

The Great Cod Collapse: Department of Fisheries and Oceans Canada, 1992

COD



MUNUC 38

Model United Nations of the University of Chicago

CHAIR LETTER

Dear Delegates,

Welcome to MUNUC 38's "The Great Cod Collapse" committee! My name is Phoebe Burgis, and I will be your chair. I am a third year student at the University of Chicago majoring in astrophysics and minoring in data science, and I'm currently working at a lab that researches exoplanet atmospheres. At UChicago, I have had the opportunity to become more involved in Model UN as an assistant chair in both MUNUC's *Indonesia Raya?: Building a United Archapellago* committee and ChoMUN's *JCC Enemies to Lovers?: Friends and Advisors of Cleopatra VII, 32 BC*. When I have free time from studying, lab work, and MUN, I love building legos or reading a good book.

Since this is a hybrid committee, there will be a transition between GA and crisis mechanics. It is up to you all to come prepared and be ready for anything, and of course my fellow execs and I are always here to help. It is such a privilege to see delegates engage in challenging discussions and find meaningful solutions in MUN. I hope that from this experience you can all grow as speakers and leaders, develop your creativity, and most importantly, have fun! I am so excited for our committee and am looking forward to the ideas you all come up with!

My fellow execs and I have worked hard to create an exciting committee for you, and we trust that you all are mature enough to handle sensitive committee discussions with care. MUNUC will not tolerate bigotry of any kind. The best delegates are the ones who see through tensions to common solutions and uplift and support other delegates. A great committee is only possible when all delegates work together to foster a collaborative environment.

I look forward to meeting you all! Please email me with any questions you may have.

Keep calm and cod on!

Phoebe Burgis

Chair, *The Great Cod Collapse: Department of Fisheries and Oceans Canada, 1992*

pburgis@uchicago.edu

CRISIS DIRECTOR LETTERS

Dear Delegates,

I hope that you are all doing well! I am Emmett Cho, and I will be one of your crisis directors for *The Great Cod Collapse* at MUNUC 38. I am a third-year student at the University of Chicago from the suburbs of Detroit majoring in chemistry and minoring in religious studies. I am currently trying to keep my lab job from taking up all of my free time, but it's just so hard to not agonize over odd looking NMR spectra. When not in class or the lab, I enjoy baking, listening to R&B, and playing ice hockey.

This will be my third year of MUNUC, as I joined MUNUC at the start of college, and my first opportunity to be a committee executive after having been an AC for three different committees over the last two years, MUNUC's JCC in 2024 and Indonesia committee in 2025, and ChoMUN's Museum committee in 2025.

This weekend will not only be super fun; it will also be an opportunity to gain exposure to unknown but fascinating topics, practice collaboration with peers, and express ideas in creative ways. My fellow execs and I are certain that these goals will be achieved and in their fulfillment this committee will be a great success, but this can happen only with the cooperation of every single one of you. In fulfilling the above goals, the committee must be a space wherein all members are welcome, comfortable, and given the opportunity to gain all of the opportunities mentioned above from being part of this committee. These goals can be met only if every delegate comes into the committee with a focus on consideration and care for both other delegates and the committee itself. I trust that every delegate is capable of this, and welcome any questions you as a delegate may have about the committee and its goals.

With all of this being said, both myself and my fellow execs are excited for you delegates to experience this committee and believe that it will be a truly unforgettable experience!

Best regards,

Emmett Cho

Crisis Director, *The Great Cod Collapse: Department of Fisheries and Oceans Canada, 1992*

emmettnlcho@uchicago.edu

Greetings Delegates,

My name is Ben Kleinman and I am very excited to be one of your CD's for the "The Great Cod Collapse" at MUNUC this year. I am a third-year at UChicago studying economics. Besides that, I am a massive history buff currently engrossed in the Victorian age and the Napoleonic wars periods in Europe. But who wants to talk about school?

As of now, I am currently in my 5th year of doing Model UN (having participated off and on throughout high school and college). Over this time, I have had the pleasure of being the CD for two—oddly both space themed—committees in high school (which were about as crazy as you would imagine), along with being an assistant chair for two committees here at UChicago last year (last year's viking Ad-Hoc and Dodge City).

It is my strong belief that, pushing past all its glitz and glamor (college apps look out), the most important part of Model UN is posing interesting and impactful questions to smart people. At its core, Model UN is about fostering cooperation by encouraging creativity, out of the box thinking, and, as should be encouraged in all great things, just a touch of controlled chaos.

My fellow execs and I are so proud about the way this committee has come together and we are so incredibly eager to be able to share it with you all. We are so excited to see you debate, create, destroy, and make this committee truly unforgettable.

Please feel free to reach out if you have any questions, concerns, bribes, or just want to show your excitement for the committee (please note bribes are no longer factored into awards).

Best of luck to all,

Ben Kleinman

Crisis Director, *The Great Cod Collapse: Department of Fisheries and Oceans Canada, 1992*

bdkleinman@uchicago.edu

SENSITIVITY STATEMENT

For a productive committee, there are some baseline levels of consideration that must be met for fellow committee members both inside and outside the context of the committee environment. We will not tolerate any forms of racism, sexism, ableism, transphobia or other offensive characterizations of groups of people. This behavior is obviously wrong when directed towards others in committee, but is also not justified by supposedly maintaining accuracy to a character or time period. There will never be a situation wherein it is encouraged or even suggested that a delegate acts offensively in a manner as noted above.

Beyond matters of explicitly offensive positions, delegates are also expected to behave in a welcoming manner towards fellow delegates. This means being considerate of others' ideas and manifests in being focused and respecting others during moderated caucuses. During unmoderated caucuses, delegates are considerate of others by letting others into discussion through both implicit invitation and by not blocking others out through more subtle verbal or body language.

Additionally, while bigoted behavior will never be encouraged, there will be encounters with sensitive matters in committee such as economic hardship and struggle mediated through geographic region, class, and occupation. These are topics that should be addressed in committee, but in doing so there should be a sense of consideration such that each topic is treated with its due respect and weight. This sort of sensitivity is necessary because it would be a disservice to not address these matters, but addressing them without due diligence would be just as much of a disservice to the history of this issue and the learning of your fellow committee members.

There are a few guidelines that should be followed to create a respectful environment for all. Note that all behaviors can't be addressed here.

1. When addressing a matter in committee, no criticism should be motivated by obviously disrespectful intent. For example, if the fishery collapse incites strikes by fishermen, criticism of these strikes should address the results of the strike itself and not purposefully degrade the fishermen for their economic struggle or economic class.
2. No suggestions or policies put forward should explicitly target a group with the intent of some negative outcome for said group.
3. Targeting any individual, either in or out of character, is not permissible and will be quickly stopped. We cannot have a welcoming environment if delegates are being expressly targeted in committee.

If there are any concerns with how an action may be perceived and how it is misaligned with the above considerations, we are more than happy to read and answer out-of-character notes along with the background note. Additionally, we are happy to discuss whether any plans are allowed in feedback.

Note that we will be vigilant about any misconduct, but we may miss things. If you notice anyone violating one of the above prescriptions, please do not hesitate to report this behavior. You are more than welcome to speak privately with the chair (Phoebe), crisis directors (Emmett and Ben K.), or Under-Secretary-General (Ben T.), and we will keep the conversation anonymous. We encourage reporting misconduct, as this is how we keep the safe and welcoming environment that will give every delegate the best experience possible.

STRUCTURE AND MECHANICS

This committee, being a hybrid committee, will be split into both a portion with General Assembly (GA) conventions and a portion with Crisis conventions. The first two sessions will follow the model of a GA, and the last three sessions will follow the model of Crisis.

In the GA model, all of the activity takes place in the frontroom, with the final goal being to present a resolution by the end of the second session. This resolution will follow GA resolution guidelines. In crisis, scenarios will be presented that correspond to the material in the resolution from the first two sessions. The goal of crisis is to pass directives that respond to these scenarios, or crises. Additionally, Crisis will involve the backroom, as delegates will write notes to characters of their choice where they gather resources and advance their own personal goals. Notes and directives will be written simultaneously. These notes are managed through a two notepad system, wherein the delegates alternate writing on two different notepads and sustain separate correspondences on each notepad. With there being two notepads, it will always be the case that one notepad will be in the backroom while the other will be in the front room with the delegate.

Part One: *Stopping the Codlapse*

Sessions one and two: The committee will start as a meeting for the Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO) in Canada in the year 1992. The chair of the committee, Phoebe, will be Federal Minister of Fisheries and Oceans, John Crosbie. At this point, after decades of bountiful yields from the northern cod stocks, a massive decrease in these yields has been observed. As delegates, you will have to put together a new set of guidelines for fishing practices

in the northern cod stocks through proposing and discussing solutions in moderated and unmoderated caucuses.

While the first committee session will be committed to developing ideas, the second committee session will involve writing up the guidelines in the form of a resolution. To develop ideas for the resolution, committee members will engage in moderated caucuses. In moderated caucuses, a select number of committee members will discuss a predetermined topic for a particular amount of time. Each speaker will have the same amount of time to speak and discussion can be continued as determined by a vote. During the first and second sessions, delegates will be writing working papers, ideas that they wish to present regarding the final resolution. These need not be formatted in the formal style of the final resolution. The final set of guidelines will be presented in accordance with GA resolution guidelines, which you can find in the “Traditional Committee Trainings” section of MUNUC’s website under the “Trainings” tab.

Part Two: *Newfoundland in Crisis*

Sessions three, four, and five: After the passage of new guidelines regarding proper fishing activity in the northern cod stocks, you will spend the rest of the committee responding to scenarios that result from those guidelines. New events will result from the particular responses to given scenarios. These new events will be presented in the form of crisis “breaks,” small interruptions to committee activities in the form of a skit put on by the Assistant Chairs (ACs). Crisis breaks reveal important information to the entire committee and are impacted by both passed directives and backroom notes.

In a crisis committee, frontroom changes are enabled through directives, while individual goals, matters that pertain to arc development for specifically the individual delegate, are

advanced discreetly through notes to the backroom. In the backroom, ACs will respond to delegate notes in the role of the character written to by the delegate. Most backroom notes will be written in the form of a letter or address to a friend, colleague, advisor, or some other fictional person who supports your goals. These letters can be made out to anyone, except other delegates in the committee. Instead of creating a resolution, sessions three through five will involve passing directives. Directives are of a shorter length than resolutions and are specific actions that go into effect once passed by the committee. Note that *multiple directives will be passed throughout sessions three through five, while only one resolution will be passed in session two.*

The last three sessions may feel much faster paced due to the mix of writing both directives and notes. This can be challenging to manage, but directives' shorter length should free up some time and mental energy to devote to backroom notes.

As for the pacing of notes, the initial goal when writing notes should be to obtain resources, as trying to push for certain outcomes without the necessary resources won't go anywhere. Once delegates have gathered resources and are granted certain capabilities from their notes, delegates can then use those resources to advance their own personal goals. Notes should be no longer than one page. There can be some conversational development around the notes, but they should be very direct with respect to the note's goal, whether that be obtaining some resource or advancing a particular goal. Not all resources may be granted, especially if the acquisition of the resource seems unreasonable, and certain actions cannot be achieved without the requisite resources. Notes should be purely with respect to personal matters and shouldn't address the resources or goals of the committee as a whole. The people of Newfoundland and the surrounding regions are in a state of uncertainty that could be culturally, economically, and

politically cod-tastrophic if not handled properly. It is your job to resolve this crisis in the way you see best fit while maintaining stability for the people of Canada.

MUNUC's website has more information regarding the hybrid committee format. Please feel free to reach out with any questions you may have. During committee, we are happy to address questions either through a point of inquiry to the chair, or a written note sent to the backroom.

HISTORY OF THE COMMITTEE

Government of Canada

Canada is a parliamentary democracy and a constitutional monarchy. Throughout the country's history, it has been ruled over by many monarchs, French and British, but it wasn't until the Statute of Westminster in 1931 that Canada gained much of its legislative autonomy and not until the Constitution Act of 1982 that Britain was barred from amending Canada's constitution.¹ In modern Canada, the British monarch (Queen Elizabeth II in 1992) is head of state, but she does not have authority over the Canadian government or its laws. Still, the British monarchy is still a part of Canada's identity as a Commonwealth nation, and the crown is federally represented by the Governor General of Canada (Ramon Hnatyshyn), who is appointed by the monarch and represents Canada internationally as head of state, in addition to playing a role in both legislative and executive branches.

Canada's legislative branch of government, called Parliament, is comprised of the Crown (Governor General), the House of Commons, and the Senate. The members of the House of Commons are elected by Canadian citizens in general elections and by-elections for each electoral district, and they in turn elect the Prime Minister who is Canada's head of government. The members of the Senate are appointed by the Governor General on the recommendation of the Prime Minister.²

The executive branch is composed of the Prime Minister and the Cabinet, the group of ministers selected by the Prime Minister (usually from the House of Commons) who mostly

¹ Barratt, David, "Canada becomes independent from Great Britain" (2022), <https://www.ebsco.com/research-starters/history/canada-becomes-independent-great-britain>.

² "Structure of Government" (Government of Canada, 2025), <https://www.canada.ca/en/government/system/how-government-works/structure.html>.

oversee their own departments and report to Parliament. The executive branch is responsible for developing, presenting, and overseeing the implementation of policies to address issues facing the country.

Department of Fisheries and Oceans Canada

The Prime Minister and the executive branch also oversee the many federal committees and organizations, one of which is the Department of Fisheries and Oceans Canada, or Pêches et Océans Canada, often abbreviated as DFO. After the first Constitution Act of 1867, which established the confederation of Canada and outlined its government and federal departments, the new Canadian government now had control over its fisheries. The actual department (which was officially created in 1868) has managed Canada's fisheries ever since and is responsible for their conservation and sustainability. The department also enforces Canada's boating and fishing regulations and responds to environmental emergencies. DFO is headquartered in Ottawa and has seven regional centers.³

The head of the department is the Minister of Fisheries, who is a member of the Cabinet and is appointed by the Crown on the advice of the Prime Minister. In 1991 John Crosbie, who previously served as the lieutenant governor of Newfoundland and Labrador, was appointed as Minister and is the current minister for our committee. Below the Minister is the Deputy Minister. The Associate Deputy Ministers of DFO sectors and the Regional Director Generals of the regional centers all report to the Deputy Minister.⁴

³ Fisheries and Oceans Canada, "About Us" (Government of Canada, n.d.), <https://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/about-notre-sujet/index-eng.htm>.

