

CNL(07)54

Draft Report of the Twenty-Fourth Annual Meeting of the Council of NASCO Harborside Hotel and Marina, Bar Harbor, Maine, USA 4-8 June, 2007

1. Opening Session

- 1.1 The President, Dr Ken Whelan, opened the meeting. Dr Bill Brennan, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Commerce for International Affairs, NOAA, USA, welcomed delegates to Bar Harbor (Annex 1). The President thanked Dr Brennan for his welcoming address and then made an opening statement on the work of the Organization (Annex 2).
- 1.2 The representatives of Canada, Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland), the European Union, Iceland, Norway, the Russian Federation and the United States of America made opening statements (Annex 3).
- 1.3 The representative of NPAFC, Dr Shigehiko Urawa, made an Opening Statement (Annex 4).
- 1.4 An Opening Statement was made on behalf of all the 20 Non-Government Organizations (NGOs) attending the Annual Meeting (Annex 5).
- 1.5 The President expressed appreciation to the Parties and to the observer organizations for their statements and closed the Opening Session.
- 1.6 A list of participants is given in Annex 6.

2. Adoption of Agenda

- 2.1 The Council adopted its agenda, CNL(07)39 (Annex 7).

3. Financial and Administrative Issues

3.1 Report of the Finance and Administration Committee

The Chairman of the Finance and Administration Committee, Dr Boris Prischepa (Russian Federation), presented the report of the Committee, CNL(07)5. On the recommendation of the Committee, the Council took the following decisions:

- (i) to accept the audited 2006 annual financial statement, FAC(07)2;
- (ii) to adopt a budget for 2008 and to note a forecast budget for 2009, CNL(07)40 (Annex 8);

- (iii) to adopt a Memorandum of Understanding with ICES, FAC(07)6 (Annex 9), which would be signed by the President on behalf of NASCO;
- (iv) to appoint PricewaterhouseCoopers (PWC) of Edinburgh as auditors for the 2007 accounts, or such other company as may be agreed by the Secretary following consultation with the Chairman of the Finance and Administration Committee;
- (v) to adopt the report of the Finance and Administration Committee.

The President thanked Dr Prischepa for his valuable work and for that of the Committee.

The representative of the European Union indicated that it is the policy in the European Commission to change auditors on a regular basis, and he indicated that he would propose that NASCO change auditors for 2008 and regularly thereafter.

4. Scientific, Technical, Legal and Other Information

4.1 Secretary's Report

The Secretary made a report to the Council on: status of accessions to the Convention; observers at NASCO's meetings, CNL(07)21; fishing for salmon in international waters; a review of international salmon-related literature published in 2006; and the Twenty-Year Milestones report, which has been very well received, and had been published in English, French and Russian and widely distributed.

In accordance with Financial Rule 5.5, the Secretary reported on the receipt of contributions for 2007. All contributions had been received and there were no arrears.

The Secretary reported (CNL(07)21 and CNL(07)28) that since the last Annual Meeting of the Council, five new non-government organizations had been granted observer status:

- Marine Environmental Law Institute, Dalhousie University, Canada
- Atlantic Salmon Conservation Foundation, Canada
- Connecticut River Salmon Association, USA
- Clean Catch, USA
- College of the Atlantic, USA

In addition, WWF (Norway) had been readmitted as observers. In total, NASCO currently has 34 accredited NGOs. The Council welcomed these observer organizations.

4.2 Report on the Activities of the Organization in 2006

In accordance with Article 5, paragraph 6 of the Convention, the Council adopted a report to the Parties on the Activities of the Organization in 2006, CNL(07)6.

4.3 **Announcement of the Tag Return Incentive Scheme Grand Prize**

The President announced that the winner of the \$2,500 Grand Prize was Karl Kristian Kruse, Uummanaq, Greenland. The Council offered its congratulations to the winner.

4.4 **Scientific Advice from ICES**

The representative of ICES presented the report of the Advisory Committee on Fishery Management (ACFM) to the Council, CNL(07)7 (Annex 10). A separate report from ICES on the application of state-of-the-art genetic stock identification methods was also tabled, CNL(07)51.

