



Agenda item 7.3
For information

CNL(18)16

Report on 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

In 2013, the Council adopted an 'Action Plan for taking forward the recommendations of the External Performance Review and the review of the 'Next Steps' for NASCO' (CNL(13)38). In 2014, 2015, 2016 and 2017 comprehensive progress reports on the recommendations contained in the Action Plan were presented to the Council (CNL(14)14, CNL(15)15, CNL(16)16 and CNL(17)16). The following tables present an update for 2018 for all the recommendations contained in the Action Plan.

Section 1 contains recommendations which had been implemented or planned at the time the Action Plan was developed in 2013 but for which there was a need to monitor progress and evaluate outcomes.

Section 2 contains recommendations for which further action was required for their implementation. For ease of reference, in this report we have allocated numbers to the nine decisions contained in the Action Plan.

Section 3 contains actions to strengthen NASCO's work on the management of salmon fisheries.

Secretary
Edinburgh
1 June 2018

Section 1: Recommendations of the External Performance Review Panel (EPR) and ‘Next Steps’ Review Group (NS) that have been implemented or are planned and for which there may be a need to monitor progress and evaluate outcomes

	Recommendation	Actions taken / planned under the Action Plan	Progress since the development of the Action Plan
	NASCO’s ‘Next Steps’ Process		
EPR1	<p>The ‘Next Steps’ process has succeeded in undertaking a comprehensive and critical review of the work of the Organization to date and in enhancing efforts on the current areas of focus of the Organization. This progress should continue, based on the Strategic Approach, which has provided a comprehensive framework for the work to be undertaken and for improvements to be made in the implementation of NASCO Agreements.</p>	<p><i>The Council has agreed to proceed with a new cycle of Implementation Plans (IPs) covering the period 2013 - 2018 and Annual Progress Reports (APRs). The ‘Next Steps’ review process proposed only minor changes to the Strategic Approach.</i></p> <p><i>The EPR considered that the Strategic Approach had provided a comprehensive framework for the work of NASCO and it will be used in the next cycle of reporting.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2013 - 2018 IPs have been submitted and critically reviewed; the agreed template covered the main elements of the Strategic Approach. Subsequent APRs are also critically evaluated, with these evaluations being the subject of a Special Session at the Annual Meeting of the Council each year. • The Review Group has highlighted a number of issues relating to the second reporting cycle including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ not all Parties / jurisdictions have provided an IP and / or APRs; ○ some actions in the IP were unclear and read like progress reports making assessment of progress challenging; ○ timeliness of reporting has improved but some APRs are still submitted after 1 April; ○ the most common fault with APRs is a lack of quantitative information to assess progress on each action. • The Working Group on Future Reporting under Implementation Plans and Evaluation of Reports met in December 2017. This Group was tasked with reviewing the NASCO guidelines and templates for preparation and evaluation of Implementation Plans and Annual Progress Reports and advising on any changes required to improve reporting for the next IP cycle due to begin in 2019. The Report of the Working Group on Future Reporting (CNL(18)12) will be considered by the Council of NASCO at its 2018 Annual Meeting.

EPR2	<p>In the next reporting cycle, the Parties should continue their efforts to implement the decisions and to address the issues identified in the Strategic Approach. It will be important for the second cycle to address areas identified in the first cycle of the 'Next Steps' process for additional action. Consideration should be given to convening an FAR special session on this topic. Progress on the socio-economic aspects of Atlantic salmon and initiatives for endangered populations is also encouraged.</p>	<p><i>The IP template adopted in 2012, CNL(12)42, indicates that jurisdictions should take into account the specific issues on which action was recommended in the first cycle of reporting. These issues were collated by the Secretariat and sent to jurisdictions with the request to develop new IPs. An initial assessment of the IPs will be undertaken to ensure the information requested in this template has been provided and where there are gaps the IPs will be returned to the jurisdiction for further drafting. The IPs will then be evaluated by a Review Group. The findings of the evaluation will be considered at the 2013 Annual Meeting. A Special Session on socio-economics is to be held during the 2014 Annual Meeting. The IP template seeks information on social and economic aspects and on how threatened and endangered stocks are identified and of actions to address threats to them so these issues should be addressed in the new IPs. There will be a need to monitor progress and evaluate outcomes.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2013 - 2018 IPs have been submitted and critically reviewed; the agreed template covered the main elements of the Strategic Approach. • The Working Group on Future Reporting under Implementation Plans and Evaluation of Reports met in December 2017. This Group was asked to advise on any changes required to improve reporting for the next IP cycle due to begin in 2019. The Report of the Working Group on Future Reporting (CNL(18)12) will be considered by the Council of NASCO at its 2018 Annual Meeting. • On the recommendation of the Socio-economics Sub-Group, a Theme-based Special Session (TBSS) was held in 2014 on the management of single and mixed stock fisheries, with particular focus on fisheries on stocks below their conservation limits, including how socio-economic issues are included in management decisions. The 2014 TBSS Steering Committee noted inter alia that the reporting on what constitutes over-riding socio-economic considerations in permitting fisheries on stocks below their conservation limit was not always clear. • Theme-based Special Sessions were also held in 2015 (Maintaining and improving river connectivity with particular focus on impacts of hydropower), in 2016 (Addressing impacts of salmon farming on wild Atlantic salmon: Challenges to, and developments supporting, achievement of NASCO's international goals) and in 2017 (Understanding the risks and benefits of hatchery and stocking activities to wild Atlantic salmon populations). Reports of each of the TBSS held to date have been published. • Parties / jurisdictions have again been requested to provide details of any new studies relating to the socio-economic values of the wild Atlantic salmon. Details provided in 2018 on any such studies are contained in document CNL(18)06. • The IYS, entitled 'Salmon and People in a Changing World', seeks, inter alia, to improve understanding and awareness of the social and economic values of salmon.
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EPR3	<p>In terms of reporting, the next cycle should focus on assessing the effectiveness of the measures taken by the Parties. The IPs should contain clearly described identifiable, measurable outcomes and timescales. The Parties are encouraged to prepare IPs and FARs in a timely fashion, including through the possibility of electronic filing.</p>	<p><i>The Guidelines for the Preparation and Evaluation of Implementation Plans and for Reporting on Progress, CNL(12)44, indicate that IPs should specify the actions to be taken, the timescales for these actions, the expected outcomes and the approach to monitoring and enforcement so that progress can be subject to critical evaluation. The IP template, CNL(12)42, has been structured to ensure that, for each action, information is provided on the expected outcome and timescale and guidance has been provided on what constitutes an action and a measurable outcome. An initial assessment of the IPs will be undertaken to ensure the information requested in this template has been provided and where there are gaps the IPs will be returned to the jurisdiction for further drafting. The IPs will then be evaluated by a Review Group. The findings of the evaluation will be considered at the 2013 Annual Meeting. In the next cycle of reporting, FARs are to be replaced by APRs that will be reviewed. Timetables for submission of IPs and APRs have been developed. The APRs will be requested in early January each year and the Secretariat will send out reminders in early March, one month before the deadline for submission (1 April). Both the IP and APR templates will be available electronically. There will be a need to monitor progress and evaluate outcomes.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2013 - 2018 IPs have been submitted and critically reviewed; the agreed template covered the main elements of the Strategic Approach. Subsequent APRs are also critically evaluated, with these evaluations being the subject of a Special Session at the Annual Meeting of the Council each year. • The Review Group has highlighted a number of issues relating to the second reporting cycle including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ not all Parties / jurisdictions have provided an IP and / or APRs; ○ some actions in the IP were unclear and read like progress reports making assessment of progress challenging; ○ timeliness of reporting has improved but some APRs are still submitted after 1 April; ○ the most common fault with APRs is a lack of quantitative information to assess progress on each action. • The Working Group on Future Reporting under Implementation Plans and Evaluation of Reports met in December 2017. This Group was tasked with reviewing the NASCO guidelines and templates for preparation and evaluation of Implementation Plans and Annual Progress Reports and advising on any changes required to improve reporting for the next IP cycle due to begin in 2019. The Report of the Working Group on Future Reporting (CNL(18)12) will be considered by the Council of NASCO at its 2018 Annual Meeting.
EPR4	<p>In the long-term, the 'Next Steps' process should consider cross-cutting issues, such as climate change. It should also consider conducting a review of the functions and role of the Council including the possibility of vesting it with binding decision-making authority.</p>	<p><i>The Council has agreed that theme-based Special Sessions could be helpful to NASCO and procedures for planning and organising these Special Sessions agreed (see CNL(12)12 for details). A number of priority topics have been identified including management of mixed-stock fisheries (MSFs), managing salmon under a changing climate and fish passage at hydro-electric facilities. It has been agreed that there will be a Special Session on socio-economics at the 2014 Annual Meeting and a focus on MSFs in NEAC in 2013. Information on</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Theme-based Special Sessions were held in 2014, 2015, 2016 and 2017 and have been well-received and reported. • Since 2015, an item has been included on the agendas for each Commission to allow for a focus on MSFs still operating in the Commission area. • Parties / jurisdictions have been requested to provide details of any new studies relating to the socio-economic values of the wild Atlantic salmon. • The IYS, entitled 'Salmon and People in a Changing World', seeks, inter alia, to improve understanding and awareness of

		<p><i>climate change impacts on salmon was presented at the ‘Salmon Summit’ and should be taken into account in developing future research needs. ICES has been requested to report on any significant advances in understanding of the biology of Atlantic salmon that is pertinent to NASCO, including information on the potential implications of climate change for salmon management.</i></p> <p><i>The actions relating to modernizing and strengthening the work of NASCO are detailed in sections 2 and 3 below.</i></p>	<p><i>the social and economic values of salmon. One of the themes of the IYS will be ‘Salmon in a changing salmosphere’ in order to understand and quantify the effects of natural environmental variability and anthropogenic factors affecting salmon distribution and abundance. Climate change will be considered under this theme.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>• There has not yet been a Theme-based Special Session specifically on climate change. However, there will be a symposium in advance of the 2019 Annual Meeting in Norway, as part of the activities during the IYS, entitled ‘Managing the Atlantic salmon in a rapidly changing environment - management challenges and possible responses’.</i> <i>• In 2017, ICES provided advice on potential future impacts of climate change on salmon stock dynamics.</i>
Convention for the Conservation of Salmon in the North Atlantic Ocean			
EPR 24	The institutional structure should be reviewed and amended as appropriate to include subsidiary bodies and a Secretariat, as well as rules for appointment of a Secretary and the duties of the Secretary. Authority and procedures for the establishment of <i>ad hoc</i> bodies should be provided.	<i>Article 12 of the Convention states that the Council shall appoint a Secretary and describes the functions of the Secretary. Rule 28 of the Council’s Rules of Procedure states that the Council may establish such other subsidiary bodies as it deems necessary and shall determine their composition and terms of reference.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>• A procedure for the appointment of a Secretary was agreed in 2012 as were details of the duties of the post. This procedure was used for the appointment of the new Secretary in 2017.</i> <i>• No further action needed.</i>
EPR 27	It is recommended that, as appropriate, consideration be given to adoption of rules relating to the establishment of NASCO subsidiary and <i>ad hoc</i> bodies.	<i>Rule 28 of the Council’s Rules of Procedure states that the Council may establish such other subsidiary bodies as it deems necessary and shall determine their composition and terms of reference.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>• No action necessary.</i>
EPR 32	The description of the functions of the Secretary in article 12 should be reviewed, expanded and modernized to reflect actual practice. This can be elaborated in rules of procedure.	<i>Article 12.2 states that the functions of the Secretary include performing such functions as follow from other provisions of the Convention or as the Council may determine. This provides the flexibility for the Council to determine the functions of the Secretary adaptively in response to the work of the Organization.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>• A procedure for the appointment of a Secretary was agreed in 2012 as were details of the duties of the post. This procedure was used for the appointment of the new Secretary in 2017.</i> <i>• No further action needed.</i>

