
Long Term Vision for the Herring and Mackerel Fisheries in the Southern Gulf of Saint Lawrence

Harvester Perspective

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Attachment:

Long-term Management Strategy - Herring and Mackerel Fisheries in the Southern Gulf of St. Lawrence (Fédération Régionale Acadienne des Pêcheurs Professionnels Inc.)

I. Introduction

The Terms of Reference for the Long Term Vision Project call for consultation with the different processors and harvester organizations (including First Nations) and Provincial Governments to seek their input on a Vision for the herring and mackerel fisheries in the Southern Gulf over the next ten years. The process was to involve setting of objectives for both fisheries, identifying threats and challenges that could impact on these objectives, setting performance indicators, and identifying strategies to meet the objectives.

Element III of the study “*examines ways and means to achieve sustainable fisheries, identifies potential risks to fisheries sustainability, addresses current issues regarding gear technology, gear selectivity and fish quality, designs a road map for promoting shared stewardship between industry and government, and provides recommendations aimed at improving fisheries management*”.

The Vision was to incorporate elements that reflect the Precautionary Approach, the concept of Objectives-Based Fisheries Management, and relevant Ecosystem Considerations. Section III of the *Policy Framework for the Management of Fisheries on Canada’s Atlantic Coast* released by DFO Minister Regan in March 2004 outlines how these elements are to be used in developing management plans.

An integral part of this process involves meetings between harvester groups with DFO personnel from Science, Enforcement and Resource Management to establish reference points linked to key stock and ecosystem indicators. The reference points would identify when stocks were in healthy, cautious, or critical zones, and strategies would be developed to manage the fisheries when they are in these zones. When the fisheries are in cautious zones, fishing effort can be reduced and when fisheries are in critical zones, fishing can be stopped.

Up to this point in time, the meetings to establish reference points for either the Southern Gulf herring fishery or the Atlantic mackerel fishery have not taken place. The result has been that while in principle, harvester groups agreed with the need to exercise caution to ensure the harvesting levels protect the sustainability of the resource and the need to consider the effects the prosecution of one fishery has on other fisheries, it was not possible for the consultant to discuss harvesting strategies that would be put in place based on biomass reference points.

For the same reason, it has not been possible to come up with performance objectives with specific measurable goals that constitute Objectives-Based Fisheries Management (OBFM). The introduction of OBFM in the herring and mackerel fisheries will require extensive consultation with the industry to agree on harvest strategies based on Total Allowable Catches (TACs) set based on specific reference points that have yet to be determined.

There is limited understanding of the Precautionary Approach, OBFM, or ecosystem considerations. To develop a detailed road map for the management of the herring and mackerel fisheries in the Southern Gulf that will incorporate these principles, DFO must put in place an action plan to explain these concepts fully to the industry.

The Vision project was not meant to address the sharing of allocations between the offshore seiners and the inshore fleet, nor is it to address the sharing of the inshore herring allocation between the different inshore fleets.

Given the above limitations the approach followed in the meetings with representatives of industry and Provincial Departments was to address the following questions:

- What are the strong points of the fisheries?
- What aspects of the fisheries could be improved?
- What are the major obstacles to improvements?
- What opportunities exist for the fisheries?
- What would you like the fisheries to look like in 10 years?

II. Background

Herring

In 2002, there were 3,508 herring licenses issued for the Southern Gulf of which nine were small seiner licenses, eleven were for large herring seiners, and 3,397 were for small inshore vessels. First Nations in the Gulf Region held 126 commercial herring licenses in 2003.

The inshore vessels are licensed to fish in one of seven inshore zones, 16A to 16G, while the seiners are licensed to fish throughout the Southern Gulf with the exception of exclusion areas as defined in the Atlantic Fisheries Regulations (1985). In 2004, seven of the seiners (five based in New Brunswick and two in Western Newfoundland and Labrador) were active in the Southern Gulf fishery and 1,023 inshore license holders were active in the inshore fishery of which three were small seiners.

The herring fishery consists of spring and fall spawning components and a TAC is established for both components, with 76.83% going to the inshore and 23.17% going to the large seiners.

In 2004, the TAC for the spring spawner allocation was 13,500 tonnes. Of this, 10,397 tonnes was allocated to the inshore fleets, of which 7,907 tonnes of spring spawners were caught. Of the 3,103 tonnes allocated to the seiners, 427 tonnes of spring spawners were caught.

In 2004, the TAC for the fall spawner allocation was 73,000 tonnes. Of this, 56,255 tonnes was allocated to the inshore fleets, of which 36,163 of fall spawners were

caught. 16,745 tonnes was allocated to the seiners, of which 7,124 tonnes of fall spawners were caught.

In addition to the commercial licenses, there were 2,063 herring bait licenses issued in the Gulf region in 2002. Landings from the bait fishery are highest in the spring fishery and, to a much lesser extent, in the fall. Herring is used for bait in the lobster, crab, and tuna fisheries. There are no recorded catches from the bait fishery although local DFO Fishery Officers provide an estimate of bait catches. DFO is introducing in 2005 a monthly report of bait catches to be submitted by fishers. The lack of an accurate count of all landings could mean that harvesting levels are exceeding the TAC and represent a threat to the stock assessment process.

The participation rate in the fishery of license holders varies from 35% to 50% in any given year. As prices increase for herring or there are declines in other fisheries, the participation rate can be expected to increase.

Mackerel

The Atlantic Mackerel Integrated Fisheries Management Plan is for all of the Atlantic including the Maritimes, Gulf, Quebec and Newfoundland and Labrador Regions. The Plan runs from 2002 to the end of 2006. Under the Plan, the TAC has been set at 75,000 tonnes of which 60% is allocated to the inshore traditional fishery, and 40% for an offshore exploratory mobile gear fishery.

In 2001, there were 16,953 mackerel licenses in Atlantic Canada. Eight were for seiners greater than 65 feet and the balance were for the inshore fleets with licenses being held for hand lines, gill nets, trap nets, small seiners less than 65 feet, weirs, and bait. In the same year, 9,215 licenses were in the Gulf and Quebec Regions. In addition to the licenses for the commercial fishery, there is an unlicensed recreational fishery.

In 2004, there were 130 active licenses in Quebec Region. In the Gulf Region, there were 710 active licenses of the 9,217 commercial mackerel licenses were issued that year. Although fishers in many instances hold licenses for different gear types, there would probably be an increase in participation if prices increased for mackerel or there were declines in other fisheries.

In 2003, there were 44,475 tonnes of recorded commercial mackerel landings in Atlantic Canada. Of this amount, the Quebec and Gulf Regions recorded landings were 14,685 tonnes. In Newfoundland and Labrador, 26,675 tonnes was landed, of which all but 600 tonnes was landed in Western Newfoundland by the offshore seiner fleet. In the Maritime Region, 3,823 tonnes were caught.

