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NASCO's role with respect to aquaculture (Tabled By Norway)

1 Introduction

The purpose of this document is to stimulate a discussion on NASCO's role with respect to aquaculture.

In the meeting of the ISFA-NASCO Liaison Group 18-19 March 2011 one conclusion was as follows:

Going forward NASCO's Parties should carefully consider the following in its next steps process:

- *NASCO's role with respect to aquaculture, introductions and transfers and genetics*
- *The roles and responsibilities of Parties, industry and NGOs with respect to that role*
- *Activities and structures that would best serve NASCO's mandate*

This document deals only with aquaculture and no other activities relevant to the Williamsburg Resolution.

2 The Williamsburg Resolution

It is an objective of NASCO to contribute to the conservation of salmon stocks through consultation and co-operation. According to the Williamsburg Resolution (WBR) the Parties shall cooperate in order to minimise adverse effects to the wild salmon stocks from aquaculture. According to the resolution, each party shall take measures to minimise escapes of farmed salmon to a level that is as close as practicable to zero, and minimise the risk of disease and parasite transmission between all aquaculture activities and wild salmon.

The responsibility to follow up agreements in NASCO lies with the Governments (and not industries). It is the responsibility of each jurisdiction to regulate its aquaculture industry in a way that minimises adverse effects on the wild salmon stocks. NASCO has no such instruments, and should therefore not take or direct actions related to aquaculture. NASCO's primary concern is the wellbeing of wild salmon stocks.

3 Implementation plans

The implementation plans are the key documents in the next reporting cycle in which each jurisdiction should describe the activities and actions it intends to undertake over a five year period (Meeting of the Next Steps Review Group).

A country's policy, management goals, challenges, measures and identifiable planned outcomes should be described clearly in its implementation plan. The planned measures should be adequate in relation to the status assessed, challenges identified, and goals for improvement stated in each parties/jurisdictions implementation plan. This implies that the

measures do not necessarily have to be in accordance with the annexes to the WBR, which means that a minor change in the resolution would be needed. The annexes related to aquaculture together with the Best Practice Guidance should be seen as guidance for which measures might be appropriate.

It lies within the remit of NASCO to ensure the conservation of wild stocks of Atlantic salmon through information exchange, consultation and cooperation. Hence, the parties should report to NASCO annually on the status of wild salmon in their jurisdiction and their relevant actions taken to reach the goals of the WBR. The reports should be made by replying to a questionnaire sent out by the secretariat in accordance with the implementation plan. Consequently NASCO's secretariat should present the annual reports from parties to the Council for information and consideration

The annual reports should cover all areas which have been focused on in the next steps process.

4 Focus Area Reports

In addition to the annual reports, in-depth FARs should be produced every five years with the main purpose to facilitate a learning process between the jurisdictions, and be presented in a special session. The FAR should describe in detail:

- the situation for the stocks related to the impact from aquaculture,
- the parties'/jurisdictions' goals
- the implementation of planned measures
- an assessment of the effectiveness of the actions implemented which measurements were effective or not effective

5 Review processes

The council should consider on the future review on the implementation plans. The annual reports should be considered by the Council and the NGOs. There should not be an evaluation process on the FARs.

6 Liaison with the aquaculture industry

As an alternative to the liaison group ISFA could be invited to participate as observer in council meetings. ISFA should in that case be invited to present their views when aquaculture is on the agenda (and only then) before and after the discussions between the parties.