EPR 33	The regulatory and other measures reflecting the scientific advice should continue to be set and, in this regard, efforts to develop a risk framework for the Faroese fishery are encouraged.	<i>Multi-annual regulatory measures or decisions were agreed for both the West Greenland and Faroese fisheries in 2012. The development of a risk framework is underway for the Faroese fishery.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>In 2015, a multi-annual regulatory measure was agreed for the West Greenland salmon fishery (2015 - 2017) under which Greenland unilaterally committed to limit the total annual catch for all components of its fishery to no more than 45t and to improve the monitoring, management control and surveillance of its salmon fishery. A new regulatory measure for the West Greenland salmon fishery to apply from 2018 will be considered at the 2018 Annual Meeting of the West Greenland Commission. Preliminary discussions on this matter have already taken place at both the Copenhagen Inter-Sessional Meeting of the West Greenland Commission (held during 27 February – 1 March 2018) and the Conference Call Inter-Sessional Meeting of the West Greenland Commission held on 15 May 2018. There will also be a further Inter-Sessional Meeting of the West Greenland Commission to be held on 10 June 2018, immediately prior to the Annual Meeting.</i> • <i>In 2015, a multi-annual Decision regarding the salmon fishery in Faroese waters in 2015/16 – 2017/18) was agreed. This decision did not set a quota but Faroese management decisions will be made with due consideration to the advice of ICES concerning the biological situation and the status of the stocks contributing to the fishery. There has been no salmon fishery at the Faroe Islands since 2000. A new Decision regarding the Faroese salmon fishery to apply from 2018 / 2019 will be considered at the 2018 Annual Meeting of the North-East Atlantic Commission.</i> • <i>The development of a risk framework for the Faroese fishery has not been progressed although ICES uses a risk framework to provide catch options.</i>
EPR 36	Obligations for Parties to provide information should be reviewed and updated, consistent with the recommendations of the 'Next Steps' Review Group and the Working Group on Future Reporting. The type of	<i>In 2012, the Council adopted all of the recommendations of the Working Group on Future Reporting, CNL(12)12 and templates for both IPs and APRs were agreed that specify the information sought, including details of monitoring programmes and expected outcomes of actions developed to address threats. The IP template,</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>2013 - 2018 IPs have been submitted and critically reviewed; the agreed template covered the main elements of the Strategic Approach. Subsequent APRs are also critically evaluated, with these evaluations being the subject of a Special Session at the Annual Meeting of the Council each year.</i>

	<p>information required by the Organization to meet the challenges identified in the 'Next Steps' process should be prioritized and identified, and information requirements concerning outcomes of actions taken to implement NASCO programmes or decisions should be required.</p>	<p><i>CNL(12)42, seeks information on the three main 'focus areas' of management of fisheries, habitat protection and restoration, and aquaculture and related activities (including G. salaris and transgenics). Information is sought on how socio-economic factors are included under management decisions and on how threatened and endangered stocks are identified.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The Review Group has highlighted a number of issues relating to the second reporting cycle including:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>not all Parties / jurisdictions have provided an IP and / or APRs;</i> ○ <i>some actions in the IP were unclear and read like progress reports making assessment of progress challenging;</i> ○ <i>timeliness of reporting has improved but some APRs are still submitted after 1 April;</i> ○ <i>the most common fault with APRs is a lack of quantitative information to assess progress on each action.</i> • <i>The Working Group on Future Reporting under Implementation Plans and Evaluation of Reports met in December 2017. This Group was tasked with reviewing the NASCO guidelines and templates for preparation and evaluation of Implementation Plans and Annual Progress Reports and advising on any changes required to improve reporting for the next IP cycle due to begin in 2019. The Report of the Working Group on Future Reporting (CNL(18)12) will be considered by the Council of NASCO at its 2018 Annual Meeting.</i>
Conservation and Management			
EPR 41	<p>NASCO should ensure that the precautionary approach is used to the same extent in managing all impacts of human activity on the full life-cycle of salmon in rivers, estuaries, coastal areas and the open ocean.</p>	<p><i>NASCO's agreements developed under the Precautionary Approach relate to management of fisheries, habitat protection and restoration and aquaculture and related activities. Guidelines both on incorporating socio-economic factors in decisions under the Precautionary Approach and on stock rebuilding programmes have also been developed. The IP template, CNL(12)42, requests that jurisdictions take account of the specific actions identified in the first reporting cycle to ensure consistency with these agreements (see EPR 2 and EPR43). There will be a need to monitor progress and evaluate outcomes.</i></p> <p><i>By-catch of salmon in pelagic fisheries for other species is referred to in the Agreement on the Adoption of a</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>2013 - 2018 IPs have been submitted and critically reviewed; the agreed template covered the main elements of the Strategic Approach. Subsequent APRs are also critically evaluated, with these evaluations being the subject of a Special Session at the Annual Meeting of the Council each year.</i> • <i>Following the first phase of the SALSEA Programme, which delivered new insights into the marine phase of salmon and new tools to support management, the IASRB now seeks to encourage telemetry studies to partition marine mortality along the salmon's migration route. Progress reports on the twelve outline telemetry projects endorsed by the IASRB and other developments in relation to SALSEA - Track, will be considered at the IASRB's 2018 Annual Meeting.</i>

		<i>Precautionary Approach (see EPR10 below).</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In 2017, ICES provided new information on by-catch in the International Ecosystem Summer Survey of the Nordic Seas, in the Icelandic mackerel fishery and in the fishery for blue whiting.
EPR 42	NASCO should ensure that the WSSD-JPOI commitment to maintain or restore stocks to levels that can produce the maximum sustainable yield with the aim of achieving these goals for depleted stocks on an urgent basis, where possible not later than 2015, is taken into account, including in the context of the 'Next Steps' process.	<p><i>NASCO's Agreement on Adoption of a Precautionary Approach, CNL(98)46, states that stocks should be maintained above conservation limits (CLs) by the use of management targets (MTs) and that stock rebuilding programmes should be undertaken for stocks that are below these CLs. ICES advises that conservation limits should be set at a level that will achieve long-term maximum sustainable yield. Progress towards establishment and attainment of these CLs and MTs will be evaluated in the next cycle of IPs and APRs. The IP template, CNL(12)42, seeks information on stock status relative to reference points (conservation limits, management targets or other measures of abundance) so as to provide a baseline for future comparison. The IP template also seeks information on any fisheries permitted to operate on stocks that are below their reference point and the approach to managing them to promote stock rebuilding. A major factor influencing salmon abundance is mortality at sea and this is constraining the ability to achieve stock rebuilding goals.</i></p> <p><i>Currently, the stated management objectives for Atlantic salmon stocks in the US and the Scotia-Fundy Region of Canada are a 25% increase in returns of 2SW salmon from the average returns in 1992-1996. This rebuilding objective was established in light of the extremely depleted state of these endangered populations. However, selection of this management objective is inconsistent with NASCO's Agreement on the Adoption of the Precautionary Approach, Action Plan for the Application of the Precautionary Approach, NASCO Guidelines for the Management of Salmon Fisheries, and</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In 2016, ICES was asked to update the time-series of number of stocks with established CLs by jurisdiction and to update trends in the number of stocks meeting CLs by jurisdiction advise. • To provide a more consistent and uniform approach to presenting information on stock status, in 2016 the Council adopted a new classification system for stock status for use in the Rivers Database. Parties were asked to use this system to update the information held in the Rivers Database by 31 December 2017. Contributions to the Rivers Database have only been received from thirteen of the seventeen jurisdictions to date. • The 2014 TBSS Steering Committee noted, inter alia, that the reporting on what constitutes over-riding socio-economic considerations in permitting fisheries on stocks below their conservation limit was not always clear. • New management objectives for Atlantic salmon in the US were established in 2014 (4,549 2SW returns). • The ICES ACOM report for 2018 indicates that the management objective for Scotia-Fundy remains a 25% increase in regional returns of 2SW salmon relative to a baseline period (average returns in 1992–1996). • The SALSEA - Track programme aims to provide new insights into the causes of mortality at sea.

		<i>scientific advice from ICES. The North American Commission has, therefore, agreed to review these management objectives.</i>	
EPR 43	Noting that NASCO has, in the SALSEA Programme, addressed the problem of estimating sea mortality, it is important to cover the sea areas stretching from estuaries to the high seas, the phase of the life cycle where the salmon leaves natal waters, to the same extent as other phases of the life cycle.	<i>The SALSEA Programme was a comprehensive programme involving freshwater, estuarine, in-shore and high seas elements, although the marine surveys were focused on post-smolts and on improving understanding of distribution and migration at sea. A Sub-Group of the SAG has met and provided recommendations to the IASRB for future research for consideration during the 2013 Annual Meeting.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The first phase of the SALSEA Programme delivered new insights into the marine phase of salmon and new tools to support management, but it did not provide quantitative estimates of mortality of salmon at sea. The IASRB now seeks to encourage telemetry studies to partition marine mortality along the salmon's migration route.</i> • <i>In 2014, the IASRB adopted a Resolution encouraging telemetry projects and hosted a Telemetry Workshop at which 12 project proposals were developed. In 2015, the Board reaffirmed its commitment to an international telemetry project under the SALSEA brand named 'SALSEA - Track' as a continuing commitment to understanding the factors affecting the mortality of salmon at sea. The project leaders of the 12 telemetry projects endorsed by the Board under SALSEA - Track have been asked to provide project updates in advance of the 2018 Annual Meeting.</i> • <i>The EU has provided funding to NASCO to support three projects:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Understanding and comparing early mortality of European salmon populations at sea;</i> ○ <i>Sea lice model for the sustainable development of Atlantic salmon fisheries and aquaculture;</i> ○ <i>Comparing mortality of European salmon populations at sea using multiple -method telemetry studies.</i> <i>Progress reports for these projects have also been requested in advance of the Board's 2018 Annual Meeting.</i> • <i>In 2017, a presentation was made to the IASRB on a new approach to tracking based on a technique for sub-surface oceanographic monitoring (ROAM). While this technique may not be suitable for nearshore waters, it offers potential for tracking salmon throughout the North Atlantic area at reasonable cost. A workshop was planned to take place in March 2018 in order to further develop the technique.</i>

