



Council

CNL(20)21

Final Report on the Activities in the International Year of the Salmon

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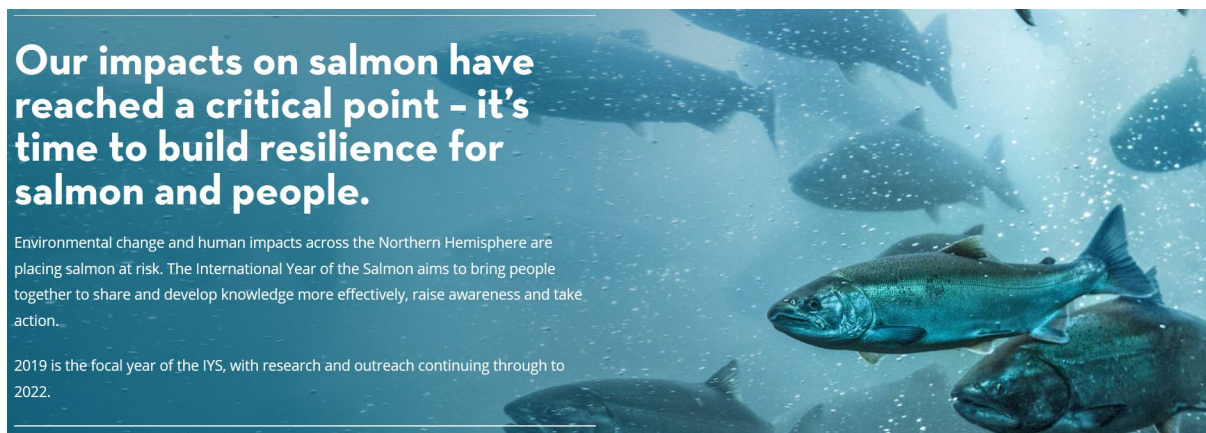
Introduction

In 2016, the NASCO Council agreed to hold an International Year of the Salmon (IYS) in partnership with the North Pacific Anadromous Fish Commission (NPAFC). The focal year for the IYS was 2019 with some efforts continuing to 2022. The aim of the IYS is to raise awareness of the factors driving salmon abundance, the environmental and anthropogenic challenges they face, and the measures being taken to address these.

This report highlights just some of the activities which took place under the IYS banner, and is organised as follows:

1. The launch the International Year of the Salmon;
2. NASCO’s key activities;
3. The variety of IYS activities;
4. Social media; and
5. Future activities and the legacy of the IYS;

Additional planning, reports and information can be found on the [IYS page](#) of the NASCO website and the [IYS website](#) itself.



Home page of the [International Year of the Salmon website](#)

1. LAUNCH OF THE INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF THE SALMON

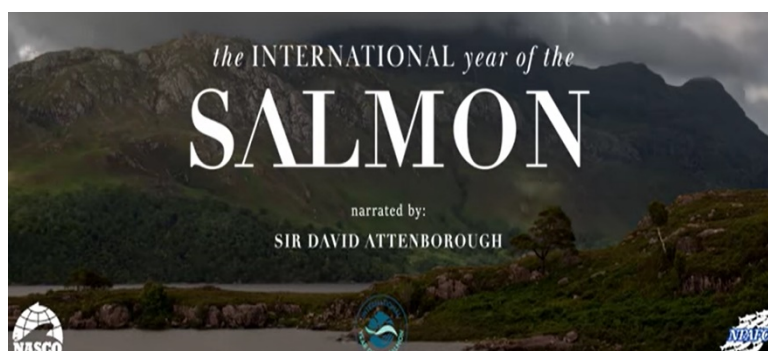


Ministers and leaders from across the Northern Hemisphere announced 2019 as the International Year of the Salmon. A total of 13 NASCO launch events were held around the North Atlantic. A number of launches included the posting of videos, such as that provided by [Jari Leppä](#), Minister of Agriculture and Forestry of Finland ([Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry of Finland](#)).