Preliminary landings for 2004 are 35,000 tonnes, of which 21,000 was landed in Western Newfoundland by the offshore seiner fleet, and 12,000 tonnes in Eastern Newfoundland. These numbers do not include landings for PEI, NB, and NS.

In addition to the commercial fishery, there were 6,376 mackerel bait licenses issued in Atlantic Canada in 2001, 1,564 of which were in the Gulf Region. Mackerel is used as bait in the lobster and crab fisheries. Up to this time there has been no record kept of mackerel bait catches although an estimate of landings is provided by local DFO Fishery Officers. DFO is planning to introduce in 2005 a monthly report to be submitted by fishers of landings from the bait fishery.

Residents and tourists are also allowed to fish recreationally for mackerel without a license. There is no record kept of the volume of landings in the recreational fishery.

DFO scientists estimate that when all the recorded landings are counted for 2004, and considering the unrecorded catches by commercial fishermen and the recreational fishery, Canadian catches could approximate the 75,000 tonne TAC.

III. Consultations

Over the course of the study, fifteen meetings were held with industry, Provincial Government and First Nation representatives, as well as with officials from the Coastal Zone Research Institute in Shippagan, New Brunswick.

The following paragraphs summarize the suggestions raised at fifteen consultative meetings, as well as points raised at a meeting with industry and Government representatives in Moncton on June 29 and 30, 2005 and written feedback from some representatives following that meeting. Points raised relating to the split of the TAC between the offshore seiners and the inshore, and the inshore allocations by Area were not retained as they are not part of the Vision exercise.

PEI Fishermen's Association Herring/Mackerel Committee

1. Small seiners should not be given access to the inshore herring fishery.
2. The use of ice should be enforced for fishermen in the fall herring fishery.
3. Opening of the fall herring fishery based on roe yield is not supported as roe yields differ at the same time in different spawning beds.
4. Fishermen support continuing to work with DFO Scientists in projects similar to the current acoustic survey.
5. Processors should pay more for herring landed that is properly iced.
6. DFO should enforce quality standards for herring. (It should be noted that enforcement of quality standards is outside DFO jurisdiction).
7. There should be an earlier opening for the fall herring fishery in Western PEI as herring are in the area earlier and weather conditions are better for fishing.
8. There should be daily trip limits in the spring herring fishery in Western PEI - Escuminac as this would slow down the fishery and, with the use of ice, would improve quality.
9. There is a problem with small mackerel in the fishery in many areas around PEI.

10. There is a concern that more access to the mackerel fishery will be provided to mid-shore seiners, which will negatively impact on the traditional inshore fishery.
11. Concern was raised that studies similar to the Vision exercise have been done several times in the past with no impact. The studies emphasized the need to improve quality, develop new products and develop new markets, but there was no follow up by DFO.

Gulf Nova Scotia Fishermen Organizations

1. The Gulf NS fishermen believe their fall herring fishery is a separate stock and would like a quota established for this stock. They have participated in a science project for the past ten years, which they feel supports this position.
2. The quota for spring herring in 2004 was 246 tonnes. The fishermen would like this increased. As well, there are 20 licensed mackerel trap fishermen who are seeking herring trap licenses and a spring herring quota so they can fish herring for sale to the bait market.
3. The fishermen recognize the importance of the mid-shore seiner fishery to supply the processing plants after the inshore fishery finishes.
4. The exclusion line for the mid-shore seiner fishery from Site Point to East Point should be maintained.
5. The fishermen would like DFO scientists to determine from which spawning beds originate the herring caught by seiners.
6. There is a shortage of ice in many ports to ice fall herring catches.
7. When fishermen were boxing and icing herring, there was no price increase. There needs to be a price incentive to fishermen to land quality fish.
8. The N.S. Department of Agriculture and Fisheries held a workshop on the "Future of Herring as a Food Fishery" on February 10, 2005 for the industry in Gulf Nova Scotia. Approximately 150 fishermen, processors and Government officials attended. We need to promote the development of herring food products.
9. Fishermen landing herring in the fall fishery for the food fishery should use a 2-¾ inch mesh size and have a reduced daily trip limit.
10. There is a significant amount of mackerel not caught in the quota. We need to further develop this fishery.
11. A study on hook size could identify ways to minimize the catches of small mackerel. (It should be noted that DFO Scientists estimate that, if all mackerel catches including the catches from the bait and recreational fisheries were recorded, the actual catch in 2004 would be close to the 75,000 tonne TAC).
12. Seals are eating a lot of the herring and mackerel stocks. (A study by DFO scientists indicates that Grey seals consume about 4,000 tonnes of herring in the Southern Gulf annually and about 60 tonnes of mackerel. As mackerel swim fast and are generally found in deeper water, they make up about 2% of the diet of Grey seals while herring make up about 10% of the diet. Harp seals are in the Southern Gulf for a short period of time and not when the herring are spawning and consume very little herring or mackerel).

Gulf Seiners Association

Representatives from the Gulf Seiners Association raised the following points at the June 29-30 Moncton meeting as well as in correspondence sent following the meeting:

1. The mid shore herring fishery is an integral part of the Southern Gulf Herring fishery with a significant economic impact on the economy of Northern New Brunswick.
2. The seiners provide herring to plants producing food products keeping plants operating after the finish of the roe fishery.
3. In any long term vision for the herring and mackerel fisheries in the Southern Gulf, the mid shore seiners must be guaranteed access to their share of the resource and have the right to fish this share without conflict with the inshore fleets.
4. DFO in the past increased license fees to pay for costs incurred by the Department for infrastructure, research, etc. Now, DFO is asking the industry to contribute more funding to the Department as part of the shared stewardship process. DFO must provide more information to the industry on Shared Stewardship, the Precautionary Approach and Objectives-Based Fisheries Management.
5. It should be possible for both the inshore and mid shore seiner fleets to participate in the development of the Southern Gulf herring and mackerel fisheries so that both fleet sectors can be economically viable and that Canada becomes a leader in the export of herring and mackerel products.

Northeast New Brunswick Meeting of Representatives from Seiner Owners and Crew, Inshore Fishermen, Processors, and Coastal Zone Research Institute

1. We need to study herring markets in other countries to determine potential to develop new products for new markets. In the fall, we are relying on roe fishery. Missions to other countries need to be carried out.
2. In our fall herring fishery, we are fishing for quantity and not for quality. Many boats are not using any ice. We need to emphasize efforts to land high quality herring.
3. We need to be concerned about the development of histamine in both herring and mackerel if we do not keep fish properly cooled.
4. Some boats will need modifications to accommodate Xactic boxes. Derricks will be needed on certain wharves. Some wharves require ice-making facilities and clean water systems. Government funds should assist in covering some of these costs.
5. A \$3 million quality improvement project for herring was developed for Northeast New Brunswick but no funds were available.
6. It may be difficult to get 100% of the fishermen in Northeast NB to commit to a quality improvement project. It would be better to proceed with pilot projects in individual ports where there is a strong commitment from fishermen, buyers, and processors, and where the necessary infrastructure is in place.

