

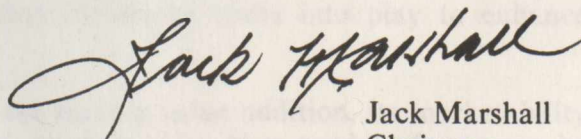
FOREWORD

The various sectors of Canada's fishing industry are enjoying buoyant markets as the demand for fish expands. However, this is not a time for complacency but rather for caution as the industry is regularly subjected to cycles in which periods of demand-driven markets are inevitably followed by periods of excess supply. In addition, there are a number of changes occurring in the industry and the market-place that will impact on Canada's fishing industry in the coming years. Among these are the increasing protectionism in the U.S. market, the development of aquaculture and the possibility of more product substitution by consumers as the price of fish continues to rise relative to that of other protein products. Therefore, the Canadian fishing industry, particularly the freshwater fishing industry, must meet a number of challenges, the most important of which is possibly the expansion of the domestic market.

Also, since this interim report on the freshwater fishing industries of the Western and Ontario Regions addresses the marketing of fish and fishery products, it must also examine, as far as possible, the resource management system. This system plays an important part in determining whether the fishing industry is "market-driven" or "supply-driven". Ideally, it should ensure that the industry is continuously market-driven so as to minimize the extent of the cyclical variations that affect both the stability of fishermen's earnings and the profitability of the fish processing companies.

The Committee has therefore put forward, for the consideration of industry and the federal and provincial governments, recommendations it deems would alleviate constraints on the marketing of Canadian freshwater fish. These recommendations, which are regrouped in section 6 of this report, suggest the implementation of some changes in the marketing structure and the resource management systems of the Western Region. They also deal with the needs in both Regions to develop the local or domestic market for freshwater fish, particularly in its fresh form, and to consolidate the industry's position to meet the challenges and opportunities that will result from the development of aquaculture.

While the Committee has striven to deal with all subjects submitted for its consideration, it is well aware that many questions remain unanswered. Accordingly, the Committee is looking forward to continuing its study of the marketing of fish in Canada.



Jack Marshall
Chairman