

Council

CNL(06)2

Explanatory Memorandum on the Agenda

(updated 7 April 2006)

Note: A summary of all the decisions before the Council will be presented in document CNL(06)21.

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1. Opening Session

The Opening Session is open to the public. The President will make a statement on behalf of the Organization and wishes to encourage an Opening Statement by each Party. Subject to a time limit, the President will invite statements from any Inter-Government Organizations present and from the nominated representatives of accredited Non-Government Organizations.

2. Adoption of Agenda

In accordance with the Rules of Procedure, and following consultation with the President, a Provisional Agenda (CNL(06)1) was issued on 30 January. There were no proposals for supplementary items. A Draft Agenda (CNL(06)3) is submitted herewith. A Draft Schedule of Meetings (CNL(06)4) is also submitted herewith.

3. Election of Officers

In accordance with its Rules of Procedure, the Council will be asked to elect a President and Vice-President. The President (Dr Ken Whelan, European Union) and Vice-President (Mr Arni Isaksson, Iceland) are both eligible for re-election.

4. Financial and Administrative Issues

4.1 Report of the Finance and Administration Committee

The Chairman of the Finance and Administration Committee will present a report of the Committee's meeting to the Council (CNL(06)5). The Council will be asked to:

- adopt the 2007 budget;
- accept the audited accounts for 2005;
- approve the appointment of auditors for the 2006 accounts;
- adopt the report of the Finance and Administration Committee;
- take such other actions as it may consider appropriate.

5. Scientific, Technical, Legal and Other Information

5.1 Secretary's Report

The Secretary will report to the Council on a number of procedural, administrative, financial and other matters.

5.2 Report on the Activities of the Organization in 2005

The Council will be asked to adopt, under Article 5, paragraph 6, of the Convention, a report on its activities in 2005 (CNL(06)6). This report is not intended for publication.

5.3 Announcement of the Tag Return Incentive Scheme Grand Prize

The President will announce the winner of the Grand Prize of \$2,500. The winners of the Commission prizes of \$1,500 will be announced in each of the Commissions by the Chairman.

5.4 Scientific Advice from ICES

The Report of the Advisory Committee on Fishery Management (ACFM) (CNL(06)7) will be circulated and will be briefly introduced at the meeting by a representative of ICES. The detailed advice will be considered by the Commissions separately at their meetings. ICES will be requested to make the report of the Working Group on North Atlantic Salmon available to NASCO delegates on the ICES website.

5.5 Catch Statistics and their Analysis

The Secretary will present the catch statistics for 2005 as provided to the Organization by the Parties (CNL(06)8). These data will be used in the calculation of the Schedule of Contributions by the Parties for 2007. The updated historical catch record will be presented for information (CNL(06)9). The Secretary will introduce a report summarising the annual returns by the Parties in relation to unreported catches, (CNL(06)10).

5.6 Scientific Research Fishing in the Convention Area

In 1996, the Council unanimously adopted a Resolution on Scientific Research Fishing. The Secretary will advise the Council of any requests to conduct research fishing since the last Annual Meeting. The President will invite any Party conducting research fishing in the last year to present a brief report on its activities.

5.7 Report of the International Atlantic Salmon Research Board

In 2001, the Council established the International Atlantic Salmon Research Board to direct and coordinate a programme of research to identify and explain the causes of the increased marine mortality of Atlantic salmon and to examine the possibilities to counteract the mortality. The Board has previously established, and is maintaining, an inventory of research on mortality of salmon at sea and has taken steps to improve coordination of research. Last year the Board had fully endorsed the SALSEA programme, a comprehensive programme comprising freshwater, estuarine, coastal and offshore elements designed to provide an overview of the factors which may affect the marine mortality of salmon. The Board had also received professional advice in relation to the development of a fund-raising strategy. A report on the Board's progress will be presented (CNL(06)11).

5.8 Report of the Standing Scientific Committee

In the Strategic Approach for NASCO's 'Next Steps', it is recommended that the Commissions of NASCO consider whether regulatory measures for fisheries could be adopted, and scientific advice from ICES sought, on a biennial or multi-year basis. At the Twenty-Second Annual Meeting, the Council asked the Standing Scientific Committee to develop a discussion document on options for changing the form and nature of the request for scientific advice in the event that multi-annual regulatory measures are established. This discussion document will be tabled (CNL(06)12) during the Special Session referred to in item 6.1 below.

