



Agenda item 2
For information

Council

CNL(17)3

Explanatory Memorandum on the Agenda

Notes:

- **Under the conditions for attendance by observers, the President may recognise requests from the floor by the Co-Chairs of accredited NGOs and/or their designee on all agenda items other than items 2, 3, 4 and 7**
- **A summary of all the decisions before the Council will be presented in document CNL(17)18**

CNL(17)3

Explanatory Memorandum on the Agenda

1. Opening of the Meeting

A welcoming address will be made by a representative of the Swedish Government. The President, Mr Steinar Hermansen (Norway), will make a statement on behalf of the Organization. As in 2016, 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 a written Opening Statement for distribution at the meeting. These written statements will be annexed to the report of the meeting. It would be of assistance if these statements could be made available to the Secretariat prior to the Annual Meeting.

2. Adoption of the Agenda

In accordance with the Rules of Procedure and following consultation with the President, a Provisional Agenda (CNL(17)1) was issued on 23 January 2017. No supplementary items have been proposed by the Parties so a Draft Agenda (CNL(17)2) is issued herewith. The Council will be asked to adopt its Agenda. A Draft Schedule of Meetings (CNL(17)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.

4. Financial and Administrative Issues

4.1 Report of the Finance and Administration Committee

The Chair of the Finance and Administration Committee, Ms Kimberly Blankenbeker (USA), will present the report of the Committee's 2017 meeting to the Council. The Council will be asked to:

- accept the Audited Accounts for 2016;
- confirm the auditors for the 2017 accounts;
- adopt a budget for 2018;
- decide on any actions required under its MoUs with ICES and the OSPAR Commission; and
- adopt the report of the Finance and Administration Committee, CNL(17)5.

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(17)6.

5.2 Report on the Activities of the Organization in 2016

The Council will be asked to adopt, under Article 5, paragraph 6 of the Convention, a report on its activities in 2016, CNL(17)7. This report is not intended for publication.

5.3 Announcement of the Tag Return Incentive Scheme Grand Prize

The President will announce the winner of the Grand Prize of £1,500. The winners of the Commission prizes of £1,000 will be announced in each Commission.

5.4 Scientific Advice from ICES

The Report of the ICES Advisory Committee (ACOM), CNL(17)8, will be circulated by ICES in early May. The advice relating to the North Atlantic area will be presented to the Council. The advice relating to the individual Commission areas will be considered by the Commissions separately at their meetings. ICES has been requested to make the report of the Working Group on North Atlantic Salmon available to NASCO delegates on the ICES website.

5.5 Report of the International Atlantic Salmon Research Board

In 2015, 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 co-ordinating efforts and fund-raising initiatives in support of telemetry projects and agreed to support SALSEA - Track as a continuing commitment to understanding the factors affecting mortality of salmon at sea. The Chairman of the Board, Mr Rory Saunders (USA), will present the report of the Board's meeting, CNL(17)9, including an update on progress with SALSEA - Track.

5.6 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(17)10. 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 2017 advice.

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

6.1 Theme-based Special Session: Understanding the Risks and Benefits of Hatchery and Stocking Activities to Wild Atlantic Salmon Populations

The objective of Theme-based Special Sessions is to allow for greater exchange of information on a topic related to NASCO's agreements and guidelines. The title of the 2017 Theme-based Special Session is '*Understanding the risks and benefits of hatchery and stocking activities to wild Atlantic salmon populations*'. This half-day session will be held on the morning of Wednesday 7 June.

A Programme for the session, CNL(17)11, has been developed by the Steering Committee (Gérald Chaput (Canada), Paul Knight (NGOs), Ian Russell (EU) and Arne Sivertsen (Norway)). The over-arching objective for the 2017 Theme-based Special Session is to facilitate an exchange of information relating to understanding the risks and benefits of hatchery and stocking activities to wild Atlantic salmon populations by:

- reviewing the latest scientific information on the risks and benefits to wild Atlantic salmon fitness of hatchery and stocking activities;
- reviewing the approaches used to prevent the loss of Atlantic salmon populations at high risk of extinction;
- reviewing the approaches used to minimise unintended negative consequences to wild Atlantic salmon populations from hatchery and stocking activities;
- sharing information on policy frameworks for assessing the risks and benefits and the decision-making process for stocking proposals; and
- reviewing NASCO's Guidelines for Stocking Atlantic Salmon and considering the need for any revisions to them in the light of new information.

