulating itself from the impending August anti-dumping tariff review *(According to Shrimp Insight Analysis).*

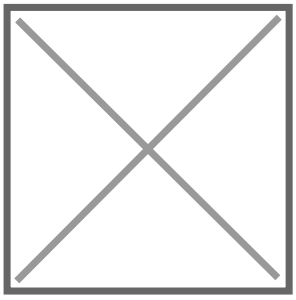
This diversification and value capture strategy is particularly critical for Indonesia as it aims to scale its shrimp sector to $2 billion by 2025 and double exports by 2029. The short-term frontloading of shipments appears tactical, but the sustained growth in high-value categories underscores longer-term structural shifts in processing capacity, traceability, and compliance.

**Benchmarking the Big Five: Ecuador, India, Vietnam, Indonesia, and China**

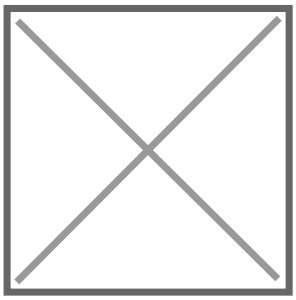
To understand Indonesiaâ??s trajectory in context, itâ??s essential to benchmark it against other leading exportersâ??Ecuador, India, Vietnam, and Chinaâ??each with distinct strengths, constraints, and market orientations.



Ecuador: The Efficiency King Facing Climate Costs
Ecuador remains the worldâ??s largest shrimp exporter, thanks to its high-efficiency pond systems, integration, and cost competitiveness. With 1.3 million MT exported in 2024 valued at over $7 billion, Ecuador has scale on its side. In the first five months of 2025, Ecuador exported approximately 593,080 metric tons of shrimpâ??up 17 per cent YoYâ??with export revenues totaling $3.135 billion, marking a 26 per cent value increase. Ecuadorâ??s average export price per kilogram during this period stood at approximately $5.29, reflecting its dominance in high-volume raw head-on shrimp shipped to China, albeit at lower margins compared to value-added exports.

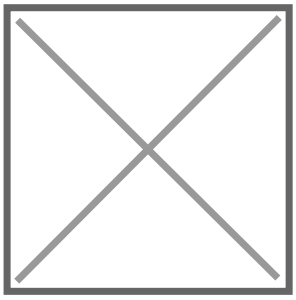


India: The Reformist Under Pressure
India, historically the second-largest exporter, is contending with structural pressures. Despite significant growth in the last decade, India saw a marginal YoY decline in 2024 exports due to farm gate price volatility, rising feed costs, and quality-related rejections in key markets like the U.S. and Japan. In early 2025, India exported approximately 94,500 MT of shrimp, down around 7 per cent, while revenues edged up modestly to $1.1 billionâ??a 12 per cent YoY increase. This translates to an average export price of $11.64 per kilogram, indicating a favorable shift toward higher-value products despite declining volumes.



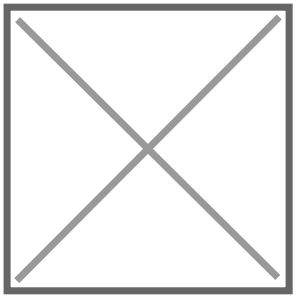
Vietnam: Stability and Diversification Amid Rising Costs

Vietnam remains a solid, well-diversified player with strong ties to the EU, U.S., and China. While not growing as fast as Indonesia, Vietnamâ??s value-added capabilities and Free Trade Agreements (FTAs) give it steady market access and a competitive edge in regulatory compliance. As of May 2025, Vietnamâ??s shrimp export value surged 22.3 per cent YoY, reaching approximately $4.3 billion. With a volume base of about 340,000 MT for the same period, Vietnamâ??s average export price hovered around $12.65 per kilogramâ??one of the highest among major exporters, reflecting its strong emphasis on processed, certified shrimp.



China: A Rebalancing Act Between Import and Export

China remains a unique caseâ??both a major importer and a modest exporter of shrimp. With rising domestic consumption and robust processing infrastructure, China plays a pivotal role in global shrimp reprocessing and redistribution. In the first five months of 2025, China imported 343,787 MT of shrimp, a 7 per cent YoY decline, though the import value rose by 2 per cent to $1.82 billion. This implies an average import price of $5.29 per kilogram, underscoring its price-sensitive bulk-buying model. Chinaâ??s own exports are smaller in scale and lower in average value, often dominated by re-exported products.



Indonesia: Climbing the Value Ladder

In comparison, Indonesiaâ??s average export price from January to May 2025 stood at $8.47 per kilogram, derived from $756 million in value over 89,224 MT in volume. This marks a notable climb, especially given the countryâ??s emphasis on cooked, marinated, and breaded products. Indonesiaâ??s pricing is increasingly bridging the gap between high-volume exporters like Ecuador and high-value players like Vietnam, reflecting its dual strategy of scaling both volume and margin.

**Trade Geopolitics: The Anti-Dumping Cloud**

Much of Indonesiaâ??s recent export tempo has been influenced by the pending U.S. anti-dumping review. The expected decision by August 1 could impose new tariffs on Indonesian shrimp, depending on preliminary margins assigned during the administrative review. While the full-year impact is uncertain, Indonesian firms appear to be mitigating the risk by aggressively front-loading shipments and entering alternate markets.

If tariffs materialize, Indonesia could pivot further toward the EU, Middle East, and East Asiaâ??especially China and South Korea. Its fast-growing breaded and marinated categories are also more appealing to markets with rising demand for ready-to-eat seafood.

**Product Innovation and Branding: The Differentiation Frontier**



One of the more significant undercurrents in Indonesiaâ??s 2025 story is its embrace of processed shrimp formats. Cooked and marinated shrimpâ??now nearly a third of its total exportsâ??command higher prices, longer shelf life, and lower rejection risk. These segments also benefit from rising health-consciousness and convenience demand in key importing regions.

Contrast this with Ecuadorâ??s raw shrimp export model or Indiaâ??s bulk frozen Vannamei dominance, and Indonesiaâ??s approach looks increasingly future-ready. Whether this shift can be consolidated with stronger branding, certification (e.g., ASC, BAP), and digital traceability will determine its long-term ability to compete with Vietnam in the premium segment.

**Implications for India and Others**

India must take note of Indonesiaâ??s recent agility and processing-centric growth. While India has strong backward integration and a large aquaculture base, it lags in branding, cold chain infrastructure, and premium market development. Thereâ??s a lesson here: front-loading compliance and investing in product innovation can not only unlock margins but also cushion against external shocks.

For Vietnam, the competitive threat from Indonesia is real, particularly in processed shrimp. Ecuador, while unmatched in scale, may need to prioritize resilience and diversification. China, meanwhile, remains an indispensable demand-side actor, with its recovery or retreat impacting all major exporters.

**Conclusion: From Volume to Value**



Indonesiaâ??s breakout performance in 2025 suggests that it is no longer content with being a peripheral player in the global shrimp market. Its surge in cooked and marinated shrimp, expansion into EU and Chinese markets, and strategic shipment timing ahead of the U.S. trade decision all point to a maturing industry.

But maintaining this trajectory will require more than export momentum. Investment in sustainability, traceability, and branding must follow. The global shrimp race is no longer just about who sells the mostâ??but about who sells best, to whom, and at what margin. Indonesia appears to be rewriting that playbook, and the rest of the world is watching closely.

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