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Sent: Friday, October 17, 2008 8:29 AM
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Subject: By-catch policy - background - for FCC meeting

As requested...

Background and Context

- The goal of the Resource Management Sustainable Development Framework is to support sustainable fisheries in Canada through an ecosystem approach to fisheries management. The Framework and its policies and tools are establishing the building blocks for an ecosystem approach to fisheries management.
- An ecosystem approach to fisheries management requires that management takes into account the impact of fisheries on the productivity of the target stock, aquatic biodiversity, benthic habitats and the aquatic ecosystem generally, and as well, that impacts of ecosystem changes on fisheries also be taken into account.
- Managing the impacts of a fishery on by-catch is essential for a sustainable fishery and is also an important element of an ecosystem approach to fisheries management. The by-catch policy will provide key guidance on managing fishery impacts on aquatic biodiversity, in particular, but also ecosystem impacts generally.
- Work on developing a national policy on by-catch species is expected to get underway in early 2009

Scope of the Policy

- The policy will be designed to guide management actions on all exploited stocks or species that are not part of a harvest management framework; that is, those stocks or species which are not the intended targets of a fishery and which are not subject to a formal management framework or policy such as the Precautionary Approach Framework, Pacific Wild Salmon Policy, specific harvest strategy, etc.
- While measures to manage by-catch are already in place in many marine fisheries in Canada, the aim of the policy will be to establish a nationally consistent approach that follows international norms on managing by-catch.
- The policy will provide guidance on minimum standards for managing by-catch and monitoring of and reporting on by-catch species as well as other considerations.