4.5 **Catch Statistics and their Analysis**

The Secretary tabled a statistical paper presenting the official catch returns by the Parties for 2006, CNL(07)8 (Annex 11), and historical data for the period 1960-2006, CNL(07)9. The statistics for 2006 are provisional.

4.6 **Special Session: Unreported Catches**

A paper summarising the information provided by the Parties on unreported catches was tabled, CNL(07)10.

The Council held a Special Session on Unreported Catches so as to allow for a more detailed exchange of information among the Parties and their relevant jurisdictions on: the methods used to estimate unreported catches; trends in the estimates of unreported catches; the source of these unreported catches; and the measures being taken to minimise them. The programme for the Special Session is contained in document CNL(07)11.

There were presentations by all the Parties. Papers on unreported catches were tabled by Canada, CNL(07)38; Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland), CNL(07)49; EU (UK – England and Wales), CNL(07)26; EU (Ireland), CNL(07)36; EU (UK – Northern Ireland), CNL(07)24; EU (UK - Scotland), CNL(07)25; Iceland, CNL(07)31; Norway, CNL(07)32; the Russian Federation, CNL(07)34; and the USA, CNL(07)33. The Council agreed that the Parties and jurisdictions should provide reports of their presentations for compilation into a report on the Special Session to be made available on the Organization's website. The Council agreed that in the light of the valuable information presented during the Special Session, the Parties might consider how the issues of improving estimates of, and further minimising, unreported catches can be incorporated into their implementation plans. The issue would remain on the Council's agenda for its Twenty-Fifth Annual Meeting.

4.7 **Scientific Research Fishing in the Convention Area**

A report on scientific research fishing conducted since the last Annual Meeting was made by EU (Ireland), CNL(07)35 (Annex 12). Norway reported that while there had been no dedicated research surveys for salmon, 46 post-smolts had been caught during research

cruises for other pelagic species. Large salmon had been caught as far north as 79°N, suggesting a northerly extension in salmon area distribution.

4.8 **Report of the International Atlantic Salmon Research Board**

The report of the meeting of the Board, CNL(07)12 (Annex 13), was presented by the Chairman of the Board, Mr Jacques Robichaud. He reported that the Board had updated its inventory of research related to salmon mortality in the sea, had received advice from its Scientific Advisory Group, and had received a progress report on implementing and promoting the SALSEA programme. The Board had agreed to fund an extension to the West Greenland Sampling Programme to allow examination of trophic feeding state and condition of salmon – continent of origin and age at maturity comparisons. In the event that ICES organises a second workshop on the Development and Use of Historical Salmon Tagging Information from Oceanic Areas, the Board agreed to fund the participation of a GIS expert and oceanographer. The Board had unanimously elected Dr Ken Whelan as its new Chairman. The Board had also considered a number of finance and administrative issues.

The representative of the NGOs stated that the NGOs are very impressed with the inventory of research and commended the Parties for their ongoing research programmes. He indicated that Workpackage 3 of the SALSEA programme on studies into the migration and distribution of salmon at sea is currently undersubscribed in relation to the other Workpackages. Commitment to the marine surveys might be seen as an indicator of how successful NASCO is in fulfilling its objectives. He stated that the marine surveys in 2008 and 2009 offered an excellent opportunity for NASCO to raise its profile and he encouraged all Parties to explore fully the opportunity to contribute research vessels and other resources to the programme.

The President expressed sincere thanks on behalf of NASCO for the excellent work Mr Robichaud had done in guiding the work of the Board from its inception. His energy and dedication had been greatly appreciated.

