

CNL(09)42

*Draft letter to the Secrétaire général de la mer concerning St Pierre and Miquelon*

{3 June 2009}

M Jean-François Tallec  
Secrétaire général de la Mer  
16 Boulevard Raspail  
75007 Paris  
France

Dear M le Secrétaire général,

This is a response to Mr Paulmier's letter of 19 May concerning the outcome of the interministerial consultation in relation to possible accession by France (in respect of St Pierre and Miquelon) to the Convention for the Conservation of Salmon in the North Atlantic Ocean. This letter together with information on the fishery and on the sampling programme at St Pierre and Miquelon were considered by the Council of NASCO (OCSAN) at its Twenty-Sixth Annual Meeting in Molde, Norway, last week and I have been asked to respond on behalf of the Organization. The Council appreciated the information provided by France (in respect of St Pierre and Miquelon) and the attendance at the meeting by a representative of the Ministère de l'Intérieur et de l'Outre-Mer. NASCO (OCSAN) also appreciates the continuation of the sampling programme to better understand the biological characteristics of the exploited stocks at St Pierre and Miquelon. Expansion of this programme to include additional sampling and analysis could contribute important information to our SALSEA-Programme and both the US and Canada offered support for sampling and analysis. SALSEA is an international collaborative scientific research programme to improve understanding of salmon at sea. It would assist both NASCO (OCSAN) and the International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES /CIEM) if this information could be provided to both organizations by March each year prior to the ICES (CIEM) Working Group on North Atlantic salmon.

While recognising that the salmon fishery at St Pierre and Miquelon is a small traditional fishery, the Council noted with concern that the catch in 2008 was approximately 80% higher than in 2007 and the second highest in the time-series of catches since 1983. Although only limited genetic sampling has been conducted, the exploited stocks are of North American origin, many of which are critically endangered. The Council of NASCO (OCSAN) understands from Mr Paulmier's letter that the salmon fishery is considered to have little impact on the economic development of the archipelago and that this was a factor in the decision not to proceed with an accession to the Convention. However, the Parties to NASCO (OCSAN) believe that there are strong conservation arguments in support of such an accession and that there would be benefits to both NASCO (OCSAN) and France (in respect of St Pierre and Miquelon) from enhanced cooperation and exchange of information about the management of this and other salmon fisheries (including other subsistence fisheries) in the North Atlantic. Consistent with the goals of NASCO (OCSAN) of rational salmon management and the application of the Precautionary Approach, it is vital that all salmon fisheries be managed with due consideration to the scientific advice and in a collaborative and transparent manner. We believe that full membership of NASCO

(OCSAN) by France (in respect of St Pierre and Miquelon) would better facilitate this cooperation than continuing observer status.

I have enclosed a copy of NASCO (OCSAN)'s basic texts. If you would like any other information about NASCO (OCSAN) please do not hesitate to contact our Secretary, Dr Malcolm Windsor. We would be pleased to meet you if that would be of assistance.

Yours sincerely

Arni Isaksson  
President

Enc: Handbook of Basic texts