

The East Coast agreements and the Halibut Protocol are subject to ratification by both governments, which in the USA involves advice and consent by the U.S. Senate.

Canada and the USA continued to pursue negotiations towards a West Coast salmon-interception agreement with a view to establishing effective mechanisms to ensure that both nations benefit from their own conservation and enhancement programmes. Canadian West Coast salmon interests received further protection as a result of the February 1979 ratification of the Canada/USA/Japan convention on high seas fisheries in the North Pacific, which prohibits high seas fishing for Pacific salmon east of 175° East longitude. Informal Canada/USA discussions also took place concerning a proposed multilateral Atlantic salmon convention which would ensure that other interested states of origin (USA and certain Western European states) join together with Canada to resolve East Coast salmon management problems.

Finally, on the West Coast, a significant Canada/USA fisheries problem arose as a result of a jurisdictional dispute over albacore tuna. All coastal states with 200-mile fishing zones, with the exception of the USA and Japan, exercise and/or recognize coastal state jurisdiction over tuna. However, the USA has continued to deny Canada's right to exclude foreign vessels from access to tuna within the portion of the Canadian zone beyond 12 miles (since the USA 200-mile legislation excludes highly migratory species such as tuna from national jurisdiction in the 12- to 200-mile zone). As a result, 19 USA tuna vessels were arrested in August and charged with illegally entering Canadian fisheries waters and fishing without a license. The USA retaliated by prohibiting the import of Canadian tuna products. The tuna remained in Canadian waters for only a short time, and there was no opportunity to resolve the problem for the 1979 fishing year. During the next year, both sides will be working to develop a mutually acceptable accommodation on tuna and other fisheries issues that will, it is hoped, avoid some of the problems that have risen this year, while respecting the consensus provisions of the Law of the Sea negotiating text relative to this matter.

In June 1979, Canada and the EEC signed a short-term fisheries agreement which had originally been initialled in July 1978 and which expires in December 1979. Negotiations are being pursued with a view to developing a longer term agreement to govern Canada/EEC fisheries relations following 1979. Better access to the European markets for Canadian fish products is one goal for such an agreement.