

Council

CNL(05)5

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 Most of the work of the Organization in 2004/2005 is detailed in the Council papers distributed, which cover a wide range of issues. This report contains only a number of procedural, administrative and financial matters and issues relating to relations with other international bodies.

2. Status of ratifications of and accessions to the Convention

- 2.1 There have been no changes to the status of ratifications of and accessions to the Convention since the last notification.

3. Membership of the regional Commissions

- 3.1 No new applications for membership of any of the Commissions have been received since the last notification.

4. Observers at NASCO's meetings

- 4.1 There have been no applications for observer status to NASCO since the last Annual Meeting. The twenty-three organizations listed in Annex 1 have observer status to NASCO and have been invited to attend the Twenty-Second Annual Meeting.

5. Report of the Fourth Meeting of Regional Fishery Bodies

- 5.1 The Fourth Meeting of Regional Fishery Bodies (RFBs) was held on 14 and 15 March 2005 at FAO Headquarters in Rome. Participants included representatives from the Secretariats of 29 RFBs, from the FAO Fisheries Department and the United Nations Environment Programme and the United Nations Law of the Sea Office. A number of issues of relevance to NASCO were discussed and are summarised in paragraphs 5.2-5.7 below.
- 5.2 The FAO Committee on Fisheries, which met the week prior to the RFB meeting but at which NASCO was not represented, has decided to undertake an "independent" review of the performance of Regional Fishery Management Organizations (RFMOs) in fulfilling the objectives and principles set forth in relevant international instruments. No details were available on the nature or purpose of the review and it was pointed out that while FAO can review the performance of its RFMOs it is a matter for the governing body of each non-FAO RFMO to decide if it wishes to participate in such a review. In this regard we pointed out that NASCO has just undertaken an independent review of its activities through stakeholder consultations and that other organizations might wish to consider such an approach. COFI recognises that implementation of the various international agreements will enhance the role of RFBs. In this regard we were able to report on the actions taken by

NASCO consistent with the FAO International Plan of Action on Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) fishing and on the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries.

- 5.3 FAO and CITES (the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species) are developing a Memorandum of Understanding which recognises the primary competence of RFMOs to manage commercially exploited aquatic species.
- 5.4 Recent global instruments of relevance to fisheries call for management of fisheries to give greater attention to the ecosystem. These instruments include the FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries and the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea. Furthermore, in 2002 the World Summit on Sustainable Development ‘encouraged the application by 2010 of the ecosystem approach’. FAO has developed principles for application of the Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries (EAF) (FAO Fisheries Technical Paper 443) which state that the EAF amounts to introducing a series of modifications to conventional fisheries governance with a view to improving its poor performance. It became clear from the contributions made to the RFB meeting that limited progress has been made by most organizations in implementing an EAF, partly because there is uncertainty about what it involves. The RFBs were advised that both human and ecosystem well-being are at the centre of the EAF. Human well-being is a condition in which all members of society are able to determine and meet their needs and have a large range of choices to meet their potential. Ecosystem well-being means a condition in which the ecosystem maintains its diversity and quality. The view was expressed that the EAF will mean very different things to different people and that this could complicate its application. At its most basic level, an ecosystem approach to salmon management could mean that salmon managers should consider not just the impacts of a fishery on salmon but also impacts on a non-target species (including other fish species, mammals and birds). Other managers will need to consider by-catch of salmon in fisheries for other species. We were able to report on NASCO’s actions in relation to: management of fisheries; by-catch in pelagic fisheries; minimising impacts of aquaculture, introduction and transfers and transgenics; stock rebuilding programmes; habitat protection and restoration; and the proposed research programme of the International Atlantic Salmon Research Board. The view was expressed by the North Atlantic Regional Fisheries Management Organizations that NASCO was considerably ahead of most other RFBs in implementing an EAF. The application by NASCO of the EAF is an issue that is likely to be discussed by the ‘Next Steps for NASCO’ Working Group.
- 5.5 The Group recognised that there was a need for RFBs to be more active in the public relations aspect of their work.
- 5.6 A brief report was given on the work of the COFI Sub-Committee on Aquaculture which had met in August 2003. It had recognised the importance of aquaculture as a means of increasing fish production, of generating income and as a means of reducing pressure on wild fish resources. The work of this sub-committee is focused on aquaculture in developing countries and its work does not seem to be particularly relevant to aquaculture in the North Atlantic. However, there have been proposals for the Committee to give emphasis to the development of good management practices and to appropriate technical standards and guidelines for ensuring food safety and

environmental sustainability in aquaculture. The Committee has not developed such guidance to date.

