

are two periods in which the bulk of landings are made - late April to late July and December 1 to January 30. About 75 % of landings occur between the first of May and the end of July.

The Provinces of Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island account for about 80% of landings. Quebec and Newfoundland supply the remainder.

#### RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

After many years of reduced landings, Canadian lobster landings have shown remarkable growth in the past decade. Landings have increased steadily from 19,000 tonnes in 1978 to almost 40,000 tonnes in 1989. The resource is now biologically, the healthiest of the world's lobster resources. This is the result of rigorous resource management on the part of our Department of Fisheries and Oceans.

A regulatory regime has in fact been in existence since 1873 and has evolved over time in an attempt to provide stability in landings in the face of strong competition between fishermen, variations in catch rates and cyclical variations in year classes. The earliest regulations placed restrictions on soft shell lobsters, egg bearing females and lobster sizes. These changes were driven largely by market requirements.

Carapace size limits were introduced in the 1930's and again in the 1950's. During the past 20 years the first regulations were put in place to curtail fishing capacity and infuse the catching sector with more economic stability. Trap limits were introduced followed by limited entry, which restricted the transfer of fishing licenses. A buyback program in effect since 1975, has retired some 1600 licenses.

The impact of these measures has been both biological - bringing substantial increases in landings, and economic - increasing the catch per vessel and the value of the catch per vessel. The fishery now supports a viable and prosperous industry with a core of professional fishermen who derive most of their livelihood from lobster.

These measures have been achieved through a consultative process involving all elements of the industry - fishermen, buyers and processors. A management regime based on the principles of sound resource conservation and economic viability is the essential component in maintaining Canada's dominant position in world lobster production.