The recommendations of the Standing Scientific Committee concerning the request to ICES for scientific advice will be presented by the Chairman of the Committee (CNL(06)13). The Council will be asked to adopt a request for scientific advice from ICES.

6. Next Steps for NASCO

6.1 Special Session: Progress with the Next Steps Strategy

(a) *Overview of progress with decisions taken in Vichy*

Under the Strategic Approach for NASCO's 'Next Steps', CNL(05)49, the Council agreed a number of decisions based on the recommendations of the 'Next Steps for NASCO' Working Group for immediate implementation. A report on progress with these decisions will be presented (CNL(06)14), together with the discussion document from the Standing Scientific Committee (CNL(06)12) referred to in paragraph 5.8 above. A separate report on cooperation with other international organizations on issues of mutual interest will be presented (CNL(06)15).

(b) *Report of the 'Next Steps for NASCO' Task Force*

The Council recognised that there was a need for further consideration of some decisions in the Strategic Approach for NASCO's 'Next Steps' before their implementation. These decisions concerned implementation, commitment and accountability and transparency and inclusivity. In order to further consider these decisions the Council established a Task Force under the Chairmanship of Gudmundur Helgason (Iceland), and the intention was that the recommendations developed by the Task Force would be implemented at the Twenty-Third Annual Meeting. The report of the Task Force meeting will be presented, (CNL(06)16).

6.2 Decisions by the Council

The Council will be asked to consider what action it wishes to take with regard to the Next Steps for NASCO in the light of the report of the Task Force and the views expressed during the Special Session (see 6.1 above).

7. Conservation, Restoration, Enhancement and Rational Management of Atlantic Salmon under the Precautionary Approach

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

A summary of the returns made by the Parties under Articles 14 and 15 of the Convention will be presented to the Council (CNL(06)17).

7.2 Special Session: Reports by the Parties or relevant jurisdictions on progress in implementing NASCO's agreements

The 'Next Steps for NASCO' Task Force has been asked by the Council to consider the level of reporting and the format for Special Sessions and will present its recommendations to the Council under agenda item 6.1(b). Following consultation with the President, it was decided not to request detailed returns by the Parties under each agreement in 2006 until the Task Force has made its recommendations on reporting requirements. However, the inclusion of this agenda item will allow each Party or relevant jurisdiction to report, in a Special Session, on any significant developments since last year in relation to implementation of any NASCO agreement.

The 'Next Steps for NASCO' Task Force has made recommendations on the scope and key elements to be included in implementation plans and has recommended that progress in developing implementation plans is reviewed at the Twenty-Third Annual Meeting, prior to critical review inter-sessionally of these plans by the *ad hoc* Review Group. The Parties or relevant jurisdictions will have the opportunity to report back to the Council on any progress since the Task Force meeting in developing implementation plans.

7.3 Aquaculture, Introductions and Transfers, and Transgenics

(a) Amendments to the Williamsburg Resolution

In adopting the Williamsburg Resolution at its Twentieth Annual Meeting, the Council had recognised that it would 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. At its Twenty-Second Annual Meeting the Council received comments from the International Salmon Farmers' Association (ISFA) on the Williamsburg Resolution (CNL(05)30). The Council asked that the Secretary develop a response to these comments in consultation with the Parties and transmit it to the President of ISFA. It was agreed that any changes to be made to the Williamsburg Resolution should be adopted inter-sessionally by correspondence among the Heads of Delegations. The Council had also agreed that the Memorandum of Understanding between the US and Canada, which is intended to reconcile differences between the methods used by these countries to authorise introductions and transfers, should be appended to the Williamsburg Resolution. A report on any proposals for amendments to the Williamsburg Resolution will be made (CNL(06)18).

(b) *Liaison with the Salmon Farming Industry*

The NASCO element of the Liaison Group, through the Chair, Mary Colligan (USA), had agreed that as there had effectively been two Liaison Group meetings in 2005, the Secretariat only should meet with the industry during the ISFA meeting in Brussels. A report of this meeting will be presented (CNL(06)19).

(c) *Report of the Trondheim Workshop “Wild and Farmed Salmon – Working Together”*

In August 2005 the NASCO/North Atlantic salmon farming industry Liaison Group held a one-day Workshop in Trondheim, Norway entitled “Wild and Farmed Salmon – Working Together”. The report of the Workshop will be presented.