4.9 **Special Session: Salmon at Sea – Research Programmes in the North Pacific and North Atlantic Oceans**

In 2002, NASCO, NPAFC, PICES, IBSFC and ICES had co-sponsored a workshop on mortality of salmon at sea. The report of this meeting had been published as NPAFC Technical Report 4. One of the recommendations of this workshop had been that there should be a major international symposium on factors influencing salmon mortality at sea in 2010. The IASRB has allocated funding to sponsor this symposium which would allow for presentation of the results of the SALSEA programme in the North Atlantic and the BASIS and BASIS2 programmes in the Pacific. However, following consultations with NPAFC it had been agreed that there could be benefits from an early further exchange of information between scientists working on research on salmon at sea in the North Pacific and North Atlantic Oceans and that such an exchange might raise the profile of ongoing research in the media. It had, therefore, been agreed that a Special Session would be held during NASCO's Twenty-Fourth Annual Meeting to which

scientists from the Pacific would be invited to participate and in 2008 NPAFC would invite scientists from the North Atlantic to participate in the BASIS Symposium.

The programme for the Special Session is contained in document CNL(07)13. A report of the Special Session would be prepared by the Secretariat and made available on the Organization's website.

During the discussion period, a proposal was made by the representative of the NGOs that one approach to raising funding for research on salmon at sea that might be explored would be the addition of a small levy on the sale of farmed salmon that would be paid by the consumer. The NGOs further noted that while there is clearly tremendous support for SALSEA among the Parties, they are concerned at the commitment to the marine surveys planned for 2008 and 2009. While applauding the commitments of vessel time made by Ireland, Norway and Faroes, the representative of the NGOs asked the other Parties if they had plans to contribute research vessel time. The representative of Canada indicated that his delegation was looking closely at the availability of research vessels but it was proving to be challenging to secure ship-time. The US indicated that it is difficult to allocate ship-time and the US was therefore looking at the possibility of providing other resources. The representative of the EU indicated that the European Union was supporting the application for FP7 funding and discussions have been held on a number of occasions with Member States about the possibility of contributing research vessel time. He referred to the gear trials undertaken by Ireland in May 2007. The President indicated that in addition to the availability of research vessels, the Parties might explore the use of chartered fishing vessels, the availability of eco-vessels and the opportunity to trawl for salmon during research cruises for other species.

4.10 Report of the Standing Scientific Committee

The Chairman of the Standing Scientific Committee presented a draft request to ICES for scientific advice. Upon the recommendation of the Committee, the Council adopted a request for scientific advice from ICES, CNL(06)13 (Annex 14). The Council agreed that to assist ICES in planning its work programme for the Working Group on North Atlantic Salmon, the aim should be to communicate the results of utilising the framework by 31st January.

5. Next Steps for NASCO

5.1 Special Session: Progress with the Next Steps Strategy

(a) Report of the Ad Hoc Review Group on the Parties' Implementation Plans

The Strategic Approach for NASCO's 'Next Steps' requires that each Party or jurisdiction develop an Implementation Plan focused around NASCO's three main agreements (which address fishery management, habitat protection and restoration, and aquaculture and associated activities) and which also takes into account NASCO's various guidelines. Guidelines for the preparation of these Implementation Plans, NSTF(06)10, were agreed by the Council and last June the Parties and relevant

jurisdictions presented draft plans. It was agreed that the final plans would be provided to the Secretariat by October 2006 and these would then be subject to review by an *Ad Hoc* Review Group. The Implementation Plans submitted by the Parties are contained in document CNL(07)22.

The Coordinator of the Review Group, Dr Malcolm Windsor, introduced the *Ad Hoc* Review Group's report, CNL(07)15 (Annex 15). The focus of the assessment was the structure of the plans and their conformity to the guidelines. Consequently to receive a favourable review a plan had to contain the key elements identified in the guidelines. The reviews were not about the adequacy or otherwise of each jurisdiction's record of salmon management. The reviews were simply about the commitments, timeframes and measurable outputs of the plan. Members of the *Ad Hoc* Review Group then presented the Group's findings, CNL(07)42. Preliminary implementation plans were made available to the Council at the meeting for EU (Germany), CNL(07)37, and EU (France), CNL(07)56 (available only in French at present).