7. Fishermen need to be paid a higher price for landing quality herring.
8. Roe testing for opening the fall herring fishery has been implemented in the past but it was discontinued, as everyone did not participate. Perhaps this could be started again and carried out by a neutral party such as the Coastal Zone Research Institute.
9. There is a problem with small mackerel in the fishery in Northeast New Brunswick. As well, there is a problem with red feed in mackerel.

Federation Regionale des Pecheurs Professionnels Inc.

Following the meeting in Northeast New Brunswick, the Regional Federation of Acadian Professional Fishermen submitted a written position to DFO on the Vision study. A copy of the submission is attached to this report. Points made in the submission are:

1. The seiner fleet must be authorized to fish the quota it has been granted when the resource is there.
2. Both the inshore and seiner fleets are entitled to fish herring in the Southern Gulf. Elimination of either fleet is not an option.
3. The strengths of the herring fishery include a diversified gear, harvest capacity, multiple markets for bait roe fishmeal, etc., and scientific support from the Marine Products Research and Development Centre.
4. There is a need for more scientific research of the fishing done by the seiner fleet, and recognition of the importance of the fishing done by the seiner fleets and the processing of herring meat on the Acadian Peninsula.
5. There is a concern about the conflict between the seiners and the inshore fishermen, the unreasonableness of DFO regulations enforced on seiners, the need for more comparative analysis of fishing gear, and the low prices paid for quality herring.
6. More research is required on product development and what is being marketed in other countries.
7. There is a lack of resources in DFO to enforce acts and regulations, a lack of resources available to DFO Science, a lack of solidarity in the industry, and a serious concern that unless changes are made, the future of the seiner fishery is not assured.
8. The main objectives of the herring fishery must be resource conservation, establishment of greater industry stabilization, and the profitability of fishing enterprises.
9. Collaborative management between the fleet sectors is essential.
10. The mackerel fishery should be considered a complementary fishery to the herring fishery. It cannot replace it.

South East New Brunswick MFU

1. There is a concern about sharp declines in the spring herring fishery in Escuminac. DFO Science needs to study reasons for this. Is the Escuminac school of herring now showing up in the Magdalen Islands spring fishery?

2. In many ports, there are no unloading systems for Xactic boxes, no ice available for fishermen, and lack of clean water. Government funds should be made available for this infrastructure.
3. Fishermen should be paid higher prices for landing iced herring.
4. One plant in Southeast New Brunswick has had an agreement with their herring fishermen to land quality herring for the past ten years. The result is that the plant gets a higher percentage of Grade A roe. Fishermen have been paid an incentive for landing boxed and iced fish.
5. Consideration should be given to eliminate night fishing in the Escuminac spring herring fishery, which would slow down the volume of landings. As well, night fishing will scare the herring into deeper water.
6. The key to improving quality is to have the buyers participate in projects.
7. The Coastal Zone Research Institute could be asked to work with fishermen and processors in Southeast New Brunswick on quality projects.
8. Mackerel products need to be promoted in the marketplace both here in Canada and internationally. The health value of these products is not understood and could be a major selling point.
9. The best approach to improving quality is through pilot projects in specific ports where there is a strong commitment from fishermen, buyers and processors and where funds are available to put in place the necessary infrastructure. Part of the pilot project should be educational seminars on quality delivered to fishermen, buyers and processors.
10. There is a lack of buyers for mackerel caught in Southeast New Brunswick.
11. Seals are having a major impact on the herring stocks.
12. Fishermen have requested government assistance to build two centralized freezing facilities to freeze surplus catches when landings are excessive. This product could be thawed out for processing at a later time.
13. Emphasis needs to be placed on developing food markets for herring and mackerel products.

Magdalen Islands Fishermen's Association

1. The herring fishery is a spring fishery with catches sold primarily as bait for the lobster fisheries.
2. The fishermen would like a permanent spring herring quota for the Magdalens, rather than the temporary quotas approved in recent years.
3. Catching capacity in the herring fishery is limited by number of nets and fishing days.
4. Ice is not used in the spring herring fishery as the water is cold and catches are sold as bait.
5. Ice is used in the mackerel hand line fishery.
6. The infrastructure for quality projects is in place with the exception being that a central freezing facility would allow for freezing of surplus landings at certain times.
7. DFO and CFIA do not have enough inspection at the wharf.

8. Grey seals are having an impact on the herring stocks.
9. Stock assessment of mackerel should be carried out by DFO and not controlled by the industry.

Professional Fishermen of South Gaspé

1. Buyers should require fishermen to use ice.
2. There are clean water systems at the Gaspé wharves.
3. Special emphasis needs to be placed on improvement of fish quality.
4. Fishermen should not be asked to pay for costs of science projects.
5. More funds should be provided to DFO Science for acoustic surveys.
6. DFO Science should have projects that assess the impact of fisheries on the habitat.
7. We need to place increased efforts in product development and marketing.
8. The mackerel fishery is not significant in the Gaspé due to poor quality in the summer. There is a hand-line fishery in the fall.

First Nations

Contact was made with the senior policy analyst for fisheries, climate change, and the environment for the Atlantic Policy Congress based in Elsipogtog First Nation in Big Cove, New Brunswick. There are a number of First Nations fishermen involved in the herring and mackerel fisheries in the Southern Gulf. It was suggested that DFO sponsor a seminar that would bring together Fisheries Directors, Fishery Officers, and Fishery Technicians from the different First Nations in the Southern Gulf to obtain their input on the Vision for future direction for the management of these two fisheries. First Nations are interested in participating with other resource users in the development of management plans.

Barry Group

1. Purse seines have been used in the pelagics fisheries the Gulf of Saint Lawrence for fifty years.
2. Fishing vessels in other countries use both seines and trawls. Trawls are necessary to catch pelagics when they move to deeper water.
3. Trawling technology using high frequency sonar to locate fish is now being used successfully in the mackerel fishery. In recent years, seiners have harvested more than half of the mackerel landed in the Gulf.
4. If we lose the seiners from the fishery, we will lose the skills of captains and crews that will be difficult to replace. As well, we will lose processing jobs in plants that rely on the seiners for fish after the inshore fisheries finish.
5. The roe produced from the inshore fishery in the Southern Gulf is of lower grade than roe from British Columbia or the Scotia Fundy Region.
6. The inshore roe fishery that targets herring on the spawning grounds could have a significant negative impact on the stocks. We should be fishing pelagics when

- the fat content is best.
7. Seiners land a good quality fish at the least cost in the shortest time. Seiners target the landing of quality fish to be processed into food products.
 8. The seiners are willing to participate with DFO in science projects.
 9. Access to the pelagic fisheries in the Southern Gulf needs to be assured to the seiners so that older vessels can be replaced.
 10. Pelagic fish need to be harvested, processed and marketed in volume.
 11. There are proven markets for herring and mackerel food products in China, Japan, Korea, Eastern and Western Europe, and the U.S. In the international markets, there is strong global competition from Iceland and Norway.
 12. We need to chill fish quickly with ice or refrigerated seawater to control for histamine.
 13. The seiners are willing to meet with representatives from the inshore groups to discuss how available quotas can best be harvested with the benefits shared between both sectors.

