

# Integrated Groundfish Program

## SPECIES

Primary species include halibut, sablefish, lingcod, dogfish, soles, flatfish, and rockfish.

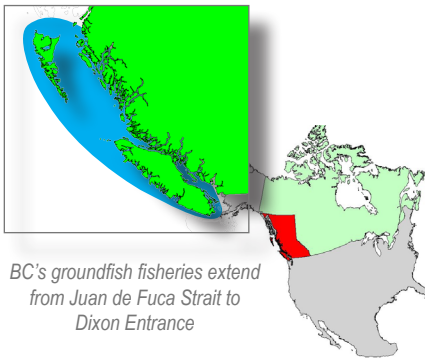
## WHAT IS THE INTEGRATED GROUND FISH MANAGEMENT PROGRAM?

The federal government and the BC seafood industry implemented an innovative, integrated groundfish management program in 2006. This world-leading system ensures the harvesting of groundfish in a sustainable manner using a variety of fishing gears, and uses new forms of information technology, including video monitoring, to account for all fish caught and minimize the need to discard marketable fish.

Discarding of fish at sea due to lack of species specific quota or size is an important issue for the sustainability of the world's fisheries. It is estimated that over 20% of the total global catch is discarded. Uncounted catch and discard mortality undermines proper stock assessment and could result in over harvesting.



(left to right) Hake, Lingcod, Pacific Ocean Perch, Arrowtooth Flounder, Petrale Sole

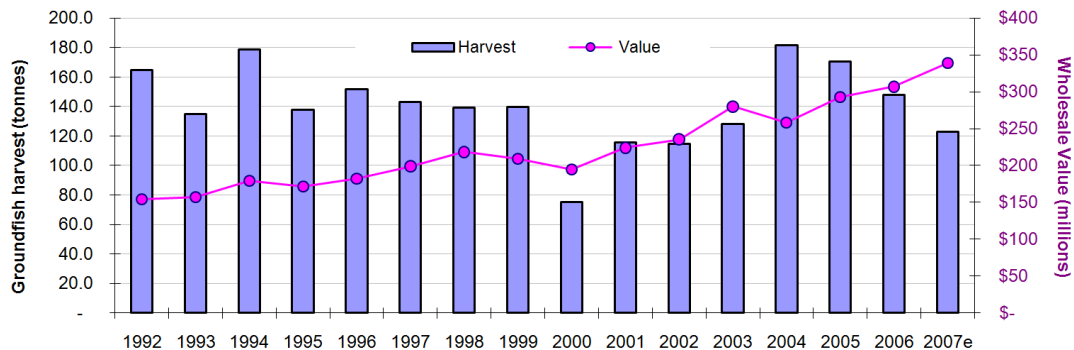


## BC'S GROUND FISH FISHERIES

BC's groundfish industry harvests more than 56 different stocks of groundfish. There are approximately 2000 groundfish licenses employing trawl (142), trap (48) and hook and line (1800) gear. BC's integrated groundfish fishery is managed federally by Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) (DFO - Fisheries Management).

## PRODUCT VALUE

In 2000, 75,200 tonnes of groundfish sold at \$194.7 million. Approximately 123,000 tonnes of groundfish sold for \$338.7 million in 2007 (BC Seafood Industry Year in Review).



e: estimate

**POSITIVE CHANGES**

The new leading edge program includes:



- Allocating each vessel a specified share of the annual total allowable catch.
- Trading individual vessel quota (IVQ) between vessels for bycatch.
- Making each individual vessel accountable and responsible for all of its catch, both directed and non-directed.
- 100% dockside monitoring of all landed catch by government-certified monitors.
- 100% at-sea monitoring on all groundfish bottom trawl vessels by government-certified observers.
- 100% at-sea monitoring of all groundfish hook & line and trap vessels by government approved video camera systems.

**BENEFITS OF THESE CHANGES**

The use of individual vessel allocations and comprehensive at-sea and dockside monitoring provides for:

- Accurate reporting of all catch, including at-sea releases, by species and area.
- Proper stock management within scientifically determined sustainable harvest levels.
- More responsible fishing by prohibiting individual vessels from exceeding their allocated share.
- Greater incentives to fish selectively and minimize at-sea releases.
- Safer fishing practices.

**RESULTS OF INTEGRATED GROUND FISH INITIATIVE**

There are significant improvements in groundfish resource management, including:

- Both landed catch and at-sea release mortality are kept well within species and area specific sustainable harvest levels.
- Better quality data from commercial harvesting, surveys, and at-sea biological samples provide for improved research and assessment of stock health.
- Reduced impacts to habitat from fishing area closures, and reductions in the number of vessels fishing, gear set, fishing time, and area fished.

**LINKS**

DFO - Fisheries Management Plans: [www.pac.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/ops/fm/fishmgmt\\_e.htm](http://www.pac.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/ops/fm/fishmgmt_e.htm)

BC Seafood Industry Year in Review: [www.env.gov.bc.ca/omfd/reports/index.html](http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/omfd/reports/index.html)

BCSeafood.ca: [www.bcseafood.ca/index.php](http://www.bcseafood.ca/index.php)