

CNL(14)61

Terms of Reference for Working Group on Stock Classification

Under the Action Plan for Taking Forward the Recommendations of the External Performance Review and the Review of the 'Next Steps' for NASCO, CNL(13)38, it is stated that the Council will convene a Working Group, to work by correspondence or at the Annual Meeting, to develop recommendations for revisions to the stock categories that are used in the rivers database that better reflect status of stocks relative to attainment of conservation limits. Consistent and updated stock status categories would facilitate the implementation of a State of the Salmon Report and would increase transparency. At its 2013 Annual Meeting, the Council agreed to ask ICES to review stock status categories currently used by the jurisdictions of NASCO, including within their Implementation Plans, and advise on common approaches that may be applicable throughout the NASCO area.

The Report of the ICES Advisory Committee, CNL(14)8, contains such a review. ICES considered that it may be possible to develop a classification system more closely reflecting the generally applied categories used for describing stock status and providing management advice (i.e. CLs).

The Council sees value in a consistent and uniform approach to presenting information on stock status. A Working Group, which is composed of experts in science and management, is charged with the following Terms of Reference:

1. Recommend a classification system to be used by jurisdictions to indicate stock status relative to conservation limits, or where these have not been established other reference points or indicators of abundance;
2. Develop recommendations to address the following:
 - a. What time period the stock indicators cover (e.g. annual, averaged over five years);
 - b. Frequency of updates;
 - c. How the absence of any data will be reported; and
 - d. How other relevant information to describe stock status can be taken into account in relation to NASCO's goals for salmon management, e.g. biodiversity and harvestable surplus.
3. Recommend changes to the NASCO Rivers database to implement the recommended classification system.

The Working Group is charged with working by correspondence over the next year and intended to meet during the 2015 Annual Meeting of NASCO.