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This is the Reason Why the Fish Canning Industry is Under Pressure

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KOMPAS.com/Ira Rachmawati

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KONTAN.CO.ID - JAKARTA. The fish canning industry is under pressure. This is due to the scarcity of sardine supplies which has caused the price of the fish to soar.

Chairman of the Indonesian Fish Canning Association (APIKI) Hendri Sutandinata said, the average national need for sardines is around 235,000 tons per year. From there, the amount of sardines utilized is around 150,000 tons.

However, in the last 10 years it has not been easy to obtain a supply of sardines. This is due to natural factors such as weather, climate change, and the decline in the number of sardines in the Indonesian ocean.

This year, the problem of scarcity of sardine supply is again experienced by business actors. Moreover, the sardine fishing area in Indonesia is only concentrated in the Bali Strait area.

When domestic supply decreases, imports must be made to meet the needs of sardines for fish canning industry players. Usually, sardine imports come from China, India, and Japan.

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Unfortunately, import activities are also difficult to do at this time, considering that other sardine producing countries are also experiencing similar problems to Indonesia. Not to mention, there are challenges in the form of increasing logistics and transportation costs.

Hendri did not mention the composition of sardines obtained domestically or imported from abroad each year. However, he said the composition could change each year. "This year, more fish are obtained locally, around 60%. But the amount has decreased from previous years. Imports are also difficult to do now," he said, Wednesday (10/8).

APIKI also said that fish canning entrepreneurs are usually given a quota for importing sardines, the amount of which is adjusted to the capacity and needs of production per year. The import process is handled by business actors at the Ministry of Trade (Kemendag).

However, Hendri admitted that the process of importing sardines is not easy and tends to take a long time. "If the import quota is still lacking and needs additional, this will be disruptive because the process is long," he said.

Due to limited supply, the price of sardines in the markets has increased from Rp 6,000 per kilogram (kg) to around Rp 12,000-Rp 13,000 per kg. Imported sardines will obviously be even more expensive because there are additional costs such as freezing *and* transportation costs.

The spike in sardine prices has caused the prices of canned fish products sold by canneries to increase by around 10%-20%. The increase in canned fish prices for end consumers tends to be limited because of the current unstable purchasing power of the community. "Margins have definitely decreased," Hendri added.

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With conditions like this, all fish canning business actors are reducing their production in order to save financial performance. There is no certainty how long the problem of sardine supply shortages will last.

"Hopefully the fish in Indonesia will appear again. Actually, in Indonesia there is a sardine fishing season too. If it is the bright moon or there is a westerly wind, it is usually difficult to find fish," he explained.

Then, APIKI hopes that the government can help business actors to explore the potential of areas that have a large number of sardine advertisements. This is considering that the sardine fishing area is limited to the Bali Strait. APIKI also hopes that the government can improve the sardine import trade system, so that the import process no longer complicates business actors.

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yang dikenal sebagai "skala ekonomis"

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