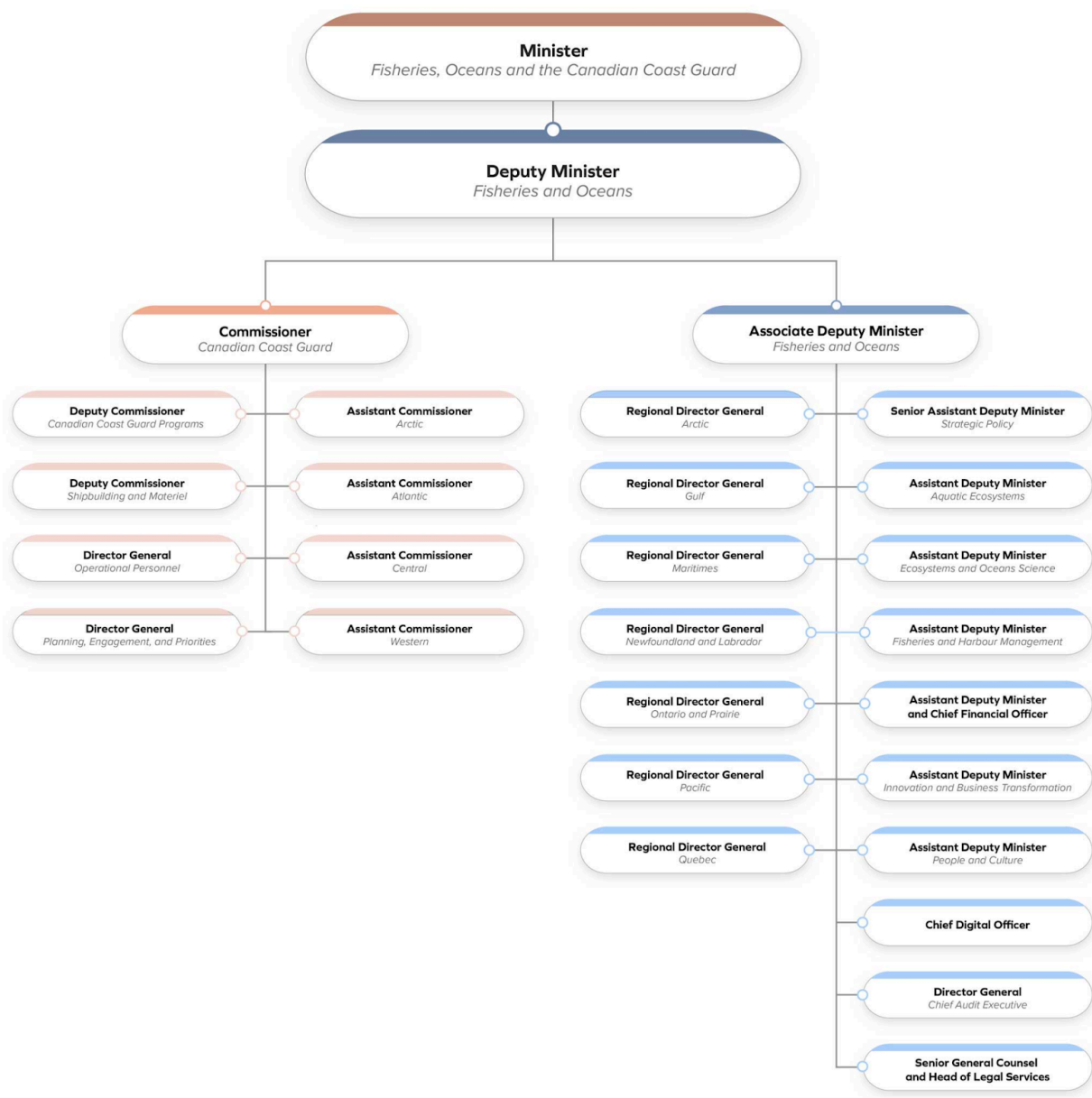
⁴ Fisheries and Oceans Canada, "Organizational Structure" (Government of Canada, 2024). <https://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/about-notre-sujet/organisation-eng.htm>.

Under the Fisheries Act, which was established in 1985, DFO has power over fishing zones, issuing and suspending fishing licenses (both national and international), and establishing fishing quotas and Total Allowable Catches (TAC) per area and species. DFO enforces these regulations with their own officers that can inspect vessels and issue fines or penalties for illegal catches, for example. The department also enforces international fishing rules and agreements and oversees foreign access within Canada's 200-mile Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ).⁵

DFO oversees many programs and special agencies to support their mandate of conservation and economic prosperity in coastal environments and communities. Their science branch focuses on environmental protection and sustainability and employs many scientists to conduct research on the various species and ecosystems in Canada's waters. DFO monitors the climates and stocks of their fisheries on a regular basis to address problems that may arise and to ensure the sustainability of the fisheries.

Because of the level of urgency and importance of the problem that our committee will be addressing, not only will the higher-up officers, researchers, or experts within or connected to DFO be meeting, but also representatives for the population of Newfoundland and other interested parties, whose livelihoods would be greatly affected by the outcome of the crisis and could provide vital perspectives and opinions to the committee.

⁵ Claude Emery, *The Northern Cod Crisis*, BP-313E (Ottawa: Political and Social Affairs Division, Library of Parliament, October 1992), <https://publications.gc.ca/Collection-R/LoPBdP/BP/bp313-e.htm>.



Organizational Structure of DFO, on right of image.⁶

⁶ Fisheries and Oceans Canada. "Organizational Structure." Government of Canada, 2024.
<https://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/about-notre-sujet/organisation-eng.htm>.

GEOGRAPHY

Geography of Newfoundland

The province of Newfoundland takes up about 111,390 km² of area.⁷ In 1992, the island of Newfoundland has a population of around 568,000, with a large proportion living on the Avalon peninsula, the southeast region of Newfoundland where the capital St. John's is located.⁸ A lot of the landscape of Newfoundland is rocky and mountainous. The Long Range Mountains (part of the Appalachian system) spans the west coast of Newfoundland, and the coastal areas contain many bays, peninsulas, and smaller islands. Newfoundland is mostly shrubland and not very desirable for agriculture, which is mostly why the major settlements are along the coast in bays and coves.⁹

Because of its shape, all areas of Newfoundland have a close proximity to water. In fact, nowhere on the island is more than 100 km from the Atlantic Ocean.¹⁰ This proximity to water and the warm jet stream current affect Newfoundland's climate, as it helps maintain a temperate maritime climate despite its northern location. The average summer temperature is around 61° Fahrenheit and around 32° F in the winter.¹¹

⁷ Summers, W.F., "Newfoundland and Labrador" (The Canadian Encyclopedia, 2010), <https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/newfoundland-and-labrador>.

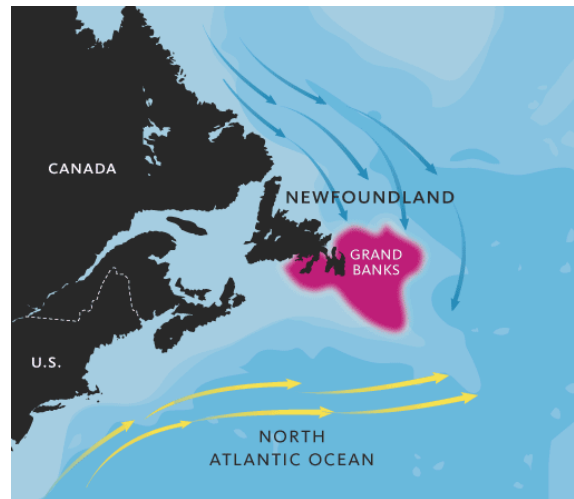
⁸ Statistics Canada, "Visual Census – Population and dwelling counts, Newfoundland and Labrador," (2012). http://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2011/dp-pd/vc-rv/index.cfm?Lang=ENG&TOPIC_ID=1&GEOCODE=10.

⁹ Summers, "Newfoundland and Labrador" (2010).

¹⁰ Bornstein, Stephen, *Newfoundland and Labrador: a Health System Profile* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2021).

¹¹ Newfoundland and Labrador Canada, "Climate and Weather" (Newfoundland and Labrador Tourism, n.d.), <https://www.newfoundlandlabrador.com/about-this-place/climate-and-weather>.

The Grand Banks



Map of the Grand Banks showing the currents from the northern Labrador Current and southern Gulf Stream.¹²

The Atlantic waters surrounding Newfoundland include several regions of the North American continental shelf, most notably the Grand Banks. Off the southeastern coast of Newfoundland, the Grand Banks is a series of underwater plateaus (banks) home to some of the most biologically diverse oceanic ecosystems in the world, and historically one of the most important fishing zones. The Grand Banks are also relatively shallow throughout their entirety, with deep trenches between the underwater banks that allow cold, nutrient-rich ocean water to rise up (or “upwell”) from the depths while still allowing for sunlight to be able to reach the ocean floor. These conditions provide the ideal environment for microscopic photosynthetic organisms called phytoplankton to thrive, who form the basis of a diverse marine ecosystem.

¹² Asc1733, "The Grand Banks of Newfoundland," Wikimedia Commons, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?title=File:Grandbanks1.gif&oldid=619481548>.

Species like cod, herring, mackerel, halibut, lobster, and scallops have always been prevalent in the Grand Banks, in addition to several kinds of seabirds and marine mammals.¹³

Additionally, the cold Labrador Ocean Current from the north and the warm Gulf Stream from the south often result in a layer of fog over the water. These thick foggy conditions can be very dangerous for vessels to navigate through, and makes it difficult to detect other nearby ships.

¹³ Witherbee, Amy, “Grand Banks” (EBSCO, 2021), <https://www.ebsco.com/research-starters/oceanography/grand-banks>.

HISTORY OF THE PROBLEM

History of Newfoundland

The history of Newfoundland starts with the people whom archaeologists refer to as the Maritime Archaics. They occupied the region from 8000 BC to 3200 BC, after which time the Paleo-Eskimos began to occupy the region. Their occupancy lasted from 2800 BC to 600 BC. The most recent indigenous occupants of Newfoundland were ancestors of the Beothuk, a group that moved out of Newfoundland after the arrival of Europeans and started to engage with other indigenous nations (or “First Nations” as they are called in Canada).¹⁴

The first Europeans to step foot on Newfoundland—and indeed any part of North America—were the Vikings, in approximately 1000 CE. Led by Leif Erikson, the Vikings named the area “Vinland,” and created a small settlement (today an archaeological site known as “L’Anse aux Meadows”) on the northern tip of Newfoundland. The Vikings did not stay long in North America, however, and their explorations were lost to time until archaeologists discovered L’Anse aux Meadows in 1968.¹⁵

¹⁴ W.F. Summers, Newfoundland and Labrador | the Canadian encyclopedia, September 12, 2010, <https://thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/newfoundland-and-labrador>.

¹⁵ “History of Vikings in Newfoundland and Labrador,” Newfoundland and Labrador, Canada, <https://www.newfoundlandlabrador.com/trip-ideas/travel-stories/vikings-history>.

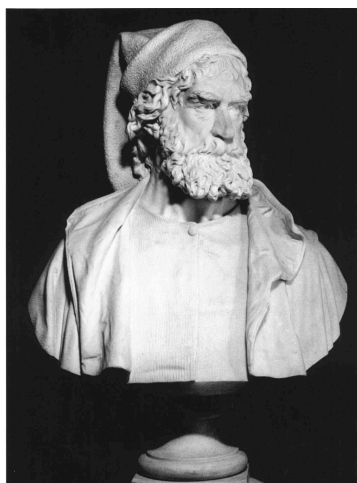


Reconstructed Viking dwelling at L'Anse aux Meadows.¹⁶

When John Cabot, an Italian born explorer who was commissioned by King Henry VII of England to sail west in search of trade routes to Asia, arrived in Newfoundland in 1497, his crew became the second group of Europeans to arrive in Canada. Cabot made note of the enormous cod population in the region and laid claim to the land for England. When Cabot arrived, the Beothuk community, in an attempt to avoid confrontation, moved away from the coast. However, this limited their food supply which, along with diseases brought by the Europeans, led to their population decline. On Cabot's arrival, the Mi'kmaq community from the regions of Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island, the Gaspé Peninsula, and New Brunswick began to travel to Newfoundland to trade fur with the newly arrived Europeans. Some of the Mi'kmaq people settled in Newfoundland, and have maintained a community in the region ever since.¹⁷

¹⁶ TravelingOtter. "L'Anse Aux Meadows - Reconstructed Hall." World History Encyclopedia, 2012. <https://www.worldhistory.org/image/9188/lanse-aux-meadows---reconstructed-hall/>.

¹⁷ Ibid.



*Bust of John Cabot.*¹⁸

Following John Cabot, in 1500, Portuguese explorer Gaspar Corte-Real continued exploration of the coast of Newfoundland, naming multiple bays and cities on the east coast of the island. In 1536, Jacques Cartier showed that Newfoundland was an island by sailing through both Cabot Strait and the Strait of Belle Isle. In 1583, Sir Humphrey Gilbert claimed Newfoundland for England.¹⁹

Soon afterwards, Europeans began to exploit the rich cod stocks of the region. During the spring, migratory fishermen from France, Spain, Portugal, and England would come into Newfoundland to fish off the coast. Of these, perhaps the most notable were the Basques, an ethnic group from Northeastern Spain and Southwestern France, who were some of the most consistent migratory fishermen throughout much of Newfoundland's early history.²⁰ Come fall, they would return with their acquired salt cod.

¹⁸ Mark Cartwright, "John Cabot," World History Encyclopedia, https://www.worldhistory.org/John_Cabot/.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Brad Loewen, "The Basques in the Gulf of Saint Lawrence and Adjacent Shores," Academia.edu, November 28, 2013, https://www.academia.edu/5254166/The_Basques_in_the_Gulf_of_Saint_Lawrence_and_Adjacent_Shores.

England initially had a less significant contribution to these fishing expeditions. However, with war in Europe crippling the fisheries of other nations, England started to gain a larger share of the fishing real estate in Newfoundland. With relative peace in the early 17th century, European nations made an effort to expand in the Americas during this time. However, the English were hesitant to expand their fisheries in Newfoundland, wanting to avoid creating settlements in the region. The nation went as far as to prohibit women from coming to Newfoundland for fear that their presence would encourage settlement. Realizing that settlements would be beneficial to their fishing endeavors, England finally allowed women to settle in Newfoundland once it was determined that settlement development in the region would be even more beneficial for the fishing industry.²¹

The first settlement was made in 1610 at Cupers Cove by the Newfoundland Company. From 1618 to 1627, more settlements developed; and by 1675, there were 1,655 people living in 31 villages along the shore of Newfoundland. During the first half of the 17th century, various individuals were appointed as proprietary governors to maintain control over the colonies.²² However, with England's Interregnum from 1649 to 1660, wherein the nation had no monarchy, the governance of the island became less of a concern. The lack of concern with the governance of Newfoundland continued into the latter half of the 17th century. Some fishers argued that year-round settlers, especially planters, were disruptive to fishing activities and petitioned for these settlers to be removed. However, all of these efforts were futile, as such a removal was deemed unfeasible. Additionally, the planters were recognized as assets in defending incursion by the French.²³

²¹ Ibid.

²² Ibid.

²³ Ibid.

During the latter part of the 17th century, the French also started to develop settlements, reaching up to 600 French settlers in Newfoundland by 1687.²⁴ In 1689, war broke out between the French and British. These conflicts, King William's War and Queen Anne's War, decided the matter of possession of Newfoundland. In the winter of 1696-1697, the French launched an offensive against the English settlements, destroying almost all of them. However, the English resettled by the summer of 1697 and developed a new garrison. A second campaign by the French in the winter and spring of 1705 destroyed a few settlements, but wasn't a significant enough victory to establish control for the French.²⁵ In 1713, the Treaty of Utrecht was signed. It left England with ownership of Newfoundland and gave France the rights to the French shore between Cape Bonavista and Point Riche—which they controlled until 1905.²⁶

King William's act, signed in 1699, gave the settlers rights, but made no allowance of a settler-operated government. Instead, the Royal Navy was given significant judicial control, which developed into significant political control in the region. The first naval governor of Newfoundland, Captain Henry Osborne, maintained order by dividing the island into six judicial districts whose judges were elected by the residents of each district.²⁷ With control established over the island of Newfoundland, the English settlers began to expand, having settled in Fogo Island and Twillingate by 1732.

