REPORT OF THE THIRTY-EIGHTH ANNUAL MEETING OF THE COUNCIL

By Video Conference
27 May – 4 June 2021

President: Serge Doucet (Canada)

Vice-President: Arnaud Peyronnet (European Union)

Secretary: Emma Hatfield

CNL(21)62

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Report of the Thirty-Eighth Annual Meeting of the Council of the North Atlantic Salmon Conservation Organization

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1. Opening of the Meeting

1.1 The President, Serge Doucet (Canada), opened the meeting and made a Statement on behalf of the Organization (Annex 1).

1.2 The President noted that, for the second time, NASCO's face-to-face Annual Meeting had been cancelled, due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Parties had agreed that NASCO's business would be conducted through inter-sessional correspondence and video conference. He thanked all delegates for their flexibility and willingness to participate during this extraordinary period.

1.3 The representatives of Canada, Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland), the European Union (EU), Norway, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom (UK) and the United States made Opening Statements (Annex 2).

1.4 Opening Statements were made by the following Inter-Governmental Organizations: the International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES) and the North Pacific Anadromous Fish Commission (NPAFC) (Annex 3).

1.5 An Opening Statement was made on behalf of the Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) (Annex 4).

1.6 The President reminded participants that the period for inter-sessional correspondence ran from 3 – 14 May. An Annotated Agenda, CNL(21)25A, which includes the inter-sessional correspondence, was issued to all delegates on 21 May. The inter-sessional correspondence for the Council can be found in full in Annex 5. The Chair noted that the Agenda, CNL(21)25, (Annex 6) was adopted by correspondence on 30 April prior to the inter-sessional correspondence period.

1.7 A list of participants at the Thirty-Eighth Annual Meeting of the Council of NASCO is given in Annex 7.

2. Financial and Administrative Issues

a) Report of the Finance and Administration Committee

2.1 The report of the Finance and Administration Committee (FAC), CNL(21)06, was introduced by the Chair of the FAC, Clemens Fieseler (EU).

2.2 On the recommendation of the Committee, the Council took the following decisions:

- to adopt the Audited Accounts for 2020, FAC(21)03;
- to adopt a Budget for 2022 and to note a Forecast Budget for 2023, CNL(21)59, (Annex 8);
- that the Secretary will liaise with ICES to request revision of the proposed revised MoU with ICES as agreed in the FAC, that the resulting document will be

considered by the FAC by correspondence, inter-sessionally, and that Council will adopt the finalised MoU thereafter, inter-sessionally, by correspondence;

- the President will write to the Chair of OSPAR, prior to 23 June 2021, concerning the OSPAR Commission's upcoming status assessment of Atlantic salmon;
- the Secretary will establish, in consultation with the President and FAC Chair, if there is another suitable accountancy firm in Edinburgh interested in tendering a bid to audit NASCO's 2021, 2022 and 2023 accounts, and to appoint Saffery Champness as auditor for the 2021, 2022 and 2023 accounts if no appropriate firm is available; and
- to adopt the report of the Finance and Administration Committee, CNL(21)06.

2.3 The Council also took note that the FAC intended to hold a virtual meeting early in 2022 to consider possible clarifications, and potentially other improvements, to the Staff and Staff Fund Rules, including related to the payment of a lump sum upon the retirement of Secretariat staff. This inter-sessional work is intended to set the stage for a decision on these matters in 2022.

3. Scientific, Technical, Legal and Other Information

a) Secretary's Report

3.1 The President noted that the 'Secretary's Report', CNL(21)09, which contains information on procedural, administrative and financial matters, had been circulated prior to the meeting. The Secretary reported that contributions had now been received from all Parties. She also noted that the new NASCO website was live for an Annual Meeting for the first time and stated that feedback on its functioning would be welcome.

b) Report on the Activities of the Organization in 2020

3.2 In accordance with Article 5, paragraph 6, of the Convention, the Council adopted the Report on the Activities of the Organization in 2020.

c) Announcement of the Tag Return Incentive Scheme Grand Prize

3.3 The President noted that NASCO operates a Tag Return Incentive Scheme. Each year, a Grand Prize of £1,500 is awarded together with three prizes of £1,000, one in each of NASCO's three Commission areas.

3.4 He announced that the Grand Prize winner is Steinar Egeland from Norway. The tag was applied to a 15.6 cm salmon smolt tagged on its seaward migration in the river Imsa in southern Norway on 19 March 2019 and recaptured with a fly rod in the river Figgjo in southern Norway on 13 July 2020. It was 57 cm long and 1.7 kg when it was recaptured. This fish was tagged in an index river as part of a project to measure sea survival of salmon smolts. The President congratulated Mr Egeland.

d) Scientific Advice from ICES

3.5 The representative of ICES, Dennis Ensing, presented the report of the Advisory Committee (ACOM), CNL(21)11, during a webinar on 28 May. The ICES presentation is available as document CNL(21)58 (Annex 9). The discussions held on the presentation during the webinar, CNL(21)60, are contained in Annex 10.

e) Report of the International Atlantic Salmon Research Board

3.6 The report of the Meeting of the International Atlantic Salmon Research Board (the Board), CNL(21)12, (Annex 11) was introduced by the Board's Chair, Ciaran Byrne (EU).

3.7 Dr Byrne informed the Council that he had been re-elected as Chair of the Board for a further period of two years, to commence from the close of the 2021 Annual Meeting. He reported on the main items for consideration at the meeting. He noted that the Board had agreed on the 'Terms of Reference for a Review of the Metadatabase of Salmon Survey Data and Sample Collections', ICR(21)15, to be conducted inter-sessionally. This would include consideration of other areas of the Board that may require review. Dr Byrne also noted that the Board had considered a potential successor to SALSEA-Track. Two presentations had been given, the first about the ROAM programme from the Board member for the United States and the second on a project proposal 'Developing an International Atlantic Salmon Modelling and Management Initiative' (ISSMI) by the representative of the NGOs. The Board decided it would refer the ISSMI proposal for a technical review to the Board's Scientific Advisory Group, inter-sessionally. The Board would consider this technical review inter-sessionally if appropriate, and then determine next steps.

f) Consideration of the NASCO Rivers Database

3.8 The President reminded delegates that, in 2020, the Council agreed that the Secretary should work with Parties / jurisdictions to explore why they had not used the Rivers Database as had been agreed in 2016. The Rivers Database was used only partially to inform the 2019 State of North Atlantic Salmon Report, instead of providing the sole basis of information as had been envisaged originally. The Rivers Database was originally envisaged as a centrepiece of the NASCO website to make it relevant to visit, to provide information on what is happening with the stocks and to raise NASCO's profile. The President referred to the document 'The Future for the NASCO Rivers Database', CNL(21)13, which lays out the various difficulties encountered and concerns related to the current incarnation of the database.

3.9 The representative of Canada said the primary purpose of the Rivers Database should be to provide a basis for future State of North Atlantic Salmon Reports and, therefore, he considered it to be a communications tool rather than a scientific tool. He felt it should be accessible on the NASCO website in a map-based format.

3.10 The representative of Norway noted that the Rivers Database is very important and is keen that it continue because NASCO should be the Organization that holds such information. He agreed with Canada that it should be made available through a map-based application, and if populating the database could be made simpler for everyone, that would be positive.

3.11 The representative of the EU agreed with Norway that NASCO is the Organization that should hold this database and when people are looking for information on salmon stocks, they should come to NASCO. He also noted that there have been difficulties in updating the Rivers Database because it involves considerable work for the Parties / jurisdictions and the Secretariat. He proposed a Working Group be established to consider, amongst other things, how it might be more easily updated. The representative of the United States agreed that a Working Group that included persons with a range of expertise was needed.

3.12 The representative of the UK noted that the Rivers Database was a communications tool and not a decision-making tool. She stated that NASCO should hold the overview, but that Parties / jurisdictions would remain the authority on their own data and should need to make the data available for inclusion in the Rivers Database in an efficient manner. She also noted that some work was needed on the baselines in the Rivers Database, for example, there were too many Scottish rivers included and not enough English rivers.

3.13 The representative of the NGOs agreed that the Rivers Database was important for NASCO and suggested that an IT expert would be needed on any Working Group. The representative of NPAFC noted that it has tasked its Stock Assessment Working Group to develop a status of salmon report due in May 2022 and would be interested in an exchange on this as it may be relevant for the IYS Symposium in 2022.

3.14 The Council agreed:

- that NASCO should retain a website-accessible Rivers Database; to caveat the Rivers Database with the appropriate disclaimers; and that the Secretariat should make the Rivers Database available in a map-based form on the website as soon as possible; and
- to establish a Working Group to address the following high-level issues with respect to the Rivers Database, and to report back to the Annual Meeting in 2022:
    - its purpose – e.g. communications, rather than a decision tool;
    - its scope – e.g. stock status in rivers; including impact factors; concentrating on a few clearly-defined metrics;
    - its data and coverage – e.g. stringent agreed stock classification or 'read across' and the categories;
    - its display and provision of the data – e.g. html, GIS version, spreadsheet data provision;
    - frequency of updates – e.g. every five years to provide updates for the State of Salmon report; and
    - other decisions.

3.15 The Secretariat will contact Parties and NGOs seeking nominees for the Working Group after the Annual Meeting. More detailed Terms of Reference will be developed by the Secretariat and agreed by the Council, by correspondence, inter-sessionally.

g) Report of the Standing Scientific Committee

3.16 The President informed the Council that Articles 3 and 4 of the Convention require NASCO to take into account the best scientific evidence and establish working arrangements with ICES. During the Annual Meeting, the Standing Scientific Committee (SSC), which assists the Council and Commissions in formulating their questions to ICES, met to develop a Draft Request for Scientific Advice from ICES for consideration by the Commissions and the Council. The Chair of the SSC, Paddy Gargan (EU), presented the draft request to ICES for scientific advice.

3.17 The representative of Norway asked about the impact of the one-year regulatory measure agreed in the West Greenland Commission (WGC) on the alignment of regulatory measures in the coming years. The Secretary replied that this issue required further consideration.

3.18 The Council adopted the 'Request for Scientific Advice from ICES', CNL(21)14, (Annex 12). The adopted document included slight updates to the questions considered by the North American Commission and adopted in principle by that Commission, so the SSC could provide revised advice related to a one-year regulatory measure in the WGC.

4. The Third Performance Review: Update to the Council

4.1 The President reminded delegates that at the December 2020 Inter-Sessional Meeting, the Council agreed that NASCO's third performance review would report in 2023. The Secretary provided an 'Update on Planning NASCO's Third Performance Review', CNL(21)15.

4.2 The Secretary reported that the following candidates have agreed to sit on the Review Panel: Jean-Jacques Maguire (an expert in fisheries science); Philip McGinnity (an expert in salmon management and conservation); and Erik Molenaar (an expert in marine / fisheries law). She noted that at least two members of the Panel would require the daily consulting fee. The Secretary plans to arrange a meeting this summer with the members of the Review Panel to designate a Chair, who will be invited to attend the 2022 NASCO Annual Meeting.

5. Conservation, Restoration, Enhancement and Rational Management of Atlantic Salmon under the Precautionary Approach

a) Minimising Impacts of Salmon Farming on Wild Atlantic Salmon: Supporting Meaningful and More Rapid Progress Towards Achievement of the International Goals for Sea Lice and Containment

(i) Theme-based Special Session: Minimising Impacts of Salmon Farming on Wild Atlantic Salmon: Supporting Meaningful and More Rapid Progress Towards Achievement of the International Goals for Sea Lice and Containment

5.1 In 2020, the Council agreed to hold a Theme-based Special Session (TBSS) on aquaculture during its 2021 Annual Meeting. A Steering Committee, comprising John Campbell (Canada), Julie Crocker (USA), Paddy Gargan (EU, Chair), Heidi Hansen (Norway), Paul Knight and Steve Sutton (NGOs), was established to work with the Secretariat in developing a programme and objectives for the session.

5.2 The overarching objective for the TBSS was to stimulate urgent action to implement further measures to protect wild salmon from the impacts of salmon farming, and to ensure demonstrable progress by Parties / jurisdictions towards achievement of the international goals for sea lice and escaped farmed salmon, taking into account the recommendations from the Steering Committees of the 2016 TBSS and the 2019 IYS Symposium, CNL(19)16. It involved:

- reviewing critically the extent to which NASCO Parties / jurisdictions are meeting the international goals for sea lice and escaped farmed salmon;
- updating the current state of scientific knowledge of the adverse impacts of escaped farmed salmon and sea lice on wild Atlantic salmon;
- highlighting advances in best management practices and new technologies (infrastructure / biological etc.), their efficacy in mitigating adverse impacts on wild Atlantic salmon and challenges to their urgent implementation, and how to incentivise industry to move towards implementing these new technologies; and

- exploring in depth how Parties / jurisdictions can move more rapidly towards the achievement of the international goals.

5.3 A report of the Theme-based Special Session will be prepared by the Steering Committee for publication.

(ii) Decisions Taken Following the Theme-based Special Session

5.4 Dr Gargan presented the draft recommendations from the TBSS Steering Committee. The President noted that given the preliminary nature of the TBSS Steering Committee recommendations, Council may wish to consider the recommendations, in principle, and look forward to seeing the finalised recommendations in the TBSS report, which will be published in the coming weeks. The Council considered the following draft recommendations.

> *'1. Council establish a Working Group to draft a NASCO report which provides the latest scientific knowledge on the impacts of sea lice and escaped farmed salmon on wild salmon (State of Knowledge Report on lice and escaped farmed salmon). The Secretariat will explore if this report could be a NASCO / ICES joint venture.'*

5.5 The representative of the UK noted that the UK was very supportive of this recommendation, indicating that such a report should be scientifically robust and peer reviewed. She suggested that there should be a policy brief in addition to the scientific report, that is accessible to non-scientists and decision-makers. The representative of the UK indicated that the UK would like to nominate a person to serve on such a Working Group.

5.6 The representative of the EU noted that the EU was supportive of the recommendations made by the TBSS Steering Committee, in particular the state of knowledge report on the impacts of sea lice and escaped farmed salmon on wild salmon. He agreed that ICES should be involved, noting that the report needs scientific credibility.

5.7 The representative of the United States also noted support for this recommendation and indicated that the United States would be willing to put forward a representative to serve on this group.

5.8 The representative of Norway also expressed support for a state of knowledge report on the impacts of salmon farming on wild fish. He indicated that the target audience should be decision-makers and that it was important that the work was done by the best wild fish experts. He noted that the report needs to be perceived as independent and scientific.

5.9 The representative of Canada also supported this recommendation, noting that representatives on the Working Group should be chosen due to their expertise.

5.10 Council agreed to establish a Working Group to draft a NASCO report which provides the latest scientific knowledge on the impacts of sea lice and escaped farmed salmon on wild salmon. The Secretariat was asked to work with the Steering Committee to identify experts to be invited to serve on this Working Group and to liaise with ICES accordingly.

> *'2. A NASCO statement be issued to:*
>
> *a) promote adoption of innovative and alternate technologies, at sea and on land, to help achieve 100% containment of farmed fish and for 100% of farms to have effective sea lice management such that there is no*

increase in sea lice loads, for the protection of wild salmon and sea trout; and

b) that any wild salmon smolt mortality or genetic introgression of salmon stocks caused by salmon farming is unacceptable when referenced as part of an Implementation Plan action and cannot be considered under the review process as progressing the relevant party or jurisdiction towards achieving NASCO's goals.'

5.11 The representative of the UK indicated that the UK could agree to NASCO issuing a statement on aquaculture, but that it was not clear whether this was intended as an internal or external statement. She further stated that the UK could not agree to the text contained within sub-bullet b) as progress also needs to be recognised.

5.12 The representative of the EU stated that the EU supported a NASCO statement on aquaculture, requesting that Parties take action. He suggested that this statement could be included in a letter to be written by the President to the Parties. The representatives of the United States and Norway supported including a statement on aquaculture in the letters to the Parties.

5.13 The representative of Norway indicated that the contents of such a statement need to be considered. He noted that Norway had provided alternative text for consideration, which addressed the comment from the UK regarding recognising progress in working towards goals as well as in achieving the goals. The representative of the EU also provided text for possible inclusion in a statement reflecting the need for more consistency with the objectives of the TBSS and, in particular, the need to take urgent action. These are included in Annex 13.

5.14 The Council considered these texts briefly and agreed that the Secretariat would prepare a draft statement, taking the discussions into account. The Secretariat would distribute this draft statement to the Council for inter-sessional agreement by correspondence.

'3. A renewed request be made from the NASCO Council that all Parties and jurisdictions with salmon farming produce SMART actions in their revised Implementation Plans for the management of lice and escapes. These actions should reflect strong and sustained progress towards meeting the goals of 100% containment of farmed fish, and for 100% of farms to have effective sea lice management. Monitoring of sea lice and escapes should only be a secondary activity to research or assess the effectiveness of the main action.'

5.15 Council agreed to adopt this recommendation from the TBSS Steering Committee.

5.16 A representative of the UK (Antje Branding) stated that she would like to refute a statement made at the TBSS on behalf of the NGOs regarding the Scottish Environment Protection Agency's (SEPA) inferred view on the impacts of aquaculture on wild salmon. Dr Branding noted that the claim was made that an official from SEPA acknowledged publicly that aquaculture has no impact on wild salmon stocks. She believed that this claim stems from evidence given by a SEPA senior ecologist to a Scottish Parliament inquiry into aquaculture in November last year. The Scottish Parliament report sets out the context and SEPA's statement in full and demonstrates clearly that there is no claim that aquaculture has no impact on wild salmon. Rather, SEPA cites the complex, multiple factors contributing to the decline of wild salmon, and states that there is concern that the additional pressure of sea lice is significant as wild stocks are now at such low levels.

5.17 The representative of the NGOs acknowledged that the quote made in the TBSS was a partial one, but said that it was being used by some, out of context, to argue that there is no impact from salmon farming. The NGOs are frustrated by this. Agreement on the recommendations of the TBSS Steering Committee may help in this regard.

5.18 The representative of the EU emphasised the importance of a clear statement from NASCO on the negative impact of salmon farming on wild salmon. He noted that there have been challenges to the view that there is a negative impact, and NASCO needs to take action given the evidence that is available.

5.19 The representative of the UK supported consolidation of the latest scientific research on the impact of salmon farming on wild Atlantic salmon strongly. She noted that the Scottish Government has published a review on the same matter.

5.20 Council agreed that the next TBSS would be held in 2023. The overarching theme would be climate change. A Steering Committee would be established to consider the appropriate structure to ensure that tangible recommendations from the TBSS would be available to NASCO. Parties and NGOs would be asked to provide nominations for representatives to serve on the Steering Committee following the 2022 Annual Meeting.

5.21 The representative of Norway noted that this would be a new format for NASCO TBSS, as climate change affected all aspects of NASCO's work, not one key area.

b) Report of the Inter-Sessional Implementation Plan Special Session

5.22 The President noted that a Special Session webinar was held on 5 May to discuss the evaluation of the 2019 – 2024 Implementation Plans (IPs). A period of inter-sessional correspondence related to the IPs and their review took place prior to the webinar from 12 – 23 April. The President referred delegates to the 'Report of the Special Session of the Council by Webinar on the Evaluation of Implementation Plans under the Third Reporting Cycle (2019 – 2024)', CNL(21)56rev. The Chair of the IP / APR Review Group, Cathal Gallagher (EU) made a presentation about the Special Session.

5.23 Dr Gallagher referred to page 4 of IP Special Session report, which seeks clarification on a number of issues. The Council considered each of these in turn.

> *'1. Council may wish to agree that there will be no major change to the IP process until the Performance Review Panel has reported (noting that the Review Panel has, in its Terms of Reference, CNL(21)22, been asked to consider the IP process).'*

5.24 The representative of Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland), who is also a member of the IP Review Group, expressed the view that there is no need for major change to the IP process. She noted that the strengthened process with the Enhanced Guidance provides a robust approach, and this should continue.

5.25 The Council agreed that there should be no major change to the IP process.

> *'2. Council may wish to request that Parties / jurisdictions either: submit no further revision of their IP until the Performance Review Panel provides advice on how the process might be revised to better meet its objectives (and, therefore, that no further IP reviews take place), recognising that this may not be until the next reporting cycle; OR continue to submit revised IPs, until their IP is considered satisfactory in all sections / areas by the Review Group (and therefore that subsequent IP reviews take place as required).'*

5.26 The representative of the EU noted that whilst some jurisdictions may not wish to submit a revised IP, it is important to allow Parties / jurisdictions the opportunity to improve their IP. He proposed that Parties / jurisdictions should be able, on a voluntary basis, to make changes to unsatisfactory sections and submit a revised IP for review. The representative of the United States agreed and noted that the United States is revising its IP with the aim of demonstrating progress towards NASCO's Resolutions, Agreements and Guidelines, and would like to submit it for review.

5.27 The representative of the NGOs agreed that Parties should be allowed to revise their IPs voluntarily, but that some consideration is needed about how the revised IPs will be reviewed. Dr Gallagher noted that discussion on this may arise later.

5.28 The Council agreed that Parties / jurisdictions may, on a voluntary basis, submit a revised IP for review.

> *'3a. Council may wish to agree that where 'fish farms' are mentioned in the IP template, this relates to all forms of aquaculture, including conservation hatcheries, as per the definition given in Annex 1 of the Williamsburg Resolution'*

5.29 The Council considered the terms used in the IP template relating to 'fish farms', and 'aquaculture'. The representative of Norway noted that these terms are used inconsistently, and clarification should be provided. He noted that in the Williamsburg Resolution, CNL(06)48, 'aquaculture' includes everything – fish farming, conservation hatcheries etc. The 'Guidance on Best Management Practices to address impacts of sea lice and escaped farmed salmon on wild salmon stocks', SLG(09)5, refers to 'farmed fish'. Dr Gallagher agreed that what information was being requested should be clear in the IP template. The representative of the United States noted that they had been including conservation hatcheries in their IP in order to be open and transparent, and felt that the relevant questions in the IP should pertain to all forms of aquaculture.

5.30 Based on Norway's examination of the Williamsburg Resolution, CNL(06)48, the 'Guidance on Best Management Practices to address impacts of sea lice and escaped farmed salmon on wild salmon stocks', SLG(09)5, and the IP template, the Secretariat indicated revisions to the IP template which would clarify this issue. However, the representative of the UK reminded the Council that it had agreed not to change the IP guidance. She suggested that changes are not made in the middle of this reporting cycle but prepared for the next reporting cycle.

5.31 The Council agreed that, with respect to the inclusion of the terms 'fish farms' and 'aquaculture' in the IP template, the *status quo* should be maintained until the fourth reporting cycle, at which point the IP template should be revised to clarify what information is being requested.

> *'3b. Council may wish to decide whether a Party's / jurisdiction's national legislation which prevents a satisfactory response to an IP question, should / should not be considered a mitigating circumstance to allow it to be considered satisfactory.'*

5.32 The representative of Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland) noted that all Parties had signed up to the Convention and NASCO's Resolutions, Agreements and Guidelines, and, therefore, national legislation should not be considered a mitigating circumstance, allowing otherwise unsatisfactory actions to be satisfactory. All Parties and the NGOs agreed with this assessment.

5.33 The Council agreed that national legislation should not be considered a mitigating

circumstance to allow otherwise unsatisfactory IP actions to be satisfactory.

> *'3c. Council may wish to consider the Review Group's interpretation of the Guidance (CNL(18)49) and the Enhanced Guidance (CNL(20)55), used in their November 2020 review.'*

5.34 The Council agreed that the report of this Council meeting provides adequate direction to the Review Group and that no further revision to guidance documents is required.

> *'3d. Council may wish to agree that in future IP revisions, questions / actions deemed satisfactory in November 2020 are not revised (unless clarification is requested), and revised sections are highlighted clearly.'*

5.35 The representative of the EU stated that although an IP section may be accepted, there may be additional progress that the Party / jurisdiction wants to present. Therefore, Parties / jurisdictions should be able to modify satisfactory actions.

5.36 The Council agreed that Parties / jurisdictions should be able to make revisions to accepted questions / actions. If a change is made to an IP, whether to a satisfactory or unsatisfactory question / action, the Party / jurisdiction should identify clearly what has been changed and why.

> *'3e. Council may wish to agree that future APR reviews only consider actions deemed to be satisfactory by the Review Group.'*

5.37 The representative of Canada noted that this would limit the Parties' ability to report on progress, and on matters that may make an action satisfactory. He proposed that future APR reviews should include all actions. However, he recognised that if meetings of the IP / APR Review Group had to be conducted by video conference this may be impractical, and flexibility should be provided for such circumstances. The representative of the UK agreed that all actions should be reviewed.

5.38 The Council agreed that all actions should be reviewed by the Review Group during future APR reviews. If a virtual meeting was needed, the Council agreed that it would be up to the discretion of the Chair of the IP / APR Review Group and Secretary to determine the best approach. However, any decisions reached must be communicated clearly to the Parties.

5.39 The representative of the NGOs stated his view that this decision was a retrograde step. He was concerned that a review of unsatisfactory actions would allow Parties / jurisdictions to be complacent. He said that the NGOs did not agree with this decision and thought the performance review would pick up on this. The NGO Co-Chair considered how the Review Group would give feedback on progress reported on unsatisfactory actions and asked whether there is guidance on how best do that. He questioned whether the guidance on the review of acceptable actions was appropriate for the review of unacceptable actions. The President replied that this could be part of the conversation between the Secretary and the Chair of the Review Group.

> *'4. Council may wish to consider whether increased participation from the Parties and jurisdictions in the work and / or meetings of the Review Group would benefit the review process;'*

5.40 The representative of the EU felt there was room to build improved interaction between Parties / jurisdictions into the process. The representative of the United States agreed that being able to seek clarification on comments made by the Review Group would be helpful in improving actions but acknowledged that the timing of such interaction would need to be carefully considered. She noted that, as the Review Group would only

need to consider revised sections of an IP, it may not be too onerous to increase communication. She suggested that the Secretary work with the Chair of the Review Group to establish how this might happen.

5.41 The representative of Norway noted the importance of maintaining the integrity and independence of the Review Group. The final decision on whether IP sections are satisfactory should be for the Review Group alone, but this judgement should be based on the best possible information and, therefore, he would welcome improved communication. The representative of Canada welcomed the opportunity for a simple process which gives the opportunity for a conversation with the Review Group. The representative of the EU noted that the process would need to be flexible for both the Parties and the Review Group, and that this communication may save time in the long run.

5.42 The President suggested that the communication should take place before the IP review was finalised and that the Secretary work with the Chair of the IP / APR Review Group to establish how the dialogue would occur. However, the representative for Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland) suggested that the communication between the Review Group and the Parties / jurisdictions might best take place before the Parties revised their IPs, so that they could understand better the feedback already available. She noted that this could work annually if need be. The representative of the NGOs asked whether the Parties / jurisdictions were looking for more detailed written responses and asked how this communication might work. He agreed that the Chair of the Review Group and the Secretary should consider how best this might take place.

5.43 The Council agreed that the review process would be revised to enable a dialogue between the Review Group and Parties / jurisdictions on the unsatisfactory elements of their IPs. The Council agreed that the Secretary and Review Group Chair should determine the timeline for this dialogue, whilst ensuring that the timing for the APR process is adhered to.

> *'5. Council may wish to invite France (in respect of St Pierre and Miquelon) to participate in the Implementation Plan process.'*

5.44 The representative of Canada encouraged France (in respect of St Pierre and Miquelon) to join NASCO, which would allow France (in respect of St Pierre and Miquelon) to be included in the IP process. He proposed that the President write a letter to ask them to join NASCO and also highlight the importance and value of the IPs. All Parties supported this.

5.45 The Council agreed to write again to France (in respect of St Pierre and Miquelon) to invite them to join NASCO. In the letter the President will emphasise how NASCO's IP process will enable France (in respect of St Pierre and Miquelon) to highlight their positive actions for salmon management.

5.46 Additionally, the representative of the EU acknowledged the many positive actions in the IPs and noted that he would welcome more recognition of them. He suggested that more might be done to give credit and recognition to those who do a good job. The representative of Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland) agreed and suggested that the Secretariat could create news items for the website and social media about such positive action.

5.47 The Council agreed that the Review Group should also provide positive feedback to the Parties / jurisdictions on those aspects of the IPs that the Review Group considers are moving the Parties / jurisdictions clearly towards the achievement of NASCO's

Resolutions, Agreements and Guidelines. These can be highlighted on the website and twitter.