(b) *Responses to the Ad Hoc Review Group findings*

The Council concluded that the review had been a very valuable process. In the light of the *Ad Hoc* Review Group's assessment and in light of the discussions at the Special Session it was decided by the Council that plans should be submitted or re-submitted in final form by 1 November. The *Ad Hoc* Review Group would then conduct one final review which would be sent to the Parties by [1 March].

(c) *Report of the Public Relations Group*

One of the central themes of the Strategic Approach for NASCO's 'Next Steps', CNL(05)49, was the need for the Organization to better promote its work and achievements. The Council had, therefore, established a Public Relations Group to develop a clear public relations strategy aimed at enhancing NASCO's profile and ensuring the most effective publicity for its work and achievements. This group met in London in December 2006. The Chairman of the PR Group, Dr Malcolm Windsor, introduced the Group's report, CNL(07)16, (Annex 16) .

The Group recognised that the term "stakeholders" is very broad and includes anyone with an interest in, or depending on, the Atlantic salmon. There are both internal (e.g. other government departments, NGO membership) and external (e.g. the public, politicians) stakeholders. A public relations strategy targeting the former would focus on communications while, for the latter, use of the media and communications would be appropriate.

The Group had reviewed the results of a pilot study to raise NASCO's profile conducted in 2005/2006, welcomed this initiative and recognised the need to build on the progress made. The Group had developed recommendations for a strategy to enhance NASCO's profile and increase publicity for its work. The Group had proposed that the main tasks in developing a public relations strategy are:

- to identify key messages;

- to identify target audiences;
- to identify products and methods for delivering the message. In this regard, the Group believes that NASCO should develop an annual ‘State of salmon populations’ report and undertake a major enhancement of the Organization’s website;
- to identify educational programmes with a view to establishing a database of such programmes on the basis of information provided by the Parties;
- to establish a network of media contacts within NASCO and the NGOs and to employ an Information Officer with good public relation skills.

The representatives of the NGOs indicated that they would be willing to assist NASCO with its public relations work and if NASCO developed a publication outlining its objectives and activities, they would be willing to distribute this with their own publications and to make it available on their websites with links to NASCO’s website. ASF and WWF indicated that at the next Annual Meeting, they would be willing to arrange a press briefing to allow NASCO and the NGOs to present a coordinated message to the media.

5.2 **Review of the ‘Next Steps for NASCO’ Special Session and Decisions by the Council**

The Council decided that the next stage of the Next Steps process would be to focus on the areas of fisheries management in the implementation plans. An *Ad Hoc* Review Group to review this focus area was set up with terms of reference, composition and a timeframe, CNL(07)47 (Annex 17). The representative of the EU stated that there could be a significant amount of work to prepare these reports and that, in the case of the EU, some jurisdictions might find it difficult to meet the timetable. The President referred to possible sensitivities from the review outcome. He also suggested that jurisdictions that had difficulties might seek support from their partners in NASCO. The representative of the NGOs indicated that it would be unfortunate to limit the process, which should be independent. He felt it would be best for the Review Group to decide for itself how it might work.

With regard to a Communications Strategy the Council decided that, in the first instance, it would upgrade and improve the website of NASCO and of the IASRB. The Secretary was asked to produce a model “State of the Salmon Stocks” document which would be easy to comprehend and attractively produced. He would use information from the Parties and from ICES to construct this publication and professional support would be needed to produce it. The Parties were asked to provide details of educational programmes concerning wild Atlantic salmon to the Secretariat for inclusion in a database of such programmes. The President strongly supported improving NASCO’s communications. The representative of the US stated that NASCO needs to refine its Communications Strategy in the light of the valuable ideas emerging from the PR Group.

The representative of the NGOs stressed that it was important that NASCO does not lose momentum on this initiative and offered more partnership and support. It was agreed that the Secretariat and the NGOs should communicate on advancing these matters and report back to the Council next year.

