Close to the sea

SJÁVARÚTVEGSRÁÐUNEYTIÐ
MINISTRY OF FISHERIES

The Icelandic policy

- To maintain the ocean's health.
- To achieve sustainable utilisation of all marine resources.
- To make every effort to preserve the ocean's biodiversity and ecosystem.
- To ensure that all decisions are based on the best available scientific and economic information available.
- To participate proactively in international forums to positively influence currents and trends in discussion on ocean-related issues.
- To promote free trade for seafood products in international trade.
- To ensure that consumers can choose Icelandic seafood knowing they are safe and healthy products.
- To ensure that individuals and enterprises in the Icelandic fisheries sector have clear and comprehensive non-discriminatory guidelines to follow that create a positive working environment which strengthens the sector's competitive position internationally.

Iceland and the international debate on the oceans

The international discussion on oceans has intensified during the last decade, driven by concern in the international community about overfishing and the risk of loss of marine biodiversity. As a nation devoted to responsible fisheries, Iceland has listened carefully and actively participated in the debate. The country's role has often been to point out that in such discussions generalisations can mislead and that it should be kept in mind that sustainable utilisation of living marine resources should be in the hands of those with most at stake and who are most affected by the decisions taken.

The last decade of the twentieth century saw important additions to the international legal framework for the oceans. Building on one of the most important achievements of the United Nations, namely the Convention on the Law of the Sea, an implementation agreement on straddling stocks and highly migratory stocks was reached in 1995. Since then numerous regional fisheries organisations have been established and those which were already in place have become more effective in taking on the management of the utilisation of marine living resources in areas beyond national jurisdictions.

Focusing more widely than on fisheries, the highlights in international development concerned with ocean affairs are most probably the Rio Summit in 1992 and its follow-up in the Johannesburg World Summit on sustainable development a decade later. The latter reviewed progress made, and stated goals for sustainable fisheries, and introduced the concept of an ecosystem approach. A convention on the conservation of biodiversity was signed in Rio and has entered into force. In 1995 the adoption of the global programme of action to reduce ocean pollution from land-based activities marked a turning point, as 80% of all pollution in the oceans originates on land. Regional co-operation on protection of the marine environment of the North-East Atlantic was established in 1992, combining and up-dating two earlier conventions. Further non-binding agreements, such as the FAO Code of Conduct, contribute to responsible management. Fisheries ministers are also increasingly taking the initiative to collectively address problems such as IUU fishing.

Thus new international instruments have been developed and coastal states, both nationally and regionally, have developed their management of fisheries activities based on the best scientific evidence available. Responsible coastal states have also participated actively in developing new concepts, such as the precautionary approach to fisheries and the ecosystem approach in management. Iceland was a host to the FAO conference on responsible fisheries in the ecosystem in 2001, which was a major contribution to the debate on ocean issues at the Johannesburg Summit

There is now no shortage of tools, in the form of a legal framework or management concepts, to help us on the way towards sustainable use of living marine resources. What we need now are not new tools but to further implement those we have. We have entered into the time of implementation, of carrying out what we agree needs to be done.

In this brochure you will find information on what Icelanders are doing to ensure sustainable utilisation of their renewable marine resources and at the same time underpin the nation's livelihood. As fisheries are a mainstay of the country's economy these two goals are directly linked. In Iceland we have developed a management system of individual transferable quotas (ITQs) based on the vessels catch performance during a certain three years period. This management has three pillars. First the general ITQ, secondly the small vessels ITQ which is based on the same rules of allocation but has restrictions on use of gear. Trade of quota from the small vessel ITQ is not allowed. Thirdly we have regional policy instruments, where a limited quantity of quotas are allocated each year to vessels in communities that are dependent on fisheries and have been adversely affected by natural fluctuations of other shocks. On the following pages, we would like to give the reader an idea of how we manage our fisheries, what we have achieved through fisheries management, and how we co-operate with other nations of the world in creating a framework that is conducive to making fisheries a thriving sector that uses the living marine resources in a sustainable way and supplies important dietary protein and minerals in safe and healthy products.

758,000 km²

Gaining control...

In 1975 the 200 mile fishing limit became effective for Iceland. Until then foreign fleets were catching over 100,000 tons of cod each year in Icelandic waters. The 200 mile extension was the last of several important milestones in gaining control over the fishing areas around the country. National control was necessary in order to begin to develop effective management of the living marine resources.