Other launches included:

- The Honourable Jonathan Wilkinson, Minister of Fisheries, Oceans and the Canadian Coast Guard, on 15 November 2018, in Saint John, New Brunswick;
- Karmenu Vella, EU Commissioner for Environment, Maritime Affairs and Fisheries on 24 October 2018;
- George Eustice, UK Minister of State of the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs on 16 October 2018;
- Lesley Griffiths, Welsh Cabinet Secretary for Energy, Planning and Rural Affairs on 6 November 2018;
- Michael Stübgen and Ursula Heinen-Esser, State Secretary of the Federal Ministry of Food and Agriculture and Minister for the Environment, Agriculture, Nature Conservation and Consumer Protection, Germany, respectively;
- Sean Canney, Irish Minister of State at Department of Rural & Community Development and Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment;
- Ola Elvestuen, Norwegian Ministry of Climate and Environment;
- Ana Paula Vitorino, Portuguese Minister of the Sea;
- Shestakov Ilya Vasilyevich, Russian Federation, Deputy Minister of Agriculture - Head of the Federal Agency for Fisheries and Fisheries;
- Jakob Granit, Director general, Swedish Agency for Marine and Water Management;
- Roseanna Cunningham, Scottish Cabinet Secretary for Environment, Climate Change and Land Reform; and
- Donna Wieting, U.S. Head of the Office of Protected Resources, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's National Marine Fisheries Service.

In addition, Sir David Attenborough narrated a [video](#) as part of the launch of the IYS. This has been widely shared.



2. NASCO'S KEY ACTIVITIES

There have been a variety of events and activities organised across the north Atlantic to celebrate the IYS. NASCO itself has organised a number of key events and activities.

The NASCO IYS Symposium

A two-day Symposium was held in June 2019, hosted by Norway in Tromsø as part of the IYS. The Symposium was structured under two main themes: Climate change and state of the salmon, with scientific overviews being provided on these subjects; and management challenges and solutions.



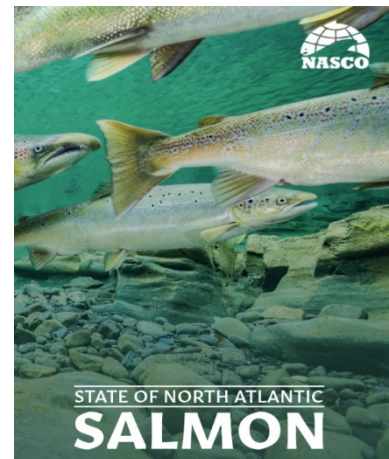
A total of 165 delegates attended the Symposium, where 26 presentations were delivered and 21 posters displayed. The Report of the Symposium, including a report and recommendations from the Steering Committee, has been published on the NASCO website. A paper discussing the recommendations

from the Symposium Steering Committee has been submitted to the ICES Journal of Marine Science, providing food for thought for a wider audience.

The State of North Atlantic Salmon Report

In December 2019, the [State of North Atlantic Salmon Report](#) was published. This includes a powerful foreword by His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales. It highlights the unique lifecycle of the salmon, provides information on salmon abundance, the pressures it faces, and gives examples of how these pressures are being addressed. The report shows that wild Atlantic salmon provide society with a host of values, benefits and ecosystem services.

The [Socio-Economic Study](#) commissioned by NASCO to provide content for the State of North Atlantic Salmon Report was published by NINA and is available on the NASCO website.



The Secretariat has received an excellent response to the Report and has ordered additional copies to be printed.



In addition to the holding the IYS Symposium and publishing the State of North Atlantic Salmon Report, NASCO:

- organised an IYS photo competition;
- presented at conferences celebrating the IYS;
- funded 19 education and outreach projects under the Small Grants - Sharing Good Practice Programme;
- continues to manage a series of education and outreach projects funded by a voluntary contribution to NASCO from the European Union under their 'Grants for an Action' funding.

3. THE VARIETY OF IYS ACTIVITIES

Parties and jurisdictions were asked to report their activities under the six IYS themes:

Theme 1: *Status of Salmon*: to understand the present status of salmon and their environments.