			<p>However, this had to be cancelled and has been re-scheduled to take place during the week commencing 4 June 2018. A report on the workshop will be given to the Board at its 2018 Annual Meeting.</p>
EPR 46	<p>Through the 'Next Steps' process, NASCO has addressed some of the ambiguities or inconsistencies in its instruments relating to fisheries management. In future reporting, information should be provided by the Parties on the interplay between stock conservation needs and incorporation of social and economic factors in decision-making, for both single and mixed-stock fisheries. In particular, clear indications should be given of how decisions were taken to permit exploitation of stocks known to be below their reference points, where information on stock status was lacking, and the consequences of these decisions for stock rebuilding.</p>	<p><i>The IP template, CNL(12)42, requests that jurisdictions identify any fisheries permitted to operate on salmon stocks that are below their reference point and describe the approach taken to managing them that still promotes stock rebuilding. Jurisdictions are also requested to describe how socio-economic factors are taken into account in making decisions on fisheries management. There will be a need to monitor progress and evaluate outcomes.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On the recommendation of the Socio-economics Sub-Group, a Theme-based Special Session (TBSS) was held in 2014 on the management of single and mixed-stock fisheries, with particular focus on fisheries on stocks below their conservation limits, including how socio-economic issues are included in management decisions. The 2014 TBSS Steering Committee noted inter alia that the reporting on what constitutes over-riding socio-economic considerations in permitting fisheries on stocks below their conservation limit was not always clear.
EPR 47	<p>The Parties are encouraged to report on issues relating to the management of salmon fisheries in a prompt and timely fashion.</p>	<p><i>The IP Guidelines, CNL(12)44, specify the timetable for submission of IPs and APRs. Reminders will be issued. There will be a need to monitor compliance with these timelines.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Review Group has indicated that not all Parties / jurisdictions have provided an IP and / or APRs. • Although the timeliness of reporting had improved since the IP Guidelines were developed, only 7 of the 17 Parties / jurisdictions submitted their APRs by 1 April 2018.
EPR 48	<p>As recommended by the 'Next Steps' Review Group, there is a need for further progress to be made in the management of salmon fisheries as part of the next cycle of the 'Next Steps' process.</p>	<p><i>The IP template, CNL(12)42, seeks information on the main threats and management challenges relating to fisheries and the actions to address each threat, including actions on the specific issues identified in the first reporting cycle. There will be a need to monitor progress and evaluate outcomes.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2013 - 2018 IPs have been submitted and critically reviewed; the agreed template covered the main elements of the Strategic Approach. Subsequent APRs are also critically evaluated, with these evaluations being the subject of a Special Session at the Annual Meeting of the Council each year. • The Review Group has highlighted a number of issues relating to the second reporting cycle including:

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ not all Parties / jurisdictions have provided an IP and / or APRs; ○ some actions in the IP were unclear and read like progress reports making assessment of progress challenging; ○ timeliness of reporting has improved but some APRs are still submitted after 1 April; ○ the most common fault with APRs is a lack of quantitative information to assess progress on each action. ● The Working Group on Future Reporting under Implementation Plans and Evaluation of Reports met in December 2017. This Group was tasked with reviewing the NASCO guidelines and templates for preparation and evaluation of Implementation Plans and Annual Progress Reports and advising on any changes required to improve reporting for the next IP cycle due to begin in 2019. The Report of the Working Group on Future Reporting (CNL(18)12) will be considered by the Council of NASCO at its 2018 Annual Meeting.
EPR 49	The Parties are encouraged to report on issues relating to the protection and restoration of salmon habitat in a timely fashion.	<i>The IP Guidelines, CNL(12)44, specify the timetable for submission of IPs and APRs. Reminders will be issued. There will be a need to monitor compliance with these timelines.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The Review Group has indicated that not all Parties / jurisdictions have provided an IP and / or APRs. ● Although the timeliness of reporting had improved since the IP Guidelines were developed, only 7 of the 17 Parties / jurisdictions submitted their APRs by 1 April 2018.
EPR 50	As recommended by the 'Next Steps' Review Group, there is a need for further progress to be made in the protection and preservation of salmon habitat as part of the next cycle of the 'Next Steps' process.	<i>The IP template, CNL(12)42, seeks information on the main threats and management challenges relating to habitat protection and restoration, and the actions to address each threat, including actions on the specific issues identified in the first reporting cycle. There will be a need to monitor progress and evaluate outcomes.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 2013 - 2018 IPs have been submitted and critically reviewed; the agreed template covered the main elements of the Strategic Approach. Subsequent APRs are also critically evaluated, with these evaluations being the subject of a Special Session at the Annual Meeting of the Council each year. ● The Review Group has highlighted a number of issues relating to the second reporting cycle including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ not all Parties / jurisdictions have provided an IP and / or APRs; ○ some actions in the IP were unclear and read like progress reports making assessment of progress challenging;

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>timeliness of reporting has improved but some APRs are still submitted after 1 April;</i> ○ <i>the most common fault with APRs is a lack of quantitative information to assess progress on each action.</i> ● <i>The Working Group on Future Reporting under Implementation Plans and Evaluation of Reports met in December 2017. This Group was tasked with reviewing the NASCO guidelines and templates for preparation and evaluation of Implementation Plans and Annual Progress Reports and advising on any changes required to improve reporting for the next IP cycle due to begin in 2019. The Report of the Working Group on Future Reporting (CNL(18)12) will be considered by the Council of NASCO at its 2018 Annual Meeting.</i>
EPR 51	If there is to be a balance between measures aimed at ending mixed-stock fisheries in the areas beyond fisheries jurisdiction and measures ending mixed-stock fisheries within fisheries jurisdiction, NASCO should aim at managing mixed-stock fisheries in the North Atlantic to protect the weakest of the contributing stocks.	<i>The NASCO Convention does not permit salmon fishing beyond areas of fisheries jurisdiction and no activity by vessels from non-NASCO Parties has been detected in international waters since the early 1990s (see EPR6). Under the IP template, CNL(12)42, jurisdictions are requested to describe how MSFs are defined, indicate the mean catch in these fisheries over the last 5 years and describe how they are managed to ensure that all contributing stocks are meeting their conservation objectives. There will be a need to monitor progress and evaluate outcomes.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>Since 2015, an item has been included on the agendas for each Commission to allow for a focus on MSFs still operating in the Commission area. Reporting has provided an update on MSFs still operating, recent catch data and any new management measures. The reporting does not indicate how they are managed to ensure that all contributing stocks are meeting their conservation objectives.</i>
EPR 52	Additional progress is needed towards achieving the international goals for sea lice and containment.	<i>The IP template, CNL(12)42, seeks information on the main threats and management challenges relating to aquaculture and related activities, and the actions to address each threat, including actions on the specific issues identified in the first reporting cycle. There will be a need to monitor progress and evaluate outcomes.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>The Review Group has recognised that, for jurisdictions with salmon farming, providing quantitative data to demonstrate progress towards the international goals for sea lice and containment has been challenging. The Group had expressed the opinion that the IPs for all Parties / jurisdictions with salmon farming should present quantitative data in a transparent manner to demonstrate progress made over the period of the IP towards the international goals for sea lice and containment rather than describing only the management measures in place.</i>

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In 2016 a Theme-based Special Session was held entitled 'Addressing impacts of salmon farming on wild Atlantic salmon: challenges to, and developments supporting, achievement of NASCO's international goals.' Following the session, the Steering Committee concluded that there is an urgent need for all Parties / jurisdictions to adopt stronger measures if their international responsibilities are to be met and reiterated that the agreed international goals are that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ there is no increase in sea lice loads or lice-induced mortality of wild salmonids attributable to the farms; and ○ 100% of farmed fish are retained in all production facilities.
EPR 53	As recommended by the FAR Review Group, there is a need for further progress to address the impacts of aquaculture, introductions and transfers and transgenics as part of the next cycle of the 'Next Steps' process.	<i>The IP template, CNL(12)42, seeks information on the main threats and management challenges relating to the impacts of aquaculture, introductions and transfers and transgenics, and the actions to address each threat (consistent with the Williamsburg Resolution and the BMP Guidance), including actions on the specific issues identified in the first reporting cycle. There will be a need to monitor progress and evaluate outcomes.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2013 - 2018 IPs have been submitted and critically reviewed; the agreed template covered the main elements of the Strategic Approach. Subsequent APRs are also critically evaluated, with these evaluations being the subject of a Special Session at the Annual Meeting of the Council each year. • The Review Group has highlighted a number of issues relating to the second reporting cycle including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ not all Parties / jurisdictions have provided an IP and / or APRs; ○ some actions in the IP were unclear and read like progress reports making assessment of progress challenging; ○ timeliness of reporting has improved but some APRs are still submitted after 1 April; ○ the most common fault with APRs is a lack of quantitative information to assess progress on each action. • For those jurisdictions that have salmon farming, the Review Group had recognised that providing quantitative data to demonstrate progress towards the international goals for sea lice and containment (questions 4.2 and 4.3 in the IP template, respectively) was challenging. The Group had expressed the opinion that the IPs should present quantitative data in a transparent manner to demonstrate progress made over the period of the IP towards the international goals for