Iceland first officially declared a fishing limit in 1901 with a maritime zone of three nautical miles, which remained in effect until 1952. For more than two decades afterwards, Icelanders campaigned to win full jurisdiction over the fishing grounds around their island and championed the international cause of coastal states to manage fisheries in their own waters, both as a resource and to prevent over-fishing. Known as the "Cod Wars", this campaign saw the fishing limit extended in four stages to reach its present 200 nautical miles in 1975, giving Iceland an Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) now covering a total area of 758,000 km^2.

Internationally, free access to fishing grounds was effective for the most productive part of the ocean until after World War II. During the next 40 years this principle was gradually replaced by almost complete authority of the adjacent coastal state to manage and control the use of the living resources and the conditions of that use.

The Icelandic claim to a 4 mile fishing limit in 1952 occurred as the International Law Commission was examining a reformulation of the Law of the Sea pertaining to fisheries. Eventually it was agreed to await the outcome of the first UN Conference on the Law of the Sea in 1958. Both that conference and a subsequent one in 1960 failed to result in agreement on territorial or fishing limits.

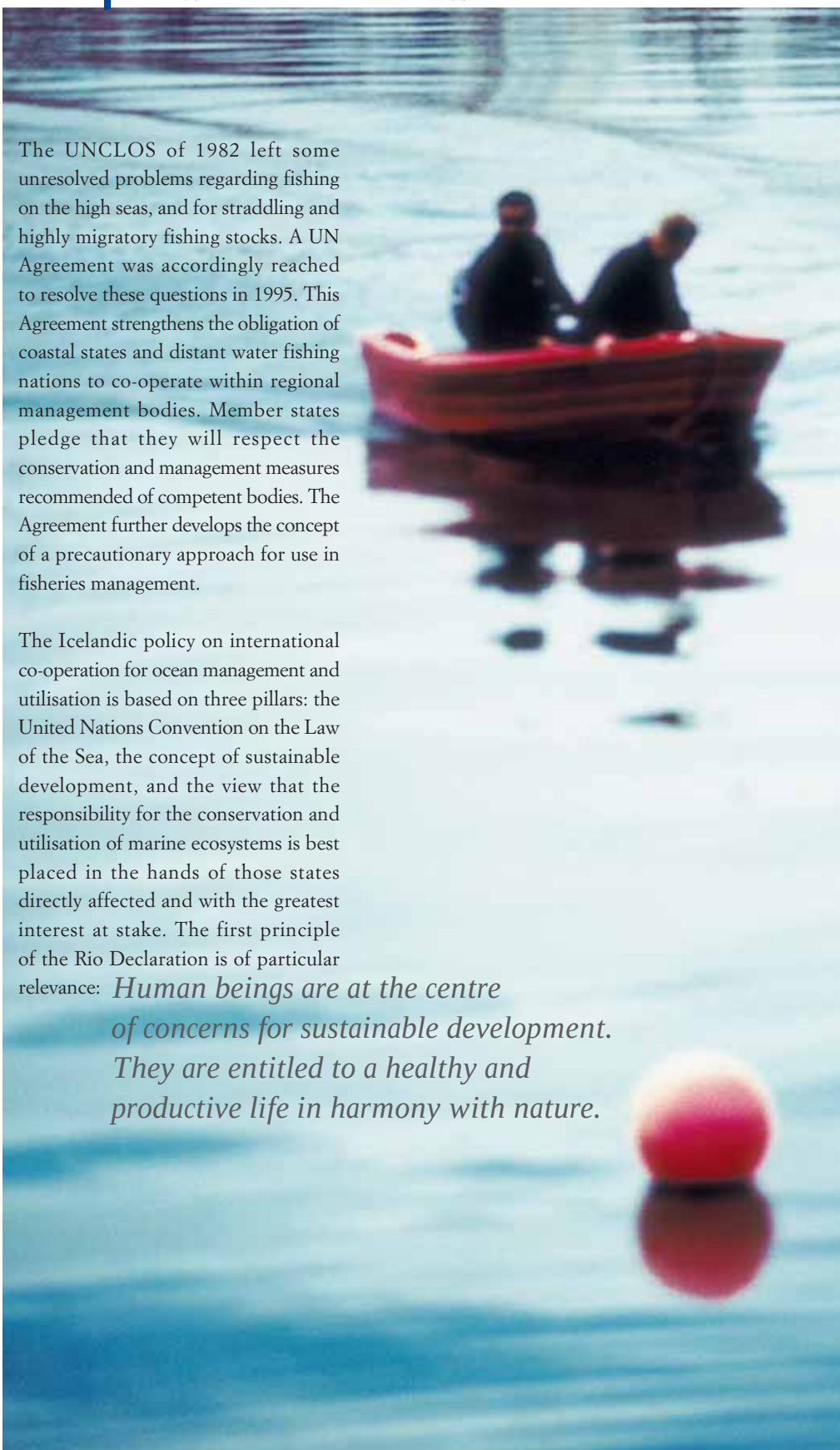
The failure to agree encouraged coastal states to expand their territorial sea or fishing zone to 12 miles. In the late 1960's a movement towards a third Law of the Sea Conference began. In 1972 Iceland proclaimed a fishing zone limit of fifty miles and consequently entered into a "Cod War" with Britain and West Germany. While the debate was ongoing at the third Conference on the Law of the Sea, the notion of a 200 mile fishing zone became generally accepted. It was finally codified in the Convention that was finalized on 10th December 1982.

