



CNL(19)47

Press Release

North Atlantic Salmon Conservation
Organization (NASCO) Thirty-Sixth
Annual Meeting, Tromsø, Norway
5 – 7 June 2019

**Value of Wild Atlantic Salmon Celebrated while Recognizing
Challenges to Survival Throughout their Range**

At the Thirty-Sixth Annual Meeting of the North Atlantic Salmon Conservation Organization (NASCO), Parties highlighted ongoing work to assess the health of wild Atlantic salmon stocks and better understand the threats and pressures they face. A number of Parties have implemented further reductions in home water fisheries while also implementing projects to address key threats such as water quality, barriers to migration, and degraded habitat. These domestic efforts are critical to ensuring the continued survival of the species across its range.

These discussions took place north of the Arctic Circle in the beautiful sea-side city of Tromsø, Norway. Representatives from six Parties and a number of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and observers came together to discuss the many environmental and human-caused factors influencing the health and abundance of wild Atlantic salmon. Parties to NASCO gather each year to review the newest scientific information and consider actions being taken and those still needed to ensure the conservation of this iconic species.

This year's meeting of NASCO was particularly significant given that 2019 is the focal year of the [International Year of the Salmon](#) (IYS) initiative. IYS aims to bring people together to share and develop knowledge more effectively, raise awareness and take action to establish the conditions necessary to ensure the resilience of salmon and people throughout the Northern Hemisphere. Highlights from the soon to be released State of Salmon report were presented; this signature outcome of the IYS initiative will be a key outreach and education tool for a number of key audiences.

In a NASCO first, the Organization's annual meeting was preceded by a two-day multi-disciplinary Symposium featuring a series of talks and discussions related to 'Managing the Atlantic salmon in a Rapidly Changing Environment – Management Challenges and Possible Responses'. This symposium went beyond a typical series of scientific presentations by successfully incorporating various perspectives on the value of Atlantic salmon and opportunities to raise awareness and increase the resiliency of populations throughout their range. Presenters challenged participants to incorporate new approaches and ideas as they moved forward with conservation, management and science initiatives. The Symposium Steering Committee presented a set of recommendations to NASCO related to how the

organization and its members can work to ensure salmon and their habitats are conserved and restored in the face of changing conditions.

NASCO President Jóannes V. Hansen of Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland) stated, ‘I could not be prouder of what NASCO is achieving for salmon through IYS. The first ever NASCO IYS Symposium was a tremendous success and several of the important recommendations stemming from it have already been incorporated into NASCO’s work’.

At the 2018 NASCO Annual Meeting, a new regulatory measure for the West Greenland mixed stock fishery was agreed to by the Parties. During review of the measure by NASCO in 2019, improvements were evident in monitoring and control activities in the 2018 fishery and Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland) reiterated its commitment to fully implement the 2018 measure, including reducing their 2019 quota to account for the 2018 quota overharvest. In addition to receiving updates on mixed stock fisheries occurring in West Greenland and in Labrador, Canada, harvests of at risk populations of North American origin salmon in the St. Pierre and Miquelon mixed stock fishery were also discussed. NASCO continues to urge France (in respect of St. Pierre and Miquelon) to cooperate in the management of, and research on, its fishery and appreciates the efforts made to provide more information about the impact of this fishery on Atlantic salmon stocks. In the same vein, NASCO is seeking to re-engage former member Iceland in its work.

Parties to NASCO and NGOs continue to invest important resources in research to better understand the complex ecology of salmon at sea; highlighted projects including the continuation of a 17-year time series tracking smolt and post-smolt migration and survival at sea from four index rivers in the northwest Atlantic and new multi-year, multi-faceted studies including telemetry and pelagic ecosystem studies in the northeast Atlantic. More information on these critical scientific efforts can be found at: <http://www.nasco.int/sas/research.htm>.

NASCO continues to look for ways to improve implementation of its agreements on fisheries management, habitat protection, and the impacts of aquaculture on wild Atlantic salmon. A workshop was held again this year to critically and publicly review how well NASCO members are meeting their commitments. Holding members accountable in this way is essential to the effectiveness and credibility of the organization. A new reporting cycle began in 2019 that strives to increase transparency, clarity, and thoroughness of information shared by the Parties. Efforts to improve this process are ongoing. NASCO is also considering the process for undertaking a third performance review which will aim to ensure that the organization is well poised to address the future challenges facing this vitally important species.

The Thirty-Sixth Annual Meeting of NASCO was held during 5 – 7 June 2019 in Tromsø, Norway.

Notes for Editors:

NASCO is an intergovernmental organization formed by a treaty in 1984 and is based in Edinburgh, Scotland. Its objectives are the conservation, restoration and rational management of wild Atlantic salmon stocks, which do not recognise national boundaries. It is the only inter-governmental organisation with this mandate which it implements through international consultation, negotiation, and co-operation.

The Parties to the Convention are: Canada, Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland), the European Union, Norway, the Russian Federation, and the USA. There are 44 non-governmental

observers accredited to the Organization.

The 2019 Annual Meeting included 114 participants, including scientists, policy makers and representatives of inter-governmental organisations and non-governmental organisations who met to discuss the status of wild Atlantic salmon and to consider management issues. The Thirty-Seventh Annual Meeting will be held in Tórshavn, Faroe Islands in June 2020.

For further
information contact:

Dr Emma Hatfield,
Secretary NASCO

Tel: +44 (0)131 228 2551

Email: hq@nasco.int Website: www.nasco.int