In 1937, Canada and the United States ratified the Convention between Canada and the United States for the Protection, Preservation and Extension of the Sockeye Salmon Fisheries in the Fraser River System, and formed the International Pacific Salmon Fisheries Commission (IPSFC). In 1957 the Convention was amended to apply to pink salmon as well as sockeye.

In 1952, the two nations and Japan signed the International North Pacific Fisheries Convention. Japan agreed to place restraints on its high seas salmon fleet.

In 1971 the two countries began negotiating a coast-wide treaty covering all salmon species, from the Columbia River in the south to the Yukon in the north.

In 1977, when both countries extended their fishing jurisdictions to 200 miles, the negotiations grew more complex.

A draft treaty providing for the conservation and management of salmon was initialled in February of this year by the negotiators from both countries but has not been ratified. It contains agreed management plans for the major intercepting fisheries of the United States and Canada. The Treaty would set up an international commission to act as a forum to discuss fishery management, research and enhancement. The State of Alaska has, however, objected to some provisions of the proposed treaty, and the United States has made some proposals for a revision. These are under review.

The Law of the Sea

The nations of the world, coastal and landlocked, began negotiating an inclusive Convention on the Law of the Sea in 1971.

In this century the sea has become a place to be mined for oil, gas and minerals and to be fished by floating factories, and which could be damaged and possibly destroyed.

Each nation has its special interests but there are three basic viewpoints. Major maritime nations wish the sea to remain as free for navigation as possible, coastal nations wish to have jurisdiction in adjacent waters, and landlocked nations and those with small continental shelves want the mineral resources of the sea to be exploited for the benefit of all mankind.

The most interesting of the mineral resources are in the form of nodules of manganese, nickel, copper and cobalt, the size and shape of potatoes, which lie in layers on the ocean's floor. Some are in shallow waters, as off Scotland, but the most commercially valuable are found in the Pacific at depths of 13,000 to 16,000 feet.

The nodules could be harvested by high technology instruments, such as continuous-line bucket dredges, but this would require enormous investments.

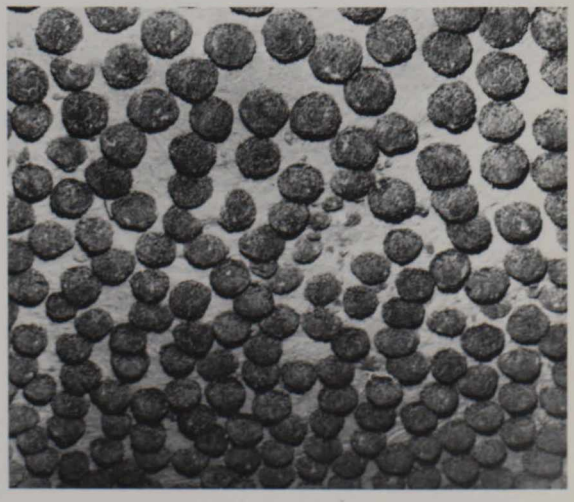
In the course of eleven years of negotiating, it was generally agreed that the nodules in no-man's-waters should be supervised by an International Seabed Authority, but it proved much more difficult to obtain unanimous agreement on specifics for development and profit sharing.

In April 1982 the majority of the nations, including Canada, voted for the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, which gave the International Seabed Authority effective control of mining of the seabed but permits mining by private companies. The treaty also defined territorial sea limits, established 200-mile exclusive economic zones providing coastal state control over fish stocks, defined the continental shelf and provided for protection of the marine environment and for peaceful resolution of sea disputes. Several industrial nations abstained from voting and the United States voted against it.

Canada and 120 other nations signed the Convention in Jamaica in December 1982, and Japan signed in January. The U.S., Great Britain, West Germany, Italy and Belgium did not sign.

On March 10 of this year President Reagan issued a proclamation claiming ownership of fish and mineral rights in a 200-mile exclusive economic zone off the American coast. An accompanying policy statement said that seabed mining in waters beyond the zone was a freedom of the high seas.

Canada's position is that seabed mining must be governed by the Law of the Sea Convention, and it is opposed to any unilateral actions to conduct mining outside the Convention.



Manganese nodules on the floor of the Pacific Ocean, at a depth of 18,000 feet.