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**The future of the Grand Banks fishery depends on strict adherence to the principles of conservation in international, as well as Canadian, waters.**

### Article 63

2. Where the same stock or stocks of associated species occur both within the exclusive economic zone and in an area beyond and adjacent to the zone, the coastal State and the States fishing for such stocks in the adjacent area shall seek, either directly or through appropriate subregional or regional organizations, to agree upon the measures necessary for the conservation of these stocks in the adjacent area. (From the official text of the *United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea*, 1982.)

## Ensuring Broad Horizons

Canada and the other NAFO members have legitimate concerns about excessive fishing in NAFO's Regulatory Area. Further, because of the close inter-relationship between the areas inside the Canadian 200-mile limit and the NAFO area outside, Canada has a special interest and role in preventing overfishing in the NAFO Regulatory Area. This special interest is reflected in international law, including the Convention on the Law of the Sea of 1982.

At heart, the overfishing dispute revolves around one simple question: When a food resource could be renewable indefinitely, is it sensible to allow today's harvest to diminish or even eliminate that of tomorrow?

Canada maintains that fish stocks should be managed in a sustainable fashion, enabling the core fish supply to grow over the long term. What's more, Canada has shown that this can be done. Since 1977, some stocks have been brought back from the brink of disaster. Canada's experience has shown that the fishing industry can catch more in the future than in the present, through a reasonable exercise of restraint.

To understand Canada's concern over the EC's fishing practices, one has only to look at the plight of the cod fishery on the Flemish Cap. This is an underwater plateau in NAFO waters,

well beyond Canada's 200-mile limit and not subject to Canadian fisheries management. For years, this NAFO zone was fished heavily by non-Canadian fleets.

NAFO made a classic error in managing the cod fishery on the Flemish Cap: it allowed fishermen to take the high catches they wanted, ignoring scientific advice that such harvests could not be sustained. The result was the serious depletion of the cod fishery in the area. After catches plummeted from an overfishing high of 30 000 t in 1979 to about 8 000 t in 1987, an international moratorium was declared. No cod fishermen make a living on the Flemish Cap today — an object lesson in the folly of short-sighted fishing.

Canada believes it is necessary to employ the principles of husbandry rather than the instincts of hunting, to achieve a steady rate of growth in fish stocks to the optimal sustainable level — in short, sustainable development.

"An horizon is nothing save the limit of our sight," wrote the English poet John Donne. In managing the fishery, NAFO is trying to set its horizons well into the future. But NAFO's success depends on compliance by all the participants in the industry.

Only this far-sighted approach will ensure broad horizons for future generations of Canadians, Europeans and fishermen of other members of NAFO, who depend on the renewable resources of the northwest Atlantic fishery.

