

- Distant-water fishing nations must ensure that fishing by their nationals on the high seas does not have an adverse effect on the living resources under the jurisdiction of coastal states; and
- The management regime applied on the high seas to straddling stocks and highly migratory species should be consistent with the management regime of the coastal states applicable to such stocks and species in their exclusive economic zones.

The next significant step in the quest for effective controls on high seas fisheries was achieved at a meeting of experts held in May 1991, in Santiago. At that meeting, Chile, New Zealand and Canada developed a text of principles and measures, based on the St. John's conclusions, which became known as the "Santiago Text."

During the lengthy negotiations leading up to the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Canada took the lead in the preparation of the initial UNCED text concerning high seas fisheries problems that was eventually incorporated into Chapter 17 of Agenda 21 -- the Oceans chapter -- for adoption by UNCED. That draft included the Santiago text.

Because of the diversity of subjects that UNCED had to address and the fact that the outcome was to be a series of non-binding recommendations, the coastal state group concluded that a UN conference devoted exclusively to high seas fisheries of straddling stocks and highly migratory species should be one of the UNCED recommendations.

The UN Conference on Straddling and Highly Migratory Fish Stocks

Canada led the effort at the 1992 United Nations General Assembly, which resulted in a resolution formally convening the UN Conference on Straddling and Highly Migratory Fish Stocks. The Conference will provide, for the first time, a forum to develop rules for the management of high seas fisheries in accordance with conservation and sustainable development principles within the framework for international co-operation established by UNCLOS. It will also continue to focus international attention on current overfishing on the high seas, thus increasing the pressure to stop this practice.

The Conference will start its work early in 1993 and aim to complete it before the 49th session of the UN General Assembly in the fall of 1994.