While the first settlers in the region were English, Irish settlers also began to come over, mostly as servants. The Irish presence on the island became significant around the 1720s, contributing to an English-Irish cultural mix that still impacts that island to this day. By 1775, the economic activity of Newfoundland diversified beyond fishing, as trapping, logging, and

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Ibid.

shipbuilding all started to contribute to the island's economic activity. This economic diversification corresponded with the island's total population reaching almost 12,000.²⁸

With the French Revolution and Napoleonic Wars, English fishing in Newfoundland was halted abruptly, as transatlantic trade routes became more perilous and many fishermen were pulled into the Navy. After the Spanish defeated the French in 1811, demand for fish in Southern Europe boomed, encouraging new settlers in Newfoundland, especially from Ireland. By 1815, the population of Newfoundland had grown to over 40,000.²⁹ With the population having increased, they began to make an effort to increase local representation. From a series of pamphlets urging Britain to give the region greater autonomy, a representative government was eventually established in 1832, with full colonial status cemented in 1855. Having gained this greater population and independent status, representatives from Newfoundland attended the confederations conference, a conference between New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, and Prince Edward Island that considered the issue of merging into one province.³⁰ However, Newfoundland decided to not join this union.



Room where the Charlottetown Conference was held in 1864.³¹

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Andrew McIntosh, "Charlottetown Conference | The Canadian Encyclopedia," Charlottetown Conference, September 2, 2010, <https://thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/charlottetown-conference>.

³¹ Joseph Thornley, "The 1864 Charlottetown Conference," Flickr, <https://www.flickr.com/photos/thornley/2680847182>.

While Newfoundland maintained prosperity in the early 20th century through fishing and mining, debt incurred from railway development and World War I, as well as economic losses from the great depression, forced the region to take assistance from Britain and returned them to their colonial status.³² However, Newfoundland recovered well in the 1930s due to British economic activity in the region during World War II and demand for resources from fishing and mining. In 1949, Newfoundland dissolved their commission government with Britain. In the wake of this dissolution, Newfoundland had to decide between returning to the commission, becoming independent, or becoming part of Canada. After two referendums, it was decided that Newfoundland would become part of Canada, with Joseph Smallwood being premier of the first provincial government.

³² Ibid.

Importance of the Cod Industry in Newfoundland



Atlantic cod swimming in an aquarium in Norway.³³

Ever since it was first explored by Europeans, the history of Newfoundland has been permanently tied to cod. When fish were first caught by fishermen from England, France, Portugal, or Spain, they were salted on the ship and brought back to Europe to be dried and sold. Fishermen set out every morning in small boats and would return everyday with their fishing gains. These fishermen would set up sites near fishing grounds. At the sites, the fish would be caught, salted, cooked and dried. This practice caused Newfoundland to become the number one

³³ Prokosch, Peter. *Atlantic cod (Gadus morhua)*, Ålesund Aquarium, Norway. 2017. Flickr. <https://www.flickr.com/photos/gridarendal/32052010306/in/photostream/>.

global exporter of salt codfish and gave the island a population of over 100,000 by the middle of the 1800s.³⁴ In fact, the practice of salt fishing for cod was so lucrative that it encouraged Great Britain to transition from seasonal fishing to developing permanent settlements. By the 1880s, over 200,000 people occupied over 6,000 miles of coastline in Newfoundland resulting in 90% of the male work force on the island being committed to fishing and 90% of the colony's exports being fish, mainly in the form of salt cod.³⁵

However, with the great depression and developments after World War II, it became harder for the residents of Newfoundland to maintain their economic activity based on fishing, as salted fishing started losing favor in exchange for freshwater fishing and larger trawlers used by European nations started competing with the local fishers of Newfoundland. This, paired with the advent of filleting and quick-freezing processes in the United States, made it harder for the residents of Newfoundland to sell fish. Though Royal Commissions in 1927 and 1930 attempted to protect Newfoundland fishers by working to decrease trawler activity and unionize Newfoundland fishers, these efforts were not generally successful, and the Newfoundland exporters remained vulnerable to losing their market.³⁶

Fishing Technology

The 1830s invention and later perfection of the refrigerator and freezer would bring about gargantuan change to the world and in particular its diet.³⁷ Able to keep recently captured food fresh for hundreds of miles of railway or ocean, the refrigerator brought about the beginning of a

³⁴ Joseph Gough, "History of Commercial Fisheries | the Canadian Encyclopedia," The Canadian Encyclopedia, August 12, 2013, <https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/history-of-commercial-fisheries>.

³⁵ "Fisheries," Heritage: Newfoundland & Labrador, May 2015, <https://www.heritage.nf.ca/articles/economy/fishery.php>.

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Ben Seal, "A Tragedy with No End," Science History Institute, September 5, 2025, <https://www.sciencehistory.org/stories/magazine/a-tragedy-with-no-end/>.

truly international meat and seafood market. No more would fishermen be content with merely selling their catches to their neighbors when they could reach a vastly greater consumer base (with full wallets) around the globe. Trapped in the epicenter of this shift, the Canadian fishing industry began to adapt, transforming quaint fishing villages into regional hubs of a gargantuan export-focused fishing operation, feeding stomachs from around the world. In fact this export focus became so great that, taking an aggregate of all Canadian fishing ventures, the Department of Fisheries and Oceans recorded in the 1991–1992 exporting almost 80 percent of its catches.³⁸

But with so many mouths to feed, how could harvests hope to keep up? Well, with some new innovations on some ancient techniques. Drift net (or gill net) fishing has been around for thousands of years.³⁹ In fact, it is a remarkably simple system in which a large net is either dragged behind a boat or simply dropped in the ocean, catching every fish that so happens to run into it. While not inherently harmful on its surface, technological innovations have taken the simple method to the next level. The creation of cheap plastics like nylon allowed for the creation of significantly longer nets, sometimes stretching for miles, which are able to catch thousands fold more fish than had previously been possible.^{40,41} As the Southern California Law review writes, in discussion of Pacific usage of modern drift net fishing, “the widespread use of pelagic driftnets is potentially, if not actually, devastating to high seas marine life. A net will capture everything in its path that is larger than the mesh, which is about two inches in diameter.” This issue is further compounded by the common practice known as bottom trawling (or

³⁸ *Annual Report of the Department of Fisheries and Oceans for the year ending March 31, 1992* (Ottawa: Communications Directorate Department of Fisheries and Oceans, 1992), <https://waves-vagues.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/Library/357873eng.pdf>, page 16.

³⁹ Simon Northridge, *Driftnet Fisheries and Their Impacts on Non-target Species: A World Wide Review* (London: Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, 1991), page 1-3.

⁴⁰ Leslie A. Davis, “North Pacific Pelagic Driftnetting: Untangling the High Seas Controversy Notes,” *Southern California Law Review* 64, no. 5 (1991): 1062, accessed August 8, 2025, https://heinonline.org/HOL/Page?collection=journals&handle=hein.journals/scal64&id=1076&men_tab=srchresults.

⁴¹ Northridge, *Driftnet Fisheries and Their Impacts on Non-target Species*, 1-5.

dragging).^{42,43} This strategy would make use of the sheer size of gillnets, weighing them down so that they could touch the ocean floor. From there the net would drag along the sea bed capturing anything in its path. This kind of harvesting was particularly popular within the cod industry, as it is a groundfish that prefers to stay closer to the sea floor.⁴⁴ As might be expected, this kind of mass fishing leads to gargantuan amounts of bycatch (the capturing of unintended animals which are often unable to be sold or protected species) and damage to the overall aquatic ecosystem.⁴⁵

Another technology worth mentioning is longlining. Developed in the 1970s, longlining describes the practice of employing miles long strings of fishing line modified to carry hundreds or even thousands of hooks.⁴⁶ These lines are then hitched to the stern of a vessel and pulled through the water as the boat moves.⁴⁷ Longlining was correspondingly aided through additional technological innovation such as mechanical line cleaners and automatic baiters which work to increase the efficiency of the otherwise tedious practice.⁴⁸ When compared to massive, open gill nets, longlining may seem to be the more environmentally friendly option; however, this is not necessarily the case. Similar to gillnets, longlines are “spectacularly nonselective” leading to significant amounts of bycatch. Based on a 2013 study, longlines are shown not just to be harmful to marine life but even seabirds, resulting in the estimated death of 300,000 a year.⁴⁹ Furthermore all these issues are compounded by the fact that longlines can accidentally be

⁴² Charlotte Jarvis and Micheal Brennan, “History of Trawling and Ecological Impact,” *Threats to Our Ocean Heritage: Bottom Trawling* (Cham: Springer Nature Switzerland AG), page 9-25, https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-3-031-57953-0_2.

⁴³ “An Overview of Bottom Trawling in Canada.” Pacificwild. 10 August, 2021, <https://pacificwild.org/an-overview-of-bottom-trawling-in-canada/>.

⁴⁴ “More About Groundfish.” Positively Groundfish. Accessed 7 August, 2025, <https://www.positivelygroundfish.org/groundfish-info>.

⁴⁵ Northridge, *Driftnet Fisheries and Their Impacts on Non-target Species*, 3-4, 83.

⁴⁶ *The Newfoundland Longline Fishery* (Canada Department of Fisheries and Oceans, 1983), 4-6.

⁴⁷ “What is Longline Fishing?,” Greenpeace, Greenpeace Australia Pacific, 29 March, 2025, <https://www.greenpeace.org.au/learn/what-is-longline-fishing/>.

⁴⁸ *The Newfoundland Longline Fishery*, 8-10.

⁴⁹ Kevin Fitzgerald, “Longline fishing (how what you don't know can hurt you),” PubMed. Accessed 7 August 2025, <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/24331555/>.

detached or cut whilst in the water resulting in a long term threat to local wildlife.⁵⁰ Overall, then, it is clear to see how novel indiscriminate fishing methods in both drastically increased catches and significant environmental damage.



A factory trawler vessel at a shipyard in the Canary Islands, Spain.⁵¹

Of course, a gillnet or longline can only be as impactful as its boat will allow. The fishery industry would also be revolutionized through changes in ship making. Innovations in engines along with the greater ease of acquiring larger vessels allowed fishermen to venture further off the coast.⁵² This added range, along with the creation of boat-mounted electrical fish-finding sonar systems, allowed for vessels to sail to high density pockets of wildlife that would have

⁵⁰ “Environmental impacts of trawling and longline fishing,” Active Oceans. 13 May, 2015, <https://activeoceans.wordpress.com/2015/05/13/environmental-impacts-of-trawling-and-longline-fishing/>.

⁵¹ Johannes, Niels. *Factory Trawler Al Rahma at Astican shipyard in Las Palmas*. 2023. Wikimedia Commons. [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Al_Rahma_\(IMO_8607141\)_Las_Palmas_2023.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Al_Rahma_(IMO_8607141)_Las_Palmas_2023.jpg).

⁵² Emery, Claude, “The Northern Cod Crisis, BP-313E” (Ottawa: Political and Social Affairs Division, Library of Parliament, October 1992), <https://publications.gc.ca/Collection-R/LoPBdP/BP/bp313-e.htm>.

been impossible to reach prior.^{53,54,55} These advancements are perhaps no better displayed than through the widespread introduction of factory trawlers. These massive ships, often being 200 feet or longer, had huge ranges and enough engine power to pull large sea floors reaching gillnets and longlines.⁵⁶ These ships actually had so long of ranges that they brought about the creation of international fishery operations (along with pushing the foundation of 200 mile exclusive economic zones to protect domestic operations).⁵⁷ Furthermore, due to their size these trawlers could be so much more than just fishing vessels. Open equipped with freezers, factory trawlers could process and store their catches whilst on the water.⁵⁸ These further allowed for vessels to reach further out as boats need not return their catches for a while. Needless to say, factory trawlers brought about a complete shift to the Newfoundland industry. According to a 2005 report “Between 1960 and 1975, 8 million tonnes of northern cod was caught, most of it by an estimated 200 factory freezer trawlers operating on the Grand Banks. By comparison, this is the same amount that was caught in the whole of the period between 1500 and 1750.”⁵⁹ Thus, trawlers, along with gillnets and longlines, have resulted in an unprecedented shift in the cod industry bringing massive catches and leading to significant damages.

⁵³ “A brief history of fishing sonars,” deeper, 4 December, 2023, <https://deepersonar.com/en-us/blogs/us/brief-history-fishing-sonars?srsId=AfmBOoo07TVcME-LkCTaB89FVJ-J-ZRWDYcRhgg4ZGIP9LRYXebwOtF>.

⁵⁴ Barani Chettiar, “A History Of Fishfinders & Marine Sonars,” Tecomart, 14 November, 2022, <https://tecomart.co/a-history-of-fishfinders-marine-sonars/>.

⁵⁵ Mehnazd, “What is a Fishfinder and How Does it Work?,” Marine Insight, 25 February, 2019, <https://www.marineinsight.com/marine-navigation/what-is-a-fishfinder-and-how-does-it-work/>.

⁵⁶ “Fishing Vessel Types,” Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. Accessed 7 August 2025, <https://www.fao.org/fishery/en/vesseltype/1010/en>.

⁵⁷ “Northeast Fisheries Historical Highlights: A Timeline,” NOAA Fisheries. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Accessed 7 August, 2025, <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/new-england-mid-atlantic/about-us/northeast-fisheries-historical-highlights-timeline>.

⁵⁸ Jeff Werner, “The History of Maine's Cod Fisheries,” Marina Life. Accessed 7 August, 2025, <https://www.marinalife.com/articles/history-of-maines-cod-fisheries>.

⁵⁹ Tom Wappel, *Northern Cod: A Failure of Canadian Fisheries Management* (Ottawa: Communications Canada, 2005), page 3.

Increase in Fish Landings

Since it was thought for centuries that the cod stock in the northwest Atlantic was practically infinite, no one seriously considered sustainability or the possibility of overfishing until the 1930s. Around this time, several theories were introduced claiming that a calculable maximum amount of fish could be caught per year so that the species would be able to repopulate that difference by the next year; in other words, as long as this amount was not surpassed, the cod population would never decrease and the fisheries could be used indefinitely. This was eventually called the “maximum sustainable yield” (MSY), and was a widely accepted theory by mid-century.⁶⁰ Often the industry caught fish with this limit in mind, but no major regulations or enforcement were put in place regarding this maximum, so the region was still at risk of overfishing.

Ever since Newfoundland joined Canada as a province in 1949, the Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO) has been responsible for the use of its fisheries. By the 1950s, advanced fishing and vessel technology made it possible for the increased exploitation of Newfoundland’s fisheries, and the number of fish landings (catches) per year began to increase rapidly. For decades, the annual landings of northern cod in the 2J3KL regions (off the east coast of Labrador and Newfoundland) remained around 250,000 tonnes (1 tonne is equal to 1000 kg or about 1.1 US tons), but began to increase and reached a high of 810,000 tonnes in 1968, mostly due to the effectiveness and widespread use of bottom draggers, introduced in the 1960s.⁶¹

As the annual cod landings started to trend downwards after 1968, more people began to suspect that the cod population might be in danger, and so regulations were made concerning the

⁶⁰ Russell, E.S., “Some Theoretical Considerations on the ‘Overfishing’ Problem,” *Journal du Conseil*, Volume 6, Issue 1, (March 1931): 3–20, <https://doi.org/10.1093/icesjms/6.1.3>.

