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Press Release

North Atlantic Salmon Conservation Organization (NASCO)
Thirty-Second Annual Meeting, Happy Valley – Goose Bay, Canada
2 - 5 June 2015

**New rules adopted for Atlantic salmon fisheries and
major research initiative for the species to be pursued**

Scientific information presented at the Annual Meeting of the North Atlantic Salmon Conservation Organization highlighted the continuing low, and in some areas, critically low abundance of salmon throughout the North Atlantic and the need for urgent action to improve understanding of these declines in abundance and to control threats.

New measures were agreed for the salmon fisheries around the Faroe Islands and at West Greenland. For the salmon fishery at the Faroe Islands, a new multi-annual measure was agreed such that management decisions will be made with due consideration to the scientific advice, which indicates that there should be no fishery in 2016, 2017 and 2018. Under similar measures adopted previously, there has been no commercial fishery at the Faroe Islands for nearly 20 years. Regarding the West Greenland salmon fishery, a new plan was agreed as part of a new regulatory measure that, when implemented, will further improve monitoring and control of that fishery. Unfortunately, however, consensus could not be reached on the level of a catch limit for the fishery. Nevertheless, Greenland committed to limit its total annual catch to 45t in 2015, 2016 and 2017.

Building on the recent marine surveys under the Salmon at Sea (SALSEA) Programme, NASCO's International Atlantic Salmon Research Board has developed plans for an ambitious and innovative programme of research to track salmon from their rivers of birth out into the ocean. This important initiative will improve knowledge of where mortality is occurring and what is causing it. This programme is called SALSEA – Track.

Ensuring accessible habitat is fundamental to the health of Atlantic salmon. A primary focus at the meeting this week concerned river connectivity with particular focus on the impacts of hydropower. A very successful themed session, organised with the accredited NGOs, was held to explore this topic and numerous presentations on actions being taken in rivers across the North Atlantic to enhance river connectivity were made. The resulting information sharing will help inform future management.

NASCO Vice President, Joannes Hansen, who was the acting President for the meeting, said '*habitat loss through destruction, degradation or fragmentation is a major threat to wildlife and Atlantic*

salmon is no exception. It is clear, however, that where habitat is improved, salmon can respond despite the current period of low marine survival.'

The meeting also provided an important opportunity for NASCO Parties to report on the progress made in implementing actions related to NASCO agreements on the management of fisheries, habitat protection and restoration, and aquaculture and related activities. These reports had been critically evaluated by a Review Group of the Parties and accredited NGOs. This process of reporting, review and public discussion of the progress Parties have made in meeting their responsibilities enhances accountability and improves implementation with NASCO agreements.

The Organization had received a warm welcome in The Thirty-Third Annual Meeting of NASCO will be held during June 7 - 10, 2016 in Germany.

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 intergovernmental 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, Russia and USA. There are 35 non-government observers accredited to the Organization.

The 2015 meeting included almost 100 delegates, including scientists, policy makers and representatives of Inter-Governmental Organisations and Non-Governmental Organisations who met to discuss the present status of wild Atlantic salmon and to consider management issues.

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