- 5.7 It seems to us in the Secretariat that there remains confusion as to aquaculture's ability to increase fish production. Aquaculture production of carnivorous fish species consumes far more fish than it produces.

6. Liaison Group Workshop

- 6.1 Last year the Council agreed to organise a Liaison Group Workshop with the North Atlantic salmon farming industry to be held in August 2005 in conjunction with the AquaNor Exhibition in Trondheim, Norway. This Workshop entitled "Wild and Farmed Salmon – Working Together" will be held on 9 August at the Norwegian University of Science and Technology and will comprise three themes:

- area management initiatives;
- pros and cons of using sterile salmon in farming and the opportunities for comparative trials;
- restoration programmes.

- 6.2 Registration arrangements for the Workshop are being handled by the European Aquaculture Society, with whom we are collaborating on the administrative arrangements. Sponsorship for the Symposium is being raised. Further details of the Workshop will be available at the Annual Meeting.

7. ICES/NASCO Symposium in 2005

- 7.1 In 2003 the Council agreed to co-convene with ICES a Symposium on the scientific and management aspects of interactions between cultured and wild salmon. Since the Bath Symposium on this subject in 1997, there have been major advances in scientific understanding of the interactions between wild and cultured salmon and their management. The 2005 Symposium entitled "Interactions between aquaculture and wild stocks of Atlantic salmon and other diadromous fish species: Science and Management, Challenges and Solutions" will be held in the Radisson SAS Hotel Norge, Bergen, Norway during 18-21 October. The objectives of the Symposium are:

- to summarise available knowledge on the interactions between aquaculture and wild stocks of Atlantic salmon and other diadromous fish species;
- to identify research needs;
- to review progress in managing interactions; and
- to make recommendations for additional measures to ensure that aquaculture practices are sustainable and consistent with the Precautionary Approach.

- 7.2 After a series of keynote scene-setting presentations there will be sessions on 'Genetic and ecological interactions and their management' and 'Disease and parasite interactions and their management'. There will then be a synthesis session which will examine challenges in managing interactions and possible solutions. This session will include a Panel Session which we hope will comprise representatives of the salmon farming industry and wild salmon management organizations. Further details of the

Symposium will be available at the Annual Meeting. We are involved in a large fund-raising effort since the Symposium will need to raise about 50% of its costs from sponsorship.

8. Fishing for salmon in international waters

- 8.1 At its Ninth Annual Meeting the Council unanimously adopted the “Resolution on Fishing for Salmon on the High Seas.” This brief report details the actions taken in accordance with this Resolution. In the period 1 April 2004 - 31 March 2005 a total of 16 airborne surveillance flights over the area of international waters north of the Faroe Islands, where salmon fishing by non-Contracting Parties is known to have taken place in the past, were undertaken by Norwegian (15 flights) and Icelandic (1 flight) Coastguards. This is a reduction from the number of surveillance flights in 2001/2002 (26 flights), the same as in 2002/2003 but an increase compared to 2003/2004 (3 flights).
- 8.2 There have been no sightings of vessels fishing for salmon in international waters since 1994. There were, however, no flights over the area in the period from 29 October 2004 to 21 March 2005, i.e. a period of almost five months, when salmon fishing occurred in the past. No new information from ports about vessels known to fish for salmon in international waters or about landings and transshipments has been obtained since last year’s report.
- 8.3 After a number of incidents in the period 1989-1994 there does not now appear to be a problem. However, it has to be recognised that surveillance of the area is limited during the winter months. It is possible that we may not know if fishing is still being conducted, although there have been no reports of such activity based on information from ports. We are aware of a steep increase in the price of wild salmon, at least at certain times of the year. It is possible that the recent adverse publicity for farmed salmon may increase the demand for wild salmon. We will continue to liaise with NEAFC and other NARFMOs on this issue through the meetings of the Secretariats. A major problem may be linked to the by-catch of salmon post-smolts in the pelagic fisheries in the same area. This issue is considered separately under Council agenda item 6.6.

