



Agenda Item 5.1
For Information

Council

CNL(15)13

*Summary of Annual Progress Reports
under the 2013 - 2018 Implementation Plans*

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Summary of Annual Progress Reports under the 2013 - 2018 Implementation Plans

The Annual Progress Reports (APRs) summarised here are the second to be made under the 2013 – 2018 Implementation Plans (IPs) using the agreed template (as revised in 2014). The following information is requested:

- any proposed revisions to the Implementation Plan;
- any major new initiatives or achievements for salmon conservation and management;
- any significant changes in the status of stocks relative to the reference points described in the Implementation Plan and any new factors which may significantly affect the abundance of salmon stocks;
- an update on progress against all actions included in the Implementation Plan;
- any actions taken in accordance with the provisions of the Convention.

The APRs for 2015 have been evaluated by a Review Group whose findings are presented in document CNL(15)12. In this paper the Secretariat has summarised the information provided in section 1 (changes to Implementation Plans), section 2 (stock status and catches) and section 4 (additional information required under the Convention) of the APRs. Section 3 of the APRs covers the progress made over the last year on each of the actions detailed in the IPs and these have been evaluated in the Review Group's report. At the time of preparation of this report, no APRs have been received for EU - France or EU - Portugal.

1. Changes to Implementation Plans

1.1 Describe any proposed revisions to the Implementation Plan and, where appropriate, provide a revised plan

None reported; several Parties/jurisdictions updates their Implementation Plans in 2014 (see CNL(15)12).

1.2 Describe any major new initiatives or achievements for salmon conservation and management that you wish to highlight

Canada: A Ministerial Advisory Committee on Atlantic Salmon was established to make recommendations on addressing low returns. The Committee will focus on conservation and enforcement measures, predation and strategies to address international, unsustainable fishing and areas for advancing science. The Committee includes key stakeholders and there will be opportunities for submissions from organizations/individuals.

Through the Recreational Fisheries Conservation Partnerships Program, \$2.1 million was contributed to 68 projects in Atlantic Canada in 2014 that identified Atlantic salmon as a target species. Projects focused on restoring, rebuilding and rehabilitating habitat.

New Aquatic Invasive Species Regulations, which aim to manage the threat of aquatic invasive species to Canada's freshwater and marine ecosystems, have been through a consultation process and are expected to be finalised in 2015. Regulations to clarify conditions under which aquaculture operators may operate are under development.

A number of new management measures were implemented in 2014, primarily in the recreational fishery, to address continuing declines in Atlantic salmon returns in southern Canada.

Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands & Greenland):

Faroe Islands - Consistent with the scientific advice no salmon fishery was conducted in the waters around the Faroe Islands in 2014. There is interest in conducting a research fishery for salmon in the Faroes. Any proposal for research fishing will be discussed with NASCO Parties.

Greenland - Greenland Fisheries License Control Authority (GFLK) conducted a phone survey after the 2014 fishing season in order to assess reporting and assist licensed fishermen to conform the new reporting requirements.

EU - Finland: Conservation limits (spawning targets) have now been established for practically all populations of the tributaries and the main stem of the River Tenö. Target attainment evaluations are now available for nine tributaries (partly including and combining lower order tributaries) and the main stem of the river.

EU - Germany: In the Rhine, fish protection devices (for salmon smolts and eels) were installed at two hydropower plants on the Sieg and Wupper rivers. A genetic analysis of a hatchery stock has been carried to determine how it compares with the donor stock from the River Ätran in Sweden. Research by the Swiss Federal Office for the Environment, with support from Baden-Württemberg, is continuing into the origin of returning salmon. In the Elbe, tests of a video counting system for adult salmon and sea trout are ongoing. A calcein-marking programme of salmon fry is also planned.

EU - Spain (Galicia): The re-organisation of sport-fisheries on the river Ulla was completed and stocking of the rivers Sor and Anllóns (A Coruña province) continued with the first returning fish expected in 2015.

