

NAC(12)10 (Rev 1)

***Report of the Twenty-Ninth Annual Meeting
of the North American Commission***

George Hotel, Edinburgh, Scotland, UK

5 - 8 June 2012

1. Opening of the Meeting

- 1.1 The Chairman, Mr Stephen Gephard (US), opened the meeting and welcomed participants to the Twenty-Ninth Annual Meeting of the Commission.
- 1.2 An opening statement was made on behalf of the NGOs (Annex 1).
- 1.3 A list of participants at the Twenty-Ninth Annual Meeting of the Council and Commissions is included on page **XX** of this document.

2. Adoption of the Agenda

- 2.1 The Commission adopted its Agenda, NAC(12)2 (Annex XX).

3. Nomination of a Rapporteur

- 3.1 Doug Twining (Canada) was appointed as Rapporteur.

4. Election of Officers

- 4.1 The Commission re-elected Mr Stephen Gephard (United States) as its Chairman and elected Serge Tremblay (Canada) as its Vice-Chairman.

5. Review of the 2011 Fishery and ACOM Report from ICES on Salmon Stocks in the Commission Area

- 5.1 The representative of ICES, Mr Gérald Chaput, presented the report from ICES on the scientific advice concerning salmon stocks in the North American Commission (NAC) area, CNL(12)8. The ICES Advisory Committee (ACOM) report, which contains the scientific advice relevant to all Commissions, is included on page XX of this document.
- 5.2 There were no comments provided by the Parties.

6. The St Pierre and Miquelon Salmon Fishery

- 6.1 The Chair noted that the representative of France (in respect of St Pierre and Miquelon) had summarized the 2011 fishery during the Council meeting earlier in the day. France (in respect of St Pierre and Miquelon) had previously tabled document CNL(12)14 which describes the management and sampling of the fishery.

- 6.2 The representative of Canada thanked the representative from France (in respect of St. Pierre and Miquelon) for his earlier presentation and requested that they once again consider joining NASCO as a full member. The representative of Canada also thanked the representative of France (in respect of St. Pierre and Miquelon) for continued assistance and partnership in sampling.
- 6.3 The United States echoed Canada's call for France (in respect of St. Pierre and Miquelon) to accede to the Convention and highlighted willingness to cooperate with France (in respect of St. Pierre and Miquelon) in implementing its sampling program. The US also expressed its concern over the interception of endangered and threatened stocks by France (in respect of St. Pierre and Miquelon).
- 6.4 The NGO representative expressed concern regarding the fishery particularly in light of listing of many of these stocks as threatened and endangered in both the US and Canada.
- 6.5 The representative of France (in respect of St Pierre and Miquelon) thanked the Parties for their comments and stated that France intends to remain as an observer. Following ICES advice, the representative of France (in respect of St Pierre and Miquelon) indicated that France (in respect of St. Pierre and Miquelon) intended to collaborate more closely, in particular with Canada, to improve the quality of genetic analysis to come, by using a genetic baseline enriched with North America profiles. The representative of France (in respect of St. Pierre and Miquelon) also expressed that the harvest in the fishery is small, but significant for a small number of people.
- 6.6 In light of the recent external performance review (CNL(12)11), the NASCO President shall write a letter to France (in respect of St. Pierre and Miquelon) requesting that France (in respect of St. Pierre and Miquelon) become a member of NASCO.

7. Salmonid Introductions and Transfers

- 7.1 The United States presented NAC(12)3 and provided highlights of an existing application to the Food and Drug Administration to sell genetically modified salmon raised in hatcheries outside of the United States. The proposal would not result in live genetically modified salmon within the U.S.
- 7.2 Canada presented NAC (12)5 and the representative of Canada re-iterated the intent to continue to live up to its obligations under the Williamsburg Resolution. The representative of the NGOs asked if the information reported to NAC by Canada on disease incidence is available to the public. The representative of Canada noted that reporting of countries through the OIE, is done in real time, with requirements for immediate reporting of outbreaks. No outbreaks were reported in Canada in 2011. NGOs requested that the date of escapes be indicated in the reporting to NAC; Canada agreed to provide this information. The representative of the NGOs suggested that ICES could be asked to compile information and provide full reports on aquaculture escapees annually and over time. The representative of the U.S. agreed that information would be useful and suggested that the idea be brought before the Council for consideration because the need for that information applies throughout the North Atlantic, not just in the North Atlantic Commission Area.