			<p><i>sea lice and containment rather than describing only the management measures in place.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The Working Group on Future Reporting under Implementation Plans and Evaluation of Reports met in December 2017. This Group was tasked with reviewing the NASCO guidelines and templates for preparation and evaluation of Implementation Plans and Annual Progress Reports and advising on any changes required to improve reporting for the next IP cycle due to begin in 2019. The Report of the Working Group on Future Reporting (CNL(18)12) will be considered by the Council of NASCO at its 2018 Annual Meeting.</i>
EPR 54	The Parties are encouraged to report on issues relating to aquaculture, introductions and transfers and transgenics in a full and timely fashion.	<i>The IP Guidelines, CNL(12)44, specify the timetable for submission of IPs and APRs. Reminders will be issued. There will be a need to monitor compliance with these timelines.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The Review Group has highlighted a number of issues relating to the second reporting cycle including:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>not all Parties / jurisdictions have provided an IP and / or APRs;</i> ○ <i>some actions in the IP were unclear and read like progress reports making assessment of progress challenging;</i> ○ <i>the most common fault with APRs is a lack of quantitative information to assess progress on each action.</i> • <i>Although the timeliness of reporting had improved since the IP Guidelines were developed, only 7 of the 17 Parties / jurisdictions submitted their APRs by 1 April 2018.</i>
EPR 57	It is recommended that further efforts be made to address the issue of <i>Gyrodactylus salaris</i> in the context of the NASCO 'Next Steps' process.	<i>The IP template, CNL(12)42, seeks information on the main threats and management challenges relating to G. salaris and the actions to address each threat, including actions on the specific issues identified in the first reporting cycle. There will be a need to monitor progress and evaluate outcomes.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The Working Group on G. salaris met in 2017 and provided a forum for exchange of information and cooperation on monitoring, research and measures to prevent the spread of the parasite and to eradicate it if introduced. The report, which included an updated 'Road Map' of recommendations was considered at the 2017 Annual Meeting of the North-East Atlantic Commission. However, the Commission was unable to adopt the revised 'Road Map' at that time. The Commission agreed to hold a further meeting of the Working Group on G. salaris in 2018 (and every three years thereafter). The Group therefore met in April 2018 and its 2018 Report (NEA(18)03) will be considered at the 2018</i>

			<p><i>Annual Meeting of the Commission. The revised 'Road Map' will also be considered again at that meeting.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>2013 - 2018 IPs have been submitted and critically reviewed; the agreed template covered the main elements of the Strategic Approach. Subsequent APRs are also critically evaluated, with these evaluations being the subject of a Special Session at the Annual Meeting of the Council each year.</i> • <i>The Working Group on Future Reporting under Implementation Plans and Evaluation of Reports met in December 2017. This Group was tasked with reviewing the NASCO guidelines and templates for preparation and evaluation of Implementation Plans and Annual Progress Reports and advising on any changes required to improve reporting for the next IP cycle due to begin in 2019. The Report of the Working Group on Future Reporting (CNL(18)12) will be considered by the Council of NASCO at its 2018 Annual Meeting.</i>
EPR 58	Further exchange of information among the jurisdictions through the development of IPs and FARs, as appropriate, should be welcomed.	<i>The Council has agreed that the next cycle of IPs and APRs should commence in 2013 and that theme-based Special Sessions will be held on a range of topics. The first theme-based Special Session will be on mixed-stock fisheries.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>2013 - 2018 IPs have been submitted and critically reviewed; the agreed template covered the main elements of the Strategic Approach. Subsequent APRs are also critically evaluated, with these evaluations being the subject of a Special Session at the Annual Meeting of the Council each year.</i> • <i>The four Theme-based Special Sessions held to date have been well received and have provided for further exchange of information including on best management practices.</i> • <i>The Working Group on Future Reporting under Implementation Plans and Evaluation of Reports met in December 2017. This Group was tasked with reviewing the NASCO guidelines and templates for preparation and evaluation of Implementation Plans and Annual Progress Reports and advising on any changes required to improve reporting for the next IP cycle due to begin in 2019. The Report of the Working Group on Future Reporting (CNL(18)12) will be considered by the Council of NASCO at</i>

			its 2018 Annual Meeting.
Compliance and Enforcement			
EPR 59	The 'Next Steps' process has been an effective mechanism to improve compliance and enforcement in NASCO, in large part due to the expanding and evolving role of the Council. The Organization is encouraged to continue these efforts to further improve compliance and enforcement and promote the conservation, restoration, enhancement and rational management of salmon stocks.	<i>The IP template CNL(12)42, seeks details of the expected outcome, the approach for monitoring effectiveness and enforcement. Progress will be reported through the APRs for each specified action. The new reporting cycle has greater focus on enforcement than the first cycle. There will be a need to monitor progress and evaluate outcomes.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2013 - 2018 IPs have been submitted and critically reviewed; the agreed template covered the main elements of the Strategic Approach. Subsequent APRs are also critically evaluated, with these evaluations being the subject of a Special Session at the Annual Meeting of the Council each year. • The Review Group has highlighted a number of issues relating to the second reporting cycle including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ not all Parties / jurisdictions have provided an IP and / or APRs; ○ some actions in the IP were unclear and read like progress reports making assessment of progress challenging; ○ timeliness of reporting has improved but some APRs are still submitted after 1 April; ○ the most common fault with APRs is a lack of quantitative information to assess progress on each action. • The Working Group on Future Reporting under Implementation Plans and Evaluation of Reports met in December 2017. This Group was tasked with reviewing the NASCO guidelines and templates for preparation and evaluation of Implementation Plans and Annual Progress Reports and advising on any changes required to improve reporting for the next IP cycle due to begin in 2019. The Report of the Working Group on Future Reporting (CNL(18)12) will be considered by the Council of NASCO at its 2018 Annual Meeting.
EPR 61	The Parties are encouraged to continue to report on these matters in the next cycle of the 'Next Steps' process. Implementation plans should include reporting on estimates of unreported catches and measures taken to reduce such catches. Timely reporting is	<i>The IP template, CNL(12)42, seeks information on the current level of unreported catch and the measures being taken to reduce this. The APR template, CNL(12)43, seeks details of the estimated unreported catch from in-river, estuarine and coastal fisheries. A schedule for reporting has been agreed and reminders will be issued to the Parties. There will be a need to monitor</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2013 - 2018 IPs have been submitted and critically reviewed; the agreed template covered the main elements of the Strategic Approach. Subsequent APRs are also critically evaluated, with these evaluations being the subject of a Special Session at the Annual Meeting of the Council each year. • The timeliness of reporting has improved but some APRs are

	essential so that all relevant information is available during assessments.	<i>compliance with these timelines, progress and evaluate outcomes.</i>	<p><i>still submitted after 1 April.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The fishery at Greenland has been reviewed using Six Tenets for Effective Management of an Atlantic Salmon Fishery and a new monitoring and control plan developed. In 2016, the other Members of the West Greenland Commission (with the exception of EU – Sweden and EU – Finland) were asked to complete self-assessments of their Atlantic salmon fisheries using the Six Tenets matrix. Self-assessments were completed by Canada, the European Union (Denmark, France, Germany, Ireland, Spain and UK) and the United States. These self-assessments were reviewed at the 2017 Inter-Sessional Meeting of the West Greenland Commission (see WGCIS(17)14 for details).</i> • <i>The Working Group on Future Reporting under Implementation Plans and Evaluation of Reports met in December 2017. In addition to reviewing the NASCO guidelines and templates for preparation and evaluation of Implementation Plans and Annual Progress Reports, this Group was asked to include options for including reporting under the Six Tenets for Effective Management of an Atlantic Salmon Fishery in the IP process. The Report of the Working Group on Future Reporting (CNL(18)12) will be considered by the Council of NASCO at its 2018 Annual Meeting.</i> • <i>Estimates of unreported catch have not been provided by all Parties / jurisdictions.</i>
International Cooperation			
EPR 69	The NASCO website should show active NGOs, or explain why an NGO is referred to as ‘suspended’.	<i>The website has been amended in accordance with this recommendation.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>No further action necessary.</i>
EPR 73	Iceland should be encouraged to re-accede to the Convention.	<i>In accordance with this recommendation a letter was sent to the Icelandic Ministry of Foreign Affairs on 15 May 2012 inviting Iceland to re-accede to the Convention. The Council has agreed that the President and Secretary should keep Iceland informed of NASCO’s work. The Parties are also encouraged to raise the issue</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The President of NASCO wrote again to the Icelandic Minister for Fisheries and Agriculture on 27 October 2014, updating him on NASCO matters and encouraging Iceland to re-accede to the NASCO Convention. The President requested that the Parties to NASCO also make individual representations to the Minister.</i>

		<i>bilaterally.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The Secretary had an informal meeting with a representative of the Icelandic authorities in the fringes of the NASF summit in March 2018 and briefed him on the IYS and other NASCO activities.</i>
EPR 74	Dialogue with St. Pierre and Miquelon should be increased in order to agree upon targets and a method for making decisions on their salmon fishery and also to improve data collection.	<i>A letter was sent to the French Secrétariat Général de la Mer by the President in 2010 encouraging France (in respect of St Pierre and Miquelon) to accede to the Convention. Welcome improvements have been made to the sampling programme of the St Pierre and Miquelon salmon fishery including genetic analyses. In accordance with this recommendation and as agreed by the Council a follow-up letter will be sent by the President. The Parties are encouraged to raise the issue bilaterally.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>In 2013, the President wrote to encourage France (in respect of St Pierre and Miquelon) to accede to the Convention. The response from the Secrétariat générale de la mer received in 2014 indicated that France (in respect of St Pierre and Miquelon) wished to retain observer status at that stage. However it noted that France (in respect of St Pierre and Miquelon) remained committed to close cooperation with NASCO and would pursue scientific cooperation with NASCO Parties.</i> • <i>In July 2017, the President of NASCO wrote to the French Minister for Agriculture and Food, noting NASCO's concerns about the salmon fishery at St Pierre and Miquelon, urging them to further enhance co-operation with NASCO by introducing effective measures to limit catches to the lowest possible level and once again asking France (in respect of St Pierre and Miquelon) to become a full Member of NASCO. A response to this letter was received on 22 May 2017. The French authorities have indicated that France (in respect of St Pierre and Miquelon) wishes to maintain observer status to NASCO. The response also notes France (in respect of St Pierre and Miquelon)'s commitment to providing NASCO with as much information as possible and taking NASCO recommendations on catch taken by communities dependent on fishing into account.</i> • <i>At the 2016 Annual Meeting, the US and Canada noted support for extending the six tenets evaluations for the fishery at St Pierre and Miquelon and Canada urged France (in respect of St Pierre and Miquelon) to join the North American Commission. France (in respect of St Pierre and Miquelon) have advised that they hope to be able to provide CPUE information in 2019.</i> • <i>Canada met with France (in respect of Saint Pierre and</i>