Since the rights of coastal states to establish EEZs became generally recognised, Icelanders have had to adjust their own fishing effort to the productive capacity of their fisheries resources and their sustainable utilization.

...and participating in international co-operation in ocean issues

The Convention of the Law of the Sea was signed in 1982. Iceland was among the first states to ratify the treaty that entered into force in 1994.The Convention codifies the right of coastal states to declare an Exclusive Economic Zone of 200 nautical miles within which they have sovereign rights for exploiting natural resources, whether living or non-living. The Convention also codifies the duties of coastal states as regards conservation and management of living resources and protection and preservation of the marine environment.

Since the completion of the legal framework that UNCLOS provides, the international legal framework regarding the ocean has continued to evolve. The World Summit on Environment and Development in 2002 proposed a plan of implementation, adding to the guidance of the Rio Declaration and Agenda 21 agreed at the UN Conference on Environment and Development in 1992. There 150 government leaders also signed the Convention on Biological Diversity.



The UNCLOS of 1982 left some unresolved problems regarding fishing on the high seas, and for straddling and highly migratory fishing stocks. A UN Agreement was accordingly reached to resolve these questions in 1995. This Agreement strengthens the obligation of coastal states and distant water fishing nations to co-operate within regional management bodies. Member states pledge that they will respect the conservation and management measures recommended of competent bodies. The Agreement further develops the concept of a precautionary approach for use in fisheries management.

The Icelandic policy on international co-operation for ocean management and utilisation is based on three pillars: the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, the concept of sustainable development, and the view that the responsibility for the conservation and utilisation of marine ecosystems is best placed in the hands of those states directly affected and with the greatest interest at stake. The first principle of the Rio Declaration is of particular relevance:

Human beings are at the centre of concerns for sustainable development. They are entitled to a healthy and productive life in harmony with nature.

Conventions to which Iceland is a party

LEGAL FRAMEWORK ON OCEAN AFFAIRS:

United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, UNCLOS (1982).

UN agreement for the Implementation of the Provisions of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea of 10th December 1982, relating to conservation and management of straddling fish stocks and highly migratory fish stocks (1995). UN Fish Stocks Agreement.

RESEARCH:

Convention for the International Council for the Exploration of the Sea, ICES (1964).

REGIONAL MANAGEMENT:

Convention on Future Multilateral Co-operation in the Northwest Atlantic fisheries. NAFO (1978).

Convention on future Multilateral Co-operation the Northeast Atlantic fisheries. NEAFC (1980).

Agreement on Co-operation in Research, Conservation and Management of Marine Mammals in the North Atlantic, NAMMCO (1992).

International Convention for the Regulation of Whaling (1946). Iceland has a reservation concerning item e, Par. 10 of the annex to the Convention.

ICCAT: International Convention for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas, 2002.

NON-BINDING AGREEMENTS RELATING TO FISHERIES:

World Summit on Sustainable Development, (WSSD). Plan of implementation (2002).

RIO Declaration from the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, UNCED (1992).

UNCED Agenda 21 (1992).

FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries (1995).

PROTECTION OF BIODIVERSITY AND PREVENTION OF POLLUTION:

Convention on Biological Diversity (1992).

Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitants (1979).

Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora, CITES (1973).

Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment of the North-East Atlantic, OSPAR (1992).

International Convention on Oil Pollution Preparedness, Response and Co-operation (1990).

International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships (1973).

Convention on the Prevention of Marine Pollution by Dumping of Wastes and Other Matter (1972).

International Convention Relating to Intervention on the High Seas in Cases of Oil Pollution Casualties (1969).

For further information: www.environment.is

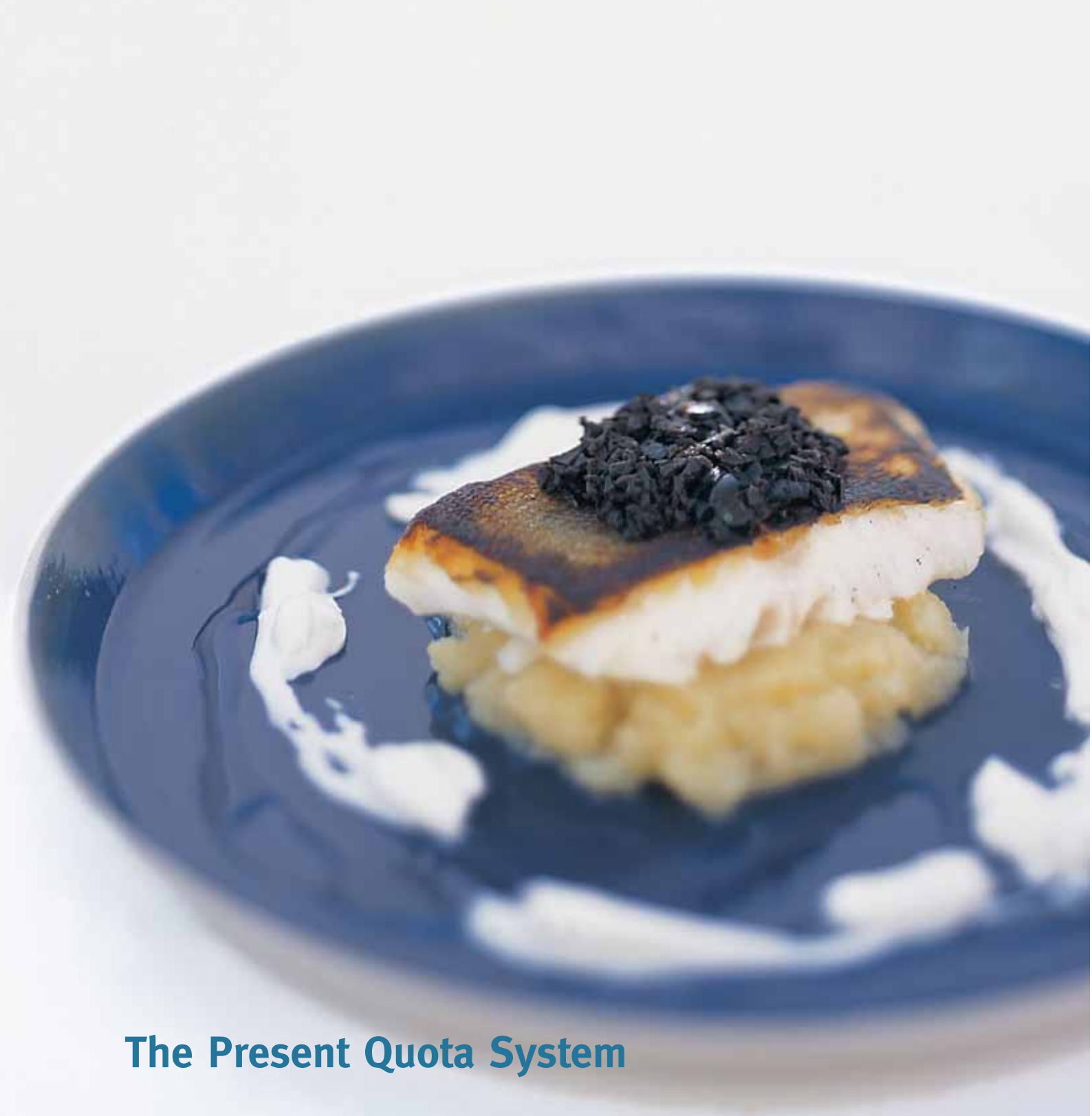
TRADE AGREEMENTS:

Agreement on the European Economic Area (1993).