(d) *Report of the ICES/NASCO Bergen Symposium*

In October 2005 NASCO and ICES co-convened an international symposium entitled “Interactions between aquaculture and wild stocks of Atlantic salmon and other diadromous fish species: Science and Management, Challenges and Solutions”. The Symposium was held in Bergen, Norway during 18 – 21 October 2005. A report on the Symposium will be presented.

7.4 New or emerging opportunities for, or threats to, salmon conservation and management

This new agenda item has been included in accordance with the Strategic Approach for NASCO’s ‘Next Steps’ (CNL(05)49). The Council’s intention is that the Parties, ICES and the NGOs be invited to provide relevant information.

One relatively new issue that is of concern to the Council is the potential level of by-catch of salmon post-smolts in pelagic fisheries for mackerel, and possibly other pelagic fisheries, in the North-East Atlantic Commission area. The Council decided previously that, consistent with the Precautionary Approach, it would encourage, and seek appropriate funding for, research on the distribution of salmon at sea, on the spatial and temporal overlap between salmon at sea and pelagic fisheries, on the vertical distribution and behaviour of salmon in the feeding areas, and on the by-catch of salmon in pelagic fisheries, and would encourage pilot studies on technical adjustments to the deployment of gear in pelagic fisheries so as to minimise by-catch. The advice from ICES in relation to by-catch will be presented and the President will invite the Parties to report on any developments in relation to by-catch of salmon in pelagic fisheries.

7.5 Report of the Working Group on Bio-economic Modelling

In 2004, the Council decided to establish a small Technical 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 intention was that the Working Group would meet prior to the Twenty-Third Annual Meeting, but it is now hoped that the meeting will be held in autumn 2006.

7.6 Progress with the development of the Database of Salmon Rivers

In 2004 US scientists developed a database drawing on the existing rivers listing held by the Secretariat but based on the more detailed inventory format proposed in the Habitat Plan of Action. The Council had agreed that the Parties should:

- update the original salmon rivers database annually;
- consider using the database to report basic habitat and habitat impacts information so as to establish the baseline level of salmon production potential against which changes may be assessed;
- enter generalised juvenile and adult salmon production data as data and resources permit.

Since then each Party has appointed a database coordinator and last year the Council agreed that, following resolution of some minor technical issues that had arisen, the database should be transferred to the NASCO Secretariat. A report on progress will be made (CNL(06)20).

7.7 St Pierre and Miquelon Salmon Fishery

In recent years the North American Commission and the Council have been concerned about catches of salmon at St Pierre and Miquelon which, although low, have been increasing at a time when there are serious worries about the abundance of North American stocks and when restrictions are being introduced all around the North-West Atlantic. Last year a report on a sampling programme at St Pierre and Miquelon in 2004 had been made available to the Council by the French authorities, together with information on the regulatory framework for managing the fishery and details of the licences issued and catches. The French authorities also indicated a willingness to continue gathering scientific information at St Pierre and Miquelon and to contribute to sustainable management of the fishery which they consider a traditional activity with a strong cultural dimension. The Council welcomed the continuing cooperation from France (in respect of St Pierre and Miquelon) and asked that the French authorities be invited to participate in future NASCO meetings. Information in relation to the St Pierre and Miquelon salmon fishery will be presented. As requested by the Council, France (in respect of St Pierre and Miquelon) has been invited to attend the Twenty-Third Annual Meeting.

7.8 Impacts of Acid Rain on Atlantic salmon

This agenda item was included on the Council's agenda for the first time last year at the request of the North American Commission because of the general interest in this matter and the wide-ranging expertise among NASCO's Parties. The President will invite the Parties to present information on the impacts of acid rain on Atlantic salmon and on any mitigation measures being undertaken.

7.9 Reports on the Work of the Three Regional Commissions

The President will ask the Chairman of each of the regional Commissions of NASCO to report to the Council on the work of their Commission.

8. Other Business

Any other business may be raised.

9. Date and Place of Next Meeting

The proposal will be made that the Twenty-Fourth Annual Meeting be held during 4-8 June 2007 either in Edinburgh or elsewhere at the invitation of a Party.

10. Report of the Meeting

A draft report of the meeting will be circulated for the approval of the Council.

11. Press Release

A draft Press Release will be prepared for consideration by the Council.

Secretary
Edinburgh
7 April, 2006

Note: Special Sessions are designated as items on the agenda where all present at the meeting are invited, and encouraged, to participate. The aim is to conduct this part of the meeting in a completely open manner so as to hear all opinions and views before the Council makes its decisions.