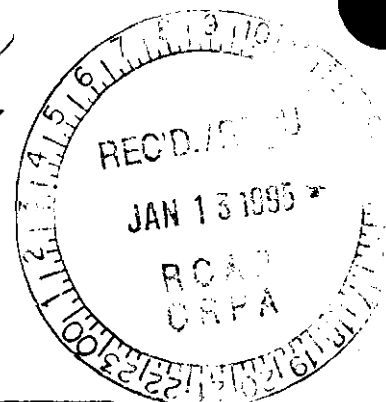


Final



WILDLIFE SECTORAL STUDY

Prepared For:

The Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples

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WILDLIFE SECTORAL STUDY - ROYAL COMMISSION ON ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

The observations, opinions and recommendations made herein, do not necessarily reflect those of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

It is a fact well known, that wildlife resources sustained the lives of aboriginal peoples in Canada for thousands of years. Less well known, is the extent to which aboriginal people continue to rely on wildlife resources for sustenance, to supplement incomes, to confirm continuity with the past, to reinforce social and community cohesion, and to maintain spiritual values based on unity with the natural world. This is the central theme of this paper.

It is said, that the foundation of the fur trade, to which aboriginal peoples contributed greatly, established the basic patterns for the subsequent development and settlement of Canada by Europeans. This development however, led to the loss of traditional hunting territories for many aboriginal peoples and the ultimate usurpation of the rights of all aboriginal people to govern themselves and to access wildlife resources for subsistence and commercial purposes. The degradation of natural ecosystems under the guise of economic progress, combined with the loss of their land base and self-governing rights, has, and continues to have, devastating social and economic consequences for aboriginal communities. For many, the changes have been traumatic, resulting in an array of social pathologies including a suicide rate among aboriginal youth which is far greater than the national average.

The continued loss of wildlife habitat and natural ecosystems, especially within the past few decades, has led to increasing and often heated competition among all user groups. For many Canadians, particularly those living in urban centres, wildlife is perceived as having limited economic value except for the recreational and tourism related industries. The

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notion that a formal cash economy can exist and work in concert with a traditional subsistence economy, based on the harvesting of wildlife, is seen as a contradiction. This feeling is reinforced by a belief that the subsistence lifestyles of aboriginal peoples combined with modern technologies cannot support a strong conservation ethic. Many Canadians also have concerns centred not on wildlife populations or ecosystems but on the welfare of individual animals. Similarly, certain radical groups have emerged who are opposed to all animal use and the trapping of animals in particular. It is within this environment, that the issues of aboriginal and treaty rights, land claims and the wildlife harvesting practices of aboriginal people have emerged as poorly understood, but controversial issues for many Canadians. It is an irony, that this is happening at a time when increasing constitutional recognition is finally being given to the rights of aboriginal peoples to access wildlife resources in priority to others users.

Aboriginal people have often argued that their traditional knowledge can make an important contribution to the management of wildlife and other natural resources. Knowledge, which is based on detailed observation of wildlife habitat, populations and behaviour which has been handed down over many lifetimes. Often discounted by professional wildlife managers, this knowledge is now being given greater recognition (e.g. World Conservation Strategy) for the role it can play in wildlife management and conservation. With the increased acceptance of the importance of traditional knowledge, combined with increasing constitutional recognition of the rights of aboriginal peoples to harvest fish and wildlife resources, it may no longer be practical for governments to deny aboriginal people a role in managing natural resources within their

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traditional territories - an inherent feature of self government. Aboriginal people have a vested interest in the management and sustainable use of all natural resources within their traditional territories and they can contribute much to their management. Increased acceptance among all stakeholders, of the need to train greater numbers of aboriginal peoples in all fields of resource and wildlife management, will strengthen this contribution.

For many aboriginal communities, especially those with few economic alternatives, subsistence activities will remain a central feature of the local economy. These activities provide a basis for the transfer of traditional values and knowledge to young people and maintain cohesion in the social organization of the community. Clearly, wildlife and natural places may be the best resources these communities have for strengthening their local economy through consumptive or non-consumptive uses, or for subsistence or commercial purposes. These resources must be viewed as a 'community resource' and it should be up to individual communities to decide how best to use these resources. At the same time, these communities must have a say in any developments that may hinder their use or access to these resources.

The real value of the traditional economy to aboriginal communities is not well understood or documented. For example, there is no single source of data on the numbers of aboriginal people in Canada who are directly or indirectly dependent on subsistence activities. Further research however, may demonstrate the need for alternative forms of income support for communities where subsistence activities remain a central feature of the local economy. The costs of these alternatives may prove to be less than the costs and consequences of

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existing welfare schemes.

It is estimated that over 40,000 traditional harvesters are participating in the annual harvest of wild furbearers in Canada. As one of the few opportunities to generate cash necessary to support other subsistence activities, these 'trappers' are particularly vulnerable to attacks from the animal rights movement which has brought about market changes such as the impending 1995 European ban on the import of furs harvested with the leg hold trap. While this action on the part of the European Community poses some serious implications for traditional harvesters, they also present important marketing opportunities, at a time when the demand and prices for wild fur have shown a marked improvement, a trend which is expected to continue.

Generally, traditional harvesters are poorly informed or organized to protect and enhance their position in Canada's fur industry. As well, many traditional harvesters, in their eagerness to get cash, continue to sell their pelts at a fraction of the prices paid on international markets. Improved education, organizational and communications capacity among traditional harvesters would help overcome these problems and would also serve to strengthen those local economies for which subsistence activities remain important.

1. Introduction

1.0 INTRODUCTION

In its search for solutions to break the cycle of dependency in aboriginal communities, the ROYAL COMMISSION ON ABORIGINAL PEOPLES is examining the importance of land and resources to aboriginal economies. As part of this larger review, it is the purpose of this study to examine the important role that wildlife harvesting (the trapping of fur bearers in particular) has, and continues to play, in contributing to the social, cultural and economic well-being of aboriginal communities. In addressing these issues, this paper will touch on a controversial issue for many non-aboriginal Canadians - the right of aboriginal people to harvest wildlife.

The study will review the critical issues regarding access and control of wildlife resources, the right to harvest these resources for subsistence and commercial use, and the potential commercialization of wildlife resources and other means of strengthening traditional economies. This review will be undertaken in the context of the larger environmental\ conservation movement and the issues of aboriginal and treaty rights, each of which will shape future public policy in these areas.

Given the importance of the fur harvest to traditional economies, the study will provide a particular focus on the Canadian fur industry and aboriginal people. It will provide a profile of the Canadian and international fur trade, an examination of global markets and trends, threats to the industry, the role of aboriginal people, and the potential for increased aboriginal involvement.

1. Introduction

Collectively, the study provides an analysis of the critical issues regarding aboriginal peoples and their use of wildlife. It will review the prospects and options available to support and strengthen the involvement of aboriginal people in the fur industry, and for reaping other economic benefits from the wildlife resource. Ideas and suggestions which are critical to building a case for strengthening aboriginal access and control of wildlife resources are provided along with a set of recommendations.

This study does not address the subject of game farming or game ranching by aboriginal people which is covered in a separate study on agriculture.

2.0 BACKGROUND

For thousands of years before European contact wildlife and other natural resources have sustained aboriginal peoples in North America. For some groups, these resources were supplemented through crop production. The availability of these resources determined their basic patterns of life. It shaped their material and non-material culture - their values, attitudes, customs and beliefs, organization, governments and relationships with others.

A well established system of trade in furs/hides, hand-crafted items and other commodities also existed throughout North America before the arrival of the first Europeans. Following European contact, these same trading systems facilitated the development of the fur trade and the subsequent growth and settlement of Canada. Aboriginal peoples were also involved in the commercial trade of wildlife with Europeans during this period of development.

As industrial development and settlement in Canada increased, so did the competition for land and resources. Following confederation, the rights of aboriginal peoples to access what wildlife resources remained, were further limited by provincial and territorial governments in favour of non-aboriginal sports and commercial interests.

Generally, the rights and interests of aboriginal peoples have not been respected in land and resource management decisions. Aboriginal people have long advocated for a role in decisions made regarding land and resources, particularly when these decisions impact on their communities. Access to land and a resource base sufficient to meet the existing and future needs

2. Background

of aboriginal communities is fundamental to aboriginal demands for recognition of their inherent right to govern themselves.

2.1 KEY TERMS AND CONCEPTS

This study will employ a number of specific words and terms which have either important or special meaning in a discussion of wildlife harvesting and aboriginal peoples. They include:

- *aboriginal peoples*; a descendent of the "original (indigenous) peoples" of Canada; for the purpose of this paper the term refers to status Indians, non-status Indians, Métis and Inuit;
- *traditional resource users*; aboriginal peoples (the first resource users) who participate in the commercial fur harvest and the harvest of other wildlife for subsistence and commercial purposes;
- *subsistence*; the social, cultural and economic values and activities of aboriginal peoples in providing food, clothing, fuel and tools from local natural resources. A way of life that reproduces and sustains important cultural and social norms in an aboriginal community. It is a livelihood that has evolved over time to include the use of modern technology such as snowmobiles, outboard motors and even aircraft;
- *commercialization of wildlife*; the commercialization of wildlife in their natural environment (e.g. the commercial harvesting of fur bearers, free ranging caribou or the sale of rights to wildlife resources to

2. Background

big game hunters such as polar bear), which will be covered in this paper. Fur farming/ranching and game farming/ranching, activities that occur primarily in a controlled environment and are more closely related to agricultural and livestock practises, will be addressed in the Royal Commission's sectoral study on Agriculture;

- *animal rights/anti harvesting*; a philosophy that supports a complete end to the killing of animals, and a complete end to the commercial use of any wildlife. Examples of groups that promote this philosophy include: International Wildlife Coalition, Greenpeace, Lynx (United Kingdom), the World Society for the Protection of Animals, et cetera; and,
- *animal welfare*; a philosophy that is opposed to cruelty to animals but, accepts the killing of animal and the commercial use of wildlife if done humanely (e.g. the use of quick kill traps). The Canadian Association for Humane Trapping is an example of a group supporting this philosophy.

2.2 CONTEXT

While there are numerous factors which have and will continue to influence the importance of wildlife resources among particular aboriginal groups (e.g. geography), several of the more notable contextual factors that will be discussed in this study include:

- the social, cultural and economic importance of wildlife resources to aboriginal peoples;

2. Background

- treaty and aboriginal harvesting rights (land claims);
- environmental ethics and wildlife harvesting;
- aboriginal peoples and wildlife conservation, management, subsistence and commercialization;
- animal protection and animal use;
- competing uses of wildlife;
- access to land and resources;
- economic and resource development;
- self government;

The livelihood of many other Canadians is also dependent, in full or part, indirectly or directly, on wildlife. In 1987, it was estimated that wildlife contributed over \$4.2 Billion annually to the Canadian economy (Geist 1989: 75). Millions of other Canadians also value wildlife for consumptive or non-consumptive purposes. The continued and rapid loss of natural habitat has led to increased competition among all wildlife users.

3. Importance of Wildlife to Aboriginal People

3.0 THE IMPORTANCE OF WILDLIFE TO ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

A substantial number of Canada's aboriginal peoples continue to rely on wildlife resources for sustenance, to supplement incomes, to confirm continuity with the past, to reinforce social and community cohesion, and to maintain spiritual values based on unity with the natural world. This is not just true for rural and northern aboriginal communities where there are few alternatives to an economy based on trapping, hunting and fishing, supplemented by transfer payments and occasional wage labour. James Morrison, in a 1993 discussion paper prepared for the World Wildlife Fund Canada, noted:

"many Canadians would be surprised at the extent to which such practices also survive in southern Native communities. The residents of Walpole Island Indian Reserve in the St. Clair River, upstream from the automobile metropolis of Detroit, still consume far more fish, waterfowl and game - and far less store bought protein - than their non-Native neighbours. Indeed, the overall quantities of country food in the Native diet can be quite startling." (Morrison 1993: 4)

Similarly, Manitoba Resource Economist Fikret Birkes, based on studies he completed in Aboriginal communities across Canada, reported that aboriginal people eat seven times as much fish as the average Canadian. He also stated that the figures are much higher for wild game (Berkes 1990: 35-42)

While quantitative data on the economic value of wildlife to aboriginal people in Canada is generally scanty, there are some sources of information that demonstrate the relative importance of hunting, fishing and trapping in specific regions and communities. In that regard, the value of country food consumed in the NWT for 1982-83 was estimated to be approximately \$40 million - its replacement value (an equal

3. Importance of Wildlife to Aboriginal People

amount of food imported from the south), was estimated to be \$80 million (Cornoyea 1986: 17).

Similarly, Robert Reed, in his 1984 study of an Income Security Program for Traditional Harvesters, Nishnawbe/Aski Nation, estimated that food production in Nishnawbe/Aski communities (excluding fish) amounted to some 1,611,000 lbs. annually with an imputed value of \$5,236,000. He compares this to the 1,700,000 lbs. (including fish) produced by the James Bay Cree communities in Quebec (Reed, 1984: 44-45). As well, Hugh Brody, in *Maps and Dreams* (1981) provided estimates of the adjusted annual value per household (in 1979 dollars) of wildlife for some selected B.C. Reserves: East Kits, \$3,182.97 per household; Cannes, \$3,388.83 per household; and, Blueberry, \$5,648.35 per household. In a more recent study conducted by Simon Brascoupe', for the Kitigan Zibi Anishnawbeg community (an hours drive north of Ottawa) it was estimated that the total replacement value of country food was \$600,000 in 1988, or \$1,715 per household (Brascoupe, 1993: 117).

Fur prices have declined in recent years however, for aboriginal trappers, the food value of the species trapped often exceeds the cash value of the fur itself. Thus the annual fur harvest continues to provide many traditional resource users with one of the few opportunities to generate cash. Cash required to support other harvesting activities such as hunting and fishing which in turn, decreases dependence on store-bought food and clothing.

The value of wildlife resources to aboriginal peoples however, goes beyond the economic value measured by the consumption of country food. In that regard, the value of wildlife resources

3. Importance of Wildlife to Aboriginal People

to aboriginal peoples is rooted in a much more holistic perspective than that of Western society. Unlike that of Western society, the traditional aboriginal perspective of wildlife is tied to a vision of man as being a part of nature. It is expressed as a spiritual relationship with the land and animals as well as a system of material rules and relationships. As noted by Peter Usher: thus,

"every person knew and observed a complex set of rules about how, where and when to hunt and, importantly, not to hunt. These rules were commonly expressed in a metaphor of religion and spirituality, although the fact that a lot of them served in result, if not in conscious or well-articulated intent, to conserve both the resource base on which people relied, as well as harmony within the band, suggests that there was a material as well as an ideological basis for these rules."
(Usher 1984: 389)

At the spiritual level, the notion of reciprocity between man and animals has been a consistent central theme in North America aboriginal societies. Other forms of life are to be respected because mistreatment provokes negative results. Thus, mankind is seen as an integral part of, rather than distinct from, nature. Respect is shown to animals by avoiding over-harvesting and by using of all parts of the animal. Reciprocity is also reflected in interpersonal relationships, as meat is commonly viewed as a shared resource rather than the property of the individual hunter.

In terms of material relationships, upon arrival on this continent, the Europeans found that the concept of private property was foreign to North American aboriginals, as was the extension of this concept to a division of ownership of the land's resources including wildlife. Land in aboriginal terms includes earth, water, plants, animals and sky, and these

3. Importance of Wildlife to Aboriginal People

components are not separable into resource management packages. Thus property rights as understood by Euro-Canadians were simply non-existent in aboriginal societies. Even the european concept of common property does not, as Usher (1984) has pointed out, parallel the aboriginal concept of collective ownership. Common property implies a free for all relationship. Aboriginal collective ownership implies collective benefits and collective responsibilities.

4. Aboriginal & Treaty Rights - Land Claims

4.0 ABORIGINAL AND TREATY RIGHTS - LAND CLAIMS

The history of European settlement, the treaty making process, and the systematic erosion of aboriginal rights to land and wildlife resources in North America has been well documented by individuals such as Thomas Berger (Berger 1991: 126-139).

To aboriginal people, treaties symbolize the direct and special relationship they had with the Crown. In their view, these agreements were based on the principles of sharing and mutual coexistence. They were seen as a framework for the relationship (government to government) that aboriginal people would continue to have with the Crown. Aboriginal people viewed this relationship as been equal to, or greater than, the Crown's relationship with European settlers who were represented after confederation by the provinces. Most importantly, the treaties were seen as a guarantee that the aboriginal signatories and their descendants would continue to have access to their traditional lands and resources.