Women for Environmental Sustainability (WES) - Souris, PEI

1. WES was formed as a group representing the inshore fishermen who are opposed to seiners fishing herring off the north shore of PEI.
2. There are small local stocks of herring off Northeast PEI that can be devastated by the seiners. If these local stocks are lost, it will affect the genetic diversity of the Southern Gulf herring stock.
3. If herring stocks are lost, it will adversely affect other fisheries such as lobster and tuna, as herring are a food source for these fish. It will be important to include ecosystem considerations in development of herring management plans.
4. It is difficult to determine a Vision for the future of the Southern Gulf herring fishery when the continuation of the seiner fishery will be destructive to the fishery.

Coastal Zone Research Institute, Shippagan, NB

1. The Coastal Zone Research Institute has established two committees that are addressing the herring fishing and processing industry in Northeast New Brunswick. The Herring Round Table Committee consists of representatives from the processing plants, seiners, inshore fishermen, the MFU, ACOA and the Provincial Government. The Sectoral Table Committee consists solely of industry representatives from the inshore, the seiners and the processors. In both of these committees, the inshore and seiner sectors have been able to meet on a regular basis to address issues.
2. Improvement in quality is the key to the development of the herring and mackerel fisheries in the Gulf. These are the last two fisheries not being exploited to their potential. The industry should focus efforts on quality improvement rather than catching all of the quotas.

3. Inshore fishermen need to be paid higher prices for landing quality fish. This has not been the case in most ports.
4. Quality must be maintained from point of harvest right through to processing.
5. We need to develop new food products from herring, and promote the products to both the domestic and international markets. Education of the consumers on the health value of herring products should be part of the marketing program.
6. Many ports lack the infrastructure to land quality fish. This includes ice making facilities, clean water systems, and unloading systems. The Institute is proposing that an engineer carry out a study of the infrastructure in the ports of Northeast New Brunswick.
7. The Institute completed a histamine project in March 2004. Under this project, seminars on histamine were offered to fishermen and processors in Northeast New Brunswick. These seminars showed how to use a rapid detection kit to test for histamine. If fish are held at temperatures of 4°C or lower, histamine should not exceed the minimum level of 50 ppm.
8. As the level of commitment to quality improvement varies from port to port, and the infrastructure necessary for quality projects is not available in all ports, it is recommended that pilot projects to improve quality be implemented in certain ports where there is a commitment and the necessary infrastructure.
9. The Institute has found that meeting with small groups of fishermen in individual ports is the most effective way to exchange information and discuss projects. Confidentiality can be maintained at this level, which results in open discussion.
10. The Institute could carry out roe testing to determine opening dates of herring fishery.
11. The seiners appear to be landing good quality fish as they have adopted modern technology.
12. It is important that we continue to have committees such as the Round Table and Sectoral Table where the seiners can sit with inshore and processor representatives to discuss issues facing the industry.
13. There is confusion in the industry on the roles that DFO and CFIA can play in quality improvement projects.

Provincial Departments of Fisheries

Newfoundland and Labrador

1. The two major issues facing the Atlantic Mackerel fishery are that we are not catching the quota, and we need to develop markets.
2. In 2003, 26,000 tonnes of mackerel were landed in Newfoundland. Preliminary landings for 2004 are 35,000 tonnes. Most of these landings were by the mid-shore seiners based in western Newfoundland.
3. A strong market exists for medium and large mackerel in Europe. There has been a problem with small mackerel in some of the Newfoundland fishery.

New Brunswick

1. We need a forum where all parts of the industry can meet to discuss industry issues.
2. We need to foster a true sense of partnership between the Federal and Provincial Governments.
3. It may be possible to initiate quality pilot projects through the MFU “Communities of Interest” organization.
4. There is some support for participation of small seiners in the inshore herring fishery.
5. There are opportunities to develop projects from herring roe on kelp and majetes.
6. Any long-term vision for the herring and mackerel fisheries in the Southern Gulf must include a guarantee of access to the resource for both the inshore and mid-shore seiner fleet sectors.
7. The Surette Report recommended that a dispute resolution mechanism representing all parties should be put in place to resolve conflict issues. This has not yet been done but should be a part of the long-term vision. The mandate of the process must be clear and precise.
8. For Shared Stewardship to succeed, there must be transparency and confidence in the decision-making process.

Nova Scotia

1. The NS Department is promoting the development of a herring food based fishery in Gulf Nova Scotia as an alternate to the roe fishery. The Provincial Department sponsored a seminar on this topic on February 10, 2005 that had 150 participants.
2. It is recognized that many ports do not have the infrastructure (ice making facilities, unloading systems) for maintaining fish quality.
3. The Provincial Department is committed to work with the industry on quality improvement pilot projects.
4. Fishermen should consider moving from 2-5/8 to a 2-3/4 inch mesh size for the fall herring to be used for food production.
5. There is a decline in mackerel from the North Sea that should open up market opportunities for mackerel food products.
6. Concern was raised that US estimates of mackerel stocks are higher than those of DFO. (Atlantic Canadian mackerel stocks migrate to the coast of Maine during the summer and fall and intermix with the US stocks. US scientists do stock assessment using Canadian and American landings catch data and consider the two stocks as one in their assessment. DFO and the Canadian industry have concerns about the way US stock assessment is carried out).
7. There is limited knowledge in the industry about the Precautionary Approach, OBFM, or ecosystem considerations.

Prince Edward Island

1. The twenty-five fathom inshore exclusion zone on the North shore of PEI should be extended to North Cape.
3. The buyers/processors should pay a price incentive for fishermen to land quality herring.
3. Educational programs to advise fishermen and processors of the importance of fish quality should be delivered.
4. There should be daily trip limits in the spring herring fishery in Escuminac/Western PEI.
5. The fall herring fishery in Escuminac/Western PEI should open on August 15th or the areas should be split with separate quotas and opening dates.
6. Development of a roe on kelp fishery should be explored.
7. There should be a reintroduction of roe testing to determine the opening of the fall herring. This could increase roe weight and result in higher prices for fishers.
8. Increasing mesh size to land larger herring and more females could increase roe quality.
9. There is a significant amount of small mackerel being landed in some areas of the Atlantic. There is a need to enforce minimum size limits.
10. Roe on kelp projects should be promoted.
11. Attention should be given to reducing the capture of juvenile herring in the seiner fishery.
12. There is limited discussion of the mackerel fishery in the consultative process.
13. There is a concern about the lack of resources available to DFO Science to carry out the necessary research resulting in requests to industry and Provincial Governments to pay some of the costs.
14. There is support for following the Precautionary Approach in managing the fisheries, but the introduction of this approach will require a significant level of consultation between the industry, DFO Science, and resource managers.
15. True co-management can only be attained if all participants have an equal vested interest in the conservation and harvesting of the resources.