5.3 EU Proposal for a Performance Review of the Work of NASCO

The Council considered, in some detail, proposals by the EU, CNL(07)43 Annex 18 in line with those requested of the various tuna RFMOs, and by the USA, CNL(07)48 Annex 19, for a Performance Review of NASCO. The Council considered this matter in the light of the Next Steps review process, which has been carried out in an open and public fashion over the past three years and the detailed nature of the decisions taken by the Council to implement broad-ranging changes in the manner in which NASCO operates and its relationship with its NGOs. While recognizing that an assessment of the work of NASCO, the Next Steps process and its performance would be a helpful and positive step, it was the Council's view that the timing of such a review was critically important given that the Organization was in the midst of implementing the core elements of the Next Steps process. The Council decided that it would, in the future, undertake an additional external review, to be carried out by an appropriately experienced team of external and internal reviewers and that it would return to this subject during the 2008 Annual Meeting with a view to deciding on the timing and terms of reference for such a review, consistent with UN Resolution 61/105.

The representative of the European Union stated that he believed there had been a missed opportunity in not proceeding with a stronger commitment to the performance review. He hoped that when the Council returns to this issue at its 2008 Annual Meeting there will be a strong commitment to establish timings for the review within a short timescale. The EU delegation regretted that it had not been possible to move further with their proposal, but in the spirit of consensus had accepted the approach proposed. The representative of Canada indicated that while the agreed approach did not meet all of Canada's expectations, it is an important step in the right direction. The representative of the NGOs suggested that if the Council had been subject to a performance review on this issue, it would not have scored too highly and he suggested that it was important that the Council find ways of dealing efficiently with such issues in the future without disrupting the Organization's business..

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

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

The Secretary presented a report on the returns made under Articles 14 and 15 of the Convention, CNL(07)17 (22). Returns were also received from EU (Germany – Baden-Wuerttemberg) and EU (France), CNL(07)29 (Annex 20). In addition, Norway tabled a paper detailing the main features of the Norwegian policy for the preservation of wild salmon, CNL(07)27 (Annex 21).

6.2 **Aquaculture, Introductions and Transfers, and Transgenics**

(a) *The Williamsburg Resolution*

At its 2003 Annual Meeting 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, CNL(03)57. Last year the Council had asked that the revised Resolution be issued as a brochure and copies of this brochure had been issued to all delegates and to the Liaison Group. The Secretary indicated that it was hoped that the brochure could be distributed widely to the salmon farming industry, salmon managers, NGOs and other interested parties around the North Atlantic.

(b) *Liaison with the Salmon Farming Industry*

The Chair of the Liaison Group, Ms Mary Colligan (US), introduced the report of the Group's meeting, CNL(07)18 (25). She indicated that a welcome development at the meeting had been that, for the first time, NASCO's accredited NGOs had been able to participate. The Group had agreed that it should:

- share information on area management initiatives (local cooperation between wild and farmed salmon interests to address impacts of aquaculture on wild stocks, e.g. from sea lice) and promote area management to NASCO's Parties;
- continue to explore opportunities for cooperation between wild and farmed salmon interests and that reports of such initiatives should be made available to the Group;
- hold a one-day session at its next meeting focusing solely on the level and causes of escapes and opportunities to minimise them;
- encourage research into alternative treatments for sea lice and make representations to the authorities urging that they make effective sea lice treatments available as quickly as possible where these are environmentally acceptable.

The industry representatives at the Liaison Group had agreed to explore how they might support the SALSEA programme. They had also agreed to develop a discussion document on how NASCO could further support the salmon farming industry.

This discussion document had been received and was entitled 'Incentivising the Industry', CNL(07)30 (Annex 22). The Council noted the findings of the Bergen Symposium (see 6.2(c)), the continued high level of escapes as presented to the Liaison Group, and the suggestion by ISFA of support for the dissemination of information on best practice and collaborative problem-solving.

The Council asked the Secretary to respond to ISFA welcoming their communication but indicating that there were proposals in their paper that would be unacceptable, some that could be the subject of cooperation and others that would need further consideration.

