

Description of the Western and Ontario Regions

2.1 Geographic Boundaries

Distance is an overwhelming factor which hinders the performance of the Western and Ontario Regions' freshwater fisheries. The territory covered by both these regions is vast in area, diverse in climatic conditions and fish stock habitats, and poses formidable challenges with respect to the transportation of the harvests to their markets. This is especially true in the case of the Western region.

2.1.1 The Western Region

The area covered by the FFMC is the shaded portion of the map presented as Exhibit 1 on page 4. It includes all of the provinces of Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba, the northwestern sector of Ontario, and all of the Northwest Territories. The area encompassed is 5.34 million km² (some 333,000 km² of which are inland water), yet it has a total population of only 4.43 million.

The implication of this relatively low population is a lack of sufficiently developed local markets to absorb the substantial quantities of freshwater fish landed in the region. Even though the Canadian rate of consumption of fishery products is above the average world rate, this consumption is composed mostly of salt water fish. Only 4% of fishery products consumed in Canada is freshwater fish and this proportion has been decreasing as seafood consumption increases.⁽¹⁾

2.1.2 The Ontario Region

The territory of the Ontario Region covers all the province except for the northwestern sector under FFMC jurisdiction, and includes a population base of 8.62 million people. The Ontario Region covers some 1.07 million km², of which

⁽¹⁾ Canada, Department of Fisheries and Oceans, *Canadian Fisheries Annual Statistical Review*, Volume 16, 1983, p. 35.