The increased competition for land and resources resulting from the development and settlement of Canada contributed to the abrogation of treaty and aboriginal rights by the Crown, the appropriation of traditional lands and resources and the gradual destruction of aboriginal economies. In some cases aboriginal peoples were displaced from their homelands. Others were incarcerated or mistreated by provincial game officials for exercising treaty rights, even as late as the 1980s. Wildlife and wildlife habitat were destroyed at an alarming rate. Many aboriginal people lost both their livelihood and their way of life. The social and economic upheaval continues in aboriginal communities. As noted by George Erasmus, the former National Chief of the Assembly of

4. Aboriginal & Treaty Rights - Land Claims

First Nations:

"indigenous peoples gradually found themselves regulated by the provinces and territories to the level of other users who do not possess aboriginal or treaty rights" (Humel 1989: 94)

In 1969, the Trudeau government's White Paper proposed transferring the federal Crown's responsibility for aboriginal peoples to the provinces. The reaction of aboriginal peoples to this proposal was profound. It led to a renewed and vigorous struggle over self government, land claims and aboriginal and treaty rights. This struggle continues and it has been strengthened by Section 35 (1) of the 1982, Constitution Act which states: *"The aboriginal and treaty rights of the aboriginal people of Canada are hereby recognized and affirmed"*. A number of court decisions, most notably Calder, Simon, Sioui, Sparrow and others have made it clear that these constitutional rights and the treaties are enforceable and valid.

The Sparrow case in particular had important ramifications in regards to aboriginal and treaty rights and the allocation of the fishery resource. In this case, the Supreme Court of Canada stated that aboriginal people have a first priority in the allocation of the fishery resource. It also stated that aboriginal people must be consulted prior to decisions being made which might interfere with traditional fishing rights. The Supreme Court also stated in the Sparrow case... *"The government is required to bear the burden of justifying any legislation that has some negative effect on any aboriginal right protected under S. 35(1)."* The Crown's obligations and general fiduciary duty to protect and uphold these rights,

4. Aboriginal & Treaty Rights - Land Claims

binds both the federal and provincial governments within the limits of their respective jurisdictions. The federal Crown has primary responsibility toward aboriginal people under section 91(24) of the Constitution Act 1867, and bears the major burden of the fiduciary trust. But in so far as the provincial crown has the power to affect aboriginal peoples, they also share this trust.

The implications of the Sparrow case for government wildlife managers and their conservation policies are significant but not fully known. A situation made more difficult by the predictable backlash among sports hunters, sports fisherman and commercial fisherman. The B.C. Fisheries Survival Coalition, the Atlantic Salmon Association and the Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters are examples of groups that have been most vocal in their opposition to aboriginal harvesting rights citing their negative impact on conservation measures. Conservation concerns may not be their only motivation however, as James Morrison points out (Morrison. 1993: 6)

"in reality, their opposition is more fundamental. To them, Native harvesting rights are undemocratic because they confer special privileges on one group of people. This opinion is widely shared by non-Native people in rural and northern areas."

Non-aboriginal people living in rural and northern areas of Canada also treat fish and wildlife resources as their common property. This has already provoked racial conflict in situations where aboriginal peoples have attempted to exercise their constitutional rights to access these resources in areas where they had been prohibited from doing so in the past. This can be attributed in part, to the non-recognition by

4. Aboriginal & Treaty Rights - Land Claims

governments of aboriginal and treaty rights for so many years. The refusal of other resource users including government representatives and employees to accept that these court cases did not create any new rights for aboriginal people, but have simply recognized existing rights, will simply add to the conflict. These conflicts, will continue as competition increases for access to scarce wildlife resources, for either consumptive or non-consumptive uses. This situation points to the need to educate all Canadians on the nature and extent of aboriginal and treaty rights.

The Constitution Act 1982 and recent decisions of the Supreme Court of Canada in the Sparrow and other cases have given much wider interpretation and substance to Aboriginal rights. Generally however, these same rights have not been accorded to Metis traditional resource users. This situation may change in light of a March 1993, provincial court decision (under appeal) which held that an accused Metis fell within the interpretation of "Indian" under section 12 of the Natural Resources Transfer Agreement (R v. Ferguson, March 5, 1993, Peace River, Alberta - Provincial Court).

5. Environmental Ethics and Aboriginal People

5.0 ENVIRONMENTAL ETHICS & ABORIGINAL PEOPLE

Like most Canadians, aboriginal peoples want to live in a healthy environment. Moreover, they are not totally against development, only the process by which it has taken place. Many aboriginal communities also want to share in the benefits of development, but they also want to have input to decisions on development that may be destructive of the environment and their communities. Thus, aboriginal people share many of the same environmental concerns as other Canadians.

Aboriginal people also share the objectives of a growing number of conservationists. However, this support may not be reciprocal when it comes to aboriginal rights and the use of wildlife. This is also attributable, in part, to some fundamental differences between aboriginal and non-aboriginal concepts of nature. In that regard, many conservationists, not all, share an almost romantic notion of nature that demands the preservation of natural ecosystems (e.g. parks, wilderness preserves, conservation authorities etc.,) in which mankind has no role. In contrast, many aboriginal peoples continue to see themselves as being integral, but subordinate to the natural world. The harvesting of wildlife is at the core of this relationship with nature. For aboriginal people, the idea that mankind has no role in a natural ecosystem simply does not exist.

These differences have led to a divergence of views and arguments in the conservation movement over aboriginal rights, land claims and the harvesting of wildlife by aboriginal people. For example, the subsistence economy of aboriginal people is acceptable to some parts of the conservation movement, only however, if the harvesting of wildlife is

5. Environmental Ethics and Aboriginal People

undertaken for traditional reasons/purposes and by "traditional" means - spears and bows. This notion fails to recognize that the subsistence economy has evolved naturally to include the use of outboard motors, snowmobiles and all-terrain vehicles.

The high birth rate and growth in aboriginal populations in also sited as a conservation concern. This is based on a belief, that increased numbers of aboriginal peoples combined with uncontrolled harvesting rights will seriously deplete wildlife populations. Added to this, is the concern over the increasing migration of younger aboriginal people to urban centres who may have lost their spiritual respect for wildlife but, retain aboriginal harvesting rights.

Of greatest concern, are accusations that some aboriginal people have threatened the conservation of fish and game by selling large quantities of fish and game outside of their communities. Upon investigation however, most of these accusations have been proven untrue. It should be noted however, that many traditional resource users hold a strong conviction that their aboriginal and treaty rights include commercial harvesting rights.

Quite often conservationists fail to acknowledge and appreciate the conservation knowledge and practices of aboriginal people which demands respect and support. In a submission to the Ontario Royal Commission on the Northern Environment, the Summer Beaver Settlement Council underscored this point aptly:

"we have protected our land and resources better than those people in the south and we can continue to do so." (Fahlgren 1985: 4-22)

5. Environmental Ethics and Aboriginal People

Equally important, is the need for conservationists to appreciate the deep and abiding respect that aboriginal people have for nature. In a submission to the same Royal Commission (Fahlgren, 1985), the Pehtabun Chiefs Tribal Council emphasized nature as the key to sustenance as well as tradition and culture:

"it is because our way of life is at stake that we cannot allow any policy of the Ontario Government to place additional restrictions on the way we use the land. Otherwise, our civilizations will be destroyed, and that not only would harm us, but everyone in Ontario . . . The truth of the matter is that European civilization and our civilization are quite different. Our civilization is based directly on the land -- the plants, the animals, the birds and the fish. We use them to feed ourselves and our children, and this means that if the land is destroyed, we will die." (Fahlgren 1985: 4-22).

Obviously, aboriginal peoples have a vested interest in the conservation of natural ecosystems. The testimony of Mackenzie Valley trapping communities contributed greatly to the decision of the Berger Inquiry against the proposal for a pipeline from the Beaufort Sea. More recently, delegates to a conference of traditional resource users in Saskatoon (ISI Canada, February 1993) called for urgent action to control the clear-cutting of fur-bearer habitat by the logging industry (Maracle 1993). Aboriginal peoples have also worked in combination with environmental groups to preserve natural ecosystems. Examples would include, the struggle over South Moresby and the old growth forest of Temagami where aboriginal peoples and conservationists shared a common objective. These opportunities may be limited however, due to the larger issues of aboriginal and treaty rights, aboriginal title and land claims.

5. Environmental Ethics and Aboriginal People

It is unlikely that the preoccupation of aboriginal people with issues such as self-government, land claims, aboriginal title, treaty and aboriginal rights will change for several decades. Conservationists must learn to appreciate that these moral, legal and political issues will have an impact on the larger environmental and conservation debate in Canada. That aboriginal people are generally distrustful of governments and the larger conservation movement when it comes to the conservation of wildlife should also be understood. This stems from the history of wildlife management in Canada, which is characterized by many aboriginal people as a violation of their treaty and aboriginal rights. Too often, governments have regulated and allocated access to these resources for the benefit of non-aboriginal sports and commercial interests at the expense of aboriginal peoples. Often, this was done to satisfy conservation groups who cited the misuse of wildlife resources by aboriginal people.

As well, aboriginal people are deeply cynical of governments and conservation groups when it comes to environmental issues as they have often suffered the most from the degraded environments brought about by development. For example, Mercury pollution in the Wabigoon-English River system in Northwestern Ontario had a devastating social and economic impact on local (Grassy Narrows and Islington-Whitedog) Ojibway bands.

No doubt, policies dealing with access to wildlife resources in Canada will respect the constitutional rights of aboriginal peoples. Public opinion however, influenced in large part by conservation groups supported by people living in urban centres will also shape these policies. Peter Ernerk, President, Keewatin Inuit Association, provided some insight

5. Environmental Ethics and Aboriginal People

to this issue during a National Symposium on the North at McGill University in January 1987:

"Unfortunately, I am also aware that most southern Canadians have become distanced from this subject. Our North American society has made hunting unnecessary for individual survival in the cities and towns. Many people see hunting as a way of life as being outdated, an obsolete mode of existence. Many southern Canadians see themselves as above such things. These people have become so sophisticated, so contemporary, and, in other cases, so contemptuous of hunting that it is doubtful that they could manage if they were accidentally lost in the woods or on the tundra. Society has conditioned people into believing that hunting skills are no longer a requirement for survival in our modern society. This prevailing attitude among southern Canadians has resulted in the alienation of subsistence hunters and has given further support to the stance taken by those opposing aboriginal rights, including aboriginal hunting rights." (Ernerk 1989: 22)

Currently, there are over 350 registered conservation organizations in Canada. The Canadian Nature Federation which represents about 100 of these special interest groups is separate from the Canadian Wildlife Federation which represents hunter and angler groups. Commercial wildlife interests have their own separate associations as do groups who are opposed to the use of animals. What is missing, is a strong, cohesive organization that can represent the environmental, conservation and wildlife interests of traditional resource users.

6. Conservation and Aboriginal People

6.0 CONSERVATION AND ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

It is still commonly asserted that aboriginal peoples remained in balance with wildlife populations only because their technology was too simple to allow overexploitation, and their numbers were limited in relation to the carrying capacity of natural habitat. As Usher (Usher 1984: 389-415) points out, however, to argue that the occasional overexploitation of a species by an aboriginal group indicates a lack of game management strategies is absurd. On this basis, industrial society, with thousands of species driven to extinction over the last century, would certainly be judged devoid of any game management strategies. This assertion is also contradicted by important bodies of literature which demonstrate that aboriginal people had well established and effective systems of game management. As one example, Harvey Feit (1983: 442) has described a number of biological indicators (number of moose yards and beaver colonies, frequency of twinning in moose, observations of placental scars in beaver to determine cohort size. etc.) and territorial management strategies (a trapline system supervised by a 'tallyman') used by the Waswanipi Cree of Quebec to regulate their wildlife harvesting activities in response to natural fluctuations. The regulation of harvests by aboriginal hunters in response to the health of animal populations is a conscious, carefully considered undertaking. As Feit points out referring to the data listed above:

"These are precisely the kinds of data that non-native game managers try to get in order to manage moose and beaver populations. It is ironic that while non-native managers lament the lack of data, because of their attitudes to native

6. Conservation and Aboriginal People

harvesters they have ignored a readily available, complete and accurate data base." (Feit 1983: 442)

When Ontario implemented their registered trapline system between 1943 and 1949 in response to declining populations of furbearers they simply incorporated the age-old system of family hunting territories into a modern structure of furbearer management. These traditional systems of game management are still in place in many regions of Canada. Similar systems for the management of waterfowl hunting have also been documented (Berkes 1982: 23-25)

Many wildlife managers continue to discount the traditional knowledge of aboriginal people in favour of contemporary scientific approaches. Increasingly however, professional wildlife managers and biologists are beginning to appreciate the important role that traditional knowledge can play in wildlife management and conservation. Knowledge, which is based on detailed observations of wildlife habitat and populations handed down over many lifetimes. Among professional resource managers working in the NWT, especially fish and wildlife biologists associated with government, there is an increasing awareness that local native people often know much better than the so-called professional how animal populations will respond under certain circumstances. For example, Milton Freeman documented several cases where Inuit hunters disagreed with policies implemented by government wildlife managers and, based on their own understanding of the behaviour patterns of affected species, predicted different outcomes that subsequently proved to be true. Freeman pointed out:

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"...scientists have only fragmentary biological information for nearly all arctic species that they propose to scientifically manage." (Freeman 1984: 7)

"...both native systems and western science rest on the same foundation namely empirical evidence. Both systems place value on the systematic accumulation of detailed observations and the abstraction of norms from disparate data sets. At this point however, the two systems begin to diverge. The native system assessed deviations from the norm in a qualitative sense...

The sum total of the communities' empirically-based knowledge is awesome in breadth and detail... and often stands in marked contrast to the attenuated data available from scientific studies of these same populations...

The existence of local populations of hunters living in a long-term dependent relationship with selected food species would seem a priori, to argue for the existence of effective indigenous systems of control to prevent irrevocable depletion or extirpation of such species." (Freeman, 1984: 17-19)

The World Conservation Strategy has also recognized the importance of traditional knowledge. "Indigenous Peoples" says the WCS, "have everything to gain from nature and much to offer: a profound and detailed knowledge of species and ecosystems; ways of sharing and managing resources that have

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stood the test of time; and ethics that reconcile subsistence and coexistence, recognize that people are an integral part of nature, and express spiritual bonds with other species, including those they harvest".

Aboriginal peoples in Canada, are contributing to conservation at the local and regional levels, through their own environmental knowledge and presence on the land. One example would be the Manitoba Keewatinawi Okimakanak (MKO) which is a resource management secretariat representing the interests of 23 Cree communities in Manitoba. In recent years, MKO has gathered detailed material on traditional land use and entered it on a geographic information system. This data base now covers two thirds of Manitoba and is being used authoritatively in studies of the projected impacts of industrial development schemes, as well as in regulating such large-scale developments. MKO, which depends upon information from Cree trappers, hunters and fishermen was started without dedicated government support and continues as a self-sufficient economic operation.

Aboriginal peoples are also beginning to undertake greater responsibilities for environmental monitoring at the local level. In Sanikiluaq, the Weasels Hunters and Trappers Association has developed procedures for making accurate reindeer counts from snowmobiles. In the Mackenzie Delta, young people act as "beluga whale monitors", taking samples and measurements of beluga taken by hunters and sending these south for analysis.

In recent years, land claim settlements, revised government policies and court rulings have led to a number of wildlife co-management agreements with aboriginal groups. These

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agreements are serving to mitigate the cultural differences between "traditional" and "western" systems of game management. The claims relating to the James Bay and Inuvialuit agreements are examples of comprehensive native claims, each of which has resulted in a number of co-management boards at the local and regional levels. Examples of other co-management regimes involving aboriginal peoples in Canada are the Porcupine and the Beverly-Quaminuriak Caribou Management Boards, the Yukon Fish and Wildlife Management Board and the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta Goose Management Plan which involves Alaskan and Californian agencies as well as other user groups. Cooperative arrangements for managing land and resources in addition to wildlife have also emerged as demonstrated by the creation of the Wendapan Stewardship Authority - a joint management authority established by Ontario and the Teme-Augama Anishnabai for four townships in the Temagami claim area.

Aboriginal people have also acted on their own to maintain effective systems of conserving and managing wildlife resources. In the Northwest Territories, the local Hunter and Trapper Councils have a major voice in the allocation of these resources. Individually, many First Nations have enacted conservation by-laws regulating the harvesting of fish and wildlife within their territories. In some cases these by-laws impose stiff financial penalties on abusers.

