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Press Release

Twenty-Second Annual Meeting
Vichy, France
June 6-10, 2005

**“Plight of wild salmon is everyone’s business”
says international body**

At its Annual Meeting in France, the North Atlantic Salmon Conservation Organization (NASCO) agreed on innovative new ways of working to improve the involvement of all interest groups. NASCO has reached out in a unique way to stakeholders across the North Atlantic, including non-governmental and other organizations. Agreement on the so-called “*Next Steps*” process makes the Organization one of the most open and transparent inter-governmental bodies dealing with fisheries.

Ken Whelan, the President of NASCO, said “Salmon stocks in countries across the North Atlantic remain in a serious condition. NASCO believes everyone needs to be concerned about this. Over the past two decades we have made significant improvements to the way that Governments work together on salmon matters and following detailed discussions this week we plan to further develop our focus and to involve, in a more inclusive way, the many interested and committed non-government bodies in our work.”

The agreement on change includes:

- Commitment to working harder and smarter to raise international awareness of the plight of salmon and the measures needed to protect the species;
- Clearer procedures to support commitment to agreements and to assess progress;
- Greater involvement of stakeholders in NASCO’s work.

Key decisions for the conservation of Atlantic salmon made at this meeting included:

- Continuation of measures to limit fishing at sea at West Greenland and the Faroe Islands to very low levels. These are areas where salmon gather to feed and grow;

- NASCO Parties endorsed an unprecedented, state-of-the-art international research initiative, *SALSEA* (Salmon at Sea), a major public/private partnership aimed at unravelling the reasons behind the serious decline of North Atlantic salmon stocks.

NASCO also reviewed a wide range of technical actions by countries around the North Atlantic to halt the decline in wild salmon stocks.

This year's event was held in Vichy, France and the representative of France's Ministers of Ecology and of Agriculture and Fisheries, Monsieur Berard, lent his support to NASCO's work saying "the restoration of salmon in France and particularly in the River Allier here in Vichy is a challenge to our authorities. I extend a warm welcome to NASCO from the French public authorities, in recognition of the work achieved over twenty years in the field of exemplary international cooperation. Thanks to you, the North Atlantic today has rational management of salmon based on a fisheries organization aiming to achieve sustainable development."

Ken Whelan, the NASCO President, added "Our Organization is fully committed to do all we can to make sure this magnificent fish can thrive again. The salmon is a symbol of high environmental quality and its plight is of great concern and importance to people around the world. We need everyone's support and involvement to achieve our ambitious conservation goals."

Notes for editors

The North Atlantic Salmon Conservation Organization (NASCO), an intergovernmental organization formed to promote the conservation, restoration, enhancement, and rational management of salmon stocks in the North Atlantic Ocean, met from 6 to 10 June 2005, in Vichy, France. Its members are Canada, Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland), the European Union, Iceland, Norway, the Russian Federation, and the United States of America. Representatives from 15 non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and 4 inter-governmental organizations (IGOs) also attended the meeting.

The report of the NASCO Annual Meeting, including the annexed documents, and other essential information on the Organization, will be made available on the NASCO website: www.nasco.int.

The next Annual Meeting of NASCO will be held from 5 to 9 June 2006 in Ivalo, Finland.

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