9. Tag Return Incentive Scheme

- 9.1 Under the Tag Return Incentive Scheme a total of four prizes is awarded annually (a Grand Prize of \$2,500 and one prize in each of the three Commissions of \$1,500). These awards are well publicised and this has led to benefits to the Organization in terms of awareness among fishermen of NASCO’s work. There is also evidence that the prizes have increased the return of tags, which was the main objective of the Scheme.
- 9.2 The draw will be made by the auditors to NASCO in accordance with the Rules of the Scheme. The winner of the \$2,500 Grand Prize will be announced by the President at the Twenty-Second Annual Meeting of the Council. The winners of the \$1,500 prizes will be announced by the Chairman of each of the Commissions.

10. Review of international salmon-related literature published in 2004

- 10.1 For a number of years, the Secretariat collated salmon-related press cuttings and scientific articles through a search of relevant computer databases. In 2003 and 2004, so as to save on costs, the unedited material, as downloaded, was made available on CD rather than in paper form. We have used this arrangement again for this year's compilation and the information is available on CD from the Secretariat.

11. The Organization's financial affairs

Audited accounts for 2004

- 11.1 In accordance with Financial Rule 11, the report of the Auditors for the Financial Year 1 January - 31 December 2004 was submitted to Heads of Delegations and members of the Finance and Administration Committee on 9 February 2005. The Finance and Administration Committee will consider the audited accounts at its meeting and will submit its recommendations to the Council. The Council will then be asked to adopt the audited accounts for 2004 or take such other actions as it decides.

2006 Budget

- 11.2 In accordance with Article 16 of the Convention and Financial Rule 3.5, the 2006 Draft and 2007 Forecast Budgets will be submitted to the Parties. The Finance and Administration Committee will consider the draft budget in detail and will submit its recommendations to the Council. The Council will then be asked to adopt a budget for 2006.

Receipt of contributions for 2005

- 11.3 In accordance with Financial Rule 5.5, the Secretary will report on the receipt of contributions and on any arrears.

12. Headquarters Property

- 12.1 NASCO's Headquarters is a listed Georgian building constructed in about 1820 and it has proved to be an excellent investment. First, there is no rent payment for the space occupied by the Secretariat. Second, the rest of the accommodation is rented out at a significant profit. Third, the value of the property has increased by about £1 million (an average increase of about £60,000 per annum). As with all Georgian buildings, maintenance costs tend to be higher than for modern buildings. In 2003 we completed a major refurbishment of the roof and stonework and in 2004 we commenced refurbishment of the internal common areas which we will complete in 2005. This is quite a costly effort but, fortunately, we have good tenants who have a long-term full-repairing lease so they pay half the costs.

Secretary
Edinburgh
5 April 2005

NON-GOVERNMENT ORGANIZATIONS WITH OBSERVER STATUS TO NASCO

Association of Icelandic Angling Clubs	(based in Iceland)
Association Internationale de Défense du Saumon Atlantique	(based in France)
Association of Salmon Fishery Boards	(based in the UK)
Atlantic Salmon Federation	(based in Canada) *
Atlantic Salmon Federation	(based in USA) *
Atlantic Salmon Trust	(based in the UK)
Coalition Clean Baltic	(based in Sweden)
Coomhola Salmon Trust Limited	(based in Ireland)
European Anglers Alliance	(based in the Netherlands)
Faroes Sportsfishing Association	(based in the Faroe Islands)
Federation of Icelandic River Owners	(based in Iceland)
Federation of Irish Salmon and Sea-Trout Anglers	(based in Ireland)
Fédération Québécoise pour le Saumon Atlantique	(based in Canada)
Fondation Saumon	(based in France)
Greenpeace International	(based in the Netherlands) *
Institute of Fisheries Management	(based in the UK)
National Anglers Representative Association	(based in Ireland)
Norges Bondelag (Norwegian Farmers Union)	(based in Norway)
Norges Jeger og Fiskerforbund (Norwegian Association of Hunters and Anglers)	(based in Norway)
Norske Lakseelver (Norwegian Salmon Rivers)	(based in Norway)
Salmon Net Fishing Association of Scotland	(based in the UK)
Salmon and Trout Association	(based in the UK)
Sami Parlamenta	(based in Finland)
Scottish Anglers National Association	(based in the UK)
Ulster Angling Federation Limited	(based in the UK)
World Wide Fund for Nature (Norway)	(based in Norway) *
WWF (France)	(based in France)
World Wildlife Fund (US)	(based in USA) *

Note: The NGO accreditation of the Atlantic Salmon Federation, Greenpeace International, World Wide Fund For Nature (Norway) and World Wildlife Fund (US) has been suspended by the Council