The Indian Act and government policies have often served to undermine the rights of aboriginal people to exercise their own management systems outside of First Nation boundaries. However, this is changing as a result of court cases which reaffirm the rights of aboriginal peoples - rights which include the priority of access to unoccupied Crown lands for

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hunting, fishing and trapping. These court cases have also served to limit the authority that provincial and territorial game managers once had to regulate the harvesting practices of aboriginal people. Aboriginal peoples are responding by developing their own game management systems. In Nova Scotia, Micmac moose and deer hunters follow regulations drafted by the Union of Nova Scotia Chiefs, which includes their own tagging and reporting systems. In Ontario, the United Chiefs and Councils of Manitoulin Island (UCCM) has also developed a pilot game management system. The UCCM approach is based on self enforcement, harvesting studies, harvest levels based on need, habitat enhancement and rehabilitation, and full cooperation with other agencies to share information and expertise (UCCM 1993: 43-63). Each of these systems combine traditional knowledge and practises with modern "scientific" methods and, each is committed to the conservation and management of fish and wild life resources on a sustained basis.

The empowerment of aboriginal people by aboriginal people, to make decisions regarding the management and conservation of wildlife resources within and adjacent to their traditional territories will be an inherent feature of Native self-government. It remains for aboriginal people to develop and define the features of their own self-governing powers, laws, institutions and responsibilities. However, it remains for the provincial and federal governments to recognize the inherent rights of aboriginal peoples to have a say in the management of these resources. With constitutional recognition of aboriginal and treaty rights, governments can no longer deny aboriginal people a role. It should be clear to both governments and other resource users that the self-government agendas of aboriginal people will influence the future of

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wildlife management and conservation in much of Canada.

Governments and conservation groups must acknowledge the important contribution that aboriginal peoples can make as major stakeholder in the stewardship of natural resources. Resource managers in particular could learn much from aboriginal concepts of nature which argue for a totally integrated approach to the management of all natural resources. Similarly, the role of aboriginal people in resource management would be strengthened considerably by ensuring that a sufficient number of aboriginal people are educated and trained in all fields of resource management.

7. The Role of Subsistence Activities in the Traditional Economy

7.0 THE ROLE OF SUBSISTENCE ACTIVITIES IN THE TRADITIONAL ECONOMY

"Subsistence" is a term which is often misunderstood. Frequently, it has different meanings for individuals or groups of individuals who are using it to make their particular point (e.g. anti-harvest movement). Too often, it is used to describe a way of making a living through primitive hunting, trapping and fishing methods.

Increasingly however, recognition is being given to the importance of the traditional economy, sometimes called the "subsistence" economy as a way of life, as opposed to just another way of making a living. As Thomas Berger explained it (Berger 1985: 51):

"The traditional economy is based on subsistence activities that require special skills and a complex understanding of the local environment that enables the people to live directly from the land. It also involves cultural values and attitudes: mutual respect, sharing, resourcefulness, and an understanding that is both conscious and mystical of the intricate interrelationships that link humans, animals, and the environment. To this array of activities and deeply embedded values, we attach the word 'subsistence', recognizing that no one word can adequately encompass all these related concepts"

Berger has also argued that most Canadians misunderstand the traditional economy of aboriginal people (Berger, 1991: 139):

"Because our world is Industrial, we tend to see aboriginal people as anachronistic. Either Natives are living a precarious existence on the edge of starvation and must be weaned into the mainstream economy. Or - a view held by many environmentalists - they should be permitted to continue their subsistence activities, provided they adhere to "traditional" methods and patterns of harvest."

7. The Role of Subsistence Activities in the Traditional Economy

To appreciate the differences between the traditional "subsistence" economy and the larger industrial economy, it is important to have an understanding of the socio-cultural significance of subsistence activities to aboriginal peoples. In that regard, it is often argued that a culture is defined in large part, by its resource base, technology, economic activities, and social arrangements through which it sustains itself. "The real meaning of tradition lies in the social organization of production and consumption" (Usher, 1979, 40).

The basic traditional resources of aboriginal peoples are wild animals, fish and plants, and for the most part, the activities by which these are harvested consist of hunting, fishing, trapping and gathering. The social arrangements by which these activities are carried on, involves the household (usually consisting of the extended family) as the primary unit of production. Each adult member of the family has a role in providing labour for the good of the family, household and community. Traditional skills and knowledge, based on a shared experience on the land, are passed on directly from one generation to the next.

The household is also the basic unit of consumption. The sharing of food and other items within and between families and communities, continues to be an important aspect of the social organization in many aboriginal communities. While the production of goods from subsistence activities is primarily an individualistic or family undertaking, the sharing of these goods provides social cohesion within the community. These activities remain a principal characteristic of the local economy in many aboriginal communities, located in the arctic and subarctic regions of Canada as well as Atlantic Canada and British Columbia. A good deal of the economic activity in

7. The Role of Subsistence Activities in the Traditional Economy

these communities is informal, in that labour and the exchange of goods are not based on cash transactions - the distribution of goods is relatively egalitarian.

These arrangements contrast sharply with those of the modern industrial society in which the household is viewed as the central unit of consumption, but not the unit of production. The accumulation of private property, the production of surplus, capitalism, and industrial technology have shaped the social organization of work, so that most individuals are involved in wage labour activities that are organized by corporate enterprise. Family members are not often employed in the same work. Moreover, technology and substantive knowledge are changing so rapidly that there is little continuity or transfer of work-related skills from generation to generation. Neither the extended nor the nuclear family form a functional unit, and the sharing of goods between families is an anomaly rather than a central social arrangement. The distribution of income and the exchange of goods is not egalitarian.

The subsistence activities of aboriginal people often involves hard work and discomfort for both men and women. The men are preoccupied with hunting, trapping and fishing. Often, the women also hunt and trap which adds to their responsibilities for primary preparation of production, young children, food preparation and other chores. In addition, many women are involved in crafts production as a source of income for themselves and their families.

Modern-day subsistence activities depend on expensive items such as rifles, snowmobiles, oil and gas, fishing nets, traps, sleeping bags etc. It can be argued therefore, that the

7. The Role of Subsistence Activities in the Traditional Economy

pursuit of subsistence activities is also dependent on those formal economic activities that generate cash. This cash is often generated from part time and seasonal work, commercial trapping, crafts production and transfer payments.

The availability of wage labour and other sources of cash does not necessarily reduce the involvement of aboriginal people in subsistence activities. In many cases, subsistence activities may expand with increased opportunities to generate cash, as it provides people with the capital they need to outfit themselves for a trip to the bush. Thus, a highly-integrated interdependence between the formal and informal sectors of the economy has evolved in aboriginal communities. The importance of this relationship however, has been largely ignored by governments, whether through resource allocation policies, the relocation of people to communities, or the imposition of southern-determined social and economic improvement programs. This has contributed to social problems in many aboriginal communities. These problems combined with the prospects of continued high levels of unemployment and few other opportunities to generate cash, have forced many people from their home communities to find other ways of sustaining themselves - as is currently the case with increasing numbers of young aboriginal people.

In an article prepared for the Northeast Indian Quarterly, "Environmental Work - An Indigenous Perspective", 1991, Winona LaDuke, discusses the impact that the loss of traditional subsistence economies has had on Indian women (LaDuke W. p.19):

"I also want to talk about the impact on women. It is my experience that in most traditional

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subsistence economies, as in many native societies, men and women are pretty much equal. They have different roles and different jobs and different instructions, but I would say there is respect for women in this society. When you devastate a traditional subsistence economy, you force women from a position of being equal into a position of being marginalized parts of the dominant society. Women in these communities are being forced from being an equal part of society to having the lowest paid jobs on the economic scale, with much lower pay and much lower respect than men. So it is an important issue to look at from the standpoint of the rights of women to have some control over their lives, and to have some control over their future, and the right to be empowered in their work".

Many aboriginal people and communities want to preserve and strengthen their traditional subsistence economies as a way of protecting their cultures and life styles. This has often been difficult in the face of resource development projects, government policies and the attraction of young aboriginal people to the wage labour economy or to urban centres. Until recently, the education of aboriginal children was focussed almost entirely on the development of knowledge and skills appropriate to the wage labour economy. Increasingly however, aboriginal people are assuming control over education and are instituting curriculums which recognize and reinforce the importance of traditional knowledge and subsistence activities. Important changes are also occurring in other areas such as the judicial system, whereby the rehabilitation of young aboriginal offenders may involve a land based experience under the supervision of an elder.

8. Commercialization of Wildlife

8.0 COMMERCIALIZATION OF WILDLIFE

Due perhaps, to the loss of traditional markets for seal skins combined with depressed wild fur prices, many aboriginal communities have been compelled to look at the commercialization of other wildlife resources to generate cash - a scarce commodity in a traditional economy. The commercialization of wildlife however, is not a new or uncommon idea as furbearers and fish have been harvested commercially on a sustained basis for a great deal of time. During the past decade, aboriginal groups in Labrador, Quebec and the Northwest Territories have organized commercial harvests of caribou for local and export markets. In the Northwest Territories, muskox are also harvested commercially. Similarly, aboriginal people across Canada have renewed their fight to have commercial fishing rights recognized.

The commercialization of wildlife can take on many forms including activities such as trapping, "fee hunting/fishing", "market hunting/fishing", outfitting/guiding, wildlife viewing, eco-tourism and even commercial game ranching or farming, which is covered in the Royal Commission's study on agriculture.

The commercialization of wildlife, other than fish and fur, is a controversial subject for many aboriginal and non aboriginal Canadians. Among professional wildlife managers there is a lot of resistance to the commercialization of wildlife as it offends some of the accepted principals of wildlife management. Many resource management and conservation concerns have been cited over the dangers in establishing retail markets for wildlife meat and parts. In particular, considerable controversy surrounds the demand for

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velvet antlers, sex organs, glands and bear gall-bladders, paws, claws, and teeth.

The greatest opposition however, will come from sport users who will argue in the case of fish that, dollar for dollar, the sports fishery contributes more to the economy than the commercial fishery. Similar arguments can be made about sports hunting. The difficulty aboriginal peoples have in accepting these arguments however, is the distribution of these dollars. Often, many aboriginal communities who had a sustainable commercial fishery found their access to the resource restricted to allow for the development of a sports fishery. The economic benefits were accrued by lodge owners from southern Canada and the U.S.A.. Not surprising, aboriginal peoples are cynical of those making these argument when they see the commercial exploitation of wildlife resources everywhere by non-aboriginal interests.

The commercialization of wildlife also presents a problem for aboriginal communities due to their concepts of resource ownership - 'community resources' and the importance attached to the subsistence harvest. In that regard, it is doubtful that a commercial harvest that benefited only a few individuals or families would be acceptable in most aboriginal communities. This may also explain why more aboriginal people are not involved in the commercial aspects of guiding big game hunters.

Many other problems surround the commercialization of species such as caribou. First of all, wild meat must be inspected and passed by the federal Department of Agriculture before it can be exported. The absence of federally approved abattoirs in northern and isolated areas makes this task difficult and

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expensive. Some provinces and territories have similar inspection requirements for the sale of wild meat domestically. Other provinces prohibit the sale of wild meat altogether. Secondly, the creation of markets for wild meat may create demands that cannot always be met due to natural population fluctuations and migratory patterns. Moreover, for various reasons, the creation of external markets for wild meat may have an adverse affect on community/regional access to this food.

For many aboriginal communities wildlife may be the best resource they have to strengthen their local economies. It's a natural renewable resource and if managed properly by local communities it may be possible to support commercial and other activities as well as providing for subsistence needs on a sustainable basis. These decisions will be made by individual communities. They should be supported however, by government policies which are designed to redirect the flow of wildlife benefits to aboriginal communities. If wildlife had greater economic value there would be more incentive for local communities to manage and conserve the resource for multiple uses.

Due perhaps, to the lack of organization, training, community infrastructure and investment capital, aboriginal communities generally, have been slow to exploit opportunities within the global tourism industry. Access to wildlife for consumptive or non-consumptive purposes combined with accommodation, meals and other world class services are products that can be marketed in North America, Europe and Asia. The image of unspoiled wilderness combined with guided interpretive tours in particular, is a product that can be sold to the growing number of environmental/conservationists.

9. Animal Use/Animal Protection

9.0 ANIMAL USE/ANIMAL PROTECTION

The international animal-rights/anti-trapping movement (largely urban based) poses a number of real and potential threats to both traditional resource users and wildlife. Attacks on the fur industry serve to undermine traditional aboriginal economies based on trapping, hunting, and fishing. By undermining the value of the wild fur harvest, the incentive for traditional resource users to use, manage, conserve and protect fur bearer populations, other wildlife and wildlife habitat is greatly diminished. Ultimately, this leads to the destruction of wildlife through the loss of habitat and the disastrous effects of overpopulation.

The animal rights movement is an offshoot of the larger animal welfare movement which has changed in the past couple of decades. In that regard, the more radical (animal-rights) elements of the movement have diverged sharply from the traditional working agenda of reform in the treatment of animals. Instead, the goal of the more radical groups is essentially to achieve a complete ban on activities involving animals. At its most extreme animal rights groups oppose the use of animals for any purpose, including pets.

Because the radical groups have drawn a much higher profile than the moderate animal welfare groups, and have been more effective in mobilizing financial support and public interest, moderate groups are being increasingly drawn toward the radical position. Changes in the direction of the Toronto Humane Society during the late 1980s exemplified this trend. During this period, the Society shifted its focus from problems in the treatment of domestic animals to actions aimed at ending the fur trade and other uses of animals. This shift

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was brought about by a "coup d'etat" undertaken by radical animal rights activists during its annual meeting and election of board members.

The effectiveness of these groups was demonstrated during the "whitecoat" seal pup anti-sealing campaign in the early 1980s. The subsequent EEC ban on seal products and the US ban on marine mammal products under the Marine Mammals Protection Act, 1972 produced severe social and economic consequences for many Inuit communities. Often their tactics include direct action, demonstrations, lobbying, boycotts and economic sanctions. These groups attempt both to bring pressure on governments to impose restrictions on targeted activities, and to undermine the markets. The income of these groups (the estimated 1983 income of the International Fund for Animal Welfare alone was \$5 million) enabled them to undertake expensive and highly effective actions, such as the direct mail out of pamphlets urging the boycott of Canadian fish to 4,500,000 households in Britain. They can also take much of the credit for the European Community (EC) restrictions on the trade of wildfur harvested with the leg hold trap which will take effect on January 1, 1995. Traditionally about 75% of Canada's wild fur has been exported to Europe and this is still the case today.

Driven by animal rights groups, European parliamentarians have also considered the inclusion of Canadian fur species which are not endangered in Annex B of their EC CITES - Flora & Fauna regulations. The EC CITES - Flora Fauna Proposal is an attempt by the EC communities to pull together and codify all of the CITES (Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species) regulations and the legislation in its 12 members countries, which relate to the importation of flora and fauna

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products. The implication to those uninformed on the issues would be that Canada is trading in endangered species of fur bearing animals, when in fact, it is not. None of the 20 species of fur bearers currently harvested in Canada is endangered or nearing endangerment.

It is ironic that the European Economic Community can justify their actions, in part, as a wildlife conservation measure when their own record in this regard has been very poor in comparison to North America's record. For example, the Inuit Tapirisat of Canada presented the following information on extinction rates of mammals, birds and fish in both Europe and North America to the Standing Committee on Aboriginal Affairs.

Mammals

Europe 40%-60%

North America 6%-10%

Birds

Europe 21%-40%

North America 0-5%

Fish

Europe 11%-20%

North America 0-5%

Those who advocate the radical approach to animal rights often hold the position that animals, like humans, should have rights. This view is strongly advocated by Peter Singer in his book, *Animal Liberation* (Singer, 1975). Singer's major concern was with the abuse of animals in mega-profit businesses such as agriculture (factory farming) and the drug and cosmetic industries (animal testing), as well as vivisection and other forms of medical experimentation. However, activists soon found trapping and the fur industry to be easier targets than these other activities. There is less popular support to attack activities such as medical experimentation involving animals, as they affect almost

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every sector of society.

The animal rights movement should not be confused with the larger environmental movement. Unlike the animal welfare/animal rights ideologies, which are based on concern for the welfare of individual animals, the environmental movement is motivated by ecological concerns -- the survival of species and the integrity of ecosystems. They are concerned with ecological, not humanitarian, issues. Not all environmental groups, however, recognize man as an acceptable active component of the natural environment. Many others however, are not opposed to hunting or trapping as long as the survival of the species is not threatened (i.e. principles of maximum sustainable yield are applied). Environmental organizations therefore tend to focus their attention on what is by far a more significant threat to the long-term health of natural ecosystems and the survival of wildlife - resource extraction, industrial activities, and urban expansion. It is in recognition of the traditional resource users' role in managing, conserving and protecting wildlife and natural habitat that some environmental organizations are willing to clearly distinguish their position from that of the animal rights/welfare movement. It is important for traditional resource users to recognize this distinction, and to avoid legitimizing animal rights groups by referring to them as environmental groups.

