Net fishing in the non-tidal waters of the province, including commercial fishing, is regulated and administered by the Commercial Fisheries Branch, Department of Recreation and Conservation, and authority for regulation of the game fisheries in non-tidal waters is vested in the Fish and Game Branch which operates a number of trout hatcheries and egg-taking stations for restocking purposes.

The shellfish laboratory at Ladysmith on Vancouver Island, formerly operated by the Department, was closed Dec. 31, 1958. The biological research into those species over which the province has control, principally oysters, clams and other forms of shellfish as well as marine plants, is now conducted by the Fisheries Research Board of Canada at the Pacific Biological Station, Nanaimo, B.C., under agreement with the federal and provincial authorities as of Jan. 1, 1959. The object of this research is to encourage the industry to produce better products more economically and to enable the Commercial Fisheries Branch to regulate the various species so that maximum exploitation may be obtained on a sustained-yield basis.

The Branch co-operates closely with the Fisheries Research Board of Canada.

Section 3.—Fishery Statistics

Subsection 1.—Primary Production

The Atlantic Coast fishermen experienced a most satisfactory year in 1959 both in quantity of fish landed and monetary returns. The value of the catch for the area, at $58,436,000, was the highest on record. While cod is normally the chief source of income for the fishermen, the landed value of $17,023,000 in 1959 was surpassed by a value of $17,387,000 for lobsters. Provincially, Nova Scotia was the most important for the year, having a catch valued at $27,112,000. This amount was 86.6 p.c. above the value of the Newfoundland catch; Newfoundland was in second place followed by New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island and Quebec in that order. Total landings in the area amounted to 1,331,058,000 lb., representing an 0.9-p.c. decrease from the five-year 1954-58 average of 1,343,483,000 lb. Although persistent shore ice prevented Newfoundland fishermen from setting their cod traps until mid-June, heavy runs of large cod arrived in the Gulf of St. Lawrence at about the same time with the result that landings of that species were the heaviest since 1954. The average unit value of the catch was $2.33 per hundred pounds, the highest return to the fishermen since 1952 when DBS records for landings in Newfoundland began.

In Nova Scotia, total landings were 9.6 p.c. lighter than in 1958 but higher unit prices for such important species as cod, haddock, pollock, small flatfish and lobster resulted in the returns to fishermen being over $2,000,000 greater, bringing the value of the catch to a record high. In terms of value, lobster was by far the most important species in 1959, outranking cod, the next most valuable species, by more than $4,900,000. Even so, the lobster catch was not unusually large, being less than 1 p.c. greater than the 1954-58 average of 20,909,000 lb. Landings of cod, unlike those of Newfoundland, were 3.6 p.c. lighter than those of 1958, making the catch the smallest in 20 years. The average price received by fishermen for cod was $3.75 per hundred pounds, an advance of 40 cents over 1958. Haddock came close to replacing cod as the second most important source of fishermen's income in 1959. The landed value at $3,956,000 was only $73,000 below that of the cod catch. The volume of herring taken during 1959, although 42.6 p.c. smaller than that of the previous year, was still about 5,000,000 lb. larger than the 1954-58 average.

In New Brunswick, lobsters made up about 38.6 p.c. of the total value of the 1959 catch, followed by herring with 22.0 p.c. and cod with 16.1 p.c. Landings of cod were the heaviest since 1918 when the Bureau's records began. Since 1953 there has been an almost continuous year-to-year increase in the landings of this species. The small flatfish have also played an increasingly important role in the New Brunswick fishery since 1950, following the introduction of small draggers.