

Newfoundland and Labrador is blessed with some 40,000 kilometres of coastline which has hundreds of communities situated adjacent to some of the richest fishing grounds in the world. In 2012 we had nearly 5000 fishing enterprises operating in the inshore fleet which comprises vessels less than 65 feet. Inshore fish harvesters are self-employed fishing enterprise owners that employ some 10,000 skippers and crew members in the communities in which they live. This does not include processing jobs nor the spin-off jobs created indirectly by these entrepreneurs. In 2012, this fleet landed \$370 million worth of fish, which was 60% of the province's total landings. Between 2000 and 2012, the Department of Fisheries and Oceans recorded that the average annual landings of this fleet was \$360 million, accounting for 66% of the total catch. This fleet has proven to be the foundation of a way of life in our Province. For 500 years this fishery has been and it remains today the centerpiece of the economic, social, and cultural life of our coastal communities. Not only that, this fishery makes a much needed contribution to the food security of our coastal communities and the province. Throughout the east coast (i.e. in Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island, Newfoundland and Labrador, and Quebec combined) there are some 10,000 inshore enterprises, which in 2011 produced \$1.8 billion in landed value and created more jobs than any other employer.

TAGS: CETA, sustainable, fisheries, coastal communities, NL, Winston Fiander

These fishing enterprises are embedded in the economic, social and cultural fabric of rural coastal communities. This fact was acknowledged with the introduction of the Fleet Separation Policy in 1979 and the Owner-Operator Policy in 1996 -- two long standing policy instruments crucial to the survival of our fishing

communities. Combined, these policies restrain the purchase of quotas and licenses by corporate entities and others who have the financial power to buy them up, consolidate them, and remove them from communities. These twin policies have acted as a bulwark which has ensured the viability of hundreds of fishing communities in our province, the Maritime

Written by Winston Fiander
Saturday, 25 January 2014 09:26

Provinces, and Quebec. They have prevented the shutdown of enterprises, saved jobs, and enabled owner-operator fisheries to remain the economic engine in our coastal communities.

In addition to the Owner Operator and Fleet Separation Policies, new and innovative fishery legislation, policies and programs are needed to address other serious threats to the viability of our communities as they evolve. One such threat, and arguably our greatest currently, is most of our fishermen are nearing retirement age, and want to sell and convert their quotas and licenses into a retirement fund. But aspiring young fishermen can't afford to buy their enterprises to enter the industry. Creative policies initiatives are needed to ensure that fishing jobs and incomes stay in our communities. Some of these are already in place.

Examples include community investment enterprises such as the St. Anthony Basin Resource Institute (SABRI), the Labrador Shrimp Company, and the Fogo Cooperative. Of-the-Hook, a Nova Scotia contractual arrangement that enables fishers to supply local households with fresh fish at a pre-arranged price on a weekly basis, is another example. C

operative ownership

[arrangements](#)

that allow fishermen or communities to pool licenses and quotas and lease them back to members, at reduced or fair trade cost, is another. Even lending institutions such as the South Coast Community Development Corporation has recognized the importance of offering affordable lending options to young fish harvesters in order to support the continuance of inshore fishing in their region. Will CETA consider these policies subsidies and challenge their continuance?

I am concerned that CETA may become a barrier to implementing policies and programs such as those mentioned above, and indeed others that may be needed in the future to accommodate food security and food sovereignty issues. In fact, I am not confident that the long standing and necessary

Owner Operator and Fleet Separation Policies are safe. It is held that they are protected because they have

been made an *Annex 2* reservation to the agreement. But Scott Sinclair who authored a study called *Globalization, Trade Treaties, and the Future of the Atlantic Canadian Fisheries*, cautions that having the policies listed in Annex 2 may merely mean that they are safe for now but they can become a target for attack later on. Once they come under attack, they may be referred to the World Trade Organization for judgement thus removing Canada's control over them. Given this, CETA could potentially jeopardize Canada's ability to retain or introduce the kind of creative legislation, policies and programs which are needed to ensure sustainability of independent fishers and the coastal communities where they are based. Given the thousands of fishery workers and communities that could be impacted, the details of CETA should make crystal clear that Canada reserves the right to manage the fishery for our own benefit. We cannot afford to be complacent about our right to maximize the economic and social benefits we derive from the fishery within our 200-mile Exclusive Economic Zone. If we fail to clarify this in CETA, we will be putting at risk the long-term sustainability of the fishery of NL and the rest of Canada.

A current [initiative](#) being undertaken by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations calls on nations to recognize and protect our small scale fisheries by adopting the *Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-scale Fisheries in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication*.

The objectives of the Guidelines are "... to provide advice and recommendations, establish principles and criteria, and information to assist states and stakeholders to achieve secure and sustainable small-scale fisheries and related livelihoods". This initiative is a concerted effort to recognize and protect the economic, social and cultural importance of small-scale fisheries throughout the world. I recommend these guidelines to the drafters of CETA as a tool that would help us retain the protective policies we currently have in place and enable us to introduce new ones for the benefit of our fishers, the communities where they live, our food security and our sovereignty.

In closing I want to thank the organizers of this hearing for inviting me to attend and present my concerns about CETA. But I also want to admonish you for not holding these hearings in NL where CETA's potential impact on the fishery will be greater than any other province. The best evidence of future negative effects on Newfoundland and Labrador is the \$280 million payment that will be made to Newfoundland and Labrador by the Government of Canada to counteract those effects. (Incidentally no information has been provided to the public as to why the payment is necessary.) I am concerned that the payment will not address potential negative economic impacts that rural communities in the Province will face if processing jobs are lost or the Owner Operator and Fleet Separation Policies are dismantled.

CETA Relevance to NL Inshore/Coastal Communities

Written by Winston Fiander

Saturday, 25 January 2014 09:26

It is a sad commentary on our democratic process when this committee, an instrument of our Parliament, cannot find the time to come to our province and hear the voices of those who will be significantly impacted. I want to remind you that it is not too late to correct that serious flaw in your consultations by scheduling hearings in NL to both inform us and hear what the people have to say.