Agreement on accession of 10 new member counties to the EEA (2004).

Free trade agreements with various countries.

For further information: http://www.mfa.is/international-relations/int-organizations



The Present Quota System

The total allowable catch (TAC) is set by the Minister of Fisheries and based on the recommendation from the Marine Research Institute (MRI)

Fishing vessels are allocated a fixed quota share of the species subject to TAC. The combined quota share for all vessels amounts to 100% of each species.

All commercial fishing activities are subject to these quotas.

The quotas were initially allocated on the basis of catch history prior to the establishment of the quota system.

The quota share is multiplied by the TAC to give the quantity which each vessel is authorized to catch of the species concerned during the fishing year in question. This is referred to as the vessel's catch quota.

Permanent quota shares and annual catch quotas are divisible and transferable to other fishing vessels. The allocation of quotas is subject to a fishing fee.

Individual fishing enterprises may not control more than the equivalent of 12% of the value of the total quotas allocated for all species, and 12% to 35% for individual species.

Towards sustainability

THE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

The waters around Iceland, fed by the warm Gulf Stream, offer exceptional conditions for fish stocks to thrive. Understanding the marine ecosystem is the foundation of sensible and sustainable harvesting of the resources. A key role has therefore been assigned to marine research in Iceland. Marine research dates back a century in Iceland and the population is well aware of its role and the importance of the fisheries sector as it contributes almost 40% of the nation's exports. Soon after gaining control of their exclusive economic zone it became clear to Icelanders that they were over-fishing their most valuable fish stocks. Various forms of fisheries restrictions have been applied and there has been an intensive political debate on different systems of management.

In 1983 effort limitations which had been in force since 1973 had proved unsuccessful and the cod stock was in decline. In 1983 the Althing, Iceland's national parliament, decided to adopt a management system of transferable quotas (ITQs) for individual vessels based on each vessel's catch performance from 1981–1983.The first year of allotting ITQs was 1984. However, until 1990 there was an effort option in the system that made it difficult to limit total fish catches. The present comprehensive Fisheries Management system is still based on ITQs. The objectives are to promote the conservation and efficient utilisation of the marine resources and thus to ensure stable employment and economic viability of fishing communities. Based on on-going research, the fisheries management system is continually under revision and development.

In 2004 the fisheries management system became a uniform quota system. All fishing ships and boats were then issued a catch quota in accordance with their fishing permit.

The merging of the days at sea system and the quota systems resulted in a comprehensive system that ensures that fishing is in accordance with the decision of the Minister of Fisheries and supports sustainable utilisation of the natural resource.

The management has three pillars, the general individual transferable quotasystem (ITQ), secondly the small vessels ITQ, where there are restrictions on use of gear and selling of quota is limited to that part. Thirdly there are regional policy instruments, where a limited quantity of quotas are allocated to vessels in communities that are dependent on fisheries and have been adversely affected by national fluctuations or other shocks.

In addition to the ITQ (individual transferable quota) system which, together with the TAC (total allowable catch) allocation, is the cornerstone of Iceland's fisheries management, there are a number of other measures that are integral to the overall management system. There are regulations concerning the type of fishing gear permitted, e.g., the minimum mesh size. Fishing with trawls is prohibited in large areas near the coast which serve as spawning and nursery areas. Grids in fishing gear are obligatory in certain fisheries to prevent catches of juvenile fish. Extensive provisions are made for temporary closures of fishing areas to protect spawning fish from all fishing. In addition, the Marine Research Institute (MRI) has the authority to close fishing areas temporarily without prior notice if the proportion of small fish in the catch exceeds certain limits.

FISHING FEE

All owners of vessels holding harvesting rights are required to pay a fishing fee. The amount of the fee for each fishing year is based on the earnings of the fishing sector as well as the allocation of the catch permit. Revenue from the fishing fee accrues to the State Treasury.