⁶¹ Emery, Claude, *The Northern Cod Crisis*, BP-313E (Ottawa: Political and Social Affairs Division, Library of Parliament, October 1992), <https://publications.gc.ca/Collection-R/LoPBdP/BP/bp313-e.htm>.

cod catch limits. Total allowable catch (TAC) quotas were first introduced by the International Commission for the Northwest Atlantic Fisheries (ICNAF) in 1970. The ICNAF was an organization that many countries participated in, including Canada, the United States, The United Kingdom, Denmark, Iceland, and others. Founded in 1950, the ICNAF was one of the first international groups to introduce the concept of sustainable use of fishery resources, and it also helped popularize the idea of maximum sustainable yields (MSY's).⁶² By 1974, TAC's had been established for most species being fished in the North Atlantic, and most of these TAC's followed the accepted MSY's of their respective species.⁶³

DFO followed suit and instituted Total Allowable Catches (TAC) in 1973 for cod in Canadian-controlled waters, which defined the maximum amount that could be caught annually in order to preserve the cod stocks. The TAC was set at around 700,000 tonnes initially, but the actual catch that year was much below this estimate. The TAC was continually lowered every year as the number of cod landings failed to reach it, until in 1976 when they decided to match the TAC to the actual value of catch.

International Fishing

However, these TAC regulations set by both the ICNAF and DFO did not fully prevent the many international fishing vessels from exploiting the Grand Banks and its cod stocks.

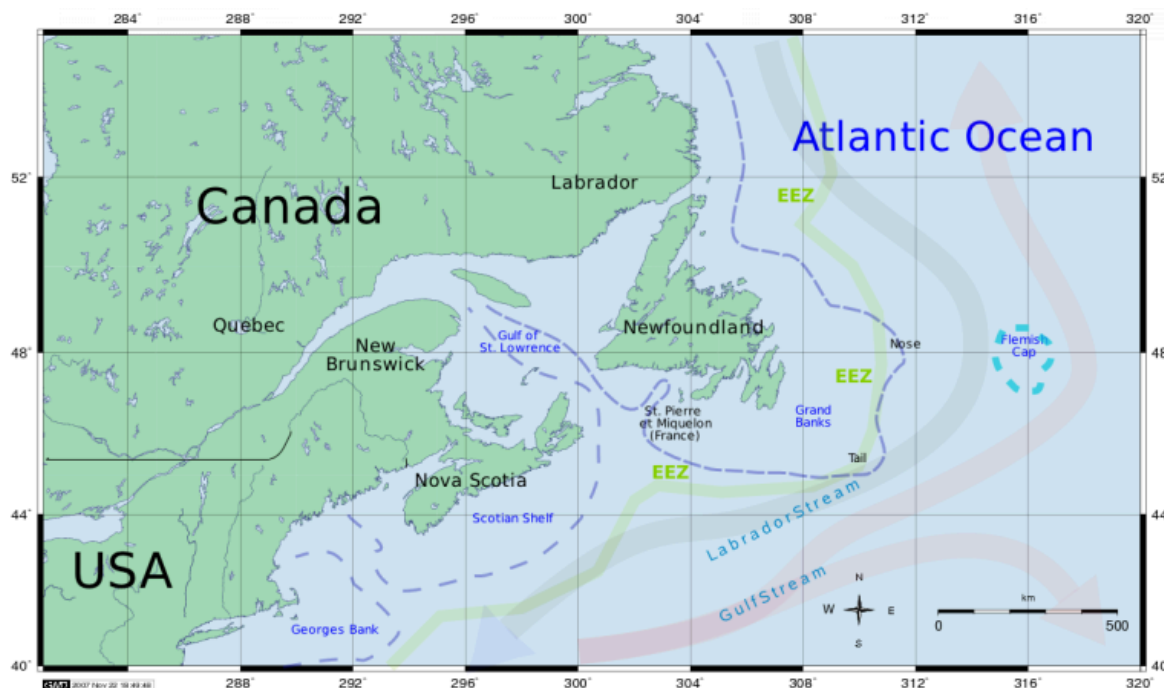
There is a long history of European fishing vessels in the Northwest Atlantic. Countries like Spain, France, and Portugal have been fishing in and around Newfoundland's waters since the early 16th century, ever since the first European settlers in Newfoundland since the Vikings,

⁶² Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organization, "International Commission for the Northwest Atlantic Fisheries (ICNAF)" (Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organization: n.d.), <https://www.nafo.int/About-us/ICNAF>.

⁶³ Higgins, Jenny, "Cod Moratorium" (Newfoundland and Labrador Heritage, 2009), <https://www.heritage.nf.ca/articles/economy/moratorium.php>.

the Basques, kickstarted the cod trade. Northern cod fishing resources have been an important part of the economies of Spain, France, and Portugal, and so when fishing technology became more advanced, they kept sending larger and more efficient vessels into the Grand Banks to fish for cod. The foreign fishing industry was so huge by the mid-20th century that they accounted for about 80 percent of the peak 1968 total northern cod landings.⁶⁴

Following the global trend, Canada officially established their own 200-mile Exclusive Economic Zone EEZ in 1977. This meant that Canada could exercise complete control of the economic activity in waters within 200 nautical miles from Canada's shores, pushing all foreign fishing vessels out of most of the Grand Banks. Now, Canadian boats would have much less competition in the cod fishing industry, and Newfoundland began to expand their industry (both inshore and offshore) and their processing facilities.



*Map of Grand Banks and Canadian EEZ.*⁶⁵

⁶⁴ Higgins, "Cod Moratorium."

⁶⁵ Keysanger. *Newfoundland Grand Banks and EEZ border*. 2007. *Wikimedia Commons*. <https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/d/d0/Canada-usa.en.png>.

However, the new EEZ also came with unexpected problems. Canadian fishing vessels were not as advanced as international factory trawlers, which could stay out for weeks at a time without needing to come back to shore.⁶⁶ Additionally, most Canadian fishing in Newfoundland was done inshore and not offshore, so a large portion of the Grand Banks cod fisheries were not being utilized. As a result, Canada signed treaties with other countries to be able to use fishing resources within the EEZ, but these were limited due to conservational concerns. Also, some areas of the Grand Banks were not included in the borders of Canada's EEZ, most notably the Tail, the Nose, and the Flemish Cap of the Grand Banks, which are all rich habitats for northern cod.⁶⁷ Since they were out of Canada's control, foreign vessels continued to flock to these areas, further contributing to the decline of the cod population.

Because the fishing limits and regulations set by DFO could not affect the fleets in international waters, the ICNAF was the only way of preventing them from overfishing. However, by the late 1970s the ICNAF had become inefficient, and it was eventually dissolved and replaced in 1979 by the Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organization (NAFO). NAFO was responsible for the international fishing regulations and the conservation of the habitats and species in international waters in the Northwest Atlantic.⁶⁸ The organization oversaw the areas of the Grand Banks that did not fall within the Canadian EEZ, so that these critical habitats for cod would not be exploited and overfished by foreign vessels. The new organization took the decline of the cod stocks more seriously, and one of the first things they did was lower the TACs for

⁶⁶ British Sea Fishing, "The Collapse of the Grand Banks Cod Fishery" (2022), <https://britishseafishing.co.uk/the-collapse-of-the-grand-banks-cod-fishery/>.

⁶⁷ Higgins, "Cod Moratorium."

⁶⁸ Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organization, "Recent History - Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organization (NAFO)" (Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organization: n.d.), <https://www.nafo.int/About-us/History/recent-history-northwest-atlantic-fisheries-organization-nafo>

northern cod from 100% of the MSY to 60% in 1979, and DFO soon did the same to their own TACs.⁶⁹

Even though NAFO had established catch quotas for the Grand Banks regions, many countries regularly exceeded them. In 1985, after Spain and Portugal joined the EEC, or the European Economic Community (which would later become the European Union), they asked NAFO to raise TACs from 60% to 100% of the MSY. NAFO refused, and later the EEC opted out of the organization's conservation policies. The EEC “set its own quotas from 1986 onward at levels much higher than NAFO limits—the [EEC’s] harvest of cod, flounder, and redfish from 1986 to 1991 was five times the NAFO quota.”⁷⁰ The continual fishing of the Grand Banks by foreign vessels is cited as one of the biggest contributors to the severe decline of the cod population by the 1990s.

Ignoring Warning Signs

For a long time, the reality of the dwindling cod population was easy to miss because cod migrate through through different areas of the ocean, so while some sectors failed to reach quotas one year, the cod would often return the next year. Thus, the failure of a few sectors was not seen as a big threat to the fishing industry and was instead blamed on these migratory patterns.⁷¹ When almost all of the sectors around Newfoundland failed to reach their quotas in the late 1980s, many still assumed it was the result of cod migrations, and that the cod would be back eventually. This is part of why it took so long for people to realize the truth: the fish weren’t migrating elsewhere, they were simply being caught up before they could repopulate.

⁶⁹ Higgins, “Cod Moratorium.”

⁷⁰ Higgins, “Cod Moratorium.”

⁷¹ Kurlansky, Mark, *Cod: A Biography of the Fish That Changed the World* (Penguin Books, 1999).

In the decade after the 200-mile EEZ was established and the resources for the exclusive Canadian fisheries were expanded, Canada claimed that their fishing industry was prospering and more profitable for the economy. After all, the US market could absorb all the surplus cod even as the national catch rose exponentially, so the Canadian government was keen to keep expanding the industry.⁷² This claim, however, did not capture the whole story; the inshore fisheries in Newfoundland were still not catching nearly as much cod as the national catches were implying. The inshore fishermen theorized that the offshore Canadian fishing fleets took up all the cod before they had a chance to migrate inshore to spawn. The local inshore fishermen of Newfoundland were up against the “fishermen’s union, the trawler workers, the seafood companies, and the government.”⁷³ The DFO ignored their complaints.

Eventually, the Newfoundland Inshore Fisheries Association (NIFA) was founded, and in 1989 they decided to sue the government in the hopes of an injunction against bottom dragging and claimed that DFO wasn’t following environmental assessments. But Canada was too ecstatic about the cod stocks, and the court ruled against an injunction, “saying it would have a negative impact on the economy and force National Sea’s plant in St. John’s to close down for several months a year.”⁷⁴ Their cod catch grew every year after 1977, and the government spent most of their efforts on expanding the cod fishing industry and finding new markets for their surplus of catch, instead of addressing the warning signs of the cod population decline.

DFO also acted in contradiction to its own conservation policies and regulations for many years. Since 1977, DFO policy stated that it used strategy $F_{0.1}$ in assessing cod populations and creating their TAC levels.⁷⁵ $F_{0.1}$ is the fishing level at which an additional unit of fishing effort

⁷² Ibid.

⁷³ Ibid.

⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁵ Steele, D.H., R. Anderson and J.M. Green, “The Managed Commercial Annihilation of Northern Cod” Newfoundland Studies 8, no. 1 (1992): 35-68, 45.

from the fishery's natural state would increase the total catch by 10%.⁷⁶ This rate was thought to maximize long-term yield while considering the reproduction rates of the stocks. However, despite having this policy, DFO developed its fishing regulations with many other factors in mind, including economic considerations, so their TAC levels were sometimes higher than the $F_{0.1}$ rate.

In 1989, the Canadian Atlantic Fisheries Scientific Advisory Committee (CAFSAC), a peer-review committee for DFO science experts, concluded that previous optimistic assessments of the cod population were miscalculated, and the actual F value each year since 1981 was over double the 0.1 rate.⁷⁷ They recommended the TAC for 1989 be set at a more conservative amount of 125,000 tonnes, but the Minister of DFO chose to set it at 235,000 tonnes “in order not to disrupt the industry.”⁷⁸

Later that year, the Northern Cod Review Panel was put together to review the cod stock assessment methods from previous years, and a report was sent to the minister in 1990 citing many previous faults and miscalculations that imminently threaten the survival of the cod fisheries. They found that fishing rates had indeed soared to well over the desired level, and the spawning stock had failed to grow as rapidly as they had predicted. They recommended that the TAC levels should be lowered so that the fishing rate would reduce to the $F_{0.1}$ level, allowing the spawning stock to repopulate more.⁷⁹ However, while accepting many of their other recommendations in the report, the minister again refused this recommendation to lower the TAC.

⁷⁶ Harris, Leslie, “Independent Review Of The State Of The Northern Cod Stock” (1990), <https://waves-vagues.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/library-bibliotheque/114276.pdf>.

⁷⁷ Canada Government, “About the Canadian Science Advisory Secretariat (CSAS)” (2020), <https://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/csas-sccs/about-sur/index-eng.html>.

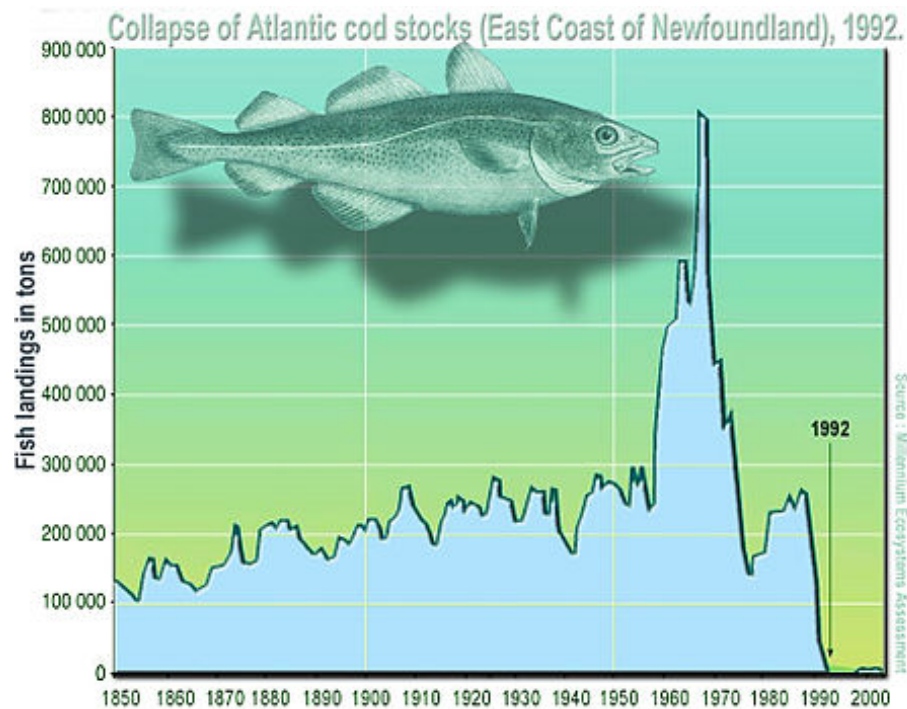
⁷⁸ Steele, “The Managed Commercial Annihilation,” 52.

⁷⁹ Harris, “Independent Review,” 103.

So, not only was DFO's main policy for proper conservational fishing ineffective and not being followed, assessments showing its failure were either miscalculated or ignored, causing the continual Canadian overfishing of cod in the 1970s and 1980s to go mostly unnoticed. If these assessments had been properly reviewed beforehand and a lower rate of fishing mortality had been maintained, the current yields would not have gotten so low.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

No More Cod



Graph showing the volume of cod caught from 1850–2000.⁸⁰

Now, at the beginning of 1992, the lack of cod in the northeast Atlantic is very much apparent. Overexploitation of the once-rich northern cod fisheries in the Grand Banks and surrounding regions has taken its toll. Those who fish inshore on Newfoundland's coasts have noticed the severe shortage of northern cod for several years now, but by this time the situation is so dire that even the big, offshore boats equipped with advanced fishing technology are

⁸⁰ Graph showing the rise and abrupt fall of Atlantic cod caught off the east coast of Newfoundland from 1850 to 2000. Minis707, "Atlantic cod stocks were severely overexploited in the 1970s and 1980s, leading to their abrupt collapse in 1992," 2024, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File%3AAtlanticcodstockswerd123.jpg>.

struggling to locate and catch any cod. All sectors are failing to reach quotas; in 1991 the total annual catch of northern cod in the 2J3KL regions (containing much of the Grand Banks, including the Nose) was 172,000 tonnes, short of the Total Allowable Catch (TAC) quota by 20,000 tonnes.⁸¹

The optimistic goals for the rapid growth of the Canadian cod industry did not go as planned, and the stock has dropped much lower than expected. The province of Newfoundland, where 90% of these jobs are located, has suffered greatly. Several fish processing plants have had to shut down from lack of stock, and many more are at risk of losing their jobs if the fisheries continue to decline. This is especially hard on these smaller operations and independent fishermen, many of whom had invested in new boats and equipment over the last decade because of the projected growth of Canadian catches.⁸²

And not only has cod seriously declined due to the prolonged overfishing and use of advanced technology and bottom dragging, other species that have long been a part of Newfoundland's fishing industry, such as haddock and redfish, have also seen population decline.⁸³ Scientists are warning that the overfishing of one specific species in an area can disturb the balance of the ecosystem and affect the relationships between the different species. For example, if crab or shrimp fisheries were widely caught as a replacement for cod, this would have a negative effect on the cod biomass, because they are food sources for cod.⁸⁴ Thus, it is integral to consider the entire ecosystem when considering the survival of the cod fisheries.

