

# The collapse of the east coast fishery in canada essay sample



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In 1992, the devastating collapse of the fishing industry on the East Coast of Newfoundland, Nova Scotia forced the Canadian government to take drastic measures and close the fishery. But what could've caused such a horrible downfall of one of Canada's biggest national resources?

The East Coast Fishery is made up of offshore fisheries and inshore fisheries. An Offshore fishery is a type of fishery that is over 25 metres of the coast. This type of fishery requires large boats. An Inshore fishery is a type of fishery that is between the 25 metres of the coast. This type of fishery requires small boats. Nets and traps were extremely common to use to catch fish.

The East Coast of Canada was a great place to catch fish because it made up most of Canada's fishing industry. The natural conditions of Canada's east coast favoured fish resources. The fish were located mainly in the Grand Banks, there was a continental shelf, which benefited the fishing because it was deep, meaning you could do offshore fishing. The water varied in all depths. There is enough sunlight coming down on the coast, which penetrates to the bottom, which stimulates plankton growth, also fish like warmer water. With the cold Labrador current and the warm gulf stream coming in, it could churn the nutrients for the plankton to grow, and attracts fish. It had many types of fish, but some of the main ones were Halibut, Cod and Sole. There are three main categories which fish fall into, Groundfish, Pelagic fish, and Shellfish. A Groundfish is a fish that swims close to the ocean floor, Pelagic fish are fish that swims near the top of the water and Shellfish are crustaceans. The main location for finding the great fish was the

Grand Banks. Fish were commonly around that area, so it was perfect for fishers and fishing industries.

The beginning of the collapse was first observed in the mid 1980's, when fisherman realized that the numbers of Groundfish caught were decreasing rapidly. The fish were also disappearing. In 1991, it was reported that the catch of the northern cod fish, had collapsed. And so it happened, this was one of the major signs that the great industry of Canada's fishing was going to deteriorate.

By now several major fishing companies were suffering a great deal from over-crowded and over-competitive fights for the fish, amplifying the never-ending problems of low incomes and shakiness. Bigger boats and better technology had multiplied fishing power, often harming fish stocks and fishermen's earnings. People raced for fish that would otherwise be caught by a competitor. Recognition spread that open-access, loosely-controlled fisheries tended to attract more fishing capacity and effort than they could properly support.

Over the next few years, the federal government dropped boat-building subsidies and coverage's, the Fisheries Loan Program, and the Fishing Vessel Insurance Program. As people looked forward to a self-supporting, and a stable industry, things were like this were hoping to stabilize the industry. In the 1990s the D. F. O (Department of Fisheries and Oceans) which was created in 1979, handed over the fish inspection responsibilities to the Canadian Food Inspection Agency. What else was in store?

The Canadian governments attempt to rebuild the fishing industry failed, no matter what happened. There have been 5 main reasons suggested for the failure of the fishing industry.

Sustained Yield Management: This is a method used to preserve fish by not letting the amount of fish exceed the amount of fish matured. (continue p2)

1. Over fishing: The government had been letting fishing industries to catch too much.

The numbers would decrease rapidly as a result of the over fishing. Sustainable yield was not reached

2. Improved Fishing Technology: With the help of satellites and radars, fishermen could

Track schools of fish faster. Also, nets were more firm and it was harder for fish too escape. This would lead and make over fishing more possible.

3. Uncontrolled Foreign Fishing: By the 60's, the Japanese and the Russians had over over fished in the area and lower sustainable yield.

4. Destructive Fishing Practices: Fishing companies (when fishing) would throw back dead fish. The unwanted fish reduced the amount of fish.

5. Changes in the Natural Condition: Some people have blamed changes in the conditions in the environment fir the reduction of fish. The reduction of ocean temperatures has forced fish to move southward to be in warmer temperatures. Also, the increase of the seal population, which eat lots of fish,

This may have reduced the amount of fish. The current depletion of the fish stocks on coasts is caused by those five reasons.

As a result of the depletion, many solutions and ideas have been suggested to help bring back the fish, here are 4 of them. To try to solve this problem, they decided to do a moratorium. They ban fish species for a certain amount of years. A quota would be set which would limit fishing companies the amount of fish they caught, also the sizes of the fish would be limited. In order for this to actually happen, and not have people do this, coasts guards would be assigned. If over fishing occurs people should be fined, this too was a suggestion. In order to have more organized fishing, and not have fishing intruders, fishing licenses were assigned. These ideas are good because it forces stability and limits over fishing.

All in all, the collapse of the east coast fishery has resulted in many cautious actions. What once started off as a beautiful area of water, has now turned into nothing but a fish war. Mainly because of over fishing and advancements in fishing technology.