EU - Sweden: A national plan for both Baltic and Atlantic salmon and sea trout is under development and should be presented in late 2015. The focus of the plan is international and national management, harmonisation between species and stakeholder involvement. New legislation was implemented setting a bag-limit of two salmon per fisherman per day for angling in the sea and banning the use of gill nets for salmon fishing in coastal waters (depth >3 m).

EU - UK (England & Wales): Following public consultation, Natural Resources Wales has decided to end the stocking of salmon (and sea trout) into Welsh rivers. Most stocking was carried out to mitigate for upland impounding reservoirs, and this will now be replaced (from 2015) by alternative means of delivering benefit for fish and fisheries, including work to resolve barriers to migration and sub-optimum habitats.

EU - UK (Northern Ireland): Legislation has been introduced in the DCAL area to manage salmon exploitation and prevent the taking of salmon from rivers not meeting their Management Targets.

EU - UK (Scotland): New secondary legislation came into force before the start of the 2015 season aimed at protecting spring salmon. The Scottish Government has also launched a public consultation on statutory measures to introduce a licensing system for killing wild salmon with associated carcass tagging regulations, baits and lures regulations and charging provision.

Norway: Following the development of a new monitoring program for escaped salmon, a new regulation entered into force in February 2015 regarding the aquaculture industry's responsibility for funding and organizing recapture of escaped salmon. This program will be funded by the salmon-farming industry by a mandatory fee per licence. The fund will be managed by a board consisting of members appointed from management authorities as well as the industry.

United States of America: In 2014, Maine's Penobscot River watershed was selected as a habitat focus area under NOAA's Habitat Blueprint. This designation does not grant the fish or the habitat in the river greater regulatory protection than already exists; it elevates the profile of ongoing restoration efforts through fiscal investments as well as improved outreach and education on what is occurring in the watershed.

The transition to measurable survival standards at hydro-electric dams within the freshwater range of endangered salmon in Maine began in earnest in 2014. Each dam in the mainstem of the Penobscot River (with the exception of Weldon Dam) must now pass 96% of all smolts passing downstream (within 24 hours) and 95% of all adults passing upstream (within 48 hours). The dam owners must also be able to demonstrate that these performance standards are being achieved through quantitative studies. Studies to develop baseline survival levels also began in the Kennebec and Androscoggin Rivers. In the coming years, quantitative performance standards will be applied to these rivers as well.

2. Changes in Stock Status and Catch Statistics

The catch statistics and information on unreported catches and on catch and release are presented in Annex 1 using the format in the APR template. As reported by ICES, the provisional nominal catches in 2014 were the lowest in the time-series. Incomplete information is available on the extent of catch and release fishing and unreported catches.

2.1 *Provide a description of any significant changes in the status of stocks relative to the reference points described in the Implementation Plan and of any new factors which may significantly affect the abundance of salmon stocks*

Most Parties/jurisdictions did not report any significant changes to stock status relative to reference points, although some provided information on returns. The following information was provided:

Canada: Returns of small salmon and large salmon to eastern Canada in 2014 were near record (since 1971) low levels in the Maritime provinces (New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island and among the lowest on record for small salmon and near record low for large salmon for the Province of Quebec. Near record high values for large salmon were estimated for Labrador and returns to Newfoundland were among the highest values on record. Only 30% of assessed rivers met or exceeded their Conservation Limits (CL) in 2014. Many rivers in the southern portion of Canada that were closed to all salmon fisheries met less than 50% of their CLs. The continued low abundance of salmon stocks in eastern Canada, despite significant fishery reductions and generally sustained freshwater production, strengthens the conclusions that factors acting on survival in the first and second years at sea are constraining abundance of Atlantic salmon.

EU - Germany:

Rhine

ICPR: The downward trend observed in recent years did not continue. For the first time within the last four years a significant rise of registered numbers of returning adult salmon was noted in 2014. The number of registered adult salmon returning from the sea and observations of natural reproduction of salmon in the Rhine tributaries are documented (see graph and statistics attached to the German APR).

North Rhine-Westphalia: The number of registered adult salmon increased in the North Rhine-Westphalian salmon project rivers compared with previous years. The cormorant predation on downstream migrating smolts is increasing.

