

Agenda item 5.1
For decision

CNL(08)21

Council

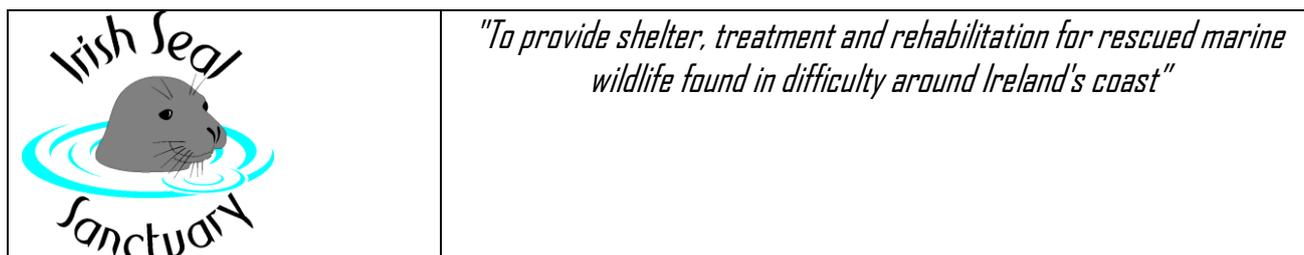
Application for NGO Observer Status to NASCO

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Application for NGO Observer Status to NASCO

1. Since the last Annual Meeting there has been one new application for observer status to NASCO from the Irish Seal Sanctuary (Annex 1). The objective of the Irish Seal Sanctuary is to provide shelter, treatment and rehabilitation for rescued marine wildlife found in difficulty around Ireland's coast. Over the last decade the organization's objectives have broadened considerably to include a nationwide marine conservation education programme, active involvement in the implementation and reform of the Common Fisheries Policy through its membership of the North Western Waters Regional Advisory Council and the provision of research support in the area of marine conservation. The Irish Seal Sanctuary's education programme provides a series of educational talks and activities for both primary and secondary schools and community groups. Discussion of the biology, ecology and conservation of seals is complemented by the inclusion of other marine wildlife and conservation issues to highlight the issues and the efforts required to maintain the marine environment for future generations. The Organization believes that the broad scope of its work and commitment to marine conservation generally confirms its compatibility with NASCO's objectives.
2. The President and I reviewed this application and in particular whether an organization devoted principally to the conservation of seals could be considered to have objectives compatible with those of NASCO. The application raises issues that we have not previously encountered in handling an application for observer status. I therefore responded to the Irish Seal Sanctuary advising them that a decision about their application would be made by the Council at its Twenty-Fifth Annual Meeting.
3. We have been advised that Clean Catch, a US-based NGO that applied for and received observer status prior to the Twenty-Fourth Annual Meeting last year, no longer exists and should be removed from the listing of accredited NGOs to NASCO. In total, NASCO currently has 33 accredited NGOs, as listed in Annex 2.

Secretary
Edinburgh
12 May, 2008



Dr Malcolm Windsor
Secretary
NASCO
11 Rutland Square
Edinburgh
EH1 2AS
United Kingdom

17 April 2008

Dear Dr Windsor

Re: Application for observer status for the Irish Seal Sanctuary

I am writing on behalf of the Irish Seal Sanctuary to apply for observer status to NASCO.

The Irish Seal Sanctuary is a registered charity sustained entirely by voluntary effort and donations. The objective of the Irish Seal Sanctuary on its foundation 20 years ago was to provide shelter, treatment and rehabilitation for rescued marine wildlife found in difficulty around Ireland's coast. While this core objective remains, the objectives of the Irish Seal Sanctuary have, in particular over the past decade, broadened considerably to include a nationwide marine conservation education programme, active involvement in the implementation and reform of the Common Fisheries Policy through its membership of the North Western Waters Regional Advisory Council (as the Sea Fisheries Advisory Group for the Irish Seal Sanctuary) and the provision of research support in the area of marine conservation.

The Irish Seal Sanctuary Education Programme provides a series of educational talks and activities for both primary and secondary schools and community groups. The discussion of the biology, ecology and conservation of seals is complemented by the inclusion of other marine wildlife and conservation issues to highlight the global, national and local efforts involved and required to maintain the marine environment for future generations.

The work of the Sea Fisheries Advisory Group for the Irish Seal Sanctuary is crucial to the opening of communication channels and the building of trust between conservation groups and the fishing industry/fishing communities, involving, as it does, regular stakeholder meetings to explore ways to achieve sustainable management of fish stocks in north western waters, while highlighting the related socio-economic problems to be addressed in this area.

