



Agenda item 5.1  
For information

## **Council**

**CNL(17)6**

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## CNL(17)6

### *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 2017**

- 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 2017 have been received and there are no arrears.

#### **4. Observers at NASCO's Meetings**

- 4.1 Since last year, there has been one new application for Non-Government Observer status to NASCO from the Atlantic Salmon Conservation Schools Network (ASCSN) based in Scotland. The objectives of the ASCSN are to foster links between education and organisations involved with the conservation of Atlantic salmon and gain greater recognition and public engagement in salmon conservation.

- 4.2 After consulting the President, it was decided that the objectives of the ASCSN are compatible with those of NASCO and, accordingly, it has have been granted observer status. The ASCSN has accepted the conditions governing observer status to NASCO and has been invited to attend the Thirty-Fourth Annual Meeting.

- 4.3 One existing NGO, the Association of Salmon Fishery Boards, which has held observer status for many years, has changed its name to Fisheries Management Scotland. Its membership now includes not only Scotland's District Salmon Fishery Boards but also Fishery Trusts and Foundations in Scotland. The objectives of the organisation include influencing relevant policy as may be desirable for the protection, preservation and development of Scotland's wild salmon and freshwater fish and fisheries and their environment.

- 4.4 The thirty-eight organisations listed in Annex 1 have observer status to NASCO. The 2012 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.
- 5.2 We have contacted the Norwegian and Icelandic coastguards to obtain details of airborne surveillance flights during the period 1 April 2016 - 31 March 2017. During this period the Icelandic coastguard conducted two surveillance flights (27 July 2016 and 26 September 2016) and the Norwegian coastguard conducted seven surveillance flights (27 June, 2 August, 1 September, 22 September, 24 October and 26 October) over the area of international waters north of the Faroe Islands where fishing for salmon by non-NASCO Parties had been observed in the past. No vessels were observed fishing for salmon.
- 5.3 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.
- 5.4 The last known incidences of fishing for salmon in international waters by non-NASCO Parties were in the early 1990s. 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 co-operation of NEAFC and NAFO in reporting on any suspected IUU fishing activities for salmon that may be detected in their MCS operations. We have continued to do so and a report is made separately in paper CNL(17)16.

## **6. Scientific Research Fishing**

- 6.1 In accordance with the Resolution on Scientific Research Fishing, CNL(96)60, the Secretary is asked 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 2015 Annual Meeting. Following the first phase of the SALSEA Programme which involved scientific research fishing in both the North American and North-East Atlantic Commission areas, the focus of the work of the International Atlantic Salmon Research Board is tracking the migrations of individual salmon through remote sensing techniques including acoustic tagging.

## **7. Rivers Database**

- 7.1 The 2012 External Performance Review of NASCO’s work had highlighted the value of the Rivers Database but noted some difficulties in reconciling the information it contained with other information on stock status. The Council had noted that the stock categories used in the Rivers Database were out-dated and had agreed on the importance of developing a consistent and uniform approach to presenting information on stock status. Last year, the Council adopted a new stock classification system for use with the NASCO Rivers Database. The new system comprises seven categories: Lost,

Unknown, Artificially Sustained, High Risk, Moderate Risk, Low Risk and Not at Risk. The four categories of risk are assigned by the use of a Stock Classification Score which is calculated by summing two scores: a ‘Conservation Limit Attainment Score’ (CAS) and an ‘Impacts Assessment Score’ (IAS). The following shows the possible Stock Classification Scores:

CAS Score	IAS Score			
	0	1	2	3
3	3	3	3	3
2	2	3	3	3
1	1	2	3	3
0	0	1	2	3

7.2 The Council asked that the information currently held in the Rivers Database be sent by the Secretary to the Parties/jurisdictions in Excel spreadsheet form for updating using the new stock classification system. For most Parties/jurisdictions, the main task of updating the information contained in the Rivers Database relates to the stock category for each river (or categories if more than one category is assigned to an individual river) although this will not be necessary for rivers in the ‘Lost’ and ‘Unknown’ categories unless the situation has changed. While the Rivers Database now contains information for ~2,550 rivers, only partial information has been provided for catchment area, river length, mean annual flow, main impact factors, special stock characteristics and conservation requirements (data has been provided for 13 - 59% of rivers, depending on the information concerned). The Council has requested that information for all fields in the Rivers Database should be updated or completed and provided to the Secretariat by 31 December 2017. The Council’s intention is that once the database has been updated, a ‘State of the Salmon’ report will be prepared. This report could be a valuable contribution to the International Year of the Salmon in 2019.

## 8. Public Relations

### *Tag Return Incentive Scheme*

8.1 In 2015, on the recommendation of the Finance and Administration Committee, the Council had recognised that the Tag Return Incentive Scheme had brought benefits in terms of publicity for the work of NASCO and agreed not to change the operation of the scheme but to undertake a further review in 2018. This year, some problems were encountered with the use of bank drafts in US\$ in two countries. The prizes have been awarded in US\$ since the scheme was established but this necessitates maintaining a separate US\$ account and causes budgetary uncertainty due to exchange rate fluctuations. Heads of Delegations, therefore, decided inter-sessionally to change the prizes from US\$2,500 for the Grand Prize and US\$1,500 for each of the three Commission prizes to the pound sterling equivalent of £1,500 and £1,000 respectively. The Rules of the NASCO Tag Return Incentive Scheme have been updated accordingly and are contained in Annex 2.

