**“The fishing industry can never be sustainable” Discuss this statement. [10]**

With growing pressures on the world’s food reserves the fishing industry is significant to many countries in the world both in terms of their economy and as a natural resource. When we say sustainable we mean that fishing can continue but in a way that does not damage the environment beyond its ability to recover and allows us to enjoy this activity in the future. To says something is ‘never’ possible is incorrect, to achieve sustainability in fishing is definitely achievable, it is however not an easy goal. I will outline how and why it is achievable followed by pointing out some of the difficulties that will occur along the route.

To achieve sustainability in the fishing industry we must address the two main factors that make it so unsupportable at present and are putting all this pressure on our oceans, seas and the fish stock in them. Firstly, a root cause of overfishing is the force that drives it, population growth and also people’s overconsumption. By tackling these causes, for example reducing the rampant population growth in periphery regions and curbing our wasteful food practices in the core countries we can remove the need for removing so many fish from the seas. This will be a first step towards combating overfishing and achieving sustainability. Secondly, there are many practices in the fishing industry that are environmentally harmful and also not necessary, instead they are driven by purely economic motives. FADs for example, drag nets and also things like dynamite fishing. All these methods need to be stopped to achieve sustainability and to a certain degree organizations such as Greenpeace are helping to limit their use. They are in fact illegal in many parts of the world. Finally, the fishing industry needs to be regulated if it is ever going to achieve sustainability. This is very possible especially if you look at the measures the Canadian fisheries have undertaken to accomplish this since the 1980s. They have tried to encourage people to diversify be offering financial incentives, they have imposed individual quotas, regulated fishing seasons, licensed the industry and even introduced a branding advertising fish caught in a sustainable way that products and restaurants can use as part of their self-promotion. All of this has slowed the decline of fish stock in their waters and in certain cases reversed it.

Achieving sustainability though will not be an easy goal. There are many difficulties in accomplishing this, namely the growing population in many periphery (LEDC) countries such as Nigeria. In addition to this countries can only instigate measures in their own territorial waters and there is currently no organization willing or able to protect international waters. Due to the nature of fish stocks and their mobility this can cause many issues as is the case in the North Atlantic and the repeated disagreements with Spanish fishing vessels. Other difficulties lie in the fact that certain poorer countries such as Zanzibar and Mozambique are very reliant on fishing and cannot see away to break away from this reliance. There are even difficulties in core countries such as Japan’s huge consumption of fish and even their continued whale fishing which is deeply embedded in their cultural make up.

To conclude, the fishing industry can be sustainable. It will undoubtedly be a long and slow process and many things will need to change but it is achievable. Given new methods such as aquaculture which is now accounts for a larger percentage of fish catches than ever before and a realization that fish stocks are a finite resource we can overcome the difficulties mentioned.