In the research arena, the Irish Seal Sanctuary has, in the aftermath of the 2006 moratorium of the Irish drift-net salmon fishing fleet, provided practical support for a research paper on the potential effects of this moratorium on both the fishing community and seal populations. The Irish Seal Sanctuary provided the researcher with invaluable introductions to members of the fishing community identified as being relevant to the research. The outcome of this research has been a

paper (currently in press¹) discussing the sustainable management of the wild Irish Atlantic salmon.

In the near future, the Irish Seal Sanctuary will migrate to the new Marine Conservation and Education Centre which is currently being built in Balbriggan with combined government and local authority funding. This innovative new facility will enable expansion of the conservation, research and education work of the Irish Seal Sanctuary as well as making it much more accessible to the public. As well as offering sanctuary to animals, the Marine Conservation and Education Centre will aim to co-ordinate a nationwide marine mammal network, protect and promote the welfare of marine wildlife and its habitat, conduct non-invasive research, protect and assist threatened coastal communities and help to resolve conservation conflicts.

The broad scope of the Irish Seal Sanctuary's work in, and commitment to, the area of marine conservation generally, as outlined above, provides evidence of its compatibility with NASCO's objectives of promoting the conservation, restoration, enhancement and rational management of salmon stocks in the North Atlantic ocean. Indeed, the broader focus of the Irish Seal Sanctuary on conservation of the marine environment generally (including awareness of the socio-economic effects of conservation measures) would arguably provide a useful voice at NASCO meetings. Finally, it is noteworthy that the proposed representative of the Irish Seal Sanctuary for attendance at NASCO meetings is Mr Patsy Peril, a salmon net fisherman with several decades of experience, former member of the National Salmon Commission, member of the Shannon Regional Fisheries Board and member of the Sea Fisheries Advisory Group for the Irish Seal Sanctuary.

I look forward to hearing from you and very much hope that your response will be positive.

Yours sincerely,

Ruth Brennan
Member of the Sea Fisheries Advisory Group for the Irish Seal Sanctuary

¹ Brennan RE, Rodwell LD. Sustainable Management of wild Irish Atlantic salmon: Keys found through the looking-glass. Marine Policy (2008)

NON-GOVERNMENT ORGANIZATIONS WITH OBSERVER STATUS TO NASCO

Association of Icelandic Angling Clubs	(based in Iceland)
Association Internationale de Défense du Saumon Atlantique	(based in France)
Association of Salmon Fishery Boards	(based in the UK)
Atlantic Salmon Conservation Foundation	(based in Canada)
Atlantic Salmon Federation	(based in Canada)
Atlantic Salmon Federation	(based in USA)
Atlantic Salmon Trust	(based in the UK)
Coalition Clean Baltic	(based in Sweden)
College of the Atlantic	(based in USA)
Connecticut River Salmon Association	(based in USA)
Conservatoire National du Saumon Sauvage	(based in France)
Coomhola Salmon Trust Limited	(based in Ireland)
European Anglers Alliance	(based in the Netherlands)
Faroes Sportsfishing Association	(based in the Faroe Islands)
Federation of Icelandic River Owners	(based in Iceland)
Federation of Irish Salmon and Sea-Trout Anglers	(based in Ireland)
Fédération Québécoise pour le Saumon Atlantique	(based in Canada)
Greenpeace International	(based in the Netherlands) *
Institute of Fisheries Management	(based in the UK)
Marine and Environmental Law Institute	(based in Canada)
National Anglers Representative Association	(based in Ireland)
Norges Bondelag (Norwegian Farmers Union)	(based in Norway)
Norges Jeger og Fiskerforbund (Norwegian Association of Hunters and Anglers)	(based in Norway)
Norske Lakseelver (Norwegian Salmon Rivers)	(based in Norway)
Salmon Net Fishing Association of Scotland	(based in the UK)
Salmon and Trout Association	(based in the UK)
Salmon Watch Ireland	(based in Ireland)
Sami Parlamenta	(based in Finland)
Scottish Anglers National Association	(based in the UK)
Ulster Angling Federation Limited	(based in the UK)
World Wide Fund for Nature (Norway)	(based in Norway)
WWF (France)	(based in France)
World Wildlife Fund (US)	(based in USA)

Note: The NGO accreditation of Greenpeace International has been suspended by the Council.