Theme 2: *Salmon in a Changing Salmosphere*: to understand and quantify the effects of natural environmental variability and anthropogenic factors affecting salmon distribution and abundance and to make projections of their future changes.

Theme 3: *New Frontiers*: to develop new technologies and analytical methods to advance salmon science and to explore the uncharted regions of the salmosphere.

Theme 4: *Human Dimension*: to improve the resilience of people and salmon through the connection and collaboration of salmon-dependent communities, indigenous peoples, youth, harvesters and resource managers across the salmosphere.

Theme 5: *Information Systems*: to develop an integrated archive of accessible electronic data collected during the IYS and tools to support future research.

Outreach and Communication was a key element of the IYS

The aim for outreach and communication in the IYS was improving public and political awareness of salmon's cultural, social, and economic importance; and the challenges salmon face from major environmental changes and human impacts.

Parties and jurisdictions were also asked to identify which of the following four audiences were targeted by the activity: Decision makers; Public; Children / Youth; and Knowledgeable Public.

To give a flavour of the variety of events and activities that have taken place under the IYS banner, one event is highlighted for each Party / jurisdiction who submitted an IYS activity report. The IYS website includes other [events](#) and [projects](#) that have taken place as part of the IYS.

Canada

In their final [IYS activity report, Canada](#) reported on The Atlantic Salmon Conservation Schools Network (ASCSN) – [North America 2019 gathering](#), amongst other events. This was highlighted under the 'Human Dimension' theme and sought to target the public and children / youth. The Atlantic Salmon Conservation Schools Network (ASCSN) is a network of schools studying the conservation of Atlantic salmon and was established in 2016. Miramichi Valley High School is one of the schools involved along with schools from Scotland, the United States, Finland, France, Greenland, Germany and Spain. The aim of the network is for schools to study their own local salmon river and share this information with the rest of the network through direct meeting or through online media.

A focal event of this project in 2019 was when 45 students and 10 adult supervisors travelled to the Miramichi to learn more about conservation efforts. Participants worked with hatchery managers, field biologists, and civil engineers to improve salmon habitat.



European Union – Finland

In their [2019 IYS activity report, Finland](#) reported a number of activities, including one targeting decision makers and the public under the ‘New Frontiers’ theme. This created links to echo-sounding sites that give in-season information from their main salmon rivers: River Tornionjoki, River Simojoki and River Tenojoki.

As set out above, they also reported on the statement and video published by Jari Leppä, Minister of Agriculture and Forestry of Finland at their launch of the IYS.

European Union – Germany

In their [2019 IYS activity report, Germany](#) reported a number of activities, including the Launch of the Brochure ‘Fish of the Year - Atlantic Salmon’ in Berlin, by the German Anglers Association (DAFV). The objective was to provide outreach and communications to the knowledgeable public. The Atlantic salmon was named ‘Fish of the Year 2019’ in Germany. The German Anglers Association (DAFV), the German Federal Agency for Nature Conservation (BfN) and the Association of German Sport Divers (VDST) were calling attention to the urgent need to restore rivers for the protection, conservation and successful reintroduction of salmon by selecting this critically endangered fish species in Germany. In order to give the public insight into the fascinating world of salmon, the German Anglers Association has published a brochure entitled ‘Fish of the Year - Atlantic Salmon’. The brochure was presented to the public on 8 May 2019 at a special event in Berlin.

European Union – Ireland

In their [final IYS activity report, Ireland](#) reported that the [‘Fishy Fun’ at Ireland’s Natural History Museum](#) had the biggest impact in their country. The family orientated, awareness



raising, event saw the public engaged on IYS messaging in an interactive manner, and it had a significant impact in Ireland. The event was launched by the Minister with responsibility for inland fisheries, received strong support from relevant policy makers and experienced high footfall on the day. A long term IYS installation was also secured in the museum which will serve as an educational tool for all visitors into 2020 and beyond. Future partnership events between Inland Fisheries Ireland and the

museum, which will focus on salmon and the fisheries resource, were being planned for 2020.

