

Council

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Report on the Activities of the North Atlantic Salmon Conservation Organization in 2004

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Note: This Report is not intended for publication but is submitted to the Council under Article 5, paragraph 6 of the Convention which requires the submission of an annual report to the Parties. The report is a summary of the activities of the Organization in 2004. Full details of the work of the Organization are contained in the reports of the Twenty-First Annual Meetings of the Council and regional Commissions and in the report of the Finance and Administration Committee.

*Report on the Activities of
the North Atlantic Salmon Conservation Organization
in 2004*

1. Introduction

- 1.1 NASCO returned to its place of birth, Reykjavik, for its Twenty-First Annual Meeting, hosted by the Icelandic Ministry of Agriculture. The Convention for the Conservation of Salmon in the North Atlantic Ocean had been adopted at a Diplomatic Conference convened in Reykjavik in 1982 and the Organization was established in 1984.

2. Council

- 2.1 The Twenty-First Annual Meeting of the Council was held in Reykjavik during the period 7-11 June 2004 under the Presidency of Mr Jacque Robichaud (Canada) and Vice-Presidency of Mr Ole Tougaard (European Union). Representatives of all the Contracting Parties, an observer from France (in respect of St Pierre and Miquelon) observers from three inter-government organizations, and twelve non-government organizations, attended the meetings.

The Precautionary Approach to Salmon Management

Management of North Atlantic Salmon Fisheries

- 2.2 To assist NASCO's Contracting Parties and the relevant authorities in applying the Precautionary Approach to the management of North Atlantic salmon fisheries, the Council had adopted a Decision Structure in 2002 and had requested that this be widely applied by managers in cooperation with stakeholders on salmon rivers. Reports on progress in implementing the Decision Structure, based on the returns by the Parties, were presented. The Council welcomed the progress made in the two years since the Decision Structure was adopted and agreed that future reporting by the Parties should be sufficiently comprehensive, and illustrated with examples, such that progress, or lack of it, could be recognised.

Special Session on the Management of Homewater Fisheries

- 2.3 The Council held a Special Session on the Management of Homewater Fisheries, in which there were presentations by two EU Member States (Ireland and the UK) and by Norway. The NGOs raised a number of questions about these fisheries. A separate report of this Special Session will be prepared.

Habitat Protection and Restoration

- 2.4 The NASCO Plan of Action for Application of the Precautionary Approach to the Protection and Restoration of Atlantic Salmon Habitat, adopted by the Council in

2001, aims to maintain and, where possible, increase the current productive capacity of Atlantic salmon through the establishment and implementation, by the Contracting Parties and their relevant jurisdictions, of comprehensive habitat protection and restoration plans. In order to measure and improve progress in meeting the objective, the Parties and their relevant jurisdictions had agreed to establish inventories of salmon rivers. The Parties reported on progress in implementing their habitat plans and on the establishment of inventories.

- 2.5 The President asked the Parties if access to, and the quality of, Atlantic salmon habitat was continuing to increase as had been reported at the Special Session on Habitat held in 2002. The Parties felt that there had been gains, and some examples were provided. The Council agreed that, in future, reporting could be more comprehensive and that examples of measures taken to protect habitat and to restore damaged habitat should be provided.

Database of Salmon Rivers

- 2.6 At its 2003 Annual Meeting, the Council established a Working Group to work by correspondence to further develop a database of salmon rivers started by the US. An expanded database based on the detailed inventory structure outlined in the Habitat Plan of Action has been developed by US scientists and made available through a website, www.WildAtlanticSalmon.com. The Council agreed on the potential uses of the salmon rivers database and adopted the recommended next steps. The Council also agreed that NASCO should now assume responsibility for maintaining and further developing the database. The Council thanked the US for developing the database.