Unlike the larger environmental/conservation movement, the animal rights movement has no long-term commitment to the conservation and protection of wildlife and their habitat. In no instance have the actions of an animal rights organization been directed at a conservation oriented goal. Moreover their aggressive and often misleading fund raising activities

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actually divert resources away from worthwhile conservation organizations and projects. Their goal is always stated as a complete end to any harvest claiming that the animal species is being threatened.

This distinction between environmental/conservation groups and animal rights groups is not always clear in the eyes of the public however, since the latter will use whatever arguments are available to raise money and get their message across to the public. They have also been effective in capturing the attention of the mass media. The history of the anti-sealing campaign demonstrated this clearly. Greenpeace began its anti-sealing campaign largely on the premise that the hunt was endangering the seal population. With irrefutable evidence to the contrary arising in the mid to late seventies, Greenpeace shifted its campaign strategy to 'humanitarian' grounds. However, Greenpeace paid a price for its success in this campaign. That price was the growing recognition by the public at large of the manner in which emotions were manipulated, and the degree to which those in the least economically secure sector of Canadian society had to bear the major impacts of this campaign. Paul Watson, a former director of Greenpeace and leader of anti-sealing campaigns, spoke of this disillusionment after the campaign:

"Watson described the mercenary attitude of his successor, Patrick Moore, in turning the sealing issue into an emotionally exploitative money-making campaign. He quotes Moore as saying "I don't care if they kill all the bloody seals, just so long as they spell our name right." In an interview with Moore on Herscovici's (1983) CBC Ideas series Herscovici describes the manipulative 'pulp novel'

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style used by Greenpeace in their media campaign on the sealing issue, targeted at an audience of "little old ladies in sneakers" (Dene Nation 1985: 11)

Generally, the impacts of the animal-rights movement on aboriginal groups who rely on wildlife harvesting for economic and cultural survival, have been largely ignored by the movement's proponents. While some groups have specifically exempted aboriginal subsistence uses from their protest, trapping for fur is generally not viewed as a subsistence activity. This leaves little room for arguments about aboriginal lifestyles, the sustainability or the humaneness of the harvest.

Efforts to counter the attacks of the animal rights movement by traditional resource users have been difficult due to a lack of organization and difficulties in communicating among themselves and to outside groups including the public. Groups such as Indigenous Survival International (ISI) and the Aboriginal Trappers' Federation of Canada (ATFC) achieved some successes in countering the animal rights threat during the 1980's. Their effectiveness in recent years however, has been greatly diminished by the lack of funding, political support and other organizational problems.

That urban based animal rights groups can dictate the morality of wildlife harvesting to those whose lives are closely tied to nature is a clear irony. Another irony embedded in the anti-trapping movement is that the destruction of the fur economy legitimizes the advance of resource extraction, clear-cutting and other industrial activities into wildlife habitat. In fact, animal-rights groups and

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industrialists frequently share the argument, that the economic dependence of aboriginal peoples on wild life is no longer significant. From the industrialists' viewpoint, this argument strengthens the case for land-use activities which would be incompatible with wildlife harvesting and/or destructive of habitat.

10.0 THE FUR TRADE

Initially an activity of minor importance, the trading of furs between aboriginal peoples and Europeans grew quickly in response to increased demand for wild fur in Europe, particularly beaver. The increased importance of the fur trade led to European exploration and domination of North America and to the subsequent waves of European colonization and exploitation. Today, it is estimated that about one half of the 85,000 wild fur harvesters in Canada are aboriginal people. Canada is the third largest producer of wild fur in the world after the U.S.A. and Russia.

From the beginning, the fur trade has operated on an international basis with furs harvested in North America to supply the fashion industry in Europe. The first fur auction house was established in London in the 17th century and the pattern was established that fur producing countries would sell their products as a commodity on a world market open to all buyers.

The business cycle of the fur industry follows the natural cycle of the seasons. Fur pelts, whether wild or farmed, become prime in late fall and through the winter months. Auction sales are held regularly from mid-December through June. The season's first pelts are forwarded for dressing, dyeing and finishing and, by the beginning of March, manufacturers present their new collections of finished garments at the major international fur fairs - Frankfurt, Milan, Paris, Hong Kong, New York, and increasingly at the International Fur Fair held each May, in Montreal. About half of the Canadian production of fur garments are sold at the Montreal Fur Fair. Garments are manufactured over the summer months, and reach the retail stores by fall. This coincides

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with the beginning of another production cycle for wild fur harvesters and farmers. The flow of wild fur through this process from the producer to the consumer is illustrated in Appendix A (Wild Fur Marketing Process).

10.1 SUPPLY & DEMAND

Operating on an international basis, the fur industry has always been prone to cycles. The beaver, once the foundation of the world fur trade, has with changes in fashion become a minor player as mink has emerged as the new gold standard. Similarly, supply and demand can dramatically affect prices and sales of fur. It has emerged as a luxury item, the demand for which can be significantly affected by events in the global economy such as the current economic recession. Between 1988 and 1991 exports of Canadian raw furs experienced a severe down turn, as demonstrated in Table 1.

A number of factors contributed to this significant downturn. First, 1987 was the fifth year of sustained growth in the trade. Increasing profits encouraged many producers, particularly in Finland and Denmark, with substantial government support to drastically increase their fur production resulting in a glut of fur, predominantly farmed mink and fox, on the world market (see Appendix B). As illustrated in Appendix B, over supply had the predictable impact of reducing prices. In the fur industry mink is the preferred choice and attracts a premium price. As the price of mink falls it drives all other fur prices down. The value of the Canadian wild fur harvest fell some \$76 from \$65,019,872 in 1987/1988 to \$15,484,058 in 1990/1991 (see Appendix C, Value Of Canadian Wild Fur Production By Province & Territory, 1987 - 1992).

10. The Fur Trade

TABLE I

Canadian Exports - Raw Furs - 1988 - 1991 (Thousands of Dollars)

COUNTRY	1988	1989	1990	1991
U.S.A	40677	45727	45884	32969
U.K.	12563	5080	2978	2169
France	3117	2782	1839	580
Germany West	15989	5718	4964	4017
Italy	7611	7699	3776	3135
Switzerland	37084	24571	29807	17854
Hong Kong	6207	5214	9106	7982
Japan	3244	4180	3294	4917
Korea South	6650	2892	4547	6672
Other Countries	9739	4999	5508	5271
Total	141981	107962	102703	85566

SOURCE: ISTC Data Based on Stats Canada Cat.No. 23-207, April 1992

World wide production of farmed mink fell from 42 million pelts in 1989 to 19 million pelts in 1992. Most of the large inventories of finished goods and raw pelts created during the period 1988-90, have now been depleted. The industry has witnessed improvements in the value of raw fur pelts and there is every reason to believe that this trend will continue. For example, the value of the 1991/1992 wild fur harvest was \$22,919,937 an increase of 48% over the value of the 1990/1991 harvest. Canadian fur auctions held in the middle of December of 1993 witnessed a 50% increase in the

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value of beaver and similar increases for other wild fur species. Similarly, price increases of 100% for farmed mink and 200% for farmed fox were realized at the fur auction held in Copenhagen on December 16, 1993.

It should be noted that 95% of all Canadian wild fur is exported. Of this, 75% ends up in the European Community (EC) either directly or indirectly. Although only 30% of Canada's raw furs goes directly to European buyers, the rest goes to Europe as dressed pelts or finished products via Asian, American and Canadian tanners and furriers. It should also be noted, that to supply Canada's fur garment manufacturing sector it is necessary to import wild fur pelts (raw or dressed) and these come primarily from the United States (eg. Raccoons, muskrats, bobcats, etc.)

Appendix D, outlines the changes in the number and value of wild fur pelts sold by province and territory for the seasons 1987/1988 and 1991/1992. For the 1991/1992 season wild fur production was greatest in Ontario, Quebec, Alberta and Saskatchewan, in that order. Their combined production accounted for 73% of all wild furs produced in Canada. In terms of value however, the worth of the harvest was greatest in Ontario, Quebec, British Columbia and the Northwest Territories, also in that order. The combined value of their fur harvest accounted for 67% of the total value for the Canadian wild fur harvest in 1991/1992

Appendix E, outlines the changes in the number, average price and total value of selected fur species between the 1990/1991 and the 1991/1992 seasons. Appendix F, Outlines these same changes between the 1987/1988 and 1991/1992 seasons. Marten accounted for 45.2% of the total value of furs

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harvested in Canada during the 1991/1992 season and 41.6% in 1987/1988. Beaver accounted for 19% of the value in 1987/1988 and 16.61% of the total value in 1991/1992. The average price of all wild fur species, with the exception of bear, increased in the 1991/1992 over prices paid in the 1990/1991 season. The increase in the average price paid for coyote of 89.5% in the 1991/1992 season is attributable to the increased demand for trim by the apparel industry.

Appendix G, outlines the number and value of farm raised pelts produced in Canada over the period 1987 to 1991.

10.2 WILD FUR MARKETS

Despite the protest movement, fur has endured as a fashionable, saleable product to many consumers around the world. Markets once thought to be lost are beginning to resurface, for example, West Germany is emerging once again into the world fur markets. While hit hard by the economic recession, Italy has in recent years been a major market for North American wild furs. Eastern Europe, China and Russia have the potential to become enormous markets, closely followed by an increasingly affluent Korea. With the recent elimination of the Korean luxury tax, Korea becomes potentially as large a market as Japan. Japanese fur purchases are a very close second to the U.S.A. the world's largest market for fur (most of the fur consumed in the U.S. and Japanese markets is farmed mink).

Table II

Change in Value of Canadian Raw Fur Exports Between January and March 1991 and January and March 1992 in actual and constant dollars over the same period. (Thousands of Dollars)

Country	Jan - Mar 1991		Jan - March 1992		% ² Change
	Actual	Constant ¹	Actual	Constant ¹	
U.S.A.	12160	12547	15143	15775	25.56
U.K.	1065	1099	360	375	-65.80
France	423	436	522	544	24.70
W. Germany	2065	2130	2257	2436	10.39
Italy	1562	1611	1573	1639	1.73
Switzerland	8693	8970	5304	5525	-38.40
Hong Kong	3094	3192	1152	1200	-62.24
Japan	626	645	691	719	11.60
S. Korea	467	481	1201	1251	160.12
Total Above	30155	31117	28203	29381	-5.81
Other Countries	1835	1893	1551	1615	-14.68
Total All Countries	31990	33010	29754	30997	-6.09

Source: ISTC Data Based on Statistics Canada Tapes, derived from 1990-91 Fur Production Records. Statistics Canada. Catalogue 23-207. April 1992. 1. Converted to 1993 dollars using the CPI with 1986 = 100.

2. Shown as a percentage of change in constant dollars.

Table II demonstrates recent changes in fur markets over the periods January - March 1991 and January - March 1992. Italy reduced its imports of Canadian raw fur as indicated by the export data for Italy and Switzerland (the bulk of fur shipped to Italy, is shipped via Switzerland). This decline however,

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was partly offset by increasing demand in the U.S.A., West Germany and Japan.

Table III

Value of Domestic Exports of Fur Apparel by Country of Destination Between January and September 1992 and January and September 1993 in Actual and Constant Dollars Over the Same Period.

Country	January - March 1992		January - March 1993	% ¹ Change
	Actual	Constant ¹		
U.S.A.	23,591,138	24,343,695	35,020,906	43.86
Japan	3,325,678	3,464,691	2,530,187	-26.97
Spain	4,820,980	5,022,496	1,410,971	-72.08
Switzerland	1,870,546	1,883,101	1,401,971	-43.09
Hong Kong	357,411	372,350	821,366	120.58
Germany	779,407	811,986	714,739	-11.97
France	558,639	581,990	662,954	13.91
China	0		466,255	
Russia	0		298,040	
Belgium	178,937	186,416	105,343	-43.49
Others	1,628,780	1,696,863	429,059	-74.71
Total	37,112,516	38,663,819	43,522,364	12.56

Source: Trade Trends - Industry Canada-Consumer Goods Branch, 1993.

Notes: 1. Converted to 1993 dollars using the CPI with 1986=100. 2. Shown as a percentage of change from constant dollars.

Export statistics of fur apparel from Canada are also useful in assessing the demand for wild fur. In that regard, most fur garment manufacturers in Canada specialize in wild fur products. The use of wild fur is generally avoided by the newly industrialized countries who specialize in mass production. Table III (derived from Appendix H) demonstrates recent changes in exports of fur apparel from Canada for the

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periods January to September 1992 and January to September 1993.

Total exports increased by 17.2% over this period. Exports to the U.S.A, the largest market for furs in the world, increased almost 50% during the same period. The value of exports, which account for about half of the Canadian production, had dropped to \$56.4 million (wholesale prices) during 1992, compared to \$119 million in 1989 (Jacops, 1993). With fur exports on the rise, industry sources are claiming a comeback.

The use of fur exclusively in garments is a recent industry trend that ignores its beginning in the cloaking and trimming trade. This can be attributed in part to the fact that with the industry's profitability in garments, it did not seek to enlarge this market to any great extent. Moreover, with the high prices that fur had demanded, it was not profitable for apparel merchandisers to use fur in production. Today however, more and more wild fur is being used in collars, hats or trimming and this is reflected in the increased demand and prices paid for a species such as coyote.

The change in urban lifestyles around the world calls for outerwear that is "environment friendly", appropriately casual, light weight and flattering. As more and more women drive to work to the shopping centres, to daycare, outerwear has taken on a more utilitarian and functional aspect. Fur, especially many varieties of long haired furs, are seen as too dressy, too big and too warm. This problem can only be addressed by working with designers, dressing plants, and advertising firms to create a new image for wild fur and new products.

10.3 WILD FUR PROMOTION AND MARKETING

Public perception of wild fur has altered substantially over past decades. Once the only fur available, wild fur now faces a number of problems as a result of changing markets and the number of alternative fur choices. As well, wild fur, has to deal with the animal rights and animal welfare issues. These two issues are part of a much larger problem that all animal user groups face. In the case of the wild fur industry however, it is vital that it makes its case based on facts, humane trapping systems and the sustainable use of resources. This case is now being made by organizations such as the Fur Council of Canada, the Fur Institute of Canada and the Wild Fur Council of North America.

In marketing wild fur, an integral part of this message has to be the importance of the trade to aboriginal peoples. The animal rights debate focuses on generating public sympathy. European and North American consumers accept that the harvesting of wild fur is an important part of the traditional aboriginal lifestyle and this perception goes a long way towards balancing concern about the leg hold trap.

The Fur Council of Canada recently concluded a national survey, to gauge consumer attitudes about fur. Some key findings included:

- a large number of Canadian women wear fur: One-quarter of Canadian women (19 to 59 years of age) own a fur coat or jacket. One-in-three women over 35 years of age wears fur. Fur is most popular in Quebec.

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- the practicality of fur is an important selling point: Three-quarters of those considering buying a fur garment cite "warmth, durability and practicality" as the prime motivations.
- consumers want more information about how the fur trade is regulated. One quarter of all women surveyed -- and over one-half of those actually planning to buy a fur garment -- say they would be more interested in wearing fur if they knew that: no endangered species were used; husbandry and harvesting methods are humane; wild fur harvesters help to manage wildlife populations; the fur trade supports livelihoods and cultures; and, fur is a renewable, environmentally -friendly product.
- Canadian consumers overwhelmingly reject extreme anti-fur tactics; 93% of all women say it is "unacceptable" for activists to publicly criticize or harass people who chose to wear fur.

Until very recently, little had been done to promote wild fur in world markets. The international ranch fur groups on the other hand, all maintain their own marketing and promotion programs funded from the sale of their pelts at auction. Scandinavian mink and fox breeders market and promote their product under the "SAGA" label which is sold through the Danish and Finnish Fur Auctions. American producers market their product under the "BLACKGLAMA" label which is sold through Seattle or under the AMERICA ULTRA label which is handled by North American Fur Producer's Marketing Inc., Toronto. Canadian mink and fox farmers market their product under the "CANADIAN MAJESTIC" label which is also sold through North American Fur Producer's Marketing Inc., Toronto. These

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programs, which are generally well funded have contributed to the emergence of mink as the "gold standard" in international markets.

Wild fur promotions are now being undertaken by the newly established Wildfur Council of North America, which has developed a marketing and promotion program using the 'NORTHERN SUPREME' label. This organization is supported by Canadian and American wild fur producers who market their product through North American Fur Producers Marketing Inc., of Toronto, and Western Canadian Fur Sales of Vancouver.

The challenge facing promoters of wild fur is to ensure that consumers are educated to distinguish the difference between wild and farmed fur, and then value the wild fur product for its social, environmental and economic benefits. Again, an important part of this message has to be the importance of the fur trade to aboriginal people.