European Union – Portugal

In its [2019 IYS activity report Portugal](#) highlighted the work of the International Permanent Commission of Minho River (Comissão Permanente Internacional do Rio Minho - CPIRM): Joint Committee for fisheries and Annual Meeting. This was reported under the themes of ‘Status of Salmon’, ‘Salmon in a Changing Salmosphere’ and ‘Human Dimension’. It was aimed at decision makers, the public and the knowledgeable public.

The report states that there was a presentation regarding salmon management challenges, raising awareness regarding the Minho river salmon and its importance as the southernmost limit in the Northeast Atlantic, and joint initiatives between Portugal and Spain, Galicia. The management of Minho river has been a joint action between Portugal and Spain since late 19th century.

European Union – Sweden

In its [2019 IYS activity report, Sweden](#) highlighted funds made available for the IYS. In November 2018 and March 2019, the Swedish Agency for Marine and Water Management agency advertised funds available for planning and implementation of local and regional IYS activities during 2019. The total funding was 750 000 SEK (75 000 EUR). The call for funds resulted in nearly 20 IYS projects with activities open for the public and schools. The Swedish IYS call for funds was for local activities focusing both on the Atlantic, Baltic and landlocked (Lake Vänern) salmon. Local activities were planned on the following salmon rivers:

- Atlantic salmon rivers: Rivers Örekilsälven, Göta älv, Sävån, Ätran, Lagan, Genevadsån, Stensån, Rönneå;
- Baltic salmon rivers: Rivers Mörrumsån, Emån, Testeboån, Ljungan, Vindelälven, Lögdeälven, Rickleån, Åbyälven, Torne älv; and
- landlocked salmon in Lake Vänern: Rivers Gullspångsälven and Klarälven.

European Union – UK – England & Wales

In their [final activity report, UK – England & Wales](#) reported on activities which sought to connect and collaborate with partners and new audiences to raise awareness of the status of salmon and what needs to be done to conserve and enhance them. Under this ‘Human Dimension’ theme, which sought to target the public and children / youth, the following work was highlighted:

- work with England Fisheries Group, Angling Associations, NGOs, River Trusts, Wildlife Trusts, Catchment Partnerships etc. to actively engage with IYS, deliver community projects, to raise awareness about salmon and deliver outcomes for salmon;
- the exploration of new partnerships to identify opportunities for wider engagement (e.g. with National Trust etc.);
- the exploration of opportunities for sentinel events, for example, at the Environment Agency’s National Salmon Centre at Kielder, national museums, national aquaria and Institute of Fisheries Management Specialist Conference;
- the exploration of opportunities to promote IYS messages to schools and young children;
- the development of an IYS communications programme including: directed communications with anglers, e-newsletters, presentations at angling consultative meetings etc.; and
- the encouragement of IYS linked campaigns and targeted communications by NGOs.

European Union – UK – Northern Ireland

In their [final activity report, UK – Northern Ireland](#) reported on (amongst other activities) scientific projects targeting decision makers and the public under the ‘Salmon in a Changing Salmosphere’ theme. The [Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs for Northern Ireland](#) (DAERA) have commissioned scientific investigations to focus on particular areas of concern in several catchments across N. Ireland. Previous telemetry work was suggestive of fish passage concerns for downstream migrating Atlantic salmon smolts on the Clady river in the Neagh / Bann catchment. A focused telemetry study took place in April/May 2019 to investigate the movement of salmon smolts around several key abstraction sites there. A second investigation is focused on salmon smolt survival in Lower Lough Erne. Previous research has indicated the potential negative effects of predation and abstraction on this

catchment. In 2019, a study was commissioned to further quantify the impact of predation in the lake by using novel acoustic ‘predation’ tags. A third research objective for the DAERA area was to examine stock status and the impact of stock enhancement measures on the Glens of Antrim rivers. In recent years, these Glens catchments have seen a more marked decline in salmon stocks than other areas of N. Ireland. DAERA secured a new screw trap in 2019, which was deployed on the Ballycastle river from 2019 to secure biological data on the smolt run.