8. Sampling in the Labrador Fishery

- 8.1 Canada tabled document NAC(12)8 which provides an update on the sampling activity in the Labrador fishery in 2011. Representatives of Canada provided additional insight into the program. The U.S. thanked Canada for its efforts to date. The representative of the NGOs expressed concern over the late tabling of the document and reminded parties of their obligation to provide copies of reports as soon as possible.
- 8.2 Canada tabled a paper (NAC(12)6) that described the Labrador Inuit Food, Social, and Ceremonial Fishery. The paper describes the tag allocation process for the Food, Social, and Ceremonial fishery by Labrador Inuit communities.
- 8.3 The representative of the NGOs asked Canada to comment on estuarine fisheries as mixed stock fisheries, as these fisheries may catch salmon from more than one Labrador river stock, some of which may not be meeting conservation requirements. The representative of Canada agreed to the possibility of the localized mixing of some stocks in estuaries, but the genetic work being done may provide more details. The results will be available in the fall 2012 and will be shared with stakeholders.
- 8.4 The representative of the NGOs asked about the nature of the Labrador Aboriginal fishery (allocation or allowance). The representative of Canada clarified that effort controls are used, i.e. each user group receives a specific number of tags (Nunatsiavut Government – 8,400 tags; Innu Nation – 1,500 tags; Nunatukavut – 6,000 tags).

9. Announcement of the Tag Return Incentive Scheme Prize

- 9.1 The Chair announced that the draw for the North American Commission prize in the NASCO Tag Return Incentive Scheme was made by the Auditor on 9 May. The winning tag was of Canadian origin and had been applied to a 1-sea-winter male salmon in the Northwest Miramichi River on 12 September 2010. It was recaptured during the spring kelt fishery in tidal waters of the Southwest Miramichi River on 17 April 2011. The winner of the \$1,500 prize is Mr Noe Thibodeau, Rogersville, New Brunswick.

10. Recommendations to the Council on the Request to ICES for Scientific Advice

- 10.1 The Commission considered the draft report of the Standing Scientific Committee (SSC(12)3). The questions posed were similar to previous years, with the addition of a question about potential threats to Atlantic salmon from exotic salmonids.
- 10.2 The representative of the NGOS requested the addition of a new question regarding aquaculture escapees. The United States indicated that asking ICES to provide a summary of information on aquaculture escapees, although more of a management issue, would be useful. The representative of the NGOs pointed out that aquaculture escapees can have a genetic impact on wild stocks and an ICES report would be appropriate and timely.

- 10.3 The representative of the NGOs also asked that unreported catch information provided by ICES be broken down by river, estuarine and coastal catches. NGOs asked for continued collaboration on how unreported catches are calculated. The representative of Canada responded that the focus is on educating the public and stakeholders on the impacts of these unreported catches.
- 10.4 The representative of the NGOs asked that Parties consider having a NGO representative on the Standing Scientific Committee. The Chair took it under advisement and suggested that it be raised at Council.
- 10.5 The Commission agreed to the request for scientific advice from ICES prepared by the Standing Scientific Committee in relation to the North American Commission area. The request to ICES, as agreed by the Council, is contained in document CNL(12)10 (Annex XX).

11. Other Business

- 11.1 The United States tabled a paper (NAC(12)4) on Management Objectives, with the suggestion that NAC Parties meet intersessionally before the next NASCO meeting to discuss the current management objectives for Atlantic salmon stocks in the United States and the Scotia-Fundy Region of Canada. Canada agreed to distribute the document internally on its return from this annual meeting and to discuss intersessionally with the United States. The representative of the NGOs asked that NGOs be involved in the process. The U.S. indicated that it would be open to stakeholder involvement in that effort.
- 11.2 Canada tabled a paper (NAC(12)7) on activities related to the status of Atlantic salmon in the context of the Species at Risk Act. The United States thanked Canada for the report and indicated that including samples from the southern Newfoundland populations in the genetics baseline will be even more important in light of the threatened status of these stocks.

12. Date and Place of the Next Meeting

The Commission agreed to hold its next meeting at the same time and place as the Thirtieth Annual Meeting of the Council in 2013.

13. Report of the Meeting

The Commission agreed a report of the meeting.

Note: The annexes mentioned above begin on page XX, following the French translation of the report of the meeting. A list of North American Commission papers is included in Annex XX.