5.48 In summary, the Council agreed that:

- there should be no major change to the IP process;
- Parties / jurisdictions may, on a voluntary basis, submit a revised IP for review;
- with respect to the inclusion of the terms 'fish farms' and 'aquaculture' in the IP template, the *status quo* should be maintained until the fourth reporting cycle, at which point the IP template should be revised to clarify what information is being requested;
- national legislation should not be considered a mitigating circumstance to allow otherwise unsatisfactory IP actions to be satisfactory;
- the record in this report of the Council meeting provides adequate direction to the Review Group and that no further revision to guidance documents is required;
- that Parties / jurisdictions should be able to make revisions to accepted questions / actions. If a change is made to an IP, whether to a satisfactory or unsatisfactory question / action, the Party / jurisdiction should identify clearly what has been changed and why;
- all actions should be reviewed by the Review Group during future APR reviews. If a virtual meeting was needed, the Council agreed that it would be up to the discretion of the Chair and Secretary to determine the best approach. Any decisions reached must be clearly communicated to the Parties;
- the review process would be revised to enable a dialogue between the Review Group and Parties / jurisdictions on the unsatisfactory elements of their IPs. The Council agreed that the Secretary and Review Group Chair should determine the timeline that would be necessary to enable this dialogue, whilst ensuring that the timeline for the APR process is adhered to;
- to write again to France (in respect of St Pierre and Miquelon) to invite them to consider joining NASCO. In the letter the President will highlight how NASCO's IP process will enable France (in respect of St Pierre and Miquelon) to highlight their positive actions for salmon management*;* and
- the Review Group should provide positive feedback to the Parties / jurisdictions on those aspects of the IPs that the Review Group considers are moving the Parties / jurisdictions clearly towards the achievement of NASCO's Resolutions, Agreements and Guidelines. In addition, significant improvements by the Parties should be communicated on the NASCO website and social media.

c) Evaluation of Annual Progress Reports under the 2019 – 2024 Implementation Plans

(i) Special Session: Evaluation of Annual Progress Reports under the 2019 – 2024 Implementation Plans

5.49 The President noted that the purpose of the evaluation of the Annual Progress Reports by the Review Group is to ensure that Parties / jurisdictions have provided a clear account of progress in implementing and evaluating the actions detailed in their Implementation Plans. In addition, under Article 15 of the NASCO Convention, Parties are required to report catch statistics and other information to the Council annually.

This is achieved through the submission of Annual Progress Reports (APRs).

5.50 The Chair of the IP / APR Review Group, Cathal Gallagher (EU), presented the report of the IP / APR Review Group for the review of Annual Progress Reports, CNL(21)17. The discussions held during the Special Session are contained in Annex 14.

(ii) Decisions Taken Regarding the Evaluation of Annual Progress Reports under the 2019 – 2024 Implementation Plans

5.51 The Council agreed that the Secretary and the Chair of the Review Group should arrange a meeting of the Review Group in April 2022 to undertake the review of the 2021 APRs.

d) International Year of the Salmon Legacy Activities

5.52 The Secretary provided an update on 'International Year of the Salmon Legacy Activities', CNL(21)19. She noted that Council had agreed in 2019 that, with regard to the legacy of the IYS, a periodic Symposium and State of Salmon Report should be delivered by the Secretariat.

5.53 In 2020, Council agreed that a joint NASCO / NPAFC IYS Concluding Symposium should be held in Vancouver, Canada, in September 2022, if possible, or October 2022 at the latest and accepted the Terms of Reference for the Steering Committee of the joint NASCO / NPAFC IYS Concluding Symposium. The Steering Committee was formed in 2020 with six members with a mandate to discuss the planning of a world-class Symposium to report on and synthesise the accomplishments of the IYS and consider its legacy and recommendations for the future. The Steering Committee has considered the format, date and location for the Symposium.

5.54 The representative of the United States asked about supporting a hybrid meeting. The Secretary noted that the Steering Committee had felt that a hybrid symposium would be difficult because of time-zone differences, but that the presentations would be made available online to make it accessible to those who cannot physically attend.

5.55 The representative of Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland) suggested that during the 2022 Annual Meeting a Special Session on the recommendations from the IYS Tromsø Symposium Steering Committee be held. She proposed that NASCO could discuss each of the recommendations and consider how it might be addressed. The representative of the NGOs said that the NGOs would welcome this, as they were keen for some commitment from the Parties on the Tromsø recommendations.

5.56 The representative of Norway proposed that, in addition to a short Special Session to consider the Tromsø recommendations, it may be possible to hold a Theme-based Special Session (TBSS). He noted that it could otherwise be another two years before another TBSS was held. The representative of the United States supported this suggestion but noted that if a regulatory measure needed to be negotiated in 2022, time may be short during the meeting. The representative of the NGOs suggested that consideration of the Tromsø recommendations could be combined with a TBSS on climate change.

5.57 The Council agreed to:

- approve the NASCO / NPAFC IYS Concluding Symposium Steering Committee's choice of venue; and
- approve the IYS Concluding Symposium dates, 4 – 6 October 2022;

- consider the timing and structure of the next State of North Atlantic Salmon report once the Rivers Database Working Group has reported; and
- hold a Special Session on the Tromsø Symposium Steering Committee Recommendations during the Annual Meeting in 2022.

e) 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

5.58 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. The President noted the report on progress in implementing the recommendations in the Action Plan, CNL(20)23.

f) Liaison with the Salmon Farming Industry

5.59 In 2013, the Council agreed that an item should be retained on its Agenda entitled 'Liaison with the Salmon Farming Industry', during which a representative of the International Salmon Farmers' Association (ISFA) would be invited to participate in an exchange of information on issues concerning impacts of aquaculture on wild Atlantic salmon. The regular meetings of the Liaison Group would not continue, but, if a specific need arose, consideration could be given to convening a joint ad hoc group. ISFA was represented at the Thirty-Eighth Annual Meeting by Mark Lane, who presented a short statement to the Council (Annex 15).

g) New or Emerging Opportunities for, or Threats to, Salmon Conservation and Management

5.60 In accordance with the 'Strategic Approach for NASCO's Next Steps', this item is included on the Council's Agenda annually and ICES is requested to provide relevant information. Section 1.2 of the 'Report of the ICES Advisory Committee', CNL(21)11, provides this information. Relevant information is also presented in the summary of Annual Progress Reports, CNL(21)18.

5.61 A representative of ICES, Dennis Ensing, presented the advice relevant to this Agenda item in a webinar on 28 May. The ICES presentation is available as a document (Annex 9).

h) Management and Sampling of the St Pierre and Miquelon Salmon Fishery

5.62 A report on the 'Management and Sampling of the St Pierre and Miquelon Salmon Fishery', CNL(21)21, had been submitted by France (in respect of St Pierre and Miquelon). This report had also been considered in the North American Commission. The representative of France (in respect of St Pierre and Miquelon), Camille Servetto, presented the highlights of the report.

5.63 Ms Servetto noted that substantial work has been undertaken to increase awareness among fishers to improve the quality of the available data for sampling and inspections. The legislation that applies to this fishery is subject to dedicated inspection programmes. She stated that with the sampling programme, the main concern is to improve understanding of the biological characteristics and the origin of salmon harvested in the fishery at St Pierre and Miquelon. In 2020, the sampling programme of salmon harvested at sea was continued by IFREMER. 116 salmon were measured and weighed, compared with 64 in 2019. This increase is explained by the important involvement of recreational fishers who collaborate closely with IFREMER.

5.64 Ms Servetto said that the collaboration set up in 2013 between IFREMER-St Pierre et

Miquelon and DFO-Newfoundland and Labrador continued in 2020. Scales and tissue samples were transmitted by IFREMER to the DFO laboratory in St John's, Newfoundland for age determination and genetic analyses. She thanked Canada for ongoing co-operation and constructive partnership on sampling work. Finally, she said that France (in respect of St Pierre and Miquelon) shares concerns about the abundance of North American stocks and is involved fully in the management of the salmon fisheries and works to improve its monitoring and control.

5.65 The representative of Canada noted appreciation for co-operation on the sampling programme and encouraged France (in respect of St Pierre and Miquelon) to join NASCO.

i) Reports on the Conservation Work of the Three Regional Commissions

5.66 The activities of the North-East Atlantic Commission were reported to the Council by the Vice-Chair. The activities of the North American and West Greenland Commissions were reported to the Council by their Chairs.

5.67 The representative of Canada made the following statement:

> *'We know that the stresses on Atlantic salmon populations are many and varied not the least of which are the fundamental changes undergoing in the world's marine and freshwater ecosystems. But this should not prevent us from taking action to control the impact of human activities on this very iconic species, this King of Fish. Looking forward, Canada encourages all Parties to roll up their sleeves and put their collective shoulder to the wheel to provide conditions whereby this iconic species does not continue to diminish, but indeed survives in the decades to come.*

5.68 The representative of the United States concurred with this statement from Canada.

6. Other Business

6.1 Upon the resignation of the current President, the Council elected the current Vice-President, Arnaud Peyronnet (European Union), as its President (proposed by the representative of Canada, seconded by the representative of Norway) for a period of two years, to commence from the close of the 2021 Annual Meeting.

6.2 The Council elected Kim Damon-Randall (USA) as its Vice-President (proposed by the representative of Norway, seconded by the representative of the United Kingdom) for a period of two years, to commence from the close of the 2021 Annual Meeting.

7. Date and Place of the Next Meeting

7.1 The Council agreed that the Thirty-Ninth Annual Meeting would be held in Edinburgh during 7 – 10 June 2022.

7.2 The Council confirmed the dates for its Fortieth Annual Meeting as 6 – 9 June 2023.

8. Report of the Meeting

8.1 The Council agreed the report of its Meeting.

9. Close of the Meeting

9.1 The President thanked the Parties and observers for their contributions and closed the Thirty-Eighth Annual Meeting of NASCO.

CNL(21)62

Compte rendu de la trente-huitième session annuelle du Conseil de l'Organisation pour la Conservation du Saumon de l'Atlantique Nord

Par vidéoconférence

27 mai – 4 juin 2021

1. Ouverture de la session

1.1 Le Président, Serge Doucet (Canada), a ouvert la session et fait une déclaration au nom de l'Organisation (Annexe 1).

1.2 Le Président a indiqué que pour la seconde fois, la session annuelle en présentiel de l'OCSAN avait été annulée en raison de la pandémie au Covid-19. Les Parties avaient accepté que les activités de l'OCSAN soient menées par correspondance inter-sessionnelle et par vidéoconférence. Il a remercié tous les délégués pour leur flexibilité et leur détermination à participer pendant cette période exceptionnelle.

1.3 Les représentants du Canada, du Danemark (pour les Iles Féroé et le Groenland), de l'Union européenne (UE), de la Norvège, de la Fédération de Russie, du Royaume Uni (RU) et des États-Unis ont fait des déclarations d'ouverture (Annexe 2).

1.4 Des déclarations d'ouverture ont été faites par les organisations inter-gouvernementales suivantes : le Conseil International pour l'Exploration de la Mer (CIEM) et la Commission des Poissons Anadromes du Pacifique Nord (CPAPN) (Annexe 3).

1.5 Une déclaration d'ouverture a été faite au nom des organisations non-gouvernementales (ONGs) (Annexe 4).

1.6 Le Président a rappelé aux participants que la période pour la correspondance inter-sessionnelle avait couru du 3 au 14 mai. Un ordre du jour annoté, CNL(21)25A, incluant la correspondance inter-sessionnelle, a été transmis à tous les délégués le 21 mai. La correspondance inter-sessionnelle pour le Conseil se trouve en Annexe 5. Le Président a noté que l'Ordre du jour, CNL(21)25, (Annexe 6) avait été adopté par correspondance le 30 Avril préalablement à la période de correspondance inter-sessionnelle.

1.7 Une liste des participants à la trente-huitième session du Conseil de l'OCSAN est fournie en Annexe 7.

2. Questions financières et administratives

a) Rapport du Comité financier et administratif

2.1 Le rapport du Comité financier et administratif (CFA), CNL(21)06, a été présenté par le Président du CFA, Clemens Fieseler (UE).

2.2 Sur la recommandation du Comité, le Conseil a pris les décisions suivantes:

- d'adopter les comptes vérifiés pour 2020, FAC(21)03;
- d'adopter un Budget pour 2022 et de prendre note d'un Budget prévisionnel pour 2023, CNL(21)59, (Annexe 8);
- que la Secrétaire assurerait la liaison avec le CIEM pour demander l'examen des modifications du protocole d'entente (MoU) avec le CIEM proposées par le CFA,

que le document ainsi obtenu serait examiné par le CFA par correspondance inter-sessionnelle, et que le Conseil adopterait ensuite la version finale du MoU, en inter-session, par correspondance;

- que le Président écrirait au Président de l'OSPAR, avant le 23 Juin 2021, au sujet de l'évaluation prochaine du statut du saumon de l'Atlantique par la Commission OSPAR;
- que la Secrétaire déterminerait, en consultation avec le Président et le Président du CFA, s'il y a à Edimbourg un autre cabinet de comptabilité adéquat intéressé par un appel d'offre pour réaliser l'audit des comptes de l'OCSAN de 2021, 2022 et 2023, et si aucun cabinet adéquat n'est disponible, que Saffery Champness serait désigné comme auditeur pour 2021, 2022 et 2023;
- d'adopter le rapport du Comité financier et administratif, CNL(21)06.

2.3 Le Conseil a aussi pris note de l'intention du CFA de tenir une réunion virtuelle début 2022 pour étudier des clarifications possibles, et potentiellement d'autres améliorations, des Règles applicables au personnel et des Règles pour le Fonds du personnel, y compris en ce qui concerne le paiement d'une somme forfaitaire lors du départ en retraite du personnel du Secrétariat. L'objectif de ce travail inter-sessionnel est de préparer le terrain pour une décision sur ces questions en 2022.

3. Informations scientifiques, techniques, juridiques et autres

a) Rapport de la Secrétaire

3.1 Le Président a indiqué que le 'Rapport de la Secrétaire', CNL(21)09, qui contient des informations sur des questions de procédure, administratives et financières, avait été diffusé préalablement à la session. La Secrétaire a fait savoir que des contributions avaient maintenant été reçues de la part de toutes les Parties. Elle a aussi indiqué que le site web de l'OCSAN était mis à jour en direct pour la session annuelle pour la première fois, et a déclaré que des retours sur son fonctionnement seraient bienvenus.

b) Rapport sur les activités de l'Organisation en 2020

3.2 Conformément à l'Article 5, paragraphe 6, de la Convention, le Conseil a adopté le Rapport sur les Activités de l'Organisation en 2020.

c) Annonce du gagnant du Grand Prix du Programme incitatif au renvoi des marques

3.3 Le Président a indiqué que l'OCSAN met en oeuvre un Programme incitatif au renvoi des marques. Chaque année, un Grand Prix de £1,500 est décerné, ainsi que trois prix de £1,000, un pour chacune des zones des trois Commissions de l'OCSAN.

3.4 Il a annoncé que le gagnant du Grand Prix était Steinar Egeland de Norvège. La marque avait été apposée à un saumoneau de 15,6 cm, marqué lors de sa migration vers la mer dans la rivière Imsa au sud de la Norvège le 19 mars 2019 et recapturé à la canne à mouche sur la rivière Figgjo au sud de la Norvège le 13 juillet 2020. Il mesurait 57 cm de long et pesait 1,7 kg lors de sa recapture. Ce poisson avait été marqué dans une rivière de référence dans le cadre d'un projet de mesure de la survie en mer des saumoneaux. Le Président a félicité M. Egeland.

d) Conseils scientifiques du CIEM

3.5 Le représentant du CIEM, Dennis Ensing, a présenté le rapport du Comité d'avis (ACOM), CNL(21)11, au cours d'un webinaire le 28 mai. La présentation du CIEM est

disponible sous la cote CNL(21)58 (Annexe 9). Les discussions sur cette présentation tenues au cours du webinaire, CNL(21)60, figurent en Annexe 10.

e) Rapport de la Commission internationale de recherche sur le saumon atlantique

3.6 Le rapport de la réunion de la Commission internationale de recherche sur le saumon atlantique (la CIRSA), CNL(21)12, (Annexe 11) a été présenté par le Président de la CIRSA, Ciaran Byrne (UE).

3.7 Le Dr Byrne a informé le Conseil de sa réélection comme Président de la CIRSA pour une nouvelle période de deux ans, débutant à la clôture de la session annuelle de 2021. Il a rendu compte des principaux points examinés lors de la réunion. Il a indiqué que la CIRSA avait approuvé les termes de référence pour une révision de la métabase des données d'enquête sur le saumon et les collections d'échantillons de saumons, qui serait menée en inter-session. Ceci inclurait l'examen d'autres champs de la CIRSA dont une révision pourrait être requise. Le Dr Byrne a aussi indiqué que la CIRSA avait étudié la possibilité d'un successeur de SALSEA-Track. Deux présentations avaient été faites, la première sur le programme ROAM, par le représentant des États-Unis au sein de la CIRSA, et la seconde sur une proposition de projet 'Création d'une Initiative Internationale de Modélisation et de Gestion du Saumon de l'Atlantique' (ISSMI) par le représentant des ONGs. La CIRSA a décidé de soumettre la proposition ISSMI au Groupe d'avis scientifique de la CIRSA pour analyse technique, en inter-session. La CIRSA étudierait cette analyse technique en inter-session, le cas échéant, puis déterminerait les prochaines étapes.

f) Considération de la base de données de rivières de l'OCSAN

3.8 Le Président a rappelé aux délégués qu'en 2020 le Conseil avait convenu que la Secrétaire travaillerait avec les Parties / juridictions à explorer les raisons pour lesquelles ces dernières n'avaient pas utilisé la base de données de rivières comme cela avait été décidé en 2016. La base de données de rivières n'a été utilisée que partiellement pour contribuer au Rapport sur l'état du saumon de l'Atlantique Nord de 2019, au lieu de constituer l'unique base d'information comme cela avait été envisagé à l'origine. La base de données de rivières a été prévue à l'origine pour être une pièce centrale du site web de l'OCSAN, afin de le rendre pertinent à consulter, de fournir des informations sur ce qui se passait pour les stocks et d'accroître la visibilité de l'OCSAN. Le Président a fait référence au document 'Le futur pour la base de données de rivières de l'OCSAN', CNL(21)13, qui expose les diverses difficultés rencontrées et les préoccupations liées à la version actuelle de la base de données.

3.9 Le représentant du Canada a dit que l'objectif principal de la base de données de rivières devrait être de fournir la base de futurs rapports sur l'état du saumon de l'Atlantique Nord et que, par conséquent, il l'envisageait plutôt comme un outil de communication que comme un outil scientifique. Son avis était qu'elle devrait être accessible sur le site web de l'OCSAN en format cartographique.

3.10 Le représentant de la Norvège a souligné l'importance de la base de données de rivières et son souhait qu'elle soit maintenue parce que l'OCSAN devrait être l'organisation détentrice de telles informations. Il était d'accord avec le Canada pour qu'elle soit disponible dans une application cartographique, et si l'alimentation par tous de la base de données pouvait être rendue plus simple pour tous, ce serait positif.

3.11 Le représentant de l'UE était d'accord avec la Norvège en ce que l'OCSAN est l'organisation qui devrait détenir cette base de données et que lorsque les gens cherchent des informations sur les stocks de saumon, ils devraient se tourner vers l'OCSAN. Il a

aussi mentionné qu'il y avait eu des difficultés dans la mise à jour de la base de données de rivières parce que cela impliquait un travail considérable de la part des Parties / juridictions et du Secrétariat. Il a proposé l'établissement d'un groupe de travail pour étudier, entre autres choses, comment elle pourrait plus facilement être mise à jour. La représentante des États-Unis a approuvé le fait qu'un groupe de travail composé de personnes ayant un éventail d'expertise était nécessaire.

3.12 La représentante du RU a indiqué que la base de données de rivières était un outil de communication et non de prise de décision. Elle a déclaré que l'OCSAN devrait détenir la vue d'ensemble, mais que les Parties / juridictions devraient rester l'autorité compétente pour leurs propres données et auraient besoin de rendre les données disponibles pour inclusion dans la base de données de rivières de manière efficace, et aussi qu'un certain travail était nécessaire sur les données de référence dans la base de données, par exemple il y avait trop de rivières écossaises incluses et pas assez de rivières anglaises.

3.13 Le représentant des ONGs a appuyé l'importance de la base de données de rivières pour l'OCSAN et a suggéré qu'un expert en informatique serait indispensable pour tout groupe de travail. Le représentant de la CPAPN a indiqué qu'elle avait chargé son groupe de travail sur l'évaluation des stocks de préparer un rapport sur l'état du saumon, attendu en mai 2022, et serait intéressée par des échanges sur ce sujet car ceci pourrait être pertinent pour le symposium de l'AIS en 2022.

3.14 Le Conseil a décidé:

- que l'OCSAN devrait maintenir une base de données de rivières accessible sur son site web; d'ajouter un texte avec les avertissements appropriés concernant la base de données de rivières; et que le Secrétariat devrait rendre la base de données de rivières disponible sur le site web sous un format cartographique dès que possible; et
- d'établir un groupe de travail pour examiner les questions de haut niveau suivantes relatives à la base de données de rivières, et en faire rapport à la session annuelle en 2022:
    - son objectif – ex. communication, plutôt qu'outil de décision;
    - son périmètre – ex. statut des stocks dans les rivières; inclusion des facteurs d'impact; concentration sur quelques paramètres clairement définis;
    - données et couverture – ex. classification rigoureuse et approuvée du stock ou ‘lecture transversale’ et catégories;
    - mode d'affichage et de fourniture des données – ex. html, version GIS, mise à disposition des données dans un tableur;
    - fréquence des mises à jour – ex. tous les cinq ans pour fournir les mises à jour pour le rapport sur l'état du saumon; et
    - autres décisions.

3.15 Le Secrétariat prendra l'attache des Parties et des ONGs après la session annuelle pour rechercher des candidats pour le groupe de travail. Des termes de référence plus détaillés seront établis par le Secrétariat et approuvés par le Conseil, par correspondance, en inter-session.

g) Compte rendu du Comité scientifique permanent

3.16 Le Président a avisé le Conseil que les Articles 3 et 4 de la Convention exigent que l'OCSAN prenne en compte les meilleures données scientifiques et établisse des accords de collaboration avec le CIEM. Pendant la session annuelle, le Comité scientifique permanent (CSP) qui aide le Conseil et les Commissions à formuler leurs questions au CIEM, s'est réuni pour élaborer un projet de Demande de conseils scientifiques auprès du CIEM pour examen par les Commissions et le Conseil. Le Président du CSP, Paddy Gargan (UE), a présenté le projet de Demande de conseils scientifiques auprès du CIEM.

3.17 Le représentant de la Norvège a posé la question de l'impact de la mesure de réglementation pour une année adoptée en Commission du Groenland occidental sur l'adéquation des mesures de réglementation lors des années à venir. La Secrétaire a répondu que cette question devait être examinée plus avant.

3.18 Le Conseil a adopté la 'Demande de conseils scientifiques auprès du CIEM', CNL(21)14, (Annexe 12). Le document adopté comprenait de légères mises à jour aux questions examinées par la Commission Nord-Américaine, adoptées sur le principe par cette Commission, pour que le CSP puisse fournir des conseils révisés en lien avec la mesure de réglementation pour une année de la Commission du Groenland occidental.

4. Le troisième examen des performances: mise à jour pour le Conseil

4.1 Le Président a rappelé aux délégués qu'à la réunion d'inter-session de décembre 2020, le Conseil avait convenu qu'il soit fait rapport du troisième examen des performances en 2023. La Secrétaire a fourni une 'Mise à jour sur la planification du troisième examen des performances de l'OCSAN', CNL(21)15.

4.2 La Secrétaire a annoncé que les candidats suivants avaient accepté de siéger au panel d'examen: Jean-Jacques Maguire (un expert en science des pêcheries); Philip McGinnity (un expert en gestion et conservation du saumon); et Erik Molenaar (un expert en droit de la mer/des pêcheries). Elle a indiqué qu'au moins deux des membres du panel exigeraient des honoraires journaliers de consultant. La Secrétaire prévoit d'organiser une réunion cet été avec les membres du panel d'examen pour désigner un Président, qui sera invité à assister à la session annuelle 2022 de l'OCSAN.

5. Conservation, restauration, accroissement et gestion rationnelle du Saumon atlantique dans le cadre de l'approche préventive

a) Minimiser les impacts de la salmoniculture sur le saumon sauvage de l'Atlantique : soutenir un progrès significatif et plus rapide vers la réalisation des Objectifs internationaux pour le pou du poisson et le confinement

(i) Séance spéciale thématique : Minimiser les impacts de la salmoniculture sur le saumon sauvage de l'Atlantique : soutenir un progrès significatif et plus rapide vers la réalisation des Objectifs internationaux pour le pou du poisson et le confinement

5.1 En 2020, le Conseil a décidé de tenir une Séance spéciale thématique (SST) sur l'aquaculture lors de sa session annuelle de 2021. Un comité de direction, composé de John Campbell (Canada), Julie Crocker (États-Unis), Paddy Gargan (UE, Président), Heidi Hansen (Norvège), Paul Knight et Steve Sutton (ONGs) a été établi pour travailler avec le Secrétariat à l'élaboration d'un programme et d'objectifs pour cette séance.

5.2 L'objectif global de la SST était de stimuler des actions urgentes pour mettre en oeuvre des mesures supplémentaires pour protéger le saumon sauvage des impacts de l'élevage

du saumon, et d'assurer des progrès démontrables de la part des Parties / juridictions vers la réalisation des objectifs internationaux pour le pou du poisson et les échappements de saumon d'élevage, par prise en compte des recommandations des comités de direction de la SST de 2016 et du comité de direction du Symposium AIS de 2019, CNL(19)16. Celui-ci impliquait:

- d'analyser dans quelle mesure les Parties / juridictions de l'OCSAN atteignent les objectifs internationaux pour le pou du saumon et les saumons d'élevage échappés;
- de mettre à jour l'état des lieux des connaissances scientifiques sur les impacts négatifs des saumons d'élevage échappés et du pou du poisson sur le saumon sauvage de l'Atlantique;
- de mettre en avant les progrès en meilleures pratiques de gestion et nouvelles technologies (infrastructure / biologique etc.), leur efficacité pour atténuer les impacts négatifs sur le saumon sauvage de l'Atlantique et les défis à leur mise en œuvre urgente, ainsi que les moyens pour inciter l'industrie à avancer vers la mise en œuvre de ces nouvelles technologies; et
- d'explorer en profondeur comment les Parties / juridictions peuvent s'approcher plus rapidement de la réalisation des objectifs internationaux.

5.3 Un rapport de la Séance spéciale thématique sera préparé par le comité de direction pour diffusion.

(ii) Décisions prises à la suite de la Séance spéciale thématique

5.4 Le Dr Gargan a présenté le projet de recommandations préparé par le comité de direction de la SST. Le Président a indiqué qu'étant donné la nature préliminaire des recommandations du comité de direction de la SST, le Conseil pourrait souhaiter étudier les recommandations sur le principe, et attendre de voir les recommandations finalisées dans le rapport de la SST, qui sera diffusé dans les prochaines semaines. Le Conseil a étudié les recommandations projet suivantes.

> *'1. Le Conseil établit un groupe de travail pour rédiger un rapport de l'OCSAN donnant les plus récentes connaissances scientifiques sur les impacts du pou du poisson et des saumons d'élevage échappés sur le saumon sauvage (Rapport sur l'état des connaissances sur le pou du poisson et les saumons d'élevage échappés). Le Secrétariat explorera la possibilité que ce rapport puisse être un partenariat OCSAN / CIEM.'*

5.5 La représentante du RU a déclaré que le RU soutenait fortement cette recommandation, indiquant qu'un tel rapport devrait être scientifiquement robuste et évalué par des pairs. Elle a suggéré que soit adjointe au rapport scientifique une note d'orientation qui serait accessible aux non-scientifiques et décideurs. La représentante du RU a indiqué que le RU souhaitait désigner une personne pour participer à un tel groupe de travail.

5.6 Le représentant de l'UE a fait part du soutien de l'UE aux recommandations faites par le comité de direction de la SST, et en particulier au rapport sur l'état des connaissances sur les impacts du pou du poisson et des saumons d'élevage échappés sur le saumon sauvage. Il a approuvé l'implication du CIEM, soulignant que le rapport devait avoir une crédibilité scientifique.

5.7 La représentante des États-Unis a aussi fait part de leur support à cette recommandation et indiqué que les États-Unis souhaiteraient dépêcher un représentant pour contribuer à ce groupe.

5.8 Le représentant de la Norvège a aussi exprimé son soutien à un rapport sur l'état des connaissances sur les impacts de l'élevage du saumon sur le poisson sauvage. Il a indiqué que le public cible devrait être les décideurs et qu'il était important que le travail soit réalisé par les meilleurs experts du poisson sauvage. Il a souligné que le rapport devrait être perçu comme indépendant et scientifique.

5.9 Le représentant du Canada a aussi soutenu cette recommandation, indiquant que les représentants au sein du groupe de travail devraient être choisis en fonction de leur expertise.

5.10 Le Conseil a décidé d'établir un groupe de travail pour rédiger un rapport de l'OCSAN donnant les plus récentes connaissances scientifiques sur les impacts du pou du poisson et des saumons d'élevage échappés sur le saumon sauvage. Il a été demandé au Secrétariat de travailler avec le comité de direction pour identifier des experts à inviter à travailler au sein de ce groupe de travail, et pour faire la liaison avec le CIEM en ce sens.

