

Agenda item 6.8
For information

Council

CNL(05)24

***Progress with Application of the Guidelines for Incorporation of Social and
Economic Factors into Management Decisions under a Precautionary
Approach – Returns by the Parties***

Progress with Application of the Guidelines for Incorporation of Social and Economic Factors into Management Decisions under a Precautionary Approach – Returns by the Parties

Summary

1. At its Twenty-First Annual Meeting the Council adopted Guidelines for Incorporating Social and Economic Factors in Decisions under the Precautionary Approach. These guidelines provide a logical framework to support and inform decision-making and are intended for use 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 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 at its Twenty-Second Annual Meeting on an example of the use of the guidelines in relation to the area chosen. Accordingly, the Parties were asked to report on the use of the guidelines in relation to the chosen area of the application of the Precautionary Approach and to provide any suggestions for improvement to the guidelines. The returns are attached. Some EU Member States with salmon interests (France and Portugal) had not made a return at the time of preparation of this report.
2. **In Canada**, the guidelines have not been applied.

Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland)

In Greenland, the guidelines have not been applied and the Faroe Islands responded 'Not applicable' in relation to use of the guidelines..

European Union

In the UK in England and Wales the guidelines are being incorporated into the processes adopted by the Environment Agency to determine the most appropriate controls required for stock conservation. The requirement to consider costs and benefits and the needs of communities (in particular those in rural locations) is set out in environmental legislation (including in relation to fisheries) applying to England and Wales. In Scotland, a Scottish Freshwater Fisheries Forum, which involves a wide range of agencies and stakeholders, has been established to develop proposals for the long-term and holistic management of salmon and freshwater fisheries. The work of the Forum complies with the guidelines. The remit is to develop policy that takes account of biological, fisheries and wider socio-economic factors to ensure long-term and sustainable fisheries for salmon and freshwater fish in Scotland. There have been no major new programmes in Northern Ireland. In Germany (Brandenburg), there is close cooperation with angler organisations and a public relations programme for the rebuilding programme is being undertaken. Denmark, Finland, Germany (Baden-Wuerttemberg and Northrhine-Westfalia), Ireland, Spain

and Sweden either provided no information or responded ‘Not applicable’ in relation to the use of the guidelines.

In Iceland, a report estimates that the total economic value of salmon angling to the Icelandic economy is approximately £60 million (Euro 85 million).

In Norway, while social and economic factors are incorporated into management decisions largely in accordance with the guidelines, there have been no major new initiatives to apply the guidelines in a more formal way.

In Russia, socio-economic considerations are taken into account when decisions are taken concerning the traditional coastal fishery. This fishery is strictly regulated by quotas and it is gradually being phased out.

In the US, one Environmental Assessment (EA) has been completed since adoption of the guidelines in relation to a grant to the State of Maine to conduct Atlantic salmon monitoring and assessment activities in addition to those already undertaken under Federal programmes. The risk to Atlantic salmon populations was evaluated and the impacts on a variety of stakeholders analysed. The socio-economic impact of the proposed study was considered to be minimal although, as noted in the guidelines, it is difficult to assign an economic value to all the costs and benefits associated with the proposed studies. The preferred alternative (to issue the grant and conduct the studies), and why it was chosen, were clearly indicated in the EA. The total impact on Atlantic salmon was considered to be relatively insignificant compared to other threats and the minor ecological impacts would be mitigated by the positive effects on salmon recovery which the studies are designed to support.

3. No suggestions have been made for improvements to the guidelines. The US has suggested that it is first necessary to consider the returns by the Parties. Norway has noted that there is often a lack of adequate data as a basis for including socio-economic aspects in decision-making processes. EU (Germany (Brandenburg)) has identified a variety of factors that should enhance its efforts to rebuild salmon stocks.

Secretary
Edinburgh
27 May, 2005

- | |
|--|
| 1. Provide a report on the use of the guidelines in relation to one chosen area of the application of the Precautionary Approach |
|--|

Canada

The guidelines were not applied.

Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland)

Faroe Islands

Not applicable.

Greenland

The guidelines were not applied.

European Union

Denmark

No information provided.

Finland

No information provided.

Germany

Baden-Wuerttemberg

No information provided.

Brandenburg

Close cooperation with angler organizations; inclusion of proper authorities (fishery, water engineering, nature protection); intensive promotion of the restocking programme (TV; journals; newspapers; conferences on fishery, aquatic or ecology science) – for a high public acceptance of a project.

Northrhine-Westfalia

Not applicable.

Ireland

No information provided.

Spain

No information provided.

Sweden

Not applicable.

United Kingdom

In England and Wales, the guidelines are being incorporated into the processes adopted by the Environment Agency to determine the most appropriate controls required for stock conservation. The principles set out in the guidelines were applied in the development of the measures implemented in 1999 to protect spring salmon. A requirement to consider costs and benefits and the needs of communities (in particular, those in rural locations) is set out in environmental legislation (including in relation to fisheries) applying to England and Wales.

In Northern Ireland, no new major programmes were undertaken in 2004.