			<p><i>Miquelon) in 2017 and discussed potential membership in NASCO (see CNL(18)28rev). Canada advised that France (in respect of St Pierre and Miquelon) will continue as an observer and participate at NASCO Annual Meetings as it has in the past.</i></p>
		<p><i>NASCO should continue to cooperate with EIFAAC and OSPAR on issues of common interest.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The OSPAR Commission and EIFAAC are core partners of NASCO in the International Year of the Salmon (IYS). The Chairman of EIFAAC attended the 2017 NASCO Annual Meeting and EIFAAC have attended three of the four IYS North Atlantic Steering Committee Meetings held since June 2017. The OSPAR Commission informed its members of the IYS during its April meeting of the Environmental Impacts of Human Activities Committee. The Secretariats of both Organizations have been invited to the 2018 Annual Meeting of NASCO.</i>
‘Strategic Approach’			
NS1	<p>While the five key issues relating to management of salmon fisheries remain valid, the Group recognised the need for further progress to address the additional actions highlighted by the FAR Review Group. The 2009 fisheries management guidelines should assist jurisdictions in making further progress in implementing NASCO’s agreements and with future reporting.</p>	<p><i>The IP template, CNL(12)42, seeks information on the main threats and management challenges relating to fisheries and the actions to address each threat, including actions on the specific issues identified in the first reporting cycle. These issues were collated by the Secretariat and sent to jurisdictions with the request to develop new IPs. There will be a need to monitor progress and evaluate outcomes.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>2013 - 2018 IPs have been submitted and critically reviewed; the agreed template covered the main elements of the Strategic Approach. Subsequent APRs are also critically evaluated, with these evaluations being the subject of a Special Session at the Annual Meeting of the Council each year.</i> • <i>The Review Group has highlighted a number of issues relating to the second reporting cycle including:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>not all Parties / jurisdictions have provided an IP and / or APRs;</i> ○ <i>some actions in the IP were unclear and read like progress reports making assessment of progress challenging;</i> ○ <i>timeliness of reporting has improved but some APRs are still submitted after 1 April;</i> ○ <i>the most common fault with APRs is a lack of quantitative information to assess progress on each action.</i> • <i>The Working Group on Future Reporting under Implementation Plans and Evaluation of Reports met in December 2017. This Group was tasked with reviewing the</i>

			<i>NASCO guidelines and templates for preparation and evaluation of Implementation Plans and Annual Progress Reports and advising on any changes required to improve reporting for the next IP cycle due to begin in 2019. The Report of the Working Group on Future Reporting (CNL(18)12) will be considered by the Council of NASCO at its 2018 Annual Meeting.</i>
NS2	NASCO could provide a useful forum for exchange of information on how different jurisdictions are incorporating social and economic factors in managing their salmon resource. Proposals for a Special Session are being developed by a Sub-Group of the Socio-Economics Working Group. It would be valuable to consider not only case studies on how social and economic factors are included in decisions relating to each of the three focus areas but to have discussions on the value of NASCO's social and economic guidelines and what NASCO's future role on this topic might be.	<i>A Special Session on socio-economics is planned for 2014. The Council has agreed that this should include case studies, consideration of the usefulness of NASCO's socio-economic guidelines and NASCO's future work on this topic. The IP template, CNL(12)42, also seeks information relating to social and economic aspects and how these are incorporated in management decisions.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>On the recommendation of the Socio-economics Sub-Group, a Theme-based Special Session (TBSS) was held in 2014 on the management of single and mixed stock fisheries, with particular focus on fisheries on stocks below their conservation limits, including how socio-economic issues are included in management decisions.</i> • <i>Parties / jurisdictions have been requested to provide details of any new studies relating to the socio-economic values of the wild Atlantic salmon.</i> • <i>The International Year of the Salmon, in 2019, entitled 'Salmon and People in a Changing World', seeks, inter alia, to improve understanding and awareness of the social and economic values of salmon.</i>
NS4	NASCO's Habitat Plan of Action is vague and most habitat issues are a matter for the jurisdictions. The 2010 habitat guidelines may assist jurisdictions in making further progress in implementing NASCO's agreements and with future reporting.	<i>The IP template, CNL(12)42, seeks information on the main threats and management challenges relating to habitat protection and restoration, and the actions to address each threat, including actions on the specific issues identified in the first reporting cycle. These issues were collated by the Secretariat and sent to jurisdictions with the request to develop new IPs. There will be a need to monitor progress and evaluate outcomes.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>2013 - 2018 IPs have been submitted and critically reviewed; the agreed template covered the main elements of the Strategic Approach. Subsequent APRs are also critically evaluated, with these evaluations being the subject of a Special Session at the Annual Meeting of the Council each year.</i> • <i>The Review Group has highlighted a number of issues relating to the second reporting cycle including:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>not all Parties / jurisdictions have provided an IP and / or APRs;</i> ○ <i>some actions in the IP were unclear and read like progress reports making assessment of progress challenging;</i>

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>timeliness of reporting has improved but some APRs are still submitted after 1 April;</i> ○ <i>the most common fault with APRs is a lack of quantitative information to assess progress on each action.</i> ● <i>The Working Group on Future Reporting under Implementation Plans and Evaluation of Reports met in December 2017. This Group was tasked with reviewing the NASCO guidelines and templates for preparation and evaluation of Implementation Plans and Annual Progress Reports and advising on any changes required to improve reporting for the next IP cycle due to begin in 2019. The Report of the Working Group on Future Reporting (CNL(18)12) will be considered by the Council of NASCO at its 2018 Annual Meeting.</i>
NS5	<p>The 2009 BMP Guidance on sea lice and containment may assist jurisdictions in making further progress in implementing NASCO's agreements and with future reporting but there might also be improved guidance on other aspects of reporting e.g. in relation to transgenic salmon. Key issue 7 ('Consider the consequences of aquaculture of Atlantic salmon in countries that are not parties to NASCO') may not be required if the Strategic Approach is revised in future.</p>	<p><i>The IP template, CNL(12)42, seeks information on the main threats and management challenges relating to aquaculture and related activities, and the actions to address each threat, including actions on the specific issues identified in the first reporting cycle. These issues were collated by the Secretariat and sent to jurisdictions with the request to develop new IPs. The IP template seeks specific information on the policy/strategy in the case of transgenic salmon. There will be a need to monitor progress and evaluate outcomes. The EPR considered that the Strategic Approach had provided a comprehensive framework for the work of NASCO and it will be used in the next cycle of reporting.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>2013 - 2018 IPs have been submitted and critically reviewed; the agreed template covered the main elements of the Strategic Approach. Subsequent APRs are also critically evaluated, with these evaluations being the subject of a Special Session at the Annual Meeting of the Council each year.</i> ● <i>The Working Group on Future Reporting under Implementation Plans and Evaluation of Reports met in December 2017. This Group was tasked with reviewing the NASCO guidelines and templates for preparation and evaluation of Implementation Plans and Annual Progress Reports and advising on any changes required to improve reporting for the next IP cycle due to begin in 2019. The Report of the Working Group on Future Reporting (CNL(18)12) will be considered by the Council of NASCO at its 2018 Annual Meeting.</i> ● <i>The IP / APR Review Group has recognised that, for jurisdictions with salmon farming, providing quantitative data to demonstrate progress towards the international goals for sea lice and containment has been challenging. The Group had expressed the opinion that the IPs for all Parties / jurisdictions with salmon farming should present quantitative</i>

			<p><i>data in a transparent manner to demonstrate progress made over the period of the IP towards the international goals for sea lice and containment rather than describing only the management measures in place.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The 2016 TBSS Steering Committee concluded that there is an urgent need for all Parties / jurisdictions to adopt stronger measures if their international responsibilities are to be met and reiterated that the agreed international goals are that:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>there is no increase in sea lice loads or lice-induced mortality of wild salmonids attributable to the farms; and</i> ○ <i>100% of farmed fish are retained in all production facilities.</i>
NS6	<p>Given the risks posed by the spread of <i>G. salaris</i>, further exchange of information among the jurisdictions is important and future reporting under Implementation Plans may be the most appropriate way to facilitate this exchange. It was recognised that <i>G. salaris</i> is a specific issue that was highlighted in the Strategic Approach, but in the event that the Strategic Approach is revised in the future, the goal and key issue relating to <i>G. salaris</i> could be incorporated in Challenge 5 (Aquaculture, introductions and transfers and transgenics).</p>	<p><i>The IP template, CNL(12)42, seeks information on measures in place to prevent the spread of G. salaris.</i></p> <p><i>The EPR considered that the Strategic Approach had provided a comprehensive framework for the work of NASCO and it will be used in the next cycle of reporting.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The Working Group on G. salaris met in 2017 and provided a forum for exchange of information and co-operation on monitoring, research and measures to prevent the spread of the parasite and to eradicate it if introduced. The report, which included an updated ‘Road Map’ of recommendations was considered at the 2017 Annual Meeting of the North-East Atlantic Commission. However, the Commission was unable to adopt the revised ‘Road Map’ at that time. The Commission agreed to hold a further meeting of the Working Group on G. salaris in 2018 (and every three years thereafter). The Group therefore met in April 2018 and its 2018 Report (NEA(18)03) will be considered at the 2018 Annual Meeting of the Commission. The revised ‘Road Map’ will also be considered again at that meeting.</i> • <i>The Working Group on Future Reporting under Implementation Plans and Evaluation of Reports met in December 2017. This Group was tasked with reviewing the NASCO guidelines and templates for preparation and evaluation of Implementation Plans and Annual Progress Reports and advising on any changes required to improve reporting for the next IP cycle due to begin in 2019. The Report of the Working Group on Future Reporting (CNL(18)12) will be considered by the Council of NASCO at its 2018 Annual Meeting.</i>

Reporting and evaluation		
NS8	<p>The second round of reporting under Implementation Plans should be streamlined so as to reduce the reporting burden, avoid duplication and focus the reports and reviews on information and analysis to further NASCO's objectives of conserving, restoring, enhancing and rationally managing salmon stocks in the North Atlantic. It would assist the streamlining of future reporting if templates were developed to facilitate the development of consistent plans and reports and the possibility of electronic reporting should be considered.</p>	<p><i>Templates for both IPs (CNL(12)42) and APRs (CNL(12)43) have been developed. The IP template has been made available electronically for completion.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The IP / APR Review Group has highlighted a number of possible improvements for the next cycle of IPs.</i> • <i>The Working Group on Future Reporting under Implementation Plans and Evaluation of Reports met in December 2017. This Group was tasked with reviewing the NASCO guidelines and templates for preparation and evaluation of Implementation Plans and Annual Progress Reports and advising on any changes required to improve reporting for the next IP cycle due to begin in 2019. The Report of the Working Group on Future Reporting (CNL(18)12) will be considered by the Council of NASCO at its 2018 Annual Meeting.</i>
NS9	<p>The second round of reporting under Implementation Plans should place greater emphasis on monitoring and evaluation of activities and describe clearly identifiable measurable outcomes and timescales.</p>	<p><i>The IP template, CNL(12)42, seeks details of the actions to be taken, the timescales for these actions, the expected outcomes and the approach to monitoring and enforcement so that progress can be evaluated. An initial assessment will be undertaken to ensure such information is presented and where there are gaps the IPs will be returned to the jurisdiction for further drafting. They will then be evaluated by a Review Group. There will be a need to monitor progress and evaluate outcomes.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>2013 - 2018 IPs have been submitted and critically reviewed; the agreed template covered the main elements of the Strategic Approach. Subsequent APRs are also critically evaluated, with these evaluations being the subject of a Special Session at the Annual Meeting of the Council each year.</i> • <i>The Review Group has highlighted a number of issues relating to the second reporting cycle including:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>not all Parties / jurisdictions have provided an IP and / or APRs;</i> ○ <i>some actions in the IP were unclear and read like progress reports making assessment of progress challenging;</i> ○ <i>timeliness of reporting has improved but some APRs are still submitted after 1 April;</i> ○ <i>the most common fault with APRs is a lack of quantitative information to assess progress on each action.</i> • <i>The Working Group on Future Reporting under Implementation Plans and Evaluation of Reports met in December 2017. This Group was tasked with reviewing the NASCO guidelines and templates for preparation and</i>