10.4 WILD FUR MERCHANDISING

Whether farmed or wild, most fur is sold at public auction through an auction house. The basic function of an auction house is to accept furs on consignment from farmers or wild fur harvesters, to grade them to international standards, and to arrange them in lots suitable for sale. In addition they also provide:

- livestock loans for fur farmers to raise their product;
- credit to buyers;
- guaranteed payment to producers within fourteen days

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after the auction sale regardless of whether the buyer has paid;

- promotion of the product in world markets through international agents and direct visits;
- insurance on pelts while in transit from producer locations and while at the auction facility.

The rationalization that has taken place in the global fur industry has not spared the auction houses. In early 1991, North Bay Fur Sales owned by the Ontario Trapper's Association, was placed into receivership, leaving Hudson's Bay Fur Sales as the only remaining major Canadian auction house. Hudson's Bay Fur Sales, which is now called North American Fur Producer's Marketing Inc, is majority owned by Canadian mink and fox farmers (1991-92 sales were reported to be approximately \$85 million which, includes domestic sales and the sale of fur from other countries and should not be confused with Canadian export data provided in this study).

Other, smaller Canadian auction houses that attract international buyers include Western Canada Fur Sales of Vancouver owned by Mr. Teddy Pappas and the newly formed Fur Harvesters Auction Inc., North Bay, which is 50% owned by the Union of Ontario Indians. These auction houses reported sales of approximately \$6 million each for the 1991-92 season.

On a worldwide basis there are four other auction houses of consequence:

- Danish Fur Sales which is owned and controlled by the Danish Fur Breeder's Association and which works closely

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with the Danish government's agricultural department;

- Finnish Fur Sales which is owned and controlled by the Finnish Fur Breeders' Association and is supported by the Finnish government;
- Sojuzpushnina (St. Petersburg) the government-owned fur marketing agency of the former Soviet Union; and,
- The Seattle Fur Exchange, owned by the American Legend Group, the United States Mink Breeders' Co-operative.

With the exception of the St. Petersburg auction for which little is known, Canadian auction houses are the only auction houses in the world that handle wild fur. As a result, the expertise in grading and preparing wild fur for auction is found primarily in Canada. Not surprisingly, much of the wild fur handled by Canadian auction houses comes from the U.S.A.

The advantage to wild fur harvesters in shipping furs directly to an auction house is that they avoid the commissions charged by skin dealers, northern stores (Northwest Company, Community Co-ops etc.). In some cases, the commission charged by independent skin dealers can be as much as 50% of the price paid at auction. For the most part, individual wild fur harvesters also benefit in having their pelts included in large inter-sorts of pelts which are of the same grade and attractiveness to international buyers. This maximizes the return to individual fur harvesters.

10.5 ADDING VALUE TO FUR

The process of adding value to a fur pelt from the primary producer to the consumer is often not understood. Frequently, this leads to claims on the part of both animal rights groups and trappers themselves, that the trapping community is exploited by the larger industry for exorbitant profits. Upon careful examination however, one would discover that the profit margins and return on investment are probably no greater than other sectors of the apparel industry given the risk factors involved (eg. animal rights campaigns, climatic changes etc.)

To appreciate this process it is important to have an understanding how a fur coat is manufactured. First, dressed pelts are graded and matched into "bundles" - the correct number of matching pelts for the coat or jacket to be made. The skins are then cut with a razor by a skilled artisan, and positioned on a pattern. As the cost of the raw material is high, every effort is made to avoid waste, and even small pieces of waste fur is collected from the cutting table, to be sewn latter (often, in Castoria, Greece) into "piece plates", from which lower cost coats and jackets are made.

For quality fur garments, when the pelts are to be "let-out", even more skill is required. The pelts, especially mink and marten, but also beaver, raccoon, foxes and other furs, are cut into diagonal slices, often as fine as one-sixteenth of an inch wide, and then sewn meticulously back together into longer, narrower, more supple and free flowing bands. These bands are then wet down and stretched, and finally nailed onto the pattern board to dry in the desired form (blocking). Once dry, the pieces are then sewn together (closing), collars and

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other details added. Finally, the garment will be lined and "finished".

The value added process can be better illustrated from a review of the actual costs associated with the production and sale a fur garment. A sheared and dyed, designer quality beaver coat will be used as an example.

In this example it is assumed that fifteen (15) large shearing type beaver pelts are required to make one coat. The manufacturer purchases the raw pelts directly from an auction house at \$30 per pelt. The trapper receives \$25.50 for each pelt from the auction house. The difference of \$4.50 represents commissions charged to both the trapper and manufacturer by the auction house. Thus, \$4.50 is added to the value of each pelt. The cost to the manufacturer to have each pelt dressed is \$32 plus a further \$22 per pelt for dyeing, which adds a further \$54 in value to each pelt.

The manufacturer has now invested a total of \$1,260 in 15 pelts before he/she can even began manufacturing a garment. Added to these are designer/labour costs per garment of \$650, which brings the actual production cost per garment to a total of \$1,910. The manufacturer's overhead costs (rent, heat, hydro, taxes, insurance, allowances for losses and financing charges etc.) combined with profit margin amount to approximately 45% of actual production costs, adds a further \$859.50 to the costs of the coat, which now totals \$2,769.50 (the wholesale cost to the retailer) . At this point, \$159.13 has been added to the value of each pelt, not including the production costs to the trapper.

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The normal markup of fur garments at retail is 100%, which results in a "ticketed" price to the consumer of \$5,539.00. At this point, a total of \$343.76 has been added to the value of each pelt (excluding the trappers costs). The retailer also has business, advertising and overhead costs. Today, it is doubtful that retailers can realize the normal level of markup due to stiff competition from lower end goods made offshore and discounting in the trade. It should be noted here, that labour costs in China are one thirteenth of what they are in Canada.

10.6 THE CANADIAN FUR INDUSTRY

The importance of the fur trade to Canada continues to this day. However, over one half of the value of current Canadian production of furs is farmed. Today, it is estimated that over 85,000 Canadians are employed in the fur industry (Jacops, 1993). Of these approximately 2,000 are employed in auction houses, in the pelt processing industry, in producing finished fur garments, or in a variety of other skilled crafts related to supplying raw, dressed, and made-up furs for domestic and international markets. The remainder are trappers and fur farmers.

Manufacturing:

Canadian manufacturers within the fur garment industry (and the garment industry generally) face increasing foreign competition, particularly from countries such as mainland China which is able to produce mink garments at even lower costs than those produced by Hong Kong.

In 1987 Canada had a thriving fur garment production industry.

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Total production for that year rose to more than \$390 million, of which \$229 million was exported -- a 450% increase in ten years. Since that time, however, lower production costs offshore, reduced consumer confidence and disposable income due to the recession, and the increased costs and market restrictions associated with animal activists campaigns, have taken their toll on the industry. While there are signs of improvement in this sector of the industry, revenues and employment in recent years have fallen back to 1983 levels.

To day there are approximately 215 fur garment manufacturers in Canada concentrated primarily in Montreal. Canadian fur garment manufacturers now consider wild fur as their only hope for producing competitive, distinctive garments. The production of wild fur garments is a field where the Orient is not competitive because the product (wild fur) is not uniform or easily standardized.

With few exceptions, attempts by aboriginal people to enter this sector of the industry and compete within the fashion fur industry have not been successful. Industry sources however, believe that there are many opportunities for aboriginal people to produce unique products for the industry - products incorporating traditional designs, art etc.. Interested aboriginal people should seek out manufacturers, fur fashion designers etc., within the industry to fully develop these opportunities.

The development of manufacturing opportunities within the fur industry should be seen as a natural extension of the thriving arts and crafts industry already established by aboriginal people. In 1988 it was estimated that there were 5,500 producers in the NWT (RMC, 1986). The production of

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traditional arts and crafts by aboriginal people also requires wild fur (5,000 pelts of different fur species annually in the NWT based on RMC estimates)) and many producers have difficulty in obtaining an affordable supply of commercially dressed fur.

Crafts production provides a source of income for many women throughout the North. Mitts, mukluks, slippers, parkas, jackets and a variety of speciality items are sold to friends, relatives, local craft shops, regional craft shops and tourists. It is virtually impossible to document the dollar value of this activity, but it is still clear that sewing items for sale is a key source of cash income for many women throughout the North - women who would otherwise have no employment options (Mackenzie Delta Regional Council, 1985).

Processing (Dressing & Dyeing)

As soon as raw fur skins are purchased by garment manufacturers, they are sent for processing (tanning). This sector of the industry, which is vital for the maintenance of a viable Canadian fur-garment industry has been severely reduced over the past few years. While one new plant has been established on the Nipissing Indian Reserve near North Bay, a number of major dressing businesses were closed in recent years. In 1987, there were 20 major dressing establishments in Canada employing some 700 people and generating \$50 million in annual revenues. Currently, there is only one plant in Canada where furs can be both, dressed and dyed.

This downturn has reduced the investments in research and product development for this sector of the industry at a time when research and development are needed to stimulate new

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designs, products, retail sales and to ensure that Canada remains internationally competitive.

Retailing

Though Canadian consumer demand for fur garments (units sold) has continued to increase over the past few years, low prices have eroded retailers' inventories, their gross margins and their profits.

New fur designs, products and approaches to fur retailing are required to attract young consumers and to address emerging fashion and lifestyle trends.

Retailers are on the "frontlines" of anti-fur activism, and feel strongly that the trade must intensify its consumer education and media relations efforts. Incidents of harassment of consumers are of particular concern, as is a new Canadian Advertising Council policy exempting "advocacy advertising" from regulation (currently under review).

Auctions Houses

The lower prices and smaller fur harvests in recent years have weakened the Canadian auction facilities. Financial costs of administering the new GST are an added burden, and may serve as an incentive to move auctions to the USA. Without a solid Canadian auction business, it will be difficult to promote Canadian wild furs, and the competitiveness of Canadian garment manufacturing would be weakened.

Currently, there is some speculation in the industry that

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only one major North American Auction house will survive the ongoing rationalization of this sector of the industry. The results could be one large North American auction located in the U.S.A. which would be controlled by american fur farmers. This could lead to some serious implications for Canadian wild fur producers and manufacturers should American fur farmers gain majority ownership. Canadian wild fur producers would lose control over the marketing and promotion of their product in international markets. Such a development would also erode Canada's ability to demonstrate to the European Community that Canadian wild fur meets the EEC trade regulations after 1995.

Fur Farming:

Farmed furs now account for over one half of the value of total fur production in Canada. Farmers received \$27 million for their furs in 1991. Currently, it is estimated that there are about 700 farms producing mink in Canada, and another 600 farms raising fox. The majority of farmed fur production occurs in Ontario, Quebec and the Atlantic Provinces. Generally, aboriginal people have shown minimal interest in this sector of the trade however, there are aboriginal fur farm operations in Ontario and Quebec.

Canadian fur farmers are particularly vulnerable to strong fluctuations in world fur supplies and prices because of the relatively small size of the Canadian industry. As well, fur farmers have fixed costs (feed, shelter, etc.) unlike trappers. In 1990 and 1991, Agriculture Canada implemented a two year (\$17 million) income stabilization program for fur farmers.

Trapping

Generally, trapping is considered to be well regulated and managed in Canada in comparison to other countries. With the exception of Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island, all of the Provinces and Territories use a registered trap line system as an important mechanism for managing the fur bearer resource. In comparison, only one U.S. State (Wyoming) is using a comparable system (Interestingly, the registered trap line system is an adaptation of the traditional aboriginal approach to managing the resource and resource users). As well, all of the provinces and territories have a system of licensing trappers and fur buyers for a fee and most of the provincial jurisdictions that use a registered trap line system also charge royalties on the furs harvested. To use Ontario as an example, it's royalties on pelts for the 1986-87 season were as follows:

badger	-	\$0.45
beaver	-	1.90
bobcat	-	6.70
coyote	-	1.35
fisher	-	9.75
arctic fox	-	0.80
coloured fox	-	1.55
grey fox	-	0.75
lynx	-	27.30
martin	-	2.10
mink	-	1.75
muskrat	-	0.25
opposum	-	0.05
otter	-	2.50
raccoon	-	1.10

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skunk	-	0.10
wolf	-	2.50
weasel	-	0.10
wolverine	-	7.90

Over the 1979/80 and 1980/81 harvest seasons, the annual return to Ontario from fur royalties was over \$11 million. In recent years however, Ontario's practise of charging royalties on the furs harvested by traditional resource users has been challenged on constitutional grounds.

Through the registered trap line system, individual trappers and local trappers' councils play an important role in managing the resource. They have input to the establishment of open and closed hunting and trapping seasons (eg. by opening a season when young animals are just beginning to gather food for themselves, more inexperienced juvenile animals will be taken, while an earlier season would put pressure on more mature females still caring for their offspring). Wildlife managers also rely on trappers to conduct surveys and provide reports on animal abundance on their traplines in order to set more meaningful quotas and to monitor fur bearer populations and the populations of other animals trappers regularly come in contact with. Frequently, trappers submit carcasses to wildlife officials to assist with sex, age, fecundity and health studies. Trappers have also been the key to keeping wildlife populations in harmony with their natural habitat and in looking after problems such as nuisance animal control which is becoming a serious problem with increasing human populations in much of settled Canada.

As noted previously, it has been estimated in recent years that approximately 85,000 Canadians are engaged in the harvest

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of wild furs. It has also been estimated that roughly one half of these wild fur harvesters are aboriginal people. Total income to Canadian trappers in 1992 amounted to \$22.9 million compared to \$65 million in 1987.

The combination of low prices and smaller harvests in recent years has reduced revenues to wild fur harvesters -- i.e. just as they are being called upon to adopt new harvesting equipment and methods, in response to public opinion (EEC Regulations). These conditions pose special problems for aboriginal wild fur harvesters. For example, reduced fur income cannot easily be replaced in remote regions, jeopardizing a subsistence lifestyle, and, the introduction of new harvesting systems may fail to respect the social, cultural, linguistic and geographical distinctiveness of northern regions. It is also important to note that many aboriginal trappers, in their eagerness to obtain cash, continue to sell their furs to country buyers for much less than they would receive from an auction house. In addition, the increasing costs of outfitting a trapper (i.e. traps, equipment etc.) is viewed as a major obstacle for aboriginal youth to begin harvesting wild fur.

11. The EEC Ban on Wild Fur Harvested With a Leg Hold Trap

11.0 THE 1995 EEC BAN ON FUR HARVESTED WITH THE LEG HOLD TRAP

On November 4, 1991, the European Economic Community (EEC) passed regulations which will ban the trade of certain species of fur bearing animals (and any product made from those animals) if they are trapped using the leg hold trap. Traditionally, the majority of wild furs harvested in Canada have been exported to Europe. This is still the case to day.

The regulations define a leg hold trap as " ... a device designed to restrain or capture an animal by means of jaws which close tightly upon one or more of the animal's limbs, thereby preventing withdrawal of the limb or limbs from the trap". The ban will take effect on January 1, 1995.

The Regulations list 13 species in Annex I, for which trade will be banned unless it is determined by the Commission (created by the EEC) that the country where the pelts originate meets one of the following criteria;

- there are adequate administrative or legislative provisions in force to prohibit the use of the leg hold trap; or
- the trapping methods for the species listed in Annex I meet internationally agreed humane trapping standards.

The EEC Commission will develop a list of countries which meet one of the above criteria for each of the species. Trade in a particular species will be suspended for any country which is not on the list for that species.

If the EEC Commission determines by July 1, 1994, that a

11. The EEC Ban on Wild Fur Harvested With a Leg Hold Trap

country is making sufficient progress in developing humane trapping systems, it may agree to suspend the prohibition on trade for that country until December 31, 1995.

The following 13 species are listed in Annex I: Beaver, Otter, Coyote, Wolf, Lynx, Bobcat, Sable, Raccoon, Muskrat, Fisher, Badger, Marten, Ermine. Some European countries (e.g. Finland and Denmark) are among the world's largest producers of farmed mink and fox. It would be very difficult for untrained EEC Customs officers to distinguish between farmed and wild (trapped) mink and fox which explains why mink and fox are not included in Annex I.