In Scotland, during 2004, the Scottish Freshwater Fisheries Forum was established, chaired by the Scottish Executive, to develop proposals for the long-term and holistic management of salmon and freshwater fisheries in Scotland, and to develop the policy underpinning a proposed Fisheries Bill scheduled for 2006-2007. The Forum comprises representatives from agencies such as Fisheries Research Services, Scottish Natural Heritage and the Scottish Environment Protection Agency, as well as a wide range of stakeholder groups including not only fishing interests but also those with an interest in the environment, and industries which rely on or may have an impact on the water environment. The work of the Forum and Steering Group complies with the Guidelines. The remit is to develop policy that takes account of biological, fisheries and wider socio-economic factors to ensure long-term and sustainable fisheries for salmon and freshwater fisheries in Scotland. The Forum has met twice, in July 2004 and in February 2005. The Steering Group has met six times to examine proposals in relation to the management and operation of salmon and freshwater fisheries. The immediate goal of the Forum and Steering Group is to develop proposals for the forthcoming Bill. However, it is envisaged that the Forum will continue after that task has been completed in order to provide a vehicle for monitoring the impacts of any new management regime.

Iceland

A report has been published in Icelandic by the University of Iceland estimating the value of the Icelandic angling fisheries. An English abstract could be provided to the socio-economic working group meeting. The report estimates that the direct value of the angling fisheries to the Icelandic economy is close to 16 million pounds Sterling. The total economic value of angling including both direct and indirect values is, however, considered to be close to 60 million pounds Sterling or 100 million Euros.

Norway

Although social and economic factors are incorporated into management decisions in general, largely in accordance with the NASCO guidelines, no major new management initiatives have been taken, e.g. changes in fisheries regulations or major new measures for habitat protection and restoration, to apply the guidelines in a more formal way.

Russian Federation

Socio-economic considerations are taken into account when decisions are taken concerning the traditional coastal fishery, which is maintained to meet the needs of communities of indigenous people on the White Sea coast. This fishery is strictly regulated by quotas. It is being gradually phased out.

USA

Socio-economic impact assessments are usually conducted per requirements of the Federal National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). For Federal actions that will have a significant impact on the human environment, an Environmental Impacts Statement (EIS) is required – for actions for which it is determined that a significant impact to the human environment will not occur, a more informal Environmental Assessment (EA) is usually required. Both EAs and EISs require the consideration and analysis of socio-economic impacts, and have provisions for public input. NEPA ensures that federal activities in the U.S. that may affect Atlantic salmon are analysed comprehensively, that alternatives are considered, and that public input is solicited, consistent with the socio-economic guidelines adopted by NASCO.

One EA that has been completed since the adoption of the socio-economic guidelines was for a grant to the State of Maine to conduct Atlantic salmon monitoring and assessment activities supplemental to NMFS (Federal) monitoring and assessment. The grant is provided for the state to conduct multiple studies involving Atlantic salmon including: adult Atlantic salmon studies (e.g., weir operation, broodstock collection, redd counts), juvenile salmon studies (e.g., juvenile abundance surveys using electrofishing), and habitat protection and assessment (e.g., permit reviews, mapping salmon habitat). Several options were evaluated in the EA, although for many areas the only other alternative was to not conduct the studies. The studies will result in some mortality of Atlantic salmon. The risk to Atlantic salmon populations was evaluated in the EA, and, because the populations in question are protected under the U.S. Endangered Species Act (ESA), an ESA permit is required. In issuing the ESA permit for these activities, a determination was made that the studies would not jeopardise the continued existence of the endangered salmon populations. The impacts on a variety of stakeholders as a result of the proposed studies was analysed in the EA – stakeholders included recreational boaters, fishermen, land owners, etc. The socio-economic impact of the proposed studies was determined to be minimal. However, as noted in the socio-economic guidelines, it is difficult to assign an economic value to all the costs and benefits associated with the proposed studies. The preferred alternative (to issue the grant and conduct the studies), and why it was chosen, was clearly indicated in the EA. The total impact on Atlantic salmon was determined to be relatively insignificant compared to other threats, and the minor ecological impacts would be mitigated by the positive effects of the overall salmon recovery program which the studies are designed to support.

2. Provide any suggestions for how the guidelines might be improved.
--

No suggestions for improvements to the guidelines were suggested by any Party. However:

European Union (*Germany – Brandenburg*) has identified the need for improvement of financial support for inland (river) fisheries (stimulation of new restocking projects); to intensify the construction of fish passes or fish protection systems (on hydro-electric power stations); to intensify the restoration of straightened rivers and lost reproduction habitats; for a national and international control programme for cormorants.

Norway has indicated that the guidelines are very useful and contribute, simply by being there, to a stronger awareness on these issues and to decision-making processes. The major difficulty, however, often lies in the lack of adequate data as a basis for those considerations. We think establishing a socio-economic Working Group by NASCO, as suggested by Norway at the 'Next Steps for NASCO' Working Group, would be an important step and an incentive to improve this data basis.

The US has indicated that it is premature at this point to suggest changes to the guidelines and that it is necessary to first see returns from 2004 and how each Party applied the guidelines in a specific example.