

SDG 14: Case Study: Canada, British Columbia's Integrated Groundfish Fishery: SDG 14 in action creating incentives for long-term stewardship of marine resources.

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I am one of the three billion people who depend on marine and coastal biodiversity for their livelihoods. I have been working on my father's commercial fishing boat since I was 13 providing high quality marine protein to markets all over the world.

My father's company Arbegar Fishing Co. operates under Pacific Canada's Commercial Groundfish Integration Program (CGIP). We are a small company with one vessel, crewed by family and friends, but we are part of a larger initiative in BC that has taken a different approach to groundfish management.

The B.C. groundfish industry is comprised of seven different commercial fishing fleets, which employ three different gear types (trap, trawl and hook and line), which target sixty-six different species of fish. All of these fisheries are managed under the CGIP.

The CGIP represents SDG 14 in action by creating incentives for long-term stewardship of the marine resources and greater ecosystem. This is achieved in two measurable ways:

- Ensuring all mortalities associated with fishing effort, both retained and released at-sea, are accounted for, for both target and non-target species.
- Creating incentives for fishermen to avoid certain fish species and certain fishing grounds. Being a successful fisherman in B.C. today requires a delicate balance between minimizing catches of certain species and maximizing catches of others.

This is achieved through species quotas and limits, 100% at-sea monitoring program using video-based electronic monitoring or at-sea observers and 100% dockside validation and monitoring. An independent, government-certified, third party company conducts the monitoring program that is 100% industry-funded.

Today, because of these changes, Arbegar Fishing Co. and the rest of the B.C. fleet spend less time on the water to catch their quotas, which results in less fuel consumption and therefore reduced carbon emissions as well as less benthic impacts as less gear is deployed. The B.C. hook and line fishery for halibut is MSC certified and provides high quality food to markets all over the world. The CGIP initiative was a result of the private sector, Government of Canada and the civil sector working together to find a collaborative solution to address bycatch concerns.