

The Plain Facts of Overfishing

The significant international fishery in the waters just outside Canada's 200-mile limit is regulated by the Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organization, a multinational body made up of 12 contracting parties (Bulgaria, Canada, Cuba, Denmark in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland, the European Community, the German Democratic Republic, Iceland, Japan, Norway, Poland, Romania and the U.S.S.R.).

NAFO establishes quotas on a scientific, sustainable basis consistent with Canada's own management policies inside Canada's zone. However, NAFO has no power to enforce its allocations. It depends on the voluntary compliance of its members.

In the northwest Atlantic, since the mid-1970s, the fisheries have been regulated through Total Allowable Catch limits based on the size and growth rates of the fish stocks. Quotas for NAFO members have been established annually by NAFO in accordance with the level of their traditional proportional shares. Until 1986, the EC complied with the quotas established for it in NAFO's Regulatory Area. Since 1986, the EC has refused to comply.

This is a picture of an industry sailing willfully into danger, destroying its own future for short-term gain.

The stocks of these yellowtail flounder have dropped to the lowest levels ever observed.



Courtesy of DFO