



Agenda item 6.3
For information

Council

CNL(17)22

***Annual Progress Report
on Actions Taken Under the Implementation Plan for the Calendar Year 2016***

United States

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Annual Progress Report on Actions taken under the Implementation Plan for the Calendar Year 2016

The primary purposes of the Annual Progress Reports are to provide details of:

- any changes to the management regime for salmon and consequent changes to the Implementation Plan;
- actions that have been taken under the Implementation Plan 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

These reports will be reviewed by the Council. Please complete this form and return it to the Secretariat **no later than 24 March 2017**.

Party:	United States
Jurisdiction/Region:	

1: Changes to the Implementation Plan
1.1 Describe any proposed revisions to the Implementation Plan <i>(Where changes are proposed, the revised Implementation Plans should be submitted to the Secretariat by 1 December).</i>
None.
1.2 Describe any major new initiatives or achievements for salmon conservation and management that you wish to highlight.
In March of 2016, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and NOAA Fisheries released a draft recovery plan for endangered Atlantic salmon within the Gulf of Maine region. The draft recovery plan, the primary tool for guiding the process for species recovery, outlines specific approaches to reduce threats to the species, identifies specific timetables for action, and estimates costs to achieve recovery goals. The recovery plan provides a vision for Atlantic salmon recovery that includes long-term objectives and criteria, research and management actions, as well as time and cost estimates to recover and conserve the species in its native habitats. The draft plan incorporates new scientific information and lays out a set of actions to restore habitat connectivity between ocean and freshwater habitats; maintain genetic diversity of Atlantic salmon over time; continue to explore a range of strategies for restoring a wild salmon population in each of three recovery areas; maintain and restore a wide distribution of naturally spawned fish across the Gulf of Maine region; increase adult spawning fish through augmentation of natural spawning via the conservation hatchery programs; restore and conserve freshwater habitats; increase survival in both marine and estuary habitats; and engage and collaborate with partners on communication and education about salmon conservation.

2: Stock status and catches.				
2.1 Provide a description of any new factors which may significantly affect the abundance of salmon stocks and, if there has been any significant change in stock status since the development of the Implementation Plan, provide a brief (200 word max) summary of these changes.				
For 2016, there are no new factors which we expect to significantly affect the abundance of salmon stocks in the United States. There has been no change in the status of stocks in the United States; the status remains dire. Provisionally, returns to U.S. waters in 2016 were 626.				
2.2 Provide the following information on catches:(nominal catch equals reported quantity of salmon caught and retained in tonnes ‘round fresh weight’ (i.e. weight of whole, ungutted, unfrozen fish) or ‘round fresh weight equivalent’).				
(a) provisional nominal catch (which may be subject to revision) for 2016 (tonnes)	In-river	Estuarine	Coastal	Total
	0	0	0	0
(b) confirmed nominal catch of salmon for 2015 (tonnes)	0	0	0	0
(c) estimated unreported catch for 2016 (tonnes)	0	0	0	0
(d) number and percentage of salmon caught and released in recreational fisheries in 2016	There are no recreational fisheries for sea-run Atlantic salmon in the United States. There are, however, small fisheries for domestic broodstock in the Merrimack, Naugatuck, and Shetucket Rivers in Southern New England; these rivers are outside the geographic range of endangered salmon.			

3: Implementation Plan Actions.		
3.1 Provide an update on progress against actions relating to the Management of Salmon Fisheries (Section 2.8 of the Implementation Plan).		
<i>Note: The reports under ‘Progress on Action to Date’ should provide a brief overview with a quantitative measure of progress made. While referring to additional material (e.g. via links to websites) may assist those seeking more detailed information, this will not be evaluated by the Review Group.</i>		
Action F1:	Description of Action (as submitted in the IP)	Continue to remain active in the West Greenland Commission and the North American Commission
	Expected Outcome (as submitted in the IP)	Continued collaborative management of the fishery at West Greenland, enhanced collaboration with France (in respect of St. Pierre et Miquelon) regarding the fishery at St. Pierre et Miquelon, and enhanced collaboration with Canada regarding the fishery in Labrador
	Progress on Action to Date (Provide a brief overview with a quantitative measure of progress. Other material (e.g.	West Greenland Commission (WGC): The United States continues to work with the other parties to the WGC. In 2016, we participated in the intersessional meeting of the WGC and the annual meeting of the WGC. We also continued to facilitate sampling in the