Quebec

1. There is a shortage of freezing capacity in some areas.
2. There is a shortage of ice-making facilities on the Magdalen Islands and on the North shore.
4. There is support for pilot projects. We need to identify key players and work with them.

IV. Conclusions

Over the course of the consultation meetings with harvesters, it was clear that the management measures for the inshore herring fisheries, as outlined in the *Integrated Fisheries Management Plan for Herring - Area 16*, had been developed in consultation with the industry at both the Area and Gulf Regional levels, and there is general agreement with these measures. Where there are differing opinions between fishermen groups in a particular Area, DFO has had to make the final decision.

Over the course of the meetings with harvesters, there was a general recognition by all groups that both the mackerel and herring fisheries have the potential to be developed to increase the returns to both fishermen and plant owners. Both fisheries should aim to land high quality fish that can be used to produce existing products, but also new food products that can be sold to national and international markets.

Fish Quality Improvement

As a Vision for the future, from the harvesters' perspective, the one area where there was general agreement by fishermen, processors, and Federal and Provincial officials was the need to promote the landing of high quality fish.

There was a general acceptance that the poor quality fish landed now in many areas of the Southern Gulf is having a negative impact in the marketplace. The marketplace is a global one and our products have to compete with products from other countries many of which are producing high quality products.

It is generally accepted that with available technology, it is possible to land high quality herring from both seiners and gill nets. Herring landed by Gulf seiners is of good quality. Good quality fish are also being effectively landed in BC by both by gillnet and seiner fleets. In BC, herring that are not being held between 1 and 3 °C are rejected by the processing plants. In many instances in the Southern Gulf, this is not being done, which is having a negative impact on the quality of the products produced and in the marketplace.

Histamine can develop in both herring and mackerel if fish are not maintained at cool temperatures by proper icing or cooling from time of capture through to processing. Processing does not eliminate histamine in products and elevated levels of histamine can cause consumer illnesses. The CFIA minimum standard for histamine is 50 ppm. The European standard is 100 ppm. In most cases, histamine levels in illness-causing fish have been above 200 ppm. Fish that are cooled to 4 °C can meet the minimum standards. There is real concern that product rejected from the marketplace because of histamine can have a significant negative impact in the marketplace.

Many harvesters felt that DFO and the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA)

should enforce the use of ice by fishermen and the maintenance of fish at cooled temperatures through to processing. Discussions with DFO and CFIA clarified their roles.

CFIA requires processing plants to produce a product safe for the consumer. The Quality Management Plan for a plant identifies critical control points that must be addressed to ensure safety of product. One of these critical control points is that fish taken into plants for processing must be held at a temperature of 4 °C. This requirement is included in Section 8 of Schedule 111 of the Fish Inspection Regulations.

Sections 14.1 and 14.3 of Schedule 111 of the Fish Inspection Regulations outline the requirements for vessels used for fishing, holding, or transporting fish. These requirements also require that fish be held at 4°C or lower. However, CFIA Inspection Officers will only go to the wharves when problems with fish quality are identified at the plants. CFIA considers it the responsibility of the buyer/processor to require fishermen to maintain their catches at the proper temperature to maintain quality.

DFO has no jurisdiction over enforcing for quality of fish (i.e. there are no DFO regulations with respect to fish quality). DFO enforces conditions of license, which covers seasons, gear type, size limits, and trip limits.

It is clearly the responsibility of fishermen and the buyers/processors to ensure fish are properly iced and fish are maintained at cool temperatures from time of harvest through to processing.

To land quality fish requires inshore fishermen to ice their catches on the boats at time of harvest. Fish should be kept in insulated boxes, Xactic boxes being the ones most commonly used. In the herring fishery, the larger Xactic boxes of 35 cubic feet are able to hold 1,875 pounds of fish using a conversion factor of 53.57 lbs/ft³ and proper icing with boxes filled to three inches from the top. One processor has indicated he requires fishermen to use 100 pounds of ice in each box. For the mackerel hand-line fishery, the smaller Xactic boxes (which can hold 400 pounds) are used and one processor has indicated he requires an equal weight of fish and ice to be used in the boxes. In most instances the buyers provide the ice to fishermen.

When fishermen land at the wharf, the fish are unloaded with derricks or booms if in insulated boxes or is pumped with wet or dry pumps into boxes for transport to the processing plants. In the inshore fishery, it is generally accepted that keeping fish in Xactic boxes with proper icing, and unloading and transporting these boxes to the processing plants maintains the fish in the best quality. The seiners hold their fish in refrigerated seawater from time of capture. The fish is pumped into Xactic boxes that are iced for transport to the processing plants and high quality is maintained.

Maintaining quality requires a commitment from fishermen and buyers/processors. If ice

is not available for fishermen, a poor quality fish will be landed. If the buyer unloading and transporting the fish to the plant does not keep the fish cool, quality will deteriorate on the way to the plants.

Currently in the Southern Gulf, there are a small number of processors/buyers in some ports that have agreements with their fishermen to use ice. The plants have the necessary infrastructure at the wharves to unload vessels and keep fish cool during transport to the plant.

In other ports, there is no ice available for fishermen. In most cases, the price paid to these fishermen is the same as that paid to fishermen using ice. Some fishermen question the need to use ice, and are not aware of the impact that poor quality fish has on the processors' ability to produce quality products.

The challenge for the industry is put in place the infrastructure necessary to land and deliver quality fish to processing plants and to provide the necessary incentives to fishermen and buyers to use the infrastructure.

Given the number of ports and fishermen, as well as the different levels of commitment within the industry both at the fishermen and processor level, and the fact the onus will be on buyers/processors to require fishermen to use ice, it is recommended to proceed with pilot projects in ports where the infrastructure is in place and there is commitment from all parties.

When fishermen and buyers in a particular port express interest in a pilot project, meetings should be held among these people to develop the pilot project. A committee should be put in place to coordinate the project. The necessary infrastructure should be identified. The responsibilities of fishermen, buyers, and processors should be determined.

When the required infrastructure has been identified a plan should be developed which would include seeking the necessary funding. In some instances, the industry may fund some of the costs. However, in all provinces, there are financial assistance programs delivered by ACOA and Provincial Departments of Fisheries and Industry that may be able to cover part of the costs.