European Union – UK – Scotland

In their [2019 IYS activity report, UK – Scotland](#) reported (amongst other activities) on the [Allan Water Improvement Project](#) – Nether Cambushinnie Bank Protection Dunblane, Scotland, carried out by the Forth Rivers Trust. They report that the Forth Rivers Trust worked with a local farmer to deliver green river bank restoration on one of the many severely eroding banks of the Allan Water. This transformed it from a steep sided, bare river bank into lush, green banking which has been reprofiled to a more natural state. The Trust worked with the farmer, submitting an Agri Environment Climate Scheme application, then managed and installed the green bank protection works.



This will benefit the river for years to come with habitat for salmonid fish, birds, insects and more whilst reducing the amount of soil being eroded and entering the river, preventing damage to spawning areas.

This was reported under the ‘Salmon in a Changing Salmosphere’ theme and targeted the public, children / youth and knowledgeable public.

Norway

In their [2019 IYS activity report, Norway](#) reported on a number of events including the NASCO Symposium 2019: Managing the Atlantic Salmon in a Rapidly Changing Environment which was held in Tromso, Norway, as set out above.

They also reported on outreach and communication activities, including the Airport Campaign for the IYS. This was organized by the Norwegian Association of Hunters and Anglers and the Norwegian Salmon Rivers. It involved three different short films showcasing the biology of Atlantic salmon as well as scenes from fishing in Norwegian rivers.

Russian Federation

In their [2019 IYS activity report, Russian Federation](#) reported on (amongst other activities) ‘The inventory of salmon rivers of the Murmansk region, The White Sea basin’. This book was published by the FSBSI ‘PINRO’. The book presents data collected by PINRO scientists during fieldwork conducted on rivers and creeks of the White Sea basin in Murmansk region. Atlantic salmon were registered in the majority of the studied rivers. Geographical, hydrological and hydrochemical conditions were identified and river infrastructure was described. The inventory also provides information on salmon diet and parasites as well as on historical and the current status of salmon stocks, their distribution, spawning and nursery grounds, adult salmon and smolt carrying capacity of rivers and biological features of salmon (run timing, age, length and weight composition, etc.). The focus was on salmon habitat description and discussion of different types of impacts to salmon (physical, chemical, biological).

This was reported under the ‘Status of Salmon’, ‘Salmon in a Changing Salmosphere’ and ‘Information Systems’ themes. It targeted decision makers, the public and the knowledgeable public.

USA

In their [final activity report, the USA](#) reported on (amongst other things) their work to raise awareness of the IYS with decision makers under the themes of ‘Status of Salmon’, ‘Salmon in a Changing Salmosphere’, and ‘Human Dimension’. They highlighted the following work:

- integration of IYS with [NOAA’s Species in the Spotlight](#) initiative to ensure that the connection is made that Atlantic salmon are critically endangered in the United States and as such, NOAA are collaborating with partners under several initiatives to raise awareness regarding this species and turn the declining trend toward recovery;
- briefings with NOAA leadership and congressional staff to ensure they understand the dire situation Atlantic salmon face in the United States; and
- invitations for NOAA leadership to attend the IYS launch event at the New England Aquarium.



4. SOCIAL MEDIA

The section above provides a flavour of the events, projects and activities that took place as part of the IYS. This section looks at the quantitative information available from the twitter feed and the IYS website.

The IYS website

The [IYS website](#) was established to promote and support the International Year of the Salmon. Analysis of the website shows that 17,985 users in 12 countries visited the site. The majority of users were located in the United States, followed by Canada and the UK. The language of the website is English.

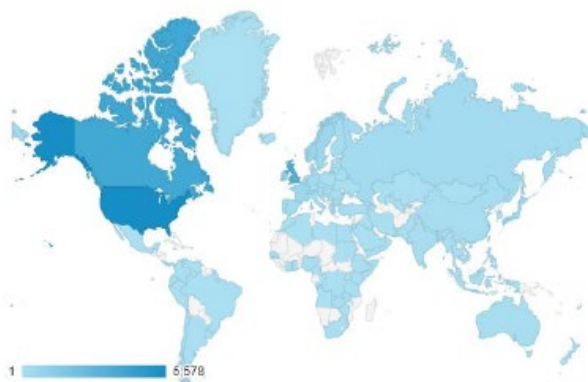


Figure 1. Geographical location of IYS website visitors. Darker colouration indicates increased activity.