'2. Qu'une déclaration de l'OCSAN soit publiée pour:

a) promouvoir l'adoption de technologies innovantes et alternatives, en mer et à terre, pour aider à atteindre 100% de confinement des poissons d'élevage et 100% des élevages ayant une gestion efficace du pou du poisson telle qu'il n'y ait pas d'augmentation de charges en pou du poisson, pour la protection du saumon sauvage et de la truite de mer; et

b) que toute mortalité de saumoneau sauvage ou introgression génétique de stocks de saumon occasionnées par l'élevage de saumons est inacceptable lorsqu'il y est fait référence dans le cadre d'une action d'un Plan de mise en œuvre, et ne peut être considérée dans le cadre de la procédure de passage en revue comme faisant progresser la Partie ou juridiction concernée vers l'atteinte des objectifs de l'OCSAN.'

5.11 La représentante du RU a indiqué que le RU pouvait approuver la publication d'une déclaration de l'OCSAN sur l'aquaculture, mais qu'il n'était pas clair si l'intention était d'en faire une déclaration interne ou externe. Elle a déclaré en outre que le RU ne pouvait pas accepter le texte figurant au sous-point b) car il est aussi nécessaire de reconnaître les progrès.

5.12 Le représentant de l'UE a déclaré que l'UE soutenait une déclaration de l'OCSAN sur l'aquaculture, demandant aux Parties de passer à l'action. Il a suggéré que cette déclaration pourrait être incluse dans un courrier du Président aux Parties. Les représentants des États-Unis et de la Norvège ont soutenu l'inclusion d'une déclaration sur l'aquaculture dans un courrier aux Parties.

5.13 Le représentant de la Norvège a indiqué qu'il était nécessaire de bien étudier la teneur d'une telle déclaration. Il a souligné que la Norvège avait transmis pour examen un texte alternatif répondant au commentaire du RU en ce qui concerne la reconnaissance de progrès dans le travail vers les objectifs aussi bien que dans l'atteinte des objectifs. Le représentant de l'UE a aussi transmis un texte pouvant être inclus dans une déclaration reflétant le besoin de plus de conformité aux objectifs de la SST et, en particulier, la nécessité d'un passage urgent à l'action. Ces textes figurent en Annexe 13.

5.14 Le Conseil a examiné brièvement ces textes et convenu que le Secrétariat préparerait un projet de déclaration prenant en compte les débats. Le Secrétariat diffuserait ce projet de déclaration au Conseil pour approbation en inter-session par correspondance.

‘3. Qu'une demande renouvelée soit faite par le Conseil de l'OCSAN pour que toutes les Parties et juridictions ayant des élevages de saumon développent des actions SMART dans leurs Plans de mise en oeuvre révisés pour la gestion du pou et des échappements. Ces actions devraient refléter des avancées fortes et soutenues vers l'atteinte des objectifs de 100% de confinement du poisson d'élevage, et pour que 100% des élevages aient une gestion efficace du pou du poisson. Le suivi du pou du poisson et des échappements ne devrait être qu'une action secondaire, afin d'étudier ou d'évaluer l'efficacité de l'action principale.’

5.15 Le Conseil a décidé d'adopter cette recommandation du comité de direction de la SST.

5.16 Une représentante du RU (Antje Branding) a déclaré qu'elle souhaitait réfuter une déclaration faite lors de la SST au nom des ONGs, en ce qui concerne l'insinuation d'un point de vue de l'Agence de Protection de l'Environnement écossaise (SEPA) sur les impacts de l'aquaculture sur le saumon sauvage. Le Dr Branding a indiqué qu'il avait été prétendu qu'un agent de la SEPA aurait reconnu publiquement que l'aquaculture n'avait aucun impact sur les stocks de saumon sauvage. Elle pensait que l'origine de cette revendication était l'audition d'un écologiste senior de la SEPA à une commission d'enquête du Parlement écossais sur l'aquaculture, en novembre de l'année dernière. Le rapport du Parlement écossais restitue le contexte et l'audition de la SEPA au complet, et démontre clairement qu'il n'y a pas de déclaration selon laquelle l'aquaculture n'a aucun impact sur le saumon sauvage. Au contraire, la SEPA cite les facteurs complexes multiples contribuant au déclin du saumon sauvage, et déclare qu'il y a des préoccupations quant à la pression additionnelle significative du pou du poisson puisque les stocks sauvages se trouvent aujourd'hui à de si bas niveaux.

5.17 Le représentant des ONGs a reconnu que la citation faite à la SST était partielle, mais a dit qu'elle était utilisée par certaines personnes, en dehors du contexte, pour affirmer qu'il n'y a pas d'impact de la pisciculture de saumon. Ceci génère une frustration des ONGs. Une approbation des recommandations du comité de direction de la SST pourrait apporter une aide sur ce sujet.

5.18 Le représentant de l'UE a insisté sur l'importance d'une déclaration claire de l'OCSAN sur l'impact négatif de l'élevage du saumon sur le saumon sauvage. Il a souligné qu'il y a eu des défis envers le point de vue selon lequel il y a un impact négatif, et que l'OCSAN devait passer à l'action étant donné les preuves qui sont disponibles.

5.19 La représentante du RU a soutenu fortement une consolidation de la recherche scientifique la plus récente sur les impacts de l'élevage du saumon sur le saumon sauvage. Elle a indiqué que le gouvernement écossais avait publié un bilan à ce sujet.

5.20 Le Conseil a convenu que la prochaine SST se tiendrait en 2023. Le thème général serait le changement climatique. Un comité de direction serait établi pour réfléchir à la structure appropriée pour s'assurer que des recommandations tangibles issues de la SST soient mises à la disposition de l'OCSAN. Il serait demandé aux Parties et aux ONGs de fournir des candidatures de représentants au comité de direction à la suite de la session annuelle de 2022.

5.21 Le représentant de la Norvège a noté que ce serait un nouveau format pour la SST de l'OCSAN, puisque le changement climatique affecte toutes les composantes du travail de l'OCSAN, pas seulement un domaine clé.

b) Rapport de la séance spéciale inter-sessionnelle sur les plans de mise en œuvre

5.22 Le Président a indiqué qu'un webinaire de séance spéciale avait été tenu le 5 mai pour discuter de l'évaluation des Plans de mise en œuvre (IPs) 2019 – 2024. Une période de correspondance inter-sessionnelle relative aux plans de mise en œuvre (IPs) et à leur examen avait pris place préalablement au webinaire, du 12 au 23 avril. Le Président a prié les délégués de se référer au 'Rapport de la séance spéciale du Conseil par webinaire sur l'évaluation des plans de mise en oeuvre dans le cadre du troisième cycle de rapports (2019 – 2024)', CNL(21)56rev. Le Président du groupe de révision des IP / APR, Cathal Gallagher (UE) a fait une présentation sur la séance spéciale.

5.23 Le Dr Gallagher s'est référé à la page 4 du rapport de la séance spéciale IP, qui vise à clarifier plusieurs questions. Le Conseil a examiné celles-ci une par une.

> *'1. Le Conseil peut souhaiter approuver qu'il n'y ait pas de changement majeur de la procédure IP avant que le Panel d'examen de la performance ait fait son rapport (prenant note qu'il a été demandé au Panel d'examen, dans ses termes de référence, CNL(21)22, d'examiner la procédure IP).'*

5.24 La représentante du Danemark (pour les Iles Féroé et le Groenland), qui est aussi membre du groupe de révision des IP, a exprimé le point de vue selon lequel il n'était pas nécessaire d'apporter des changements majeurs à la procédure IP. Elle a souligné que la procédure renforcée par les Directives détaillées donne une approche robuste, et que ceci devrait continuer.

5.25 Le Conseil a décidé qu'il n'y aurait pas de changement majeur de la procédure IP.

> *'2. Le Conseil peut souhaiter demander aux Parties / juridictions: de ne pas soumettre d'autre révision de leur IP jusqu'à ce que le Panel d'examen de la performance donne des conseils sur la façon dont la procédure pourrait être revue pour mieux atteindre ses objectifs (et, par conséquent, qu'il n'y ait pas de révision plus avant des IP), reconnaissant que ceci pourrait ne pas être fait d'ici au nouveau cycle de rapports; OU de continuer de soumettre des IPs révisés, jusqu'à ce que leur IP soit considéré comme satisfaisant pour toutes les sections / domaines par le Groupe de révision (et par conséquent que les révisions suivantes d'IP aient lieu comme requis).*

5.26 Le représentant de l'UE a indiqué que même si certaines juridictions pouvaient ne pas souhaiter soumettre un IP révisé, il était important de permettre aux Parties / juridictions d'avoir l'occasion d'améliorer leur IP. Il a proposé que les Parties / juridictions puissent sur une base volontaire apporter des changements à des sections non satisfaisantes et soumettre un IP révisé pour examen. La représentante des États-Unis a approuvé et indiqué que les États-Unis étaient en cours de révision de leur IP dans le but de démontrer des progrès accomplis vers la conformité avec les Résolutions, Accords et Lignes directrices de l'OCSAN, et aimeraient le soumettre pour examen.

5.27 Le représentant des ONGs a approuvé la possibilité pour les Parties de réviser volontairement leurs IPs, mais avec une réflexion nécessaire sur la façon dont l'IP révisé serait examiné. Le Dr Gallagher a indiqué qu'une discussion sur ce sujet pourrait être soulevée plus tard.

5.28 Le Conseil a décidé que les Parties / juridictions pourraient, sur une base de volontariat, soumettre à examen un IP révisé.

> *'3a. Le Conseil peut souhaiter approuver que lorsqu'il est question d''élevages de poissons' dans le template d'IP, ceci se rapporte à toutes formes d'*

aquaculture, y compris les écloseries de conservation, conformément à la définition donnée dans l'Annexe 1 de la Résolution de Williamsburg'

5.29 Le Conseil a examiné les termes utilisés dans le template d'IP se rapportant aux 'élevages de poissons', et à l''aquaculture'. Le représentant de la Norvège a noté que ces termes sont utilisés sans cohérence, et qu'une clarification devrait être fournie. Il a indiqué que dans la Résolution de Williamsburg, CNL(06)48, 'aquaculture' inclut tout – pisciculture, écloseries de conservation etc. Les 'Lignes directrices sur les meilleures pratiques de gestion pour traiter les impacts du pou du poisson et des saumons d'élevage échappés sur les stocks de saumon sauvage', SLG(09)5, font référence au 'poisson d'élevage'. Le Dr Gallagher a admis que le template d'IP devrait être clair quant aux informations requises. La représentante des États-Unis a indiqué qu'ils avaient inclus des écloseries de conservation dans leur IP pour être ouverts et transparents, et pensaient que les questions pertinentes dans l'IP devraient concerner toutes les formes d'aquaculture.

5.30 Sur la base de l'analyse par la Norvège de la Résolution de Williamsburg, CNL(06)48, des 'Lignes directrices sur les meilleures pratiques de gestion pour traiter les impacts du pou du poisson et des saumons d'élevage échappés sur les stocks de saumon sauvage', SLG(09)5, et du template d'IP, le Secrétariat a indiqué quelles révisions du template d'IP clarifieraient cette question. Toutefois, la représentante du RU a rappelé au Conseil qu'il avait décidé de ne pas modifier les lignes directrices IP. Elle a suggéré que les changements ne soient pas faits en milieu de cycle de rapports mais soient préparés pour le prochain cycle de rapports.

5.31 Le Conseil a décidé que, en ce qui concerne l'inclusion des termes 'élevages de poissons' et 'aquaculture' dans le template d'IP, le *statu quo* serait maintenu jusqu'au quatrième cycle de rapports, stade auquel le template d'IP serait révisé pour clarifier les informations requises.

'3b.Le Conseil peut souhaiter décider si une législation nationale d'une Partie / juridiction qui l'empêche de faire une réponse satisfaisante à une question de l'IP, devrait / ne devrait pas être considérée comme une circonstance atténuante permettant de la considérer comme satisfaisante.'

5.32 La représentante du Danemark (pour les Iles Féroé et le Groenland) a déclaré que toutes les Parties avaient adhéré à la Convention et aux Résolutions, Accords et Directives de l'OCSAN, et qu'en conséquence, leur législation nationale ne devrait pas être considérée comme une circonstance atténuante permettant que des actions par ailleurs non satisfaisantes puissent être satisfaisantes. Toutes les Parties et les ONGs ont approuvé cette analyse.

5.33 Le Conseil a décidé que la législation nationale ne devrait pas être considérée comme une circonstance atténuante permettant à des actions IP non satisfaisantes de devenir satisfaisantes.

'3c. Le Conseil peut souhaiter examiner l'interprétation du Groupe de révision des Lignes directrices (CNL(18)49) et des Lignes directrices détaillées (CNL(20)55), dans sa révision de novembre 2020.'

5.34 Le Conseil a décidé que, le rapport de cette session du Conseil donnant une orientation adéquate au Groupe de révision, une révision plus avant des documents des lignes directrices n'était pas nécessaire.

'3d. Le Conseil peut souhaiter décider que dans les futures révisions d'IP, des questions / actions jugées satisfaisantes en novembre 2020 ne soient pas

modifiées (sauf si une clarification est demandée), et que les sections amendées soient clairement mises en évidence.'

5.35 Le représentant de l'UE a déclaré que bien qu'une section d'un IP puisse avoir été acceptée, il pourrait y avoir des progrès supplémentaires que la Partie / juridiction veuille présenter. Par conséquent, les Parties / juridictions devraient pouvoir modifier des actions satisfaisantes.

5.36 Le Conseil a décidé que les Parties / juridictions pourraient procéder à des modifications de questions / actions acceptées. Si un changement était apporté à un IP, que ce soit à une question / action satisfaisante ou non satisfaisante, la Partie / juridiction devrait identifier clairement ce qui a été modifié et pourquoi.

'3e. Le Conseil peut décider que les futures révisions des Rapports annuels de progrès n'examinent que les actions jugées satisfaisantes par le Groupe de révision.'

5.37 Le représentant du Canada a noté que ceci limiterait la capacité des Parties à rendre compte de leurs progrès, et sur des sujets qui pouvaient rendre une action satisfaisante. Il a proposé que les futurs passages en revue des APRs incluent toutes les actions. Toutefois, il a admis que si les réunions du Groupe de révision IP / APR devaient se tenir en vidéoconférence, ceci pourrait être infaisable et qu'il fallait donner de la flexibilité, pour de telles circonstances. La représentante du RU a fait part de son accord pour que toutes les actions soient passées en revue.

5.38 Le Conseil a décidé que le Groupe de révision passerait en revue toutes les actions lors des futurs examens des APR. Si une réunion virtuelle était nécessaire, le Conseil a décidé qu'il serait à la discrétion du Président du Groupe de révision IP / APR et de la Secrétaire de déterminer la meilleure approche. Toutefois, toutes les décisions arrêtées devraient être communiquées clairement aux Parties.

5.39 Le représentant des ONGs a déclaré que pour lui, cette décision était un pas en arrière. Il était préoccupé si un passage en revue d'actions non satisfaisantes pouvait permettre aux Parties / juridictions de relâcher leurs efforts. Il a dit que les ONGs n'approuvaient pas cette décision et pensaient que l'examen des performances allait revenir sur ce sujet. Le Co-Président des ONGs a examiné comment le Groupe de révision ferait retour sur un compte rendu de progrès sur des actions non satisfaisantes et a demandé s'il y avait des lignes directrices sur la façon de le faire le mieux possible. Il a mis en question l'adéquation de lignes directrices pour le passage en revue d'actions acceptables avec le passage en revue d'actions non acceptables. Le Président a répondu que ceci pourrait faire partie des échanges entre la Secrétaire et le Président du Groupe de révision.

'4. Le Conseil peut souhaiter examiner si une participation accrue des Parties et juridictions au travail et / ou aux réunions du Groupe de révision pourrait être bénéfique à la procédure de révision;'

5.40 Le représentant de l'UE a été d'avis qu'il y avait de la marge pour mettre en place des interactions entre les Parties / juridictions dans la procédure. La représentante des États-Unis a admis qu'avoir la possibilité de solliciter une clarification sur des commentaires faits par le Groupe de révision pouvait aider à améliorer des actions, mais a reconnu qu'il fallait bien réfléchir au moment où une telle interaction aurait lieu. Elle a souligné que, le Groupe de révision n'ayant besoin d'examiner que les sections révisées d'un IP, il ne devrait pas être trop contraignant d'accroître la communication. Elle a suggéré que le travail de la Secrétaire avec le Président du Groupe de révision puisse établir comment ceci pourrait se faire.

5.41 Le représentant de la Norvège a souligné l'importance de maintenir l'intégrité et l'indépendance du Groupe de révision. La décision finale de dire si des sections d'IP sont satisfaisantes devrait revenir au seul Groupe de révision, mais cette évaluation devrait être basée sur les meilleures informations possibles, et par conséquent il accueillerait favorablement une meilleure communication. Le représentant du Canada se féliciterait de l'opportunité d'une procédure simple donnant la possibilité d'avoir une conversation avec le Groupe de révision. Le représentant de l'UE a indiqué que la procédure devrait nécessairement être flexible, à la fois pour les Parties et pour le Groupe de révision, et que cette communication pourrait faire gagner du temps sur le long terme.

5.42 Le Président a suggéré que cette communication ait lieu avant la finalisation de la révision des IP, et que la Secrétaire travaille avec le Président du Groupe de révision des IP à établir les modalités du dialogue. Toutefois, la représentante du Danemark (pour les Iles Féroé et le Groenland) a proposé que la communication entre le Groupe de révision et les Parties / juridictions puisse avoir lieu idéalement avant que les Parties ne révisent leur IP, afin qu'elles aient une meilleure compréhension du retour déjà disponible. Elle a indiqué que ceci pourrait fonctionner annuellement si nécessaire. Le représentant des ONGs a demandé si les Parties / juridictions recherchaient des réponses écrites plus détaillées et a demandé comment cette communication pourrait fonctionner. Il a approuvé le fait que le Président du Groupe de révision et la Secrétaire devraient réfléchir sur les meilleures modalités de mise en place pour cela.

5.43 Le Conseil a décidé que la procédure de passage en revue serait révisée pour permettre un dialogue entre le Groupe de révision et les Parties / juridictions sur les éléments non satisfaisants de leurs IPs. Le Conseil a approuvé que la Secrétaire et le Président du Groupe de révision doivent fixer le calendrier pour ce dialogue, tout en assurant le respect de la chronologie de la procédure APR.

> *'5. Le Conseil peut souhaiter inviter la France (pour St Pierre et Miquelon) à participer à la procédure Plan de mise en œuvre.'*

5.44 Le représentant du Canada a encouragé la France (pour St Pierre et Miquelon) à rejoindre l'OCSAN, ce qui permettrait à la France (pour St Pierre et Miquelon) de participer à la procédure IP. Il a proposé que le Président écrive un courrier pour leur demander d'adhérer à l'OCSAN, et aussi pour souligner l'importance et la valeur des IPs. Ceci a été soutenu par toutes les Parties.

5.45 Le Conseil a décidé d'écrire de nouveau à la France (pour St Pierre et Miquelon) pour l'inviter à adhérer à l'OCSAN. Dans le courrier, le Président fera valoir comment la procédure IP de l'OCSAN permettra à la France (pour St Pierre et Miquelon) de mettre en avant ses actions positives pour la gestion du saumon.

5.46 Par ailleurs, le représentant de l'UE a souligné les nombreuses actions positives figurant dans les IPs et a indiqué qu'il accueillerait favorablement davantage de reconnaissance de celles-ci. Il a suggéré qu'il soit fait davantage pour accorder du mérite et rendre hommage à ceux qui font du bon travail. La représentante du Danemark (pour les Iles Féroé et le Groenland) a approuvé et suggéré que le Secrétariat pourrait créer de nouveaux éléments pour le site web et les réseaux sociaux autour d'actions si positives.

5.47 Le Conseil a décidé que le Groupe de révision devrait aussi donner un retour positif aux Parties / juridictions sur les éléments de leurs IPs dont le Groupe de révision juge qu'ils font clairement avancer les Parties / juridictions vers la réalisation des Résolutions, Accords et Directives de l'OCSAN. Ces éléments peuvent être mis en lumière sur le site web et dans Twitter.

5.48 En résumé, le Conseil a décidé que:

- il n'y aurait pas de modification majeure de la procédure IP;
- les Parties / juridictions pourraient, sur une base de volontariat, soumettre un IP révisé pour passage en revue;
- en ce qui concerne l'inclusion des termes ‘élevages de poissons’ et ‘aquaculture’ dans le template IP, le *statu quo* serait maintenu jusqu'au quatrième cycle de rapports, point auquel le template IP serait révisé afin de clarifier quelles informations sont demandées;
- une législation nationale ne peut être considérée comme une circonstance atténuante permettant à des actions IP par ailleurs non satisfaisantes d'être satisfaisantes;
- ce qui est consigné dans ce rapport du Conseil donne une orientation adéquate au Groupe de révision et il n'est pas nécessaire de réviser davantage les documents de directives;
- les Parties / juridictions pourront apporter des révisions aux questions / actions acceptées. S'il est fait un changement à un IP, que ce soit à une question / action satisfaisante ou non satisfaisante, la Partie / juridiction devra identifier clairement ce qui a été modifié et pourquoi;
- toutes les actions seront passées en revue par le Groupe de révision lors des futures révisions des APRs. Si une réunion virtuelle est nécessaire, le Conseil a décidé qu'il serait à la discrétion du Président et de la Secrétaire de déterminer la meilleure approche. Toutes décisions arrêtées devront être communiquées clairement aux Parties;
- la procédure de révision serait revue pour rendre possible un dialogue entre le Groupe de révision et les Parties / juridictions sur les éléments non satisfaisants de leurs IPs. Le Conseil a décidé que la Secrétaire et le Président du Groupe de révision détermineraient le calendrier nécessaire pour permettre ce dialogue, tout en assurant le respect de la chronologie pour la procédure APR;
- qu'un nouveau courrier serait envoyé à la France (pour St Pierre et Miquelon) pour les inviter à étudier l'adhésion à l'OCSAN. Dans le courrier le Président mettra en avant comment la procédure IP de l'OCSAN permettra à la France (pour St Pierre et Miquelon) de valoriser leurs actions positives dans la gestion du saumon; et
- que le Groupe de révision ferait un retour positif aux Parties / juridictions sur les aspects de leurs IPs dont le Groupe de révision considère qu'ils font clairement avancer les Parties / juridictions vers la réalisation des Résolutions, Accords et Directives de l'OCSAN. De plus, communication sera faite sur le site web de l'OCSAN et les réseaux sociaux des améliorations significatives réalisées par les Parties.

c) Évaluation des Rapports de progrès annuels réalisés dans le cadre des plans de mise en œuvre de 2019 – 2024

(i) Séance spéciale : évaluation des Rapports de progrès annuels réalisés dans le cadre des plans de mise en œuvre de 2019 – 2024

5.49 Le Président a noté que l'objectif de l'évaluation des Rapports de progrès annuels par le Groupe de révision est de garantir que les Parties / juridictions ont rendu clairement compte des progrès dans la mise en œuvre et l'évaluation des actions détaillées dans leurs plans de mise en œuvre (IPs). De plus, en vertu de l'Article 15 de la Convention

de l'OCSAN, les Parties doivent faire rapport annuellement au Conseil de leurs statistiques de captures et autres informations. Ceci est réalisé par la soumission des Rapports de progrès annuels (APRs).

5.50 Le Président du Groupe de révision IP / APR, Cathal Gallagher (UE), a présenté le rapport du Groupe de révision IP / APR pour le passage en revue des Rapports de progrès annuels, CNL(21)17. Les discussions tenues lors de la Séance spéciale se trouvent en Annexe 14.

(ii) Décisions prises concernant l'évaluation des Rapports de progrès annuels réalisés dans le cadre des plans de mise en œuvre de 2019 – 2024

5.51 Le Conseil a décidé que la Secrétaire et le Président du Groupe de révision organiseraient une réunion du Groupe en avril 2022 pour passer en revue les APRs 2021.

d) L'Année internationale du saumon : Activités léguées

5.52 La Secrétaire a fourni une mise à jour sur 'Les activités léguées par l'Année Internationale du Saumon', CNL(21)19. Elle a indiqué que le Conseil avait décidé en 2019 qu'en ce qui concernait le legs de l'AIS, la Secrétariat coordonnera l'organisation d'un Symposium périodique et la production d'un Rapport périodique sur l'Etat du Saumon.

5.53 En 2020, le Conseil a décidé qu'un Symposium de conclusion de l'AIS conjoint OCSAN/CPAPN se tiendrait à Vancouver, Canada, si possible en septembre 2022 ou au plus tard en octobre 2022, et a accepté le mandat du comité de direction du Symposium de conclusion de l'AIS conjoint OCSAN/CPAPN. Le comité de direction a été constitué en 2020 avec six membres, et mandaté pour discuter l'organisation d'un Symposium de niveau mondial pour rendre compte et synthétiser les réalisations de l'AIS et étudier ses legs et recommandations pour l'avenir. Le Comité de direction a réfléchi au format, à la date et la localisation du Symposium.

5.54 La représentante des États-Unis a posé la question du soutien à une réunion hybride. La Secrétaire a indiqué que le Comité de direction était d'avis qu'un symposium hybride serait difficile à cause des différences de fuseau horaire, mais que les présentations seraient rendues disponibles en ligne afin de le rendre accessible à ceux qui n'étaient pas en mesure d'y participer physiquement.

5.55 La représentante du Danemark (pour les Iles Féroé et le Groenland) a suggéré que pendant la session annuelle de 2022 se tienne une Séance spéciale sur les recommandations du Comité de direction du Symposium de l'AIS de Tromsø. Elle a proposé que l'OCSAN puisse discuter chacune des recommandations et étudier comment il pouvait y être donné suite. Le représentant des ONGs a dit que les ONGs accueilleraient cela favorablement, puisqu'elles attendaient un certain engagement de la part des Parties sur les recommandations de Tromsø.

5.56 Le représentant de la Norvège a proposé qu'en plus d'une courte Séance spéciale pour examiner les recommandations de Tromsø, il soit possible de tenir une Séance spéciale thématique (SST). Il a indiqué que sinon, deux autres années s'écouleraient avant qu'une nouvelle SST soit tenue. La représentante des Etats-Unis a soutenu cette proposition, mais en soulignant que si une mesure de réglementation devait être négociée en 2022 le temps disponible pendant la session pourrait être court. Le représentant des ONGs a suggéré qu'une réflexion sur les recommandations de Tromsø puisse être combinée avec une SST sur le changement climatique.

5.57 Le Conseil a décidé:

- d'approuver le choix de lieu fait par le comité de direction du Symposium de conclusion de l'AIS; et
- d'approuver les dates du Symposium de conclusion de l'AIS, 4 – 6 octobre 2022;
- de réfléchir au calendrier et à la structure du prochain Rapport sur l'Etat du saumon de l'Atlantique Nord, lorsque le Groupe de travail sur la base de données de rivières aurait fait son rapport; et
- de tenir une Séance spéciale sur les recommandations du comité de direction du Symposium de Tromsø pendant la session annuelle de 2022.

e) Progrès effectué dans l'application du 'Plan d'action pour mettre en œuvre les conseils de l'étude externe des performances et la révision des 'Prochaines Etapes' pour l'OCSAN', CNL(13)38

5.58 En 2013, le Conseil a adopté un 'Plan d'action pour mettre en oeuvre les conseils de l'étude externe des performances et la révision des 'Prochaines Etapes' pour l'OCSAN', CNL(13)38. Le Président a pris note du rapport de progrès dans la mise en oeuvre des recommandations du Plan d'action, CNL(20)23.

f) Liaison avec l'industrie salmonicole

5.59 En 2013, le Conseil a décidé de conserver un point à son Ordre du jour intitulé 'Liaison avec l'industrie salmonicole', au cours duquel un représentant de l'Association Internationale des Eleveurs de Saumon (AIES) serait invité à participer à un échange d'informations sur des questions concernant l'impact de l'aquaculture sur le saumon sauvage de l'Atlantique. Les réunions régulières du Groupe de liaison ne se poursuivraient pas, mais, si un besoin spécifique se présentait, la convocation d'un groupe mixte ad hoc serait envisagée. L'AIES a été représentée à la trente-huitième session annuelle par Mark Lane, qui a adressé une courte déclaration au Conseil (Annexe 15).

g) Nouvelles opportunités ou opportunités naissantes pour, ou menaces contre, la conservation et la gestion du saumon

5.60 Conformément à l' 'Approche stratégique pour les Prochaines Etapes de l'OCSAN', ce point est inclus tous les ans à l'Ordre du jour du Conseil et il est demandé au CIEM de fournir les informations pertinentes. La section 1.2 du 'Rapport du Comité d'avis du CIEM', CNL(21)11, fournit ces informations. Des informations pertinentes sont aussi présentées dans le résumé des Rapports de progrès annuels, CNL(21)18.