Baden-Wuerttemberg: The number of recorded salmon in the upstream counting stations of the fish pass at the Iffezheim and Gamsheim barrages increased significantly in 2014. Whether this represents a turnaround due to the extensive conservation efforts is not known yet. Unfortunately the high predation pressure by cormorants on downstream migrating smolts is increasing due to growing cormorant breeding grounds.

Elbe

Lower Saxony: Natural reproduction of salmon could not be recorded for Lower Saxony in 2014. Salmon catches in recreational fisheries were carried out in few tributaries of the tidal Elbe exclusively.

Brandenburg / Saxony-Anhalt / Saxony: Salmon run and reproduction was negatively impacted by unusual high temperatures and low water levels in the tributaries of the middle and upper Elbe River. Therefore 2014 was a poor salmon season measured by the registered adult salmon and natural reproduction in the Elbe river catchment.

EU - Ireland: The stock status and catch advice for the 2015 fishery is that 55 rivers have an advised harvestable surplus as they are exceeding their Conservation Limits. A further 27 rivers could open for catch and release only based on exceeding a minimum fry threshold (>17 salmon fry/5 min electro-fishing average) in catchment wide electrofishing surveys or based on IFI management criteria that they meet over 65% of their Conservation Limits. 61 rivers should be closed for fishing as they do not exceed the management target of meeting 65% of Conservation Limits, electrofishing thresholds have not been met or there is insufficient information for full stock assessment. There are 16 rivers for which a separate assessment is made for MSW (Spring) salmon where there are significant fisheries. Of these, 12 have an advised harvestable surplus as they are exceeding their Conservation Limits. The remaining 4 rivers could open for catch and release only based on exceeding a minimum fry threshold in catchment-wide electrofishing surveys or based on IFI management criteria that they meet over 65% of their Conservation Limits. In addition, there are four assessments on rivers used for hydro power which have been assessed as being below their Conservation Limits i.e. Upper Liffey (Dublin), Upper Lee (Cork), Upper Shannon (Limerick) and the River Erne. In applying the scientific advice to management it should be noted that where rivers are only marginally above their CL they may be restricted to C&R so that the actual number of rivers open under regulation will be less than the number of rivers actually achieving CL.

EU - Sweden: As river specific Conservation Limits are lacking for Swedish rivers, the stock status for each river is assessed using recruitment data (abundance of parr). Salmon habitat quality is classed in nine categories (habitat index values 0 to 8) from depth, water velocity, dominating substrate and wetted width. For each category an expected abundance was calculated from electrofishing data from the 1980s when the number of returning spawners was high. Data from each site each year is then compared to the expected value and expressed in per cent. All sites in a river are pooled and an average (and 95% c. i.) is calculated. Rivers with averages of 75% or more are considered to be of good status. Rivers with an average of 50-74% are labeled intermediate status, and rivers below 50% are labeled poor status.

Using the period 2000-2014 data is available from 22 rivers. Three rivers (14%) have poor status; R. Vegeå and R. Törlan are both affected by organic pollution. In River Enningdalsälven, the border river between Norway and Sweden, there is too few spawners reaching the upper reaches of the river, i.e. the Swedish part of the river. Eight rivers (36%) have good status, among these the largest wild salmon rivers; R. Ätran and River Örekilsälven. Finally, eleven rivers (50%) have intermediate status.

EU - UK (England & Wales): The provisional annual review of stock status for 2014 showed the following river classifications:

- 0 rivers (0 %) ‘not at risk’ – i.e. p>95 % of meeting the management objective (MO);
- 4 rivers (6 %) ‘probably not at risk’ – i.e. p>50% but <95% of meeting MO;
- 39 rivers (61 %) ‘probably at risk’ – i.e. p>5% but <50% of meeting MO;
- 21 rivers (33 %) ‘at risk’ – i.e. p<5% of meeting MO.