⁸¹ Mateo, Ivan and James Baird, *Atlantic Cod (Gadus morhua) 2J3KL – Pre-Assessment Report for MSC Certification* (SAI Global: Ireland, 2016), http://awsassets.wwf.ca/downloads/2j3kl_cod_pre_assessment_final.pdf.

⁸² Steele, D.H., R. Anderson and J.M. Green, "The Managed Commercial Annihilation of Northern Cod" *Newfoundland Studies* 8, no. 1 (1992): 35-68.

⁸³ Harris, "Independent Review," 43.

⁸⁴ Harris, "Independent Review," 27.

The current estimations for the future of the cod species (if the fisheries continue operating as they are) are bleak. DFO scientists warn that the current level of fishing must be lowered immediately to ensure that the spawning biomasses of cod survive.⁸⁵

State of DFO

In 1991, John Crosbie was appointed the new Minister of Fisheries and Oceans. Crosbie, a member of the Progressive Conservative Party, had previously worked in several federal positions such as Minister of Finance or in the Ministry of International Trade.⁸⁶ With new leadership and a long-unnoticed disaster looming on the horizon, Crosbie and DFO have to act in order to save the northern cod population from extinction while also considering the socio-economic impacts of limiting the fisheries. At this time, DFO is undergoing intense pressure from all sides. Scientists and researchers have found that previous cod regulations and assessments were inaccurate, and that the fishing levels need to be lowered urgently to save the cod stocks.⁸⁷

However, there is also pressure from Newfoundland fishermen and smaller processing plants that mainly rely on the inshore fisheries, as well as from large vertically-integrated corporations with big fishing fleets, that want the government to promote their own interests and keep the fisheries alive.

DFO also has to deal with other jurisdictions, such as the Newfoundland government or the Newfoundland Inshore Fisheries Association (NIFA), that often have conflicting goals for the cod fisheries. The government recognizes that with the expansion of the cod industry and

⁸⁵ Harris, Leslie, "Independent Review Of The State Of The Northern Cod Stock" (1990), <https://waves-vagues.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/library-bibliotheque/114276.pdf>.

⁸⁶ Baker, Melvin, "John Crosbie" (The Canadian Encyclopedia, 2008), <https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/john-crosbie>.

⁸⁷ Steele, "The Managed Commercial Annihilation," 53.

conflicting interests between the different parts of the industry, dealing with this problem will require a complex solution.

Economic and Cultural Considerations



*A fishing trawler in port.*⁸⁸

The history of Newfoundland has been permanently tied to cod. In fact, the practice of fishing for cod was so lucrative that Newfoundland became the number one global exporter of salt cod, the production of which gave the island a population of over 100,000 by the middle of the 1800s.⁸⁹ These sorts of developments reflect the central role that cod has in the cultural and economic ecosystem of Newfoundland: on the island, cod is simply termed “fish,” while all other fish are referred to by their particular name.⁹⁰ This economic significance was made clear in the mid to late 1800s, as by the 1880s, over 200,000 people occupied over 6,000 miles of coastline

⁸⁸ “Trawler at Quay Free Stock Photo,” PublicDomainPictures.net, accessed August 22, 2025, <https://www.publicdomainpictures.net/en/view-image.php?image=492813&picture=trawler-at-quay>.

⁸⁹ Ibid.

⁹⁰ Ibid.

in Newfoundland; 90% of the male work force on the island was committed to fishing and 90% of the colony's exports were fish, mostly salted cod.⁹¹

Because of the lucrative and relatively easy business of catching cod, the population of Newfoundland kept increasing as more people moved there to make a living fishing. However, even though the population had about a 60% increase from 1900 to 1950, the annual average cod landings stayed the same, creating more competition between Newfoundland fishers.

The population of Newfoundland steadily increased through most of the 20th century, and by 1991 the province had a population of about 568,000.⁹² In 1992, over 30,000 residents of Newfoundland worked in the fishing industry, about 5% of the entire population.⁹³ While the rest of Canada and other countries benefited from the prosperity of the offshore Grand Banks cod fisheries, the quality of life of Newfoundland fishermen did not improve much, even though they were the most reliant on the fishing industry.

Economic Dependence

Any decrease in fishing activity throughout Newfoundland's history has always been tied to an economic downturn as well. For example, when the Newfoundland government undertook programs to increase economic diversity in the early 20th century, there was a subsequent fall in fishing activity, down to the point that only 24% of exports from Newfoundland in 1940 were fish. This decrease was especially harmful to smaller outposts and settlements in Newfoundland that had access to fishing as their only possibly viable economic activity.

⁹¹ Ibid.

⁹² Statistics Canada, "Visual Census – Population and dwelling counts, Newfoundland and Labrador" (Ottawa: 2012), http://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2011/dp-pd/vc-rv/index.cfm?Lang=ENG&TOPIC_ID=1&GEOCODE=10.

⁹³ Steele, "The Managed Commercial Annihilation," 35.

However, while underinvestment in fishing has left certain regions of Newfoundland economically underserved, overextending in fishing can likewise cause issues. This was seen in the 1970s, as the fishing industry in Newfoundland was modernized, specifically through the use of “trawlers” that could scoop up huge numbers of fish. The fishing industry’s modernization, while improving earnings for the fishermen, has placed intense pressure on cod stocks and helped induce a free fall in cod population. However, while the government tried to make new regulatory efforts in the late 1970s, they had to capitulate to industry interests due to lack of industry success in other sectors.⁹⁴

These two scenarios reflect the potential issue associated with tipping the scale too far in one direction or in another direction, as while trying to save the cod stocks by limiting fishing activity may be initially effective, the economic hardship that this will cause for large parts of Newfoundland’s population, paired with loss of culturally significant parts of Newfoundland’s heritage that have been built off of fishing, will have lasting impacts. However, allowing for unfettered fishing activity will simply exacerbate current losses. Finding the proper balance to address all concerns and achieve equilibrium such that fishing culture can both thrive while not eliminating the rest of the cod stocks will be deeply important.

While other places can afford to lose the cod industry, Newfoundland cannot. As the Northern Cod Review Panel stated in their 1990 report, “The vast majority of the Newfoundland coastal communities that were built upon a foundation of cod are still utterly dependent upon that resource for their continued existence.”⁹⁵ Put simply, if the cod go, so too go the codfishing towns.

⁹⁴ Ibid.

⁹⁵ Harris, “Independent Review,” 1.



A fisherman hauls in a cod trap off the coast of Newfoundland.⁹⁶

Issues to Address

This committee needs to decide whether to institute a “moratorium” on cod fishing, meaning closing down the cod fisheries for a set amount of time to allow the cod stocks to recover. This means that all inshore and offshore fishing operations would be shut down, allowing for the best chance for the cod populations to return to a safe fishing level as quickly as possible. It also means that most people working in the cod industry would immediately and indefinitely be out of a job. This includes all the Newfoundland fishermen in the inshore

⁹⁶ Meintzer, Phillip, “An Atlantic cod harvester retrieving an experimental Norwegian style cod pot, following an overnight deployment, off the Southern coast of Fogo Island, Newfoundland, Canada,” 2016, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:NOR_Cod_Pot_-_Phillip_Meintzer_-_Aug_2016.jpg

fisheries, and the many other Newfoundlanders employed in fish processing plants or otherwise reliant on the industry for income.

The committee needs to consider the backlash to the moratorium and what further issues it could present. For example, you may need to develop plans to provide economic assistance to those displaced by the moratorium, or find another source of income to replace cod, such as crab or shrimp fishing. You will also likely need a strategy to prevent illegal fishing, which could impede on the recovery efforts. The duration of this moratorium would need to be decided based on scientific estimates and advice about the cod stocks' recovery process, and would require regular reevaluations of the recovery progress to assess this moratorium and possibly extend its duration.

If this committee decides not to institute a moratorium, heavy regulations on the fisheries would be necessary if there is any hope of preventing complete extirpation (regional extinction) of cod in the northwest Atlantic. This would also mean maintaining a careful balance between recovering the cod stocks and maintaining the socio-economic stability of Newfoundland, which is heavily reliant on cod.

For this committee to create an effective solution for this crisis, there are several issues that your solution must address, including:

- The demands of both the inshore fishing community and offshore operations
- The economic importance of the cod industry for Newfoundland and Canada and the potential impacts from the closure or collapse of the fisheries
- The downstream effects of tens of thousands of Newfoundland families losing their only source of income, which could threaten the very existence of many small fishing towns

- The management of licenses for commercial fishing and the enforcement of potential new fishing regulations
- The scientific advice on rebuilding the cod species and the urgency needed for preserving the cod population
- The consequences of the crisis or potential solutions on the other marine life in the Grand Banks and on its entire ecosystem
- Relations with NAFO and other countries to ensure cod stocks aren't being overfished outside the Canadian EEZ, which would impede on conservation efforts

DELEGATE POSITIONS

A Quick Note: How to Use These

Below are the character biographies and before you go diving in we just wanted to give a little explanation as to what the point of them is. First of all, *you are not expected to read them all, only your own*. While it is certainly encouraged to try and read other ones, it is important to note that one of the main skills of Model UN is learning how to effectively communicate and understand others through debate. Talking to your fellow delegates to learn about their character in the moment is a great way to do this (and also just fun). Second, it is also really important to note that these biographies are, at their core, meant to just be jumping off points. You are not expected to follow them word for word, rather you are supposed to merely capture the “essence” of the character. At the end of the day, this whole thing is about you. It is only with your creativity that this can truly come to life.

Government Officials

Desmond Harris, Associate Minister of Fisheries

Have you ever needed to take orders from a committee? It is utter chaos. Having to listen and respond to multiple different people at any given time is a total nightmare. Not to mention the fact that people always contradict themselves. One person’s order is overridden by another, who is ultimately trumped by a third. It is perhaps the single least time-effective manner to do and things, and Desmond Harris absolutely despises it.

Born the son of a career politician, Harris is more than familiar with seeing precisely how things don’t get done. Harris’ mother always had big dreams. She saw the Newfoundland

government as a means to achieving them. She was appointed Minister of Recreation with the hopes of bringing about a complete overhaul of the parks system. She wished to remake the park spaces into nicer areas in which people would want to stay. She had detailed plans which, as one might have expected, never came to pass. Her legislation was chewed up and spit out in the legislature, as it came under fire from the local and federal governments. The federal law says you can't build a park here. This local ordinance says this industrial plant actually *can* dump into this river. It was a total mess, and the park's plan, along with his mother's dream, was a total failure.

Going into government himself, Harris did everything he could to avoid her fate. Running for a federal post, Harris hoped to ensure that his dreams could not be superseded. The current cod crisis, at least for Harris, is something to have been completely expected. Nobody knows what the rules are! With different regulations in Newfoundland, Nova Scotia, and even Prince Edward Island (not to mention the discrepancies between the Atlantic and Pacific) it is near impossible to figure out who you are supposed to report to. A national problem requires a national solution; it is thus up to Harris to produce effective national rules devoid from the chaos of provincial and local squabbles.

James Orchard, Deputy Secretary of State for External Affairs

Isn't there something so great about those awkward moments of silence in a conversation? Those times in which both parties seem unsure of the proper etiquette in continuing. Those times in which both people need to pause for a moment to gauge the complex conversational calculus being done by the other. Those moments in which the entire flow of speech or even the flow of an entire relationship can be upended by just a single poorly thought

word. While most people, rightfully so, would scoff at the idea of taking pleasure in moments like these, James Orchard is not one of them.

Deeply analytical, and with a side passion of learning psychology, Orchard is fascinated by the intricacies of human relations and communications. Although he had never been particularly good at it, Orchard sees even the most basic forms of “chatting” to be deeply complex and strategic games. When a friend asks another friend to go see a movie, there are important elements of interest aggregation and leverage to be discovered. Why might one party not want to see a movie? What conditions are hidden within the (metaphorical) fine print of the offer? How can a temporary session here lead to changes in the relationship as a whole? Given the correct lens, any interaction can be gamified. And, according to Orchard, any game can be won. It is this deep analysis of miniature human details that has made Orchard not just powerful on the debate floor, but also an indispensable secretary of state. It was only right that such a mind be placed into the world of foreign policy where Orchard can level up his games of social deduction to a global scale.

Though he is typically concerned with wars and alliances, the situation in Newfoundland has proven interesting enough to draw Orchard’s attention. With so many different interests at stake, such an interest is only nature after all. Of course, Orchard’s formal deployment to the region had come to respond to the large international interests in the cod market. Rash and poorly thought out decisions could have powerful ripple effects through the global stage. Much to the displeasure of many, foreign corporations, outside trade partners, and even political allies hold a power stake in Canada’s decision-making process. It is up to Orchard to ensure that the committee is able to see the entire game and not limit itself to domestic issues.

Joseph Milligan, Deputy Minister of State for Small Businesses and Tourism

What should one do with paradise? Should you destroy it, stripping it for parts and profits, or should you cherish and protect it at all costs? Joseph Milligan much prefers the latter. Paradise is rare and fragile. You cannot simply destroy what is so special because of a bottom line or a desire to exploit a resource. Paradise is meant to be experienced; it is not meant to be used. Paradise is meant to be one of those very special places on earth in which all are welcome to come, see its glory, and support it. Although you can never be too sure of anything, having visited the island, Milligan is sure that Newfoundland is paradise.

Being a rather unconventional member of parliament, Milligan never intended to go into government. Instead Milligan hoped to follow his passion for creativity and go to art school. He loved nature and harbored a deep desire to be able to capture that magic on a canvas. Milligan went all around Canada, finding breathtaking spots and painting them. However, most of those canvases never made it past a week in Milligan's collection. In truth, he hated his work. Despite his love for art, he could not bear to see his pieces fail to capture the real majesty of the natural world. His work just could not be the real thing. Following this realization, Milligan knew that he needed to change his approach. If he couldn't bring paradise to people, he would just need to bring people to paradise. He would run and win his parliamentary race in the Wild Rose riding of Alberta, being appointed Deputy Minister for Tourism soon enough.

Milligan has been deeply grieved by the modern fishing industry in Newfoundland. How could people spoil such a beautiful place with such ugly machinery, terrible smells, and horrid business? *Why can't they just let paradise be paradise?* Milligan has been preaching for years in parliament about the value of the country's greenspaces (both their emotional impacts and the not-so-insignificant boon of wealthy tourists) to little avail. However, with the fishing industry in

a weakened state, perhaps this is the perfect chance. Maybe—just maybe—Milligan will be able to bring back beauty (and some tourist-backed prosperity) to this former slice of paradise.