The fishing fee is calculated by subtracting the total cost of oil, labor costs and other operating costs from the total value of the catch. The contribution margin is multiplied by 9.5% and that figure is divided by the number of cod equivalents that are the basis of the catch value. The result is the fishing fee that is assessed on all catch quotas allocated during the next fishing year.

The fishing fee was first levied on vessel owners in the fishing year of 2004/2005 and will be fully phased in by the fishing year of 2009/2010.

What has been achieved

THRIVING FISHERIES SECTOR

Fishing has been an important activity in Iceland since the country was settled, and during the past century the development of fisheries has provided the basis for the country's progress and economic growth. Marine life and its utilisation have to a large extent created the quality of life that Icelanders enjoy today. The fisheries sector in Iceland provides over 60% of the earnings of exported goods, and up to 40% of all exports. It does not receive subsidies, but is the mainstay of the national economy. The Icelandic fishing industry is quite competitive and has expanded its operations to other countries. It has a stake in the sustainable use of the marine resources and is a responsible participant in policymaking in ocean affairs.

ECONOMIC EFFICIENCY

The main advantage of the Icelandic fisheries management is its economic efficiency. The whole sector, including processing and marketing, benefits from the fact that the catch can be organised in line with the market and the available labour force. Fishing companies have chosen to invest in quotas rather than other forms of investment. Quotas have been transferred to those who exploit them most efficiently. Trading in quotas for different species has encouraged firms to specialise. In mixed fisheries the transfer of quotas has allowed vessels to adjust their quota composition to the actual species composition of the year's catch.

In most cases there is a direct relationship between fishing operations and processing, Vessels and processing plants are largely owned by the same firm. The system of issuing quotas to individual vessels rather than companies has therefore not disturbed the earlier balance that had been established between fishing and processing interests. Considerable changes in the relative importance of local and regional fishing activities have nevertheless resulted from quota trading, as fishing and processing have been transferred to enterprises that have competed successfully.

EFFECTIVE MANAGEMENT AND CONTROL

Weighing and registration of landing of catches takes place in all the country's harbours. After the catch has been weighed it is registered in the information and control database of the Fisheries Directorate. The database keeps track of the catch position of the entire fleet of Icelandic fishing vessels and boats. After the information about the catch has been entered into the database it is accessible to everyone on the Net. This arrangement provides a great deal of transparency and ensures better control and inspection of the fishing and catch position of Icelandic boats and vessels.

The quota system has served well in keeping the catch within previously determined limits. The actual total catch is very transparent since, with minor exceptions, all catches are landed in Iceland and some 97% of the total catch is exported. The management system is supported by other management measures such as closure of areas to protect juveniles, stringent restrictions on fishing gear, and use of protected areas to conserve important vulnerable habitats.

PROTECTION OF THE ICELANDIC FISHING GROUNDS

Iceland's exclusive fishing zone of 758,000 km2 includes some of the richest fishing grounds in the world. The most productive cod banks are off the south-west coast during winter and off the West Fjords in the north-west all year round. Redfish is mostly found in the south, the west and the south-east. Herring is largely confined to the East Fjords and south-east coast, whilst capelin feeding grounds are to the north and spawning grounds off the south and west coasts. Greenland halibut is found in deep banks off the West Fjords as well as elsewhere off the north, west and east coasts. Oceanic redfish is harvested along the Reykjanes Ridge, inside and outside the 200 mile limit south-west of Iceland. Other stocks such as inshore shrimp, scallop, Norway lobster and deep-sea shrimp are fairly localised. The Icelandic coast guard is responsible for the on-site surveillance of activities in the EEZ.

PRECAUTIONARY APPROACH TO FISHERIES MANAGEMENT

There are different ways to implement a precautionary approach in fisheries. In 1995 Iceland adopted a catch rule for cod, and catch rules for herring and capelin had been adopted previously. The catch rule for cod, as revised in 2000, stipulates that the annual quota may not exceed 25% of the fishable stock, and that changes in the annual total cod catch shall not exceed 30,000 tons from one year to the next. The catch rule was a result of extensive work by marine biologists and economists who provided advice on maintaining stability in the fishing sector, the most favourable stock size and efficient rebuilding of the stock, among other things, taking into account the relationship between cod, capelin and shrimp stocks. The application of the catch rule for cod ensures that the risk of stock collapse is neglible or less than 1%.