### *NASCO and IASRB websites*

- 8.2 The Council has previously agreed that the NASCO ([www.nasco.int](http://www.nasco.int)) and IASRB ([www.salmonatsea.com](http://www.salmonatsea.com)) websites would be the main public relations tools. Improvements and updating to both websites are on-going and we would welcome feedback on suggestions for further changes. In the period 1 April 2016 - 31 March 2017, there were approximately 17,500 visits to the NASCO website, a small increase of approximately 3% on the same period in 2015/2016. For the IASRB's website, the number of visits increased slightly to approximately 2,300. For both sites, the number of pages viewed averaged 3 per session.

### *Atlantic salmon - Lost at Sea*

- 8.3 The Council has recognised the enormous potential of the film 'Atlantic salmon - Lost at Sea' to raise awareness of the challenges facing the Atlantic salmon, the wide range of conservation measures that have been taken to conserve and restore the species and the research being undertaken to improve understanding of the factors affecting them, including at sea. The film is being produced by Deirdre Brennan (Castletown Productions), an Emmy nominated director for film and television. In 2012, the Council agreed to contribute £5,000 towards the cost of filming at West Greenland and a further contribution of £10,000 was made in 2015. The editing of the film is in the advanced stages and it is expected that the film will be completed by the end of June. The actor, Gabriel Byrne recorded the narration this spring at a studio in New York and the post-production house (Windmill Lane in Dublin) will do the animations, sound mix and online colouring and grading during the first week of June. The director plans to enter the film in wildlife, environmental and conservation themed film festivals as well as broader festivals such as Hot Docs in Toronto. The first will be Jackson Hole International Wildlife Film Festival in September. The director also plans to work with sponsors to arrange special screenings and talks for their members in the summer and autumn. This film is an educational tool and the aim is to make sure it informs audiences and the concerned community. The director will also seek distribution partners as soon as the film is complete through film festivals and direct contact. The social media outreach will be expanded to create awareness with distribution and broadcasters in mind and the website will be updated and streamlined. The Producer will work with NASCO in promoting the film and it should be a valuable contribution to the International Year of the Salmon.

## **9. Activities Relating to the United Nations (UN) Including the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)**

- 9.1 NASCO has continued to respond to requests for information on relevant activities from the United Nations Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea (UNDOALOS) and in relation to the FAO Code for Conduct for Responsible Fisheries. The biennial meeting of the Regional Secretariats Network was hosted by the FAO in Rome on 9 and 15 July 2016 and the NASCO Secretary attended the meeting on 9 July. The RSN was established to facilitate on-going information exchange among RFB Secretariats and 34 secretaries participated in the meeting. They represented regional fisheries bodies with diverse mandates and from all geographic regions, including FAO and non-FAO regional fisheries bodies, and marine and inland fishery advisory and management bodies. The discussions covered several subjects, including conservation and the

sustainable use of marine biological diversity in areas beyond national jurisdiction, issues related to the functioning and performance of regional fisheries bodies, and the consolidation and development of the RSN. The report of the meeting is available at [www.fao.org/3/a-i6597e.pdf](http://www.fao.org/3/a-i6597e.pdf).

- 9.2 NASCO became a partner in the Fishery Resources Monitoring System (FIRMS) in 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 and is part of FAO's Fisheries Global Information System (FIGIS). The information about NASCO was updated after the Thirty-Third (2016) Annual Meeting to reflect the latest scientific advice from ICES.

## 10. Socio-economic Studies

- 10.1 In 2014, on the recommendation of the Socio-economics Sub-Group, the Council asked that Parties/jurisdictions provide to the Secretariat details of any new studies relating to the socio-economic values of the wild Atlantic salmon.

- 10.2 The following study has been noted by the European Union:

The Environment Agency is currently undertaking a valuation of freshwater angling in England. The key objectives of the project are firstly to estimate the economic impact of freshwater angling (including salmon and sea trout angling) in England, expressed as income (Gross Value Added) and jobs supported. The second objective is to estimate economic value of improvements in the water environment (expressed in terms of type, abundance and size of fish present and of waterside amenities) to anglers, often referred to as 'willingness to pay'. Both parts of the study are based on on-line and telephone surveys of rod licence holders' activity and expenditure. The economic impact study is largely complete and the results of the willingness-to-pay study are expected imminently. The final report is expected to be published in the autumn 2017.

- 10.3 The following studies have been noted by Norway:

**Sea lice and escaped farmed salmon:** Assessing and modelling the economic impacts of sea lice infestations and escaped farmed salmon on wild salmon and wild salmon recreational fishing have been an important concern in new studies at the Norwegian University of Science and Technology (NTNU). Impacts on welfare and economic losses in Norwegian salmon rivers have been analysed, as well as changes in yield, benefit distribution and overall profitability.