Ranald Quail, Commissioner of the Canadian Coast Guard

Rules are nothing without careful and effective enforcement. One could spend decades in a committee debating and fabricating the best laws, but they will ultimately amount to nothing if they lack the proper execution. That is something that politicians simply don't seem to understand: ideas alone can't do anything. If you want to make a real change in the world, you don't become a lawmaker in an office, you get your hands dirty on the ground. Or, for Ranald Quail, out on the ocean.

While perhaps not as luxurious as others, Quail's career started early atop a lifeguard's chair at a public pool. Earning what should be an illegally low amount of money, Quail spent the summer's days laying down the brutal laws of the pool. No running on the deck; no diving; and for goodness sake, no animals in the water. While those rules were easy enough to enforce, the pool's ban on eating and drinking near it wasn't. Of course, people couldn't just walk in the front gate with food; they needed to adapt. In order to thwart the community pool's regulations, people worked to develop complex systems of smuggling to sneak their illegal items onto the premises. Quail himself, determined to keep his job, worked hard to foil these minor plots (in one case, Quail located a small hole in a brick wall which children were using to sneak in their favorite candy bars). Although the job mobility of a lifeguard is rather restricted, Quail's dedication would take him far. Following some hard work during the Welland Canal's expansion Quail would land himself in a good position.

In 1984 Quail was appointed the Commissioner of the Canadian Coast Guard. Acting as, in many ways, the lifeguard of the Canadian nation, Quail would work hard seeking to save those

in need and enforce the rules on an otherwise lawless sea. Although perhaps not the most obvious choice, with talks of regulations in the fishing industry on the horizon, Quail has been called to this committee. No matter what decisions the committee eventually ends on, it is important that those rules are effectively enforced. Environmental laws will hold no impact if illegal operations—perhaps even cod smuggling—could take place.

Walter Carter, Newfoundland Minister of Fisheries

There is no greater threat to progress than micromanagement. Having every single piece of work you do scrutinized is perhaps the best way to ensure that a project is not finished on time. Worse yet, those who micromanage almost always fall under the category of a “nonexpert.” This means that progress is halted even more, as your work is being criticized and slowed down by someone that has no clue as to what they are doing. It is this kind of management that, unfortunately for him, Walter Carter has a great deal of experience with.

In contrast to his modern day hands-off approach to management, Carter began his political life with the strong belief that effective rule comes from the top. Only when the boss was involved in the work could a good job get done. It was this philosophy that encouraged Carter to get his first legislative post in the federal House of Commons. From there, he went on to serve in a variety of ministerial positions, where he would be a very hands-on leader. There are even times in which Carter would travel hundreds of miles to inspect provincial offices in person. Of course, productivity in these offices was typically low, as most of the workers were too busy writing progress reports to actually make progress. It was only after Carter received a very strong and colorfully worked letter from one of his inferiors that he would grasp the true inefficiency of his methods. Being too far up the governmental chain of command, Carter found himself largely unaware and unable to effectively govern. Determined to make a change and

actually make progress, Carter would resign to join the Newfoundland legislature (where work is actually done).

Currently the provincial Minister of Fisheries, Carter is closer to the ground and able to work with more efficiency. This is at least the case for now. The poor cod stocks have garnered national attention and thus has drawn the eyes of the federal government. With talks of greater federal oversight, the Newfoundland government could find itself in an even worse situation: being micromanged by a disconnected national government that can only make the crisis worse. At the end of the day, nobody knows Newfoundland like those that actually live in Newfoundland. Carter will need to stand up for his province's interests and ensure that the federal government respects its boundaries.

Norman Simms, Associate Minister of Culture of Newfoundland

There is so much more to life than what meets the eye. Hidden deep within every crevice of society is emotion, passion, and history. Every single action, even those day-to-day ones which seem minute and meaningless, make up the compositions of the most meaningful stories you can read. It is in the composition of these stories, then, in which a people, a nation, and a culture is ultimately founded. Collecting and actually recording these stories is of course no easy task, but that difficulty has never come to Norman Simms' mind.

A historian at heart, Simms has always held a passion for understanding the past. After all, it is only through the understanding of the past that one can understand the present and work to build the future. While learning about ancient wars and battles was certainly colorful and enjoyable, it was not the flashy element of history for which Simms fell in love with. Instead it was the deeply personal element, how history is not just the telling of the past but rather the construction of the present. In particular, Simms became mystified about how history works to

construct identity and ultimately define people. Humans are merely the combination of everything that came before them, after all. This love took Simms first, of course, to a museum in which he could live with history directly. After that, it was only fitting that he go into government and find his post as the minister of culture.

This position has given him an important role, especially in current times. So much is based around the land's history of fishing. The industry is not only engrained economically within the province; it is also a significant piece of its identity. With environmental issues and threats to the operations, this identity finds itself in danger. It is up to Simms, then, to be a good historian and keep the record straight.

Lise Bacon, Deputy Premier of Québec

The most generous thing a person can do in life is to help their community. In a world that is full of self interest and pure individualism, it has become increasingly easy to forget those around you. Familiar faces transform themselves into strangers as people opt to merely inhabit their own little bubble ignoring those around them. For that reason especially, it is important to strengthen the bonds of your community. It was this passion for bringing communities together that brought Lise Bacon into politics.

Québécois through and through, Bacon was born in the relatively small town of Salaberry-de-Valleyfield. From a young age, she proved to be very charitable and deeply committed to the town. Her neighbors often recount the story of her as a teenager walking five miles up the road during a deadly snowstorm to help a neighbor whose truck had broken down.

With a devotion to her community so strong it was only a matter of time until Bacon went into public service. Following a brief stint as a judge, Bacon would join the Québec legislature. Throughout her long time within the chambers, she would serve the people of Québec in more

ministerial positions than almost any other. It was this dedication that ultimately earned her her 1988 appointment as Deputy Premier.

Although the main focus of the recent cod crisis has been in Newfoundland, Québec holds a significant stake in the issue. Like Newfoundland, Québec's Atlantic coast is home to many fishing operations, which bring the province significant revenue. Legislation passed by the federal government could have huge impacts on their operations; more importantly, any federal regulations could come to overstep the government's boundaries, upsetting the provincial-federal balance of power. Québec is a proud and fiercely independent province which enjoys significant sovereignty within the Federation. Bacon's main purpose in this committee is to ensure that those boundaries remain in place while not losing sight of the communities she swears to protect.

Arthur Cowen, Deputy Mayor of Saint John's

Saint John's is a major city. Within the municipal conference, that statement often draws a significant amount of laughs. Given the monsters of Toronto, Montreal, and Calgary with their own massive footprints and influence, it is often easy to see Saint John's as almost irrelevant (most don't even really know that it exists). After all, in the political game, population is everything. The bigger you are the more tourists, federal funds, and respect you get. While Saint John's influence might be limited now, that does not mean that things can't change. Arthur Cowen sees this kind of "irrelevance" as merely temporary.

Growing up in the Newfoundland capital, Cowen is a complete native. Just walking down the street, he can point out the names of every building, tell you who lives in it now, who lived in it 50 years ago, and even the name of its architect. As a young man, Cowen worked within the city's tourism department, giving tours to visitors. While he loved showing guests around his home, he always took issue with the fact that these guests never really appreciated the city as

much as he did. It was only the bigger cities that got respect, while Saint John's was often cast out. Cowen would not let this stand. Cowen wanted—no, *needed*—to take a more active role in the city's fate. With a fiery campaign to grow the city's standing in the nation, Cowen was duly elected to the post of deputy mayor.

Of course, ideas are not always perfectly transformed into reality. The issues within the cod industry might present a certain disaster for Cowen's plan. With so many people employed in fisheries, a significant portion of the city's population are tied to the continuing of those operations. Should these operations halt or stop in any meaningful capacity, Saint John's could experience immense emigration as people follow the jobs out. This is a nightmare that Cowen simply cannot allow. He loves the city too much to see it shrivel, and must do everything he can to make good on his promise of turning Saint John's into a major city.

Corporate Representatives

Bruce Graham, Operations Manager and Corporate Envoy, Fishery Products, Ltd.

If you don't keep up, you get left behind. Take that as a rule of business, politics, and life. If your head is not in the game and you're not paying attention, then getting anything done is impossible. You can't just look at the cutting edge; you have to *be* the cutting edge if you want to win. And there is nobody in this world that wants to win more than Bruce Graham.

Growing up in the tiny Newfoundland fishing town of Brigus, Graham was more than used to the slow life. He remembers seeing his father go out every day on his tiny row boat with his single short rod. Graham would always watch in horror as he saw his father returning home with just a tiny bucket half-filled with fish. Graham knew better than to work like them. With a bigger boat, a crew, and a proper net, a modern fisherman could catch easily in an hour what his

father could just barely catch in a month. As he grew older, Graham only became more and more disappointed in the way that his father was stuck in the past.. As soon as he was old enough, Graham moved away from home and joined the Newfoundland-based Fishery Products Limited. With ships larger, freezers colder, and nets longer than Graham could have imagined in his old village, he fell in love with the company instantly.

Working his way up from a deckhand, Graham would become more and more involved in the company. Always keeping an eye on the most recent innovations, Graham works to ensure that the company is always staying ahead of the competition. With the most up-to-date equipment, Graham—now operations manager—has come to make it so that the company can sail farther, store more, and harvest deeper than anyone else in the world. Of course, innovation is not for everyone. Modern techniques have recently come under fire, and there are even talks of technology bans. Graham cannot stand this, and as such has come to Ottawa to make his stand for innovation and progress at all costs.

Evelyn Buchanan, Corporate Envoy, Cooke Aquaculture

Perhaps the most ignorant thing someone can do is to not look towards the future. This piece of advice, which seems to be so fundamental and basic to human existence, is so often overlooked it can be painful to see. Like a lumberjack with no idea as to where his tree might fall, the world operates “in the now” with no care as to the impacts of those actions just a few years down the line. Evelyn Buchanan cannot stand this obvious blindness in human nature.

Buchanan has always been a very methodical planner; working out on a ranch you have to be. Figuring out when to place the periods of grazing, milking, and butchering takes an immense amount of mental capital to do right. Too much of any one thing and the grass could all get eaten up or the supply lines get choked up—and the profits get evaporated. Sustainability,

then, was the name of the game, at least for Buchanan. Of course, the farm life is a rather simple one, and Buchanan had far more planned for herself. Having saved up for years, when the time was right, Buchanan sold the old ranch and moved from Newfoundland to New Brunswick. There she would join a, then start-up, company that could move her (not to mention the world) into the future.

Founded just a few years prior to her arrival, Cooke Aquaculture was an innovative idea at its infancy. In an industry in which massive corporations would harvest millions of tons of fish from thousands of miles of ocean, Cooke focused on the little things. The Aquaculture firm had worked to develop means of effective fish farming using smaller artificial bodies of water to provide an effective breeding ground for fish. Unlike traditional methods, this production is forward thinking and focused on sustainability (not to mention the significantly reduced labor costs).

The news out of Newfoundland has just come to prove Buchanan's thoughts correct: the current fishing industry is unsustainable. Canada is chewing up and spitting out fish like there's no tomorrow. The only issue is that tomorrow is not on the horizon anymore; it's right here. This environmental crisis, of course, brings with it a very meaningful opportunity. Although Cooke Aquaculture is currently focused on salmon cultivation, perhaps Buchanan can tip the scales a bit and start plotting out a long-term plan for the future of Newfoundland's cod, too.

Samantha Ramsay, Regional Manager and Corporate Envoy, Hannaford Brothers Co.

The customer is always right. That is perhaps the single most fundamental rule in retail. Whatever the customer wants they get, and whoever can get it to them the quickest gets paid. Customer satisfaction, not shareholder dividends or revenue, is the only metric that matters in

judging a successful enterprise. With a dashing smile, optimistic attitude, and witty (but never mean) charm, Samantha Ramsay always ensures that customers always come back for more.

This lesson of commerce came to her not during her MBA but on the sidewalk right outside of her childhood home in Portland, Maine, USA. Disappointed that she did not get an EasyBake Oven for her birthday, the young Ramsay did what anyone in her shoes would do: open a lemonade stand. Of course, lemonade stands in the suburbs make for quite the cutthroat market. With kids from all over selling their own sugar-infused beverages, it's almost impossible to gain a substantial market share. After all, lemonade is lemonade; there is not much you can do to make it better. It was here that Ramsay showed her entrepreneurial spirit. Pulling out an old box of art supplies, she worked to turn her stand from a boring cookiecutter storefront into a masterpiece. Selling not just lemonade, but a good shopping experience, Ramsay crushed the market and secured the needed oven funds in just two days.

This focus on the customer has taken Ramsay far. As a young adult, she took a job at the local Hannaford Grocer, and within just a few years her enthusiasm had taken her up the rank to regional manager. With her trademark attention to detail, she had worked to dramatically increase customer satisfaction—and sales. Despite this success, a potential threat looms on the horizon. Customers want variety, and with the recent supply shocks of cod, Hannafords has been forced to have empty shelves and leave consumer wishes unsatisfied. Should the situation continue to get worse, the company could face major issues. For that reason, Ramsay has been sent up to Canada, where she will ensure that Hannafords will be able to meet customer demand.

Jackson Gagnon, Owner, Mount Pearl Cannery Plant, Ltd.

Efficiency is everything. Time is certainly money, and every millisecond matters. Running an effective operation is more than simply checking boxes and counting inventory; it's a

science, in which every aspect can be optimized and perfected. Being the owner and manager of the Mount Pearl Cannery Plant, Jackson Gagnon sees this better than everyone.

As a young man, Gagnon could often be aptly described in a single word: lazy. He was never one to work long hours or wake up early in the morning. He was certainly not one of those “library dwellers” in university who spend hours upon hours doing seemingly nothing whilst being debilitatingly busy. No, Gagnon was never one to spend any more time on a project than he needed. To an outsider, this view of Gagnon may simply look like an example of sloth and unproductivity, however this is simply not the case. Hidden behind this seeming desire to be lazy and do nothing lies a deep and inherent need for efficiency. Gagnon did not do nothing, he just did everything faster than anyone else.

When faced with a problem, Gagnon’s first instinct is to search for the best and quickest way through it. Good enough is suboptimal; only the best will do. It was this need to get everything done faster, easier, and better that transformed Gagnon from the “laid-back student” to a powerful commercial force. Following graduation, Gagnon would take out masterfully timed loans in order to open up his cannery plant in Mount Pearl. On the factory floor, as should be expected, Gagnon is a ruthless manager, rooting out inefficiencies and ensuring maximum production. So long as things are optimal, Gagnon will have no problems.

Unfortunately this has not been the case. Whilst the operation is still going well, disruptions of fish prices could throw it completely off-kilter. Even minor fluctuations could wreak havoc on Gagnon’s airtight operation. With loans soon coming due, it is paramount that Gagnon adapt and optimize to keep himself in business.

Calvin Anderson, Co-Owner, Ferryland Cod Co.

While it might be true that the big fish rules the pond, that is no reason to count out the little guys. Being small has its perks, of course. The lack of size allows for quick changes and pivots. When the big fish is struggling to shift its weight to turn, the small fish can zip behind it and grab the spoils. In fact, maybe that first statement isn't true: The small fish rule the pond, and the big fish are just too busy managing themselves to see it. This is a statement that Calvin Anderson can certainly get behind.

