The Arctic is assuming increasing prominence as an area of national interest for Canada. As the ice melts and other countries jockey for position in the Arctic, Canada needs to assert a greater presence in the Arctic. The Harper Govt announced a couple of years ago its intention to build 6-8 patrol ships capable of operating in the Arctic as well as a major Arctic icebreaker. A CBC news investigation has revealed that Canada will be paying though the nose for these patrol ships compared with the prices that other countries have paid recently for similar vessels. Apparently Ottawa will pay Irving Shipbuilding $288 million just to design — not build — a fleet of new Arctic offshore patrol ships. A study of other countries shows they paid a fraction of that $288 million to actually build the ships — and paid less than a tenth as much for the design. The design of Canada's new ships is based upon a Norwegian vessel whose design Ottawa has already bought for just $5 million.

Denmark acquired two patrol ships for $105 million in 2007.

The Irish navy now is building two offshore patrol ships for $125 million. These facts indicate that Canadian taxpayers are being fleeced by this process. An ad by Irving Shipyards did little to counter that notion.

TAGS: sustainable fisheries, patrol ship fiasco, Arctic patrol ships, Irvings, government waste