Key issues surrounding the EEC ban for traditional resource users would include:

- The European ban is a trap linked fur ban, the intention being to ban the use of the leg hold trap - its development has been guided by animal protectionist groups in Europe;
- The bulk of trapping in Canada is currently done with quick kill traps that do not involve a leg hold restraint however, there are species on the list for which some form of leg restraint is necessary to trap them (i.e. wolves, bobcats, otter, badger and ermine);
- The ban is species specific and applies to a country as a whole and not to a province or region;
- Canada must prove that it has banned the use of the leg hold trap or, that its' trapping methods meet international standards for humaneness. It must be proved

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this is the case in all provinces and territories and on all crown land including Indian Reserves;

- Trapping in Canada is regulated by the provinces and the territories except on federal crown land including Indian reserves;
- It is not known how many aboriginal trappers have adopted quick kill traps or have been trained in humane trapping methods. DIAND has suggested that the response of aboriginal trappers to advanced trapper training has been low due to the low number of aboriginal instructors;
- The Fur Institute of Canada has estimated that the total cost of trap replacement to Canadian trappers will be approximately \$70 million; and,
- It is not known how many, if any First Nations in Canada have adopted humane trapping regulations within their respective areas of jurisdiction in order to safeguard the interests of traditional resource users.
- Canadian Wildlife Ministers have established a task force to develop a strategy for dealing with the EEC ban.

11.1 HUMANE TRAPPING STANDARDS

The concept of developing international humane trapping standards began in 1983 with a CITES resolution calling for a world wide ban on steel-jawed leg hold traps. Canada, recognized as a leader in humane trap research, argued for trap standards that would be agreed to internationally, as not every country had the same notion of cruelty or

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humaneness. Seven countries, including Canada, expressed interest in participating in the development of international trap standards through the International Standards Organization (ISO). This led to the creation of a technical committee for the development of international trapping standards -ISO TC 191, which is chaired by Canada. During the past decade, Canada, the provinces and the territories have spent some \$5.8 million on humane trap research. An additional \$2.4 million for humane trap research within Canada was contributed by the International Fur Trade Federation (IFTF).

The ISO is made up of the national standards bodies of a variety of countries. Its object is to promote the development of standardization and related activities in the world with a view to facilitating international trade of goods and services, and developing co-operation in relation to intellectual, scientific, technological, and economic activity. It brings together the interests of producers and users, including governments, consumers and the scientific community.

The long term goal of the ISO TC 191 is to develop practical, scientifically based, trapping systems that can provide the framework for evaluating the humaneness, efficiency and quality of any trapping system used for individual species. The humane trapping standards to be developed through the ISO process will not distinguish between the reasons for trapping, an issue which is of concern to those whose only interest is in destroying the fur trade and, who are actively attempting to discredit the trap-standard-setting-process.

The ISO process is considered to be very important as once international standards for humane trapping have been agreed

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upon and the traps being used in future meet these standards, then the trapping industry is less vulnerable to attack. At the very least animal rights activists will have to stop hiding behind the skirts of the animal welfare issue and come out in the open with their point of view. They will only be able to attack trapping by saying clearly that they are opposed to all animal usage.

It is hoped that the ISO's work will be completed and standards approved by late 1994, just before the ban takes effect. There are no guarantees however, that this will be the case. Given normal administrative requirements and the involvement of 10 countries and working groups with varying opinions, the work could be delayed especially if certain "animal rights groups" become effective in influencing the work of the Technical Committee. Animal rights groups in Europe have already sought membership on the Technical Committee.

As well, once the standards and certification programs are put in place, the traps must still be tested and certified against the new standards. This testing can only be done during the trapping season, which means that traps which have been certified as meeting the standard may not be available to trappers until the end of 1995 at the earliest, which leads to another problem. Though certified traps may become available by the end of 1995, they must still be manufactured (manufacturers will need time to re-tool), traps will have to be distributed, and trappers will have to be trained in their proper use.

It is thought that some of the new traps already developed in Canada will meet the ISO trap standards, when approved. They

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include traps for: beaver, coyote, lynx, raccoon, fisher, and marten. Additional work is needed on traps for otter, wolf, bobcat, muskrat, badger, and ermine. Humane traps have also been identified for four species that are not listed in EEC regulation, the are: red fox, arctic fox, mink and squirrel. It is likely, therefore that when the ISO has completed its work and the standards have been finalized, that Canada will be in a better position than other countries to meet both, the ISO standards and the EEC Regulations.

The United States and Russia are Canada's largest competitors for wild fur within the European market. At this point in time, neither country is as close to Canada is, in meeting the trapping criteria set out in the EEC regulations. If neither country is able to meet the deadline, and Canada is, then Canada's position in the wild fur market in Europe may be considerably strengthened by the fact that it is the only producer that is legally able to trade.

As a result of the trap research already undertaken, the EEC may consider suspending the trap linked ban on imports from Canada until the end of 1995 to give the provinces and territories time to implement the ISO standards. Even with a one year suspension however, there is a strong possibility that Canadian trappers may still not be in a position to meet the requirements of the EEC regulations.

A background paper on the International Humane Trapping Standards process prepared by the Canadian Chairman of the ISO TC 191, is attached as **Appendix I**. A summary of trapping regulations in Canada by province and territory is also attached as **Appendix J**.

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11.2 TRAP REPLACEMENT

New, quick kill traps exist in Canada which will probably meet the ISO standards. Their availability however, is also limited for the reasons discussed above.

Generally, most trappers want to trap as humanely as the technology allows. Replacing traps however, is a very expensive proposition for them, especially aboriginal trappers with limited incomes. The average trapper will have as many as 150-200 traps. At a replacement price of between \$6.00 and \$25.00 each, the cost adds up (the Fur Institute of Canada has estimated that the total cost of trap replacement in Canada could be as high as \$75 million). Most trappers cannot afford to absorb these costs themselves and have already begun to seek government assistance in the form of trap replacement programs.

The federal government through the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development is implementing a program to assist on-reserve trappers with the costs of trap replacement. Similar assistance from the federal government is being sought by Metis trappers and off-reserve Indians.

The governments of the Yukon and Northwest Territories are also providing similar assistance to their trappers. It is not known at this time however, if the provinces will be developing similar programs.

11.3 TRAPPER EDUCATION

Canada is also recognized as a world leader in trapper education. This has resulted from years of cooperative work

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between trapper associations and provincial/territorial wildlife managers.

Through trapper education courses, trappers learn the safest and most up to date and humane trapping techniques. They learn not only how to manage the fur resource, but also how to prepare their skins so that they get the best possible value for their pelts. Prior to formal trapper education courses, it took a trapper approximately 15 years of trapping before he/she achieved an acceptable level of competency. With the introduction of trapper education programs a skilled harvest technician can be trained within three years. Currently, both territories and most provinces require that first time trappers complete a recognized trapper education program before they may be licensed.

Not unlike other natural resource sectors, trapping associations and the larger fur industry working with governments have instituted a number of measures to "professionalize" participation in the industry as a means of improving both quality and production. In that regard, the number of people who have access to the furbearer resource is limited to only those who have made an investment in training, education and maintaining their certification. For example, and as noted above, most if not all Canadian jurisdictions require all first time trappers to undertake an extensive course on fur bearer management and the latest and most humane trapping techniques. Even upon completion of the course and certification, many jurisdictions such as Ontario, will require a first time trapper to work with an experienced trapper for a minimum of two years, before they can apply for their own trap line. Trap lines are registered and their numbers are limited therefore, a first time trapper may have

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to trap with an experienced trapper for several years before a registered trap line becomes available.

Trappers are also required to maintain a commitment to managing the fur bearer resource within their registered trapping territory, on a sustained yield basis. Quotas are established for each species and for each registered trap line, most often in consultation with local trappers' councils. If the minimum of the quotas are not harvested, or if a trapper fails to use his trapping territory for one season, he/she can lose his registered trap line. At the same time, trappers are required to submit reports on the health, numbers and primeness of the fur bearers he/she harvests to local wildlife managers on a regular basis. The marketing of furs in Canada is also highly regulated by all jurisdictions. In that regard, furs can only be purchased from a licensed trapper and his/her license number must appear on every pelt sold at auction. This practise protects the species from being over harvested and it protects the trappers from poaching, which was once a widespread practise but now almost nonexistent.

It should be noted, that aboriginal communities who are dependent on the fur resource have always enforced measures similar to the above as a means of conserving and managing the resource. For the most part, traditional resource users have been supportive of regulatory measures that protect and enhance the value of the resource, most are licensed and most trap on their own registered trap lines.

With the introduction of new humane trapping technologies in recent years, concern has been expressed that aboriginal trappers generally, have not participated in approved trapper

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education programs to the extent warranted by their numbers. Sources in the department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development attribute this in part to the lack of qualified aboriginal language instructors. They have responded to this need with a program which funds the delivery of trapper education in aboriginal communities and the training of aboriginal instructors.

It will be important that trapper education programs accompany the distribution of new traps designed to meet the ISO trapping standards. It will also be important that native languages and instructions be incorporated into these programs.

11.4 FUR INDUSTRY DEFENSE PROGRAM - CANADA

The federal government has provided support to the wild fur industry and to native peoples involved in the industry for several years. For example, the federal government's Fur Industry Defense Program was a five year interdepartmental program in place from 1987 to 1991 and funded to the amount of \$8.7 million. The three departments involved in the program were the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development (DIAND), the Department of the Environment (DOE), and External Affairs (EA).

During the life of the program DIAND expended \$2.5 million on trapper education, core funding to aboriginal groups such as ISI (Canada) and the Aboriginal Trappers Federation of Canada (ATFC) and for communications and economic development planning. DOE directed \$3.8 million towards trap research, the development of trap standards, and for trapper education. EA

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expended \$1.8 million towards the international component of communications as a part of the larger coordinated package. Of this, \$600,000 supported the "Living Arctic" exposition in London, England and the remainder supported the industry through the FIC.

The Canadian government has just announced a new program of support to the wild fur industry with funding of \$12 million over the fiscal years 1992-1993 to 1996-1997. The support programs are to be delivered by the Departments of Environment and Indian Affairs and Northern Development.

DIAND funding is directed towards consultation, mainly with aboriginal groups and trappers, trapper education, trap replacement on reserves, and public advocacy and public education. DOE will continue it's support to the trap research program of FIC, and Canada's continued participation in the ISO process.

External Affairs currently has no specific funding commitments in relation to the fur industry but claims to remain active in supporting the industry in three broad areas - trade policy, public relations and trade promotion.

11.5 IMPLICATIONS

The EEC regulations pose some serious implications for Canadian governments, the Canadian Fur Industry and aboriginal communities as 95% of Canadian wild fur is exported, and of that, 75% finds its way to the European Market as raw pelts or finished products.

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An interruption in the supply of Canadian wild fur to Europe of even one season could destroy the demand for wild fur and wild fur products to an extent that even the best advertising campaigns might not be able to repair. This is particularly true if animal rights activists take advantage of the opportunity to launch their own public relations campaigns directed at the wild fur industry and its inability to meet the criteria set out in the regulations without an interruption in supply. The loss of the wild fur industry for even a year would have serious financial consequences for Canadian trappers, designers, manufacturers, processors and auction houses.

The loss of the wild fur industry would also have an impact on an already struggling Canadian economy and on the nation's expenditures for social assistance, wildlife management and pest control.

On the surface, it would appear that the most effective way for Canada to meet the EEC requirements would be to legislate the use of traps which meet ISO standards. Wildlife management in Canada however, is a provincial/territorial responsibility with the exception of federal crown lands including Indian reserves.

The provinces and territories are monitoring the situation and have expressed to the federal government a willingness to pass appropriate legislation when the international standards for humane trapping have been finalized and when the steps which must be taken to conform to the EEC regulations are clear.

At present, it is not known how aboriginal communities will respond to the requirement to regulate trapping within their

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own jurisdictions. Generally, there has been little leadership from the larger aboriginal community in response to the threat of the EEC regulations on aboriginal economies.

Auction houses which handle wild fur have not yet indicated any firm plans regarding implementation of the EEC regulations. Under the current auction process, furs from both the U.S. and Canada are sorted and sold in the same lots if their colour and quality are determined to be the same. Though Canadian trappers are in a position which may enable them to meet the deadline established in the EEC regulations, American trappers are much less likely to do so. It is possible therefore that wild furs from the United States will not be accepted by the EEC for trade because they may not have been trapped in accordance with ISO standards.

If wild fur from the US is not acceptable to the EEC and Canadian wild fur is, then the Auctions Houses will either have to change their process for sorting and grading furs into lots, allowing for separate lots of wild furs from Canada and from the US, or face losing their access to the European market for wild fur entirely.

Of some concern is the fact that probably 1/3 of the wild fur which is sold by the auction house comes directly out of the aboriginal community. If some aboriginal trappers do not comply with the ISO standards, and others do, the auction houses may be forced to insist on documentation from aboriginal trappers before their furs may be accepted for auction.

The EEC regulations will add to the operating costs of the auction houses as they will likely have to certify the

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country of origin of each fur pelt they handle so as to be able to assure the buyer that there will be no difficulty in exporting the raw furs or final products to the European Community.

The EEC regulations also pose some serious implications for aboriginal communities. Traditional resource users will have to comply with the regulations if they want to be able to sell their furs on the European market. For that matter they will likely have to comply if they want their furs distributed within the Canadian auction system at all. Non-compliance by aboriginal communities may threaten Canada's entire wild fur industry, as it will be difficult for Canada to prove that all of the furs it is trading are trapped in accordance with the criteria set out in the EEC regulations. Non-compliance by aboriginal communities will most definitely affect the economic base of all aboriginal communities in which trapping is an important economic activity.

Some traditional resource users are of the opinion that an exemption under the EEC ban should be sought for furs harvested by aboriginal people. While this may be possible, it is doubtful that such a measure would be effective in protecting European markets. For example, the Inuit were granted an exemption to the European ban on seal pelts in 1983, but this didn't help as the market for seal pelts was effectively killed. Moreover, the logistics and costs of establishing a marketing system that could make a distinction between fur pelts harvested by aboriginals and non-aboriginals would be prohibitive.

Estimating the number and location of aboriginal trappers, and whether or not they have received trapper education programs

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is a task that is currently impossible. There are no reliable statistics available even on how many people there are in Canada that trap fur bearing animals for their living, let alone the number of those who are of aboriginal ancestry. Assessing the impact of the EEC trap regulations on aboriginal trappers and communities in terms of the potential loss of income, trap replacement costs, regulatory costs and the need for trapper education will be extremely difficult due to the absence of this information.

In 1985, DIAND commissioned a telephone survey of aboriginal communities to determine how many aboriginal trappers there are in Canada. Based on this survey, they estimated that 50% of all trappers were native people. However, based on annual fur returns to auction houses, industry sources believe that the percentage is much lower and give an estimate of 33%. In a recent press release the federal government stated that there were 50,000 aboriginal trappers in Canada. It is not known however, how they have based this estimate. In that regard, there are a number of reservations regarding the use of census data to establish the number of aboriginal trappers. These reservations relate to problems with the 1991 Census and the Aboriginal Peoples Survey.

Estimating the number of aboriginal trappers in Canada will be made difficult by a number of factors, including the reluctance of some harvesters to report fur income to Revenue Canada. The practice of having one provincial license to cover all trappers in a community will also add to this problem.

Sooner or later, the Canadian fur industry, aboriginal organizations and the Canadian government may be challenged to prove their estimates of aboriginal trappers, by groups who

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want to destroy the fur industry. It is vital that any defence of the fur industry and its importance to aboriginal people be based on facts.

Generally, aboriginal communities do not appear to be fully aware or have a clear understanding of the implications of the EEC Regulations for their communities and their traditional resource users.

11. Strengthening Aboriginal Economies

12.0 STRENGTHENING ABORIGINAL ECONOMIES

Strategies designed to strengthen aboriginal economies should recognize the important role that wildlife plays in safeguarding the cultural, social and economic survival of aboriginal people. It will be important that these strategies recognize aboriginal and treaty rights, the right to self-government, traditional knowledge, and the values and practices of individual communities. The need to provide aboriginal peoples with alternatives to traditional economic pursuits must also be respected. All stakeholders, governments, aboriginal peoples and other resource users should be guided by a principle which ensures equality of access to wildlife resources for all aboriginal peoples to achieve a level of self-sufficiency measured by:

- enhancement and maintenance of traditional economic pursuits;
- creation of and improved access to meaningful and secure jobs and income opportunities for aboriginal men and women; and,
- establishment, expansion and enhancement of aboriginal owned and controlled businesses.

To be successful, the above approach must occur in an environment which is characterized by a willingness on the part of all governments to recognize, protect and enhance the rights of aboriginal peoples to access and manage fish and wildlife resources and habitat for both subsistence and commercial purposes. The "environmental rights" of aboriginal

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people to protect fish and wildlife habitat from environmental degradation and other competing land uses should also be respected. This must be followed by a commitment to transfer to aboriginal communities, a greater share of the economic benefits derived from Canada's fish and wildlife and other natural resources.