	<i>website links) will not be evaluated.)</i>	<p>West Greenland fishery. In February 2016, we participated in the Working Group on the Application of the Six Tenets for Effective Management of an Atlantic Salmon Fishery. We are preparing for both the intersessional WGC meeting and the annual meeting of the WGC in June 2017, and intend to consult with all the parties in advance of those meetings to help ensure their success.</p> <p>North American Commission (NAC): We have reviewed a considerable amount of new information pertaining to the mixed-stock fishery in Labrador. We will confer with Canada prior to the annual meeting. We will continue to support efforts to monitor and sample the fishery that continues at St. Pierre et Miquelon.</p>
	Current Status of Action	Completed for Current Year
	If 'Completed', has the Action achieved its objective?	Yes, for the current year.
Action F2:	Description of Action <i>(as submitted in the IP)</i>	Work with state authorities to ensure that recreational fisheries for other species, such as brook trout, reduce bycatch of salmon to the maximum extent possible.
	Expected Outcome <i>(as submitted in the IP)</i>	Closures of certain areas of rivers, gear restrictions, bag limit reductions and other means could be agreed to within the context of a conservation plan for recreational fishing permitted by the State of Maine.
	Progress on Action to Date <i>(Provide a brief overview with a quantitative measure of progress. Other material (e.g. website links) will not be evaluated.)</i>	There are stringent and extensive regulations governing recreational fishing (http://www.state.me.us/ifw/fishing/laws/pdfs/2017fishinglawbook.pdf) in salmon habitats in addition to the "take" prohibitions of the Federal Endangered Species Act. Fishing regulations explain that sea-run salmon are federally endangered and cannot be removed from the water. Anglers are also prohibited from retaining landlocked salmon and brown trout above 25 inches in roughly 40 specific waters to ensure that adult sea-run salmon are not incidentally captured and retained. These additional protections for Atlantic salmon resulted from discussions among local fisheries managers, although these discussions have not yet resulted in the development of a comprehensive conservation plan applicable to the entire freshwater range of endangered salmon.
	Current Status of Action	Completed for Current Year
	If 'Completed', has the Action achieved its objective?	Yes, for current year.
	Description of Action	Maintain closures for all directed fisheries for Atlantic

Action F3:	(as submitted in the IP)	salmon
	Expected Outcome (as submitted in the IP)	Reduced risk to productive capacity.
	Progress on Action to Date (Provide a brief overview with a quantitative measure of progress. Other material (e.g. website links) will not be evaluated.)	Directed fisheries for sea-run salmon remain closed. NOAA’s National Marine Fisheries Service maintains a vessel landings database, a dealer sales database, and an observer database for commercial fisheries subject to federal jurisdiction. For 2016, we queried the vessel landings database and the dealer sales database and found no record of Atlantic salmon having been caught. For the observer database, the recent summary noted below reveals the instance of bycatch to be very limited over the time series. See: Wigley SE, Tholke C, Blaylock J, Rago PJ, Shield G. 2015. 2015 Discard estimation, precision, and sample size analyses for 14 federally managed species groups in the waters off the northeastern United States. US Dept Commer, Northeast Fish Sci Cent Ref Doc. 15-04; 162 p. http://www.nefsc.noaa.gov/publications/crd/crd1504/crd1504.pdf
	Current Status of Action	Completed for Current Year
	If ‘Completed’, has the Action achieved its objective?	

3.2 Provide an update on progress against actions relating to Habitat Protection and Restoration (Section 3.4 of the Implementation Plan). <i>Note: The reports under ‘Progress on Action to Date’ should provide a brief overview with a quantitative measure of progress made. While referring to additional material (e.g. via links to websites) may assist those seeking more detailed information, this will not be evaluated by the Review Group.</i>		
Action H1:	Description of Action (as submitted in the IP)	Improve fish passage by removing dams, installing fishways, removing culverts, decommission roads, and upgrading road-stream crossings
	Expected Outcome (as submitted in the IP)	Enhanced connectivity between freshwater habitats and the Atlantic Ocean
	Progress on Action to Date (Provide a brief overview with a quantitative measure of progress. Other material (e.g. website links) will not be evaluated.)	In 2016, 30 additional aquatic connectivity projects were completed in Maine. The primary goal of these projects is to restore aquatic connectivity and ecological stream processes by allowing the natural flow of materials (water, wood, sediment). Over 57 km of stream were made accessible as a result of these projects. These efforts were made possible due to strong partnerships including Natural Resource Conservation Service; Penobscot Indian Nation; Project SHARE; Maine Dept. Inland Fisheries and Wildlife; Maine Dept. of Marine Resources; Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and

