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# NEWS RELEASE

## Canada must show leadership by restricting bottom-trawling

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For Immediate Release

VANCOUVER – As the international “Governance of High Seas” conference ends today in St. John’s, the Canadian government must lead by example and take decisive steps towards ending destructive bottom trawling, says the David Suzuki Foundation and the Living Oceans Society.

“Today is a perfect opportunity for Canada to show real leadership by supporting an end to ocean bottom-trawling,” says Bill Wareham, Director of Marine Conservation for the David Suzuki Foundation. “Without it, we will see the collapse of more fish stocks and the continued destruction of marine ecosystems on a massive scale.”

Bottom trawling uses nets that are held open by two steel doors and weighted down with rollers, which drag along the ocean floor. Anything in their path is often damaged or destroyed.

Prime Minister Paul Martin opened the conference earlier this week, using strong words to urge attendees – 300 delegates from over 45 nations – to stop the ‘rape’ of the world’s fisheries.

What Mr. Martin failed to mention in his speech is that bottom trawling is ongoing in sensitive and threatened ecosystems in Canadian inshore waters on both coasts. There are currently at least 70 active bottom-trawling vessels in British Columbia.

“Paul Martin has called for an end to the rape of the world’s oceans,” says Jennifer Lash, Executive Director of the Living Oceans Society. “Yet at the same time, he’s allowing it to happen right here in British Columbia.”

The B.C. bottom-trawling fleet continues to dump millions of kilos of bycatch – non-target fish and other marine creatures – back into the ocean, most of which die.

“If the Prime Minister really wants to stop the rape of our oceans, then we need to start at home” says Ms. Lash.

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