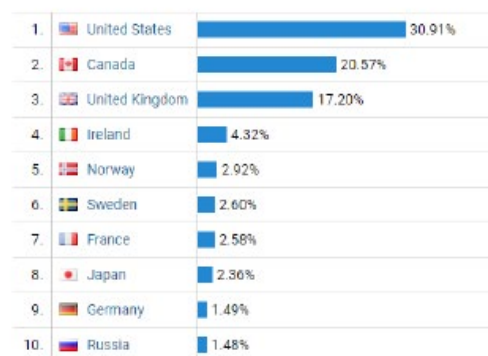
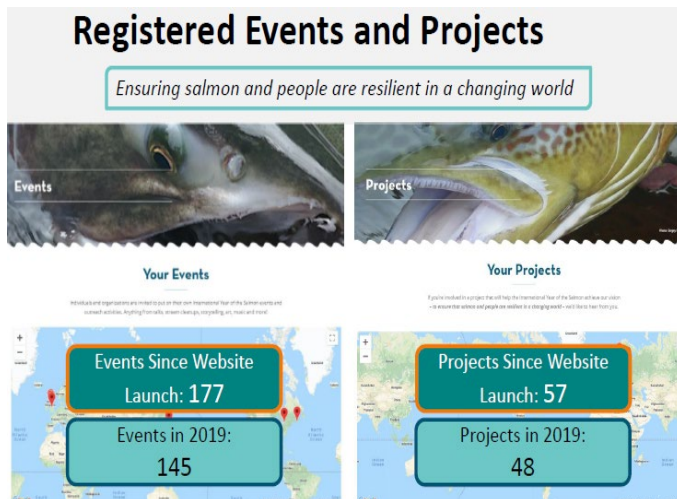


Figure 2. IYS website visitor countries by %.



Those carrying out IYS events and projects were encouraged to register them on the website. A selection of these are described in more detail below. Since the launch of the website, 177 events were registered, with 145 registered in the focal year – 2019. A total of 57 projects have been registered on the website since it was launched, with 48 of those in 2019.



Additional projects and events may still be registered on the website as the NASCO Small Grants – Sharing Good Practice projects have been requested to register projects.

More recently, education and outreach projects funded under the EU’s Voluntary Contribution to NASCO in 2019 to support the IYS have been asked to register their projects and events. Most are scheduled to take place in 2020, although there will be delay to many given the restrictions to people and events during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Year of the Salmon - North Atlantic Twitter account

In 2018, the North Atlantic Steering Committee recommended that NASCO should have a Twitter Feed to ‘push’ content out to a wider audience ([IYS\(18\)04](#)). The Year of the Salmon -



North Atlantic Twitter account (@IYS_Atlantic) was set up in October 2019. It was felt that a NASCO Twitter account may be the best platform for the Secretariat to use as it would be a relatively easy way to disseminate information, require minimum interaction concerning any conversations triggered by tweets and could continue to be used post-IYS by NASCO.

As of 31 March 2020, the account had 710 followers and had made 242 tweets.

The #yearofthesalmon hashtag has been widely used.

5. FUTURE ACTIVITIES AND THE LEGACY OF THE IYS

In 2019, the Council agreed that ‘with regard to the legacy of the IYS, a periodic Symposium and State of Salmon Report should be delivered by the Secretariat. The other work of the Secretariat needs to be considered when determining when to hold the Symposium and update the State of Salmon report’ ([CNL\(19\)46](#)).

Further activities may be agreed by Council at the 2020 Annual Meeting.

Co-Chair of the IYS Co-ordinating Committee and Secretariat
Edinburgh
22 April 2020