



news release

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CANADIAN MINISTERS IN BRUSSELS TO DISCUSS NORTHWEST ATLANTIC FISHERY

Ottawa--International Trade Minister John C. Crosbie and Minister of Fisheries and Oceans Bernard Valcourt on Friday, November 30, 1990 will meet with European Commission Vice-President and Fisheries Commissioner Manuel Marin to discuss overfishing outside Canada's 200-mile zone and the decisions to be taken at the December meeting of the European Community (EC) Council of Fisheries Ministers.

On December 19-20, the EC Council of Fisheries Ministers will decide whether to comply with the 1991 conservation decisions and Total Allowable Catches (TACs) established in September by the Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organization (NAFO). NAFO is the international conservation and resource management organization to which Canada, the EC and nine other countries are Contracting Parties. The quotas and TACs for the 10 stocks managed by NAFO are determined on the basis of advice provided by NAFO's Scientific Council, comprising scientists from NAFO members.

"When Mr. Valcourt and I met with Mr. Marin in Ottawa in May, we made progress that led to the EC voting in favour of many TACs and quotas at the NAFO meeting in September, including 3NO cod," Mr. Crosbie said. "Mr. Valcourt and I will be seeking to make further progress, especially concerning 3L cod, when we meet with Mr. Marin in Brussels on November 30."

At the September 1990 NAFO meeting, for the first time since 1985, the EC voted with the NAFO majority in decisions affecting seven of ten NAFO stocks. In addition, new steps were proposed to improve surveillance and control in the NAFO area, and to eliminate fisheries in the northwest Atlantic by countries that are not NAFO members.

"The full compliance of all NAFO members with NAFO conservation decisions is needed to protect and rebuild fish stocks in the northwest Atlantic," Mr. Valcourt said. "In

Brussels, we hope Mr. Marin will agree with this essential step for conservation co-operation, and also with strengthened surveillance and control to ensure quotas are not exceeded."

In recent years, the EC has made extensive use of the NAFO objection procedure to reject quotas for stocks that had been voted on by NAFO members. The objection procedure expires after a 60-day period and the EC must indicate its intentions prior to December 11, 1990.

The November 30 discussions follow high-level diplomatic meetings involving Prime Minister Brian Mulroney, Secretary of State for External Affairs Joe Clark, Mr. Crosbie and Mr. Valcourt as part of Canada's efforts to describe to EC decision-makers the problem of overfishing in the northwest Atlantic. Canada continues to stress the serious environmental and socio-economic impact of overfishing outside the 200-mile zone, and to seek EC compliance with NAFO conservation decisions.

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