5.61 Un représentant du CIEM, Dennis Ensing, a présenté l'avis relatif à ce point de l'Ordre du jour lors d'un webinaire le 28 mai. Le document de la présentation du CIEM est disponible (Annexe 9).

h) Pêcherie de saumons à St Pierre et Miquelon – Gestion et Échantillonnage

5.62 Un rapport 'Gestion et échantillonnage de la pêcherie de saumon de St Pierre et Miquelon', CNL(21)21, a été soumis par la France (pour St Pierre et Miquelon). Ce rapport a aussi été examiné par la Commission Nord-Américaine. La représentante de la France (pour St Pierre et Miquelon), Camille Servetto, a présenté les points principaux du rapport.

5.63 Mme Servetto a indiqué qu'un travail important avait été réalisé pour mieux sensibiliser les pêcheurs afin d'améliorer la qualité des données disponibles pour l'échantillonnage et les inspections. La législation qui s'applique à cette pêcherie est soumise à des programmes d'inspection dédiés. Elle a déclaré que la préoccupation principale du

programme d'échantillonnage, est d'améliorer la compréhension des caractéristiques biologiques et de l'origine des saumons capturés dans la pêcherie de St Pierre et Miquelon. En 2020, le programme d'échantillonnage des saumons pêchés en mer a été poursuivi par l'IFREMER. 116 saumon pêchés ont été mesurés et pesés, en comparaison de 64 en 2019. Cette augmentation s'explique par l'investissement important des pêcheurs de loisir qui collaborent étroitement avec l'IFREMER.

5.64 Mme Servetto a dit que la collaboration mise en place en 2013 entre l'IFREMER-St Pierre et Miquelon et Pêche et Océans (MPO) Terre-Neuve et Labrador s'est poursuivie en 2020. Des écailles et des échantillons de tissu ont été transmis par l'IFREMER au laboratoire MPO de St John's, Terre-Neuve, pour détermination de l'âge et analyses génétiques. Elle a remercié le Canada pour la poursuite de la coopération et le partenariat constructif pour le travail d'échantillonnage. Enfin, elle a déclaré que la France (pour St Pierre et Miquelon) partage les préoccupations quant à l'abondance des stocks nord-américains, s'implique totalement dans la gestion des pêcheries de saumon et travaille à améliorer son suivi et son contrôle.

5.65 Le représentant du Canada a marqué son appréciation pour la coopération sur le programme d'échantillonnage et a encouragé la France (pour St Pierre et Miquelon) à adhérer à l'OCSAN.

i) Rapports des trois Commissions régionales concernant leurs activités de conservation

5.66 Le compte rendu des activités de la Commission de l'Atlantique du Nord-Est a été fait par son Vice-Président. Les compte rendus des activités des Commissions Nord-Américaine et du Groenland occidental ont été faits par les Présidents.

5.67 Le représentant du Canada a fait la déclaration suivante:

> *'Nous savons que les pressions sur les populations de saumon de l'Atlantique sont nombreuses et variées, la moindre d'entre elles n'étant pas les changements fondamentaux en cours dans les écosystèmes marins et d'eau douce mondiaux. Mais ceci ne devrait pas nous empêcher de passer à l'action pour contrôler l'impact des activités humaines sur cette espèce très emblématique, ce Roi des Poissons. Regardant vers l'avenir, le Canada encourage toutes les Parties à retrousser leurs manches et à participer à l'effort collectif afin de créer les conditions dans lesquelles cette espèce iconique ne continue pas à se réduire, mais survive vraiment dans les décennies à venir.*

5.68 La représentante des États-Unis a souscrit à cette déclaration du Canada.

6. Divers

6.1 Suite à la démission du Président actuel, le Conseil a élu le Vice-Président actuel, Arnaud Peyronnet (Union européenne) comme Président (proposé par le représentant du Canada, appuyé par le représentant de la Norvège) pour un mandat de deux ans, débutant à la clôture de la session annuelle 2021.

6.2 Le Conseil a élu Kim Damon-Randall (États-Unis) comme Vice-Présidente (proposée par le représentant de la Norvège, appuyé par la représentante du Royaume-Uni) pour un mandat de deux ans, débutant à la clôture de la session annuelle 2021.

7. Date et lieu de la prochaine session

7.1 Le Conseil a décidé que la trente-neuvième session annuelle se tiendrait à Edimbourg du 7 au 10 juin 2022.

7.2 Le Conseil a confirmé les dates de sa quarantième session annuelle : du 6 au 9 juin 2023.

8. Compte rendu de la session

8.1 Le Conseil a accepté le compte rendu de la session.

9. Clôture de la session

9.1 Le Président a remercié les Parties et les observateurs pour leurs contributions et a clos la trente-huitième session annuelle de l'OCSAN.

List of Annexes

Annex 1

Opening Statement from the President of NASCO

Distinguished Delegates, Observers, Ladies and Gentlemen:

It is my great pleasure to welcome you to the Thirty-Eighth Annual Meeting of NASCO. Once again we find ourselves spread across the North Atlantic in different time zones, and meeting online because of the pandemic. I would like to thank you all sincerely for your flexibility and willingness to participate yet again, in this extraordinary period. I very much hope that we will be able to meet in person next year in Edinburgh.

Before I turn to some of the issues that we will discuss during our meeting, I think it is important to remember why we are all here. NASCO's objective is to conserve, restore, enhance and rationally manage Atlantic salmon. The Implementation Plans and Annual Progress Reports submitted by Parties highlight the work conducted and planned to conserve wild Atlantic salmon. This includes significant actions on the management and restoration of salmon habitat and the closure of various net and mixed-stock fisheries. However, we all know, there is much work still to do!

And our packed meeting reflects our need to continue, and where possible improve, our efforts to conserve, restore, enhance and rationally manage Atlantic salmon. One of the most valuable mechanisms that NASCO has developed to do this, is through Implementation Plans together with annual reporting of progress. Last year, Parties confirmed their commitment to a strengthened IP process, and there will be further discussion about the direction of the third reporting cycle this week.

One of the major concerns within the NASCO community is the impacts of salmon farming on wild Atlantic salmon. We have examined that already, in the excellent Theme-based Special Session last week, and will continue our discussion of the issue this week by considering the recommendations from the Steering Committee.

And of course, negotiations are underway in the West Greenland Commission for a new regulatory measure for fishing for Atlantic salmon at West Greenland. My understanding is that Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland) has been extremely helpful in providing drafts of documents to inform these negotiations. I am most grateful to them for their willingness to co-operate so openly. I wish the West Greenland Commission well in the conversations to come.

I look forward to learning about the outcome of discussions in the North-East Atlantic Commission, to agree a new Decision for the Faroese salmon fishery.

And in the North American Commission conversations will continue around the Labrador Fishery and the St Pierre and Miquelon Salmon Fishery.

We will also be looking forward to NASCO's third performance review and to the concluding International Year of the Salmon Symposium being planned for 2022. And following the success of 'The State of North Atlantic Salmon Report' published by NASCO in 2019, we will look ahead to the next iteration of that, and the data that will inform it.

So, we have a very busy week ahead, but please do take the opportunity to chat informally with friends and colleagues in the 'networking area' between meetings, something that was not available to us last year. This has always been an integral part of the NASCO Annual Meeting experience.

I hope that when we ‘go home’ we will have had enjoyable conversations and productive meetings. And we will have done all we can to further our efforts to conserve, restore, enhance and rationally manage Atlantic salmon.

Thank You.

Annex 2

Opening Statements Submitted by the Parties

Opening Statement to Council Submitted by Canada

Mr. President, Distinguished Delegates, and Observers:

It is a pleasure for Canada to participate in the 38th Annual North Atlantic Salmon Conservation Organization (NASCO) meeting. As Head of the Canada's Delegation to NASCO, I would like to applaud the tireless efforts of all the parties and observers in continuing NASCO's work throughout the year, and give special thanks to Secretary Hatfield and the team at the secretariat for their support, including organizing this year's meeting through this virtual platform, which is a welcome adaption to these challenging times. With that said, we do look forward to working with you all in person as soon as that is possible, and I think those days are beginning to look closer and closer.

Atlantic salmon continues to be a significant cultural, economic, and environmental symbol for Canada. Particularly our coastal and Indigenous communities in Atlantic Canada and Quebec. Canada has continuously demonstrated a strong commitment to Atlantic salmon conservation through targeted domestic policies and management regimes, and scientific investments. This, in addition to our ongoing engagement at NASCO, contribute to achieving the Organization's Resolutions, Agreements, and Guidelines.

With this in mind, I must admit that we received the third "unsatisfactory" result of our 2019-2024 Implementation Plan (IP) with great disappointment. As NASCO's IP process has consistently been challenging for Canada, we would like to further discuss ways to improve this process, which should include greater flexibility and focus on actions to support conservation and management of salmon, rather than on the format and intricacies of the reporting process.

As demonstrated during this year's negotiations towards a new Regulatory Measure to Apply to the Atlantic Salmon Fishery at West Greenland, Canada acknowledges the challenges that come with managing a fishery in northern and remote communities and the importance of a subsistence fishery to stakeholders in Greenland. Greenland's efforts in implementing measures in recent years are appreciated. Nonetheless, Canada is concerned with the level of Greenland's harvest and the recurrent overharvests. Our science advice continues to be clear: while factors other than fishing certainly contribute to the dire state of the stocks, factors that we can control, such as reducing the harvest level, are critical to alleviating some pressure on Atlantic salmon. Canada's Prime Minister has joined an initiative with 13 other world leaders, including Norway and EU-member state Portugal, called the High Level Panel for a Sustainable Ocean Economy. The group released its vision last year, known as the Transformations for a Sustainable Ocean Economy. Canada's policy position in international organizations, like NASCO, is informed by this vision. Among other things, the High Level Panel calls for a strengthening of regional fisheries management organizations, including management measures that control harvest levels based on scientific assessment and meaningful consequences for exceeding quota. We look forward to continuing discussions with Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland) and the other members of the West Greenland Commission (WGC), and hope to agree on the key elements needed to strengthen the new regulatory measure for the benefit of the stock.

Canada greatly appreciates France's (in respect of Saint Pierre and Miquelon (SPM)) continued collaboration on an Atlantic salmon sampling program for the SPM fishery. Despite the catch

stabilization in recent years, Canada continues to be concerned with the ongoing harvest of wild Atlantic salmon originating almost exclusively in Canadian rivers, especially the increase in recreational catch and the absence of individual licence catch limits in SPM. We would like to thank our French colleagues for the productive bilateral conversations this past year and we look forward to further discussions with France about how to improve the effectiveness of the measures in place for the monitoring and control of the mixed-stock fisheries, particularly any options that could help mitigate the ongoing decline of Atlantic salmon stocks in eastern Canada. As we have stated before, we encourage France, in respect of Saint Pierre and Miquelon, to take up membership at NASCO.

Finally, I would like to acknowledge our President, Mr. Serge Doucet, of Canada, and thank him for his efforts the past year. We very much look forward to working with you Mr. President and for the opportunity to collaborate with all parties and observers in the coming days, and trust that we will have constructive discussions which will prove beneficial for all involved.

Thank you.

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Opening Statement to Council Submitted by Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland)

Mr President, Distinguished Delegates, Observers, Ladies and Gentlemen,

The Faroe Islands and Greenland, would like to begin by thanking the NASCO Secretariat for the huge efforts they have done to facilitate this virtual annual meeting yet again under continued difficult circumstances.

In both the Faroe Islands and Greenland, fishery is the most important industry. It contributes greatly to our national economies as well as in creating jobs to establish socioeconomic welfare. It has therefore impacted our small communities significantly, when our governments decided to act and refrain from all commercial fishing of Atlantic salmon in our respective economic exclusive zones. The intention of this action was to aid in the re-building of the stocks and promote the conservation of the Atlantic salmon. The Faroe Islands have retained the right to practise scientific based catch, if need be, and Greenland continues to set a small quota for the subsistence fishery that has been going on for generations in Greenland and is of high importance for the livelihood in namely small and remote communities. But also, for food security and self-sufficiency.

The regressive evolvement of our fishery practices has yet to bear fruit. Though our quotas have been pressingly reduced for more than thirty years, the stocks of Atlantic salmon are at a historical low. Despite the extensive reductions in catch, strict management regimes and increased monitoring and control, with great sacrifices made by our small coastal communities, the general trend of salmon stocks is still declining. Therefore, it must surely be concluded that it is not the limited subsistence fishery in Greenland that is preventing the recovery of the Atlantic salmon. It is about time that we consider other factors and measures more seriously in order to understand the regretful status of the salmon stocks.

We believe that it is important to focus on all aspects of the lifecycle of the Atlantic salmon. Greenland and the Faroe Islands would like to emphasise, yet again, the importance of focusing on the external factors that affect the Atlantic salmon stocks such as migratory obstacles, predation, effects of aquaculture, pollution and climate change. Thus, Greenland and the Faroe Islands urge NASCO and States of Origin to increase focus on how to address these local

factors that are negatively impacting the stocks. We therefore call on all States of Origin to start acting!

Salmon farming in the North Atlantic has increased significantly since NASCO was established. The industry has become a central part of the economies of several North Atlantic countries, including the Faroe Islands. The aquaculture industry may pose a threat to the wild salmon stocks, if the industry is not regulated carefully. The impacts of salmon farming on wild Atlantic salmon is therefore of great interest to all countries in the region with aquaculture industries, as it is important to implement and maintain high regulation standards in our industry in order to safeguard wild salmon stocks and ensure sustainable aquaculture.

Mr President, the Faroe Islands and Greenland are looking forward to a productive week, although the settings this year yet again differ substantively from our usual annual meetings. Nonetheless, we are of course prepared to work in a constructive way so that we collectively can contribute to a successful outcome of this 38th Annual NASCO Meeting.

Thank you.

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Opening Statement to Council Submitted by the European Union

Mr. President, Mrs Secretary, Distinguished Delegates, Observers, Ladies and Gentlemen,

The European Union is delighted to participate to the 38th Annual Meeting of NASCO and we would like to thank the Secretariat for all the hard work that went into the preparation of this virtual meeting.

This year, NASCO must revisit the regulatory measures for the West Greenland Commission. The European Union would like to thank the efforts made by Denmark (in respect of the Faroes and Greenland) for contributing to improving the management of its fishery over time and for the sustained efforts in implementing the NASCO regulatory measures. The scientific advice is very clear and continues to indicate that there is no scope for conducting a fishery. This is particularly true for the multi sea winter component of southern European populations, which are at critically low level of abundance, despite the protections measures implemented in their rivers of origin, such as compulsory catch and release or the closure of mixed stocks fisheries. These measures required significant sacrifices from often very remote coastal communities, without employment or fisheries alternatives. These communities therefore remain particularly vigilant about NASCO's decisions regarding the protection of these stocks. The European Union is looking forward to engaging with the Members of the West Greenland Commission to find an agreement on an effective regulatory measure for the West Greenland fishery.

The recent Special Session of the Council by Webinar, on the Evaluation of Implementation Plans under the Third Reporting Cycle (2019-2024), highlighted that despite the continuous overall improvement of the actions taken by the Parties towards NASCO goals and objectives, further efforts continue to be needed in relation to the impacts of salmon farming on wild populations. The European Union would like to thank the steering committee who organised the recent Theme Based Special Session (TBSS) dedicated to this issue. This event provided a clear state of play of our current understanding of these interactions as well as of the technological solutions now available. The European Union believes that this gives a new impetus for NASCO to more proactively address these issues, and we are looking forward to contributing to identify how to best implement the recommendations from the TBSS..

The EU is looking forward to a fruitful cooperation with all the Parties during this virtual meeting, and we are looking forward to the opportunity to soon meet you all in person to continue working towards the achievement of the long-term objectives of NASCO.

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Opening Statement to Council Submitted by Norway

Mr. President, distinguished Delegates, Observers, Ladies and Gentlemen. On behalf of Norway, I would like to thank the Secretariat for hosting the Thirty- Eighth Annual Meeting of NASCO from Edinburgh as a videoconference, due to the covid19 pandemic.

In Norway, the pre-fishery abundance of wild Atlantic salmon remains reduced by more than half compared to historic levels. One of the main reasons continues to be reduced survival at sea. However, local and regional differences suggest that adverse human impacts strongly influence the development and status of stocks.

The fishery regulations adopted over the last decade or so have - to a large extent - compensated for the reduction in salmon runs. Therefore, in general, overexploitation is no longer considered a major threat to larger populations. River Tana is an exception to this pattern. The latest report by the Tana Monitoring and Research Group concludes that in 2020 there was not a harvestable surplus in most salmon populations in the Tana system. The forecast for 2021 salmon run in Tana is low and indicates that this also will be the case in 2021. In response Finland and Norway have agreed there will be no fishing for salmon in the Tana river system in 2021. Subsequently a decision was made to close the salmon fisheries in the Tana fjord and in coastal areas in proximity to the Tana fjord in 2021.

Pink salmon is a new threat, and there is need for national and international measures to reduce the risk of negative impacts on native salmonids, including Atlantic salmon. Based on the findings in the risk assessment on pink salmon the by the Norwegian Scientific Committee for Food and Environment, an action plan has been drawn up. The action plan places special emphasis on removing pink salmon from selected rivers in the northernmost counties to prevent the establishment of self-reproducing stocks. In 2021 Pink salmon already have been reported caught in recreational angling in sea and in relatively significant amounts as by-catch in marine commercial fisheries as far south as the middle of Norway.

Of a total of 51 infected rivers by *Gyrodactylus salaris*, 39 are treated and the parasite is successfully eradicated. In November 2020, the river Rana in Nordland county was declared free of the parasite after successful combatting the parasite in 2014/2015. If all the eradication measures implemented are successful, the number of infected rivers in Norway will be reduced to eight. Testing of monochloramine as treating chemical in infected rivers has shown that chlorine has a good treating effect against *G. salaris*. In 2021 a large-scale treatment of river Driva is planned as the final step to determine whether monochloramine can be used as a new method for combating the parasite.

The work on developing new IPs has proven to be challenging, as it should be. It is our strong belief that NASCO, in part by introducing the IP scheme, has played a vital role in the better protection and rational management of Atlantic salmon internationally and nationally. We hope NASCO is able to fulfill this role also in the future, and in order to do so NASCO has to be efficient, innovative, relevant, and challenging.

In closing, the Norwegian delegation would like to thank the Secretariat for its efforts in all the preparations for this meeting under extraordinary conditions, and we look forward to a productive and successful meeting.

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Opening Statement to Council Submitted by the Russian Federation

Mr President, Distinguished Delegates, Observers, Ladies and Gentlemen!

I am pleased on behalf of the Russian Delegation and the Federal Agency for Fisheries, representing the Russian Government in NASCO, to greet all participants of the 38th Annual Meeting of NASCO. We are grateful to the Secretariat for its hard and brilliant work in arranging the virtual NASCO meetings in two years in a row now.

The Russian Federation is looking forward to a very productive meeting and to working closely with you and all the Parties during this week and I wish all of us success in working together.

Thank you!

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Opening Statement to Council Submitted by the United Kingdom

Mr. President, Mrs Secretary, Distinguished Delegates, Observers, Ladies and Gentlemen.

The United Kingdom is delighted to participate in this, the 38th Annual Meeting of NASCO, indeed our first annual conference as a Party in our own right. We look forward to the opportunity that this provides us, in particular the opportunity to engage with partners, equally enthusiastic in their ambitions to work towards managing and ultimately reversing the unfortunate decline that we see affecting North Atlantic salmon today.

Despite the implementation of several important management measures to support conservation and stock rebuilding, as well as major reductions in fisheries exploitation, both across the UK and the entire range, salmon numbers have continued to decline significantly over recent decades. Therefore, the UK recognises the importance of shared responsibilities in safeguarding salmon stocks within the convention area, and the need for all parties to work together constructively- governments and NGOs -- to ensure we leave this iconic species in a better state than we found it, for the future generations..

Already this year the West Greenland Commission (WGC) have held important intersessional meetings to develop a vital draft regulatory measure for the mixed stock fishery at West Greenland. We would like to thank DFG for their open-ness in sharing, at an early stage, their management plan and executive order, which are so key to managing this fishery. We remain keenly aware that the ICES catch advice continues to be that there are no catching options and that we have seen significant overfishing in recent years. Against this challenging backdrop the UK seeks to continue working collaboratively with Greenland and other members of the West Greenland Commission to find a way forward that balances improved protection for salmon with respecting Greenland's cultural heritage.

The UK welcomed this year's Themed Based Special Session on: *Minimising Impacts of Salmon Farming on Wild Atlantic Salmon: Supporting Meaningful and More Rapid Progress*

Towards Achievement of the International Goals for Sea Lice and Containment, and for the chance to hear ideas on how to move forward within this area. Furthermore, the opportunity to discuss the development of Implementation Plans and Annual Reports will highlight our firm and ongoing commitment to ensuring transparency and accountability in relation to the aquaculture industry, and wider salmon conservation work, within our jurisdiction. We believe that there is much to be done, and with time we can as both a Party and a collective help each other to progress the issues that we face today. Indeed, the advent of new technology and improved practices is something we willingly embrace, and we relish the opportunity to work together towards improving conservation in this area.

The UK firmly believes in the importance of the work carried out by NASCO and all Parties in support of sustainable salmon stocks. We look forward to a productive meeting that will continue to build on the efforts made so far, and to working successfully with all in 2021 and beyond.

Thank you.

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Opening Statement to Council Submitted by the United States

Mr. President, Madam Secretary, Distinguished Delegates, Observers, Ladies, and Gentlemen:

The United States is pleased to participate in the 38th annual meeting of NASCO. We sincerely thank the NASCO Secretariat for their hard work in preparing for this second virtual annual meeting in as many years. We cannot overstate our satisfaction at the support our small Secretariat staff has provided in what are incredibly trying times. We note with deep pride that NASCO set the bar for all other RFMOs last year in how to organize and carry out an effective virtual annual meeting process. They have done so again this year, and we thank them sincerely for their dedication and professionalism.

We have an extensive set of issues before us this week, and we look forward to working with allof our colleagues to complete our work successfully. Mr. President, we know this will be your last meeting, and it is with sadness that we will have to say goodbye to you at the close of NASCO's 2021 annual meeting. That said, with your leadership and the cooperation of the Parties, we anticipate positive outcomes this year. We know there is a strong commitment around this virtual table to ensure wild Atlantic salmon are effectively conserved and managed across the North Atlantic.

As in past years, the United States is keenly interested in addressing threats to critically endangered U.S. origin Atlantic salmon. Mixed-stock fisheries that intercept U.S.-origin salmonare of particular concern as even small numbers of U.S. origin salmon harvested in these interceptory fisheries could have significant impacts given the current low abundance of these stocks. Moreover, ICES continues to advise against the prosecution of fisheries that would intercept these and other depleted populations.

The previous regulatory measure for the West Greenland fishery has expired and, despite scientific advice, Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland) maintains an interest in conducting a fishery for internal use. We anticipate a robust discussion in the West GreenlandCommission (WGC) regarding development of a new regulatory measure for this fishery. We thank Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland) for providing detailed information on the implementation of the 2018-2020 regulatory measures and the outcome of the2020 fishery at West Greenland. This and other information helped set the stage

for the intersessional development of a draft proposal, which provides the basis for further discussions this week. As we engage in these discussions, however, we are still quite concerned that the annual total allowable catch for West Greenland was exceeded in all three years of the previous regulatory measure -- despite the steps taken by Greenland over the last three years to improve monitoring and control of its fishery. As consideration of a new regulatory measure continues this week, we look forward to hearing more from Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland) on how it will continue to improve in-season monitoring and control to ensure such overharvests do not continue. In addition to the fishery at West Greenland, we look forward to continuing our engagement with Canada and France (in respect to St. Pierre and Miquelon) on the monitoring and control of the Labrador and St. Pierre and Miquelon mixed-stock fisheries.

Finally, we are pleased that NASCO will be able to restart the process of critically reviewing the Annual Progress Reports after this was cancelled in 2020 due to the pandemic. Toward that end, we are looking forward to the APR special session this week and encourage active engagement by all participants. With regard to the third round of the IP/APR review more generally, we havefound that it has been the most challenging to date, and holding the Parties accountable to these high standards is, in our opinion, important to helping to ensure transparency as well as ensuring that Parties are working to further NASCO's resolutions, agreements and guidelines. This week,we believe the Council should continue to discuss how the process might be further improved to enable it to successfully accomplish its purpose for Parties to ultimately achieve NASCO's goals and objectives in the area of fisheries management, habitat protection, and aquaculture and related activities. As an initial step, we could see value in reviewing the role of the IP/APR Review Group to consider how it might be more clearly defined while at the same time ensuring it can continue to provide robust assessments of IPs and APRs. It also might be worthwhile to discuss the review process and who can be engaged during the discussion of the review group.

In closing, I want to reaffirm that the United States is fully committed to NASCO and to working cooperatively and collaboratively with our international partners to successfully address the important issues facing us this week and into the future.

Annex 3

Opening Statements Submitted by Inter-Governmental Organizations

Opening Statement Submitted to Council by the International Council for the Exploration of the Sea

Mr. President, Distinguished Delegates, Members of the Secretariat, Observers, Ladies and Gentlemen

I am very grateful for the opportunity to deliver an Opening Statement on behalf of the International Council for the Exploration of the Sea at this 2021 Annual Meeting of NASCO.

NASCO aims to base its management measures on the best available scientific information. Through the Memorandum of Understanding between our two organizations, ICES is proud andhonored to provide scientific advice on Atlantic salmon to NASCO on an annual basis. In this regard, ICES is very much looking forward to a renewed MoU with NASCO.

In developing and providing advice, ICES aims to use the best available science characterized by quality assurance, that is developed in a transparent process and is unbiased, and independent.

The advice is developed through the work of expert groups, specifically WGNAS for North Atlantic salmon, review groups, workshops and advice drafting groups under the oversight of theAdvisory Committee (ACOM) of ICES.

ICES is more than an organization; it is a community of more than 5,000 scientists from over 700 marine institutes from our 20-member countries and beyond. Each year, over 1,500 scientistsparticipate in our activities. I cannot stress enough that the scientific advice that ICES provides isonly possible through the contributions of the many scientists involved and the support that they receive from their respective countries.

In closing, I note that NASCO and ICES share many of the same goals including that of international cooperation. In this context, I trust that the discussions of this annual meeting will be fruitful.

Thank you for your attention.

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Opening Statement to Council Submitted by the North Pacific Anadromous Fish Commission (NPAFC)

Distinguished delegates, observers, ladies and gentlemen.

First of all, let me extend my gratitude to Secretary Dr. Emma Hatfield and the Council for the invitation to the 38th NASCO Annual Meeting. On behalf of the North Pacific Anadromous Fish Commission (NPAFC), the sister organization of NASCO, I am pleased to be able to meet with you virtually.

Five years ago, the NPAFC and NASCO signed off on a joint proposal that established the International Year of the Salmon (IYS). Over that time our organizations have built a very strong connection base on mutual understanding of cultures and procedures that allow us to

effectively work together. We believe as the challenges faced by salmon are mounting the resilience of our institutions will be driven on our ability to work together.

Since the mid 1990's many populations of Atlantic salmon and Pacific salmon have been in serious decline due in large part to poor marine survival coupled with degradation of freshwater habitat. The last two years in the Pacific basin have been disastrous with the overall commercial catch declining by almost 40% a result of marine heat waves an order of magnitude in extent beyond the range of El Nino's that have defined extremes in the past. These patterns of declining survival , re-distribution with movement into the arctic and loss in southern areas of their range, reduced growth etc are happening in both basins, not by coincidence but by the tele-connected nature of the shared jet streams that drive our climate. We believe that cooperation in projects like the Likely Suspects Framework and ROAM and others being considered under the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development are just the beginning.

Over the past year NPAFC continued to implement IYS signature projects including the Pan-Pacific High Seas Research Expedition, the Likely Suspects Framework, and the Salmon Data Mobilization project. In 2020 – five months of 2021, there were a number of IYS workshops, symposia, and meetings, both in-person and virtual. Our Atlantic partners have raised funds for implementing the LSF in the U.K. and have collaborated with the NPAFC in planning and conducting a Salmonscape workshop series on the LSF that just concluded. The workshops brought together over 100 experts to discuss current challenges, modelling approaches, assessment processes, data mobilization and the development of a visual roadmap to implement the LSF and identify case-use studies in the Northeast Pacific. The outcomes from these workshops will be synthesized and published in a NPAFC technical report. The IYS Secretariat continues to search for funding to carry out the next phase of the LSF, which would include the implementation of the case-use studies, and we hope to continue expanding our network in the future. We are pleased the see that the Atlantic Salmon Trust and The Missing Fish Alliance are proposing an LSF modelling project to the International Atlantic Salmon Research Board. We hope to see hemispheric cooperation on a project like this.

