

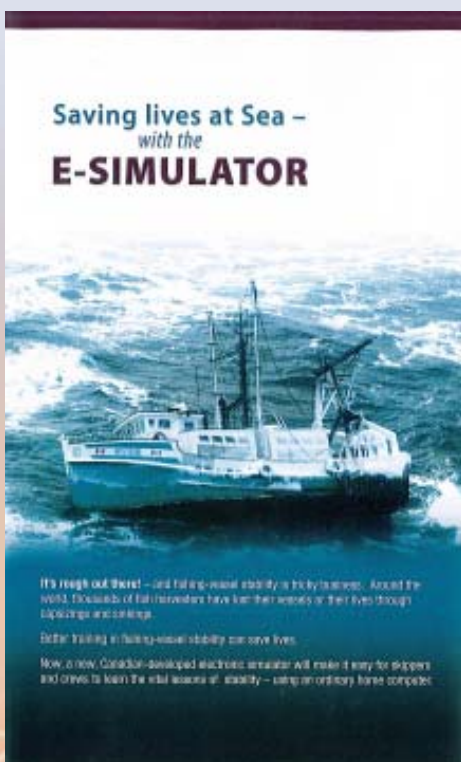


## Bulletin: stability simulator for fishing boats gets go-ahead funding

Fish harvesters can now look forward to better safety training through their home computers. The Council has secured funding to complete the world's first electronic simulator providing stability instruction for smaller fishing vessels.

Capsizing or other loss of stability costs lives every year. Safety starts with understanding, and the "E-Simulator" CD-based program will use every trick, including video game-like features, to put stability principles and practices across to users.

The Fisheries and Marine Institute of Newfoundland and Labrador is developing this teaching tool with the Council. The department of Human Resources and Skills Development Canada, the government of Newfoundland and Labrador and the province's Professional Fish Harvesters Certification Board have helped fund early work. Full project details and a demonstration will be presented at the CCPFH General Assembly in July.



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## N.S. School of Fisheries foresees increased training

What will fisheries training look like twenty years from now? Canada's oldest fisheries school is forecasting major new developments.

Every fishing-vessel operator will need training and certification in navigation, says the Nova Scotia School of Fisheries, and every crew member will need to know marine safety and first aid. That's predictable because of Transport Canada requirements.

But in addition, the fishing industry itself will be asking more of its members. Training boards will have set up professional programs looking something like this:

- Every new entrant will attend a two-year diploma program, with work experience an integral part.
- Training under the program will include harvesting techniques, marine ecosystems, fisheries management, fish handling and processing, marketing, business management, vessel and mechanical maintenance, and more.
- There will also be short courses based on demands identified through Professionalization Training Boards.
- The aquaculture and boatbuilding industries will have their own apprenticeship programs.

That forecast appears in a "future landscape" envisioned by the Pictou-based School. "We obviously can't predict in detail," says academic chair Kevin Henderson. "But we do expect a significant progression in training."

When the Nova Scotia School of Fisheries started up in 1946, fish harvesters generally relied on an informal apprenticeship with family or friends. The School supplemented that with thorough training in the many skills needed on boats of all sizes.

Informal apprenticeships continue today, but there's a new emphasis on organized instruction. That's partly because of Transport Canada regulations, partly because of changing attitudes. Many fish harvesters are telling their children to get more education and training.

The N.S. School trains about 1,500 people a year, through classes given at Pictou on the Northumberland Strait, at Shelburne on the province's South Shore, and in the fire halls and church basements of communities all over the province.

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Making a splash with Marine Emergency Duties training.  
(Photos courtesy of Kevin Henderson)

The mainstays are the Fishing Master courses (mainly navigation, given over several weeks) and training in Marine Emergency Duties (MED), radio operation, and first aid.

Beyond those basics, the School gives instruction in fishery skills, engineering, aquaculture, boat-building, diving, computers, and other fields. Courses get set up on an as-required, customized basis.

The School in recent years successfully met a major surge in demand. When First Nations gained many fishing licences after the Supreme Court's 1999 Marshall decision, rapid instruction became a necessity. Hundreds of Native people took training and are now fishing. The School continues to train new entrants and upgrade others.

Instruction, mainly given in Native communities themselves, covers both regulatory requirements such as MED and practical skills such as net-making. The popular deckhand course deals with the basics of knots and splices, navigation, safety around machinery, hand signals for crane operators, boat and gear maintenance, engines, and other subjects.

Native people also enroll in the Fishing Master IV course, which often means sharing a classroom with non-Natives. When First Nation training started, there was still controversy over the Marshall decision. So how did everyone get along?

Lead navigation instructor Duane Dakin, as quoted in the Mi'kmaq Maliseet Nations News, was straightforward with his first mixed class. "I told them, we're all fishermen here. And there was never a problem. Instead, they learned from each other."

The school also carries out applied research. Examples include work on an environmentally friendly scallop drag and ways to reduce fishing costs.

