



# JOHANNESBURG SUMMIT 2002

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## **Johannesburg Summit Calls For Restoration of Fisheries by 2015**

Johannesburg, 28 August—A provision calling for restoration of depleted fisheries not later than 2015 was agreed to by negotiators at the World Summit on Sustainable Development yesterday.

The agreement was the last in a series of provisions that recognizes that the world's oceans and fisheries are in trouble and need urgent attention. United Nations studies have shown that three-quarters of the world's fisheries are presently fished to their sustainable levels or beyond.

A breakthrough, the agreement on the target marks a major commitment that requires countries to marshal resources and political will to ensure the responsible management of fisheries.

“This agreement provides us with the crucial underpinning for government action,” according to Johannesburg Summit Secretary-General Nitin Desai. “Overfishing cannot continue. The depletion of fisheries poses a major threat to the food supply of millions of people. This agreement recognizes that we need coordinated action between governments on an urgent basis to manage the oceans responsibly, to meet the needs of people now and in the future.”

Desai added that it was absolutely necessary that government commitments to implement sustainable fishing be complemented through partnerships by and between governments, fishermen, communities, and industry. “We have no choice but to work together on this,” he said.

In addition, agreement was reached on a provision that calls on countries to ratify the Convention on the Law of the Sea, and other conventions that promote maritime safety and protect the environment from marine pollution and environmental damage by ships.

Agreement was also reached on a text that asks regional fisheries management organizations to consider the needs of developing countries when allocating fish quotas. Developing countries have maintained that existing fisheries regimes do not reflect their interests.

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