Growing up in Ferryland, a town with no more than 300 people, Anderson has long understood the feeling of being the little guy. He can count his high school graduating class on one hand and walk from one side of main street to the other in less than five minutes. With a population that low, it can sometimes be outclassed by a big wedding or a popular party; suffice it to say that everything is small in Ferryland. This all goes to justify the fact that when Anderson got his job at the local fishing company, he was promoted to co-owner almost instantly. With only a handful of employees, it would be hard for somebody not to have an owning stake.

The company was rather pitiful to be honest, but Anderson always saw its potential. In the old days, when you needed to row your boat and use a fishing rod, manpower was everything. However, recent technological changes have begun to shift the dynamic. Gillnets and longlines along with fancy new boats with powerful engines and sonar have served to be a force multiplier. What once needed another worker can now be done by a machine, allowing for hands to be freed up. Being a smaller operation, Ferryland was able to get involved in this fishing revolution before the big companies could get their heads around what was going on. Armed with the newest equipment, Anderson had been able to update the small operation into quite a formidable force.

However, not all advantages can be kept forever. Ferryland's relative success has been built on the company's ability to adapt to and exploit the power of new technology quickly. With discussion in the capital about the industry ongoing, it is becoming clear that modern fishing methods are at risk. Should technology be restricted, the company could lose the force multipliers it has been employing and turn back to the old ways (in which the big corporations would simply outclass it) Anderson is here in Ottawa to make sure that doesn't happen.

Johnathan Clipper, Engineer and Corporate Envoy, Eastern Shipbuilding Group

Balance is almost never easy, but is always essential for a job well done. From the bow to the stern, a ship must be perfectly weighted to float effortlessly in the water. Every person, piece of equipment, and even chair must be masterfully accounted for in order to ensure proper buoyancy and perfection every time. Anything less than this is a complete and total failure. It was this need of a careful eye and steady mind, along with the adrenaline of the pressure, that drew Johnathan Clipper to be a ship engineer.

Ever since he was a young boy, Clipper had longed to work on those behemoths of the sea. His father had long talked of his time in the merchant marine and how the allied war effort forced innovation on all levels of the ship making process. After a very boring tenure in high school (in which he only really cared for physics), Clipper found himself shipped off to, of all places, Florida for college. Clipper's mother in particular was deadset on escaping the Newfoundland cold, and saw college visits as the perfect excuse to do so. However, despite these well wishes, Clipper would not spend much time frolicking in the heat, as he much preferred taking to the library to study, learn, design, and dream. Hidden in his college dorm, Clipper tested his models in a small and questionably cleaned bathtub. Following his graduation,

Clippers followed his passion to the Florida-based Eastern Shipbuilding Group. Responsible for making some of the largest commercial vessels used on the open ocean, Clipper would be brought in to engineer some of the newest innovations in fishing trawlers.

He had been working at the firm for a few years when he was unexpectedly called into his superior's office. Hearing the news about cod stocks in Newfoundland, some noisy landlubbers had begun blaming the firm (and Clipper's handywork) for making ships that are responsible for overfishing and causing a so-called "environmental crisis." Such harsh and false claims, given the right audience, are sure to be dangerous to the company, and ultimately Clipper's position. Being a Newfoundland native, Clipper's boss found it imperative that he be sent to Ottawa to stand up for innovation and technological progress.

Gabriel del Pez, Regional Manager and Corporate Envoy, Pesquera Rodríguez S.A. Co.

There is nothing more beautiful to the human eye than something that has never been seen before. The unknown is an enigma in society being both endlessly sought after and deeply feared. We are scared of what we do not know but nevertheless come to seek it out. It was this great dichotomy of exploration and discovery that drew a young Gabriel del Pez to the ocean.

Born from a family of Basque fishermen (there is a legend that the Basque fishers of the early 1400s had actually first discovered Newfoundland in their coastal expeditions), Pez is more than comfortable manning a vessel. He can even recount numerous days as a boy when we would skip school to sneak onto his father's ship to just get a peek of the wide world that was out there. In school, he always dreamed of getting out of his small town and venturing out into the great unknown. In high school, when he was finally old enough, he dropped out, grabbed everything he could carry, and made his way to the coast.

There, he worked a few odd jobs on some pretty odd ships with some very odd crews, but he was never truly satisfied. Those tiny boats could only go so far. He wanted more; he needed adventure. With this hunger, he once more set out to chart his own path, this time coming to find the Pesquera Rodríguez S.A. Company. With a fleet of gargantuan vessels, Pez's new employer took fishermen out of Europe to Iceland and Canada where they could partake in the lucrative cod trade

Having worked at the company for years, Pez had slowly risen through the ranks. From just a lowly fisherman, he has now become one of the chief managers of the company's North Atlantic fishing operations. While this promotion was certainly something to celebrate, it did not come without strings attached. The Canadian population is becoming more and more focused on controlling the cod industry, with some even having the gall to blame foreign (completely legal!) operations for Canada's issues. With such backlash, it was only natural that Pez be sent to Canada to set the record straight and keep the vessels running.

Li YuWang, Manager of Partnerships and Corporate Envoy, FCF Co., Ltd.

Relationships are complicated. Even in the most perfect of matches, hidden interests, opinions, and goals work to ensure that nothing is ever concrete. There is always friction amongst friends, no matter how strong their bond seems. Conversely, taking on even the greatest adversaries, you can always find an element of connection between enemies. Relationships are thus not binary but rather fluid. They ebb and flow between hostility and friendliness. It was the complexity of bonds that brought Li YuWang into the business world.

As a student, Li was long fascinated by the real science of relationships. Starting, perhaps unexpectedly, in the field of biology, Li would spend most of her higher education in labs analyzing animals. In particular, her focus was on how adaptable animals were. Creatures that

were scared of each other one day might be indifferent the next. Even more interesting, the terms of predator and prey lose meaning as the complexity of the real world intervenes. A big fish will spare a small fish, provided that small fish can benefit the larger one in some other sense. Thus, cooperation is born out of competition.

It was this deep study of relationships that eventually led Li out of the lab and into the corporate office. Working with the Taiwan-based FCF Company, Li became the Manager of Partnership, in which she would construct conflict out of cooperation and cooperation out of conflict, founding relations in order to yield the firm the most benefit.

With a job title like this, Li's deployment to Canada should not be unexpected. Although FCF is primarily a tuna harvesting operation, it is very invested within the cod market. Cod is a substitute and thus competitor to tuna, making any economic shifts part of FCF's corporate interests. Likewise, being a fishing operation that makes extensive use of driftnets, longlines, and trawlers, FCF bears similar environmental regulations. The relationships are thus, like all are, complex. Damage to the cod industry could be a boon to FCF, but should Canada make regulations (which could be eventually adopted world wide) the company would existential threat. Thus FCF is in limbo, being both an adversary and ally of the cod industry. It will be up to Li to see how this can be balanced.

Academics and Intellectuals

Charlotte Price, Professor of Economics at Harvard University

It is very often the case that the most important things in the world are just simple. Be them the "complications" of the modern stock market to the ever fascinating relationship between a flock of birds and a household's bird feeder, Charlotte Price has made a career, quite a

great one at that, by merely pointing out the obvious. Those above situations represent markets (no matter how odd) in which the only proper regulation is none at all. In all honesty, who in their right mind is going to tell a bird that it is using its bird seeds suboptimally? Who is going to tell a stock trader that they know the options market better than them? And who is going to tell a fishing firm that they are doing business “incorrectly?”

From the very beginning, Price had always had a knack for pointing out this obvious fact of life: that people do best when left to their own interests. In her tiny Newfoundland high school, Price brilliantly planned the perfect prom by simply organizing the proper incentives and leaving people to their own devices (among other things using a laughably large container of animal crackers to incentivise students away from slacking on the job and stealing party snacks). From high school, Price would venture to the University of Toronto, where she would expand her formal training. Although she would occasionally need to debate and, in her own words, “destroy” her peers that failed to see the power of the free market, she was very much at home. Her intellect and savvy was near unmatched (in fact, her poor Econ 226 professor begged her to stay in Toronto for her PhD). Of course, you would only expect that kind intellectual prowess out of a newly minted Harvard Professor.

In all honesty, Price had forgotten about her Newfoundland heritage until she heard the news about the fishing industry. While she typically would ignore a story like this, the sheer ineptitude of all parties involved peaked her interest. There are serious people that are trying to make the government *even bigger than it already is*. When has the government ever solved anything? Taking just a surface look at the situation the answer seems to be quite clear to Price: the free market hasn’t failed anybody, people are just too stupid to know how to use it. With her return to Canada, perhaps it’s time for Professor Price to put class into session.

Dr. Lisa Trout, Marine Biologist, Newfoundland Cod Laboratory

There are few things in this world that are more delightfully confusing than nature. To make things even better, there is nowhere more fascinating than the ocean. From fish with silly lights on them to fish with deadly spikes on them, the ocean offers a perfect collection of bizarrely wonderful creatures. Even from her first words (perhaps babbling would be a more apt description) it was clear that Lisa Trout wanted to study it all.

Although quite paradoxically aquaphobic, Trout has dedicated the vast majority of her life to the study of Marine Biology. While terrified to actually jump into the water, Trout could spend hours within her university's laboratory analyzing the microscopic specimens within just a single drop of water. She wanted to know everything: What do these creatures eat? What kind of water do they fare the best in? What temperature do they prefer? How do they reproduce? Full of ambition and questions, Trout, during her graduation year, poured her heart out on a masterfully written grant application to study these microscopic creatures in a depth never before seen. She was full of emotion when she handed in her proposal and was even more full of emotion when she was told that she was denied the grant. In a mania that was brought about by equal parts having her dreams crushed and needing money for food, Trout scrambled to apply to any Marine Biology lab she could.

Following a dreadful interview process, Trout was brought onboard to a small Newfoundland lab studying, of all things, cod eggs. Far from living the dream, Trout has, unwillingly, spent years becoming one of the foremost experts on the fish and, in particular, the cod reproductive process. While at first Trout simply saw this research as simply a means to an end, with the recent news about the fishing industry it has become apparent that the world could use a person that actually knows at least a little bit about the fish everyone is debating about.

Perhaps it's time for Trout to reignite her curiosity and leverage her expertise towards making a real difference in the world.

Professor Edward Fisch, Environmental Science Professor, McGill University

It is most often the case that those who are most harmed by a certain issue are those that are, in reality, the least related to it. Environmental damages are not merely isolated to a single species or region; they flow downstream, a river of the poor innocent bystanding plants and animals reaping havoc in its wake. Knocking out a predator, accidentally or on purpose, makes the prey more plentiful, and puts *their* prey at risk. The environment is far more complex than just a single point. Edward Fisch knows this idea well; evidently few others do.

Making up one of the most unexpected carrier shifts imaginable, Fisch began his work as an investment manager. With an original education in economics and social science, Fisch had a knack for being able to connect dots that few others even knew existed. The increase of the price of oil, after all, trickles down to cars and eventually ensures that the price of a babysitter increases as the value of their compensation (a delivery pizza) has increased.

This ability to highlight difficult-to-see causes made him very successful in the financial space, but led to an increasing feeling of guilt. Unfortunately for him, Fisch was not ignorant enough to see how his work with the logging industry did not just yield bigger bonuses but also disrupted ecosystems that were miles away from the actual operation. Determined to change course and make a positive difference, Fisch resigned his lucrative post and went back to school. Using his self-proclaimed “environmental bloodmoney,” Fisch learned the methods of environmental science. Following years of study, Fisch has since become a widely respected professor in Montreal's McGill University.

The industry of overfishing in Newfoundland has always hurt Fisch to hear. The blatant lack of care is astounding. However, even more astounding is the single-mindedness of the discussion. All anyone seems to care about is *cod*. While *Gadus morhua* surely is important, the powers at play seem to fail to understand the need for balance in the ecosystem. A one-size-fits-all solution could be horrible (Fisch is particularly worried about the sea plant life due to the lack of cod eating shrimp in the area). As such, Ottawa needs Fisch Ottawa to ensure that all the possibilities are seen and environmental collapse is prevented.

Albert Gibbons, Senior Research Fellow, University of Toronto Department of Economics

“That answer is completely and totally incorrect Mr. Gibbons!” Albert Gibbon’s old economics professor at the University of Toronto boomed, slamming the black board with his fist so hard a stick of chalk might just jump out of its holder. To the unknowing eye, this scene might be evidence of Gibbon’s lack of skills as an academic, but in fact it was quite the opposite.

It was this strictness and direction given from Gibbons’ both least and most favorite professor, and later doctoral advisor, that not only established Gibbons as a powerful mind but taught him the real facts about economics that his professor would not.

To be fair, it must be mentioned that in the beginning that Gibbons was never a particularly phenomenal student. He was surely bright and could certainly do wonders when he put his mind to it, but often found it difficult to keep his head out of the clouds. As a young student he would simply jump towards the opportunity he deemed to be the most profitable. By his sophomore year, he had successfully swapped majors five times and gone almost nowhere. It was this lack of direction that brought Gibbons into Professor Efford’s Economics 226: The Free Market and You, in which everything began to come together. Economics was of course

fascinating to Gibbons, but it was truly the work of Efford that set Gibbons on the path towards scholarship. Acting as a knowledgeable guide and mentor, Efford brought about the decades of experience he had gathered and brought it to bear for the young Gibbons. It was through this process of mentorship that Gibbons finally understood one key fact about economics: Professor Efford was so, so, so wrong.

Pushing past the incoherent ramblings about “laissez faire” and “deadweight loss,” Gibbons came to understand that the free market was very, very flawed. As a young student, he was free of regulation to do as he pleased. His life was quick changing, unpredictable, and unsustainable. It was only under the overtly visible hand of a seasoned expert that he was able to really get his life together. It was from here that Gibbons came to outgrow his free market education and begin to follow the true power of smart invention that is necessary to running a prosperous and sustainable economy and life.

It was only nature then, with cod stocks being butchered by the untamed force of the market, that Gibbons came to the aid of Newfoundland. Lack of regulation has allowed companies to harvest cod without repercussion for its unsustainability. Gibbons has long awaited the time to make an impact and prove his mentor wrong. Perhaps this is just the opportunity.

Concerned Citizens

Oliver McGregor, Fisherman, Neighbor, Father

“The ocean is particularly calm tonight,” Oliver McGregor thinks to himself as he walks down his tiny dock to stock his boat with supplies for the next day's trip. McGregor is, as his father, grandfather, and great-grandfather all had been, a cod fisherman. While the industry has changed a lot since those old times, McGregor's methods really haven't. Far from what might be called a “modern operation,” McGregor gets to push past the madness of today's current

bureaucracy with a trusty vessel, himself as a reliable skipper, and his family's single set of mouths to feed. McGregor knows that there is nothing more real than a fisher and their unbreakable bond to the open ocean.

Of course, some might call this kind of life, tied so close to the sea and cod, simple, but those people just don't understand it. Cod is so much more than just an animal or commercial product; cod is life. McGregor's family has dedicated centuries to catching it. McGregor's home town of Trinity sprouted out of thin air because of it. McGregor's whole life, and the lives of his ancestors and fellow townsfolk, have been constructed out of it. People might laugh, but McGregor wouldn't want it any other way.

However, not all changes can be so easily ignored. It would take a real fool not to notice how cod trips as of recent have been coming up significantly less fruitful, leading to a new sense of household austerity for the McGregor family. Those big corporations are taking far more cod than they have any right to and are threatening to outcompete McGregor's family. All this happens while the big wigs in Ottawa, with titles far longer than they should be, debate detached policy (based on science and data they just pull out of nowhere) that could threaten to bring about not just the impoverishment but the outright extinction of the McGregor's beloved province, town, and family. Trapped between money and politics, no one is looking at people actually affected. Nobody cares about the little guy, the *real* fishmen. It is this conflict that has brought McGregor down to the capital to make his voice, and those of so many others, heard. No one knows cod fishing like Oliver McGregor. They never have listened to nobodies like McGregor before; perhaps they will now.