[NB: *The ‘at risk’ category does not mean that stocks are in danger of becoming extinct, but rather that they are falling well short of the management objective – i.e. of meeting or exceeding the conservation limit in four years out of five, on average.*]

Factors affecting stock abundance:

River flow is a key factor affecting angler effort. In 2014, flows were generally below the long-term average in March and April as well as for much of the summer and early autumn (July to October inclusive) and were particularly low in July and September. The summer and early autumn represents an important period for most rod fisheries, and relatively low flows at this time are likely to have affected runs of fish and provided conditions that were unfavourable for angling, particularly for 1SW salmon since these only start to return to rivers in the summer months. The number of days fished by anglers in 2014 was 33% below the average of the previous five years. This is likely to have contributed to the low in-river catch in 2014.

US: The status of stocks in the United States remains dire. Returns to U.S. waters in 2014 were only 450 fish, which ranks lowest in the 48 year time-series. This is in stark contrast to 2011 returns that were among the highest in the modern period. Returns the last five years suggest high interannual variability in marine survival with some of the widest differences in interannual returns in the time-series despite relatively consistent smolt production.

3. Implementation Plan Actions

Details of progress against the actions included in individual Implementation Plans is reported in the Annual Progress Reports for each jurisdiction and have been evaluated by the Review Group (see CNL(15)XX).

4. Additional information required under the Convention

4.1 Details of any laws, regulations and programmes that have been adopted or repealed since the last notification

EU - Denmark: A Danish Multi-annual Strategy for Aquaculture (2014-2020) according to the EU Common Fisheries Policy was adopted in January 2015.

EU - Ireland: Fisheries by-laws have been updated for the 2014 and 2015 seasons.

EU - Sweden: From 2013 commercial or non-commercial fishermen may only use a maximum of six gill nets (maximum length 180 m, max. height 3 m) in shallow (<3 m) coastal waters. The allowed mesh size is 120 mm. From 2014 there is a ban on gill net fishing aimed at salmon in deeper (>3 m) coastal waters to avoid mixed-stock fishing. New legislation was implemented in 2014 with a bag-limit of only two salmon allowed per angler and day. Trap nets are allowed but operating under a license system, where permits normally are not renewed. Today only 2 licenses exist.

EU - UK (England & Wales): New Net Limitation Orders approved for rivers Tamar, Tavy and Lynher. Catch limit of 10 salmon per licence was introduced for the Solway haaf nets.

EU - UK (Northern Ireland): New Salmon Conservation legislation supports the precautionary management of salmon stocks in the DCAL area. The legislation prohibits the harvest of salmon by commercial fishing unless all rivers affected consistently attain their Management Targets and ensures default catch and release for recreational fishing except where a river consistently attains its Management Target.

EU – UK (Scotland): New statutory conservation measures have been introduced in 2015 to ensure no salmon can be taken prior to 1 April each year. Key aspects are:

- The annual close time has been extended until 31 March with fishing by rod and line permitted from the start of the season until 31 March on a catch and release basis.
- The start of the net fishing season is delayed until 1 April.
- These measures seek to unpin existing voluntary/statutory measures which restrict fishing further
- The measures will be reviewed on an annual basis

Norway: Extraordinary regulations were implemented in some regions during the fishing season, in response to lower salmon runs than expected.

Russian Federation: New Fishing Regulations for the Northern Fisheries basin came into force in 2014 by the order of the Ministry of Agriculture No. 414, 30.10.2014. New Regulations set new restrictive rules for Atlantic salmon fisheries for both commercial and recreational.

A number of by-laws to the Federal Law “On aquaculture” came into force in 2014. The order of the Government of the Russian Federation No. 1183, 11.11.2014 established rules for designation of aquaculture areas. The order of the Ministry of Agriculture No. 305, 07.08.2014 established rules for contract procedures for aquaculture areas.

US: Over the last several years, stocking associated with restoration and recovery programs has been scaled back particularly in Southern New England. The implementation plan was recently revised to reflect these changes.

4.2 *Details of any new commitments concerning the adoption or maintenance in force for specified periods of time of conservation, restoration and other management measures*

EU - Denmark: An expected increase in the production volume of 25 % in 2020. [Note: It has subsequently been clarified that this relates to aquaculture (rainbow trout) not wild salmon.]

