

BOOK REVIEW

Ocean Forum - An Interpretative History of the International North Pacific Fisheries Commission

By

Roy I. Jackson and William F. Royce

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Before the end of the Second World War, Japan used to exploit salmon, halibut and herring of the North Pacific and other fisheries close to North American territorial waters. This was a major concern to the United States and Canada. Apprehensions were strong that the fishery interests of the US and Canada demanded protection. After the defeat in World War II, Japan was under the authority of the Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers (SCAP). Japan's shore-line industries, fishing fleet and land installations had been severely damaged and Japan lost the fishing bases outside their home-islands. To feed the hungry millions after the war, Japan turned to the sea. At that time the three nautical mile limit of maritime jurisdiction was supported by most of the maritime nations. Because of Japan's capability for operating salmon near North American coast, Canada and the United States realised that the three mile limit would offer little protection to salmon and the North American halibut and herring fisheries. This led to negotiations with Japan by the US and Canada which paved the way for the establishment of the International North Pacific Fisheries Commission (INPFC) to "ensure the maximum sustained productivity in the North Pacific Ocean." This book by the two celebrated fishery scientists Roy I. Jackson and William F. Royce traces the background and in eight well conceived chapters portrays the work of the INPFC in a very lucid style and with remarkable insight. They give a final appraisal of INPFC and its futuristic outlook also. The sea-otter extremely valued for its fur, the Steller's sea-cow, fur-seals, walrus etc. were

either extinct or on the verge of decline owing to indiscriminate exploitation. So the first task of the commission was to promote studies for evolving conservation measures. This led to remarkable co-operation in international research and management in fisheries and it became an eye-opener for other nations for finding solutions in several ever changing fisheries problems. The Commission's history is a clear example of how people sharply divided and quarrelled each other can be brought under a common umbrella for solving their own fisheries problems and establish friendship for mutual benefit and fostering high-seas conservation. Ocean Forum, even though deals with INPFC and member countries interested in it, has an appeal to those concerned with international scientific management of other fisheries. Roy I. Jackson and William F. Royce were actively associated with INPFC and their rich experience has amply justified in writing this excellent interpretative history of INPFC. It is a classical example of how international co-operation is possible in high-sea fisheries through co-ordination of scientific research and international debate for evolving conservation measures for mutual benefit. The book is a useful reference to all those concerned with international scientific management of ocean fisheries and should find a place in all libraries concerned with fisheries in general and fisheries management in particular.

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