Edmund Roy, Retired Fisherman, Former Member of the Fishermen's Protective Union

You don't realize that you need help until you need it the most. The vast majority of people are woefully unprepared for the worst things in life. In the bliss of the monotony of everyday life, it can be easy to neglect and forget one's own support systems. Thousands of people exist just on the edge of calamity and have no plan as to what to do when fates shift (which they always do). Edmund Roy, much to his modern day chagrin, had been exactly this kind of person.

Growing up as a taller-than-average boy in Newfoundland, it was certain what industry Roy would make a living in. Following the end of schooling, it took Roy less than a week to get out on the open ocean. Like most in the town, Roy was a fisherman for much of his younger life. Day in and day out, he would serve on one of those giant fishing trawlers hauling in cod by the ton. It was hard work to be sure, but it was good work and it kept the family afloat. That was until, of course, the accident. On a cold autumn's day, Roy slipped and fell down a set of stairs on his vessel. His arm was broken. However amidst the agony of the injury, the only thing that Roy could think about was how he was going to be unable to work. Shortly after the fall, Roy's fears were vindicated by a pink slip. How could he take care of his family? All hope was lost—at least it seemed that way for a while.

Fortunately for Roy, while the big wigs on a board of directors might not care for him, his fellow worker certainly would. He was met by a representative of the Fishermen's Protective Union, who helped Roy's family weather the storm and give time for his arm to heal. The union provided a safety net, even when Roy couldn't.

That incident was many years ago. Since then, sometime in the 1960s, the Union dissolved and the world became just a little bit nastier. Roy never forgot the help that he got

though. He hopes that he can one day come close to repairing that generosity. Perhaps he might now have the chance. With the cod industry in flux, the commercial fishermen are at huge risk. A silenced population as of now, they stand to lose their jobs and livelihood without any kind of back-up plan. The workers need a new safety net, they need a champion. Perhaps they need Edmund Roy.

Lauren Tremblay, Owner, Fogo General Store

Stock the shelves, mop the floors, clean off the counter, and turn on the open sign. Lauren Tremblay is far from unfamiliar with that exact day to day routine. Being the owner of the only independent general store in Fogo, Newfoundland, she would have to be. Tremblay's store had been the sole supplier of this community for almost as long as it has been a community. Tremblay would call it a family business, but the store has had an odd habit of being passed down to cousins, goddaughters, and sometimes even outright strangers instead of direct heirs. Tremblay had "won" the right to the store during a family get together when she was the only person to finish a 3 kilometer potato sack race. Tremblay's grandfather claimed that the race was a test of one's ability to work hard and stay determined, although Tremblay thinks it's because he was getting just a bit too old.

Despite the rather odd system of inheritance, Tremblay has come to love the store as if it were her own child. There is perhaps no greater feeling than seeing a happy customer walk away with a bag of bread, vegetables, or, as is often the case, one of the best cod sandwiches this side of the Atlantic. Being the store's signature product, Tremblay takes pride in her ability to offer high quality fish at an affordable price. You need a product like that if you want to keep your head in the game, after all.

While the store had run unopposed for decades, Tremblay has recently come into conflict with the opening of a new commercial grocer. At four times the store's size, not to mention large corporate backing, Tremblay is starting to feel dwarfed.

To make matters worse, the news coming out of the cod fisheries is nothing to smile at. Fewer fish could mean higher prices and thinner margins, which Tremblay's store simply can't afford. Furthermore, a poorly made (or overtly corporately influenced) piece of legislation could inflict pains far greater on her store than a corporate giant. After all, a big corporation can just up and leave when things get rough; Tremblay can't. With all this chaos in the province, it is only right, for the safety of her business, that she come to make a stand in Ottawa.

Richard “The Armadillo” Behr, Animal Rights Activist

This is a question that is often posed to Ricahrd Behr: why in the world would anyone want to name themselves after an armadillo? There are of course many possible answers here. For starters, armadillos have quite an awesome shell. It's flexible enough to allow them to roam free as they wish, but strong and rigid to protect themselves when in danger. Additionally, it is worth saying that armadillos are surprisingly fast swimmers and good jumpers. But if you were to really ask Behr this question, his response would most likely be: “because armadillos are beautiful creatures that don't take nonsense from anyone.”

There are few people in this world that love animals more than Behr. Growing up on a farm in rural Australia, you either love the animals or fall victim to them. Behr chose to love them; his family picked the contrary. Behr can remember the hours upon hours his dad would make him work on the farm setting up traps, laying razor wire, and doing whatever dangerous thing he could to keep the wildlife off the property. While Behr hated doing these things, he

began to develop an admiration for the animals. He would watch in awe as a clever emu would destroy the entire harvest after cleverly exploiting a weakness in the razor fence.

This passion took him off the farm and into the city, where Behr took to the streets in the Animal Rights movement. Behr knew more than anyone that animals are just as valuable as people and need to be treated with respect and dignity. His quick wit and powerful charisma took him to radio shows and news reports, where he preached an animal-friendly lifestyle. Aren't we all just neighbors on this earth?

However, even the best messages die on deaf ears. After years of fighting, Behr had found himself unsuccessful. Given time, his supporters dried up almost as fast as his bank account. This would seem like a good time to give up but, like the armadillo, Behr was determined to shrug it off and keep going. Perhaps Australia was not the right place for him. When Behr heard about what was being done with the cod population in Newfoundland, he used the last money he had to buy a one-way ticket to St. John's. Overfishing is a crime. The animals need a champion. It is only a matter of time before Behr regains the spotlight and brings those fish murderers to justice.

Emily French, Journalist, *The Telegram*

There are few things in the world that are more powerful than a good story. With only a careful selection of words, a clever writer is able to not just move hearts but even the world as a whole. Emily French knows this idea well. Of course, she would have needed to when, despite her parents begging her to follow their steps to medical school, she declared an English major in college. Immersing herself in the great literature of the past, French had come to develop her future passion. Looking at the infinite fame possessed by these writers, French had come to seek

the immortality that only a great reporter could get. Never turning down what could be a great story, French has traveled up and down Newfoundland searching for anything and everything that might be of interest. It was this dedication to the craft that got her her first gig at *The Telegram*. However it was the lack of interesting things to find in Newfoundland that ensured that her first gig at *The Telegram* has remained her current and only gig.

Far from famous and immortal, the Emily French of today finds herself far too cooped in a small office then she would prefer. Who could blame her? Newfoundland is so boring! How is she supposed to get a promotion when *The Telegram*'s only audience are people too old to have anything better to do? Far too often, French sits and ponders about these kinds of things, the hopeless and endless quandaries of passion and employment. It was during one of these times of, to put it nicely, "career reconsidering" that French had almost missed the beginning of what might be the story she needed.

Believe it or not, but all the cod are dying and people seem to be unsure as to who to blame and how to fix it. This could be the perfect time for a young and ambitious journalist to finally get their career off the ground. Confusion and panic is after a reporter's best asset. Provided this story can be found to be (or made to be) interesting, French might just have the chance of a lifetime. Her now-meager audience won't know what hit them when world class scholarship—maybe even beyond world class scholarship—hits the front pages and their porches. A powerful story is ripe for the taking; it is up to Emily French to grab it.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

“A brief history of fishing sonars.” 2023. Deeper.

<https://deepersonar.com/en-us/blogs/us/brief-history-fishing-sonars?srsltid=AfmBOoo07TVcME-LkCTaB89FVJ-J-ZRWDYcRhgg4ZGIP9LRYYXebwOtF>.

Annual Report of the Department of Fisheries and Oceans for the year ending March 31, 1992.

1992. Ottawa, Ontario: Communications Directorate Department of Fisheries and Oceans.

“An Overview of Bottom Trawling in Canada.” 2021. Pacific Wild.

<https://pacificwild.org/an-overview-of-bottom-trawling-in-canada/>.

Baker, Melvin. “John Crosbie.” *The Canadian Encyclopedia*, 2008.

<https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/john-crosbie>.

Barratt, David. “Canada becomes independent from Great Britain.” 2022.

<https://www.ebsco.com/research-starters/history/canada-becomes-independent-great-britain>.

Bornstein, Stephen. *Newfoundland and Labrador: a Health System Profile*. University of Toronto Press, 2021.

Chettiar, Barani. 2022. “A History Of Fishfinders & Marine Sonars.” Tecomart.

<https://tecomart.co/a-history-of-fishfinders-marine-sonars/>.

“Collapse of the Grand Banks Cod Fishery: British Sea Fishing.” *British Sea Fishing*, June 13, 2022. <https://britishseafishing.co.uk/the-collapse-of-the-grand-banks-cod-fishery/>.

- Davis, Leslie A. 1991. “North Pacific Pelagic Driftnetting: Untangling the High Seas Controversy Notes.” *Southern California Law Review* 64, no. 4 (May): 1057-1102. Heinonline.
- Emery, Claude. “The Northern Cod Crisis.” Political and Social Affairs Division, Library of Parliament, October 1992.
- <https://publications.gc.ca/Collection-R/LoPBdP/BP/bp313-e.htm>.
- “Environmental impacts of trawling and longline fishing.” 2015. Active Oceans.
- <https://activeoceans.wordpress.com/2015/05/13/environmental-impacts-of-trawling-and-longline-fishing/>.
- Fisheries and Oceans Canada. “About the Canadian Science Advisory Secretariat (CSAS).” Government of Canada, February 21, 2020.
- <https://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/csas-sccs/about-sur/index-eng.html>.
- Fisheries and Oceans Canada. “About Us.” Government of Canada,
- <https://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/about-notre-sujet/index-eng.htm>.
- Fisheries and Oceans Canada. “Organizational Structure.” Government of Canada, 2024.
- <https://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/about-notre-sujet/organisation-eng.htm>.
- “Fisheries.” Heritage: Newfoundland & Labrador, May 2015.
- <https://www.heritage.nf.ca/articles/economy/fishery.php>.
- “Fishing Vessel Types.” n.d. Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. Accessed August 8, 2025. <https://www.fao.org/fishery/en/vesseltype/1010/en>.
- Fitzgerald, Kevin T. n.d. “Longline fishing (how what you don't know can hurt you).” PubMed. Accessed August 7, 2025. <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/24331555/>.

Gough, Joseph. "History of Commercial Fisheries | the Canadian Encyclopedia." The Canadian Encyclopedia, August 12, 2013.

<https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/history-of-commercial-fisheries>.

Harris, Leslie. "Independent Review Of The State Of The Northern Cod Stock." Department of Fisheries and Oceans, 1990.

<https://waves-vagues.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/library-bibliotheque/114276.pdf>.

Higgins, Jenny. "Cod Moratorium." Cod Moratorium in Newfoundland and Labrador, 2009.

<https://www.heritage.nf.ca/articles/economy/moratorium.php>.

"History of Vikings in Newfoundland and Labrador." Newfoundland and Labrador, Canada.

<https://www.newfoundlandlabrador.com/trip-ideas/travel-stories/vikings-history>.

"International Commission for the Northwest Atlantic Fisheries (ICNAF)." Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organization, <https://www.nafo.int/About-us/ICNAF>.

Jarvis, Charlotte, and Micheal Brennan. n.d. "History of Trawling and Ecological Impact." In *Threats to Our Ocean Heritage: Bottom Trawling*, 9-26. Cham, Switzerland: y Springer Nature Switzerland AG.

Kurlansky, Mark. *Cod: A Biography of the Fish That Changed the World*. Penguin Books, 1999.

Loewen, Brad. "The Basques in the Gulf of Saint Lawrence and Adjacent Shores."

Academia.edu, November 28, 2013.

https://www.academia.edu/5254166/The_Basques_in_the_Gulf_of_Saint_Lawrence_and_Adjacent_Shores.

Mateo, Ivan and James Baird. "Atlantic Cod (*Gadus morhua*) 2J3KL – Pre-Assessment Report for MSC Certification." SAI Global, 2016.

http://awsassets.wwf.ca/downloads/2j3kl_cod_pre_assessment_final.pdf.

McIntosh, Andrew. “Charlottetown Conference | the Canadian Encyclopedia.” Charlottetown Conference, September 2, 2010.

<https://thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/charlottetown-conference>.

Mehnazd. 2019. “What is a Fishfinder and How Does it Work?” Marine Insight.

<https://www.marineinsight.com/marine-navigation/what-is-a-fishfinder-and-how-does-it-work/>.

Newfoundland and Labrador Canada. “Climate and Weather.” Newfoundland and Labrador Tourism. <https://www.newfoundlandlabrador.com/about-this-place/climate-and-weather>.

“Northeast Fisheries Historical Highlights: A Timeline.” n.d. NOAA Fisheries. Accessed August 8, 2025.

<https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/new-england-mid-atlantic/about-us/northeast-fisheries-historical-highlights-timeline>.

Northridge, Simon P. 1991. *Driftnet Fisheries and Their Impacts on Non-target Species: A World Wide Review*. N.p.: Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations.

“Positively Groundfish.” n.d. More About Groundfish. Accessed June 8, 2025.

<https://www.positivelygroundfish.org/groundfish-info>.

Prokosch, Peter. Atlantic cod (*Gadus morhua*), Ålesund Aquarium, Norway. 2017. Flickr.

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/gridarendal/32052010306/in/photostream/>.

“Recent History - Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organization (NAFO).” Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organization, May 15, 2024.

<https://www.nafo.int/About-us/History/recent-history-northwest-atlantic-fisheries-organization-nafo>.

- Russell, E.S. “Some Theoretical Considerations on the ‘Overfishing’ Problem.” *Journal du Conseil* Volume 6, no. 1 (1931): 3–20. <https://doi.org/10.1093/icesjms/6.1.3>.
- Seal, Ben. 2024. “A Tragedy with No End.” Science History Institute.
<https://www.sciencehistory.org/stories/magazine/a-tragedy-with-no-end/>.
- Statistics Canada. “Visual Census – Population and dwelling counts, Newfoundland and Labrador.” 2012.
http://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2011/dp-pd/vc-rv/index.cfm?Lang=ENG&TOPIC_ID=1&GEOCODE=10.
- Steele, D.H., R. Anderson and J.M. Green. “The Managed Commercial Annihilation of Northern Cod.” *Newfoundland Studies* Volume 8, no. 1 (1992): 35-68.
- “Structure of Government.” Government of Canada, 2025.
<https://www.canada.ca/en/government/system/how-government-works/structure.html>.
- Summers, W.F. “Newfoundland and Labrador.” *The Canadian Encyclopedia*, 2010.
<https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/newfoundland-and-labrador>.
- The Newfoundland Longline Fishery*. n.d. Canada: Department of Fisheries and Oceans.
Accessed August 8, 2025.
- Wappel, Tom. 2005. “Northern Cod: A Failure of Canadian Fisheries Management,” Report of the Standing Committee on Fisheries and Oceans. House of Commons Canada.
- Werner, Jeff. 2016. “The History of Maine's Cod Fisheries.” Marina.
<https://www.marinalife.com/articles/history-of-maines-cod-fisheries>.
- “What is Longline Fishing?” 2025. Greenpeace.
<https://www.greenpeace.org.au/learn/what-is-longline-fishing/>.

Wetherbee, Amy. "Grand Banks." EBSCO, 2021.

<https://www.ebsco.com/research-starters/oceanography/grand-banks>.