The Williamsburg Resolution

- 2.7 In 2003 the Council adopted the Resolution by the Parties to the Convention for the Conservation of Salmon in the North Atlantic Ocean to Minimise Impacts from Aquaculture, Introductions and Transfers and Transgenics on the Wild Salmon Stocks, the Williamsburg Resolution. In adopting the Williamsburg Resolution the Council had recognized that it was a “living document” that could evolve in future in the light of experience with its implementation, consultations, improved scientific understanding of the impacts of aquaculture, introductions and transfers and transgenics on the wild stocks and developments in measures to minimise them.
- 2.8 The Council had recognized that further work was required in relation to the definition of ‘transgenic’, to the Guidelines for Action on Transgenic Salmon and to further refine the Preliminary Guidelines for Stocking Atlantic Salmon. This work was undertaken by two inter-sessional Working Groups which had worked by correspondence and the Council adopted a new definition of transgenic, revised Guidelines for Action on Transgenic Salmonids and revised Guidelines for Stocking Atlantic Salmon. The Williamsburg Resolution was amended to reflect these changes.
- 2.9 Canada indicated that a National Code on Introductions and Transfers of Aquatic organisms had been adopted in 2001. Domestic consultations had been held with

respect to the Williamsburg Resolution and Canada will be discussing with the US how to integrate the National Code into the North American context and ultimately Canada's position with regard to implementation of the Williamsburg Resolution.

- 2.10 The Parties made reports on their returns made in accordance with the Williamsburg Resolution. Iceland tabled a paper describing a new regulation for the protection of wild Atlantic salmon, which prohibits the rearing of salmonids of reared origin in sea cages in fjords and bays close to major salmon rivers.
- 2.11 The Council accepted an invitation from the European Union (Scottish Executive) to host a Workshop to assess the current and developing methods for marking farmed Atlantic salmon. This meeting was held in Edinburgh during 6-8 December 2004.

Liaison with the Salmon Farming Industry

- 2.12 A report was presented on a meeting with the International Salmon Farmers' Association held in Boston, USA in February 2004. This meeting had not been a full Liaison Group meeting but was intended to explore how the liaison process could be put back on a firmer footing with a higher level of commitment. A Statement of Commitment had been developed at the meeting and the Council agreed that the actions outlined in the statement served as a good basis for further cooperation with the salmon farming industry. In addition, the Council acknowledged that it had outlined actions applicable to the salmon farming industry in the Williamsburg Resolution which serves as a basis for NASCO Parties' future involvement in the Liaison Group and identification of areas of cooperation.

Social and Economic Values Related to Atlantic Salmon

- 2.13 The wild Atlantic salmon has many aspects to its value, including those associated with recreational, commercial and subsistence fisheries. In addition, however, there are values associated with the existence of the salmon itself which, although difficult to assess, are so widespread that they may greatly exceed the values associated with the fisheries. The Council had previously developed a framework which could be used to assess the social and economic values of the wild stocks.
- 2.14 A Technical Workshop was held in New Orleans, USA, to develop a decision structure or guidelines for incorporating social and economic factors into management decisions under a Precautionary Approach. The Council adopted the Guidelines developed at the Workshop, which provide a logical framework to support and inform decision-making. They are intended to be used by those with responsibility for managing the wild Atlantic salmon and its environments and for communicating concerns to other sectors whose proposals could impact on the wild salmon and its environments. The Workshop had also considered the development of a bio-economic modelling approach that would allow social and economic factors to be integrated into a management model for Atlantic salmon.
- 2.15 The President asked that the Parties select one area of the application of the Precautionary Approach (management of fisheries; habitat protection and restoration; aquaculture, introductions and transfers and transgenics; by-catch and stock rebuilding

programmes), and report to the Council in 2005 on an example of the use of the guidelines in relation to the area chosen. The Council also decided to set up a small Working Group, led by the USA, to develop a bio-economic modelling approach that would allow social and economic factors to be integrated into a management model for Atlantic salmon. The Council asked the Secretariat to combine the output from the two Technical Workshops into one handbook.

Stock Rebuilding Programmes

- 2.16 A stock rebuilding programme has been defined by the Council as an array of management measures, including habitat improvement, exploitation control and stocking, designed to restore a stock to above its conservation limit.
- 2.17 The Council adopted Guidelines on the Use of Stock Rebuilding Programmes in the context of the Precautionary Management of Salmon Stocks. In order that the Parties can gain from each other's experience, and to facilitate the dissemination of best practice, the Council agreed that each year the Parties should be requested to provide the following information:
- a summary or list of current stock rebuilding programmes (or similar documents) indicating how copies may be obtained;
 - suggestions for how the guidelines might be improved.

Future Actions in Relation to Application of the Precautionary Approach

- 2.18 The Council considered possible future actions in relation to application of the Precautionary Approach. After a period of sustained activity in developing agreements on application of the Precautionary Approach, the emphasis should now be on implementation of the agreements by the Contracting Parties with detailed and transparent reporting and amendment of the agreements as necessary in the light of experience gained with their implementation. The Council agreed that the future actions in relation to the application of the Precautionary Approach should be considered by the 'Next Steps for NASCO' Working Group (see paragraphs 2.19 - 2.23).