4.3 *Details of any new actions to prohibit fishing for salmon beyond 12 nautical miles*

Russian Federation: New Fishing Regulations for the Northern Fisheries basin came into force in 2014 by the order of the Ministry of Agriculture No. 414, 30.10.2014. New Fishing Regulations among other new restrictive rules for Atlantic salmon coastal fisheries explicitly prohibits salmon fisheries in the Barents Sea.

- 4.4 *Details of any new actions to invite the attention of States not Party to the Convention to matters relating to the activities of its vessels which could adversely affect salmon stocks subject to the Convention*

Canada: Canada met with France (in respect of Saint Pierre and Miquelon) in 2014 and discussed potential membership in NASCO. France is content to be an observer and participate at NASCO annual meetings as it has in the past.

- 4.5 *Details of any actions taken to implement regulatory measures under Article 13 of the Convention including imposition of adequate penalties for violations*

Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands & Greenland:

Faroe Islands - In accordance with the NASCO multi-annual decision, NEA(12)7, no salmon fishery was conducted by the Faroe Islands in 2014.

North American Commission Members only

- 4.6 *Details of any new measures to minimise by-catches of salmon originating in the rivers of the other member*

No new measures reported

- 4.7 *Details of any alteration to fishing patterns that result in the initiation of fishing or increase in catches of salmon originating in the rivers of another Party except with the consent of the latter*

No details reported

Secretary
Edinburgh
8 May 2015

Table 1: Official Catch Statistics

	Provisional 2014 Catch					Confirmed 2013 Catch				
	In-River	Estuarine	Coastal	Unspecified	Total	In-River	Estuarine	Coastal	Unspecified	Total
Canada	59	40	7	-	106	80	47	10	-	137
Denmark (in respect of Faroe Islands and Greenland)										
Faroe Islands	0	0	0	-	0	0	0	0	-	0
Greenland	-	-	-	58	58	-	-	-	47	47
European Union	161	52	96	-	309	191	74	117	-	382
Norway	277	0	213	-	490	284	0	192	-	476
Russian Federation	48	0	33	-	81	42	0	36	-	78
USA	0	0	0	-	0	0	0	0	-	0
TOTAL	545	92	349	58	1,044	597	121	355	47	1,120

1. Where no return to NASCO has been made ICES data have been used.

Table 2: Catches of Atlantic Salmon by the Parties to the NASCO Convention

	Canada	Denmark (Faroe Islands and Greenland)	European Union	Finland	Norway	Russian Federation	Sweden	USA
1960	1636	60	2641		1576	1100	40	1
1961	1583	127	2276		1456	790	27	1
1962	1719	244	3894		1838	710	45	1
1963	1861	466	3842		1697	480	23	1
1964	2069	1539	4242		2040	590	36	1
1965	2116	861	3693		1900	590	40	1
1966	2369	1338	3549		1823	570	36	1
1967	2863	1600	4492		2058	883	25	1
1968	2111	1167	3623		1752	827	150	1
1969	2202	2350	4407		2083	360	76	1
1970	2323	2354	4069		1861	448	52	1
1971	1992	2511	3745		1847	417	35	1
1972	1759	2146	4261	32	1986	462	38	1
1973	2434	2402	4604	50	2126	772	73	3
1974	2539	1945	4432	76	1973	709	57	1
1975	2485	2086	4500	76	1754	811	56	2
1976	2506	1479	2931	66	1530	542	45	1
1977	2545	1652	3025	59	1488	497	10	2
1978	1545	1159	3102	37	1050	476	10	4
1979	1287	1694	2572	26	1831	455	12	3
1980	2680	2052	2640	34	1830	664	17	6
1981	2437	2602	2557	44	1656	463	26	6
1982	1798	2350	2533	83	1348	364	25	6
1983	1424	1433	3532	79	1550	507	28	1
1984	1112	997	2308	75	1623	593	40	2
1985	1133	1430	3002	49	1561	659	45	2
1986	1559	1490	3524	38	1597	608	53	2
1987	1784	1539	2593	49	1385	559	47	1

