



Agenda item 2
For information

Council

CNL(16)3

Explanatory Memorandum on the Agenda

Notes:

- **Under the conditions for attendance by observers, the President may recognise requests from the floor by the accredited NGO Chairperson and/or designee on all agenda items other than items 2, 3 and 4.**
- **A summary of all the decisions before the Council will be presented in document CNL(16)18.**

CNL(16)3

Explanatory Memorandum on the Agenda

1. Opening of the Meeting

A welcoming address will be made by a representative of the German Government. The President, Mr Steinar Hermansen (Norway), will make a statement on behalf of the Organization. This year the Opening Session will not include verbal Opening Statements by the Parties and Observers, but the President wishes to encourage each Party, Inter-Government Organisation and NASCO's accredited Non-Government Organisations to submit written Opening Statements for distribution at the meeting. These written statements will be annexed to the report of the meeting. It would be of assistance to the Secretariat if these could be made available prior to the Annual Meeting.

2. Adoption of Agenda

In accordance with the Rules of Procedure and following consultation with the President, a Provisional Agenda (CNL(16)1) was issued on 20 January 2016. No supplementary items have been proposed by the Parties so a Draft Agenda (CNL(16)2) is issued herewith. The Council will be asked to adopt its Agenda. A Draft Schedule of Meetings (CNL(16)4) was also issued with the Provisional Agenda.

3. Election of Officers

In accordance with its Rules of Procedure, the Council will be asked to elect a President and Vice-President. The current President (Mr Steinar Hermansen, Norway), and Vice-President (Mr Jóannes Hansen, Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland)) were elected in 2014 and both are, therefore, eligible for re-election.

4. Financial and Administrative Issues

4.1 Report of the Finance and Administration Committee

The Chairman of the Finance and Administration Committee, Mr Raoul Bierach (Norway), will present the report of the Committee's meeting to the Council, CNL(16)5. The Council will be asked to:

- adopt a budget for 2017;
- accept the Audited Accounts for 2015;
- confirm the auditors for the 2016 accounts;
- decide on any actions required under its MoUs with ICES and the OSPAR Commission; and
- adopt the report of the Finance and Administration Committee.

5. Scientific, Technical, Legal and Other Information

5.1 Secretary's Report

The Secretary will report to the Council on a number of procedural, administrative, financial and other matters, including details of any new applications for NGO observer status to NASCO and any applications to conduct scientific research fishing in the Convention area, CNL(16)6.

5.2 Progress Report on the Proposed International Year of the Salmon

In 2014, the Council was advised that the North Pacific Anadromous Fish Commission (NPAFC) was considering organising an International Year of the Salmon. The Council recognised that this may be a very good opportunity to raise awareness of the challenges and opportunities facing salmon globally and the considerable efforts being made to conserve and restore them. Last year, the Council asked that the Secretary and the Head of the US Delegation, Mr Dan Morris, continue to liaise with NPAFC on NASCO's involvement in, and contribution to, such an initiative. A report on developments since last year will be presented, CNL(16)7. A representative of NPAFC has been invited to attend the Annual Meeting.

5.3 Report on the Activities of the Organization in 2015

The Council will be asked to adopt, under Article 5, paragraph 6 of the Convention, a report on its activities in 2015, CNL(16)8. This report is not intended for publication.

5.4 Announcement of the Tag Return Incentive Scheme Grand Prize

The President will announce the winner of the Grand Prize of US\$2,500. The winners of the Commission prizes of US\$1,500 will be announced in each Commission.

5.5 Scientific Advice from ICES

The Report of the ICES Advisory Committee (ACOM), CNL(16)9, will be circulated by ICES in early May and presented at the meeting. The detailed advice will be considered by the Commissions separately at their meetings. The advice relating to impacts of salmon farming will be presented during the Theme-based Special Session (see item 6.2 below). ICES has been requested to make the report of the Working Group on North Atlantic Salmon available to NASCO delegates on the ICES website.

