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WHAT COMMERCIAL PRODUCTS OTHER THAN FISH ARE OBTAINED FROM THE SEA

Products obtained commercially from sea water include common salt, bromine, and magnesium. All of the United States' supply of magnesium is taken from sea water, because extraction is cheaper than obtaining it from mines on land. About 75 percent of our supply of bromine is extracted from the sea.

In recent years interest has developed in exploiting the seemingly inexhaustible supply of manganese and phosphate-rich nodules on the sea floor. The American Institute of Mining, Metallurgical, and Petroleum Engineers (AIME) has estimated that there are 1.1 trillion tons of manganese nodules on the bottom of the Pacific Ocean. These nodules contain as much as 50 percent manganese plus smaller amounts of nickel, copper, cobalt, and other metals. Nodules on the sea floor appear to be forming faster than the rate at which the United States is now using manganese, nickel, and cobalt; thus it seems that our reserve of these metals is assured for many years. Phosphorite nodules off the California coast could satisfy California's phosphate fertilizer needs for many years.

Other materials obtained from the sea floor or beaches include diamonds, pearls, sand, gravel, shell, and ores of tin, thorium, and titanium.

Oil is being recovered from beneath the ocean floor in increasing amounts. In 1960 about 8 percent of the free world's oil supply was obtained from this source; by 1965, it had increased to 16 percent. Undersea deposits of sulfur are also being tapped by drilling from platforms in the Gulf of Mexico, as the supply on land dwindles. ("Questions About The Oceans," U.S. Naval Oceanographic Office.)