ECOSYSTEM APPROACH — PRESERVATION OF THE MARINE ECOSYSTEM AND ITS BIODIVERSITY

Responsible management of human activities on the oceans entails taking into account the structure, components and functioning of relevant marine ecosystems, diet composition and food webs, species interactions and predator-prey relationships, as well as the role of habitat and the biological, physical and oceanographic factors affecting ecosystem stability and resilience. The marine ecosystem is highly complex and interactive. Icelanders are well aware that it is crucial to conserve biological diversity and not to disrupt the overall balance of the ecological web. To pursue the priority aim of sustainable harvesting, measures are taken to ensure that individual stocks are not overfished nor that other stocks become disproportionately large, which also may result in ecological imbalance. An important step towards sustainable harvesting and conservation of biological diversity is multi-species management of stocks. Dynamic relations between stocks have in several areas been thoroughly investigated. Iceland is committed to advancing the scientific basis for incorporating ecosystem considerations and to applying the ecosystem approach to the extent possible at each time. Iceland has promoted further work on the ecosystem approach in international forums and initiated an FAO conference on the subject that produced the Reykjavík Declaration of Responsible Fisheries in the Ecosystem in 2001. It became a contribution to the discussions on ocean issues at the Johannesburg World summit on sustainable development in 2002, which set new objectives, among other things, for sustainable fisheries and for halting loss of biodiversity.

CONTRIBUTION TO FOOD SUPPLY AND FOOD SAFETY

Even though there are few Icelanders, or only about 300, 000, Iceland is an important supplier of seafood products. Icelandic ships catch nearly 2 million tons of marine species annually, almost all of which is exported. The value of Iceland's annual export normally exceeds 2 billion US dollars. The catches come from the pristine waters of the North Atlantic and are processed in strictly controlled conditions at sea and on land. Iceland exports safe and healthy seafood to all parts of the world.

ICELAND: A RESPONSIBLE EXPORTER OF SEAFOOD, KNOW-HOW AND TECHNOLOGY

Enjoying internationally established contacts, Icelandic firms are in an excellent position to establish trade connections in marketing all kinds of seafood products worldwide. Some of the largest marketing companies for fish in Europe are Icelandic. Icelandic seafood exporters have managed to establish themselves at the top of the market through their reputation for the outstanding quality of the fish and processing standards. Rapid advances in Icelandic fisheries have been accompanied by the development of manufacturing and service industries that draw on long experience of the practical needs of fishing and fish processing operations. Among the leading fields are software products, electronic and digital equipment such as scales for on-board, as well as land-based weighing and process control, and graders for landed or even live fish. A wide selection of tubs, boxes and packaging for handling storage and retailing of fresh and frozen products are made in Iceland, as well as trawl nets, trawl doors and fishing boats, safety equipment and protective clothing. Icelandic manufacturers have designed and installed many processing plants around the world for companies ranging from vessel owners to industrial food processors. Services such as banking and consulting know-how for the fisheries sector worldwide are also in increased demand.

Priority given to research and innovation

A special research fund, AVS, was established in 2002. The fund is intended to strengthen research and product development to support increasing the value of Icelandic marine products and the catch effort of Icelanders. The fund is thus set up to be an innovative and dynamic force leading to varied progressive projects in the field of ocean fishing. The fund supports, among others, innovative projects in the field of new technology, the development of new products, better quality, increased food safety, increased productivity and environmental friendliness, and self-sustaining production.

The Ministry of Fisheries

The Ministry of Fisheries is responsible for management of fisheries in Iceland, and the implementation of legislation, and issues regulations to this effect. The Ministry's duties are general administration, long-term planning and relations with other fisheries institutions at the international level. The Minister of Fisheries is responsible for the annual TAC decisions. Three bodies assist the Ministry of Fisheries in management and general administration tasks: the Directorate of Fisheries, The Marine Research Institute and the Icelandic Fisheries Laboratories. www.sjavarutvegsraduneyti.is / www.fisheries.is

The Directorate of Fisheries

The Directorate of Fisheries is entrusted with the day-to-day administration of fisheries. The Directorate is responsible for implementing legislation on fisheries management. It collects and publishes data and other fisheries statistics. The Directorate of Fisheries issues fishing permits to vessels and allocates catch quotas. Other duties include imposing penalties for illegal catches. The Directorate supervises the transfer of quotas and quota shares between fishing vessels, controls the reporting of data on the landings of individual vessels and monitors the weighing-in of catches.