Proposed changes to Canada's social assistance regime should also be based on a clear understanding of the substantial social and economic contribution that the traditional economy makes to aboriginal communities. In that regard, Robert Reed, in a 1984 study completed for the Nishnawbe Aski Nation, concluded that (Reed 1984: 2):

"when the imputed value of the food harvest is added to the value of the fur harvest, then the importance of the traditional economy exceeds that of General Welfare and Family Benefits combined. Of course, the traditional economy has an incalculable value to the social, cultural and psychological well-being of the communities"

While government subsidies or guaranteed income support measures have been developed or contemplated in Canada (e.g. agriculture and fisheries), no universal program of income support has been developed for traditional resource users, even as an alternative to social assistance. Where programs do exist, they have been developed as part of a claims settlement as in the case of the James Bay Cree' (Quebec), Hunters and Trappers Income Security Program. The reluctance of governments to fund programs of this nature can be attributed to the costs but, it may also stem in part from a poor understanding of the real economic, social and cultural value of the traditional economy, which may be greater than the direct costs of social assistance and the indirect costs

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of dealing with the debilitating consequences of welfare.

Traditional economies would also be strengthened through improved education and information programs for all Canadians. Canadians generally, have little or no knowledge of aboriginal peoples, aboriginal rights and traditional aboriginal knowledge and lifestyles. Improvements here would go along way in protecting the traditional economy from attacks by animal rights activists and may also serve to lessen the rhetoric of certain groups who are opposed to aboriginal rights. At the same time, there is a need to train and educate greater numbers of aboriginal people in all fields of resource and wildlife management.

Traditional resource users generally, are unorganized and poorly informed about marketing issues in the fur trade such as the forthcoming EEC ban on furs harvested with the leg hold trap. This is the case, just when the price of fur is beginning to improve. As a consequence, they are less likely to benefit from improved fur prices and are more vulnerable to the EEC trade regulations than their non-native counterparts, who are better organized and informed. There is an urgent need to inform traditional resource users about the implications of the EEC ban and the benefits of advanced trapper education and trap replacement. Direct assistance will be required in the form of trap replacement and trapper education programs. Many traditional resource users could also benefit from assistance in marketing their raw fur pelts directly to an auction house (i.e a local fur marketing co-op etc.) which would maximize the cash returns from the fur harvest to many aboriginal communities.

11. Strengthening Aboriginal Economies

The participation of aboriginal people in Canada's fur industry enhances the image of the industry in world markets and adds to the defense of the industry in its efforts to counter animal rights and anti-trapping campaigns. With few exceptions however, the participation of aboriginal people has been confined to trapping. Industry sources recognize this as a weakness and many are prepared to assist aboriginal interests in developing value added products for domestic and export markets. This will require an investment in training, product design and development and cooperative arrangements with industry.

Ultimately, there will be a need to recognize and build upon the unique contributions that the traditional knowledge of aboriginal peoples have made and can continue to make in terms of managing wildlife resources. This will be important in determining the extent to which local wildlife populations can sustain the growing numbers of aboriginal people in specific communities or be used for other uses.

13.0 CONCLUSIONS

The major conclusions which can be drawn from this study are as follows:

- a substantial number of aboriginal people in Canada continue to rely on fish and wildlife resources to provide for their sustenance, to supplement incomes, to confirm continuity with the past, to reinforce social and community cohesion, and to maintain spiritual values based on unity with the natural world;
- the material values of aboriginal peoples and their concepts of nature combined with their traditional knowledge can contribute greatly to the sustainable use and management of natural resources in Canada;
- the loss of wildlife habitat and natural places in Canada has contributed to increased competition among all wildlife user groups at a time when constitutional recognition is finally being given to the rights of aboriginal people to access these resources in priority to other users;
- with increasing constitutional recognition of aboriginal and treaty rights governments can no longer deny aboriginal people access to and a major role in managing wildlife and other natural resources within their traditional territories;
- social and economic measures designed to strengthen the economic base of aboriginal communities must recognize the importance of the traditional economy;

13. Conclusions

- for many aboriginal communities wildlife may be the best resource they have to strengthen their local economy through subsistence or commercial uses;
- wildfur markets and recent prices have shown a marked improvement just when traditional resource users are most vulnerable to changing market requirements brought about by the impending European boycott of wildfur harvested with the leg hold trap;
- there is a need to strengthen the organizational capacity of traditional resource users in Canada to ensure that they have access to market information, advanced trapper education, trap replacement programs and, to enable them to counter attacks from animal rights activists on the traditional economy;
- an investment in training, product design and development combined with cooperative arrangements with industry is required to enable aboriginal peoples and communities to exploit unique opportunities within the international fur trade; and,
- there is a need to educate all Canadians on the nature and extent of aboriginal and treaty rights, traditional knowledge, traditional values and lifestyles and the importance of wildlife to aboriginal people.

14.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

1. It is recommended that appropriate steps be taken now, for all governments to negotiate a new deal with aboriginal peoples regarding their access to fish and wildlife resources for subsistence or commercial purposes;
2. It is recommended that a new resource management ethic be established in Canada which demands the full participation of aboriginal people;
3. It is recommended that appropriate steps be taken to educate all Canadians on the nature and extent of aboriginal and treaty rights, the environmental/conservation ethic of aboriginal people, and their traditional knowledge and lifestyles;
4. It is recommended that further research be undertaken to document the true value of the traditional economy to aboriginal peoples and that consideration be given to the development of a guaranteed income support program for traditional resource users as an alternative to social assistance;
5. It is recommended that a national survey be conducted to determine the true number of traditional resource users (aboriginal trappers) by province and territory;
6. It is recommended that Revenue Canada review/rescind the charitable tax status of all organizations that promote an extreme animal rights philosophy through attacks on

14. Recommendations

the fur industry;

7. It is recommended that aboriginal communities who are dependent on the annual fur harvest, explore the possibility of establishing a revolving loan fund to provide cash advances to traditional resource users for their furs (advances, interest and handling costs to be recovered from payments received from auction houses);
8. It is recommended that greater numbers of aboriginal peoples be educated and trained in all fields of resource and wildlife management;
9. It is recommended that steps be taken to strengthen the organizational capacity of traditional resource users to protect and enhance their participation in Canada's fur industry;
10. It is recommended that sufficient resources be made available to provide trapper training to all traditional resource users. It is further recommended that consideration be given to a national trap exchange program to ensure that traditional resource users can adapt to new trapping technologies as they develop; and,
11. Finally, it is recommended that consideration be given to an investment in a national centre of product research, design and development to assist aboriginal communities in the production of value added fur/wildlife products that can be exported world wide.

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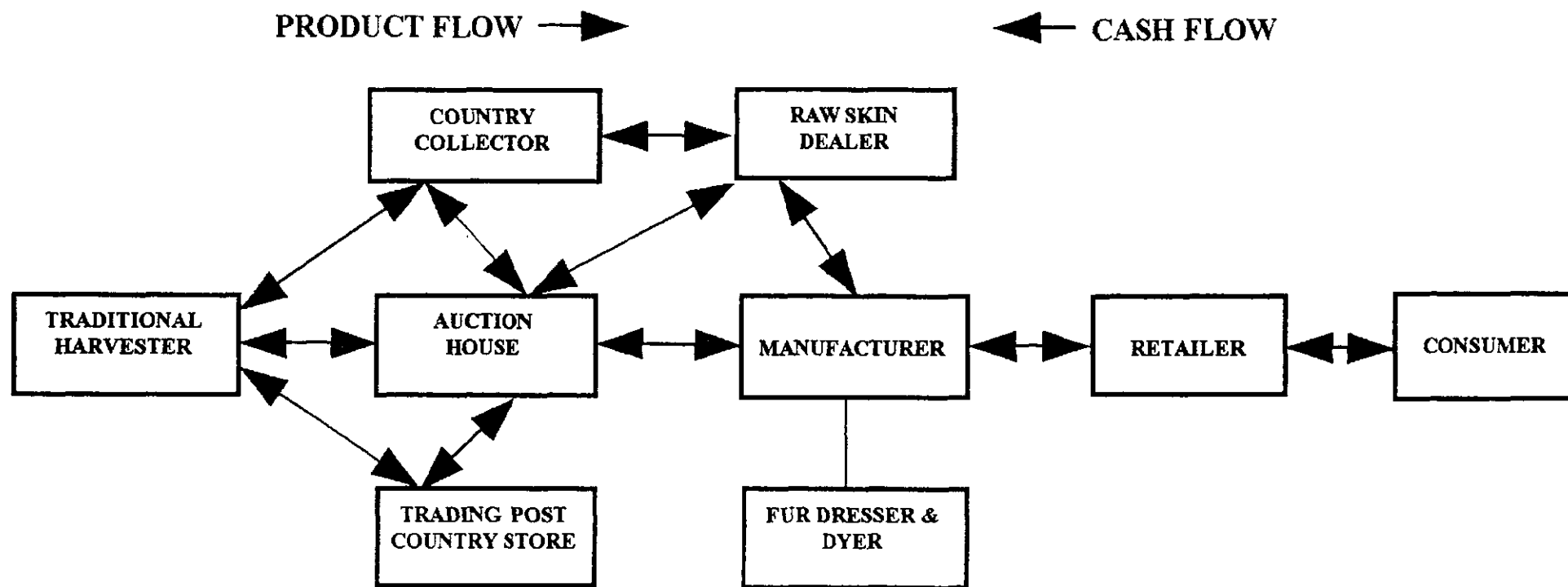
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5. Alan Herscovici, Chairman, Canadian Fur Industry Adjustment Committee, Montreal;
6. Jerry Jacobs, Amsel & Amsel, Montreal (President, Fur Council of Canada);
7. Irving Camlot, Natural Furs Canada Inc, Montreal;
8. Keith Conn, Environmental Co-ordinator, Assembly of First Nations, Ottawa;
9. Tina Jagros, Director of Marketing, North American Fur Producers Marketing Inc., Toronto;
10. Doug Fizzel, Executive Vice President, North American Fur Producers Marketing Inc.; and,
11. Alison Beal, The Fur Institute of Canada, Ottawa.

APPENDICES

- A. WILDFUR MARKETING PROCESS
- B. WORLD PRODUCTION - RANCHED MINK, 1985 - 1990
- C. VALUE OF CANADIAN WILD FUR PRODUCTION BY PROVINCE & TERRITORY, 1987 - 1992
- D. CHANGE IN THE NUMBER AND VALUE OF WILD FUR PELTS SOLD BY PROVINCE & TERRITORY 1987/88 & 1991/92
- E. CHANGE IN THE NUMBER, AVERAGE PRICE AND TOTAL VALUE OF SELECTED FUR SPECIES 1990/91 & 1991/1992
- F. CHANGE IN THE NUMBER, AVERAGE PRICE AND TOTAL VALUE OF SELECTED FUR SPECIES 1987/88 & 1991/1992
- G. NUMBER AND VALUE OF RANCH RAISED PELTS PRODUCED IN CANADA 1987 - 1991
- H. DOMESTIC EXPORTS BY COUNTRY OF DESTINATION, FUR APPAREL, JANUARY - SEPTEMBER 1992 & JANUARY - SEPTEMBER 1993
- I. INTERNATIONAL HUMANE TRAPPING STANDARDS - BACKGROUNDER, 1991
- J. STATUS OF CANADIAN TRAPPING REGULATIONS, 1991



Traditional Harvester: Finances harvest, harvests and manages resource, skinning & initial pelt preparation, transport or shipping of raw skins to point of sale, sale of raw skins.

Country Collector : Cash payment for raw skins at prices lower than auction house prices.

Trading Post: Cash payment or credit for raw skins at prices lower than auction house prices, trapper supplies and equipment, trading goods, shipping service.

Auction House: Selection, sorting, cleaning & grading of furs, access to large buyers, quality control, price maximization, trade credit to buyers, product promotion.

Raw Skin Dealer : Selection & grading service to manufacturers, credit to manufacturers.

Manufacturer : Selection & grading in house ,(dressing & dyeing contracted out) designing, manufacturing of garments & accessories, wholesaling.

Retailer : Advertising, inventory financing, sale of final product to consumer.

Consumer: USA, European Community and Canada. Purchases affected by fashion designs, price, economy, climate and public opinion around animal use.

Appendix B

World Production - Ranched Mink 1985 - 1990 (Thousands)

	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990
Denmark	8,600	10,000	10,800	12,800	14,500	10,500
Finland	4,000	3,700	3,700	3,800	3,500	1,500
Sweden	1,700	1,900	2,000	2,200	2,200	1,500
Norway	500	500	500	490	500	300
Holland	1,650	1,650	1,800	1,700	2,000	1,700
U.K./Ireland	350	350	400	465	500	250
Fra/Ital/Spa	800	1,200	1,300	1,690	1,900	1,000
Rest of Europe	800	1,000	1,100	800	1,200	500
East Block	800	1,000	1,100	800	1,200	500
USSR	3,750	4,000	4,000	4,000	4,500	4,500
China	2,700	3,000	3,200	5,500	3,000	1,200
USA	4,400	4,100	4,400	4,500	4,500	3,000
Canada	1,400	1,300	1,500	1,400	1,300	875
Japan	800	800	800	800	800	425
Total	32,000	34,500	36,000	40,945	41,600	28,050

EXCESS BREEDING STOCK PELTED FOR SALE: 1,300

SOURCE: NORTH AMERICAN FUR PRODUCERS MARKETING INC. 42,900

Appendix C

1. Value of Canadian Wild Fur Production by Province & Territory for the 1987/1988 and 1991/1992 Seasons in Actual and Constant Dollars.

	1987-1988		1991-1992	
	Actual	Constant ¹	Actual	Constant ¹
NFLD	1,397,502	1,675,604	372,534	388,105
PEI	135,046	161,920	57,874	60,293
NS	900,573	1,079,787	190,281	198,234
NB	1,382,445	1,657,551	342,637	356,959
Que	9,768,371	11,712,276	4,454,535	4,640,734
Ont	20,165,032	24,178,873	5,798,121	6,040,482
Man	5,393,731	6,467,083	1,681,578	1,751,867
Sask	5,741,446	6,884,446	1,671,651	1,741,526
Alta	7,409,211	8,290,907	2,758,396	2,873,396
BC	5,252,193	6,622,332	2,697,829	2,810,598
Yukon	1,353,071	1,622,332	534,097	556,422
NWT	7,338,926	7,338,926	2,360,692	2,459,368
Canada	65,019,872	77,958,826	22,919,937	23,877,990

Source: Statistics Canada, Catalogue No. 23-603E, April 1993

Value of seals not included in Total for Canada.

1. Dollars converted to 1993 dollars using CPI and 1986 = 100.

2. Total Actual Value of Canadian Wild Fur Production 1987-1992

1987-1988	1988-1989	1989-1990	1990-1991	1991-1992
65,019,872	34,046,280	22,524,472	15,484,058	22,919,937

Source: Statistics Canada, Catalogue No. 23-603E, April, 1993

Appendix D

Change in the Number and Value of Wild Fur Pelts Sold by Province & Territory for the Seasons 1987/88 & 1991/92

Prov/Terr	Number 1987/88	% of Total	Number 1991/92	% of Total	Change %	Value \$ 1987/88	% of Total	Value \$ 1991/92	% of Total	Change %
NFLD	32,521	.9	15,168	1.5	-53.3	1,675,604	2.1	388,105	1.6	-76.8
PEI	9,416	.2	5,109	-1	-45.7	183,502	.2	60,293	-1	-67.0
NS	62,982	1.9	23,748	2.4	-62.2	1,079,787	1.3	198,234	-1	-81.6
NB	50,185	1.5	31,100	3.2	-38.0	1,657,551	2.1	356,959	1.4	-78.4
QUE	542,450	16.5	199,730	20.9	-63.1	11,712,276	15	4,640,734	19.4	-60.3
ONT	890,590	27	233,146	24.4	-73.8	24,177,873	31	6,040,482	25.2	-75.0
MAN	391,744	11.9	70,801	7.4	-81.9	6,467,083	8.2	1,751,867	7.3	-72.9
SASK	488,367	14.8	93,446	9.8	-80.8	6,884,446	8.8	1,741,449	7.3	-74.7
ALTA	527,882	16	170,716	17.9	-67.6	8,883,643	11.3	2,873,396	12	-67.6
BC	114,224	3.4	61,435	6.4	-46.2	6,297,379	8	2,810,598	11.7	-55.3
YUKON	26,858	.8	8,571	-1	-68.0	1,622,332	2	556,422	2.3	-65.7
NWT	150,985	4.6	38,906	4	-74.2	7,338,926	9.4	2,459,368	10.2	-66.4
CANADA	3,287,204	100	951,876	100	-71.0	77,958,826	100	23,877,990	100	-69.3

Source: Statistics Canada - Cat. no. 23-603E. Dollars are shown as constant dollars converted to 1993 dollars using CPI with 1986 = 100

Appendix E

Change in the Number, Average Price and Total Value of Selected Fur Species - 1990/91 & 1991/92 Seasons

SPECIES	Number of Pelts					Value of Pelts in Constant Dollars						
	1990/1991		1991/92		% Change	1990/91			1991/92			% Change Average Price
	Number	%	Number	%		Value	%	Average Price	Value	%	Average Price	
Beaver	179,962	14.1	219,737	23	22.1	2,457,379	15.3	13.65	3,803,683	15.9	17.31	26.8
Muskrat	197,131	50.3	204,112	21	3.5	334,273	2.1	1.69	462,868	1.9	2.26	33.7
Marten	158,320	8.2	184,222	19.3	16.3	8,266,088	51.7	52.21	10,805,337	45.2	58.65	12.3
Fox	30,477	2.7	56,810	5.9	86.4	408,961	2.5	13.41	1,035,140	4.3	18.22	35.8
Mink	41,108	3.8	46,512	4.9	13.1	1,088,165	6.8	26.40	1,702,409	7	36.60	38.6
Coyote	24,430	2.1	43,682	4.5	78.8	459,384	2.8	18.80	1,570,464	6.5	35.95	91.2
Bear	2,672	.1	2,544	.2	-4.8	842,432	5.2	315.28	742,639	3.1	291.92	7.4
Fisher	8,831	.3	15,381	1.6	74.1	449,359	2.8	50.88	815,729	3.4	53.03	4.2
Lynx	7,579	.2	11,542	1.2	52.3	590,583	3.7	77.92	1,040,935	4.3	90.18	15.7
Other*		17.8	167,334	17.5	97.5	1,081,371	6.7	8.26	1,898,844	7.9	11.34	37.2
Total	735,251	100	951,876	100	29.4	15,977,999	100	21.73	23,877,990	100	25.08	15.4

Source: Statistics Canada - Cat. no. 23-603E

*Other species include: Badger, Wolf, Otter, Wolverine, Squirrel, Raccoon, Ermine, Wildcat and others.