	Canada	Denmark (Faroe Islands and Greenland)	European Union	Finland	Norway	Russian Federation	Sweden	USA
1988	1311	1136	2833	34	1076	419	40	1
1989	1139	701	2450	52	905	359	29	2
1990	912	542	1645	59	930	316	33	2
1991	711	533	1139	69	877	215	38	1
1992	520	260	1506	77	867	166	49	1
1993	373	35	1483	70	923	140	56	1
1994	355	18	1919	48	996	141	44	0
1995	259	86	1852	-	839	130	-	0
1996	290	92	1474	-	787	131	-	0
1997	229	59	1179	-	630	111	-	0
1998	157	17	1183	-	740	130	-	0
1999	152	19	1016	-	811	102	-	0
2000	153	29	1336	-	1176	124	-	0
2001	148	42	1407	-	1267	114	-	0
2002	148	9	1245	-	1019	118	-	0
2003	141	9	1012	-	1071	107	-	0
2004	161	15	978	-	784	82	-	0
2005	139	14	884	-	888	82	-	0
2006	132	23	703	-	931	91	-	0
2007	112	25	453	-	767	63	-	0
2008	158	26	444	-	807	73	-	0
2009	126	26	327	-	595	71	-	0
2010	146	38	496	-	642	88	-	0
2011	179	28	510	-	696	89	-	0
2012	126	33	403	-	695	82	-	0
2013	137	47	382	-	476	78	-	0
2014	106	58	309	-	490	81	-	0

1. The European Union catch from 1995 includes the catches by Finland and Sweden; 2. The catch for Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland) includes the catch for Greenland when it was a member of the European Union and the catches up to 1983 by Denmark; 3. Figures since 1986 are the official catch returns to NASCO. Where no return to NASCO has been made ICES data have been used.

Table 3: Catch and release

Year	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Canada	62,106	58,961	54,425	51,442	57,005	45,886	49,279	42,820	58,000	47,892	58,300	77,641	50,811	59,207	39,534
Denmark (Faroe Islands and Greenland)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
European Union	27,346	33,504	32,984	34,968	55,064	60,145	62,812	82,977	81,301	71,133	115,065	99,086	97,499	74,445	53,985
Norway	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5,512	6,696	15,041	14,303	18,611	15,912	20,229
Russian Federation	12,624	16,410	25,248	33,862	24,679	23,592	33,380	44,341	41,881	-	14,585	-	4,743	3,732	8,479
USA	0	0	0	0	0	0	424	-	61	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total	104,994	112,482	118,233	125,629	144,042	138,773	154,156	176,313	202,155	125,721	202,991	191,030	171,664	153,296	122,227

Notes: Not all EU Member States provide complete information on catch and release. Since 2009, there has been no obligation to report fish caught and released in the Russian Federation but it is believed to have remained at similar high levels (average 33,575 salmon or 84% of total rod catch) as in the 5 years from 2004 to 2008. In the US, no sea-run salmon are subject to recreational fishing but small recreational fisheries occur on domestic broodstock in the Merrimack River in New Hampshire and the Naugatuck and Shetucket Rivers in Connecticut.

Table 4: Unreported catches

Year	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Canada	133	124	81	84	118	101	101	56	-	21	-	18	29	31	24	21
Denmark (Faroe Islands and Greenland)	10-15	10	10	11	10	11	11	11	12	10	5	12.3	10	10	10	10
European Union	215	240	169	165	125	116	114	95	72	54	47	70	71	59	57	38
Norway	320- 540	440-760	500- 860	410- 690	320- 600	252- 420	285- 475	299- 499	247 - 411	260 - 432	166 - 338	206 - 344	298	298	204	210
Russian Federation	237- 255	249-309	200- 252	166- 206	99-152	110	70- 103	70- 103	25 - 77	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
USA	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	917- 1,160	1,065- 1,445	962- 1,374	838- 1,158	674- 1,007	593- 761	584- 807	534- 767	360 - 576	362 - 534	218 - 390	306 - 444	408	398	295	279

Note: The information for Canada in 2010 is incomplete, as only 3 of 4 administrative regions reported. Not all EU Member States provide an estimate of unreported catch. No estimate has been provided by the Russian Federation since 2008.