



Agenda item 4.1
For decision

Council

CNL(15)6

Secretary's Report

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Secretary's Report

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This report contains a number of procedural, administrative and financial matters and issues relating to public relations and relations with other international bodies.

2. Status of Ratifications of, and Accessions to, the Convention and Membership of the Regional Commissions

- 2.1 There have been no changes to the status of ratifications of, and accessions to, the Convention since the last notification. No new applications for membership of any of the Commissions have been received since the last notification.

3. Receipt of Contributions for 2015

- 3.1 In accordance with Financial Rule 5.5, the Secretary is required to report on the receipt of contributions and on any arrears. All contributions for 2015 have been received and there are no arrears.

4. Observers at NASCO's meetings

- 4.1 One organisation, the Federation of Foyle Salmon and Trout Anglers (FASTA), has applied for Observer Status to NASCO since last year. The objectives of FASTA are to:

- improve the quality of the environment of the Foyle River system and of angling on the entire Foyle system for the enjoyment of all;
- represent the views and concerns of anglers;
- liaise with statutory and voluntary bodies in relation to angling and water environmental interests;
- encourage and promote measures designed to improve fish stocks;
- encourage the establishment of an effective water quality programme.

- 4.2 Further information on FASTA is available at www.fasta.ie/. After consulting the President, it was decided that the objectives of FASTA are compatible with those of NASCO and, accordingly, FASTA has been granted observer status. FASTA has accepted the conditions governing observer status to NASCO.

- 4.3 The thirty-five organisations listed in Annex 1 have observer status to NASCO. The External Performance Review Panel had commended NASCO for its approach towards inclusive participation in meetings and for its transparency in proceedings.

5. Fishing for Salmon in International Waters

- 5.1 Under the 'Resolution on Fishing for Salmon on the High Seas', CNL(92)54, the Secretary is requested to obtain and compile information on sightings of fishing

activities on the high seas of the North Atlantic which may undermine the conservation measures adopted by NASCO. We have again contacted the Norwegian and Icelandic coastguards to obtain details of airborne surveillance flights over the area of international waters north of the Faroe Islands in the North-East Atlantic Commission in the period 1 April 2014 - 31 March 2015. No information has been provided to date. No new information has been obtained from ports or about landings and transshipments since last year's report to suggest that there has been any fishing for salmon by vessels from non-NASCO Parties.

- 5.2 The External Performance Review Panel concluded that NASCO has demonstrated that it can respond quickly to address IUU fishing in areas beyond fisheries jurisdiction by vessels registered to non-NASCO Parties. However, the Panel felt that NASCO should consider enhancing its current surveillance efforts by requesting the cooperation of NEAFC and NAFO in reporting on any suspected IUU fishing activities for salmon that may be detected in their MCS operations. We have done so and a report is made separately in paper CNL(15)15.

6. Scientific Research Fishing

- 6.1 In accordance with the Resolution on Scientific Research Fishing, CNL(96)60, the Secretary is requested to advise the Council of any requests to conduct scientific research fishing since the last Annual Meeting. There have been no such requests since the 2014 Annual Meeting.

7. Public Relations

Atlantic salmon - Lost at Sea

- 7.1 In 2012, the Council agreed to contribute £5,000 towards the cost of filming at West Greenland for the film 'Atlantic Salmon – Lost at Sea'. The film is being produced by Deirdre Brennan (Castletown Productions), an Emmy nominated director for film and television, and footage has been obtained from 7 countries and during the SALSEA-Merge research surveys. To date, funding of US\$427,000 has been raised for the film but due to a delay and uncertainty with one sponsor, a further sum of around US\$50,000 (£30,000) is now being sought to complete the post-production work. RTE, the Irish National Broadcaster, will broadcast the film which will also be entered in international film festivals. Castletown Productions are also in discussions with two distributors to place the film with other broadcasters and there will be a series of screenings for sponsors and targeted audiences. This film should raise awareness of the challenges facing the salmon, the wide range of conservation measures that have been taken to conserve and restore them, and the research being undertaken to improve understanding of the factors affecting them including at sea. The Council recognised this potential when it agreed to sponsor the film which hopefully will be completed and released shortly.

NASCO and IASRB websites

- 7.3 The work in enhancing both the NASCO (www.nasco.int) and the International Atlantic Salmon Research Board (www.salmonatsea.com) websites was largely completed in 2010 but improvements and updating are ongoing and we would welcome

feedback from the Parties on any changes that they would like to see made. The rivers database now contains information for all Parties/jurisdictions (except EU - Portugal) and a total of 2,553 rivers. For all rivers, details of river name, location and stock category have been provided. However, details of catchment area, river length, mean annual flow, main impact factors, special stock characteristics and conservation requirements have only been provided for between 13% and 34% of rivers. A Working Group has been established to advise on a new classification system for use with the rivers database. An update on the Group's work will be presented during the Annual Meeting (CNL(15)10).

- 7.3 In the period 1 April 2014 - 31 March 2015, there were approximately 15,000 visits to the NASCO website, an increase of ~7% on the same period in 2013/2014. The number of pages viewed averaged 3 per session; ~60% of the visitors to the site came from the UK, France, Canada and the US. For the IASRB's website the number of visits declined to ~2,000 with ~70% of the visitors coming from the UK, Ireland, Canada and the US.

EIFAAC Symposium

- 7.4 During 15 - 17 June 2015, the European Inland Fisheries and Aquaculture Advisory Commission (EIFAAC) will hold an international symposium in Lillehammer, Norway entitled 'Managing freshwater fisheries in an era of change'. Sub-themes will include: managing for diversity; restoration and protection of habitat; management and conservation of vulnerable diadromous species; methods for the management of recreational fisheries where insufficient data exist; and the value of protecting large fish from overharvest. NASCO is a supporter of the symposium.