The Directorate provides supervision on board fishing vessels and in ports of landing, which involves inspecting the composition of catches, fishing equipment and handling methods. The Directorate of Fisheries issues licences to processing plants and supervises their production. Processors have to meet specific requirements concerning hygiene, equipment and quality control. Approved inspection bodies are responsible for inspection of hygiene, facilities and in-plant monitoring of production, both in processing establishments on land and on board vessels. Formal accreditation of inspection bodies is required.

In carrying out its many tasks, the Directorate of Fisheries co-operates with a number of other government institutions, including the Icelandic Coast Guard, the Directorate of Customs and the Directorate of Shipping. Collaboration with the Harbour Authorities and the Association of Local Authorities permits daily recording of catches weighed in throughout the country. (For further information see www.fiskistofa.is)

Icelandic Fisheries Laboratories (IFL)

Icelandic Fisheries Laboratories established in 1934, perform research and analytical work for the fisheries, primarily the processing sector. IFL's goal is to increase the value of marine catches through research, development, dissemination of knowledge and consultancy. By working closely with the fisheries industry and universities in Iceland and abroad, IFL promotes the acquisition of knowledge and interactive transfer of knowledge between researchers and the industry.

The laboratories carry out extensive research in collaboration with similar institutions in neighbouring countries and within the European Union. They have close links with the universities in Iceland, providing experts for research and teaching in the faculties of food science and fisheries science, as well as training courses for industry personnel.

The analytical division provides services for assessment of the chemical, microbiological, sensory and physical properties of seafood products. The main analytical methods employed have been accredited in accordance with the EN ISO/IEC 17025:2000 standard.

IFL's specialised fields include processing technology, biotechnology, chemical and physical properties of food, quality and safety of marine catches, feed and feed technology for aquaculture, and environmental research. (For further information see www.rf.is).

The Marine Research Institute (MRI)

was established in 1965, but the history of marine research in Iceland dates back more than a century. The role of the MRI is:

- *to acquire knowledge of the marine environment around Iceland and its living resources*
- *to provide advice to the government on catch levels and conservation measures*
- *to inform the government, the fishery sector and the public about the marine environment and its living resources*

MRI undertakes research into marine climate and environmental monitoring, marine geology and bottom topography, plankton distribution and production, reproduction and recruitment, assessment of fish stocks, multi-species interactions, marine mammals, fishing gear, fishing impact on the ecosystem, and potentially exploitable species.

MRI is organised into two main research sections. The Marine Environment Section deals with environmental conditions, geology, and the ecology of algae, zooplankton, fish larvae and benthos. The Marine Resources Section undertakes research on the exploited stocks of fish, crustaceans, molluscs and marine mammals. The Fisheries Advisory Section scrutinises stock assessments and prepares formal advice on the total allowable catch (TAC) and sustainable fishing strategies for the government. The three sections work in close co-operation and also they make use of the work carried out by the Modelling and Electronic Departments and the services provided by the Fisheries Library. MRI has an experimental mariculture station and operates five branch laboratories in fishing communities in different parts of Iceland. Two ocean-going research vessels are currently operated by MRI.

MRI co-operates with the universities in Iceland and students undertake practical training and carry out research projects at the Institute. Furthermore, the United Nations University – Fisheries Training Program is operated under the supervision of MRI. MRI also co-operates with many foreign institutions and international organisations and has through the years been involved in many international projects in the fields of marine sciences. (For further information see www.hafro.is)

We aim

At achieving sustainable utilisation of marine resources, and to make every effort to preserve the biodiversity and the ecosystem of the ocean.

To ensure and maintain maximum long term productivity through responsible use of all marine resources.

To ensure that all decisions are based on best available scientific and economic information at any time.

To ensure that individuals and enterprises in the Icelandic fisheries sector have clear and generally applicable, non-discrimatory guidelines to follow, that provide them with a positive working environment which will strengthen the sector´s competitive position internationally.

For further information on the Icelandic fisheries sector please visit our websites www.sjavarutvegsraduneyti.is and www.fisheries.is

Sjávarútvegsráðuneytið
Ministry of Fisheries Iceland
Skúlagata 4 ·150 Reykjavík
Tel.: +354 545 8300
Fax. +354 562 1853