		<p>Forestry; NOAA Fisheries Service; Atlantic Salmon Federation; U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; The Nature Conservancy; Downeast Lakes Land Trust; municipalities; lake associations; towns; and numerous private landowners.</p> <p>In Connecticut, one dam was removed in the area that is still actively managed for sea-run salmon. The Norton Mill Dam removal was sponsored by The Nature Conservancy, and opened 17 miles of high quality habitat including areas stocked with salmon fry.</p>
	Current Status of Action	Completed for Current Year
	If Completed, has the Action achieved its objective?	Yes, for current year.
Action H2:	Description of Action <i>(as submitted in the IP)</i>	Continue to implement Clean Water Act and other federal and state laws
	Expected Outcome <i>(as submitted in the IP)</i>	Continued water quality improvement
	Progress on Action to Date <i>(Provide a brief overview with a quantitative measure of progress. Other material (e.g. website links) will not be evaluated.)</i>	<p>The Maine Department of Environmental Protection implements water quality programs under the Clean Water Act and state law. The Department is responsible for managing, protecting and enhancing the quality of Maine's water resources through voluntary, regulatory, and educational programs. The Department collaborates with local, state and federal agencies to plan and implement strategies to protect Maine's water quality.</p> <p>An online archive of enforcement and monitoring results over the last five years is available online at echo.epa.gov. A summary of the last five years of enforcement actions in Maine pursuant to the Clean Water Act over the last five years reveals a total of roughly 400,000 (USD) in fines. There were no new enforcement actions made public in 2016.</p>

		<p style="text-align: center;">Total Monetary Penalties Assessed (All)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Fiscal Year</p> <p style="text-align: center;">■ State ■ EPA</p> <p>Figure H2. Total monetary penalties assessed related to enforcement actions in Maine from 2011 to (March) 2017.</p>
	Current Status of Action	Completed for Current Year
	If Completed, has the Action achieved its objective?	Yes, for current year.
Action H3:	Description of Action <i>(as submitted in the IP)</i>	Conduct consultations on all federal actions in areas where Atlantic salmon Essential Fish Habitat is designated and issue conservation recommendations to avoid, minimize or mitigate impacts to salmon habitat
	Expected Outcome <i>(as submitted in the IP)</i>	No net loss of productive capacity
	Progress on Action to Date <i>(Provide a brief overview with a quantitative measure of progress. Other material (e.g. website links) will not be evaluated.)</i>	Under the Magnuson-Stevens Act, Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) must be designated for all managed species. For Atlantic salmon, EFH (which equates roughly to the historic range of the species) has been designated by NOAA and the New England Fishery Management Council (http://www.greateratlantic.fisheries.noaa.gov/hcd/webintro.html). The EFH provisions of the Act require Federal agencies to consult with NOAA regarding any of their actions authorized, funded, or undertaken, or proposed to be authorized, funded, or undertaken that may adversely affect EFH. NOAA incorporates EFH consultations into interagency procedures previously established under the National Environmental Policy Act, Endangered Species Act, Clean Water Act, Fish and Wildlife Act, or other applicable statutes. If a federal or state project may have an adverse effect on EFH, Federal action agencies are required to prepare an Essential Fish Habitat Assessment which must include (1) a description of the proposed action; (2) an