The NPAFC's Third NPAFC-IYS Workshop on *Linkages between Pacific Salmon Production and Environmental Changes* was successfully completed last week. Several presentations on Atlantic salmon were given including a keynote lecture by Eva Thorstad: *Atlantic Salmon - Nomads of the Ocean* and a presentation by Ciaran Byrne and co-authors entitled 'Controlling the Controllables'—What More Can be Done?—State of Atlantic Salmon in Ireland. Both presentations were very well received. As usual, we found many common issues to discuss about salmon at-sea mortality, their resilience in the warming World Ocean, salmon in Arctic outlooks, etc. There was a special section devoted to relationship between human dimensions and salmon including lessons of catastrophic natural disasters, habitat restoration, risk management in the salmon hatcheries and the aquaculture industry. All these and other topics of mutual interest will be also included in scientific program of the IYS Concluding Symposium, that NASCO and NPAFC are continuing to plan. The joint NASCO-NPAFC Committee has been very positive as representatives from both organizations are excited to summarize what has been learned during the five years of the IYS but more importantly to chart a course for the future of salmon. This Symposium will be held in Westin Bayshore Hotel Vancouver on October 4-6, 2022. We are looking forward to seeing many Atlantic colleagues presenting at the symposium.

We were very pleased to have Ms. Kim Damon-Randall, United States Head of Delegation to NASCO, join us at the 29th NPAFC Virtual Annual Meeting on May 10-20, 2021. We wish you a successful and productive meeting and, taking this opportunity, we would like to invite

representatives of the NASCO to participate in our 30th Annual Meeting in May 2022 in Hakodate, Japan.

Thank you.

Annex 4

Opening Statement to Council Submitted by NASCO's Accredited Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs)

Mr President, Heads of Delegation, delegates, and colleagues,

The NGOs are pleased to make an opening statement for this, the 38th Annual meeting of NASCO, and would like to thank the secretariat for once again organising a virtual meeting under difficult circumstances.

In the NGO Statement to the IP Webinar on May 5th, we reiterated concerns that, having dealt well with the challenge of commercial salmon exploitation at sea, NASCO is dealing less effectively with the other stressors impacting wild Atlantic salmon. The causes may currently be outside NASCO's direct control, lying variously in the capacity, capability, priorities or intransigence of home governments and their agencies, but this forum must find a way to influence greater protection for wild salmon right across their North Atlantic range, otherwise the relevance of this forum will be greatly diminished.

The long list of pressures on salmon includes open-net aquaculture, habitat quality, water quality and quantity, connectivity and many others, although their causes and importance vary with country or region. While it is vital to continue combating these relentlessly, we agree with the conclusion of the 2019 IYS Symposium in Tromsø that climate change is the biggest, all-pervasive, global threat to Atlantic salmon. Climate change exerts direct effects, through thermal or hydrological regime changes and indirect effects through changing human activities of agriculture, forestry, urbanisation, renewable energy generation, and a plethora of changes to ecosystems, including invasive alien species.

We remind Council that the first recommendation to NASCO of the 2019 Symposium Report was *"To remain relevant in a period of rapid environmental and social change, NASCO needs a renewed strategy to respond to the challenges facing wild Atlantic salmon. To begin this process, NASCO should specifically identify strategic activities to deal with climate change and its cascading effects on salmon and salmon habitat, possibly by updating its 2005 'Strategic Approach for NASCO's 'Next Steps'.* This is in line with the NGO Group's view, and we press strongly for this to be taken up through meaningful action in a redirection of NASCO's ambitions and delivery. The External Performance Review (EPR) is a timely opportunity to embed that into its revised formal objectives.

We also make this related suggestion. A systemic feature of NASCO is its focus on the eponymous Atlantic salmon as a single species, which arose for good historical reasons. That focus should continue for as long as there is potential for renewed exploitation, but now it also presents a problem of perception. To understand better and present more persuasively the arguments for urgent, generic environmental improvements that will benefit salmon, including climate change controls, we need to move beyond single species management. We must keep our salmon assessment perspective, but also present Atlantic salmon as part of the ecosystems and biodiversity of seas and rivers, a keystone indicator species spanning multiple environments. Such change will offer partnerships and collaborations with groups that are more experienced and effective at environmental lobbying than NASCO is at present.

The practical changes would include:

- incorporation of these intents into NASCO constitution and objectives;
- demonstrable and urgent moves to work with other organisations with the same aims;

- encouragement and funding of research into climate responses of salmon ecology, population dynamics and distribution in the context of freshwater and marine ecosystems; and
- use the results of that research to add to our current knowledge to better inform the actions necessary within each party and jurisdiction to effectively manage and conserve wild Atlantic salmon.

Mr President, no-one around the NASCO table should be in any doubt that wild salmon are in crisis across much of their North Atlantic range and that we are at a crucial time if we are to reverse the many stressors on the species, all exacerbated by the emerging consequences of climate change. The NGOs are therefore really concerned that some parties seem to want to make significant retrograde changes to the Implementation Plan process.

We quote form the report of the IP webinar, CNL(21)56 decisions, where it says that, '*Council may wish to decide whether a Party's / jurisdiction's national legislation which prevents a satisfactory response to an IP question, should / should not be considered a mitigating circumstance to allow it to be considered satisfactory*.'

If we are to conserve wild salmon, as is NASCO's primary objective, we cannot accept excuses for failing to provide actions within IPs or to report on their progress towards achieving NASCO's goals in Annual Progress Reports. Any diminishing of this, the third IP/APR cycle, will send a clear message to the salmon world that you, as representatives of your respective governments, are lacking in the necessary commitment to protect the species when it is arguably at its most vulnerable.

So, Mr President, the NGOs will be making a full report to the External Performance Review group which will include the major recommendation that the focus of NASCO has to change. The external salmon world is looking to you - the parties and jurisdictions and your governments - to show international example and leadership and, crucially, political commitment to protect this iconic species and the environment on which it depends. With the External Performance Review, NASCO has one last chance to genuinely embrace that challenge and become the major international force the salmon world desperately needs it to be. However, if you fail to take the opportunities offered you by the review, this forum will become irrelevant to modern salmon management and conservation, and the future of wild Atlantic salmon will be very bleak indeed.

Annex 5

Council Inter-Sessional Correspondence

The Council's inter-sessional correspondence took place from 3 – 14 May. It is set out below, under the relevant Agenda item. If an Agenda item is not listed, no inter-sessional correspondence took place.

5. Conservation, Restoration, Enhancement and Rational Management of Atlantic Salmon under the Precautionary Approach

b) Report of the Inter-Sessional Implementation Plan Special Session

Whilst most of the Inter-Sessional Correspondence on this item is included in CNL(21)56. The following additional question was asked:

Q1. NASCO NGOs asked UK (10 May):

The UK – England & Wales IP (IP(19)13rev2) sets out actions to address freshwater environmental problems arising from loss or damage of habitat, connectivity, water quality and quantity and other ecosystem changes from invasive alien species or climate change effects. The NGO welcomes these but recognises that the potential or actual benefits to salmon remain unclear and unspecified.

All the actions will likely benefit salmon productivity (as smolt output) to some degree, but some more than others. The key questions for salmon management should be how much benefit has or will arise, is it enough and what else needs to be done? A fundamental prerequisite to do this is a national, spatially explicit inventory of river habitat (as the original NASCO Habitat Guidance advises), because that provides the template for all salmon production (juvenile stock) assessment and improvement.

The 2010 NASCO Habitat Guidelines advise that,

a. Managers should assess the expected effects of management actions and the timescale in which they will occur prior to their implementation.

b. Managers should also monitor the outcomes of the management actions to determine whether they have achieved the desired aims.

We agree and ask:

i. Is there a functioning, spatially explicit river habitat inventory for England and Wales?

ii. How are a) and b) being done now and are current measures enough to protect stocks?

iii. If they are not, what factors (structural, resources or other) are limiting this delivery?

- ***A1. UK response (19 May):***

  i. Salmon stocks in England and Wales' 64 principal salmon rivers are assessed annually against conservation limits. These limits were calculated in 1996/97 based on modelling of available habitat. The stock assessment methodology, including how conservation limits are set, is currently being reviewed. This review, which is being carried out by the Environment Agency (EA), Natural Resources Wales (NRW), Cefas and the Game and Wildlife Conservation Trust and is due to

complete in 2022 and will consider the options for, and the costs and benefits of, obtaining a better understanding of available habitat quality and quantity.

In addition to modelling the quantity of freshwater and estuarine habitat available to Salmon the EA and NRW have also assessed salmon limiting factors, including physical habitat, for most of the principal salmon rivers. This work was carried out in England between 1997 and 2003 and published in Salmon Action Plans. In Wales detailed Fisheries Habitat Restoration Plans (FHRPs), that identify all known physical habitat constraints, have been developed more recently. These plans are informing River Basin Management Plans (RBMPs) produced under the Water Framework Directive. RBMPs in England and, FHRPs in Wales, are now the primary tools for driving forward habitat improvements.

ii. Most actions to improve salmon habitat are progressed as part of broader projects intended to deliver a wide array of environmental outcomes, in line with the goals set out under the Water Framework Directive and intended to move water bodies towards "good" ecological and chemical status.

These objectives, whilst not always being salmon specific, clearly implement the expectation and requirement of the NASCO habitat guidance in terms of assessing and maintaining an inventory of habitat limiting factors that potentially where salmon form part of the overall fish assemblage within a river catchment.

The overall benefits with respect to moving water bodies towards "Good" status will generally be assessed prior to implementation of any improvement work but the specific benefits to salmon will only be assessed if they are the main, or an associated, reason for not achieving a good status.

Similarly, post implementation assessment will be much broader than just salmon. However juvenile surveys and stock assessments are carried out annually on England and Wales' 64 principal salmon.

iii. Despite significant reductions in salmon exploitation in England and Wales (from 219 Tonnes in 2000 to 3 Tonnes in 2020) coupled with wider conservation efforts the status of UK-England and Wales' salmon stock remains poor, with 40% predicted to be "at risk" in 5 years time and another 50% predicted to be "probably at risk".

The UK – England and Wales Implementation Plan set out a comprehensive programme of salmon conservation actions and our Annual Progress Reports show progress is being made. The pace of action is limited by a combination of factors, including competing priorities and funding constraints. The increasing national and international focus on the state of our natural environment should offer opportunities to push forward further salmon conservation work and we remain committed to working with stakeholders to progress the five point approach, the partnership plan for salmon in England, and the Wales Plan of Action for Salmon and Sea Trout.

c) **Evaluation of Annual Progress Reports under the 2019 – 2024 Implementation Plans**

(i) **Special Session: Evaluation of Annual Progress Reports under the 2019 – 2024 Implementation Plans**

Q2. Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland) asked EU – Ireland (6 May):

In Ireland salmon fishery is allowed and reporting of catches via returned logbooks is a requirement in accordance with the Wild Salmon and Sea Trout Tagging Regulation. However according to the data presented in Ireland's APR from the calendar year 2020 (section 3.1 Action F2), it is only estimated that 60% of the logbooks provided to anglers are returned. Could there be some underlying reason for this relatively low return rate of catch-data?

In the APR it is further stated that "All anglers who do not return logbooks are written to as a means of improving logbook returns and a proportion are taken to court annually and fined for non-return of logbooks". However, it does not supply a penalty for failure to report catches. In other countries it is also a requirement to report catches, and a penalty suspension from the fishery for failure to report must be implemented by request of council members.

What happens in Ireland if they fail to report their catches? Is there a criteria that determines who it is that have to appear in court, and how large is that proportion?

Furthermore, this creates potential issues with accurate information regarding the inventory of salmon stocks. How is this missing information accounted for in the stock estimations?

- ***A2. EU – Ireland response (21 May):***

  Background

  Inland Fisheries Ireland (IFI) manages each of Irelands 144 genetically unique salmon stocks on an individual stock basis. Management is and remains strictly in line with the scientific advice, and this principle was ratified by a Government decision in 2006.

  Management Advice is prepared annually by IFI for each river and is supported by annual independent scientific advice from the Technical Expert Group on Salmon (TEGOS) - a group comprised of scientists from a range of organisations.

  Each individual stock is reviewed by TEGOS every year and the annual scientific advice sets out the predicted stock status on each river. This information is used to establish any potential harvest surplus/deficit for each river. Based on this advice managers draft and implement annual legislation aimed at ensuring that any exploitation of salmon stocks is done on a sustainable basis.

  Use of a range of data sets

  In carrying out salmon stock assessments TEGOS draws on several data sets and does not rely entirely on rod catch returns. These data sets incorporate include both rod (inc. catch and release) and commercial catch data, fish counters, catchment wide electro-fishing and reports from experienced Fisheries Inspectors nationwide.

  Each data set is averaged over the previous 5 years. The use of a five year rolling average avoids a good or bad year having a disproportionate impact on the assessment based on the established precautionary principle. In addition, information on juvenile abundance indices derived from electro-fishing surveys, carried out by IFI, is also evaluated as an indicator of stock status.

  Profile of licenced anglers

  It should be noted that some 40% of the licenced anglers are visitors and nationals of other countries and therefore residing outside the jurisdiction. In these circumstances visiting anglers have little incentive to make timely, if any, returns

as enforcement or prosecution of such anglers is virtually impossible.

This situation is not comparable to the commercial licencing regime where every licensee is domiciled in Ireland and can be easily brought to task under domestic law for non-reporting of catches, thus we have full compliance with the commercial license reporting requirements.

Prosecutions have been taken by the Fisheries Authorities in relation to anglers domiciled in Ireland but conviction and penalty is a matter for the statutorily independent Courts system and Fisheries Authorities have no role in that regard.

Accounting for missing information in the stock estimations

The reported rod catch from the Wild Salmon and Sea Trout Carcass Tagging Scheme are collated and reported annually by Inland Fisheries Ireland and raised to take into account of fish caught by anglers who have not returned logbooks. The raising factor used is based on Small (1991) and applied to each of the 17 constituent Fisheries Districts based on their respective angling logbook return rates (it should be noted that returns of logbooks from the commercial fisheries are 100%).

In the annual national stock assessment and catch advice process undertaken by TEGOS, the resulting raised rod catch information along with associated exploitation rates is used as one of the data sets to estimate stock abundance in individual rivers. This approach accounts for any missing information in the stock estimations.

For Irish inputs to the ICES WGNAS North Atlantic stock assessment models to estimate Irish pre-fisheries abundance, homewater returns and spawners, the raised angling catch is used along with a further associated unreported catch which is deemed to be 7.5% (and an associated error of 2.5%) of the collated national raised angling catch. For annual reporting of stock abundances to NASCO in the Irish APR, an unreported catch figure of 10% of all harvested fish is assumed in our reporting.

Conclusion

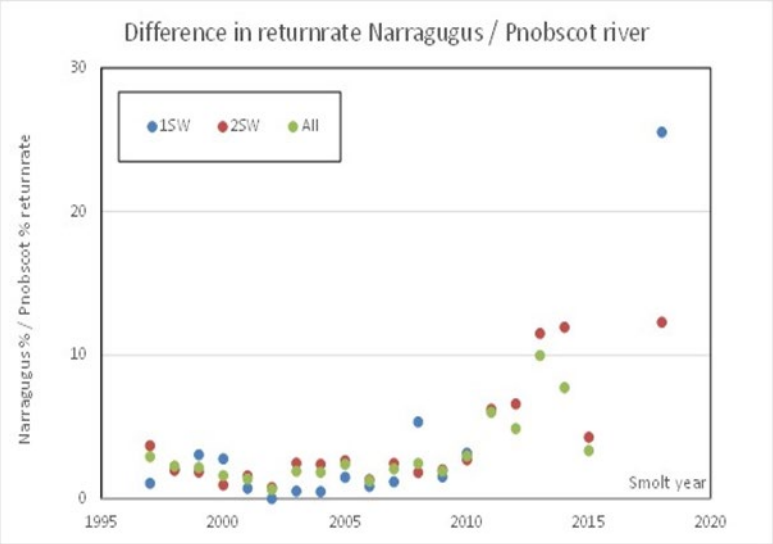
TEGOS takes account of all potential variables and adopts very much a precautionary approach to setting out comprehensive scientific advice on each of the 144 salmon stocks. Based on this approach and the methodologies used by TEGOS, to take account of situations raised by DFG, Ireland has confidence in the outcome of scientific assessments to underpin the status of (and potential harvestable surplus identified for) fisheries to keep those fisheries within safe biological limits in the domestic arena.

Annual TEGOS advice and the annual management advice it supports are based always on the precautionary principle.

Q3. Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland) asked United States (6 May):

ICES use regional/nation summarised return rates as input for the PFA model, and not individual river return rates. However, variability in return rates within regions can be very high, even for rivers located side by side. This regional variability must be assumed to be attributed to regional factors, since both river stocks must experience equivalent conditions at sea. In the United States return rates of large salmon (2SW) has varied between two rivers (Narragugus and Penobscot) by more than a factor of 12, and the small salmon (1SW) has varied by a factor of 25 (figure below). These variations are

not accounted for in the PFA model, however they imply that conservational efforts in the rivers of origin are necessary to recover the stocks.



What future initiatives do the United States propose to improve conditions in their rivers of origin to equalise stock improvements?

- A3. ***United States response (13 May):***

  We are a little confused by the preamble to these questions as ICES does not use regional/nation summarised return rates or individual river return rates as inputs for the PFA model. The United States does report individual river returns rates as a metric of marine productivity in support of NASCO's request to ICES to "describe the status of the stocks…". Regardless, we will do our best to answer the questions below.

  Different stocking approaches are used in different watersheds to support various research or adaptive management practices and much of the annual variability in adult returns is attributable to these different approaches. As an example, the Penobscot River is a smolt stocked river; whereas, the Narraguagus River primarily receives fry stocked fish. Variability in the return rates for these two hatchery products is expected. A quick survey of the literature suggests that wild smolts may have return rates up to eight times higher than hatchery reared smolts.

  That said, one of the biggest initiatives that we are taking across all rivers is ensuring Atlantic salmon can access high quality, climate resilient habitats that can maximize spawning success, juvenile survival, and, ultimately, the number of smolts leaving our rivers. Some of this work is summarized in Action H3 of our APR, and also within our final Recovery Plan (see sub-actions under C1.0, C2.0, C3.0 and actions F3.2, F3.3 and F3.6 in USFWS & NMFS, 2018): U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and National Marine Fisheries Service (USFWS & NMFS). 2018. Recovery Plan for the Gulf of Maine Distinct Population Segment of Atlantic Salmon (Salmo salar): Final Plan for the 2009 ESA Listing.

Q4. Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland) asked United States (6 May):

It appears as if there has been improvements in Narragugus river since 2012 for the salmon population. This is one of the smaller rivers habitating salmon in the United States. Has any measures been taken in Narragugus river since the population has improved? If so which?

- A4. ***United States response (13 May):***

  Yes, habitat restoration efforts continue throughout the Narraguagus River, much like they do in all our rivers that continue to support salmon. These efforts include restoring stream connectivity by removing any remaining man-made barriers and restoring physical habitats damaged by past land use practices.

  Regarding the improved runs in the Narraguagus, the Narraguagus 2SW return rate has remained below its 1995-present mean value in all but two years since 2010. The two values that were above the mean were the two highest estimates in the time series and a significant deviation from the recent estimates. The Penobscot River has remained at low levels below its 1995-present mean value since 2010. As such, we do not think that the ratio of Narraguagus return rates to Penobscot return rates is an appropriate comparison as the ratio may increase with an increase in Narraguagus return rate and or a decrease in Penobscot return rate.

Q5. Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland) asked United States (6 May):

Are these potential measures different from the measures taken in other habitat rivers, such as Pnobscot? And why?

- A5. ***United States response (13 May):***

  In general, habitat restoration activities in Maine rivers are guided by process-based restoration principles described in Roni et al. (2002), which is cited below. This is a four step process of: 1) protecting the most important habitats; 2) ensuring they are well connected (remove dams that block access to them); 3) restoring the ecological function; and, 4) enhancing habitats as it is needed. For many of the larger rivers, including the Penobscot River, we are working within step 2 (ensuring habitats are well connected). In some of our smaller watersheds, including the Narraguagus where many of the connectivity issues have already been addressed, we have moved to the next phase of restoring and enhancing freshwater habitats.

  Roni, P., Beechie, T. J., Bilby, R. E., Leonetti, F. E., Pollock, M. M., & Pess, G. R. (2002). A review of stream restoration techniques and a hierarchical strategy for prioritizing restoration in Pacific Northwest watersheds. North American Journal of Fisheries Management, 22(1), 1-20.

Q6. Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland) asked United States (6 May):

There is only one standing dam in this Narragugus River, and the salmon seem to have only that barrier to pass during migration. When three dams have been removed from the Pnobscot river, what is the reasoning behind keeping the only dam in Narragugus river?

- A6. ***United States response (13 May):***

  The Cherryfield Dam is the single dam remaining on the Narraguagus River, and it was originally constructed as an ice control dam to protect downstream communities from flooding during the winter and early spring months. It contains fish passage, although it still presents some challenges for Atlantic salmon. Efforts are underway to evaluate the feasibility of removing the Cherryfield Dam. While we are supportive of efforts to remove the dam from a salmon conservation perspective, we understand that it is necessary to consider not only fish passage needs but how the dam serves to protect the communities from floods and ice

downstream. We will provide any relevant updates in future versions of our APR.

The United States set a goal of restoring 5,000 units (1Unit=100 M2) , equivalent 50 hectares or about 123 acres, of salmon habitat by 2024. However, due to the lack of prerequisites attached to this goal, it is essentially possible to reach it without contributing to the conservation of salmon. Prior to this goal, the removal of Bangor dam (1995), Veazie dam (2013) and Great Works dam (2012) has provided approximately 50,000 units, a factor 10 of the current goal, of unobstructed river, explained as salmon habitat. However, there is not accounted for the fact that other dams still obstruct Pnobscot river and the breeding sites are still challenging to reach.

Q7. Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland) asked United States (6 May):

The United States set a goal of restoring 5,000 units (1 Unit=100 M2), equivalent 50 hectares or about 123 acres, of salmon habitat by 2024. However, due to the lack of prerequisites attached to this goal, it is essentially possible to reach it without contributing to the conservation of salmon. Prior to this goal, the removal of Bangor dam (1995), Veazie dam (2013) and Great Works dam (2012) has provided approximately 50,000 units, a factor 10 of the current goal, of unobstructed river, explained as salmon habitat. However, there is not accounted for the fact that other dams still obstruct Pnobscot river and the breeding sites are still challenging to reach. How much of this 5000 unit goal is expected to occur in the remaining U.S. identified salmon rivers (Pnobscot river, Narraguagus river, Sheepscot river, East Machias river)?

- A7. ***United States response (13 May):***

We are again a little confused by the preamble to these questions. The removal of Bangor Dam occurred in 1978, and passage was fully restored at that time. The final removal of the remnant debris from the old structure of the dam occurred in 1995. Further, we are not sure where the estimate of 50,000 units of habitat came from in relation to the removal of the Great Works and Veazie dams. The Great Works and Veazie dams were the lowest dams on the river at the time, and their removal has resulted in full access to 11 miles of lower river mainstem habitat, which contained essentially no viable salmon rearing habitat. However, the access to all the upstream habitat was greatly improved with the removal of these two dams and has resulted in improved connectivity within the system. Regardless, we will do our best to answer the questions below.

All of the 5000 habitat unit goal described in our Implementation Plan must occur within the range of the Gulf of Maine Distinct Population Segment where wild Atlantic salmon remain. The 5000 unit goal in our Implementation Plan is explicitly linked to the recovery goals in our Final Recovery Plan (USFWS & NMFS, 2018, cited below). The goals in the Recovery Plan describe criteria that define very stringent standards for passage effectiveness at dams that would allow for upstream habitat to be counted towards our recovery goals. Furthermore, only habitats considered to be highly suitable for Atlantic salmon spawning and juvenile rearing can count towards these goals. The remaining dams in the lower Penobscot still have not achieved the passage effectiveness standard, and, therefore, habitat upstream from them does not count toward our recovery goals. We are continually working on a variety of habitat connectivity and dam passage improvement efforts as outlined within our APR to allow salmon access to the habitat mistakenly referenced within the preamble to these questions.

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and National Marine Fisheries Service (USFWS & NMFS). 2018. Recovery Plan for the Gulf of Maine Distinct Population Segment of Atlantic Salmon (Salmo salar): Final Plan for the 2009 ESA Listing.

Q8. Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland) asked United States (6 May):

How much of this goal will be executed in places where it can facilitate migration to and from breeding sites or in quality habitats?

- A8. ***United States response (13 May):***

  Since our Implementation Plan is tied to our recovery goals in our Final Recovery Plan, and our recovery plan explicitly states that only habitats considered suitable for spawning and rearing count towards our habitat goals for recovery, all of the 5000 units described in our Implementation Plan must be in places that facilitate migration to and from breeding sites.

Annex 6

CNL(21)25

Thirty-Eighth Annual Meeting of the Council

By Video Conference

31 May – 4 June 2021

Agenda

1. Opening of the Meeting

2. Financial and Administrative Issues

a) Report of the Finance and Administration Committee

3. Scientific, Technical, Legal and Other Information

a) Secretary's Report

b) Report on the Activities of the Organization in 2020

c) Announcement of the Tag Return Incentive Scheme Grand Prize

d) Scientific Advice from ICES

e) Report of the International Atlantic Salmon Research Board

f) Consideration of the NASCO Rivers Database

g) Report of the Standing Scientific Committee

4. The Third Performance Review: Update to the Council

5. Conservation, Restoration, Enhancement and Rational Management of Atlantic Salmon under the Precautionary Approach

a) Minimising Impacts of Salmon Farming on Wild Atlantic Salmon: Supporting Meaningful and More Rapid Progress Towards Achievement of the International Goals for Sea Lice and Containment

(i) Theme-based Special Session: Minimising Impacts of Salmon Farming on Wild Atlantic Salmon: Supporting Meaningful and More Rapid Progress Towards Achievement of the International Goals for Sea Lice and Containment

(ii) Decisions taken Following the Theme-based Special Session

b) Report of the Inter-Sessional Implementation Plan Special Session

c) Evaluation of Annual Progress Reports under the 2019 – 2024 Implementation Plans

(i) Special Session: Evaluation of Annual Progress Reports under the 2019 – 2024 Implementation Plans

(ii) Decisions Taken Regarding the Evaluation of Annual Progress Reports under the 2019 – 2024 Implementation Plans

d) International Year of the Salmon Legacy Activities

e) 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

f) Liaison with the Salmon Farming Industry

g) New or Emerging Opportunities for, or Threats to, Salmon Conservation and Management

h) Management and Sampling of the St Pierre and Miquelon Salmon Fishery

i) Reports on the Conservation Work of the Three Regional Commissions

6. Other Business

7. Date and Place of the Next Meeting

8. Report of the Meeting

9. Close of the Meeting

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Annex 8

CNL(21)59

North Atlantic Salmon Conservation Organization
2022 Budget and 2023 Forecast Budget (Pounds Sterling)

		Budget 2022	Forecast 2023
	Expenditure		
1.	Staff-related costs	386,140	396,900
2.	Travel and subsistence	27,000	27,000
3.	Research and advice	62,700	63,500
4.	Contribution to Working Capital Fund	0	0
5.	Meetings	50,000	10,300
6.	Office supplies, printing and translation	22,000	22,700
7.	Communications	18,000	18,500
8.	Headquarters Property	47,250	48,600
9.	Office furniture and equipment	1,500	12,000
10.	Audit and other expenses	14,000	14,400
11.	Tag Return Incentive Scheme	4,500	4,500
12.	International Atlantic Salmon Research Fund	0	0
13.	Contribution to Contractual Obligation Fund	0	0
14.	Contribution to Recruitment Fund	5,000	2,500
15.	Contribution to IYS Fund	0	0
16.	Contribution to Periodic Projects Special Fund	0	0
	Total Expenditure	**638,090**	**620,900**
	Income		
17.	Contributions - Contracting Parties	585,590	568,400
18.	General Fund – Interest	500	500
19.	Income from Headquarters Property	52,000	52,000
20.	Surplus or Deficit (-) from 2020	0	0
	Total Income	**638,090**	**620,900**

2022 Budget & 2023 Forecast Budget (Pounds Sterling) – Expenditure by Sub-Section

		Budget 2022	Forecast 2023
1.	**Staff related costs**		
1.1	Secretariat members	246,240	253,100
1.2	Temporary and part-time staff costs	57,800	59,400
1.3	Staff Fund, allowances, insurances and other costs	82,100	84,400
	Total	**386,140**	**396,900**
2.	**Travel & subsistence**		
2.1	Travel to Annual Meeting	7,000	7,000
2.2	Official travel and subsistence	20,000	20,000
	Total	**27,000**	**27,000**
3.	**Research and advice**		
3.1	Contribution to ICES	62,700	63,500
3.2	Other research & advice	0	0
	Total	**62,700**	**63,500**
4.	**Contribution to Working Capital Fund**	0	0
5.	**Meetings**		
5.1	Costs of annual meeting	43,000	3,100
5.2	Costs of other meetings	7,000	7,200
	Total	**50,000**	**10,300**
6.	**Office supplies, printing and translation**		
6.1	Office supplies	12,500	12,900
6.2	Printing	6,500	6,700
6.3	Translations	3,000	3,100
	Total	**22,000**	**22,700**
7.	**Communications**		
7.1	Telecommunications	5,000	5,100
7.2	Postage and courier services	2,500	2,600
7.3	IT Support & Website	10,500	10,800
7.4	Communications, professional support and design	0	0
	Total	**18,000**	**18,500**
8.	**Headquarters Property**		
8.1	Capital and interest payments	0	0
8.2	Maintenance, services and other building related costs	47,250	48,600
	Total	**47,250**	**48,600**
9.	**Office furniture and equipment**		
9.1	Furniture	0	0
9.2	Equipment	1,500	12,000
	Total	**1,500**	**12,000**
10.	**Audit and other expenses**		
10.1	Audit and accountancy fees	11,000	11,300
10.2	Bank charges and insurances	500	500
10.3	Miscellaneous	2,500	2,600
	Total	**14,000**	**14,400**
11.	**Tag Return Incentive Scheme**	**4,500**	**4,500**
12.	**Contribution to IASRF**	**0**	**0**
13.	**Contribution to Contractual Obligation Fund**	**0**	**0**
14.	**Contribution to Recruitment Fund**	**5,000**	**2,500**
15.	**Contribution to IYS Fund**	**0**	**0**
16.	**Contribution to Periodic Projects Special Fund**	**0**	**0**
	Total Expenditure	**638,090**	**620,900**

2021 Budget Contributions (Pounds Sterling) Adjusted for Confirmed rather than Provisional 2019 Catches (tonnes)

Party	2019 catch (provisional)	2019 catch (confirmed)	2021 contribution (provisional)	2021 contribution (confirmed)	Adjustment
Canada	94	100	75,428	77,594	2,166
Denmark (Faroe Islands and Greenland)	29	29	41,429	41,089	-340
European Union	109	116	83,274	85,968	2,695
Norway	510	512	293,022	289,880	-3,141
Russian Federation	57	57	56,074	55,608	-466
United Kingdom	21	20	37,244	36,331	-913
USA	0	0	26,260	26,260	0
Total	**820**	**833**	**612,730**	**612,730**	**0**

Note. A positive adjustment represents an underpayment in 2021.