Next Steps for NASCO

- 2.19 In order to mark NASCO's Twentieth Anniversary, the Secretary presented a review with ideas on NASCO's Working Methods and Structures, covering: the frequency of Council and Commission meetings; the organization of sessions at meetings; the effective use of delegates' time at meetings; inter-sessional meetings; reporting procedures; scientific advice; membership structure; the Presidency and Secretariat; transparency; and the spirit of the Organization. The review had concluded that there were many issues to consider, and it would be useful to further examine these issues in some depth.
- 2.20 The United States tabled a report entitled NASCO – the Past, Present and Future. The President then referred to a Vision Statement for NASCO which had been written by

four authors, including the Chairman of NASCO's accredited NGOs. This contribution was welcomed.

- 2.21 The Council decided to establish a Working Group on the Next Steps for NASCO, with the aim of developing and strengthening the Organization to ensure that it continues to be a world-class regional fisheries organization over the next twenty years. The Working Group was asked to organize and convene a consultative meeting with stakeholders.
- 2.22 The Council stressed that NASCO is undertaking this review to identify and develop new objectives and strategies for its work. The Parties recognise that one goal is to ensure that NASCO's work reflects contemporary developments in science, management practice and international cooperation. Another goal is to ensure that NASCO business is conducted in a cost-effective, efficient and transparent manner. This review should be responsive to the needs of the species and to the interests of stakeholders. The Council encouraged the Working Group to involve a representative of NASCO's NGOs in the planning of the consultative process.
- 2.23 The first meeting of the Working Group was held in Dunkeld, Scotland, in October 2004.

Unreported Catches

- 2.24 The Secretary summarised the returns by the Parties, which indicate that in 2003 unreported catches were estimated to be between 675 and 1,007 tonnes. The Council welcomed this information which presented data on unreported catches in a transparent manner.

International Atlantic Salmon Research Board (IASRB)

- 2.25 The International Atlantic Salmon Research Board was established by the Council in 2001 to direct and coordinate a programme of research to identify and explain the causes of marine mortality of Atlantic salmon and the possibilities to counteract this mortality.
- 2.26 The report of the Third Meeting of the Board was presented by the Chairman of the Board, Mr Jacque Robichaud. The Board had updated its inventory of research related to salmon mortality in the sea and had received advice from its Scientific Advisory Group. In addition to annual expenditure on the 43 projects in the inventory, which amounted to more than £4.3 million, NASCO's Parties had contributed or pledged an additional £180,000 to the fund. These contributions should assist in seeking funds from the private sector. Details of a pilot fund-raising initiative were presented. The Board had noted that fund-raising is a very specialised activity and is likely to be a slow process as there are many competing interests for the funds available. The Board had agreed that it would be helpful to have some professional assistance in developing a fund-raising strategy and agreed that an action plan to guide future fund-raising should be commissioned. The Board had decided to organise and sponsor a workshop to further develop a major proposal for a programme

of research on salmon at sea drawing on the SALSEA project but including scientists from North America and more widely in Europe.

By-catch of Atlantic Salmon

- 2.27 Concern had previously been raised within the Council about the possible by-catch of salmon post-smolts in fisheries for pelagic species of fish, particularly mackerel, in the North-East Atlantic. In 2003, the Council had decided that, consistent with the Precautionary Approach, it would encourage and seek appropriate funding for research on the distribution of salmon at sea, and the overlap between salmon at sea and pelagic fisheries; encourage pilot studies on technical adjustments to the deployment of gear in pelagic fisheries so as to minimise by-catch of salmon; review the results of this research at its 2005 Annual Meeting or at a Special Session; in the light of the findings of this research, request that the Parties, non-Parties and other Fisheries Commissions make adjustments (if appropriate) to fishing methods so as to minimise the by-catch of salmon; and continue to ask ICES to provide information on by-catch.
- 2.28 ICES had advised that, given the wide range in catch rate estimates and limited observer coverage of pelagic fleets, it had not been possible to provide sound estimates of by-catch for any pelagic fishery and that this situation will prevail until there is sufficient monitoring of, and information derived from, commercial fisheries. ICES has advised that observer-based programmes are the preferred methodology for estimating by-catch and should be expanded and further refined. A report on studies of the distribution and by-catch of Atlantic salmon post-smolts in the Norwegian Sea in 2003 was presented by the Russian Federation.

