



Fisheries Council of Canada
Conseil Canadien des Pêches



MARINE CONSERVATION

Overview

The Canadian fisheries industry has a high standard of sustainability, with the second highest rates of Marine Stewardship Council certifications in the world. Fishermen and women have a vested interest in the long-term sustainability of their livelihood, and are some of the most knowledgeable stewards of the oceans.

It is important to ensure our oceans remain healthy for generations to come. But it is possible to balance marine conservation with sustainable use of fisheries resources, if decisions are made based on sufficient science.

The United Nations predicts global demand for sustainable blue foods to double by 2050 as the population and demand for healthy proteins continues to climb. As well, 90,000 Canadians in rural, coastal and Indigenous communities rely on fishing for their income, and fisheries contribute \$9 billion annual in GDP to Canada's economy. Marine conservation need not come at the expense of a disrupted food supply.

Objective

Ensure industry involvement in consultations on marine conservation, to make certain that all decisions are based on sufficient science and balance conservation with sustainable use.

Key Messages

1. Canada has a responsibility to balance marine conservation with science-based sustainable use of fisheries resources to support the food supply chain.
2. The Canadian fisheries industry has a high standard of sustainability, with the second highest rates of Marine Stewardship Council certifications in the world.
3. Sustainable fisheries contribute to biodiversity, and certain fisheries management measures can be more effective at conservation than full restrictions.



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Background & Facts

The Canadian fisheries industry is a world leader in sustainability. Our fisheries rank second in the world among large countries in rates of third-party sustainability certifications from the Marine Stewardship Council, and Fisheries and Oceans Canada reports that 98% of fisheries are harvested at sustainable levels. Beyond that, Canadian fishing companies engage in significant levels of industry-led science and innovation that are constantly striving to create improved harvesting gear, practices and processing techniques to make fishing even more sustainable.

Marine conservation is important to Canadian fishing companies, who have a vested interest in ensuring the long-term viability of their livelihoods. But the Fisheries Council of Canada believes that marine conservation can be balanced with sustainable use, so long as sufficient science is used to make informed fisheries management decisions.

Fish and seafood can have some of the lowest GHG emissions per unit of protein produced of all protein sources, up to 250 times less than beef. A stronger fish and seafood industry could help Canada reach its GHG targets. Marine conservation needs to consider this too.

Canadian fish and seafood is an important link in a food supply chain that is increasingly reliant on sustainable blue foods for protein as the population grows. It is important that we consider human wellbeing in tandem with marine conservation as we strive to make the world a better place.

In a 2020 paper by Ray Hilborn et al., it was shown that area- and gear-based effort regulations can provide the high levels of biodiversity most no-take areas strive for. In many instances there are certain fishing gears that do not impact the conservation goal for specific area and therefore could potentially still be used while achieving the desired ecological integrity of the area.

The Fisheries Council of Canada has a position paper, *Balancing Marine Conservation with Sustainable Use*, that explores the pathways to creating healthy fisheries within healthy oceans.