To advance this initiative, the Council agreed to propose to ISFA that a Joint Technical Task Force be set up with membership from the two Secretariats and two or three nominated expert participants from NASCO and ISFA. The Terms of Reference for this Group are:

- Taking account of the findings in the 2005 ICES/NASCO Bergen Symposium, the Joint ISFA/NASCO Trondheim Workshop and any other relevant scientific information regarding impacts from aquaculture on wild stocks, identify and agree on a series of best practice recommendations to address the continuing impacts of salmon farming on wild stocks (e.g. escapes, interbreeding, sea lice infestations, disease transfers to and from the wild). These recommendations will be designed to achieve the impact targets established by the NASCO Parties.

The Secretary was asked to liaise with ISFA with a view to the Task Force meeting before the next Annual Meeting of NASCO. The Task Force should, for the time being, replace the NASCO/ISFA Liaison Group.

The representative of the NGOs expressed the view that the proposals by ISFA made an assumption that the salmon farming industry had the view already achieved the condition where it posed no threat to wild salmon. This was certainly not the case and he trusted that the Council would accordingly make a robust response. He offered to provide a technical expert to the proposed Joint Technical Task Force.

(c) *Reports of the ICES/NASCO Bergen Symposium*

The Secretary informed the Council that two reports from the ICES/NASCO Symposium 'Interactions between aquaculture and wild stocks of Atlantic salmon and other diadromous fish species: Science and Management, Challenges and Solutions' had been published. The scientific papers have been published in a special issue of the ICES Journal of Marine Science (Volume 63) edited by the Assistant Secretary. A second report focusing on the management issues had been prepared by the Co-Conveners and published by the Norwegian Institute for Marine Research (NINA). Copies of both reports had been made available to delegates. The Conveners had concluded that if no action is taken now to address the remaining challenges identified at the Bergen Symposium (relating to minimising impacts of sea lice and escapes of wild salmon), there is a real risk of losing genetic diversity in the wild stocks with potentially serious consequences for their fitness, productivity and their ability to survive environmental changes. The Conveners did not believe that this was a precautionary situation. It had been suggested that one way forward would be to use the findings of the Bergen Symposium in the development of NASCO's input to a group that was to be proposed to the industry, the Joint Technical Task Force mentioned above. Support for some of the industry's proposals would be conditional on their meeting certain quantitative standards of e.g. escapes, sea lice infestation.

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

In accordance with the Strategic Approach for NASCO's Next Steps, this item had been included on the Council's agenda and ICES had been requested to provide relevant information, which is contained in document CNL(07)7.

6.4 Report of the Working Group on Bio-economic Modelling

The Council had previously agreed that a Technical Working Group (TWG) should be held to consider the development of a bio-economic model. This decision was consistent with the decision in the 'Strategic Approach for NASCO's Next Steps, CNL(05)49, to continue and expand existing efforts to incorporate social and economic factors in the Organization's work. However, for a number of reasons it had not been possible to organise a meeting of the TWG. The Council recognised that under the Strategic Approach the key issues identified are:-

- ensure that appropriate emphasis is given to the social and economic factors of the Atlantic salmon;
- strengthen the socio-economic data as a basis for managing Atlantic salmon;
- integrate social and economic aspects and considerations in an open and transparent way into a decision-making process with NASCO;
- disseminate the information on the social and economic aspects of the wild Atlantic salmon in order to ensure that they are given due weight compared to other important economical and public interests.

The Council therefore decided to establish a Working Group on socio-economics to meet inter-sessionally at least once before the 2008 Annual Meeting. The Terms of Reference for the Group are contained in document CNL(07)44 (Annex 23). The Council asked that Norway and the United States consult with regard to appointing a Chairman for the Group.

The representative of the NGOs indicated that the NGOs have great expertise in the area of socio-economics and requested that they be invited to participate in the Group. The Council agreed to this request.