Predator-Related Mortality

- 2.29 In 2003, the Council had agreed that it would seek to gather together all available information on predator-related mortality of Atlantic salmon and each Party had been requested to appoint a coordinator for this work, who would provide the following:
- information on the impact on salmon populations of predation by piscivorous birds, fish and mammals;
 - details of measures implemented in relation to management of these predators of salmon and any assessment of the effectiveness of these measures;
 - details of on-going research in relation to predator-related mortality.

The information provided by the Parties was presented. The Secretary was asked to review the information submitted, so as to summarise available knowledge on impacts. The issue of predator-related mortality of salmon at sea is an area that will be considered by the International Atlantic Salmon Research Board. The Council recognised that predation is an important issue that will need to be considered further in the light of increased understanding of its impacts.

St Pierre and Miquelon Salmon Fishery

- 2.30 Mr Yann Becouarn, an observer at the meeting from the Ministère de l'Agriculture, de l'Alimentation, de la Pêche et des Affaires rurales, made a presentation to the Council on a sampling programme for salmon at St Pierre and Miquelon undertaken by IFREMER scientists in 2003. He indicated that France (in respect of St Pierre and Miquelon) will continue the biometric sampling in 2004 and start the genetic sampling (provided that Canadian scientists are able to cooperate in the programme). France (in respect of St Pierre and Miquelon) wishes to increase its cooperation with NASCO and to initiate an exchange of information with the Parties which manage traditional fisheries. The Council welcomed the cooperation from France (in respect of St Pierre and Miquelon). Canada indicated that it was willing to cooperate with IFREMER scientists on the genetic study and sought clarification that sampling would be undertaken during the 2004 fishery. Mr Becouarn confirmed that, provided Canada was able to provide technical expertise, the genetic sampling would be undertaken in 2004.

Scientific Advice

- 2.31 The report of the ICES Advisory Committee on Fishery Management (ACFM) was presented. The Council adopted a request for scientific advice from ICES to be presented in 2005.

Catch Statistics and their Analysis

- 2.32 The official catch returns by the Parties for 2003, and historical data for the period 1960-2003, were presented.

Measures Taken in Accordance with Articles 14 and 15 of the Convention

- 2.33 A report was presented on the returns made under Articles 14 and 15 of the Convention.

Scientific Research Fishing in the Convention Area

- 2.34 Reports on scientific research fishing conducted since the last Annual Meeting were made by Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland) and Norway.

Election of Officers

- 2.35 The Council unanimously elected Dr Ken Whelan (European Union) as President and Mr Arni Isaksson (Iceland) as Vice-President. The Council unanimously decided to retain the retiring President, Mr Jacque Robichaud (Canada), as a Special Adviser to NASCO, and made budgetary provision to facilitate this.

Other Issues

- 2.36 The Council received a report from each of the three regional Commissions on its activities (see sections 3, 4 and 5 below)

- 2.37 The Council adopted the report of the Finance and Administration Committee (see section 6 below). With regard to relations with ICES, the EU asked that the Secretary continue to liaise with the other fishery Commissions so as to ensure consistency in the MoUs.
- 2.38 Since the last Annual Meeting, Coalition Clean Baltic (based in Sweden) and WWF (France) had been granted observer status to NASCO.
- 2.39 Reports were provided on: a joint meeting of North Atlantic Regional Fisheries Management Organizations; initiatives within FAO of relevance to NASCO; fishing for salmon in international waters; receipt of contributions for 2004; and on the proposed joint meeting with ICES, to be held in 2005, on ‘Interactions between aquaculture and wild stocks of Atlantic salmon and other diadromous fish species: Science and Management, Challenges and Solutions’.
- 2.40 The winner of the \$2,500 Grand Prize in the Tag Return Incentive Scheme was Ms Mildrid Børseth, Hovin, Norway.
- 2.41 The Council adopted a report to the Parties on the activities of the Organization in 2003.
- 2.42 The Council accepted an invitation from the European Union on behalf of France to hold its Twenty-Second Annual Meeting in Vichy, France, during 6-10 June 2005. The Council decided to hold its Twenty-Third Annual Meeting during 5-9 June 2006 in Edinburgh or elsewhere at the invitation of a Party.

