



Agenda Item 5.6  
For information

**Council**

**CNL(18)10**

***Review of the Procedures Relating to the Work of the International Atlantic  
Salmon Research Board and its Scientific Advisory Group***



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### **Review of the Procedures Relating to the Work of the International Atlantic Salmon Research Board and its Scientific Advisory Group**

In 2001, NASCO established an International Atlantic Salmon Research Board (hereinafter referred to as 'the Board') to promote collaboration and cooperation on research into the causes of marine mortality of Atlantic salmon and the opportunities to counteract this mortality.

Each NASCO Party is a founding member of the Board which also includes representation from NASCO's affiliated Non-Government Organizations (NGOs).

The original Rules of Procedure for the Board were revised in 2006 (ICR(06)10). These rules established the Terms of Reference for the Board as follows:

- maintaining an inventory of relevant research projects which are ongoing or planned and for which budgets have been confirmed;
- identifying research needs;
- evaluating the inventory against research needs;
- identifying gaps in the inventory of research and setting priorities for further research;
- providing a forum for coordination of relevant research efforts by the Contracting Parties of NASCO;
- developing administrative mechanisms to accept financial contributions to an International Atlantic Salmon Research Fund;
- soliciting and accepting financial contributions and managing the Fund;
- establishing terms and conditions for soliciting, evaluating, approving and funding relevant research projects; and
- funding approved projects and reviewing results in relation to the objectives of the Programme.

Rule 3 of the Board states, among other things, that *'the Board shall comprise one Member from each Contracting Party assisted, as appropriate, by one or more advisers.'*

Rule 8 of the Board states that the Chair of NASCO's accredited NGOs, or his / her nominee from within the accredited NGOs, shall be invited to participate in the meetings of the Board *'so as to provide the NGO viewpoint on the issues under discussion'* and that the Board *'should consider appropriate arrangements for increasing NGO involvement in its work.'*

Rule 9 of the Board states that *'the Board shall establish a Scientific Advisory Group (SAG) to identify research gaps and priorities, to develop recommendations for enhanced coordination of existing research, to develop calls for proposals, and to develop recommendations for research and other activities that may be supported by the Board. The SAG shall invite the Chairman of NASCO's accredited NGOs, or his / her nominee from within the accredited NGOs, to participate in its meetings so as to provide the NGO viewpoint on the issues under discussion.'*

Rule 10 states that *'the Board shall appoint a Chairman by consensus, who shall serve for a term of two years and who may be eligible for re-election for a further term of two years. A Contracting Party providing the Chairman shall also be entitled to provide a Member of the Board and one or more advisers.'*

At the Annual Meeting of the Council in 2017, the representative of the European Union raised that it was unclear who, within each Party, was the Board’s voting member (the Board member) and who was the scientific adviser (the Board adviser) to the Board member given that everyone around the meeting table spoke freely to the various agenda items. It was also unclear to him who was the NGO representative. He felt that it would be easier for everyone to follow the business of the Board if only the Board members, including the nominated NGO representative, were able to speak to the meeting, as is the case in the Council and Commission meetings of NASCO. It is also the Secretary’s understanding that the representative of the European Union had similar issues with the Scientific Advisory Group and its conduct.

On this basis, the Secretary was asked to prepare a review of the procedures relating to the work of the International Atlantic Salmon Research Board and its Scientific Advisory Group. She has determined the following.

In the inaugural meeting of the Board, in 2001, it was stated in the report that *‘participation on the Board was restricted to one nominated member from each NASCO Party, assisted by one or more advisors. The clear intention of the Council was to limit the size of the Board so as to ensure its effective functioning’*. The Board members and their respective advisers at the inaugural meeting of the Board in 2001 were as follows:

| <b>Party</b>  | <b>Board member</b> | <b>Board advisers</b>                    |
|---|---------------------|--|
| Canada  | David Bevan         | Dave Meerburg                            |
| Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland) | Hedin Weihe         | Jan Arge Jacobsen                        |
| European Union  | Ken Whelan          | Ole Tougaard,<br>Ted Potter              |
| Iceland   | Arni Isaksson       |  |
| Norway  | Arne Eggereide      | Raoul Bierach,<br>Lars P Hansen          |
| Russian Federation                                      | Boris Prischepa     | Svetlana Krylova,<br>Alexander Zubchenko |
| USA   | Mary Colligan       |  |

The names of the nominated Board members and Board advisers were clearly distinguished in the participants list for each Board meeting until 2003. Invitation of an NGO representative to the Board was clarified in the re-write of the Rules of Procedure for the Board in 2006.