6.5 Progress with development of the Database of Salmon Rivers

In 2004/2005, the US had developed a web-based database based on the inventory format proposed in the NASCO Plan of Action for Application of the Precautionary Approach to the Protection and Restoration of Atlantic Salmon Habitat. This database had been made available for data entry by NASCO's Parties and the Council had agreed that:

- the Parties should update the original NASCO salmon rivers database information annually (via the expanded web-based database) to correct errors and inaccuracies and to ensure the specific information conformed to the new format. It was recognised that this process should not involve a significant amount of time and effort;

- the Parties should consider using the database to report basic salmon habitat and habitat impacts information;
- as data and resources permit, the Parties should enter generalised juvenile and adult salmon production data although such data entry would be optional but of benefit to the database.

A report on progress with development of a database of salmon rivers was tabled, CNL(07)19. The progress report indicated that the Parties have started to update the rivers database information and some Parties have gone further and have started to enter habitat and habitat impacts information and salmon production data. Feedback from database coordinators had indicated that there may need to be some changes to the database to better reflect the available data. The Council agreed that any revisions to the database should be agreed by correspondence between the Secretariat and database coordinators. The Council encouraged the Parties to undertake the first task of validating the basic river data at the earliest opportunity as it is now publicly available on the Organization's website.

6.6 **St Pierre and Miquelon Salmon Fishery**

A report on the sampling programme at St Pierre and Miquelon in 2006, information on the regulatory framework for managing the fishery and details of licences issued and catches was made available to the Council, CNL(07)20 (Annex 24). In this document the French authorities indicated that they have continued to pursue the commitment made with regard to gathering scientific information on salmon stocks at St Pierre and Miquelon and with regard to management and conservation efforts. It is the intention to put in place a procedure with a view to reducing the number of permits granted and hence reduce progressively the catches made on fragile North American stocks. The Council noted that while the number of licences issued in 2006 had declined, the catch, while low, had increased compared to 2005 and was the highest catch in the period 1998-2006. The North American Commission believed that it would be beneficial if France (in respect of St Pierre and Miquelon) became a Party to the NASCO Convention and had asked that the Council pursue this matter with the French authorities.

The President expressed his concern that France (in respect of St Pierre and Miquelon) had not been present at the Twenty-Fourth Annual Meeting. The representative of the NGOs stated that they urged the government of France to become a Party to NASCO, since there were increasing harvests of salmon at St Pierre and Miquelon. The representative of the European Union indicated that while France is a Member State, and participates in the EU delegation to NASCO, this participation is for metropolitan France. France represents St Pierre and Miquelon as a French overseas territory, over which the European Community has no competence.

The Council authorised the President of NASCO to invite France (in respect of St. Pierre and Miquelon) to accede to the Convention. The representative of Canada stated that it was important that France (in respect of St Pierre and Miquelon) participated in NASCO, since there are challenges that we need to understand and work cooperatively to address. He indicated that his delegation would be pleased to assist in encouraging the French authorities, on behalf of St Pierre and Miquelon, to become a Party to NASCO

6.7 Impacts of Acid Rain on Atlantic Salmon

There were no interventions on the impacts of acid rain. The President suggested that the acidity in the oceans was a factor to be kept under review.

6.8 Reports on the Work of the Three Regional Commissions

The Chairman of each of the three regional Commissions reported to the Council on the activities of their Commission.

7. Other Business

- 7.1 The representative of the NGOs referred to the fact that Baltic salmon are managed separately from Atlantic salmon and that the IBSFC had been disbanded since the Baltic States had joined the EU. He hopes that information on Baltic salmon will be made available to NASCO.

8. Date and Place of Next Meeting

- 8.1 The Council accepted an invitation from the EU, on behalf of Spain, to hold its Twenty-Fifth Annual Meeting at a venue to be decided in Spain during 2 - 6 June 2008.
- 8.2 The Council accepted an invitation from Norway to hold its Twenty-Sixth Annual Meeting at a venue to be decided in Norway during 1 - 5 June 2009.

9. Report of the Meeting

- [9.1 The Council agreed the report of the meeting.]

10. Press Release

- [10.1 The Council adopted a press release, CNL(07)xx (Annex 25).]