3. North American Commission

- 3.1 The Twenty-First Annual Meeting of the North American Commission was held in Reykjavik during the period 7-11 June 2004 under the Chairmanship of Mr Pierre Tremblay (Canada).

Review of the 2003 Fishery and Scientific Advice from ICES

- 3.2 The Commission reviewed the 2003 fishery and considered the scientific advice from ICES.

Review of the 2004 Salmon Management Measures

- 3.3 The United States presented a report on US Atlantic salmon management and research activities in 2003. A review of the Canadian Atlantic salmon management measures for 2004 was presented.

St Pierre and Miquelon Salmon Fishery

- 3.4 The Chairman noted that a comprehensive discussion of the St Pierre and Miquelon fishery had occurred during the Council meeting. He recalled that France (in respect of St Pierre and Miquelon) had indicated its intent to continue its scientific study of the St

Pierre and Miquelon fishery, including beginning a genetics study in 2004 with assistance from Canada. The representative of Canada confirmed that Canadian scientists had already been in contact with their counterparts in St Pierre and Miquelon to move ahead with the proposed genetics work. The Chairman and the representatives of Canada and the United States expressed appreciation to the representative of France (in respect of St Pierre and Miquelon) for the increased collaboration with NASCO.

Salmonid Introductions and Transfers

- 3.5 A report on the activities of the Scientific Working Group on Introductions and Transfers in 2003/2004 was presented. It was noted that revisions to the NAC Protocols had been pending for a number of years and the Parties agreed that there was a need to acknowledge, in the revised Protocols, that the US and Canada utilise different methods for the authorization of introductions and transfers. In Canada the National Code on Introduction and Transfers of Aquatic Organisms is the mechanism for approval of introductions and transfers. The NAC members noted that there is a requirement for the Parties to report to the NAC annually on any decision made under their respective jurisdictions that has an impact on the other jurisdiction. The Parties agreed to consult each other if they receive a proposal for an introduction or transfer that may have such an impact. The Commission asked that NAC Working Group be convened in 2004 to prepare a revised version of the NAC Protocols and to review the Protocols in light of the Williamsburg Resolution and the latest developments in other areas such as fish health and stocking guidelines. The revised version will be distributed to both Parties for review and comment. The United States and Canada will hold a bilateral meeting prior to the 2005 NASCO Annual Meeting to finalize the Protocols.

Impacts of Acid Rain on Salmon

- 3.6 The United States and Canada presented a report on cooperative work between the two countries on acid rain, including the results of a workshop held in April 2004, jointly sponsored with the Atlantic Salmon Federation.
- 3.7 The question of how often pH levels in North American rivers are monitored was raised. Canada used to have an acid rain programme that actively monitored Canadian rivers. This programme gave a good indication of impacted rivers; however, funding ended several years ago and, consequently, pH levels of Canadian rivers are no longer checked regularly.
- 3.8 The United States commented that, unlike in Southwest Nova Scotia, high acidity is not a chronic problem in the United States. The problem in Maine is more episodic following snow melt and heavy rains. Salmon rivers in the United States still maintain some natural buffering capacity. The United States is making an effort to improve its water quality monitoring programme on rivers in Maine with Atlantic salmon populations.
- 3.9 The Parties welcomed the report and noted the value of the workshop and the Parties agreed to continue their cooperative work on acid rain issues and to report back to the NAC in 2005 on the progress of this cooperation, including the status of their pilot

liming projects. The Commission recommended that the issue of acid rain be included on future Council agendas.

Sampling in the Labrador Fishery

- 3.10 Canada reported that the sampling programme in Labrador would continue in 2004.

Election of Officers

- 3.11 Mr George Lapointe (USA), was unanimously elected Chairman of the North American Commission and Mr Guy Beaupré (Canada) was unanimously elected Vice-Chairman.

Other Issues

- 3.12 The winner of the Commission's \$1,500 prize in the Tag Return Incentive Scheme was Mr Harry McSheffery of Moncton, New Brunswick, Canada.

4. North-East Atlantic Commission

- 4.1 The Twenty-First Annual Meeting of the North-East Atlantic Commission was held in Reykjavik during the period 7-11 June 2004 under the Acting Chairmanship of the Vice-Chairman, Mr Steinar Hermansen (Norway).

Review of the 2003 Fishery and Scientific Advice from ICES

- 4.2 The Commission reviewed the 2003 fishery and considered the scientific advice from ICES.