		<p>analysis of the effects, including cumulative effects; (3) the Federal agency's conclusions regarding the effects of the action on EFH; and (4) proposed mitigation, if applicable. NOAA is required to provide EFH conservation recommendations to Federal and state agencies for actions that would adversely affect EFH. These recommendations may include measures to avoid, minimize, mitigate, or otherwise offset adverse effects on EFH. Federal agencies are required to respond to EFH conservation recommendations in writing within 30 days explaining how they will incorporate them or why they will not.</p> <p>For 2016, we had approximately 56 requests for consultations, and we provided conservation recommendations for approximately 16 projects that were in Atlantic salmon EFH. While this is our best attempt to quantify progress under this action, we caution that it should not be used as a metric to compare progress from year-to-year. We respond to requests for EFH consultation as they are received and do not have control over the number of requests in a given year. In many instances, EFH conservation recommendations are not necessary because project proponents are already proposing best management practices to reduce impacts to the maximum extent practicable.</p>
	Current Status of Action	Completed for Current Year
	If Completed, has the Action achieved its objective?	Yes, for current year.
Action H4:	Description of Action <i>(as submitted in the IP)</i>	Issue conservation recommendations to avoid and minimize impacts to salmon habitat on all federal actions in areas where Atlantic salmon are listed as endangered and Critical Habitat is designated
	Expected Outcome <i>(as submitted in the IP)</i>	No net loss of productive capacity
	Progress on Action to Date <i>(Provide a brief overview with a quantitative measure of progress. Other material (e.g. website links) will not be evaluated.)</i>	Under the Endangered Species Act, the United States has designated critical habitat for Atlantic salmon. Critical habitat is essential for the recovery of the species. NOAA and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) conduct consultations with other federal agencies pursuant to the Endangered Species Act that requires all federal agencies to ensure that any action they undertake or fund does not prevent the survival and recovery of endangered Atlantic salmon. The Endangered Species Act also requires NOAA and USFWS to analyse whether an action may result in

		<p>destruction or adverse modification of critical habitat. If it does, NOAA and USFWS must develop alternatives that reduce the effects to salmon and their designated critical habitat. The Endangered Species Act also requires NOAA and USFWS to analyze whether an action by a federal agency may result in destruction or adverse modification of critical habitat. NOAA and USFWS work with the action agency to develop project/activity alternatives that will minimize the potential effects on salmon and their designated critical habitat.</p> <p>In 2016, NOAA completed eight consultations and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service completed roughly 47 consultations for projects within designated Critical Habitat. While this is our best attempt to quantify progress under this action, we caution that it should not be used as a metric to compare progress from year to year. We respond to requests for ESA consultation as they are received and do not have control over the number of requests received in a given year.</p>
	Current Status of Action	Completed for Current Year
	If Completed, has the Action achieved its objective?	Yes, for current year.

3.3 Provide an update on progress against actions relating to Aquaculture, Introductions and Transfers and Transgenics (Section 4.8 of the Implementation Plan).

Note: The reports under 'Progress on Action to Date' should provide a brief overview with a quantitative measure of progress made. While referring to additional material (e.g. via links to websites) may assist those seeking more detailed information, this will not be evaluated by the Review Group.

Action A1:	Description of Action (as submitted in the IP)	Continue to monitor implementation of protective measures identified in the Biological Opinion from 2003. Continue collaboration with Canadian provincial and federal agencies to inform new regulations for consistency with U.S. federal permit requirements.
	Expected Outcome (as submitted in the IP)	Zero escapes, reduced disease transfer
	Progress on Action to Date (Provide a brief overview with a quantitative measure of progress. Other material (e.g. website links) will not be evaluated.)	We continue to monitor compliance with protective measures in place within the U.S. salmon farming industry. The current status of active farm sites in Maine shows all sites are in full compliance with the required permit conditions. However, there were several escape events leading to capture of two aquaculture escapees in the Dennys River and one in the Penobscot River. Since all of the farmed fish in the United States are genetically marked, we were able to determine that the fish were of farmed origin and from which site they escaped. NOAA staff is currently