			<p><i>evaluation of Implementation Plans and Annual Progress Reports and advising on any changes required to improve reporting for the next IP cycle due to begin in 2019. The Report of the Working Group on Future Reporting (CNL(18)12) will be considered by the Council of NASCO at its 2018 Annual Meeting.</i></p>
NS10	<p>In developing updated Implementation Plans it is envisaged that jurisdictions will use their existing plans as a starting point and involvement of NGOs and other stakeholders is encouraged.</p>	<p><i>The IP Guidelines, CNL(12)44, state that IPs should draw on information contained in the first IPs and be prepared in consultation with other NGOs and other relevant stakeholders and industries. There will be a need to monitor progress and evaluate outcomes.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>It is not known to what extent Parties / jurisdictions consulted stakeholders in developing the 2013 – 2018 IPs. There were two NGO representatives on the Review Group charged with evaluating the IPs and two NGOs serve on the Review Group which reviews the APRs.</i> • <i>The Working Group on Future Reporting under Implementation Plans and Evaluation of Reports met in December 2017. This Group was tasked with reviewing the NASCO guidelines and templates for preparation and evaluation of Implementation Plans and Annual Progress Reports and advising on any changes required to improve reporting for the next IP cycle due to begin in 2019. The Report of the Working Group on Future Reporting (CNL(18)12) will be considered by the Council of NASCO at its 2018 Annual Meeting.</i>
NS11	<p>The findings from the first round of reviews should be taken into account in developing updated Implementation Plans.</p>	<p><i>The IP template, CNL(12)42, requests that jurisdictions take into account the specific issues on which action was recommended in the first cycle of reporting. These issues were collated by the Secretariat and sent to jurisdictions with the request to develop new IPs. There will be a need to monitor progress and evaluate outcomes.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>2013 - 2018 IPs have been submitted and critically reviewed; the agreed template covered the main elements of the Strategic Approach. Subsequent APRs are also critically evaluated, with these evaluations being the subject of a Special Session at the Annual Meeting of the Council each year.</i> • <i>The Working Group on Future Reporting under Implementation Plans and Evaluation of Reports met in December 2017. This Group was tasked with reviewing the NASCO guidelines and templates for preparation and evaluation of Implementation Plans and Annual Progress Reports and advising on any changes required to improve reporting for the next IP cycle due to begin in 2019. The Report of the Working Group on Future Reporting</i>

			<i>(CNL(18)12) will be considered by the Council of NASCO at its 2018 Annual Meeting.</i>
NS12	Updated Implementation Plans should be subjected to a critical review since these plans will set the stage for activities and reporting for a five year period. The Group recommends that any plan that is not sufficiently specific should be returned to the jurisdiction for further drafting	<i>The IP Guidelines, CNL(12)44, state that there will be an initial assessment of IPs and where IPs do not provide answers to all questions, list threats and provide actions to address threats they will be returned for further drafting. Similarly, after a full evaluation, IPs that are unsatisfactory will be returned for further drafting. There will be a need to monitor progress and evaluate outcomes.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2013 - 2018 IPs have been submitted and critically reviewed according to the agreed process; the agreed template covered the main elements of the Strategic Approach. Subsequent APRs are also critically evaluated, with these evaluations being the subject of a Special Session at the Annual Meeting of the Council each year. • The Working Group on Future Reporting under Implementation Plans and Evaluation of Reports met in December 2017. This Group was tasked with reviewing the NASCO guidelines and templates for preparation and evaluation of Implementation Plans and Annual Progress Reports and advising on any changes required to improve reporting for the next IP cycle due to begin in 2019. The Report of the Working Group on Future Reporting (CNL(18)12) will be considered by the Council of NASCO at its 2018 Annual Meeting.
NS13	Each year the jurisdictions should provide a report identifying the status of actions within their plan as well as available data on monitoring the effectiveness of those actions. A review of the Annual Reports should be conducted to assess if the commitments in the plan have been fulfilled and whether progress has been made towards achievement of the stated objectives.	<i>A template for APRs, CNL(12)43, has been developed that seeks a progress report on each action, the results of monitoring and enforcement and whether the objective has been achieved. These APRs will be reviewed in order to ensure that jurisdictions have provided a clear account of progress in implementing and evaluating the actions in their IPs (see CNL(12)44). There will be a need to monitor progress and evaluate outcomes.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Review Group has highlighted a number of issues relating to the second reporting cycle including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ not all Parties / jurisdictions have provided an IP and / or APRs; ○ some actions in the IP were unclear and read like progress reports making assessment of progress challenging; ○ timeliness of reporting has improved but some APRs are still submitted after 1 April; ○ the most common fault with APRs is a lack of quantitative information to assess progress on each action.
NS14	There should be a new cycle of Focus Area Reports but developed around specific themes e.g. during the year when habitat protection and restoration is considered the theme might be an exchange of information on fish	<i>The Council has agreed that FARs will be replaced by theme-based Special Sessions and procedures have been agreed for planning and organising these sessions. Priority themes have been agreed (See CNL(12)12). The first theme-based Special Session will be on mixed-stock fisheries.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Theme-based Special sessions have been held in 2014, 2015, 2016 and 2017. The reports of these Theme-based Special Sessions have been widely distributed and well-received.

	passage issues. Reports may be solicited from jurisdictions and could be presented during the Special Session.		
	Additional areas to be addressed in meeting NASCO's challenges		
NS15	Climate change poses real challenges for salmon management that may require management approaches to be more flexible and adaptive to changes that may be difficult to predict. The Council might, in the first instance, consider holding a Special Session on this topic in the future to allow for information exchange.	<i>The Council has agreed that theme-based Special Sessions could be helpful to NASCO and procedures for planning and organising these Special Sessions agreed (see CNL(12)12 for details). A number of priority topics have been identified including management of mixed-stock fisheries (MSFs), managing salmon under a changing climate and fish passage at hydro-electric facilities. It has been agreed that there will be a Special Session on socio-economics at the 2014 Annual Meeting and a focus on MSFs in NEAC in 2013. Information on climate change impacts on salmon was presented at the 'Salmon Summit' and should be taken into account in developing future research needs. ICES has been requested to report on any significant advances in understanding of the biology of Atlantic salmon that is pertinent to NASCO, including information on the potential implications of climate change for salmon management.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The Theme-based Special Sessions were held in 2014, 2015, 2016 and 2017 and have been well-received and reported.</i> • <i>Since 2015, an item has been included on the agendas for each Commission to allow for a focus on MSFs still operating in the Commission area.</i> • <i>Parties / jurisdictions have been requested to provide details of any new studies relating to the socio-economic values of the wild Atlantic salmon.</i> • <i>2019 is the International Year of the Salmon (IYS), with the theme 'Salmon and People in a Changing World'. It seeks, among other things, to improve understanding and awareness of the social and economic values of salmon.</i> • <i>In 2017, ICES provided advice on potential future impacts of climate change on salmon stock dynamics.</i> • <i>There has not yet been a Theme-based Special Session specifically on climate change. However, there will be a symposium in advance of the 2019 Annual Meeting in Norway, as part of the activities during the IYS, entitled 'Managing the Atlantic salmon in a rapidly changing environment - management challenges and possible responses'.</i>

NS16	The President and Secretary should engage in discussions with the former Head of Delegation for Iceland to keep him informed of the work of NASCO.	<i>A letter was sent to the Icelandic Ministry of Foreign Affairs on 15 May 2012 inviting Iceland to re-accede to the Convention. Efforts will continue to be made to keep Iceland informed of NASCO's work (see EPR 73).</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The President of NASCO wrote again to the Icelandic Minister for Fisheries and Agriculture on 27 October 2014, updating him on NASCO matters and encouraging Iceland to re-accede to the NASCO Convention. The President requested that the Parties to NASCO also make individual representations to the Minister.</i> • <i>The Secretary had an informal meeting with a representative of the Icelandic authorities in the fringes of the NASF summit in March 2018 and briefed him on the IYS and other NASCO activities.</i>
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**Section 2: Recommendations of the External Performance Review Panel (EPR) and ‘Next Steps’ Review Group (NS)
that require further action for their implementation**

2.1	IUU Fishing by non-NASCO Parties
EPR 6	If IUU fishing by vessels registered to non-Parties becomes an issue in the future, NASCO should consider taking measures consistent with the Port State Measures Agreement.
EPR 7	Any strategy would have to take account of the existing NEAFC port control system and EU Regulation 1005/2008.
EPR 8	The need for measures or a mechanism to combat IUU fishing in the NASCO area of application should be monitored and as appropriate developed, including through cooperation with relevant RFMOs which already have in place MCS systems, in which case the IPOA-IUU should serve as a basis for such measures or mechanism.
EPR 63	NASCO should consider enhancing its current surveillance efforts by requesting the cooperation of NEAFC and NAFO in reporting on any suspected IUU fishing activities for salmon in the area of the Convention that may be detected in their MCS operations.
EPR 64	If IUU fishing activities for salmon in the area of the Convention are discovered, the Organization should take appropriate and proportionate measures to address the problem, including strengthening the NASCO surveillance programme, as appropriate.
EPR 72	If IUU fishing is detected in the future, NASCO should consider whether relationships could be forged with non-Parties to address the issue. Other areas of its mandate could also be the subject of such discussions, such as enhancement and restoration. A strategy could be considered involving action in accordance with international law to address and deter the undermining of the objective of the Convention.
<p>Decision: <i>A problem of fishing for salmon by vessels registered to non-NASCO Parties occurred in the North-East Atlantic in the late 1980s and early 1990s. NASCO took diplomatic action to address the problem and there have been no sightings of vessels registered to non-NASCO Parties fishing for salmon in international waters in the North-East Atlantic since the early 1990s. However, it is recognised that airborne surveillance of this area is limited, particularly during winter months. The Secretariat should continue to liaise with the Parties and the coastguard authorities. It should also seek cooperation from NEAFC and NAFO to use their MCS to identify any activity by vessels in their areas of competence that may be fishing for salmon in international waters and to compile information in accordance with the Council’s Resolution on Fishing for Salmon on the High Seas, CNL(92)54. The Parties should coordinate with their delegations to NAFO and NEAFC, as appropriate, on this issue. In the event that there is evidence of such activity, it will be drawn to the Council’s attention so that appropriate measures can be considered.</i></p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Secretariat has again contacted the Norwegian and Icelandic coastguards to obtain details of airborne surveillance flights during the period 1 April 2017 - 31 March 2018. During this period the Icelandic coastguard did not conduct any surveillance flights in the area; the Norwegian coastguard conducted three surveillance flights (22 June, 1 August and 11 September) and four marine surveillance vessel surveys (6 September, 7 - 9 September, 17 - 19 September and 18 - 22 November). No vessels were 	