Risk of Transmission of *Gyrodactylus salaris* in the Commission Area

- 4.3 The Commission had previously recognised the very serious threat to wild salmon stocks posed by the parasite *Gyrodactylus salaris* and the need for close cooperation among members of the Commission to minimise the risk of its further transmission in the Commission area. The Secretary presented the Report of a Workshop on *Gyrodactylus salaris* in the Commission Area and a draft "Road Map" for taking forward the recommendations of this Workshop, including Terms of Reference for a Working Group on *G. salaris*. After minor revision the Road Map was adopted by the Commission. The Working Group will be chaired by Norway.
- 4.4 Norway informed the Commission that the European Union is in the process of implementing a Directive on biocides, a consequence of which will be a potential ban on the use of rotenone from 1 September 2006. Norway noted that the use of rotenone is a key tool for the eradication of *G. salaris*, its use had been recommended by the Commission Working Group on *G. salaris* and it is important in the contingency plans of the Parties, including countries which are free of the parasite. Norway will be seeking clarification from the European Commission as to how rotenone and other control measures can continue to be used after 2006. The European Union suggested that any Party affected by the proposed Directive should record its concerns in writing

to the European Commission's Health and Consumer Relations Directorate General (Directorate General SANCO).

Regulatory Measures

- 4.5 The Commission adopted a decision regarding the salmon fishery in Faroese waters in 2005. Under this decision the Commission agreed not to set a quota for the Faroe Islands salmon fishery in 2005 on the basis that, in the event that there is a commercial fishery, management decisions will be made with due consideration to the advice from ICES concerning the biological situation and the status of the stocks contributing to the fishery and the fishery will be limited in scope compared to the management measures agreed by NASCO in previous years and subject to close national surveillance and control.

Experimental Tagging Programme

- 4.6 At the Commission's 2003 Annual Meeting it had been agreed that a pilot study involving a simulated escape of farmed salmon should be undertaken to improve understanding of the migration, dispersal and survival of farmed salmon in the North-East Atlantic. It had been agreed that between 500-1,000 tagged farmed salmon would be released by a number of countries in the Commission area. However, some countries had experienced some practical difficulties in carrying out the releases in 2004 so it had been decided to postpone the experiment until 2005.

Election of Officers

- 4.7 The Commission unanimously elected Mr Steinar Hermansen (Norway) as its Chairman and Mr Andrew Thomson (European Union) as its Vice-Chairman.

Other Issues

- 4.8 The winner of the Commission's \$1,500 prize in the Tag Return Incentive Scheme was Mr Jury Alexeevich Evdokimov, from Murmansk, Russia.

5. West Greenland Commission

- 5.1 The Twenty-First Annual Meeting of the West Greenland Commission was held in Reykjavik during the period 7-11 June 2004 under the Chairmanship of Ms Patricia Kurkul (USA).

Review of the 2003 Fishery and Scientific Advice from ICES

- 5.2 The Commission reviewed the 2003 fishery at West Greenland and considered the scientific advice from ICES. A paper on the 2003 fishery at West Greenland was tabled by Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland). In accordance with the Regulatory Measure adopted by the West Greenland Commission, the Greenland Home Rule Government decided to set the national quota for commercial landings of Atlantic salmon to fishing plants to zero tonnes, and prohibited any export of salmon from Greenland in 2003. Only a subsistence fishery was allowed, i.e.

fisheries for private consumption, and fisheries with the aim of supplying local open air markets, hotels, hospitals and restaurants. The latter was only allowed for professional fishermen with licences. In 2003, the fishery was opened on August 11 and closed on October 31. During this period a total catch of 8.7 tonnes of salmon was reported to the Greenland Fishery Licence Control (GFLK). Of this, 5.8 tonnes were reported by licensed fishermen as sold at open-air markets, hotels, hospitals and restaurants, and 2.9 tonnes were reported as used for private consumption.

Regulatory Measures

- 5.3 The Commission adopted a Regulatory Measures for Fishing for Salmon at West Greenland for 2004. Under this measure the catch will be restricted to that amount used for internal subsistence consumption in Greenland, which in the past has been estimated at 20 tonnes. There will be no commercial export of salmon.

Sampling in the West Greenland Fishery

- 5.4 The United States presented a report on the cooperative sampling programme at West Greenland in 2003 which provided a thorough analysis and assessment of the fishery and the results of the sampling programme
- 5.5 All Parties agreed to contribute to the resourcing of the West Greenland Sampling Agreement for 2004. Canada will not be able to send a sampler to West Greenland but will support all other measures, including the maintenance of the database and the analysis of scale samples.