Seminars should be held for fishermen and buyers/processors to provide them with information on the importance of landing quality fish and the benefits it can have to both fishermen and processors. The Coastal Zone Research Institute in Shippagan has been involved in quality programs and is willing to assist in organizing and implementing pilot projects, including delivering training seminars. Fisheries training institutions in other provinces could be approached to participate as well. Officials from Provincial Departments of Fisheries and Industry as well as from DFO and CFIA could also participate in training seminars.

Shared Stewardship

The *Policy Framework for the Management of Fisheries on Canada's Atlantic Coast* defines the principle of Shared Stewardship as follows:

"Governments, resource users and others with an interest in the fisheries share responsibility for the sustainable use and economic viability of fisheries."

To implement the principle, four strategies will be followed designed to empower and engage participants in the fisheries in the fisheries management decision and policy making processes. These four strategies are as follows:

1. To adopt a more inclusive approach to policy planning;
2. To enable resource users to assume more of a role in operational decisions;
3. To facilitate Aboriginal participation in policy planning and decision making; and
4. To support building capacity for resource users to take on new responsibilities.

The current process of developing management plans for the herring and mackerel fisheries in the Southern Gulf contains some elements that involve industry decision-making, but DFO must take the decision on any contentious issues.

DFO has in place a number of committees to receive input from harvesters, processors and Provincial Governments in the development of management plans. In each of the DFO Areas, there are Small Pelagics Advisory Committees, some chaired by industry, which meet at least annually to discuss the fisheries at the Area level. Annually, representatives from the DFO Areas participate at the Gulf Small Pelagics Advisory Committee meeting to discuss management plans for the Southern Gulf.

In addition, Area representatives are also invited to participate at the Regional Assessment Process (RAP) meetings, which are held annually to review the Stock Status Reports prepared by DFO Science. DFO Science officials canvas about one third of all fishermen for their views on stock abundance.

Following the RAP meeting, there is a further meeting to obtain input from the industry and Provincial Government representatives on the management plans based on information received from the RAP session. DFO officials then recommend a management plan to the Minister who makes the final decision on the plan and announces it.

During the consultative process, there is generally agreement on the decisions relating to the establishment of the TACs for the upcoming season. In most instances, in local Areas, industry determines opening dates and trip limits which follows the principle of shared stewardship. There are, at times, disagreements between Areas on management measures such as Area quotas and trip limits. As well, there are instances where there is conflict between the inshore and offshore seiners on exclusion zones.

When these disagreements occur, DFO must make the final decision, which is usually seen as favoring one of the two parties involved when management plans are announced.

In addition, fishermen and processors have, over the past forty years, become very quick to draw areas of concern to the attention of Provincial and Federal politicians to seek support for the positions of their respective groups. Politicians at both levels, including Ministers, have been drawn into areas of conflict, and the industry, in most instances, expect a political decision to resolve these areas of conflict.

The presentation from the DFO Manager, a gillnet fisherman, and a seiner fishermen from British Columbia, as part of the Vision exercise, provided an example of how shared stewardship has evolved in the BC herring fishery.

In the mid 1960s the BC herring fishery collapsed due to overfishing for a reduction fishery. When the stocks rebounded in the early 1970s, the fishery was opened for roe. After a period of conflict, the fishers, processors and DFO established harvest rules that ensure conservation and a sustainable harvest.

About eighty per cent of the TAC, which is about 60,000 tonnes annually, is shared between seiners (55%) and gillnetters (45%). The remaining twenty per cent of the TAC is shared among a number of small fisheries including bait, food, and roe on kelp. Six per cent is set aside for management and research.

The Herring Conservation and Research Society manages the funds generated from the six per cent set aside in the quota for conservation and research. The Board of Directors for the Herring Conservation and Research Society is dominated by industry members and has representation from gillnetters, seiners, First Nations, processors, DFO, and other public representatives.

The Society pays for all research and management related to the BC herring fishery. Proposals for science or management initiatives come before the Board, or sub-committees of the Board, for approval.

At present, 300 seiners and nearly 1000 gillnetters fish side by side in the fishery. Each license has an Individual Transferable Quota (ITQ). Both gillnetters and seiners participate in roe testing to determine opening dates. The seiner fishery takes place just before the gillnet fishery.

There are five fishing areas and each area has a TAC established based on spawning stock biomass from the previous year and estimates of recruitment. Stocks are monitored as they accumulate prior to spawning and, if considered necessary, TAC'S can be reduced in consultation with an industry consultative committee.

Independent dockside monitors observe every landing and buyers enforce the

requirement that fish be held between 1°C and 3°C. Landing of quality herring by both gillnetters and seiners is an integral part of the fishery, as processors want to have a top quality product for the Japanese market.

Industry is much more involved in decision-making in the BC herring fishery than the process in the Southern Gulf. Industry is thus more responsible for, and accountable for, the decisions taken.

Given the numbers of fishermen, harvester, and processor organizations, seiners, inshore zones, and five provinces that participate in the Southern Gulf herring and mackerel fisheries, the model to be developed for shared stewardship for the management of these fisheries, although able to draw on the experience in the BC fishery, will have to be structured to meet the needs of the Southern Gulf.

The Vision for the herring and mackerel fisheries in the Southern Gulf should be to establish a true, shared partnership for the management for the two fisheries following the strategies outlined in the DFO Policy Framework referred to above. The management decisions can be either policy or operational in nature.

It is proposed that DFO and the industry work closely together in developing policies and guidelines. This would include decisions on matters relating to setting TACs, determining harvesting strategies (developed under the Objectives-Based Fisheries Management Approach) to be implemented based on reference points under the Precautionary Approach and ecosystem considerations, and determining science plans.

In the early stages, DFO will have to take the lead in policy discussions. However, at the end of a ten year period, it should be a goal for the industry representation to have developed to a point where it can take the lead in these discussions and make recommendations to DFO for approval.

When the policies and guidelines have been established for the fisheries, industry should take the lead role in operational matters relating to the day-to-day management of the fisheries. This would include making decisions on matters such as seasons, trip limits, roe testing, and quality improvement projects. The primary function of DFO would be to audit or monitor industry decisions to ensure that agreed upon policies and guidelines are being followed.

While the high value of the BC herring makes it possible for the industry to assign part of the quota to cover all costs of research and management, this would be extremely difficult given the much lower price for Gulf herring. It should be noted that for the past several years, herring caught in excess of trip limits in some areas of the Gulf has been sold and the funds sent to science initiatives.

For shared partnership to function effectively in the Southern Gulf, it is necessary that representatives of industry organizations develop abilities to work together. Integral to

this process, these representatives from different areas and gear sectors who participate in discussions (primarily at the regional level) must have the authority to negotiate agreements on issues that are deemed best for the region. Under the current process, area or sector representatives take their respective organization's position to the regional level but generally have no ability to agree to any other position, thus leaving DFO to make a final decision. DFO is then held accountable for the decision. The goal should be for industry to agree on decisions that are consistent with pre-determined policies and guidelines that have been developed by DFO in close consultation with the industry.