Some alternate-energy work takes place in conjunction with the provincial power corporation, reflecting the school's stress on good relationships. "It takes a lot of meetings with the fishing industry and others," Kevin Henderson says, "but it helps in the long run."

The Nova Scotia school is a partner with the Canadian Council of Professional Fish Harvesters in developing a distance-learning program for Fishing Master training. And co-operation extends internationally. The School welcomes foreign students and has given instruction in the Caribbean and Central America, as well as other parts of Canada.

The School of Fisheries forms part of the Strait Campus of the Nova Scotia Community College system. The other element is the Nautical Institute at Port Hawkesbury, which offers training for marine professions.

Kevin Henderson, who oversees courses at both sites under principal Tom Gunn, has a background in marine biology, and the School of Fisheries has done training in responsible fishing. "Whatever courses the future requires," Mr. Henderson says, "our school has long experience, and we'll be ready."



The Nova Scotia School of Fisheries trained hundreds of First Nations members in recent years.



Trainees getting out on the boats.

## **“Shared stewardship” – What happens next?**

Shared stewardship – which means a bigger role for fish harvesters in managing the industry – may be moving further ahead. A CCPFH workshop on February 12-13 clarified the state of play, and member organizations discussed future options with Jeff MacDonald, Director General of Shared Stewardship for the Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO).

It’s three decades since federal fisheries minister Roméo LeBlanc offered fish harvesters “co-management”. LeBlanc encouraged fishermen to organize and made fishery advisory committees part of the management system.

Nothing else major happened until the 1990’s, when DFO, suffering from budget cutbacks, downloaded many duties and costs onto harvester organizations under the name of co-management. Resentment was common. Still, many harvesters benefitted from a stronger hand in research and management.

At the February workshop in Ottawa, harvester representatives from across the country reviewed the ups and downs of what DFO now tends to call “shared stewardship”. Arrangements vary by region and fishery. Most representatives acknowledged progress, but also pointed to mistrust and difficulties with DFO.

Some called for more integrity in co-management processes, including clear “rules of engagement”. It was generally felt that harvesters should become a recognized part of decision-making and policy development not only for specific fisheries, but also for wider questions.

Jeff MacDonald told the workshop that harvesters should participate in both developing and implementing conservation policies. They should also think “beyond the wharf” to consumers, and highlight the sustainability of Canadian fisheries.

The department is reviewing processes to entrench shared stewardship, Mr. MacDonald said, and DFO and CCPFH need to work together and share information.

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## Preparing for shared stewardship

True co-management requires fish harvesters capable of dealing with many aspects of the fishery. CCPFH workshops a year ago identified training needs in science, management, and leadership training.

Science and management projects are still under discussion. Meanwhile, the Council is sponsoring development of a leadership course by Ged Blackmore, a well-known educator and creative consultant in Newfoundland and Labrador. An early version outlined at the February workshop drew praise and further suggestions for content.

The Council plans a thorough consultation this fall with harvester organizations, fishery agencies, and provincial governments on the best tools and delivery methods to help fishermen acquire the skills they want and need, for co-management and other purposes.

## New CD helps harvesters run their business

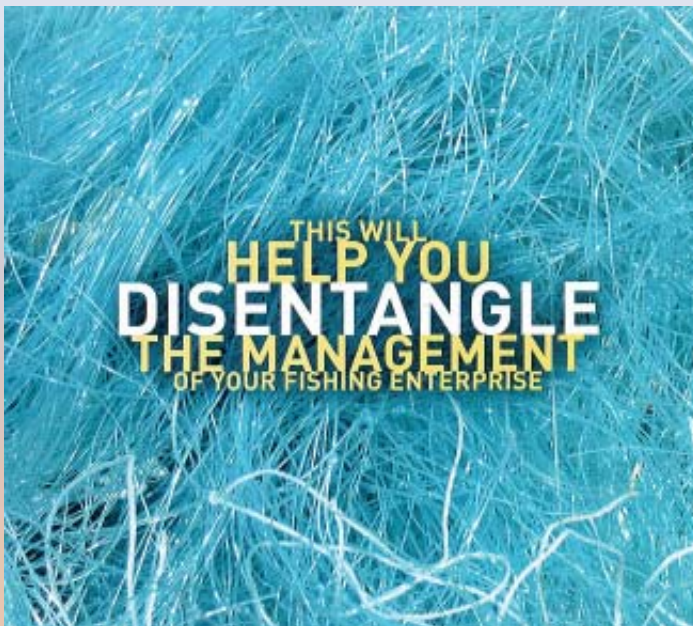
The Council's new compact disk, *Managing Your Fishing Enterprise*, is proving popular with fish harvesters in all regions. Slip the CD into your computer, and you'll find an easy-to-follow guide to managing, financing, and evaluating your fishing business.

About 1,500 instructional disks have gone out so far to all regions, says Pierre Verreault, the Council's co-ordinator of human resources projects. Copies are still available to Canadian fish harvesters on request to the Council office, or e-mail [ent@ccpfh-ccpp.org](mailto:ent@ccpfh-ccpp.org).

