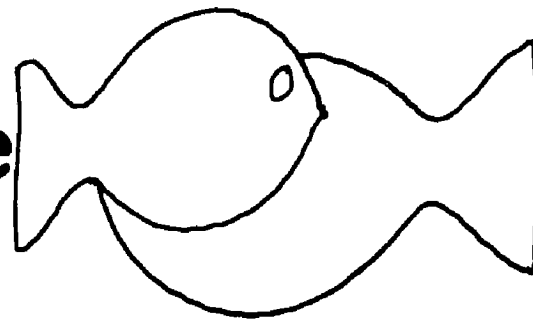


Canada's 200-Mile Fishing Limit



On January 1st, 1977, Canada's extension of jurisdiction over fisheries to 200 miles, came into effect. Here are some of the questions most frequently asked about the new Fisheries Zone.

Q. WHAT DO WE MEAN BY THE TERM "EXTENSION OF FISHERIES JURISDICTION"?

A. This means that Canada is the "owner and manager" of all fisheries within 200 miles of its coasts.

Q. WHY HAS CANADA EXTENDED ITS FISHERIES JURISDICTION TO 200 MILES?

A. Because action was needed to save both offshore and inshore fisheries which have been severely depleted in recent years owing to lack of effective management under international arrangements. This has seriously affected the welfare of Canada's coastal communities and its fishermen and fishing industry. Canada has come to the conclusion that the only way to ensure effective management and conservation is for the coastal state itself to assume management authority.

Q. WHY 200 MILES?

A. Nations of the world which have been considering fisheries and other matters at recent sessions of the United Nations Law of the Sea Conference have generally agreed on 200 miles as an acceptable limit for coastal state jurisdiction. On Canada's Atlantic coast, 90 per cent of all significant fish stocks are concentrated over prolific fishing "banks" within the 200-mile zone. On the Pacific coast, practically all important fish stocks are contained within this zone, except salmon which range well beyond its boundaries.

Q. WHAT WAS CANADA'S FISHING ZONE IN PAST YEARS?

A. Canadian jurisdiction over the sea fisheries used to be confined to waters within the traditional three-mile territorial limit. In 1964, Canada extended fisheries control nine miles beyond the territorial sea; in 1971, the three-mile territorial sea and nine-mile fishing zone were replaced by a twelve-mile territorial sea.

Also in 1971, special fishing zones were established by Canada in the Gulf of St. Lawrence and Bay of Fundy on the Atlantic Coast, and in Queen Charlotte Sound, Hecate Strait and Dixon Entrance on the Pacific coast. Finally, on Jan 1st, 1977 Canadian fisheries management jurisdiction was extended an additional 188 miles to establish a 200-mile fishing zone on both coasts.

Q. THE NEW FISHING ZONE NOW EXTENDS 200 NAUTICAL MILES - WHAT IS THE LIMIT IN STATUTE MILES?

A. One nautical mile = 6,080 feet. This 200 nautical mile zone works out to roughly 230 statute miles.

Q. HOW DID CANADA GO ABOUT EXTENDING ITS FISHERIES JURISDICTION?

A. The Territorial Sea and Fishing Zones Act, first enacted by Canada's Parliament in 1964 and amended in 1970, empowers the Government to establish fishing zones off Canada's coasts. The fishing zones in the Gulf of St. Lawrence, Bay of Fundy, Queen Charlotte Sound, Hecate Strait and Dixon Entrance were established in 1971 under authority of this Act.

The same authority was used to create the new 200-mile fishing zones on both Atlantic and Pacific coasts. Using this procedure, the Government published the proposed Order-in-Council in the Canadian Gazette, November 1st, 1976 providing for the extension of Canada's fishing zones to 200 miles. In a separate Order-in-Council effective March 1st 1977, 200 mile fishing zone was first established in the Arctic.

Q. WHY DID CANADA EXPECT FOREIGN COUNTRIES TO ACCEPT ITS DECLARATION OF A 200-MILE LIMIT?

A. Because
(a) the concept of a 200-mile fishing zone has won acceptance by the international community, as reflected in developments within the United Nations Law of the Sea Conference. The concept is now reflected in state practice, with an increasing number of countries having already taken action to extend their fisheries zones to 200 miles.
(b) Canada had already gained acceptance