

doc
CA1
EA
G41
ENG
1994 no.
1

GLOBAL AGENDA

CANADA'S FOREIGN POLICY AND THE ENVIRONMENT

• VOLUME 2, NUMBER 1 •

Conserving and Protecting Canada's Marine Environment and Resources

Ministère des Affaires extérieures
OCT 3 1994
RETURN TO DEPARTMENTAL LIBRARY
RETOURNER A LA BIBLIOTHEQUE DU MINISTERE

With the world's longest coastline and significant economic reliance on its three surrounding oceans—the Atlantic, the Pacific and the Arctic—Canada has a vital interest in the marine environment. With this special interest goes a responsibility for maintaining a healthy marine environment, including supporting environmentally sound economic activity. Today, however, the global marine environment and its resources are under increasing pressure. Restoring the health of our oceans, as called for in Agenda 21, requires an international effort dedicated to action and co-operation.

According to Canada's Marine Environment Quality Framework, "The quality of the marine environment is of local, regional, national and global importance and is essential for the sustainable development of marine resources."

Internationally, Canada takes a strong leadership position on marine environment issues, drawing upon the recommendations of Agenda 21's Chapter 17 on Oceans. Since 1985, Canada has played an active role in developing a comprehensive strategy to deal with marine pollution from land-based sources. From June 6 to 10, 1994, in Montréal, Canada hosted a meeting of experts on the Montréal Guidelines (1985) under the auspices of the UN Environment Program. Participants prepared an outline of a program of action to pre-

vent pollution of the marine environment from land-based sources.


Recognizing the growing pressures on the Arctic marine environment, Canada is co-leading, with Norway, a multinational working group on the Protection of the Arctic Marine Environment (PAME) as part of the Arctic Environment Protection Strategy. Established at the 1993 ministerial meeting in Nuuk, Greenland, the working group will focus on co-ordinating national programs to reduce marine pollution from land-based sources, led by Canada, and sea-based sources, led by Norway. As a first step, PAME will work on identifying all major sources of pollution of the Arctic marine environment and will assess the adequacy of existing legal and policy instruments for protection of the marine environment.

"The quality of the marine environment is of local, regional, national and global importance and is essential for the sustainable development of marine resources."

Canada also works closely with other maritime nations to deal with the global environmental fisheries crisis caused by the overfishing of the "global commons." With the Atlantic fishery crisis acting as a catalyst, Canada is working with

these nations, through the UN, to develop a practical and effective set of rules to manage the high-seas fishery of straddling and highly migratory stocks. The goal is a legally binding solution that would provide for effective conservation and management measures, surveillance and control, and compulsory binding dispute settlement.

On the Pacific coast, Canada continues to press for conservation and equity as outlined in the Pacific Salmon Treaty signed by Canada and the United States in 1985. Since the treaty was signed, Canadian interceptions of salmon of U.S. origin have steadily declined while U.S. interceptions of fish of Canadian origin have increased to record levels, especially in Alaska. Both countries are aware of this development; however, progress on implementing the equity principle has lagged far behind progress on implementing sound conservation measures. The implementation of the equity principle would facilitate the process of establishing long-term fishing regimes and allow both countries to realize the production potential of the Pacific salmon.

Canada is strongly committed nationally and internationally to conserving, protecting and rehabilitating marine environments and their resources. The global commons offers tremendous resource potential. The challenge will be to realize this potential in ways that meet environmental, socio-economic and resource management goals. 

Department of Foreign Affairs
and International Trade

Canada

Contains 50 % Recycled, 25 % Post-Consumer,
Acid-Free Fibers. Vegetable-Based Ink.

