

Agenda Item 6.1(a)
For decision

Council

CNL(06)15

*Cooperation with other international organizations
on issues of mutual interest*

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Introduction

1. Under the Strategic Approach for NASCO's 'Next Steps' it is stated that the Council will review its relationship with other international organizations and explore areas of mutual interest (Decision 12 of CNL(05)49). In order to implement this Decision the Secretariat was asked to review the areas identified in the Strategic Plan and prepare a paper for consideration by the Council at its 2006 Annual Meeting.

Existing Cooperation

2. NASCO has established good relationships with other international organizations, particularly those concerned with the management of Baltic Salmon (International Baltic Sea Fishery Commission) and Pacific Salmon (North Pacific Anadromous Fish Commission) and with the International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES) and, to a lesser extent, the North Pacific Marine Science Organization (PICES). In March 2002, these five organizations cooperated in organizing a symposium entitled the "Causes of Marine Mortality of Salmon in the North Pacific and North Atlantic Oceans and in the Baltic Sea". While the IBSFC ceased to exist at the end of 2005, salmon matters in the Baltic will be subject to bilateral negotiations between the European Union and Russia, both of which are Parties to NASCO, so there should be a mechanism to continue this cooperation in future. NASCO and ICES have also cooperated in arranging international symposia, most recently the symposium entitled "Interactions between aquaculture and wild stocks of Atlantic salmon and other diadromous fish species: Science and Management, Challenges and Solutions" held in Bergen, Norway during 18 – 21 October 2005. It is fair to say that these symposia have provided very valuable information for the sponsoring organizations, both with regard to science and management, have provided an opportunity to publicise the work of these organizations and have allowed participation by many stakeholders.
3. In addition, the Secretariats of several international organizations are invited to attend NASCO's Annual Meetings. Last year in Vichy, representatives of ICES, IBSFC, NPAFC and the North Atlantic Marine Mammal Commission (NAMMCO) participated in our meeting. Similarly the NASCO Secretariat has occasionally attended the annual meetings of other international organizations, although this has been restricted to organizations involved in salmon management, and usually only when there has been a specific proposal for a joint initiative to discuss. The Secretariats of the North Atlantic Regional Fishery Management Organizations (NARFMOs) (i.e. NEAFC, IBSFC, NASCO, Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organization (NAFO), NAMMCO, and the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT)) also meet from time to time, where possible in conjunction with other meetings to discuss issues of mutual interest. Every second year there is a meeting of the Secretariats of Regional Fishery Bodies

from around the world hosted by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) in conjunction with the biennial meeting of the FAO Committee on Fisheries (COFI). The meetings of NARFMOs allow an exchange of information on issues such as transparency, dissemination of information, arrangements for obtaining scientific advice and application of the Precautionary Approach and Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries Management. The FAO meeting allows for an exchange of information in relation to global ocean governance issues.

4. NASCO has also cooperated closely with the relevant international organizations on specific topics. For example, the IBSFC was represented at the *Gyrodactylus salaris* Working Group Meeting held in 2004 and NEAFC has assisted NASCO in ensuring that ICES obtained the information it required to assess by-catch of salmon in pelagic fisheries in the North-East Atlantic Commission area.
5. In the case of NASCO's relationship with ICES a Memorandum of Understanding has been agreed, but there is no such formal arrangement for cooperation with the other organizations.

Enhancing cooperation in future

6. The Working Group on the 'Next Steps' for NASCO suggested that the NASCO Secretariat should increase its participation in the annual meetings of Regional Fisheries Organizations (RFOs) in order to raise its profile with these RFOs, enhance cooperation and allow NASCO to see how other RFOs operate. The Working Group also believed that the NASCO Secretariat should consider attending international fisheries events such as the FAO Committee on Fisheries and meetings of the United Nations, with a view to raising NASCO's profile.
7. Unlike many RFOs, NASCO deals with an anadromous species which depends on freshwater, estuarine, coastal and marine environments. The Strategic Approach identifies seven key challenges for NASCO's work as follows :
 - management of salmon fisheries;
 - social and economic aspects of the Atlantic salmon;
 - research on salmon at sea (including studies of by-catches);
 - habitat protection and restoration;
 - aquaculture, introductions and transfer and transgenics;
 - *Gyrodactylus salaris*;
 - initiatives for endangered salmon populations.
8. This wide range of issues means that there may well be benefits from cooperation with a wide range of international organizations. For example, with regard to protection and restoration of freshwater habitats there might be benefits from cooperation with the European Inland Fisheries Advisory Committee (EIFAC), while the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) has considerable expertise on socio-economic issues and is now involved in developing measures to combat illegal, unregulated and unreported (IUU) fishing. NASCO's work on *G. salaris* also raises issues of world trade agreements so there may be a need for further cooperation with the WTO Secretariat. Regional Seas Organizations

are also increasingly involved in fisheries management issues so there may be benefits from cooperation with UNEP in conjunction with other RFBs.

9. In conclusion, NASCO's broad remit means that there are many potential organizations with which it could, and should, cooperate but there are obvious budgetary constraints within which the Secretariat must operate. Cooperation is already underway with our colleagues in the Baltic Sea and North Pacific and we believe that this should be continued and, where appropriate, strengthened through joint meetings. In addition, NASCO should continue to participate in the NARFMO and FAO RFB meetings and, where appropriate and possible, participate in annual meetings of other RFBs (e.g. NEAFC, NAFO) and at meetings of FAO COFI and United Nations (UN) fisheries meetings. Secondly, where specific issues arise, NASCO should seek cooperation from other relevant international organizations. The objectives of NASCO's cooperation with other international organizations should be to share information on common problems, raise the profile of NASCO with these other international organizations, address problems of fisheries for other species affecting Atlantic salmon and to share experience of working methods.
10. The Council may wish to review the suggestions for enhancing cooperation with other international organizations and agree the approach outlined or take other action it considers appropriate.

Secretary
Edinburgh
7 April 2006