observed fishing for salmon. Liaison with both NEAFC and NAFO has continued. We have not been advised of any additions to the IUU lists maintained by NAFO and NEAFC and no information has been provided to suggest that there may be an issue of IUU fishing for salmon by non-NASCO Parties.	
2.2	IUU Fishing – NASCO Parties
EPR 60	Despite progress in addressing illegal and unreported fishing within areas of fisheries jurisdiction, high levels continue to be reported. Further efforts are encouraged to address this issue, including through enhanced reporting procedures and logbook schemes.
EPR 62	Since difficulties in minimising and estimating unreported catches remain a common challenge for the Parties, consideration should be given to convening a technical meeting to exchange information and best practices on the methods used to calculate unreported catches. It would also be useful, given the range of approaches by the Parties to addressing illegal and unreported catches, to consider the development of best practices and consolidated guidelines.
<p>Decision: <i>In response to requests from NASCO, ICES has advised that over recent years efforts have been made to reduce the level of unreported catch in a number of countries through improved reporting procedures, carcass tagging and logbook schemes. Consistent with the 1993 Minimum Standard for Catch Statistics, CNL(93)51, jurisdictions should continue to take measures to reduce the level of unreported catches. The IP template, CNL(12)42, seeks information on the current level of unreported catch and the measures being taken to reduce this. The APR template, CNL(12)43, seeks details of the estimated unreported catch from in-river, estuarine and coastal fisheries. There will be a need to monitor progress and evaluate outcomes. A Special Session was held on this topic in 2007 to review approaches to estimating and minimise such catches. The need for the development of guidelines on approaches to minimising unreported catches and for a Special Session on this topic could be considered in the light of the information provided in the next reporting cycle. ICES has reviewed the methods used to calculate unreported catches and has provided suggestions for how estimates of unreported catch should be included in regional, national and international assessments. Best practice guidelines have not, however, been developed by the Council and in the first instance, the Secretariat should review FAO's IUU IPOA with regard to any guidance the IPOA may include on best practice in minimising unreported catches and report back to the Council.</i></p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not all Parties / jurisdictions provide an estimate of unreported catch. • The fishery at Greenland has been reviewed using the Six Tenets for Effective Management of an Atlantic Salmon Fishery and a new monitoring and control plan developed. The West Greenland Commission reviewed a progress report on the implementation of this Plan at its inter-sessional meeting in February / March 2018. In 2017, the other Parties to this Commission conducted self-assessments using the six tenets and these were reviewed at the 2017 inter-sessional meeting of the Commission (see WGCIS(17)14). A Working Group on Future Reporting under Implementation Plans and Evaluation of Reports met in December 2017. In addition to reviewing the NASCO guidelines and templates for preparation and evaluation of Implementation Plans and Annual Progress Reports, this Group was asked to include options for including reporting under the Six Tenets in the IP process. The Report of the Working Group on Future Reporting (CNL(18)12) will be considered by the Council of NASCO at its 2018 Annual Meeting. The Secretariat has previously reviewed the FAO's IUU IPOA (see CNL(15)15), however, best practice guidelines on minimising unreported catches have not yet been developed. The application of the six tenets should result in improvements to monitoring and control where a need for additional measures is identified. 	
2.3	Ecosystem Approach
EPR 9	Review the Technical Guidelines on the Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries with a view to determining whether EAF management plans are needed.
<p>Decision: <i>ICES has advised that the current salmon fisheries in both the NEAC and NAC areas probably have no or only minor influence on the marine ecosystem. Furthermore, the Plan of Action for Habitat Protection and Restoration requires that each jurisdiction should prepare a comprehensive salmon habitat protection and</i></p>	

restoration plan in order to identify risks to productive capacity. Progress in this regard is being assessed through IPs and APRs. Given that the issue of EAF is broad, the Secretariat should review these Technical Guidelines and report to the Council on any implications for NASCO.

- The Secretariat reviewed the Technical Guidelines (see CNL(14)14) and it was noted that much of the information which would be included in an EAF management plan is already being provided by NASCO Parties / jurisdictions in their IPs.
- ICES advice for 2018 confirms that salmon fisheries have no, or only minor, influence on the marine ecosystem. The exploitation of salmon in freshwater may affect the riverine ecosystem through changes in species composition but there is limited knowledge of the magnitude of these effects.

2.4	Rivers database
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EPR 40	The information in the rivers database should be compared with other information on the state of the river systems, for example, the annual ICES advice and the information on habitat estimates.
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NS7	The stock categories used in the NASCO rivers database are out-dated and consideration should be given to reviewing these in the future. Consideration might be given to including the goals and key issues relating to initiatives for endangered salmon populations under the other challenges if the Strategic Approach is revised in the future.
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Decision: *All jurisdictions have contributed to the database and the information is available on the NASCO website. This information has already been used in research projects and is a valuable PR tool. The Council will convene a Working Group, to work by correspondence or at the Annual Meeting, to develop recommendations for revisions to the stock categories that are used in the database that better reflect status of stocks relative to attainment of conservation limits. The Parties would then be requested to update the stock category information held in the database and provide information on threats to those stocks. With the available information, the NASCO Secretariat should be requested to prepare an overview of the status of stocks around the North Atlantic and the threats to them using the information contained in the rivers database. The EPR considered that the Strategic Approach had provided a comprehensive framework for the work of NASCO and it will be used in the next cycle of reporting.*

- The Council had previously recognised the value of a consistent and uniform approach to presenting information on stock status for use with the rivers database and in 2016 a new stock classification system was agreed by the Council. 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). Parties / jurisdictions were asked to update the information in the Rivers Database 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 which could be a valuable contribution to the International Year of the Salmon in 2019. Updated contributions to the Rivers Database have been received gratefully from thirteen of the seventeen jurisdictions and the initial analysis of this data is underway. Updates have not yet been received from: Canada; Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland) Faroe Islands; European Union – Spain and European Union – UK (Scotland). Canada have confirmed that their update will be provided in August 2018 and it is unlikely that European Union – UK (Scotland) will provide an update. To maximise the impact of the State of the Salmon report, a complete picture is required and therefore jurisdictions are urged to provide the requested data.

2.5	ICES Advice
EPR 44	WGNAS should heed the advice given by the ICES Review Group, especially to estimate post-smolt survival.
EPR 45	The issues and recommendations raised by WGNAS in 2011 should be addressed when it meets in 2012.
<p>Decision: <i>EPR 44 relates to an issue concerning the forecasts of stock abundance and the EPR has noted that in 2011 the ICES Review Group recommended that environmental indices should be included in the model used by the ICES WGNAS. This matter should be considered by NASCO's SSC to determine if a request should be made to ICES in relation to this issue. For EPR45, it is assumed that the ICES WGNAS will have acted on the issues and recommendations it raised in 2011.</i></p>	
<p>These are issues for ICES. No further action required from NASCO.</p>	
2.6	Research on Salmon at Sea (including bycatch)
EPR 10	Review the International Guidelines on By-catch Management and Reduction of Discards with a view to developing a strategy to promote the application of by-catch measures in NASCO, including through all of its Commissions.
EPR 55	Sea mortality should be further investigated in relation to all phases from the time the salmon leaves natal waters.
EPR 56	Observer programs on and screening of landings of pelagic vessels fishing in seasons and areas where salmon make feeding migrations should be continued.
NS3	The key issues in the Strategic Approach relating to research on salmon at sea have been implemented and the SALSEA Programme has been a highly successful public/private initiative that allowed important research on salmon at sea to be conducted. The research inventory relating to mortality of salmon at sea that is maintained by the IASRB is a very useful initiative and the Board might consider if NASCO might play a broader role in providing a forum for coordination of research of relevance to NASCO's work.
<p>Decision: <i>The annual request to ICES seeks information on bycatch in new and existing fisheries. ICES has advised that the current salmon fisheries in both the NEAC and NAC areas probably have no or only minor influence on the marine ecosystem. For the WGC area ICES has indicated that there is no information on by-catch of other species in the salmon fishery that is practiced with nearshore surface gillnets. This fishery has been restricted to an internal-use fishery (~20 tonnes) since 1998 by NASCO agreements. The need for a by-catch strategy in NASCO might be considered if the ICES advice on this issue changed. If that was the case, the Secretariat could be requested to prepare a review of the International Guidelines on Bycatch/Discards. NASCO's Guidelines for the Management of Salmon Fisheries, CNL(09)43, indicate that information should be sought on the by-catch of salmon in fisheries for other species and efforts made to identify their river of origin. Such information should be reported to NASCO. Concern was raised about bycatch of salmon in pelagic fisheries (e.g. for herring and mackerel) in the NEAC area. In the light of the new information and tools developed through the SALSEA Programme, the Council recommends that jurisdictions undertake further studies to assess by-catch in pelagic fisheries such as those recently undertaken by Russia, Iceland and the Faroe Islands. Further liaison with the pelagic RAC is also encouraged. The Secretariat might also liaise with NAFO and NEAFC regarding availability of information on by-catch of salmon obtained through their observer programmes. The Board's role is to promote collaboration and cooperation on research into the causes of mortality of salmon at sea and the opportunities to counteract it. It has agreed to review its working methods in 2013; its TORs require that it maintain an inventory of research relating to mortality of salmon at sea. This includes information on long-term monitoring programmes in freshwater. It will be a matter for the Council to decide if it wishes to have a broader inventory of research relating to other aspects of NASCO's work. The Parties considered that theme-based Special Sessions might</i></p>	

allow for a further exchange on research priorities and needs. A Sub-Group of the SAG has met and provided recommendations to the IASRB for future research for consideration during the 2013 Annual Meeting.

- The first phase of the SALSEA Programme delivered new insights into the marine phase of salmon and new tools to support management, but it did not provide quantitative estimates of mortality of salmon at sea. The IASRB now seeks to encourage telemetry studies to partition marine mortality along the salmon's migration route.
- In 2014, the IASRB adopted a Resolution encouraging telemetry projects and hosted a Telemetry Workshop at which 12 project proposals were developed. In 2015, the Board reaffirmed its commitment to an international telemetry project under the SALSEA brand named 'SALSEA - Track' as a continuing commitment to understanding the factors affecting the mortality of salmon at sea. The project leaders of the 12 telemetry projects endorsed by the Board under SALSEA - Track have been asked to provide project updates in advance of the 2018 Annual Meeting.
- In 2017, the IASRB contributed £5,000 towards a workshop, facilitated by the Atlantic Salmon Trust, to develop ideas towards a model identifying the areas of significant post-smolt marine mortality to determine if any actions can be taken to mitigate against these – the 'Likely Suspects' model.
- Since the last Annual Meeting, the EU has provided funding to NASCO to support a further project on smolt mortality:
 - Comparing mortality of European salmon populations at sea using multiple-method telemetry studies;
- In 2017, ICES provided new information on by-catch derived from the International Ecosystem Summer Survey of the Nordic Seas and for the Icelandic mackerel fishery and the fishery for blue whiting. This information has again been provided in 2018 and will be considered at the 2018 Annual Meeting.