		<p>working with industry representatives to review their Containment Management System plans and corrective action reports to better understand the likely cause of escapes and determine if there are additional measures that can be implemented to increase containment effectiveness and reduce the number of escapes overall.</p> <p>In 2016, all Atlantic salmon captured and handled at the Milford fish lift were checked for the presence of sea lice and screened for pathogens of concern. Staff from the Maine Department of Marine Resources handled 507 sea-run Atlantic salmon and noted the presence of sea lice on 162 fish in total. Additionally, adult sea-run returns to the Penobscot River were tested for pathogens by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The results indicated all fish screened were free of any pathogens of concern.</p>
	Current Status of Action	Completed for Current Year
	If Completed, has the Action achieved its objective?	Yes, for current year.
Action A2:	Description of Action <i>(as submitted in the IP)</i>	Implement specific regulations and guidelines for importation of baitfish described in State laws and a National Aquatic Animal Health Plan (NAAHP).
	Expected Outcome <i>(as submitted in the IP)</i>	Reduced transmission of diseases of concern including; Viral Hemorrhagic Septicemia and Bacterial Kidney Disease.
	Progress on Action to Date <i>(Provide a brief overview with a quantitative measure of progress. Other material (e.g. website links) will not be evaluated.)</i>	As described in our APR submitted in 2016, the Northeast Fish Health Committee (NEFHC, a subcommittee of the Northeast Fisheries Administrators Association) encourages state and federal fish and wildlife agencies to develop rules, regulations, and/or protocols to manage fish importation in ways that minimize the movement of pathogens. The NEFHC annually reviews the fish health status of the Northeast states and have developed regional guidelines that enable state resource agencies to prevent the importation or transfer among member states of fish infected with the listed pathogens of concern. In 2015, the NEFHC completed revisions to the existing fish health guidelines to include fish importation, movement and transfer between all states in the Northeast United States (Connecticut, Delaware, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont, and Virginia). These revisions have been unanimously

		accepted by the Northeast Fisheries Administrators for each of the States represented above.
	Current Status of Action	Completed
	If Completed, has the Action achieved its objective?	Yes, for current year.
Action A3:	Description of Action (as submitted in the IP)	Implement broodstock management protocols at conservation hatcheries.
	Expected Outcome (as submitted in the IP)	Slow the rate of the loss of genetic diversity.
	Progress on Action to Date (Provide a brief overview with a quantitative measure of progress. Other material (e.g. website links) will not be evaluated.)	Estimates of genetic diversity are used to monitor if genetic diversity within seven broodstock populations is being maintained over time. Maintenance of genetic diversity is a primary goal of the hatchery program: to maintain the genetic characteristics of each individual broodstock, to allow for the diversity to persist for natural selection and adaptation to occur, and to ensure that genetic diversity is not being lost inadvertently due to management practices. Estimates of heterozygosity (observed and expected) compared over time within a broodstock and between broodstocks indicate that similar levels of diversity are present in each broodstock; however, some broodstocks, such as the Dennys and Pleasant River broodstock, have slightly decreased estimates of allelic diversity relative to other broodstocks, and observed decreases in the past 10 years, likely a result of decreased broodstock number. Estimates of effective population size also vary between broodstocks from between 50 to 150 for most populations to over 400 for the Penobscot, due to the larger total broodstock number and overall population size of the Penobscot River population (see below). In addition, pedigree lines have been established for the Dennys population to more assertively reduce the rate of loss of genetic diversity and to increase estimates of effective population size. A pedigree line was also recently established for the Narraguagus River.
	Current Status of Action	Completed for Current Year
	If Completed, has the Action achieved its objective?	Yes, for current year.
Action A4:	Description of Action (as submitted in the IP)	Coordination with state programs that stock salmonids to support recreational fisheries.
	Expected Outcome (as submitted in the IP)	Identification of potential areas of overlap of salmon and other stocked salmonids.
	Progress on Action to Date (Provide a brief overview with a quantitative measure of	Many salmon rivers are no longer stocked with exotic species such as brown trout and rainbow trout. Discussions and decisions on such matters most often

	<i>progress. Other material (e.g. website links) will not be evaluated.)</i>	occur on a river-by-river basis. There is not yet a comprehensive conservation plan for Atlantic salmon regarding the stocking of salmonids to support recreational fisheries that has been agreed to by all relevant State government authorities and no specific date set for the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife to develop a comprehensive conservation plan. There is, however, progress in curtailing stocking of non-native salmonids in salmon rivers. For example, the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife and the Maine Department of Marine Resources have agreed that the stocking locations of non-native salmonids will be spatially segregated from areas that are actively managed for Atlantic salmon.
	Current Status of Action	Completed for Current Year
	If Completed, has the Action achieved its objective?	Yes, for current year.

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.
None	
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.
None	
4.3	Details of any new actions to prohibit fishing for salmon beyond 12 nautical miles.
None	
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.
None	
4.5	Details of any actions taken to implement regulatory measures under Article 13 of the Convention including imposition of adequate penalties for violations.
None	
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.
None	
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.
None	