
PART III**OTHER ISSUES****Canada, U.S., Mexico Trade Talks**

Canada, the USA and Mexico are entering into negotiations for a free trade agreement between the three countries. The proposed North American Free Trade Area would comprise a market of 350 million people with a \$6 trillion (U.S.) output, one of the biggest markets in the world, and the countries will participate as "full and equal partners".

Initial discussions began late last year, when Minister Crosbie met with U.S. Trade Representative Carla Hills and Mexico's Chief Negotiator, Herminio Blanco, in Washington D.C., on December 17th, 1990, to discuss further the modalities of possible trilateral free trade negotiations. The ministers met again in January and agreed to participate in discussions, subject to the normal U.S. Congress approval for the participation of the United States in any trade negotiations.

Lobsters

The New England Fisheries Management Council, on January 9th, 1991, approved a motion to amend the Fishery Management Plan for lobster so as to suspend U.S. federal minimum carapace size increases beyond three and one quarter inches, until July 1st, 1992. As the amendment process can take as long as a year to complete, the Council also requested the U.S. Secretary of Commerce to take emergency action to suspend the increases. The procedure requires that the regional office of the NMF's make a recommendation to the Secretary. This has not been done and therefore, no action has been taken by the Secretary.

Swordfish

A major development has taken place since the South Atlantic Fisheries Management Council (SAFMC) recommended to the U.S. Secretary of Commerce that the U.S. establish a total allowable catch (TAC) for the U.S. swordfish fisheries and impose import quotas on swordfish imported from countries fishing the western Atlantic Ocean stock, including Canada.

Under the Reauthorization of the Magnuson Act legislation signed by President Bush on November 28th, 1990, the responsibility for fisheries management plans for highly migratory species (including swordfish) passes from the U.S. Fisheries Management Councils to the Secretary of Commerce. The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) held public