



news release

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CANADIAN MINISTERS TO VISIT EUROPE ON OVERFISHING

St. John's . . . International Trade Minister John C. Crosbie and Fisheries and Oceans Minister Bernard Valcourt will meet European Ministers this week as part of the Government of Canada's on-going diplomatic campaign to seek an end to overfishing of the Northern Cod stock beyond Canada's 200-mile fishing zone.

Ministers Crosbie and Valcourt will meet in Dublin, Ireland on Wednesday, April 4 with Mr. John Wilson, the Irish Minister of the Marine, responsible for fisheries. The Irish Minister is the current chairman of the European Community Council of Fisheries Ministers, which takes final decisions on fisheries matters. On the following day, April 5, Canadian Ministers will meet in Brussels with Mr. Manuel Marin, Vice-President of the European Commission and Fisheries Commissioner.

"The Harris Report on the state of the Northern Cod Stock provides further evidence that foreign overfishing by the European Community (EC) outside Canada's 200-mile zone is seriously depleting that stock," said Mr. Valcourt. "The EC must cooperate if we are to be successful in our efforts to rebuild the stock and meet our conservation objectives."

"Mr. Valcourt and I will be meeting with responsible EC Ministers both in Dublin and Brussels to press the EC to undertake a review of its 1990 quota for 2J3KL cod as requested by Prime Minister Brian Mulroney in his letter of December 19, 1989 to EC President Jacques Delors," said Mr. Crosbie.

"We will be telling the European Community that we will continue to strengthen our conservation regime and to improve both the quality and the quantity of our scientific effort," Mr. Valcourt added. "We expect the European Community to assume their responsibility by cooperating with Canada and to bring their fishing practices in accordance with Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organization (NAFO) conservation decisions on quotas."

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In December 1989, the EC set a unilateral quota of 32,000 tons for cod in the area 2J3KL which extends beyond the 200-mile zone. In doing so, the EC failed to comply with the NAFO decision that there be no fishing of 2J3KL cod outside the 200-mile limit. NAFO is an international organization established to protect fishery resources of the northwest Atlantic ocean. The organization is made up of 12 members, including Canada and the European Community.

The high-level political discussions by the two Canadian Ministers are a further step in the continuing initiative of the Government to end foreign overfishing in the northwest Atlantic. The government's objectives are to obtain recognition of the serious political, environmental and socio-economic ramifications of overfishing outside Canada's 200-mile fishing zone, and to achieve agreement of the Community to comply with NAFO conservation decisions.

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