

***Crangon crangon*, endangered or merely on a via dolorosa?**

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Abstract.

The short Belgian coast has been subject to numerous transformations in its physical and human geography aspects. Major changes have affected its economic geography. From an area essentially devoted to fishing, and, further inland, agriculture, it is today more centered on tourism. With that new vocation former occupations have vanished, yet, some survived as part of the folkloric patrimony. A specific and colourful example is shrimp-fishing on horseback. There are about 1950 species of shrimps of which 300 are edible.

Key words: overfishing; shrimpboats; horseback fishing; cultural heritage; shrimps and prawns.

*Avec la mer du Nord pour dernier terrain vague
Et des vagues de dunes pour arrêter les vagues
Et de vagues rochers que les marées dépassent
et qui ont à jamais le cœur à marée basse
Et qui ont infiniment de brumes à venir
Avec le vent de l'est écoutez le tenir
Le plat pays qui est le mien.
Jacques Brel*

1. Introduction

Is the Dutch shrimp fishery sustainable? A question appropriately raised by Henny C. Welleman and Niels Daan in 2001. The same query may be brought to the fore for Belgium and a few other shrimp “producing” nations . Brown shrimp to the English, Grey or North Sea shrimp to others *Crangon crangon*