2.7	Public relations
EPR 68	The Council should consider whether it wishes to hold further stakeholder dialogue meetings in the jurisdictions of all relevant Members, <i>inter alia</i> , to report on developments, to consider or monitor the IPs and FARs and to discuss the implementation of the recommendations in the present report.
EPR 70	NASCO should take further steps to consider, develop and implement a clear public relations strategy, <i>inter alia</i> , through a revitalization and strengthening of the Public Relations Group, continued regularized cooperation with the NGOs expert in media relations and the Parties communications experts.
EPR 71	The Public Relations Group could build on the work already begun and develop a medium-term proactive communications strategy that sets out objectives, tasks and the responsibilities of NASCO and its partners. Some components of such a strategy should include the "State of the Salmon" report, progress made under IPs and FARs, development of additional reports on NASCO's achievements, educational tools and further development of the "newsroom" site.
<p>Decision: <i>The IPs and APRs in the second cycle of reporting will be made available on the NASCO website. NASCO has 35 accredited NGOs which now participate in most of the meetings and improvements have been made to the website. Stakeholder consultation meetings are a tool to be considered when a specific need for seeking broad input is identified. The Council has agreed that its initial priorities in Public Relations are its websites and the Salmon Rivers database. The work to enhance the website is ongoing and should continue. The Council believes that NASCO should be the source of information on salmon stock status around the North Atlantic and has agreed to develop a State of the Salmon report using the updated stock categories in the rivers database (see above). The Council should keep its PR approach under review and consider if further actions are needed.</i></p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council had previously recognised the value of a consistent and uniform approach to presenting information on stock status for use with the rivers database and in 2016 a new stock classification system was agreed by the Council. 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). Parties / jurisdictions were asked to update the information in the Rivers Database 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 which could be a valuable 	

<p>contribution to the International Year of the Salmon in 2019. Updated contributions to the Rivers Database have been received gratefully from thirteen of the seventeen jurisdictions and the initial analysis of this data is underway. Updates have not yet been received from: Canada; Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland) Faroe Islands; European Union – Spain and European Union – UK (Scotland). Canada have confirmed that their update will be provided in August 2018 and it is unlikely that European Union – UK (Scotland) will provide an update. To maximise the impact of the State of the Salmon report, a complete picture is required and therefore jurisdictions are urged to provide the requested data.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 and has previously provided £15,000 in funding to the project. The film is now completed and a report is included in the Secretary’s Report (CNL(18)06). • One of the aims of the IYS is to ‘improve scientific understanding and public and political awareness of the factors driving salmon abundance, the environmental and anthropogenic challenges facing salmon and the measures being taken to mitigate these;’ and outreach activities will be a key component of the IYS. A key messages document for the International Year of the Salmon has now been agreed – ICC(18)05. • NASCO now has 41 accredited NGOs. • The Secretary has been involved in several public relations activities since October 2017 and reports on these are included in the Secretary’s report, CNL(18)06. • The Public Relations Group has not met since it reported to the Council in 2007. 	
2.8	Future role for NASCO on aquaculture
NS17	The Council should resolve the future role envisaged for NASCO on aquaculture, taking into account the findings of the external performance review.
<p>Decision: <i>Aquaculture remains a focus area for NASCO in terms of concerns over impacts on wild Atlantic salmon. In general, NASCO has established the goal to minimise adverse impacts to wild stocks from aquaculture activities. However, it is for the Parties and jurisdictions to identify and implement appropriate measures to meet this goal. Progress will be tracked as implementation plans and annual reports are submitted. Some more specific measures are contained in the NAC Protocols, appended to the Williamsburg Resolution. The Review Group has recognised that, for jurisdictions with salmon farming, providing quantitative data to demonstrate progress towards the international goals for sea lice and containment has been challenging. The Group had expressed the opinion that the IPs for all Parties/jurisdictions with salmon farming should present quantitative data in a transparent manner to demonstrate progress made over the period of the IP towards the international goals for sea lice and containment rather than describing only the management measures in place.</i></p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In 2013, the Council agreed that an item should be retained on the Council’s agenda entitled ‘Liaison with the Salmon Farming Industry’, 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. The regular meetings of the Liaison Group would not be continued, but, if a specific need arose, consideration could be given to convening a joint <i>ad hoc</i> group. • In 2016 the Council held a Theme-based Special Session entitled ‘Addressing impacts of salmon farming on wild Atlantic salmon: Challenges to, and developments supporting, achievement of NASCO’s international goals’. • In 2017, ISFA presented a paper on ‘Aquaculture Technological Developments Related to Sealice Management’. ISFA has been invited to attend the Thirty-Fifth Annual Meeting and submit a paper, but their representative is unable to attend. 	
2.9	Meeting schedule and structure

NS18	Options for changes to the structure, frequency and location of NASCO's Annual Meetings to achieve efficiency gains is a complex matter and there would be a need to consider the costs and benefits of different meeting options and changes to the agenda taking into account the findings of the external performance review.
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Decision: *The Parties are invited to submit proposals for changes to the structure, frequency and location of NASCO meetings to the Secretariat who will prepare a paper, based on these submissions, for consideration by the Council at its 2013 Annual Meeting. The intention is to explore options for changes to the structure, frequency and location of NASCO meetings with a view to ensuring the most effective use of the time available and expertise present. The Parties may choose to communicate with each other during the development of these papers and Canada committed to circulate its draft to the other Parties.*

- In 2013, the Council agreed not to change the frequency of its Annual Meetings but to change the structure of the Annual Meeting on a trial basis to include full-day Theme-based Special Session in years when there are no negotiations on regulatory measures. To date this arrangement has been very successful.

Section 3: Strengthening the work of NASCO

Following a comprehensive discussion among the Parties in relation to the options for strengthening the work of NASCO (see FVN(13)12) it was agreed that in addition to the actions in sections 1 and 2, the priority area for special focus is in the area of fisheries management. The Parties renewed their commitment to the following actions:

Recommendation	Action taken
<p>3.1 During the 2013 Council meeting, critically review the new 5-year Implementation Plans which include the following sections:</p> <p>(a) information on reference points used to assess the status of stocks;</p> <p>(b) the decision-making process for fisheries management, including predetermined decisions taken under different stock conditions (e.g. the stock level at which fisheries are closed);</p> <p>(c) identification of whether fisheries are permitted to operate on salmon stocks that are below their reference point and, if so, how many fisheries there are and what approach is taken to managing them that still promotes stock rebuilding; and</p> <p>(d) identification of any mixed-stock salmon fisheries and an explanation of how they are managed to ensure that all the contributing stocks are meeting their conservation objectives.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2013 - 2018 IPs have been submitted and critically reviewed; the agreed template covered the main elements of the Strategic Approach. Subsequent APRs are also critically evaluated, with these evaluations being the subject of a Special Session at the Annual Meeting of the Council each year. • The Review Group has highlighted a number of issues relating to the second reporting cycle including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ not all Parties / jurisdictions have provided an IP and / or APRs; ○ some actions in the IP were unclear and read like progress reports making assessment of progress challenging; ○ timeliness of reporting has improved but some APRs are still submitted after 1 April; ○ the most common fault with APRs is a lack of quantitative information to assess progress on each action. • The Working Group on Future Reporting under Implementation Plans and Evaluation of Reports met in December 2017. This Group was tasked with reviewing the NASCO guidelines and templates for preparation and evaluation of Implementation Plans and Annual Progress Reports and advising on any changes required to improve reporting for the next IP cycle due to begin in 2019. The Report of the Working Group on Future Reporting (CNL(18)12) will be considered by the Council of NASCO at its 2018 Annual Meeting. • The 2014 TBSS Steering Committee noted inter alia that the reporting on what constitutes overriding socio-economic considerations in permitting fisheries on stocks below their conservation limit was not always clear. • Reporting has provided an update on MSFs still operating, recent catch data and any new management measures. The reporting does not indicate how they are managed to ensure that all contributing stocks are meeting their conservation objectives.
<p>3.2 During each annual Council meeting, critically review the annual progress reports from each Party, paying particular attention to progress</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2013 - 2018 IPs have been submitted and critically reviewed; the agreed template covered the main elements of the Strategic Approach. Subsequent APRs are also critically evaluated, with these evaluations being the subject of a Special Session at the Annual Meeting of the Council each year.

<p>against actions relating to the management of salmon fisheries.</p>	<p><i>The Review Group has indicated that the most common fault with APRs is a lack of quantitative information to assess progress on each action.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The Working Group on Future Reporting under Implementation Plans and Evaluation of Reports met in December 2017. This Group was tasked with reviewing the NASCO guidelines and templates for preparation and evaluation of Implementation Plans and Annual Progress Reports and advising on any changes required to improve reporting for the next IP cycle due to begin in 2019. The Report of the Working Group on Future Reporting (CNL(18)12) will be considered by the Council of NASCO at its 2018 Annual Meeting.</i>
<p>3.3 Ensure there are agenda items in each of the Commissions to allow for a focus on mixed-stock fisheries.</p>	<p><i>Since 2015, an item has been included on the agendas for each Commission to allow for a focus on MSFs still operating in the Commission area.</i></p>
<p>In addition, the Parties agreed to explore opportunities to strengthen their commitment to implement the NASCO Guidelines on Management of Salmon Fisheries <i>inter alia</i> by the use of a Protocol or Resolution.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>A new agreement between Finland and Norway was signed in September 2016 on the Teno / Tana river system. This agreement came into effect in 2017. Under this agreement, fishing times will be reduced with all gear types used. The aim is to reduce fishing mortality by 30%, in order to enable recovery of weak salmon stocks, especially in the upper reaches of the river system. The Finnish APR states that the new agreement is in line with the NASCO recommendations concerning management of salmon fisheries.</i> • <i>A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) concerning cooperation on management and monitoring of, and research on, wild salmon stocks in Finnmark County and the Murmansk region was signed by Norway and the Russian Federation in Autumn 2015. A Working Group was established and in 2016 the North-East Atlantic Commission was advised that and it had exchanged detailed information on the current management regime and regulatory measures. Some areas for possible closer scientific cooperation have been identified.</i>