5.6 Report of the International Atlantic Salmon Research Board

In 2014, the Board endorsed the need for an international acoustic tracking programme and adopted a Resolution encouraging telemetry studies, building on the success and identity of the SALSEA Programme. The Board had recognised the role it could play in coordinating efforts and fund-raising initiatives in support of telemetry projects in the future. Last year, the Board re-affirmed its commitment to an international telemetry project, SALSEA - Track. The Board had agreed to support SALSEA - Track as a continuing commitment to understanding the factors affecting mortality of salmon at sea, to make funds available in order to prepare a vision statement for SALSEA -

Track and to advance existing initiatives towards an integrated and collaborative telemetry programme. The Chairman of the Board, Mr Rory Saunders (USA), will present the report of the Board's meeting, CNL(16)10, including an update on progress with SALSEA - Track.

5.7 Report of the Working Group on Stock Classification

The Council had previously agreed to revise the stock categories used in the rivers database so as to better reflect the status of stocks relative to attainment of conservation limits. The information could then be used to prepare an overview of the status of stocks around the North Atlantic and the threats to the resource. The Council had recognised that it would be important to have a consistent and uniform approach to presenting information on stock status and agreed Terms of Reference, CNL(14)56, for a Working Group on Stock Classification. The TORs request, *inter alia*, that the Working Group recommends a classification system to be used by jurisdictions to indicate stock status relative to conservation limits (or other reference points), taking into account other relevant information to describe stock status (e.g. biodiversity). Last year, the Council was advised that the Working Group had commenced its work inter-sessionally and had met briefly during the Thirty-Second (2015) Annual Meeting. The Council was advised that the Working Group intended to continue its work inter-sessionally and report back to the Council in advance of its 2016 Annual Meeting. The report of the Working Group, CNL(16)11, will be presented by its Chairman, Mr Steve Gephard (USA).

5.8 Report of the Standing Scientific Committee

The recommendations of the Standing Scientific Committee concerning the request to ICES for scientific advice will be presented, CNL(16)12. The Council will be asked to adopt a request to ICES for scientific advice and to provide any feedback to ICES on the responses provided to new questions addressed in the 2016 advice.

6. Conservation, Restoration, Enhancement and Rational Management of Atlantic Salmon under the Precautionary Approach

6.1 Special Session: Evaluation of Annual Progress Reports under the 2013 - 2018 Implementation Plans

The report of the Implementation Plan/Annual Progress Report Review Group, CNL(16)13, will be presented by its Chairman, Mr Ted Potter (European Union). The report will include the Group's evaluations of the third Annual Progress Reports (APRs) under the 2013 – 2018 Implementation Plans (IPs). The primary purpose of the APRs is to provide details of:

- any changes to the management regime for salmon and consequent changes to the IPs;
- actions that have been taken under the IPs in the previous year;
- significant changes to the status of stocks and a report on catches; and
- actions taken in accordance with the provisions of the Convention.

The purpose of the evaluation of the APRs by the Review Group is to ensure that Parties/jurisdictions have provided a clear account of progress in implementing and evaluating the actions detailed in their IPs along with the information required under the Convention. Where shortcomings are identified, the Group has been asked to develop a list of questions to be sent to the Parties/jurisdictions who will be asked to respond in writing prior to the Annual Meeting. There will be an opportunity for questions to be raised during the Special Session. The APRs will be issued and made available on the NASCO website (www.nasco.int/implementation_plans_cycle2.html).

The Secretariat will prepare a summary of the sections of the APRs concerning changes to the IPs, stock status and catches and additional information required under the Convention, CNL(16)14.