<http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0165783615001125>

<http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/13657305.2014.926466>

**Participation in salmon angling in Norway:** In recent years, with reduced salmon catches Norway has also experienced a reduced number of salmon anglers as monitored through the statistics for the national salmon-fishing fee. A report from The Norwegian University for Life Sciences and The Norwegian Institute for Nature Research (NINA) looks at recent user characteristics, activity patterns, and barriers to participation (including poorer catches, stricter regulations and expenditures).

<http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/09669582.2017.1291650>

<http://www.umb.no/statisk/ina/publikasjoner/fagrappport/if29.pdf> (project report in Norwegian)

**Catch and release angling:** In recent years, a few studies have been undertaken to assess the mechanisms underlying the rather rapid transition towards more catch and release-based angling of salmon, and some of the subsequent conflicts that emerge. Studies have focused on the role of social norms, herein the interaction between regulations and informal social norms. A recent study has investigated the underlying causes for conflicts between catch and harvest and catch and release related stakeholders (anglers, river owners, tourism operators) and underlines that such conflicts often link to more general struggles for power and hegemony in regards natural resources and their utilisation.

<http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/10871209.2016.1199073>

<http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/fme.12078/full>

**Local ecological knowledge:** While not specifically linked to economic values, some recent studies have looked into the concept of local ecological knowledge of salmon, especially how the concept could be understood and applied alongside scientifically based knowledge, primarily from ethnographic or anthropological perspectives. Specifically, a PhD thesis at the University of Tromsø, and a NINA report have shed light on this issue for the use and conservation of Norwegian wild Atlantic salmon.

[http://munin.uit.no/bitstream/handle/10037/9668/Thesis\\_entire.pdf](http://munin.uit.no/bitstream/handle/10037/9668/Thesis_entire.pdf)

<https://brage.bibsys.no/xmlui/handle/11250/2418802>

10.4 The United States has noted a publication entitled ‘Comparative economic performance and carbon footprint of two farming models for producing Atlantic salmon (*Salmo salar*): Land-based closed containment system in freshwater and open net pen in seawater’. While not related to socio-economic values of wild Atlantic salmon, it may be of interest given the topic of last year’s Theme-based special Session.

[www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0144860916300036](http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0144860916300036)

10.5 There will be a presentation on the social and economic aspects of salmon at the Special Session on the International Year of the Salmon to be held during the Thirty-Fourth Annual Meeting. References to some previous published studies are available on the NASCO website.

Secretary  
Edinburgh  
9 May 2017



**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)
Atlantic Salmon Conservation Foundation	(based in Canada)
Atlantic Salmon Conservation Schools Network	(based in UK)
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)
Der Atlantische Lachs (The Atlantic salmon)	(based in Germany)
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)
Fisheries Management Scotland	(based in UK)
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 & Trout Conservation UK	(based in UK)
Salmon & Trout Conservation Scotland	(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)





## **Rules of the NASCO Tag Return Incentive Scheme**

1. The objectives of the Scheme are to encourage and improve the return of tags and recapture information.
2. Participation by the Parties in the NASCO Tag Return Incentive Scheme is on a voluntary basis.
3. The Council will review the operation of the Scheme at three year intervals.
4. The Scheme only applies to individually identifiable external tags, except in the case of tags returned from the West Greenland Commission area where any tag may be included in the scheme. Only tags returned to the appropriate official agency of a NASCO member Party and deemed to be legitimate by the official agency will be eligible. The authorities where the tag originates report the tag to NASCO.
5. The Secretary will, in December prior to the year when the prizes will be awarded, request each Party wishing to participate to send a list of the names and addresses of eligible participants who have returned tags during the calendar year ending on 31 December. A Party may choose to submit only a list of eligible tag numbers for each Commission area as long as that Party knows the identity of the tag holder and can supply this information in the event of the tag winning an award. The Secretary will request that this be provided to NASCO by 1 May. Only tag returns received by that date will be eligible.
6. All tag returns will be subject to a random selection procedure in which they will be mixed in a closed container and one tag will be selected blind. The procedure will be scrutinised by a representative of the auditors to NASCO. The persons who returned the selected tag will receive a Grand Award of £1,500 which the President will announce at the Annual Meeting of the Council. This tag will not be eligible for a further award.
7. The remaining returns will be sorted into the three Commission areas of NASCO according to the place of recapture of the tagged fish. For the purposes of the Scheme the Commission areas shall be considered to include the river systems flowing into the appropriate Commission area. For each Commission one tag will be selected blind. The person who returned the selected tag in each Commission area will receive an award of £1,000 which will be announced by the Chairman at the Annual Meeting of the respective Commission.
8. The Secretary will send cheques to the winners within 60 days of the announcement of the awards. The Secretary will circulate a list of winners to the Parties.
9. In the event of any dispute by a participant in this Scheme the decision of the Secretary shall be final.