The development of industry organizations to effectively represent their members in negotiating decisions where some flexibility is required is essential if shared partnership is to be achieved. This will reduce the number of times where DFO must make decisions, and reduce the number of conflicts between different sectors. As well, decisions reached in this manner will be seen as being taken by industry and industry will see themselves as responsible for, and accountable for, the decisions.

It is recommended that DFO convene a regional meeting of representatives from industry, First Nations, and Provincial Governments to discuss how shared partnership can be introduced into the management of the herring and mackerel fisheries in the Southern Gulf. This meeting should not be held as part of any discussion of a particular management plan, but rather should focus on process and the responsibilities of the different parties in the process. At this meeting, DFO should present a clear definition of policy/guideline decisions and operational decisions with examples from the two fisheries. As well, there is a need for DFO to fully explain what the Department means by the Precautionary Approach, Objectives-Based Fisheries Management, and ecosystem considerations, with examples provided from the fisheries.

At the regional meeting, a group representatives of industry organizations, First Nations, and Provincial Governments should be formed that would work with DFO to implement a shared partnership approach in the herring and mackerel fisheries in the Southern Gulf over the next ten year period. A representative from industry should chair this Regional Group. DFO should function as a resource to the Group.

As a follow up to the Vision exercise, the Regional Group should review the points raised during the consultative process and determine which fall under a policy and guideline grouping, and which are considered operational. The Regional Group should work with DFO to make decisions on the policy and guideline matters. After this process is completed, the Area Small Pelagics Committees and the Gulf Small Pelagics Committee should proceed to develop management plans to address the operational concerns in a manner consistent with the agreed upon policies and guidelines. The objective should be to have the Area and Regional Committees chaired by industry representatives as soon as possible and all consultative committees chaired by industry representatives within a ten year period.

Another option to consider would be to establish industry committees in each Area with representation from different groups to address specific issues and to come to Government with proposed solutions. Based on the suggestions received during the consultative meetings, there was agreement in every Area that efforts need to be taken to improve fish quality. A pilot quality improvement project in each Area could be initiated. An Area Committee, chaired by industry, structured similar to the Sectorial Committee established by the Coastal Zone Research Institute, would oversee the development and implementation of the project. Final recommendations from the group would go to Government to seek financial support for certain infrastructure. If the groups developed a relationship where they could constructively work together on quality improvement pilot projects, they could assume responsibility for addressing more difficult issues at a later time.

The management of the BC herring fishery has evolved from one of conflict between gear sectors and DFO to the current situation where there is a true partnership between industry and Government on management and science. A similar shared stewardship approach should be possible for the herring and mackerel fisheries in the Southern Gulf within the next ten-year time frame.

V. Recommendations

The following recommendations should be considered as DFO continues to meet with representatives from industry, First Nations, and Provincial Departments of Fisheries to complete a long-term vision for the herring and mackerel fisheries of the Southern Gulf.

- 1. Pilot projects to improve the quality of herring and mackerel should be initiated in all provinces. Officials from DFO, Provincial Departments, First Nations and institutions such as the Coastal Zone Research Institute should work closely with fishers and processors in the development and implementation of these projects.**
- 2. Officials from DFO should meet with representatives from the industry, First Nations, and Provincial Departments to fully explain how the principles of the Precautionary Approach, Objectives-Based Fisheries Management and Ecosystem Considerations are to be incorporated into the management plans developed for the herring and mackerel fisheries in the Southern Gulf.**
- 3. DFO needs to continue to support the development of industry organizations so that they can take on increasing levels of decision-making in the development and implementation of management plans with the objective of achieving true, shared stewardship. The objective should be to put in place regional and area committees chaired by industry to manage the fisheries. The industry must have confidence in the decision-making**

process and it must be transparent.

- 4. Representatives of industry groups that represent their organizations on consultative committees need to have the ability to negotiate final decisions on management plans that may require some deviation from their original positions. The objective should be to have industry groups resolve differences rather than referring issues to DFO managers or seek political support to resolve conflicts.**
- 5. The Long Term Vision for the Southern Gulf Herring Fishery should include a guarantee of access to the mid-shore seiners to their share of the stocks and the right to harvest this share without conflict with the inshore fleets.**

Attachment

Long-term Management Strategy
- Herring and Mackerel Fisheries
in the Southern Gulf of St. Lawrence –

Report Submitted to Fisheries and Oceans Canada
by the

Fédération Régionale Acadienne des Pêcheurs Professionnels Inc.

April 2005

INTRODUCTION:

FRAPP was invited to participate in this strategic exercise as part of a DFO initiative to develop, in cooperation with the industry, a long-term vision of the herring and mackerel fishery. It is from this perspective that we prepared the following report, which includes:

- I. our reaction to the terms of reference prepared by DFO;
- II. our opinion of the questions asked by the consultants, Desjardins/Johnston, during a meeting held in Shippagan on March 22, 2005, and finally;
- III. our main objectives with regard to the herring and mackerel fisheries in the southern Gulf of St. Lawrence.

I. REACTION TO THE TERMS OF REFERENCE:

As a result of the many conflicts, disputes and problems that have characterized this fishery and the management measures imposed on the New Brunswick seiner fleet in recent years, some skipper/owner-operators have disposed of their fishing enterprises, or are currently considering the possibility of doing so.

This has increased the level of uncertainty of crew members working in this fleet about their future in this industry.

The development of a long-term vision for the herring and mackerel fisheries therefore gives rise to, an interest tinged with fear among members of the seiner fleet about such things as their **legitimate right to fish**, their access to the resource, the harvesting and the delivery of the resource.

In order to commit themselves to this initiative, seiners need to be 100% reassured by the Department of Fisheries and Oceans that ***the seiner fleet will be authorized to exercise its legitimate right to fish the quota it has been granted and when the resource is there***. There is no doubt that DFO will need to show more leadership and win the industry's trust.

On March 10, 2005, the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans, the Hon. Geoff Regan, proceeded to announce a stabilization of sharing arrangements in various fisheries, including southern Gulf of St. Lawrence herring. This arrangement confirms that the sharing between the inshore fleet and the seiner fleet is in place for a 5-year period.

FRAPP urges DFO to continue its efforts to make known far and wide the message contained in the report from consultant Allister Surette to the effect that “*both fleets are entitled to fish herring in the southern Gulf of St. Lawrence as per the present allocations*” and that the “*elimination of a fleet is not an option...*”. With this in mind, if a long-term strategy can bring more stability to this industry, and especially to the New Brunswick seiner fleet, FRAPP will encourage the latter to participate in a co-management exercise with the government as described in the terms of reference.

Furthermore, on the whole, FRAPP concurs with the objectives of the terms of reference with regard to the sustainability of resources and viability of the industry.