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

6.2 Special Session: Salmon and People in a Changing World - Planning for the International Year of the Salmon

In 2015, the Council had asked that the Secretary and the Head of the US Delegation, Mr Dan Morris, liaise with NPAFC on arrangements for an International Year of the Salmon (IYS) and to consider NASCO's possible involvement in, and contribution to, such an initiative. Last year, the Council considered an Outline Proposal for an International Year of the Salmon (Annex 3 of document CNL(16)7). This included a proposed rationale, vision, themes and timings for the IYS, together with details of its scope and a governance model and initial budgetary considerations. The Council recognised that an IYS could provide a very good opportunity to raise awareness of the factors driving salmon abundance, the environmental and anthropogenic challenges they face and the measures being taken to address these. The Council expressed broad acceptance of the Outline Proposal. The governance structure for the IYS includes a Coordinating Committee, a North Atlantic Steering Committee and a Symposium Steering Committee. These Committees have been established and have commenced

their work and an update on progress will be presented, CNL(17)12. This document will include a summary of proposed IYS activities to be undertaken by Parties/jurisdictions based on returns made to the Secretariat using an agreed template. This template sought information on actions being undertaken as a contribution to the IYS; how progress on these actions will be tracked; the target audiences; and timelines for implementing the actions.

The Council had asked that the North Atlantic Steering Committee develop recommendations for a half-day session on the IYS at the 2017 Annual Meeting to allow for consideration of IYS activities planned for 2018 and 2019. That Committee has developed a Programme for the Special Session, CNL(17)13, which will be held on the afternoon of Wednesday 7 June.

6.3 **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(17)14, will be presented by its Chairman, Mr Rory Saunders (USA), at a Special Session of the Council. The report will include the Group's evaluations of the fourth 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).

A summary of the sections of the APRs detailing changes to the IPs, stock status and catches and additional information required under the Convention will be presented, CNL(17)15.

The Council will need to consider arrangements for the next cycle of Implementation Plans commencing in 2019.

6.4 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(17)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.

6.5 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 the International Salmon Farmers’ Association (ISFA) could be invited to participate in an exchange of information on issues concerning impacts of aquaculture on wild salmon. Last year, the representative of ISFA had indicated that the industry is developing rapidly but that these advances had not been reflected in the presentations made during the 2016 Theme-based Special Session. A representative of ISFA has been invited to attend the Thirty-Fourth Annual Meeting and asked to bring these advances relating to minimising impacts of salmon farming on the wild stocks to the attention of the Council under this agenda item.

6.6 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(17)8. There will be an opportunity for any relevant information to be presented by the Parties and observers.

6.7 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(17)6.

6.8 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 a further invitation was extended in 2015. France (in respect of St Pierre and Miquelon) has been invited to attend the Thirty-Fourth Annual Meeting and to present any new information in relation to the management and sampling of the St Pierre and Miquelon salmon fishery, CNL(17)17.

6.9 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. Appointment of a New Secretary

The President will announce the appointment of a new Secretary.

8. Other Business

Any other business may be raised.

9. Date and Place of Next Meeting

The Council will be asked to confirm the date (12 - 15 June 2018) and venue of its Thirty-Fifth Annual Meeting to be held in the United States of America.

The Council will be asked to consider a date (4 - 7 June 2019) and venue for the Thirty-Sixth Annual Meeting of NASCO.

10. Report of the Meeting

A Draft Report of the Meeting will be circulated for approval by the Council.

11. Press Release

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

12. Close of the Meeting

The President will close the Thirty-Fourth Annual Meeting.

Secretary
Edinburgh
7 April 2017