Meanwhile, a distance-learning course for Fishing Master IV, developed by CCPFH and Atlantic fisheries schools, is being tested out in practice. And the Council will be completing the "E-Simulator" project, providing instruction on stability for small fishing vessels.

### Don't forget two other items available on-line:

- *Essential Skills Modules*. Making it easy for harvesters whose school days were long ago, these modules give verbal and math tips along with instruction on landing good-quality groundfish, computer basics, math for navigation, and Marine Emergency Duties. ([http://www.ccpfh-ccpp.org/e\\_List.aspx?cs=eskills](http://www.ccpfh-ccpp.org/e_List.aspx?cs=eskills))
- *Fisheries Science and Management: A Handbook for Canadian Fish Harvesters*. The new Handbook gives a concise outline of the Canadian management system, together with a glossary of common terms. ([http://www.ccpfh-ccpp.org/e\\_WhatsNew.asp](http://www.ccpfh-ccpp.org/e_WhatsNew.asp)).



Front cover of the new CD-Rom "Managing Your Fishing Enterprise"

## Workshop tackles eco-certification issues

How will eco-certification affect independent fish harvesters? A CCPFH workshop in Halifax, January 28-29, brought together harvester representatives, marketing experts, government officials and others to sort through the issues.

Eco-certification, also called eco-labelling, is making waves through the fish industry. The biggest player is the Marine Stewardship Council (MSC), a non-government agency based in the United Kingdom. Assessment goes by three principles – stock sustainability, ecosystem impact, effective management – and related criteria.

Of the thousands of fisheries in the world, the MSC has certified only about 40, although these account for hundreds of products. There are problems with assessment time and costs, and it remains unclear whether certification really helps conservation.

But the trend remains strong, with many assessments under way as more and more retailers get on the certification bandwagon. “If buyers want proof that your seafood products are sustainably produced then you may have no choice but to seek certification,” Marc Allain, the CCPFH’s Policy Advisor told workshop participants.

What’s driving the change? Consumers, often influenced by environmental organizations, are increasingly concerned about ocean health and fishery conservation. Food-service and retail companies are responding.

To increase the value and distinctiveness of their products Canadian harvesters can “brand” their fisheries for quality, conservation, stewardship, and as produced by real people from real communities, Marc Allain said. But they’ll need to work with processors and governments.

MSC certification requires traceability – where did the fish come from, who has handled it, and how? Sadie Beaton and Anna Magera of the Ecology Action Centre (an environmental non-government organization or ENGO based in Halifax) told the workshop that many grocery shoppers in Canada feel they have too little information about fishing practices. Tracking the chain of custody makes sense from environmental, food safety, marketing, and “branding” points of view.

Tasha Sutcliffe outlined efforts by Ecotrust, a Pacific coast ENGO, towards traceability in the B.C. fisheries. Key elements include piloting a local system with necessary equipment (tags, for example), appropriate training for fishermen, processors, and retailers, and related database, promotional, and other work.

It’s not just business interests and environmentalists that want more certification. Governments can be sticky about fish products coming into their country.

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Jeff MacDonald, Director General of shared stewardship for the Department of Fisheries and Oceans, noted that both the European Union and the United States want certainty that products aren't from illegal, unregulated, or unreported (IUU) fisheries. Regulations, markets, and ecological voices are all upping the demand for traceability.

DFO is discussing requirements with foreign nations, the Marine Stewardship Council, and others, and setting more detailed sustainability standards in Canadian fisheries. The Canadian Council of Fisheries and Aquaculture Ministers (CCFAM) is stressing traceability, and a task group is to make recommendations by September.

But there's no major, industry-wide program to deal with eco-certification head-on, whether through MSC or otherwise.

Meanwhile, in Atlantic Canada, the northern prawn and Gulf of St. Lawrence shrimp fisheries have gotten MSC certification. Fisheries under assessment include offshore, Maine and PEI lobster and scallops on the Atlantic, and sablefish, dogfish, and pink, chum, and sockeye salmon on the Pacific.

Outside Canada, different areas are responding in different ways. Japan is developing its own Marine Eco-label. But in Alaska, where the salmon fishery was one of the early big-name fisheries approved by MSC, there's resistance to the recertification that's supposed to take place every five years.

So what does it all mean for Canadian fishermen? The Halifax workshop pierced some of the fog, but no one has yet set a course. Eco-certification will be on the agenda when the CCPFH consults with provincial governments and others this fall, on ways to help fish harvesters acquire the knowledge and techniques to meet future needs.

For more on eco-certification, see our August, 2007 newsletter :

(<http://www.ccpfh-ccpp.org/cgi-bin%5Cfiles%5CVol3-Issue2-E.pdf>).

### **Picture Submissions**

The Council is always looking for photos to use in our newsletters and other promotional materials. Photos can be sent to the Council office by email or regular mail.



Our next issue will have extensive reporting on the Council's 5th Triennial General Assembly taking place in St. John's, NL on July 28th and 29th.