6.2 **Theme-Based Special Session: ‘Addressing impacts of salmon farming on wild Atlantic salmon: challenges to, and developments supporting, achievement of NASCO’s international goals’**

The objective of Theme-based Special Sessions (TBSS) is to allow for greater exchange of information on a topic related to NASCO’s agreements and guidelines. Previous sessions have been held on ‘*Management of single and mixed stock fisheries, with particular focus on fisheries on stocks below their conservation limit*’ and on ‘*Maintaining and improving river connectivity with particular focus on impacts of hydropower*’. The theme of the session to be held at the 2016 Annual Meeting is ‘*Addressing impacts of salmon farming on wild Atlantic salmon: challenges to, and developments supporting, achievement of NASCO’s international goals*’. A Programme for the Session has been developed by the Steering Committee and is contained in document CNL(16)15. The overarching objective for the session is to facilitate an exchange of information relating to protecting wild Atlantic salmon from impacts of salmon farming and to promote sustainable salmon farming practices by:

- reviewing the latest scientific information on the impacts of salmon farming on the wild salmon stocks, with particular focus on the impacts of sea lice and escaped farmed salmon;
- reviewing progress and sharing best practice on approaches, including regulatory frameworks, to implement effective sea lice management at salmon farms;
- reviewing progress and sharing best practice on approaches, including regulatory frameworks, to ensure that 100% of farmed fish are retained in both freshwater and marine production facilities; and
- reviewing new developments that could facilitate achievement of NASCO’s international goals for sea lice and containment including technology development (e.g. cage design and closed containment), rearing strategies, access to a broad suite of therapeutants, biological controls, monitoring regimes, training and recapture efforts.

A report of the meeting will be prepared by the Steering Committee following the Annual Meeting.

6.3 Progress in implementing 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

A report, CNL(16)16, will be presented on progress in implementing the measures contained in 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, which was adopted at NASCO’s Thirtieth (2013) Annual Meeting.

6.4 Liaison with the Salmon Farming Industry

In 2013, the Council agreed that the regular meetings of the ISFA/NASCO Liaison Group would not continue but that if a specific need arose, consideration would be given to convening a joint *ad hoc* group. The Council decided to retain an item on its Agenda during which a representative of ISFA could be invited to participate in an exchange of information on issues concerning impacts of aquaculture on wild salmon. Accordingly, a representative of ISFA has been invited to attend the Thirty-Third Annual Meeting and to participate in the Theme-based Special Session.

6.5 New or Emerging Opportunities for, or Threats to, Salmon Conservation and Management

This agenda item was included for the first time in 2006, in accordance with the Strategic Approach for NASCO’s ‘Next Steps’ (CNL(05)49). ICES has been asked to report on any significant new or emerging threats to, or opportunities for, salmon conservation and management and its advice will be presented in document CNL(16)9. There will be an opportunity for any relevant information to be presented by the Parties and observers.

6.6 Incorporating Social and Economic Factors in Salmon Management

The Council has previously requested that the Parties/jurisdictions advise the Secretariat of any new studies relating to the socio-economic values of the wild Atlantic salmon. Any such studies will be referred to in the Secretary’s report, CNL(16)6.

6.7 Management and Sampling of the St Pierre and Miquelon Salmon Fishery

In recent years, the North American Commission and the Council have been concerned about catches of salmon at St Pierre and Miquelon which, although low, occur at a time when there are serious concerns about the abundance of North American stocks and when strict harvest restrictions have been introduced throughout the Commission area. In 2012, the Council agreed that the President should write to the French authorities inviting them to become a member of NASCO and this letter was sent on 26 February 2013. A follow up letter was sent by the Secretary on 17 February 2015. Any new information in relation to the management and sampling of the St Pierre and Miquelon salmon fishery will be presented, CNL(16)17. France (in respect of St Pierre and Miquelon) has been invited to attend the Thirty-Third Annual Meeting.

6.8 Reports on the Conservation Work of the Three Regional Commissions

The President will ask the Chairman of each of the regional Commissions of NASCO to report to the Council on the work of their Commission.

7. Other Business

7.1 Any other business may be raised.

8. Date and Place of Next Meeting

8.1 The Council will be asked to confirm the venue for its Thirty-Fourth Annual Meeting to be held during 6 - 9 June 2017.

8.2 The Council will be asked to confirm the date and venue for the Thirty-Fifth Annual Meeting.

9. Report of the Meeting

9.1 A draft report of the meeting will be circulated for the approval of the Council.

10. Press Release

10.1 A draft Press Release will be prepared for consideration by the Council.

Secretary
Edinburgh
8 April 2016