NASCO Budget Contributions for 2022 and Forecast Budget Contributions for 2023 (Pounds Sterling)

Party	2020 catch (provisional)	2022 contribution	Adjustment from 2021	2022 adjusted contribution	2023 forecast contribution
Canada	104	75,580	2166	77,747	73,362
Denmark (Faroe Islands and Greenland)	31	40,013	-340	39,673	38,839
European Union	117	81,871	2695	84,566	79,468
Norway	527	281,160	-3141	278,018	272,906
Russian Federation	49	48,808	-466	48,342	47,375
United Kingdom	16	33,060	-913	32,147	32,090
USA	0	25,097	0	25,097	24,360
Total	**844**	**585,590**	**0**	**585,590**	**568,400**

Contributions are based on the official returns.
Column totals in both tables can be in error by a few pounds due to rounding.

Five-year NASCO Budgeted Expenditure and Income Projections 2022 – 2026

		Budget 2022	Forecast 2023	Forecast 2024	Forecast 2025	Forecast 2026
	Expenditure					
1.	Staff related costs	386,140	396,900	408,013	419,438	431,182
2.	Travel & Subsistence	27,000	27,000	30,000	30,000	30,000
3.	Research & advice	62,700	63,500	64,436	65,403	66,384
4.	Contribution to Working Capital	0	0	0	0	0
5.	Meetings	50,000	10,300	10,500	10,750	11,000
6.	Office supplies, printing and translations	22,000	22,700	23,400	24,000	24,700
7.	Communications	18,000	18,500	19,000	19,550	20,100
8.	Headquarters Property	47,250	48,600	49,000	49,000	49,000
9.	Office furniture & equipment	1,500	12,000	1,550	1,600	13,150
10.	Audit & other expenses	14,000	14,400	14,800	15,220	15,640
11.	Tag return incentive scheme	4,500	4,500	4,500	4,500	4,500
12.	International Co-operative Research	0	0	0	0	0
13.	Contribution to Contractual Obligation Fund	0	0	0	0	35,000
14.	Contribution to Recruitment Fund	5,000	2,500	0	0	0
15.	Contribution to IYS Fund	0	0	0	0	0
16.	Contribution to Periodic Projects Special Fund	0	0	15,000	0	0
	Total	**638,090**	**620,900**	**640,199**	**639,460**	**700,655**
	Income					
16.	Contributions of Contracting Parties	580,590	568,400	587,699	586,960	648,155
17.	Interest Received on General Fund	500	500	500	500	500
18.	Income from HQ property	52,000	52,000	52,000	52,000	52,000
	Total	**633,090**	**620,900**	**640,199**	**639,460**	**700,655**

Presentation of the ICES Advice on North Atlantic Stocks to the Council

CNL(21)58

sal.oth.nasco

North Atlantic Salmon Stocks

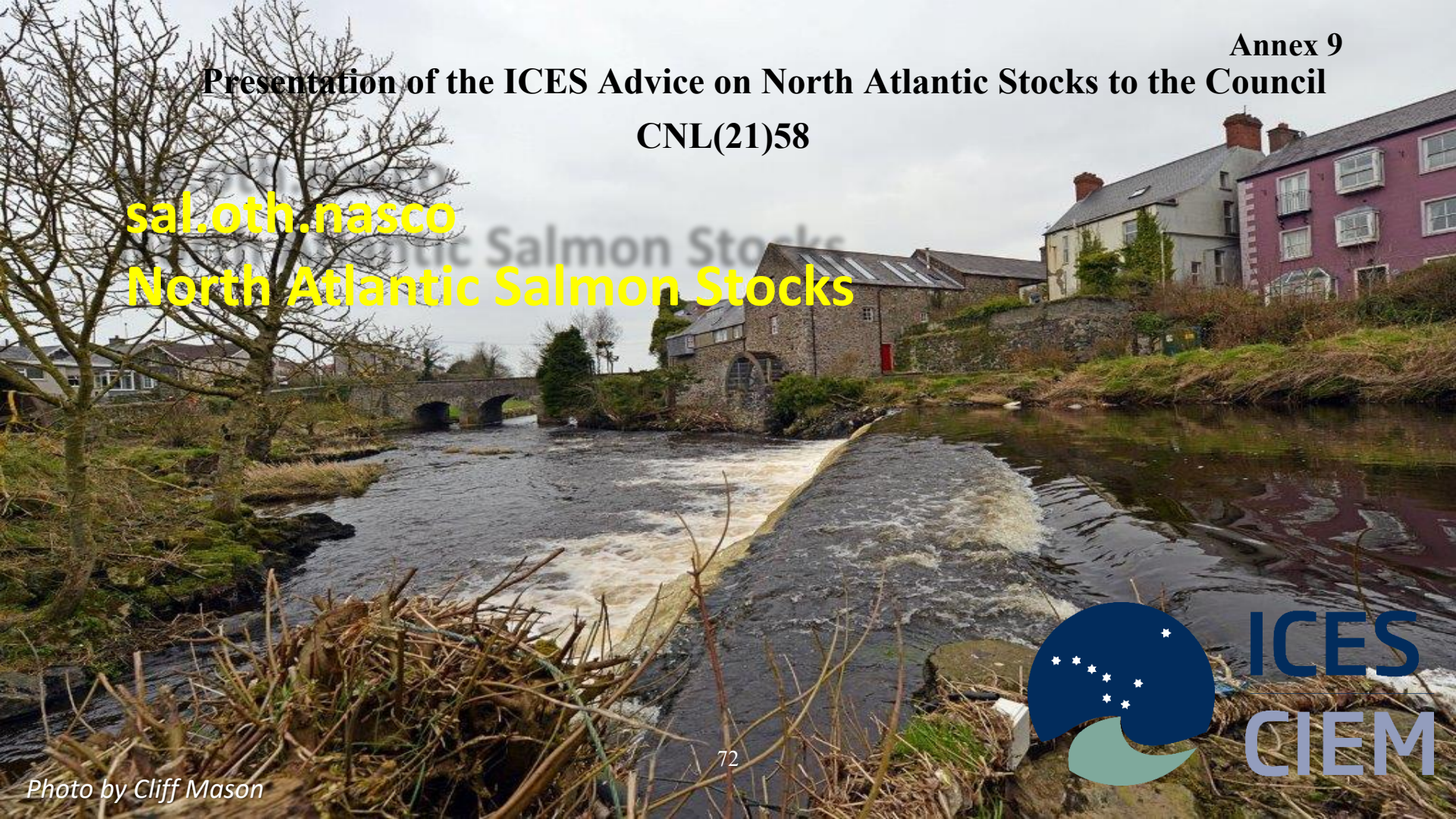
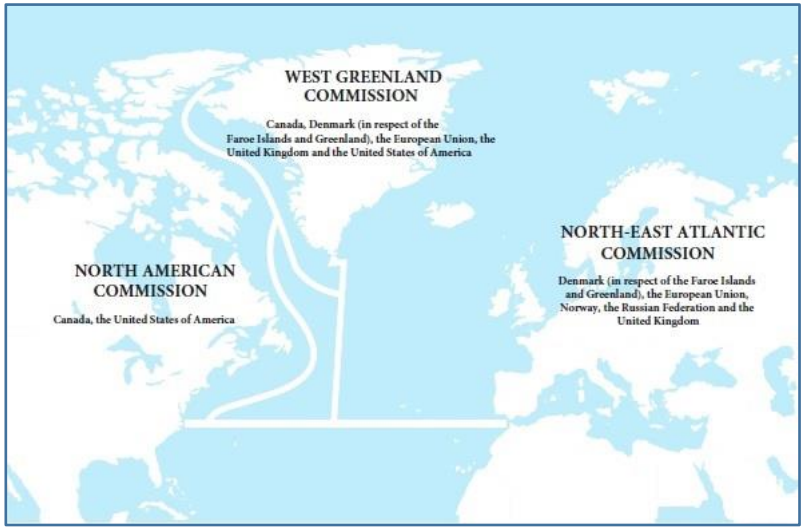


Photo by Cliff Mason

Background

- NASCO Commissions: North American (NAC), West Greenland (WGC) and North-East Atlantic (NEAC)
- Management framework for Atlantic salmon in the North Atlantic



Terms of Reference

1. With respect to Atlantic salmon in the North Atlantic area:

1.1 provide an overview of salmon catches and landings by country, including unreported catches and catch and release, and production of farmed and ranched Atlantic salmon in 2020;

1.2 report on significant new or emerging threats to, or opportunities for, salmon conservation and management;

1.3 provide a compilation of tag releases by country in 2020;

1.4 identify relevant data deficiencies, monitoring needs and research requirements;

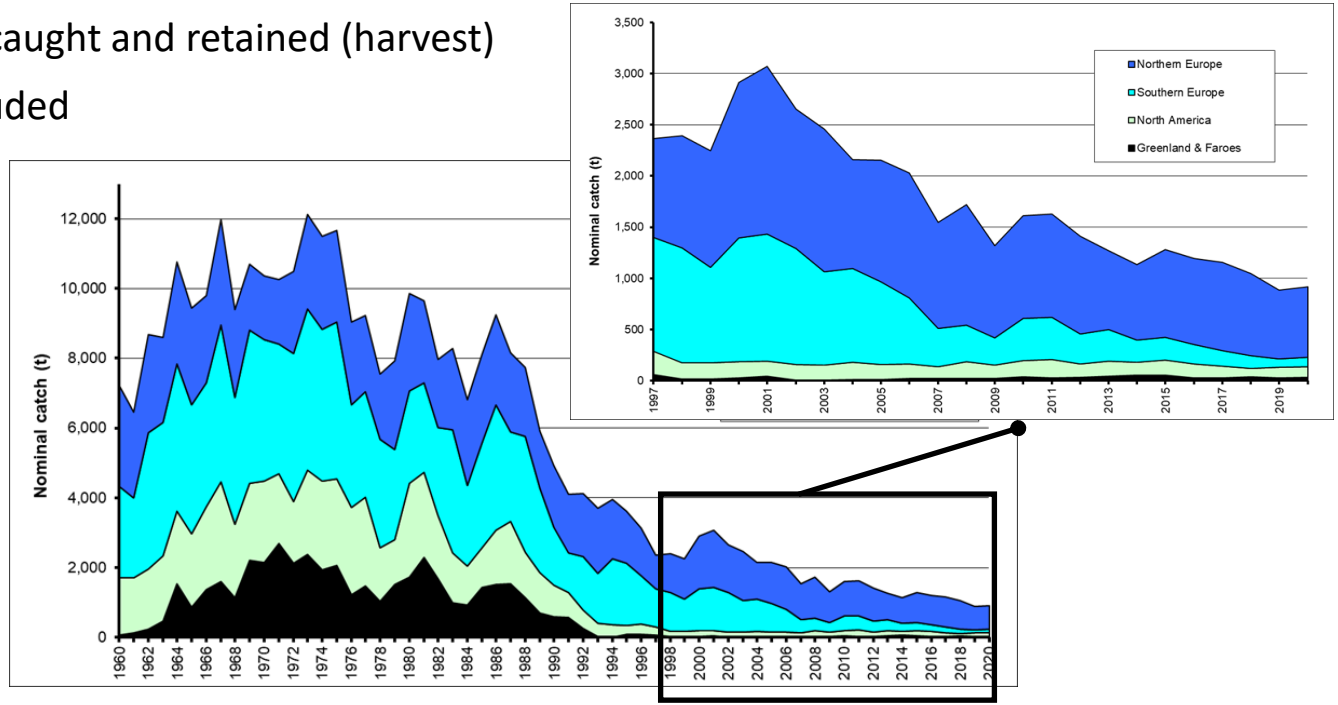
1.5 review and update the General Considerations section (Annex 2) of the ICES Commissions' advice documents to include 'Environmental and other influences on the stock'.

1.1 Reported (nominal) Catch

- 915 t
  - whole weight of fish caught and retained (harvest)
  - released fish not included

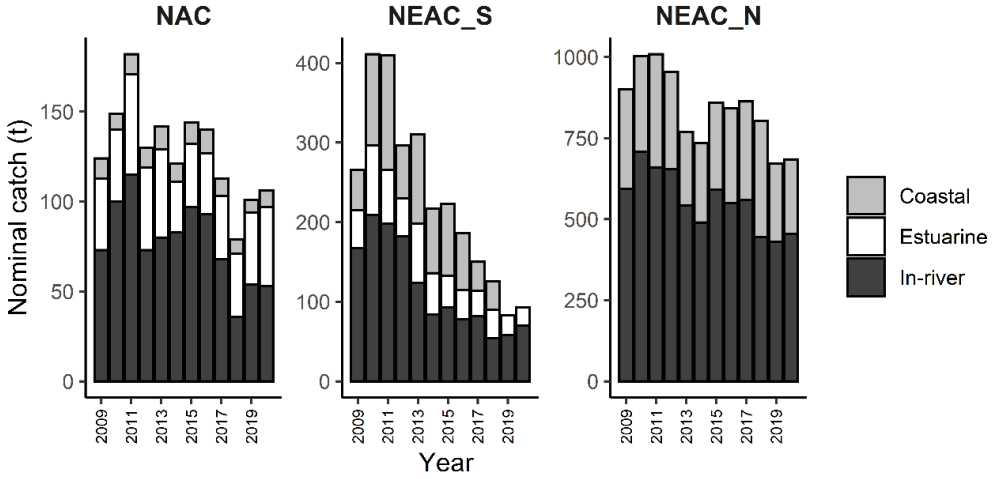
Area	Catch (t)	
	2019	2020
NEAC	755 (85%)	778 (85%)
NAC	101 (11%)	106 (12%)
WGC	29 (3%)	32 (3%)
Total	886	915

Figure 1: sal.oth.nasco



1.1 Location of Catches

Figure 2: sal.oth.nasco



- Coastal Catches
  - N-NEAC: 30% - 40% since 2008
  - S-NEAC: 0%
    (2019 change in management measures)
  - NAC: 8% (< 10% since 2007)

- location of catches by country: Figure 3: sal.oth.nasco

1.1 Unreported Catches

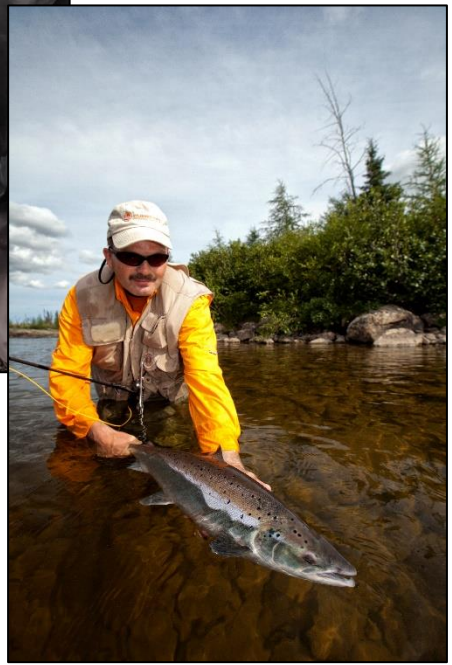
- 276 t
  - Legal under-reporting, non-reporting and illegal catch
  - 30% of total nominal catch
  - no estimate for Russia, France, Spain, and St. Pierre and Miquelon

Table 3: sal.oth.nasco

Year	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
NEAC	298	318	277	237	239
NAC	27	25	24	12	27
WGC	10	10	10	10	10
Total	**335**	**353**	**311**	**259**	**276**

1.1 Catch-and-Release (C&R)

- 196 677 salmon released (Table 8: sal.oth.nasco)
- Percentage released ranges from:
    - 16% in Sweden
    - 93% in UK (Scotland)

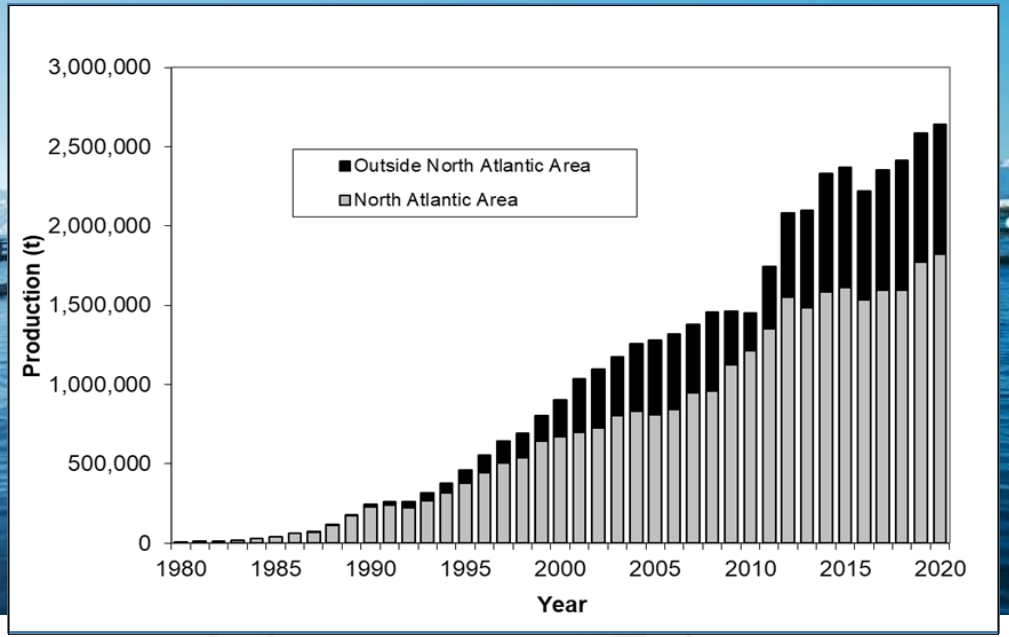


- Reflects varying management practices and angler attitudes
- Practice of C&R generally increasing

1.1 Production Farmed Salmon

- 1821 kt
  - Norway (77%)
  - UK (Scotland) (11%)

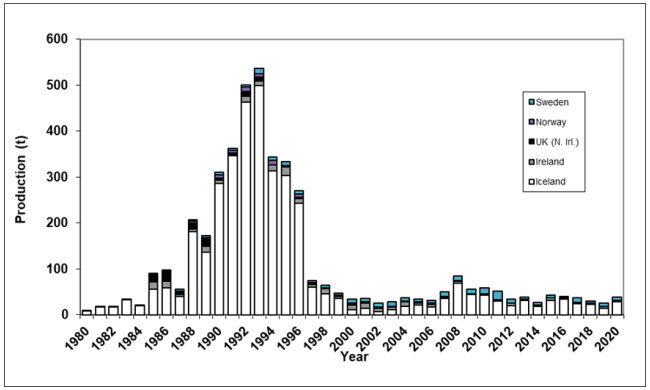
Figure 4: sal.oth.nasco



1.1 Production Ranched Salmon

- 39 t
  - Iceland 28.2 t, Sweden 7.0 t, Ireland 3.3 t
    No estimate for Norway (< 1 t)
  - UK (N. Ireland) not assessed since 2008

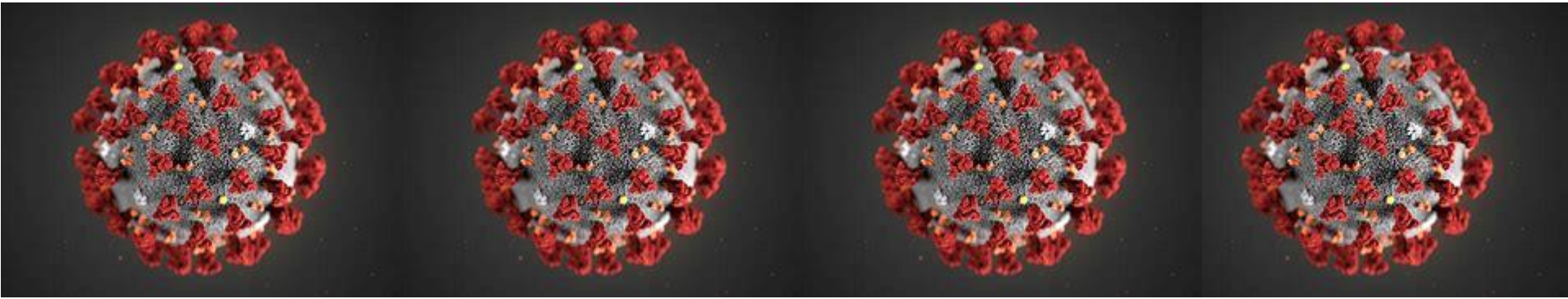
Figure 5: sal.oth.nasco



1.2 New or emerging threats to, or opportunities for, salmon conservation and management

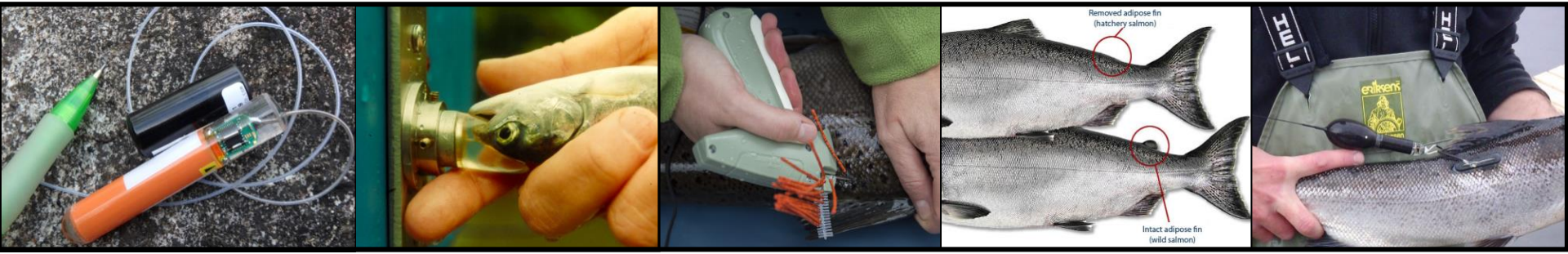
COVID-19 pandemic

- little or no impact reported for UK (Northern Ireland), Ireland, Iceland, Norway, Sweden and Denmark
- In other jurisdictions stay-at-home orders and travel restrictions affected fishing effort (France, UK England &Wales), population monitoring activities (Canada, USA), and delayed the collection and official release of fisheries statistics (UK Scotland)
- No international sampling at West-Greenland



1.3 Tag Releases

- Data on tagged or marked salmon are compiled as a separate report (ICES, 2021b)
- Summary in Table 4: sal.oth.nasco
  - 1.96 million salmon were marked in 2020 (2.2 million in 2019)
  - **Hatchery:** 1.73 million juveniles and 160 355 adults **Wild:** 40 678 juveniles and 31 032 adults
    - adipose clip (1.65 million) and coded wire microtags (CWT) (0.836 million)
    - 91 390 internal electronic tags (PIT, DSTs, radio, acoustic), decreased use relative to 2019 (Covid-19 effect?)



1.4 Identify relevant data deficiencies, monitoring needs and research requirements

NAC:

- A database is needed that lists individual PIT tag numbers or codes identifying the origin, source, or programme of the tags on a North Atlantic basin-wide scale.
- Complete and timely reporting of catch statistics from all fisheries for all areas of eastern Canada is recommended.
- Improved catch statistics and sampling of the Labrador and Saint Pierre and Miquelon fisheries is recommended.
- A sampling rate of at least 10% of catches in Labrador is recommended to achieve a relatively unbiased estimate of region of origin.

NEAC:

- Tag users should be encouraged to include these tags or tagging programmes in the WGNAS tagging report as this greatly facilitates identification of the origin of tags recovered in fisheries or tag scanning programmes in other jurisdictions

1.5 review and update the General Considerations section ICES Commissions' advice documents

Annex 2 General considerations

Management plans

The North Atlantic Salmon Conservation Organization (NASCO) has adopted an Action Plan for Application of the Precautionary Approach, which stipulates that management measures should be aimed at maintaining all stocks above their conservation limits (CLs) by the use of management targets. CLs for North Atlantic salmon stock complexes have been defined by ICES as the level of a stock (number of spawners) that will achieve long-term average MSY. NASCO has adopted the region-specific CLs as limit reference points (S_{lim}); having populations fall below these limits should be avoided with high probability. Advice for the Faroes fishery (which historically harvested both 1SW and MSW salmon) is currently based upon all NEAC area stocks. The advice for the West Greenland fishery (ICES, 2021e) is based upon the Southern NEAC non-maturing 1SW stock and the non-maturing 1SW salmon from North America. A 75% risk level (probability) of achieving the management objectives (CLs) simultaneously in four regions (Labrador, Newfoundland, Quebec, and Gulf), as well as being above the management objectives for Scotia-Fundy and USA, has been agreed by NASCO for the provision of catch advice at West Greenland. No specific risk level has so far been agreed by NASCO for the provision of catch advice for the Faroes fishery; in the absence of this, ICES uses a 95% probability of meeting individual CLs, applied at the level of the European stock complexes (two areas and two age classes) and for the ten NEAC countries and two age classes. A Framework of Indicators (FWI) has been developed in support of the multiannual catch options.

Biology

Atlantic salmon (*Salmo salar*) is an anadromous species found in rivers of countries bordering the North Atlantic. In the Northeast Atlantic area, its current distribution extends from the Lima River (41°69′) in northern Portugal to the Pechora River (68°20′) in Northwest Russia and west to Iceland (66°44′). Juveniles migrate to the ocean at the ages of one to eight years (dependent on latitude) and generally return after one or two years at sea. Long-distance migrations to ocean feeding grounds take place, with adult salmon from the Northeast Atlantic stocks being exploited in waters near both Greenland and the Faroes.

Environmental and other influences on the stock*

Environmental conditions in both freshwater and marine environments have a marked effect on the status of salmon stocks. Across the North Atlantic, a range of problems in the freshwater environment play a significant role in explaining the poor status of stocks. In many cases, river damming and habitat deterioration have had a devastating effect on

Acknowledgements

- All scientist and technicians who gathered data for WGNAS reporting
- All colleagues at WGNAS, ICES, and ICES Salmon RG/ADG

Photo by Nick Hawkins

Annex 10

CNL(21)60

Question & Answer Session at the ICES Advice Presentation – Thursday 28 May 2021

Katrine Kærgaard (Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland)): I was just wondering whether ICES has looked into other factors affecting the salmon stock. Because in your previous advice, you always said that considering the reduced fisheries, and there haven't been any changes in the stock, that there should be other factors affecting the salmon stock, and whether you can assess those other factors' impacts versus fisheries. Thank you.

Dennis Ensing (WGNAS Chair): It's a very pertinent question, and you're absolutely right, other factors are impacting on Atlantic salmon abundance. You would probably be talking about predation, climate change barriers. The thing is, it's quite difficult to model on a large scale, but what is interesting in this respect, is that we are moving into a new full-lifecycle model for Atlantic salmon, and we will be doing the exercise with that.

So, in time, we will have a completely new assessment framework, and that will allow us a lot more flexibility of what data we use. That would mean that if we have good data on things like predation, you can then bring it into that model, and you can build that model up and feed that in and use it.