8. The FAO FIRMS Partnership

- 8.1 NASCO became a partner in the Fishery Resources Monitoring System (FIRMS) on 16 December 2013. The primary aim of FIRMS is to provide access to a wide range of high-quality information on the global monitoring and management of fishery marine resources. It is part of FAO's Fisheries Global Information System (FIGIS). Information provided by the partners is organised in a database and published in the form of fact sheets and allows for the dissemination of high quality and updated information. The current partners include the FAO, ICES, DG MARE, ICCAT, NAFO and NEAFC. Since last year, the fact sheet on salmon, as agreed by the Council in 2014, has been included on the FIRMS website, <http://firms.fao.org/firms/about/en>. This information will be updated to reflect the latest scientific advice from ICES after the Annual Meeting.

9. International Year of the Salmon

- 9.1 The External Performance Review Panel had concluded that NASCO's cooperation with other international organisations was highly satisfactory and noted that the Council had agreed that this approach should continue, *inter alia* to share information on common problems and raise the profile of NASCO. Last year, the Council was advised that the North Pacific Anadromous Fish Commission (NPAFC) is considering organising an International Year of the Salmon (IYS). The Council had recognised that this may be a very good opportunity to raise awareness of the salmon globally, the issues facing them and

the considerable efforts being made to conserve and restore them and had asked that the Secretary continue to liaise with the NPAFC Secretariat and report back on any development. We have been advised that since last year, NPAFC has established an IYS Working Group and that this Group convened a workshop in February this year in order to examine major issues that will, or are likely to, affect salmon production in the foreseeable future and around which an IYS could be developed and funded. Following that workshop, the Working Group developed a draft proposal for the IYS that was considered by the NPAFC at its Twenty-Third Annual Meeting that was held during 11 – 15 May 2015. At that meeting NPAFC supported the concept of an IYS and asked the IYS Working Group to define a scope of activities that will be undertaken, to clarify the potential core partners, and to develop an agenda for the second Workshop that will be held in Vancouver in January-February of 2016. A representative of the NPAFC, Mr Mark Saunders, will attend the Thirty-Second Annual Meeting and will update the Council on this initiative. The Council will be asked to consider if it wishes to take any action in the light of the update from NPAFC.

10. Socio-economic studies

- 10.1 Last year, on the recommendation of the Socio-economics Sub-Group, the Council decided that the tables of socio-economic information relating to rod and line and net and trap fisheries, that had been developed based on information available in 2008 and which were incomplete, should not be made available on the NASCO website. Rather the Council had decided that the Parties/jurisdictions should provide to the Secretariat details of any new studies relating to the socio-economic values of the wild Atlantic salmon. No such studies have been made available to the Secretariat since the 2014 Annual Meeting. However, references to relevant studies are available on the NASCO website. Additionally, one of the objectives for the 2014 Theme-based Special Session was to allow for a detailed exchange of information on the management of salmon fisheries including how socio-economic considerations, are weighed against conservation needs and, where fishing is permitted on stocks below their conservation limits, the approaches being used to ensure that exploitation is limited to a level that permits stock rebuilding within a stated timeframe. One of the objectives of the 2015 Theme-based Special Session is to share best practice on the approaches taken by NASCO Parties and jurisdictions to evaluate the benefits and costs of removing dams and other obstructions. Some socio-economic information concerning the Greenland salmon fishery is included in document WGC(15)3 and there is an agenda item on this topic for the West Greenland Commission's Annual Meeting.

Secretary
Edinburgh
22 May 2015

NON-GOVERNMENT ORGANISATIONS WITH OBSERVER STATUS TO NASCO

Angling Council of Ireland	(based in Ireland)
Angling Trust	(based in UK)
Association Internationale de Défense du Saumon Atlantique	(based in France)
Association of Salmon Fishery Boards	(based in UK)
Atlantic Salmon Conservation Foundation	(based in Canada)
Atlantic Salmon Federation	(based in Canada)
Atlantic Salmon Federation	(based in USA)
Atlantic Salmon Trust	(based in UK)
Coalition Clean Baltic	(based in Sweden)
College of the Atlantic	(based in USA)
Connecticut River Salmon Association	(based in USA)
Conservatoire National du Saumon Sauvage	(based in France)
Coomhola Salmon Trust Limited	(based in Ireland)
European Anglers Alliance	(based in Netherlands)
Faroes Sportsfishing Association	(based in Faroe Islands)
Federation of Irish Salmon and Sea-Trout Anglers	(based in Ireland)
Fédération Québécoise pour le Saumon Atlantique	(based in Canada)
Foyle Association of Salmon and Trout Anglers	(based in UK/Ireland)
Institute of Fisheries Management	(based in UK)
Irish Seal Sanctuary	(based in Ireland)
Marine and Environmental Law Institute	(based in Canada)
National Anglers Representative Association	(based in Ireland)
Norges Bondelag (Norwegian Farmers Union)	(based in Norway)
Norges Jeger og Fiskerforbund (Norwegian Association of Hunters and Anglers)	(based in Norway)
Norske Lakseelver (Norwegian Salmon Rivers)	(based in Norway)
Salmon Net Fishing Association of Scotland	(based in UK)
Salmon and Trout Association	(based in UK)
Salmon Watch Ireland	(based in Ireland)
Sami Parliament	(based in Norway)
Sami Parlamenta	(based in Finland)
Scottish Anglers National Association	(based in UK)
Ulster Angling Federation Limited	(based in UK)
World Wide Fund for Nature (Norway)	(based in Norway)
WWF (France)	(based in France)
World Wildlife Fund (US)	(based in USA)