Election of Officers

- 5.6 The Commission re-elected Ms Patricia Kurkul (USA) as Chairman and Ms Julia Barrow (Canada) as Vice-Chairman.

Other Issues

- 5.7 The winner of the Commission's \$1,500 prize in the Tag Return Incentive Scheme was Ms Charlotte Lyberth, Maniitsoq, West Greenland.

6. Finance and Administration Matters

- 6.1 The Finance and Administration Committee met prior to the Twenty-First Annual Meeting of the Council under the Chairmanship of Mr Steinar Hermansen (Norway).

Relationship with ICES

- 6.2 A report on the continuing consultations with ICES was presented. It had been agreed that NASCO's present MoU would be renewed until the end of 2006 and that during this period the price charged to NASCO by ICES for scientific advice will be adjusted only to take account of the rate of inflation in Denmark. The Committee expressed its satisfaction at the continuation of stable payments to ICES and the extension of the MoU until 2006 but expressed concern at the level of the actual costs of providing the

advice. The Committee asked the Secretary to continue to liaise with ICES and the other fishery Commissions with a view to ensuring stability in payments when the present MoU expires in 2006 and to ensure that consultations occur before additional costs are attributed to NASCO by ICES. The Committee also noted that there may be benefits from improved internal coordination between each Party's delegate to ICES and its representatives to the Fishery Commissions which receive their advice from ICES. The Committee recommends that each NASCO Party undertake such internal coordination.

- 6.3 ICES had confirmed that it intends to make observer status available to some of its Working Groups on a pilot basis in 2004 although the Working Group on North Atlantic Salmon is not involved. ICES is also considering admitting observers to ACFM meetings but the situation is not yet resolved. The Secretary was asked to obtain further information on the conditions governing observer attendance at the Working Group meetings, and to indicate to ICES that NASCO would wish to be consulted before any decision is taken to admit observers to the Working Group on North Atlantic Salmon.

NASCO Staff Fund

- 6.4 In 2001, the Council agreed to establish a NASCO Staff Fund because of the financial difficulties experienced by Equitable Life and the losses incurred by Secretariat Staff Members. Concern had been expressed by the Committee about the quality of the advice received from NASCO's financial advisors, PricewaterhouseCoopers (PWC), which had resulted in substantial losses for the three Secretariat Members concerned. The Committee considered that, although there was not a legal obligation on the part of NASCO to put right the losses suffered by the Secretariat Members, there was a moral obligation to support the staff who had been placed in this situation. Accordingly, the Committee had recommended that the Council, as the employer, authorize the Secretary to use the Working Capital Fund to take legal action to deal with this matter to the extent agreed by the Heads of Delegations.
- 6.5 The Secretary reported that following further protracted negotiations a settlement had been reached with PWC. The final settlement was about 75% of the loss but the remainder had not been recovered. In addition, there are significant additional losses from the Staff Fund which could not be claimed from PWC. Nevertheless, the Secretary expressed appreciation, on behalf of the Secretariat Members, for the support shown by the Committee which had certainly helped to produce the settlement.
- 6.6 The Committee agreed that in order to assist the current Secretariat Members who had been affected by the losses associated with the collapse of Equitable Life, it would recommend to the Council that, consistent with Rule 2.1 of the Staff Fund Rules, those Staff Members retain Secretarial Member status while a deferred salary is being drawn from the Staff Fund. In order to facilitate investment planning, the Committee also agreed to recommend to the Council the following addition to the Staff Rules: "A Secretariat Member aged over 55 years may request the Secretary to transfer to the Staff Fund up to 20% per annum of the estimated value of his or her lump sum

entitlement so as to enable investment planning. Such transfers will be deducted from the final payment.”

2005 Budget

- 6.7 The Committee agreed to recommend to the Council the adoption of a 2005 Budget and Schedule of Contributions.

Audited Accounts

- 6.8 The Committee recommended to the Council the adoption of the audited accounts for 2003 and the appointment of PricewaterhouseCoopers of Queen Street, Edinburgh as auditors for the 2004 accounts or such other company as may be agreed by the Secretary in consultation with the Chairman of the Finance and Administration Committee.

Secretary
Edinburgh
5 April, 2005