As it stands, as you have seen, for instance, we assume a natural mortality value of 3% per month at sea. But that is a constant. It's based on something. It's not that we just decided to pull that out of a hat. It's based on research. But models do not allow us that flexibility yet, but they will shortly. So, I have created a few models because of their flexibility, and we can then really start to bring all those factors in. Of course, it depends on good data.

And of course, there is a lot of research happening. I know that a lot of Parties here spend a lot of money on looking into marine survival issues. What is it? What are the factors? Where do they happen? And the new model will allow us to put that into our advice in the future, hopefully.

Maria Strandgård Rasmussen (Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland)): I just had a question regarding the PFA model. I'm looking at table seven for the Atlantic salmon at West Greenland. It's the output from the PFA model. I was just wondering about whether the input data is regionally summed. If it's based on regionally summed data, how can that account for variability within the region?

Dennis Ensing (WGNAS Chair): Yes, but this is from the PFA model. The input for that, it would be river returns, yes. Every jurisdiction will have its index rivers, and that's where that data comes from, and that is input in the model, and this is then what you get as an output.

Maria Strandgård Rasmussen (Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland)): I can try to clarify a bit further. If the output is summed by region, then you bypass the variability that's within one region. For example, if the predation picture is higher for one area within the region than the other, then you cannot get the sum value for the output saying that it's way below the…

Dennis Ensing (WGNAS Chair): No, I see what you mean. We know that there is variability. Unfortunately, the model is not allowing us to account for that, and this is probably the reason

for wanting to move into this full-lifecycle model, because it will give us a lot of flexibility to bring those things in. So, yes, we know the constraints of the model. There are different things in the model as well that we have as constant, or questions, and this is just the evolution of modelling. We've been using this model for a couple of years now, and it's not ideal, and I absolutely agree with that. This is why we want to improve it. This is why we're very keen to move to a new model which allows us a lot of flexibility to look at those. There're so many things we can do in the new model, that we can't with this one, so I hope that answers your question. Even the new model will be suboptimal. That's the caveat with the model, it never truly reflects what is happening, it just tries to be as close as possible. And the new model should get us closer to that and allow us a lot more flexibility.

Maria Strandgård Rasmussen (Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland)): Yes, thank you so much for your reply.

Tim Sheehan (United States): Thank you very much for the presentation. I just wanted to clarify, I was a little confused by the last question and the last answer. I was wondering if you could provide a little commentary on how the model works, where the model as I understand it, is a summation.

You have regional inputs that are the summation of river returns, spawning returns, that are lumped together for the U.S., and then that goes up and is added with the, say, rest of North America, and those are the primary inputs for the model. So, I didn't understand the question and the answer about individual rivers not really being averaged or summed across a region, where they're all contributing to the region totals.

I think that individual rivers, where we have information, it is informing the model, and it is providing a picture of what's going on for that region. So, I was wondering if you could talk about that, how individual rivers play into the model, and how the regional estimates of, say, spawning as an input are used within the modelling.

Dennis Ensing (WGNAS Chair): I think you've pretty much already given the answer here yourself. Different regions are represented. Every region will have multiple rivers, or hopefully at least one, of where the returners, where the spawners are. And we derive a lot of our information for the model from those rivers as well, so we know about smolt age, the migration, the average of that, the midpoint of that, spawners, marine survival we know for those rivers.

And they are then indicative of those regions that they represent. Now, that means that not every region is as well represented as we want. In an ideal world, you would have every river assessed, but that is just not feasible, that is impossible to do. The cost alone and the infrastructure alone would be prohibitive. But all that information is used in the data.

In terms of variability, there will be variability between years, but certainly if I look at our own river here, that is hard data. I know that's not the case on some rivers. Some rivers are estimates. There will spawner estimates because it's done, for instance, using catch statistics, angling data. In Ireland, we have an index river which has a full trapping facility, so we literally get everything that ascends the river. So, we can be pretty happy with that input.

In some regions, it has to be a subset of the rivers in a region that are used in the model, and I think that when we move model, we're going to be dependent on rivers , but we can take other data as well, that has more of a regional signal.

Serge Doucet (NASCO President): I would like to thank Dennis for his presentations, and I thank you for the questions. And with that, I believe that I will bring this webinar to a close. Thank you, everyone.

CNL(21)12

Report of the Twentieth Annual Meeting of the International Atlantic Salmon Research Board

By Video Conference

26 – 29 May 2021

1. Opening of the Meeting

1.1 The Chair, Ciaran Byrne (European Union), opened the meeting and welcomed members of the International Atlantic Salmon Research Board (the Board), their scientific advisers and observers to the video conference.

1.2 The Board had adopted its Agenda, ICR(21)10, (Annex 1) by correspondence on 30 April prior to the inter-sessional correspondence period that ran from 3 – 14 May. Board members had been able to use this inter-sessional correspondence period to consider the documents issued under each Agenda item and ask, and respond to, questions on the various Agenda items. No issues were raised during the inter-sessional correspondence period.

1.3 A list of participants is contained in Annex 2.

2. Election of Officers

2.1 The Board unanimously re-elected Ciaran Byrne as its Chair for a further period of two years, to commence from the close of the 2021 Annual Meeting. Dr Byrne was nominated by the Board member from the United States and seconded by the Board member from Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland).

3. The Review of the Metadatabase of Salmon Survey Data and Sample Collections

3.1 The Board had decided previously that it could play an important role with regard to marine salmon survey data and sample co-ordination by establishing a metadatabase of existing datasets and sample collections of relevance to mortality of salmon at sea. A metadatabase was established in 2014. In 2015, the Board agreed that information on archival scale collections should also be included in the Board's metadatabase. The Board's Scientific Advisory Group (SAG) had noted that these collections may be lost when individual scientists retire, unless appropriate arrangements are in place to archive them and ensure their safe storage so that they may be available for analysis. Even if the scales themselves are not lost, the information accompanying them could be or they could be damaged while in storage. In 2017, it was recognised that the Board could play a role in identifying such scale collections, raising their profile with a view to safeguarding them for future use. The Board agreed that information on these scale collections should, as a first step, be included in the Board's metadatabase. The Board also agreed that information on the West Greenland Sampling Programme Biological Characteristics database should be included in the metadatabase. Accordingly, Parties / jurisdictions were requested to provide details to the Secretariat of any archival scale collections.

3.2 Since the 2020 Annual Meeting, requests to update the metadatabase had been received from European Union – Germany, UK – England and Wales and France (in respect of St Pierre and Miquelon).

3.3 In 2020, the 'Working Group to Review the SALSEA-Track Programme and the Inventory of Research Relating to Salmon Mortality in the Sea' noted that many of the issues it had identified relating to the Inventory, such as relevance and utility, may equally relate to the metadatabase (see ICR(20)07). The Working Group had recommended that the metadatabase be reviewed and consideration be given as to whether other areas of the Board's work require review, and that this review be conducted by the Board. The Board agreed to this recommendation at its 2020 Annual Meeting. The Board had also agreed that:

> '*the timing of the review of should be agreed by the Chair and the Secretary, as and when NASCO business allows. The review will be conducted by correspondence, preferably before the next Annual Meeting of the Board.*'

3.4 In light of ongoing restrictions related to the Covid-19 pandemic and the high NASCO workload, the Chair and the Secretary agreed that the review should take place after the 2021 Annual Meeting, with the Terms of Reference for the review being agreed at the Board's Annual Meeting in 2021.

3.5 The Chair introduced a document containing 'Draft Terms of Reference for the Metadatabase Review', ICR(21)06. The Board member for the United States noted that the Draft Terms of Reference included in document ICR(21)06 focused on enhancing the metadatabase and on making better use of it. He suggested that the first step should be to evaluate the utility of the metadatabase and whether it should be continued. If it is recommended that the metadatabase should continue, then the review should consider ways in which to improve it. 'Revised Draft Terms of Reference for the Metadatabase Review', ICR(21)11, incorporating this suggestion, were tabled and considered by the Board.

3.6 The Board Member for Norway requested clarification of the text in Point 3 of the 'Revised Draft Terms of Reference', ICR(21)11. The Secretary noted that this was a reflection of the language used in the recommendations from the Working Group for the Review of SALSEA-Track and the Inventory of Research, as agreed by the Board at its 2020 Annual Meeting, CNL(20)12.

3.7 The Board adopted 'Terms of Reference for the Metadatabase Review', ICR(21)15 (Annex 3).

3.8 The Chair proposed that a subset of the Board conduct the review. The Board agreed to this proposal, noting that this group should comprise, at a minimum, the Chair and Secretary of the Board and representatives of two Parties. However, all Parties would be able to nominate a representative on the group. An NGO representative could also be nominated to serve on the group. The Board asked the Secretary to seek nominations for representatives on the group following the Annual Meeting.

3.9 The Board member for the UK asked for clarification of the workload anticipated in connection with the review and the process for the review. The Chair indicated that the first step would probably be some correspondence, followed by a virtual meeting or conference call. The Secretary stated that the Secretariat would prepare a background paper for the review, containing information on previous discussions on the metadatabase. She noted that conducting such a review by correspondence would be difficult and that it may better to hold a virtual meeting. The Board member for the United States agreed that it would be better to arrange a series of calls to discuss the review, and that correspondence would not be as efficient. He suggested that it would

be better to have a few calls, several days apart. The Board agreed that the Chair and Secretary would make appropriate arrangements for conducting the review, taking into account the comments made during this discussion.

3.10 The representative of the NGOs noted that the Likely Suspects Framework has been searching for other metadatabases and working with NASCO's Assistant Secretary. He suggested that this may be helpful for the review in terms of what other similar platforms exist.

3.11 The Board agreed that Parties and jurisdictions would not be asked to contribute any information for inclusion in the metadatabase until the conclusion of its review.

4. Review of the 2020 Updated Inventory of Research

4.1 At its 2019 Annual Meeting, the Board agreed to establish a Working Group to review both the Inventory and the SALSEA-Track programme and to consider how the Inventory could be best updated and managed going forward. The 'Working Group to Review the SALSEA-Track Programme and the Inventory of Research Relating to Salmon Mortality in the Sea' met in February 2020 and made several recommendations to the Board (included in the Report of its Meeting, ICR(20)07). The Board adopted these recommendations at its 2020 Annual Meeting. Among the recommendations adopted in relation to the Inventory, the Board agreed that the Secretariat should consider how the utility of the updated website can best be evaluated with the use of hit statistics and related metrics, and that these statistics should be presented to the Board annually to understand the extent to which the Inventory is used.

4.2 The Chair referred to the 'Update on the Board's Website', ICR(21)09. He noted that it was not possible to compare the hit statistics contained within the document with the previous year, as the updated Inventory was uploaded only a few months in advance of the meeting. The Board agreed to revisit this item at its 2022 Annual Meeting.

4.3 The Board member for the UK asked for clarification on how the Missing Salmon Alliance (MSA) Inventory interacts with the Board Inventory, noting that she had updated the MSA Inventory and it is problematic to update in two places. The Chair referred to the Board Inventory review conducted in 2020 and stated that the Working Group had recognised the overlap between both inventories. The Working Group had therefore been very prescriptive about the information it wanted to include in the Board Inventory and asked Parties to provide this. The representative of the NGOs noted that there was a lot of work involved in trying to pull all of the information together, but that the MSA did not want to affect the information going to NASCO. He stated that the MSA is working closely with the NASCO Assistant Secretary to ensure that the NASCO information is included in the MSA Inventory. He indicated that, at present, it is important to keep both inventories updated.

4.4 The Board noted that the Secretary would ask members to update and check the information held in the Inventory relevant to their Party / jurisdiction in November 2021. Board members should return their updates to the Secretariat by 31 December 2021. The Secretariat will post an updated Inventory spreadsheet on the website at the end of January 2022.

5. A Potential Successor to SALSEA-Track

5.1 The 'Working Group to Review the SALSEA-Track Programme and the Inventory of Research Relating to Salmon Mortality in the Sea' (see item 4 above) had recommended that the SALSEA-Track programme, in its current form, should be closed. The Board adopted this recommendation at its 2020 Annual Meeting and agreed that any successor to SALSEA-Track should have the following attributes: be problem focused with a

clearly defined internationally relevant question, which was not solely developed based on the newest technology available; have clear SMART objectives; have clear timelines; have a clear budget; be at the basin-scale; and have an identified owner / co-ordinator. Additionally, it should address issues such as: data gaps / climate change / commonalities across the jurisdictions / mechanisms for supporting new technologies.

5.2 The Chair noted that the SALSEA-Track programme had been closed and referred to the paper entitled 'SALSEA-Track Final Report', ICR(21)04.

5.3 The Chair reminded the Board that the Working Group had proposed that Board members could canvass colleagues on a potential successor to SALSEA-Track if the ROAM programme was not deemed a feasible candidate successor. Additionally, the Board recognised that the process of considering a new programme can happen alongside developments in the ROAM programme. It had been noted that the Board could revisit progress under this Agenda item at its 2021 Annual Meeting. The Secretary had asked Board Members whether they were aware of any potential successor programmes to SALSEA-Track in advance of the 2021 Annual Meeting. In response, a project proposal on 'Developing an International Atlantic Salmon Modelling and Management Initiative' (ISMMI) was provided. Information on this and the ROAM programme was contained in paper 'A Potential Successor to SALSEA-Track', ICR(21)07.

5.4 The Board member for the United States gave a presentation on the ROAM programme, ICR(21)13 (Annex 4).

5.5 Following the presentation, the Board member for the European Union (EU) expressed the EU's excitement and support for the project. He stated that the ROAM programme could be a 'game-changer' in terms of our understanding of where the salmon are and their migratory paths. He hoped that this would provide real value for money in future and asked how the EU could best support the programme. He stated that care would need to be taken as the programme was not just relevant to salmon and it may, therefore, not be possible to guide its direction.

5.6 The Board member for the United States noted that future progress would depend on the field trials that had been delayed, most recently due to the Covid-19 pandemic. If the field trials are successful, the next step will be to look at how the programme can be implemented. If there is a problem during the field trials, they will need to work out why, so there is not much that can be done at present. He noted that the ROAM approach was one component of a larger project being undertaken by the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institute, which is being funded by a $35 million award, so there is strong interest getting the ROAM approach up and running. It is hoped that the field trials will go ahead in July 2021 and all the data would be available by autumn 2021, at which point the next steps for the programme, including a possible workshop, can be considered.

5.7 A representative of Canada asked for clarification on the likely timeline for initiating the programme if the field trials were successful. The Board member for the United States indicated that if all the data were available in autumn 2021, it was hoped that the West Greenland pilot could commence in autumn 2022 or perhaps 2023.

5.8 The representative of Canada indicated that they are conducting a large study focused on the migration pathway of salmon from Canadian rivers until 2025. If the ROAM field trials in 2021 are successful, Canada may be able to support a larger trial in the Labrador Sea, through in-kind support (e.g. purchase of tags for tagging salmon from Canadian rivers). In response to a question from the representative of Canada, the Board member for the United States indicated that at least one receiver would be required for

location information, but three would be best to allow triangulation.

5.9 The Board member for the EU referred to the possibility of a workshop to support the project in autumn 2021. He noted that the Board had previously agreed to allocate funding towards a second ROAM workshop if needed and asked if this funding was still available. He also indicated that the EU would be supportive of the project, including the possibility of tagging fish.

5.10 The Chair confirmed that the funding for a potential second ROAM workshop was still available and asked the Board member for the United States to keep the Board updated on progress with this programme.

5.11 The representative of the NGOs gave a presentation on the ISMMI initiative, ICR(21)12 (Annex 5).

5.12 The Board member for the EU stated that it was interesting to see basin-level influences such as climate change and changes in the ecosystem being brought back in a Decision Support Tool for individual catchments. He indicated that this was very ambitious given the variations between the stocks. He asked how a basin-scale model could be reflected in the management of individual stocks.

5.13 The representative of the NGOs agreed that this was a hugely ambitious initiative and that it was time to start discussions on such an approach. He referred to a paper from the SeaSalar project which will be published shortly, and which updates the work undertaken in relation to SALSEA. SALSEA showed that there are groups of genetically similar regional stocks, and we are now beginning to see patterns where these stocks are located at times in the ocean. He noted that if managers know where their stocks are going in the ocean, and what the prospects are for that part of the ocean, potentially their management goals could be refined accordingly. He indicated that the managers involved with the pilot work have been very keen on getting this kind of information.

5.14 The Board member for the UK agreed that this is a very ambitious project and asked whether, given the paradigm shift proposed in terms of how Atlantic salmon are managed, this should be referred to the Council of NASCO for consideration. She stated that there was a lot included in the proposal and she would like to see a pilot in a more geographically constrained area to see what it means in practice. She felt that further scrutiny and background information was necessary. The representative of the NGOs noted that a pilot project was already planned as part of the Likely Suspects Framework. The pilot will cover an area from the west coast of France to Britain and Ireland, and northwards towards the post-smolt feeding areas, west of Norway. This area benefits from a range of index systems and good background data from the SeaSalar and SALSEA projects.

5.15 The Board member for the EU asked whether it would be useful to ask ICES formally for additional advice on this matter. The representative of the NGOs indicated that ICES was already involved and that a number of joint NASCO / ICES workshops were underway. He stated that there were now 11 very clear hypotheses, and the current focus was on looking at the data relating to these hypotheses. The first step was to ask ICES what data they have available, how these can be accessed and then how best to fit these data into the models. He suggested that the SAG could be asked to consider the technical aspects of the initiative and consider how realistic the prospects are and what the next steps should be, and to advise the Board accordingly.

5.16 The Board member for Canada indicated that he was very supportive of the concept but that the Board would need to know it was going to get somewhere. He agreed that technical advice would be useful. The Board member for the UK agreed that the matter

should be referred to the SAG.

5.17 The Board Member for the United States indicated that this was not an issue for Council as the request was for money to support participants, a workshop and developing a proposal. He indicated that there was no guarantee this concept would be successful as experts had been working on developing an ecosystem approach for many years. He asked what was new in this request that was not already planned under the Likely Suspects Framework.

5.18 The representative of the NGOs indicated that the funding requested was additional to the funding raised for the development of the Likely Suspects Framework. The funding sought from the Board would be used, as outlined in his earlier presentation, for preparatory work in advance of a bid for major research funding to international research funding sources such as the EU Horizon Europe Programme and the Galway Agreement. He stated that the same logic that applied to SALSEA applied to ISMMI; the aim was to encourage many different partners to buy into the initiative.

5.19 The Board member for the EU noted that while the Board had limited funds available to it, funders, other than NASCO Parties, could provide funding through the Board such as has been done for the SMOLTrack projects and ROAM.

5.20 The representative of the NGOs indicated that endorsement could be key in developing a larger project. He asked if the proposal could be referred to the SAG for a technical evaluation of the project. The Board could then make a decision on endorsing the project, which the NGO representative stated would be helpful in seeking external funding. He also encouraged Parties to consider donating to the development of the funding request.

5.21 The Board agreed that it would refer the proposal to the SAG. The Chair and Secretary would prepare Draft Terms of Reference for the SAG's evaluation of the proposal, which would be agreed inter-sessionally by the Board. The Board noted that individual SAG members could consult with other relevant experts on this evaluation. The SAG would be asked to address their Terms of Reference and report their technical evaluation to the Board. The Board would then consider this evaluation. The Board agreed that, if necessary, a virtual inter-sessional meeting of the Board could be arranged.

6. Projects of Interest to the Board and its Work

6.1 At its 2020 Annual Meeting, the Board agreed to retain an Agenda item focused on projects where NASCO has some ownership (such as the EU-funded projects, the SALSEA-Track successor and the Likely Suspects Framework) and that if SAG and Board members knew of other relevant projects, those researchers could be invited to contribute information. The Board had asked the Secretary to provide updates on the first category of projects (i.e. where NASCO has some ownership), and, through the Board and SAG members, to seek information on new and emerging projects that would be of interest to the Board and its work.

6.2 The Chair referred to the document entitled 'Projects of Interest to the Board and its work', ICR(21)08, which contained updates for 2021 on the ongoing projects funded under the European Union's 'Grants for an Action' (SMOLTrack III: 'Quantifying smolt survival from source to sea: informing management strategies to optimise returns', and SMOLTrack IV: 'Quantifying salmon survival from river exit to return as adult: Collecting thermal and behavioural data to refine smolt to adult survival indices') and the Likely Suspects Framework project. No details of other projects that fall within the

scope of the Board's activities, or that are not already listed in the Board's Research Inventory, had been provided.

6.3 The Chair thanked the contributors for the information provided.

7. Finance and Administrative Issues

7.1 The Chair referred to the Board's 2020 accounts, ICR(21)03. The decision had been taken to have the 2020 accounts audited. The total value of the International Atlantic Salmon Research Fund as at 31 December 2020 was £541,373. Of the Funds available at the end of 2020, £449,827 was grant funding from the European Union in the Euro account and £91,546 was the pounds sterling account balance. Of the £91,546, £41,910was a voluntary contribution from Canada in 2020 and £40,150 was a voluntary contribution from the United States in 2019. Thus, £82,060 of the £91,546 in the pounds sterling account was ring-fenced funding. In 2018 the Board had agreed to make a sum of up to £4,000 of the Board's funds available towards a second ROAM workshop if needed. This money is yet to be spent. The Board had previously indicated that it was desirable to retain a reserve of £4,000 - £5,000.

7.2 The Board agreed to accept the 2020 audited accounts.

7.3 At its 2006 Annual Meeting, the Board recognised that it was not necessary to have the accounts audited annually and agreed that, in future, the Board's accounts should be audited as required in relation to the funds held. For years in which an audit is not conducted, details of the Board's income and expenditure statements would be circulated to the members of the Board and discussed at its Annual Meeting.

7.4 The Board decided not to have its 2021 accounts audited. The Secretary was asked to provide income and expenditure statements.

8. Other Business

8.1 The Board member for the UK referred to a potential development of a new North Atlantic SNP baseline and asked if this was something that could be referred to the SAG. She agreed to provide further background information on this SNP baseline. TheChair noted that it is likely that there would be an Inter-Sessional Meeting of the Board and suggested that this could be discussed at that meeting. The Board member for the UK agreed to this suggestion.

9. Report of the Meeting

9.1 The Board agreed a report of its meeting.

10. Date and Place of the Next Meeting

10.1 The Board agreed to hold its next Annual Meeting in advance of the Thirty-Ninth Annual Meeting of NASCO.

10.2 The Board member for the United States noted that the Board is often rushed in its work and suggested that meeting over two days at future Annual Meetings may be more efficient. The Secretary agreed to investigate options for scheduling a second meeting of the Board at future Annual Meetings.

11. Close of the Meeting

11.1 The Chair thanked participants for their contributions and closed the meeting.

ICR(21)10

Twentieth Meeting of the International Atlantic Salmon Research Board

By Video Conference

26 May & 28 May 2021

Agenda

1. Opening of the Meeting
2. Election of Officers
3. The Review of the Metadatabase of Salmon Survey Data and Sample Collections
4. Review of the 2020 Updated Inventory of Research
5. A Potential Successor to SALSEA-Track
6. Projects of Interest to the Board and its Work
7. Finance and Administrative Issues
8. Other Business
9. Report of the Meeting
10. Date and Place of the Next Meeting
11. Close of the Meeting

2021 Board Meeting List of Participants

Canada
**Tony Blanchard
*Martha Robertson
Julien April
Doug Bliss
Cindy Breau
Natalie Her
Isabelle Morisset
Justin Turple

Denmark (In respect of the Faroe Islands & Greenland)
**Maria Strandgård Rasmussen

European Union
Ciaran Byrne (Chair)
**Cathal Gallagher
Ida Ahlbeck Bergendahl
Jaakko Erkinaro
Ignacio Granell
Arnaud Peyronnet

Norway
**Raoul Bierach
*Helge Dyrendal
Peder Fiske

Russian Federation
**Alexander Khatuntsov
*Sergey Prusov
Kristina Belogurova
Alexander Lizogub

United Kingdom
**Nora Hanson
Simon Toms
Alan Walker

United States
**Tim Sheehan
*Dan Kircheis

IGOs
Laura Poinsot
Mark Saunders

NGOs
Ken Whelan (Nominated NGO Representative)
Dave Meerburg
Nigel Milner

Secretariat
Emma Hatfield
Wendy Kenyon
Louise Forero Segovia

**Nominated Board Member
*Board Adviser

ICR(21)15

Terms of Reference for the Review of the Metadatabase of Salmon Survey Data and Sample Collections

1. A Working Group reporting to the Board is established with the following high-level objectives:
   a. Consider the relevance and utility of the Metadatabase of Salmon Survey Data and Sample Collections (the Metadatabase)

   In the event that the Working Group recommends that the Metadatabase continue to be maintained:

   b. Propose a future course for the Metadatabase by considering a full range of options, to increase its relevance and utility;
   c. Consider how the Metadatabase could be better managed and presented.
2. In carrying out the objectives in paragraph one, the Working Group will:
   a. Review the relevance and utility of the entries in the Metadatabase;
   b. Review the processes related to the Metadatabase, including:
      i. The process for maintaining and providing annual updates;
      ii. The process of advertising to, or sharing the resource with, non-NASCO salmon researchers; and
      iii. Propose modifications to procedures and tools related to the Metadatabase;
   c. Propose ways to enhance awareness of the Metadatabase, to encourage greater use.
3. The Working Group should also consider whether other areas of the Board's work require review.

The Working Group should take into account the following documents and information:

- ICR(17)7, Report of the Sixteenth Meeting of the International Atlantic Salmon ResearchBoard;
- SAG(15)7, Report of the Meeting of the Scientific Advisory Group of the International Atlantic Salmon Research Board;
- ICR(12)4, Progress in Developing a Metadatabase of Salmon Survey Data and Sample Collections of Relevance to Mortality of Salmon at Sea; and
- ICR(11)4, Interim Report of the IASRB Working Group on Marine Salmon Survey Dataand Sample Collection.

ICR(21)13

ROAM update

Timothy Sheehan

NEFSC

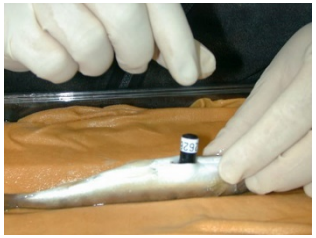
May 26, 2021

Electronic tagging technologies

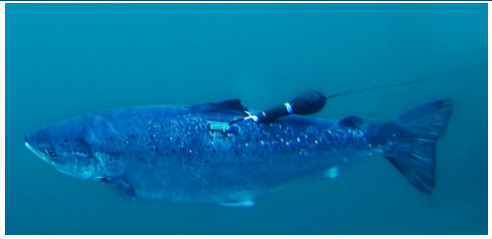
- Have advanced our understanding of the marine ecology for many species, including Atlantic salmon

- Two primary/contemporary tools used for Atlantic salmon:
  - Ultrasonic acoustic tags (acoustic tags)
    - Since 1994
    - Tag emits a signal that receivers detect and record

  - Pop off Satellite tags (PSAT)
    - Since 2008
    - Geo-positioning from collected data (temperature, depth, light, magnetic fields, etc.)



