



From the Mission Blue Voyage
a first-of-its-kind conference of global business leaders, marine scientists, deep-sea explorers, entertainers and cultural icons to create tangible solutions for ocean conservation.
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April 2010

The Right Honorable Stephen Harper
Prime Minister
80 Wellington Street
Ottawa Canada K1A 0A2

Dear Prime Minister:

We write to you as a leader of the G-20 nations and host of the Toronto Summit. We are citizens of the world who believe that there is no greater force for changing the world than a powerful idea. We are committed to fostering the spread of great ideas to increase understanding of the challenges facing our planet and inspire global action for a better future.

We write with our grave concern about the state of the world's fisheries.

Nearly all of the world's fisheries are in jeopardy from overfishing, and could be beyond recovery within decades if current trends continue. Despite international consensus on the dire state of the oceans, many governments continue to provide major subsidies to their fishing sectors. These subsidies promote overfishing by pushing fleets to fish longer, deeper, and farther away than would otherwise be economically viable. The fleets are over capacity – as much as 2.5 times needed for sustainable catch levels. Destructive fisheries subsidies are estimated to be at least \$20 billion annually, an amount equal to approximately 25 percent of the value of the world catch.

The good news is the World Trade Organization is negotiating new trade rules on fisheries subsidies as part of Doha trade round. But the clock is ticking for the world's fisheries and fishing fleets. The G-20 has an immediate opportunity that can put the world fisheries back on a path to recovery and towards an abundant future.

We urge G-20 leaders to pledge to not further expand fishing subsidy programs and give their highest priority to a strong outcome in the WTO fisheries subsidies negotiations.

The world relies on the oceans for food and livelihood. More than a billion people depend on fish as a key source of protein, and hundreds of millions of people depend on fishing for income. A new commitment on fisheries would demonstrate that G-20 can contribute to solving environmental problems of global consequence while fulfilling its shared responsibility for the economy and well-being for people of the world.

Sincerely,

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cc: Ambassador John Gero
Permanent Representative to the WTO

Mr. Peter Van Loan
Minister for International Trade

Director-General Pascal Lamy
World Trade Organization

Managing Director Dominique Strauss-Kahn
International Monetary Fund

President Robert B. Zoellick
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