

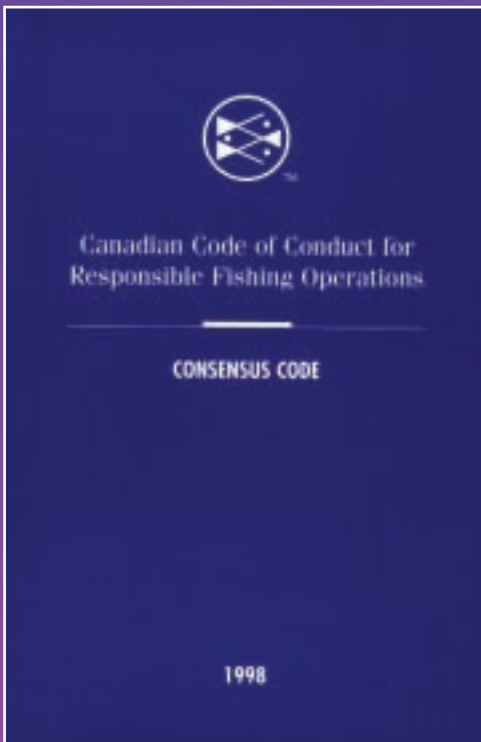
Canadian Code of Conduct *for Responsible* Fishing Operations

Canada is one of the first countries in the world to protect fish stocks and the aquatic environment by developing its own code of conduct for its domestic fisheries.

Developed by fishermen for fishermen, the Canadian Code of Conduct for Responsible Fishing Operations includes conservation principles and practical operational standards aimed at ensuring responsible fishing practices in Canadian waters. All Canadian fishing organizations took part in developing the code. Its objective is to promote responsible fishing, conservation harvesting technology and sustainable development.

Based on a United Nations Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) code developed in 1995 in recognition of the pressure on many fish stocks around the world, the Canadian Code came into being in 1998. In our domestic fisheries, many Atlantic groundfish stocks had been closed to fishing or had reduced quotas and Pacific salmon runs were down.

The Government of Canada and the Canadian fishing industry are learning from past mistakes and preparing for a productive future. A fundamental change in the way fisheries are managed and operated is essential, whether it's recovering fish stocks, healthy fisheries or newly developed commercial fisheries. Fishermen recognize, along with DFO, that real change requires a fundamental shift in attitude and responsibilities.



Principles and guidelines



The Canadian code sets out nine principles as the foundation for conservation. Based on these principles, 36 guidelines detail what is needed to achieve sustainable fishing operations. Issues covered under the guidelines include:

- selective fishing;
- catch monitoring;
- protection of the resource and environment;
- fishing gear;
- vessels;
- cooperation and partnership;
- access and environment; and
- education, research and public awareness.

A new approach for a new century

Fishermen fully recognize the need to play an important role in all conservation aspects of the fishery together with the Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO). Fundamental to this new approach to management and fishing practices in Canada is the Canadian code, developed through the joint efforts of fishermen and government. The Canadian code provides a solid foundation for future co-operation between industry and government. To date, more than 60 fisheries organizations, representing 80 percent of the landings, have ratified it.

Canada's Program for Responsible Fishing deals with practical issues as proposed by industry and is supported by DFO. Proposals come from all stakeholders involved in the fishery, and the resulting collaborative projects involve, for example, technical support from DFO and vessel and other contributions from the industry partners involved.

An awareness that individual achievements and efforts often go unrecognized has given rise to four annual awards and a medal for responsible fishing named after

the Right Honourable Romeo LeBlanc, former fisheries minister and Governor General of Canada. Fishermen from the Atlantic, Arctic, Freshwater and Pacific coasts have been honoured, and the awards and medal have already been presented for 2000 and 2001 by the Right Honourable Romeo LeBlanc.

The Canadian fishing industry is committed to the effective conservation of our marine resources. Canadian fishermen understand that fish and the aquatic environment must be protected and managed to ensure long-term benefits to present and future generations of Canadians.

