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The Cape Breton Fish Harvesters Association (previously the LFA27 Management Board) represents inshore owner-operator fish harvesters in Eastern Cape Breton many of whom are fishing or have historically fished in the area covered by the St. Anns Bank proposed Marine Protected Area. Association members are heavily affected by the proposed MPA, which covers over 15 per cent of their fishing grounds (4Vn) and yet, they were not properly consulted during the development period of the MPA.

The Association fully supports the Government of Canada's effort to protect our marine and coastal waters through MPAs. We see this as an advantage for the inshore, sustainable fishery using low-impact fishing methods as most MPAs around the world favour our industry by excluding industrialized fishing and other environmentally destructive developments. However, the proposed regulations for the St. Anns Bank MPA fall short of that ideal.

The Proposed Regulations designate over 81% of the protected area as an exclusive no-fishing zone. The members of the Association use sustainable, low-impact fishing methods and need not be excluded from operating in much of the proposed MPA.

The Association therefore suggests two changes to the proposed regulations:

- The management zones where our sustainable, low impact fisheries would be allowed, should be increased in size, and
- the pelagic fisheries (targeting tuna and swordfish) should be re-assessed and they should be allowed within the entire MPA, just as seal fishing is.

A more detailed account of our position and recommendations can be found on our website at: www.capebretonfish.com

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