A search of the NASCO Access database to determine the current nominated Board members showed that the most recent list was from 2014. The Secretary subsequently contacted the Heads of Delegation of the various Parties in February 2018 to ask them for their nominated Board members and Board advisers. As of June 1, the following information has been provided:

| <b>Party</b>  | <b>Board member</b>             | <b>Board advisers</b> |
|---|---------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Canada  | Tony Blanchard                  |                       |
| European Union  | Cathal Gallagher                |                       |
| Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland) | Tommy Petersen<br>Birita i Dali |                       |
| Norway  | Raoul Bierach                   | Helge Dyrendal        |
| Russian Federation                                      | Alexander Khatuntsov            |                       |
| USA   | Tim Sheehan                     |                       |
| NGO   | Ken Whelan                      |                       |

Rory Saunders (USA) is the Chair of the Board until 2019.

It is still, therefore, not entirely clear at this juncture who are the Board's advisers given that they have only been named for one Party.

The Secretary consulted the Board's Chair, Rory Saunders (USA), to discuss how the Board meetings could be conducted in light of the issues raised by the representative of the European Union. The Chair stated that he would be happy to clarify with the Board members in advance of the meeting his intention to conduct the meeting in the way that the Council and Commission meetings are conducted such that only the Board members, the NGO representative and any invited speakers take the floor during the meetings of the Board in future. Both the Chair and the Secretary felt that firm instruction from the Chair should suffice to ensure clearer communication in meetings in future.

In consulting for this review, clarification of the role of the SAG has also been raised with the Secretary through the current representative of the European Union.

It is the Secretary's understanding that the SAG was originally established as a small team of technical experts (salmon scientists) to allow scientists working actively in the field the opportunity to input to the priorities and operations of the Board.

No Terms of Reference, as such, for the SAG have been found. However, in 2002, the report of the Board stated '*The Board discussed a timetable and mechanism for updating the inventory, for identifying research priorities and for soliciting, evaluating and funding research proposals. It was agreed that much of this work could best be undertaken by a Scientific Advisory Group (SAG) of the Board made up of the advisers to the Members of the Board.*' The Board asked that '*Mr David Meerburg serve as Chairman [of the SAG] for an initial period and implement the procedures outlined in the timetable [in the Board's 2002 report].*' The SAG first met in 2003 with the following nominated participants:

| <b>Party</b>  | <b>Original SAG member</b> |
|---|----------------------------|
| Chair   | Dave Meerburg              |
| Canada  | David Reddin               |
| Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland) | Jan Arge Jacobsen          |
| European Union  | Niall Ó Maoiléidigh        |
| Iceland   | Gudni Gudbergsson          |
| Norway  | Lars P Hansen              |
| USA   | Tim Sheehan                |

The SAG participants list remained limited, and comprised mainly scientists, until around 2012, after which more people started attending the SAG meetings, including an increasing number of non-scientists. In 2017, 28 people participated in the SAG meeting.

To determine the current nominated members of the SAG, as with the Board, a search of the NASCO Access database was performed and showed the list below; it is uncertain when this was last updated but it is also believed to be from 2014. The Secretary subsequently contacted the Heads of Delegation of the various Contracting Parties in February 2018 to ask them for their nominated SAG members. As of June 6, the following is known:

| <b>Party</b>  | <b>SAG member in NASCO database</b> | <b>Recent information from Heads of Delegations</b> |
|---|-------------------------------------|---|
| Canada  | Gérald Chaput                       | Gérald Chaput                                       |
| Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland) | Jóannes Hansen                      | Birita i Dali                                       |
| European Union  | Jaako Erkinaro                      | Jaako Erkinaro                                      |
| Norway  | Peder Fiske                         | Peder Fiske   |
| Russian Federation                                      | Sergey Prusov                       | Sergey Prusov                                       |
| USA   | Tim Sheehan                         | Tim Sheehan   |
| NGO   | Dave Meerburg                       | Dave Meerburg                                       |

Niall Ó Maoiléidigh (EU) is the Chair of the SAG until 2018.

Additionally, Rule 9 of the Board states that ‘*the Board shall establish a Scientific Advisory Group (SAG)*’.... However, the establishment of a Chair for the SAG is not stated, even though there has been a Chair of the SAG since 2002. Neither is the tenure of the position clear even though the last two Chairs have each served for four year terms.

There are, therefore, a number of issues that need to be clarified for both the Board and the SAG. These include:

- whether Council still wants a single Board member for each Party;
- the frequency of confirmation of the Board’s members and advisers, and a mechanism for that clarification;
- whether the SAG members should be the Board scientific advisers, as was originally suggested;
- who is able to attend both the Board and the SAG meetings;
- the establishment of and tenure for the Chair of the SAG;
- Terms of Reference for the SAG.

The Secretary feels that consultation among the Parties would be helpful to decide if new Rules of Procedure for the Board (and SAG) are necessary in light of this review.

Secretary  
Edinburgh  
June 6 2018