However, we must be realistic and acknowledge that in the short term, the seiner fleet’s viability will continue to be based on the volume of catches, even though, in the long term, certain measures will have to be taken to increase the value of the fishery and the sustainable use of these resources.

As for the management by objectives, it is an interesting approach, provided the performance objectives established are realistic, are based on reliable and up-to-date data and have been the subject of a consensus within the industry.

II. INDUSTRY CONSULTATION – OUR OPINIONS:

FRAPP took part in the industry consultation sessions held on March 22, 2005 in Shippagan. The following is our opinion of the questions raised by consultants Desjardins/Johnston during the meeting.

1) What are the strengths at this time?

- Diversified gear;
- Harvest capacity;
- Multiple markets (bait, fillet, roe, fishmeal, etc.) ;
- Scientific support from the Marine Products Research and Development Centre (information on histamine, research work on by-products, industry awareness, etc.).

2) What aspects could be improved?

- Increased need for scientific research on the fishing done by the seiner fleet;
- Recognition of the importance of the fishing done by the seiner fleet and the processing of herring meat. Everyone seems to forget:
 - 1 that the herring quota held by New Brunswick seiners represents a very large part of the overall herring quota in the southern Gulf, i.e. 23.17%;
 - 2 that New Brunswick is the only province to have a fleet of vessels exclusively used for the fishing of herring intended for meat processing;
 - 3 that plants specializing in herring meat products are located throughout the Acadian Peninsula;
 - 4 that this fishery generates a sizeable number of jobs here in the Acadian Peninsula;
- DFO's leadership, its leniency towards the false allegations of the inshore sector, its

weakness with regard to enforcing legislation and regulations, and its lack of equity with regard to the seiner fleet;

- Elimination of irritants by clarifying perceptions;
- Making up-to-date and relevant documentation on the fishing activities of the seiner and inshore fleets accessible;
- Increasing the seiners' limited access to the roe market;
- Promotion of the optimization of finished product quality in a context in which the price would be relative to the quality;
- Re-establishment of the dialogue between the industry and DFO so as to work together in a constructive manner. Optimization of communication and exchanges;
- Support from governments and communities for the seiner fleet.

3) **What are the main obstacles to this improvement?**

- Ignorance and bad faith on the part of Prince Edward Island stakeholders, among fishers, the media, supporters and others (smear campaign);
- False allegations and systematic attacks by the inshore sector;
- Indifference of governments (federal and provincial) and the public;
- Regulatory unreasonableness on the part of DFO-Gulf towards the seiner fleet;
- The lack of negotiation power leads to low prices paid to fishers for quality herring;
- Inability of the seiner fleet to fish when the resource is present and quality could be optimized;

- Lack of recent comparative analysis of fishing gear;
- Continuing public discourse to the effect that seiner fishing today is the same (with the same impact) as fishing in the 1960s.

4) **What are the opportunities?**

- Intensified research and development efforts by seeking out the expertise of fishers;
- Research on an optimal use of the product (e.g.: Omega 3, by-products, etc.) ;
- Use the example of the successful British Columbia fishery;
- Opportunity for the development of new markets (mackerel, caplin, etc.);
- Explore what is being done in other countries and see how it could be applied here.

5) **What are the threats?**

- The lack of resources in DFO for enforcing acts and regulations with respect to the inshore fleet (logbooks, daily quota overruns due to lack of control and dockside monitoring, etc.);
- A lack of resources within the Science Branch at DFO;
- Lack of solidarity within the industry;
- Real danger of the disappearance of a fleet sector. If no changes are made, these species may end up being harvested solely by inshore fishers or by consortiums of processing companies;

- Little of the seiner fleet still belongs to skipper-owners. Some seiners have been purchased by corporate interests, which could lead to a monopoly in this sector (e.g.: Barry Group from Newfoundland controls the market of 4 seiners in New Brunswick);
- There is little new blood in the industry, among both operators and crew members, as a direct consequence of the fishing conditions in recent years. The seiner fleet may very well have more and more difficulty recruiting qualified and certified professional crew members;
- Vessels are getting older and greatly need repairs;
- Inability of Canadian fishers to establish a history of fishing (vis-à-vis American fishers).

III. MAIN OBJECTIVES:

Herring fishery:

The main objectives must be:

- i. resource conservation,
- ii the establishment of a greater industry stabilization, and
- iii the profitability of fishing enterprises.

The evolution in the herring seiner fishery in recent years indicates that it suffers serious harm resulting from the impossibility of catching the herring quotas granted to it, on an annual basis.

The problem lies in the conflicts with the inshore fleet and the management measures imposed by DFO.

In 2004, the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans released the Policy Framework for the Management of Fisheries on Canada's Atlantic Coast. This framework states that:

“ The department’s policy objective is to create the circumstances for resource users to be more self-reliant, economically viable and self-sustaining” (page 17)

Self-reliant resource users are described as:

- 1 Having adopted a conservation ethic and conducting harvesting operations in a responsible manner.
- 2 Receiving returns sufficient to be economically viable.
- 3 Contributing to the costs of managing fisheries.
- 4 Conducting safe fishing practices and ensuring that all those involved have received proper training.

This policy framework announced by the minister stresses the importance of the **resource users’ self-reliance**. This is also a priority for the seiner fleet, which has seen the profitability of fleet operations greatly affected in recent years, making the very viability of this fleet highly uncertain.

Optimistically, we hope that the issue of the co-existence of the two fleet sectors can be resolved on a permanent basis, since there is room for both groups and these fisheries provide a lot of opportunities.

A climate of cooperation must also be established between the provinces and the fleet sectors involved in this fishery. **More than ever, collaborative management is essential.**

The future management of fisheries must be based on greater industry accountability. Mechanisms must be established to maximize communications and the sharing of information, with the ultimate objective of enabling each group to catch its quota and get the best possible price for its fish.

It is totally unacceptable that processors and herring plant employees in the Acadian Peninsula are unable to benefit from the entire supply of herring caught by the seiner

fleet.

It is essential to realize that in the southern Gulf, New Brunswick is the only province to have a quota for the supply of herring meat, i.e. approximately 23% of the overall quota. This quota belongs to the seiners. It is obvious that if the seiner fleet were to disappear, its herring quota would be distributed among the other provinces bordering the Gulf. This would be a permanent and incalculable loss for the New Brunswick fishing industry and especially for the workforce of the Acadian Peninsula.

The Department will therefore have a role to play; this role will not be to validate ignorance and/or perceptions, but rather to enforce the fisheries legislation and regulations and allow the two fleet sectors to fish and land the quotas allocated to each.

Mackerel fishery:

The mackerel fishery can represent a worthwhile opportunity for the seiner fleet. It could serve as a complementary fishery, but should never be perceived as a replacement for their main fishery, which is herring.

We will need to work in close cooperation with processors and DFO to establish a policy development plan for this pelagic fish.