*Dollars shown as constant dollars - converted to 1993 dollars using CPI and 1986 = 100.

Appendix F

Change in the Number, Average Price and Total Value of Selected Fur Species -1987/88 & 1991/92 Seasons

SPECIES	Number of Pelts					Value of Pelts in Constant Dollars						
	1987/1988		1991/92		% Change	1987/88			1991/92			% Change Average Price
	Number	%	Number	%		Value	%	Average Price	Value	%	Average Price	
Beaver	464,992	14.1	219,737	23	-52.7	14,843,736	19.0	31.92	3,803,683	15.9	17.31	-47.7
Muskrat	1,654,755	50.3	204,112	21	-87.6	7,694,313	9.8	4.65	462,868	1.9	2.26	-51.4
Marten	269,586	8.2	184,222	19.3	-31.6	32,448,535	41.6	120.36	10,805,337	45.2	58.65	-51.3
Fox	91,494	2.7	56,810	5.9	-37.9	2,742,907	3.5	29.97	1,035,140	4.3	18.22	-39.2
Mink	125,875	3.8	46,512	4.9	-63.0	6,202,075	7.9	49.27	1,702,409	7	36.60	-25.7
Coyote	72,283	2.1	43,682	4.5	-39.5	3,283,390	4.2	45.42	1,570,464	6.5	35.95	-20.8
Bear	3,618	.1	2,544	.2	-29.6	591,056	.7	163.36	742,639	3.1	291.92	78.7
Fisher	12,661	.3	15,381	1.6	-21.4	2,338,047	3	184.66	815,729	3.4	53.03	-71.3
Lynx	6,574	.2	11,542	1.2	75.6	2,880,046	3.7	438.16	1,040,935	4.3	90.18	-79.4
Other*	585,366	17.8	167,334	17.5	-71.4	4,934,292	6.3	8.42	1,898,844	7.9	11.34	34.6
Total	3,287,204	100	951,876	100	-71.0	77,958,826	100	23.71	23,877,990	100	25.08	5.7

Source: Statistics Canada - Cat. no. 23-603E

*Other species include: Badger, Wolf, Otter, Wolverine, Squirrel, Raccoon, Ermine, Wildcat and others.

*Dollars are shown as constant dollars converted to 1993 dollars using the CPI with 1986 = 100.

Appendix G

Number and Value of Ranch Raised Pelts Produced in Canada 1987 - 1991

YEAR	FOX		MINK	
	Number	Value \$ ¹	Number	Value \$ ¹
1987	77,217	10,203,779	1,280,695	61,471,399
1988	109,566	7,502,334	1,428,462	42,207,329
1989	113,478	4,834,498	1,476,950	29,434,323
1990	79,214	2,940,519	930,904	26,140,640
1991	40,517	1,934,574	926,632	21,233,844

SOURCE: STATISTICS CANADA - CAT. NO. 23-603E, APRIL 1993

1. Shown as constant dollars converted to 1993 dollars
using CPI with 1986 = 100.

Total Value of all Ranches Fur Production in Canada 1987\1991

YEAR	\$ ¹
1987	71,675,179
1988	49,731,246
1989	34,268,821
1990	29,081,160
1991	23,168,418

SOURCE: Statistics Canada - Cat. No. 23-603E, April 1993

1. Shown as constant dollars converted to 1993 dollars using
CPI with 1986 = 100.

Appendix H

Domestic Exports of Fur Apparel by Country of Destination

Value in Constant¹ Dollars January - September 1992 and January - September 1993

Country	1992	1993	Annual % Change 1993/92
United States	24,577,247	35,020,906	42.49
Japan	3,464,691	2,530,187	-26.97
Spain	5,022,496	1,401,971	-72.08
Switzerland	1,948,734	1,071,545	-45.01
Hong Kong	372,350	821,366	120.58
Germany	811,986	714,739	-11.90
France	581,990	662,954	13.91
China	0	466,255	
Russia	0	298,040	
Belgium	186,416	105,343	-43.49
Norway	147,466	65,217	-55.77
South Korea	11,800	47,068	298.88
Austria	6,261	43,652	597.20
Sweden	183,424	40,280	-78.03
Netherlands	42,107	38,869	-7.68
Greece	100,525	34,779	-65.40
Saudi Arabia	0	29,036	
Syria	10,001	23,700	136.97
India	0	22,800	
Italy	111,107	19,180	-82.73
Mexico	57,101	16,227	-71.59
Ireland	18,329	8,216	-55.17
Romania	4,115	7,098	72.49

Continued on page 2...

Value in Constant¹ Dollars \$
January - September

Country	1992	1993	Annual % Change 1993/92
Portugal	2,407	6,500	176.04
Lebanon	2,083	5,000	140.00
Turkey	0	5,000	
Ukraine	0	4,540	
United Kingdom	610,472	3,559	-99.41
Denmark	0	3,540	
Chile	220,861	2,542	-98.84
Egypt	0	2,253	
USSR	162,186	0	-100.00
Kuwait	20,235	0	-100.00
Finland	11,816	0	-100.00
Taiwan	6,901	0	-100.00
Poland	4,167	0	-100.00
Luxembourg	3,516	0	-100.00
Morocco	2,407	0	-100.00
Czechoslovakia	1,119	0	-100.00
St Pierre- Miquelon	329	0	-100.00
Total	38,663,819	\$43,522,364	12.56

Source: Trade Trends - Industry Canada - Consumer Goods Branch

1. 1992 dollars are shown as constant dollars converted to
1993 dollars using the CPI with 1986 = 100.

INTERNATIONAL HUMAN TRAPPING STANDARDS BACKGROUNDER

July 2, 1991

Historical Perspective

The interest in developing international trap standards came about when a resolution by Gambia was tabled at the 1983 C.I.T.E.S. meeting to prohibit trade in products from animals "taken by cruel methods including the steel jawed leghold trap." The resolution was rejected by C.I.T.E.S. as ultra vires to the Convention but the animal welfare intent behind it was discussed. The Parties agreed that definitions of "cruel" and "inhumane" in the context of taking animals or their by-products to be entered into trade were not clearly understood in the same way by all countries. Canada, therefore, suggested that on the matter of trapping, the subject be considered by the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) headquartered in Geneva with a view to establishing international humane trapping standards. Canada agreed to take a lead in this initiative and to provide the secretariat functions.

A great many countries have their own National Standards setting process and they in turn directly relate to ISO for the purpose of establishing international standards. This is to ensure equality of weights, measures, quality, etc., of goods and services traded internationally.

Formation and Make up of ISO TC191

Through the Canadian General Standards Board, the Canadian department of External Affairs and other Canadian government agencies, participation was elicited from six other countries to begin the process to establish international humane trapping standards through ISO. For ISO to establish a Technical Committee to undertake the process of drafting any Standard at least five countries must agree to full participation status. Since seven countries agreed in this case, ISO established Technical Committee 191 (TC191) on Humane Animal (Mammal) Traps to set the process in motion. Countries now involved in this endeavour are Canada, U.S.A., Sweden, Germany, Finland, Australia, New Zealand, U.K. and Argentina. Eight other countries have agreed to observer status.

The first meeting of TC191 took place in Quebec City in March 1987 and 4 of the original 7 Countries were represented. Canada, through the Standards Council of Canada and Environment Canada is providing the Secretariat for TC191 and was nominated by the group to chair the committee for three years. This was extended in 1990 for another six years. Three Working Groups (WGs) were established at the first meeting to begin drafting aspects of the International Trapping Standards in relation to Definitions (WG1), Killing Type Traps (WG2) and Restraining Type Traps (WG3). The Technical Advisory Group (TAG) established by the American National Standards Institute agreed to carry forward the WG3 effort.

TC191 Working Group Progress

From its earlier pioneering research in the area of humane trapping systems, Canada drafted a National Standard for Killing Type Traps which was accepted in 1984. This standard was submitted to TC191 for consideration and possible adoption internationally. The Canadian Standard was given to Working Group 2 for further study. At present, the Canadian Standard is voluntary but as the extensive Canadian trapping research program continues and ultimately results in approval of various trapping systems for individual species, Canadian sources anticipate that the provinces and territories will adopt the Standard into their respective regulations governing trapping.

It was recognized by TC191 that for purposes of animal control or for legal trade, trapping in many countries very often takes place in more urban areas where the availability of restraining type traps is required. This is also the case for certain species taken in other trapping situations; i.e. for larger mammals where killing traps would be impractical and dangerous or in certain submersion trap sets for muskrat. Since development of a standard for restraining trap systems is a new effort, members of WG3, on a voluntary basis, have been meeting twice a year to produce a draft standard for such devices as soon as possible. WG2, on the other hand, is working from the established Canadian standard for killing traps and therefore, did not need to meet as often until recently.

The TC191 Working Groups met jointly in Canada in November 1988 during an "International Symposium on Trapping Wild Furbearers" and were fortunate to have input to their deliberations from individuals present from the U.K., the Netherlands, Finland, New Zealand and Sweden. Previously, input to the Working Groups has been by expertise from Canada and the U.S.A. although other countries had been invited to involve technical experts of their own.

A second formal meeting of TC191 took place in Sweden in May 29-31 to receive progress reports from the chairman of Working Group 2 and 3. Official delegates from Canada, U.S.A., New Zealand, Finland, Sweden and Germany provided advice and recommendations to the chairmen for their meetings next October. Both the USSR and Greenland attended the meeting as observers but indicated their intentions to seek full participation status.

It is anticipated that a first Committee Working Draft Standard will be ready by May 1992.

Research Related to Humane Trap Standards

Over the past eight years Environment Canada and the International Fur Trade Federation will have expended some \$8 million through the Fur Institute of Canada specifically for research and development of more humane trapping systems. This is a very extensive program, a major portion of which follows a 7 phase scientific protocol for both killing and restraining traps. Sweden has undertaken specific laboratory and field testing of restraining and killing traps under the auspices of the National Veterinary Institute. The U.S.A. has carried out field tests on a number of restraining devices especially for fox and coyote and researchers from New Zealand, Australia and South Africa have undertaken field tests of

restraining devices for opossum, and dingo and jackals respectively. Trappers in Norway have been field testing several experimental traps. There are some examples of trap testing and research and TC191 is looking for more.

According to a survey by Environment Canada, virtually every country in the world still permit the use of trapping systems for the capture and/of killing of wild animals under predator or pest control programs and/or for commercial purposes. Results from the Canadian and other research programs will be very helpful to these countries. During meetings of the ISO TC191 and its Working Groups new areas of research have been identified and perhaps could be undertaken within, and with financial support from, other countries not yet involved. However, additional funding is needed at this time to accelerate the research programs and provide the necessary data for the standards process.

Therefore, a realistic and long term solution to the animal welfare problems connected with the capture and/or killing of wild mammals for whatever reasons, is to join in the international trapping standards process.

Rationale for Trap Standards Setting Schedule

In considering the time frame for establishing international trapping standards, it appears that - given the known financial commitments to the present research efforts - it will require several more years before completion. However, financial aspects notwithstanding, much of the research activities can only take place in semi natural enclosures using animals during the several months they are normally trapped in the wild. Following that activity and assuming the work passes successfully through the various test phases for a specific species, it is one year later that field testing takes place on actual traplines. Field testing also takes one trapping season and several months to analyze the findings. Further, the research must be methodical so that the subsequent trap standards are developed on scientifically based data. In order for traps or trapping systems comply with the standard they must meet specific criteria that is not dependent on philosophical interpretations and which can be scientifically measured.

While the setting of standards can be maintained in parallel with ongoing research, ISO requires that the periodic decisions by participating members be made by consensus vote and that specific bureaucratic and legal procedures be followed with each step of the process. Considering the present research momentum, ISO requirements and the recent interest by a number of other countries to get involved in the trap standards program, it is estimated that it will require about three or four years before scientifically based, internationally agreed, humane trapping standards could be completed.

International Recognition

At its meeting last November in Perth Australia, the International Union for the Conservation of Nature, now the World Conservation Union (WCU) endorsed the scientifically based ISO trap standards setting process as a realistic and practical way to address the animal welfare concerns related to trapping animals.

In the WCU resolution, formal linkage between the conservation/sustainable use ethic and animal welfare was made for the first time within such a prestigious forum.

On June 14 the European Council of Environment Ministers accepted the ISO trap standards setting process when it approved in principle, a regulation that would ban the importation into the EC certain wild fur products derived from animals taken in leg hold traps. The ban would come into effect by January 1995 for those fur producing countries that have not banned the specific trapping device OR which have not implemented internationally agreed humane trapping standards.

Conclusion

The foregoing updates the background and activities of ISO TC191 but in conclusion it should be noted that while furbearing animals are a priority, standards for acceptable trapping systems for all mammals is the ultimate goal of the Committee. Therefore for countries or agencies interested in participating in this process, it would seem unnecessary and certainly premature to establish a list of specific species related to the perceived "inhumaneness" of methods used to capture them. Such actions pre-empt the scientific results of trap research and the deliberations of the standards committee. TC191 is mandated by ISO to expand toward world wide participation in the trapping standards setting process which in the long term can improve the welfare of animals trapped for various reasons and may eventually serve as a precedent for developing international standards related to other animal use/control issues.

Neal Jotham
Chairman ISO TC191

STATUS OF CANADIAN TRAPPING REGULATIONS - SOURCE: FUR INSTITUTE OF CANADA, DEC. 1991

	NWT	YK	BC	ALTA	SASK	MAN	ONT	QUE	NS	NB	PEI	
1. Prohibit traps with metal teeth	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes
2. Prohibit the use of hooks or sharp objects	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes
3. Require locking devices on neck snares	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes
4. Require all foot traps for aquatic species to be drowning sets	yes	TBL 1992	yes	yes	TBL	TBL 1993	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes
5. Quick-kill traps for all terrestrial furbearers except fox, coyote, wolf, lynx, bobcat, black bear	yes	TBL 1992	yes *	TBL	TBL	TBL 1993	yes	yes	TBL	TBL	yes	yes
6. Restrict foot hold traps, to fox, coyote, wolf, lynx, bobcat, black bear	T.B.L. when traps available	TBL 1992	yes *	TBL	TBL	TBL 1993	yes	yes	TBL	TBL	yes	yes
7. Live holding devices to be checked daily	72 hrs	no	24 hrs priv. land 72 hrs crown land	Res. license 24hrs Reg. license 48hrs	72hrs	72hrs	yes in south	no	48hrs	48hrs	yes	72hrs
8. Prohibit the use of poison	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes
9. First time trappers must have course	yes	yes	yes	yes	Under consid- eration	yes	yes	yes	yes	under consid- eration	yes	no
10. Prohibit spring poles with foot hold snares in trees except killing sets	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes
11. Prohibit steel jawed leg hold traps for bears	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	n/a	yes
12. Extend use of padded leg hold if research shows they are humane	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A

NOTES: TBL - To be legislated in the year specified or is being considered in concert with other provinces
A - Acceptable