A Few Pros and Cons



Acoustic

- Small tag size
- Precise locations
- Predation events
- Impacts considered minimal

- Limited tag life
- Small receiver detection radius
- Data from monitored areas
- Monitoring large expansive areas is logistically and economically challenging

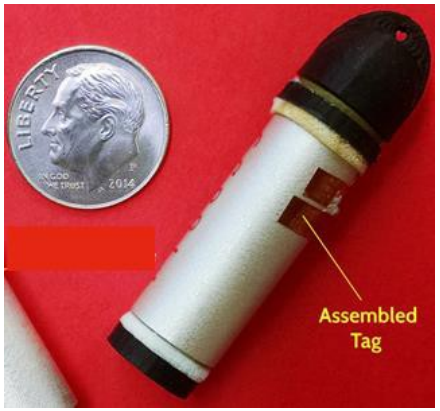
PSAT

- Long-term deployment
- Continuous data collection
- '*Daily precise*' locations
- Predation events

- Large tag size
- Impacts on behaviour
- Behaviour may be incompatible with data requirements
- Sub-set of data informative
- Imprecise location estimates

ROAM (RAFOS Ocean Acoustic Monitoring) tag

- Evolution of a common oceanographic monitoring tool
  - Modification and miniaturization



- Overview:
  - Moored sound sources deployed in the ocean
    - 10-year life span
  - A hydrophone is incorporated into the fish tag
  - Daily precise estimates of tag position via triangulation (± 1 km^2)
  - Temperature and depth data also collected by tag
  - Archive (*smolt*) and pop-off satellite (*adults and sub-adults*) tags are being developed

Timeline

2017

- 1st presented to IASRB

2018

- Workshop (June 7-8, 27 participants)
  - Bronger and Sheehan (2019) http://www.nefsc.noaa.gov/publications/
  - Approach holds promise
  - Significant challenges/unknowns remain
  - Questions on permitting
  - Fields trials a significant next step
- Update provided to IASRB
  - Continued support and interest
  - IASRB funds earmarked £4,000 for 2nd workshop
  - Interest expressed to seek domestic funding

2019

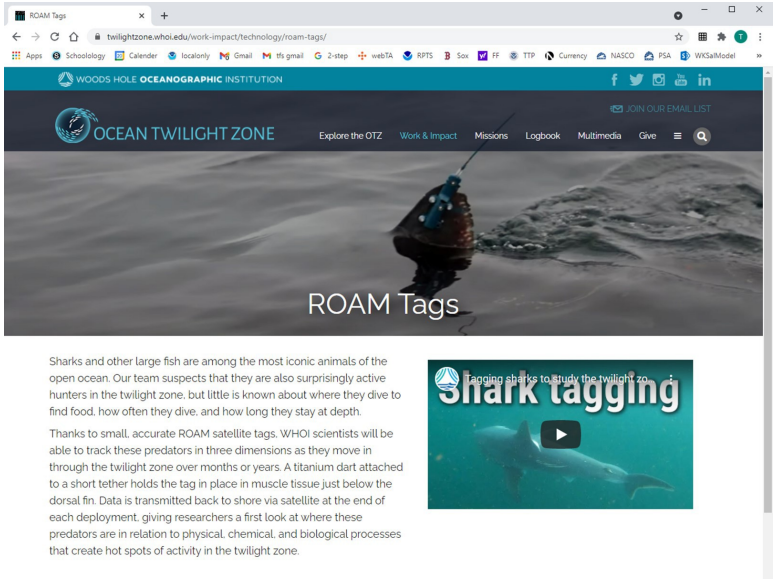
- 1st ROAM 'salmon' sound source fabricated
- Tags
  - Delays in pressure sensor delivery/proto-tag fabrication
  - 2nd and 3rd generation tags planned/pursued
    - PSAT housing, increase sensor capabilities, dual frequency
- Field trials
  - Delayed to incorporate commercial proto-types
  - Fall 2019 - cancelled due to logical issues
  - New target – summer 2020
- Permitting (U.S.)
  - No mammal concerns, permit obtained

2020

- Field trial piggy-back on July survey
  - Sound source deployment, range testing with ship and performance evaluation with glider
- Corona
- Field trial canceled

2021

- Primary Investigators still keen to pursue
  - ROAM is integral to the *Ocean Twilight Zone* project (https://twilightzone.whoi.edu/)



- Advances with tag development/production
  - Vemco and Wildlife Computers still pursuing
  - Necessary components in hand
  - Multi-frequency ROAM tag being developed
    - Will increase the versatility (e.g. variable range, fw/sw)

- Marine surveys resumed, but at reduced staff making piggy-backing difficult
  - Pursuing an opportunity for July 2021
  - Collaborators working to secure commitments, ship time and glider support

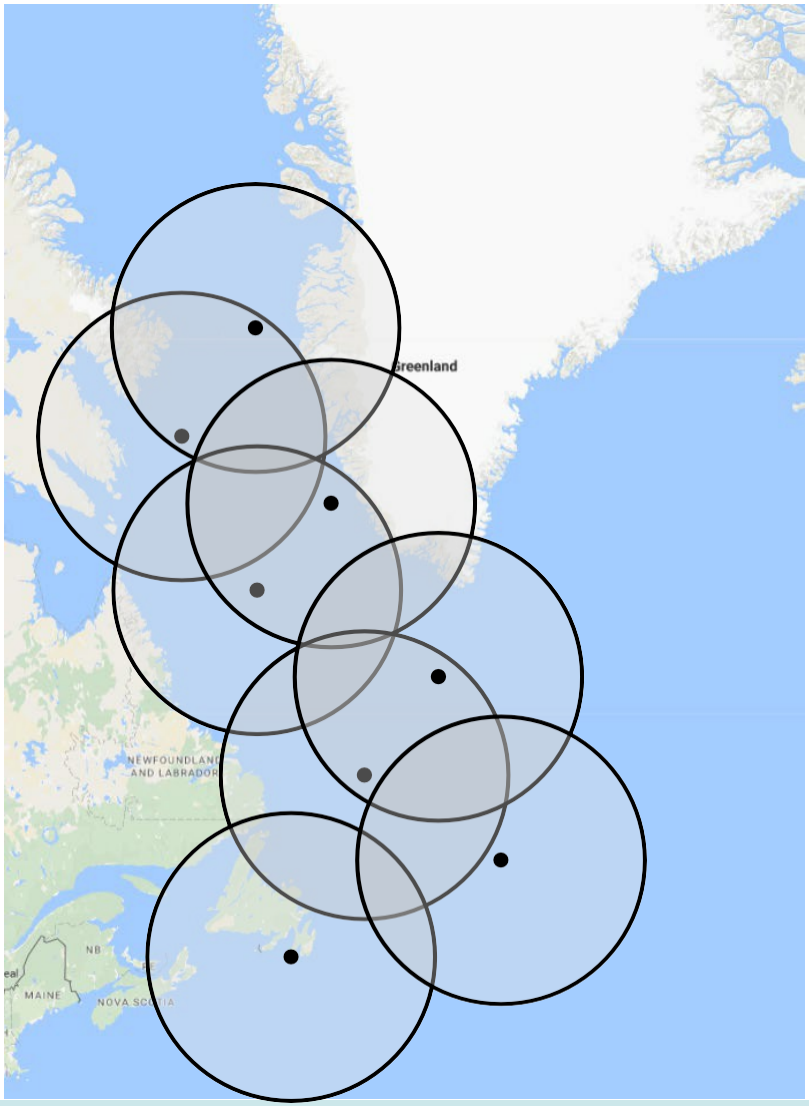
- Great Lakes project being considered

RAFOS Ocean Acoustic Monitoring (ROAM)

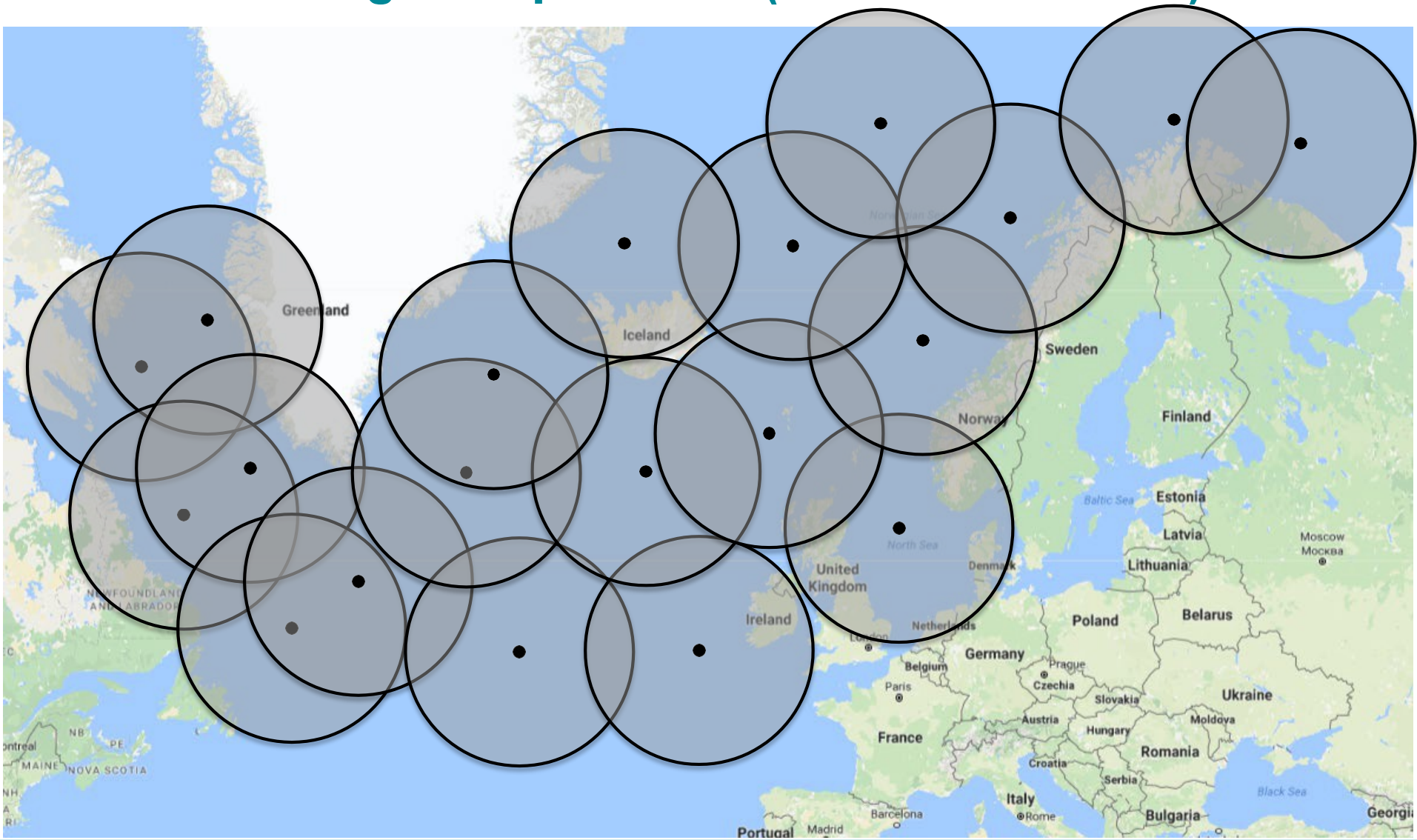
- Offers the potential to accurately track further out to sea throughout the marine stage than previously able
  - New use for an old technology
  - Different tag types allow for different research approaches
  - Overall cheaper cost
  - Field testing is needed

- Prime for within and cross-basin multi-species collaborations

Greenland Sub-adult PSAT Tracking



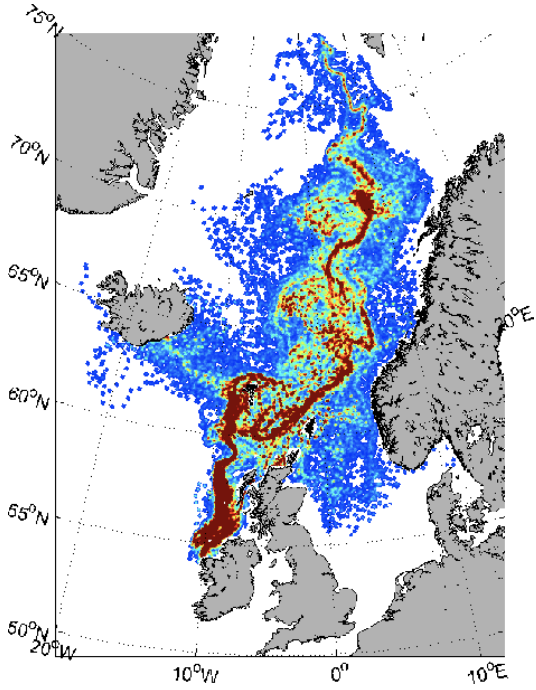
Basin wide/global potential (~2-4 million USD)



ICR(21)12

Developing an International Atlantic Salmon Modelling and Management Initiative (ISMMI)

Ken Whelan, Colin Bull, Walter Crozier, Etienne Prévost, Etienne Rivot , Matthieu Buoro



A Successor for SALSEA Track - A Vision

- International salmon conservation and management must move beyond the provision of catch advice, based on single-species, to a vision encompassing the whole salmon ecosystem
- Aligned with the provision of a new, management guidance/advice formats, addressing the salmon's wider needs

- ***International Atlantic Salmon Modelling and Management Initiative (ISMMI)***

Development of a major international funding bid to initiate, develop and support the building of an ecosystem-based management system for Atlantic salmon

What is ISMMI?

- **An initiative which will assist linking model development, mobilised data resources and prioritised research programmes to advance stock assessment and management efforts**

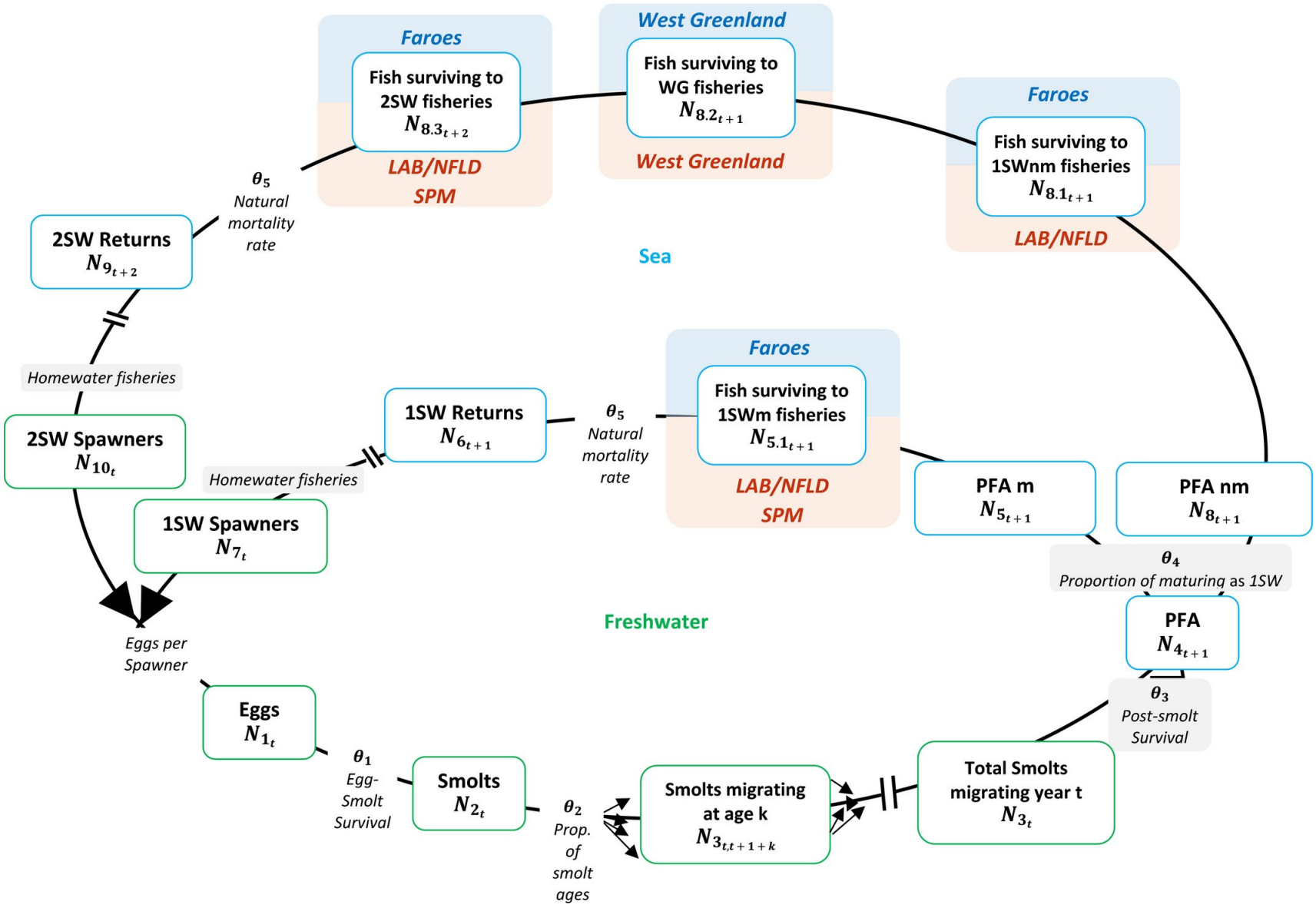
- A one-year pilot study to begin in 2022.
- Concurrently building an international consortium bid, spanning the three NASCO Commission areas, for a four-year science project (2023-2026) to develop the modelling and advice frameworks.

- 1. Further Development of Decision Support Tools for Managers
- 2. Alignment of Existing Salmon Stock Assessment and Management Models
- 3. **Ecosystems Based Approach to Salmon Management**
- 4.Developing an Atlantic, basin-wide, international funding bid

Background to ISMMI Proposal

- Improved advice and guidance to ICES and NASCO must be capable of tackling the urgent and fast moving challenges facing salmon populations for the remainder of this century
- ICES Atlantic salmon advice must become more closely aligned with an ecosystems-based approach. Stock assessment methodology for salmon will require: further model development, assessment of potential indicators, and benchmarking
- NASCO/ IASRB has actively supported the Likely Suspects Framework, NASCO /ICES advisory group (WGNAS) has supported the Life Cycle Model (LCM): How best to integrate and benefit from the results of these two programmes?
- ISMMI facilitates enhanced linkage and alignment between programmes, directly supporting the work of WGNAS and assisting future benchmarking of Atlantic salmon assessments.

The Life Cycle Model

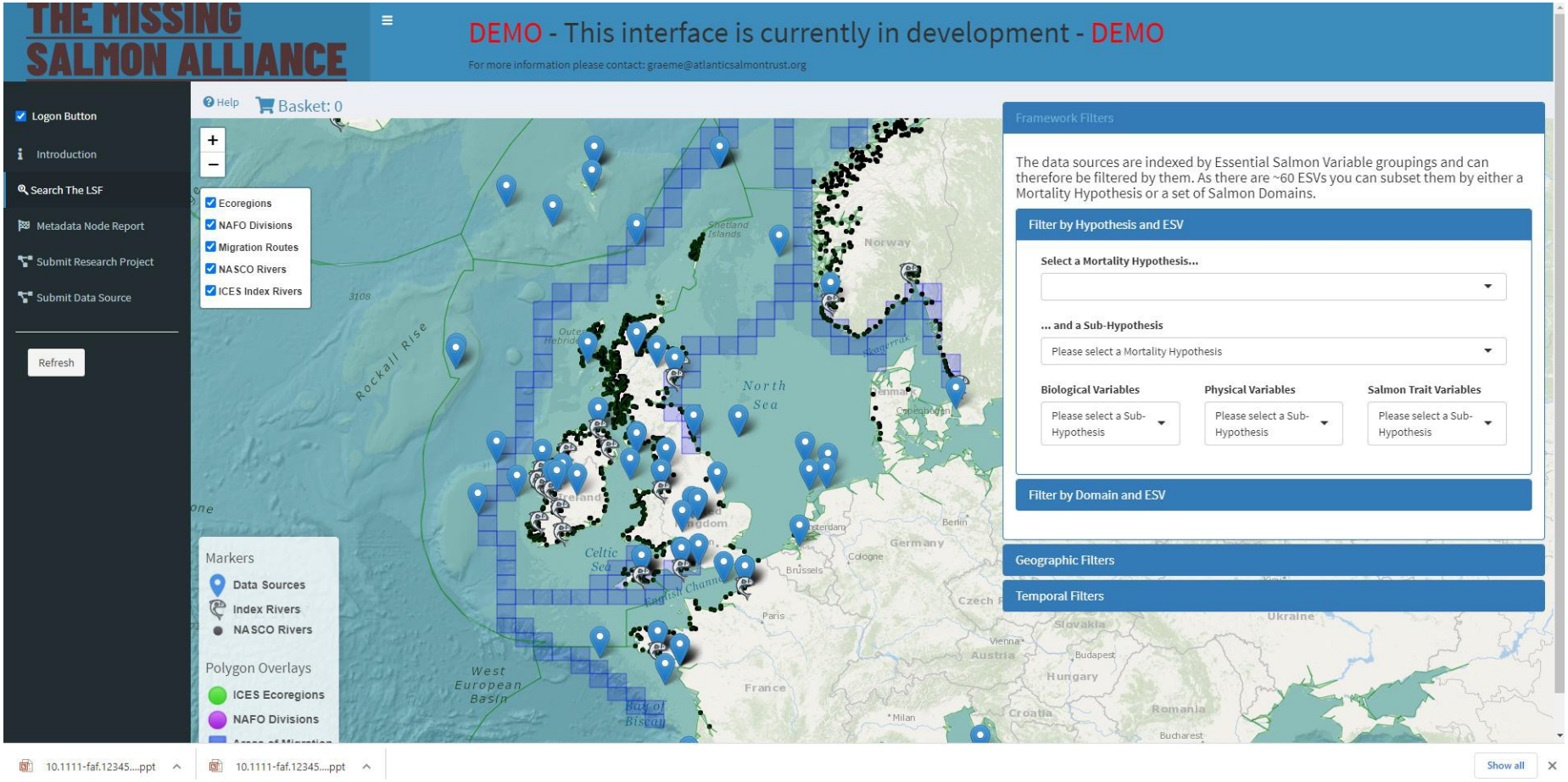


WK SalModel

WGNAS-SalmoGlob ToolBox
A ToolBox for supporting Atlantic salmon stock assessment at the North Atlantic basin scale

7 January 2021, remote

Pierre-Yves HERNVANN,
Rémi PATIN,
Maxime OLMOS, Jérôme GUITTON, Marie-Pierre ETIENNE,
Maéva LABOUYRIE, Léa BEZIER,
Etienne RIVOT


THE MISSING SALMON ALLIANCE
DEMO - This interface is currently in development - DEMO
For more information please contact: graeme@atlanticsalmontrust.org
Logon Button
Introduction
Search The LSF
Metadata Node Report
Submit Research Project
Submit Data Source
Refresh
Help
Basket: 0
Ecoregions
NAFO Divisions
Migration Routes
NASCO Rivers
ICES Index Rivers
Framework Filters
The data sources are indexed by Essential Salmon Variable groupings and can therefore be filtered by them. As there are ~60 ESVs you can subset them by either a Mortality Hypothesis or a set of Salmon Domains.
Filter by Hypothesis and ESV
Select a Mortality Hypothesis...
... and a Sub-Hypothesis
Please select a Mortality Hypothesis
Biological Variables
Physical Variables
Salmon Trait Variables
Please select a Sub-Hypothesis
Filter by Domain and ESV
Geographic Filters
Temporal Filters
Markers
Data Sources
Index Rivers
NASCO Rivers
Polygon Overlays
ICES Ecoregions
NAFO Divisions
Rockall Rise
North Sea
Celtic Sea
West European Basin
Bay of Biscay
Norway
Germany
France
Austria
Hungary
Slovakia
Ukraine
Romania
Croatia
Paris
Brussels
Berlin
Vienna
Budapest
Bucharest
Milan
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Show all

1. Further Development of Decision Support Tools

Improved engagement with salmon management at all levels. Assist with translation of new model outputs better aligned to salmon management needs.

Specific

To provide a User Interface (UI) Decision Support Tool

Measureable

Quantifiable use-data and metrics from engagement with UI Interface

Achievable

Phase 1 development of UI underway and technical expertise within network of proposers

Relevant

Salmon managers need better access to good management advice and forecasting tools

Time bound

A functional UI to provide decision support is deliverable within 1 year, with iterative revision and refinement necessary via continued management

Budget

£12K

- ”Ask the Managers”
- Understand the needs of the managers
- Align outputs from ISMMI with management needs
- Contribution to support participation in workshops and meetings

2. Alignment of Existing Salmon Stock Assessment and Management Models

Improve biological realism in existing models

Specific

Model evaluation and refinement to increase biological realism

Measureable

Documented revisions and evolution of modelling programmes

Achievable

Functional models exist and expertise within networks of proposers

Relevant

Recognised limitations in current modelling frameworks are addressed

Time bound

Development of specified elements within one year

Budget

£15k

- Fundamental to future work of WGNAS and alignment with ICES
- Ensure that output formally written up and is citable
- Contribution towards ensuring involvement of key players

3. Ecosystems Based Approach to Salmon Management

Progress towards the Development of an Ecosystems based approach that guides future modelling work

Specific

Development of IEA strategy and ecosystem indicators evaluation

Measureable

Conduct comparison between outputs from current stock assessment methods and developing IEA approach

Achievable

Multiple examples of developing IEA approach and expertise within ICES networks

Relevant

An Ecosystem-based management system which addresses current challenges and future requirements

Time bound

Initial IEA development will be to assemble and assess potential indicators in year 1

Budget

£35K

- Fundamental change - from a catch based management model to an ecosystem model
- No manual on how to do this!
- Manage the transition process: data access, data mobilisation, refinement of indicators.
- Contribution towards travel costs to technical workshops
- To increase participation at WKSalmon 3 workshop

4. Developing and Preparing an Atlantic, basin-wide, international funding bid

Develop a comprehensive bid to support ISMMI and the roll out of a 5-year strategic science plan for Atlantic salmon management

Specific

The production and submission of an international funding bid

Measureable

Bid development provides identifiable research consortium and content will provide transferable resources/models

Achievable

Previous track record of proposers. Key groups and individuals are well integrated within proposers' networks assisting bid development

Relevant

International collaboration behind an agreed vision is required to address the scale of challenges facing Atlantic salmon

Time bound

Bid development and submission completed within 1 year

Budget

£34K

Employ a project bid developer - contribution towards salary and travel costs for 12 months

Develop IASRB Plan ~ similar to SALSEA – shared between Parties and research partners

IASRB - Relevant TOR's

The Board will seek to advance an International Atlantic Salmon Research Programme **into the causes of marine mortality of Atlantic salmon and the opportunities to counteract this mortality** through the following activities:

- Identifying research needs
- Providing a forum for co-ordination of relevant research efforts by the Contracting Parties of NASCO
- Establishing terms and conditions for soliciting, evaluating, approving and funding relevant research projects
- Funding approved projects and reviewing results in relation to the objectives of the Programme
- Endorsing projects that are consistent with the objectives of the Programme

Board Request

We believe that the ISMMI Initiative, as detailed in the full proposal presented to the Board, fulfils the criteria agreed at the 2020 meeting of the Board for a successor to SALSEA Track

- *be problem focused, with a clearly defined internationally relevant question, which is not solely developed based on the newest technology available*
- *have clear SMART objectives*
- *have clear timelines*
- *have a clear budget*
- *be at the basin-scale*
- *have an identified owner / co-ordinator – (Phase 1, MSA; Phase 2 – 5 Year Project / IASRB Plan – research partners)*

Additionally, it should address issues such as:

- *data gaps*
- *climate change*
- *commonalities across the jurisdictions*
- *mechanisms for supporting new technologies*

*Funding sought - **£96k** for year 1 of the project*

*Matching the LSF budget for 2021 / 2022 of £200k, INRAE / L'Institut Agro Budget of £85 and the ECOBIO budget of £175k **– total £460k***

18% of the total 2021 / 2022 Budget

Annex 12

CNL(21)14

Request for Scientific Advice from ICES

1. With respect to Atlantic salmon in the North Atlantic area:

1.1 provide an overview of salmon catches and landings by country, including unreported catches and catch and release, and production of farmed and ranched Atlantic salmon in 2021[1];

1.2 report on significant new or emerging threats to, or opportunities for, salmon conservation and management[2];

1.3 provide an update on the distribution and abundance of pink salmon across the North Atlantic and advise on potential threats to wild Atlantic salmon;

1.4 provide an overview of the East Greenland stock complex in terms of migration, stock composition, biological characteristics, historical landings, effort etc.;

1.5 provide a compilation of tag releases by country in 2021; and

1.6 identify relevant data deficiencies, monitoring needs and research requirements;

2. With respect to Atlantic salmon in the North-East Atlantic Commission area:

2.1 describe the key events of the 2021 fisheries[3];

2.2 review and report on the development of age-specific stock conservation limits, including updating the time-series of the number of river stocks with established CLs by jurisdiction;

2.3 describe the status of the stocks, including updating the time-series of trends in the number of river stocks meeting CLs by jurisdiction;

2.4 provide catch options or alternative management advice for the 2022/2023 - 2024/2025 fishing seasons, with an assessment of risks relative to the objective of exceeding stock conservation limits, or pre-defined NASCO Management Objectives, and advise on the implications of these options for stock rebuilding[4]; and

2.5 update the Framework of Indicators used to identify any significant change in the previously provided multi-annual management advice.

3. With respect to Atlantic salmon in the North American Commission area:

3.1 describe the key events of the 2021 fisheries (including the fishery at St Pierre and Miquelon)[3];

3.2 update age-specific stock conservation limits based on new information as available, including updating the time-series of the number of river stocks with established CLs by jurisdiction;

3.3 describe the status of the stocks, including updating the time-series of trends in the number of river stocks meeting CLs by jurisdiction;

3.4 provide catch options or alternative management advice for 2022-2025 with an assessment of risks relative to the objective of exceeding stock conservation limits, or

pre-defined NASCO Management Objectives, and advise on the implications of these options for stock rebuilding[4]; and

3.5 update the Framework of Indicators used to identify any significant change in the previously provided multi-annual management advice.

4. With respect to Atlantic salmon in the West Greenland Commission area:

4.1 describe the key events of the 2021 fisheries[3];

4.2 describe the status of the stocks[5];

4.3 provide catch options or alternative management advice for 2022-2024 with an assessment of risk relative to the objective of exceeding stock conservation limits, or pre-defined NASCO Management Objectives, and advise on the implications of these options for stock rebuilding[4]; and

4.4 update the Framework of Indicators used to identify any significant change in the previously provided multi-annual management advice.

Notes:

1. *With regard to question 1.1, for the estimates of unreported catch the information provided should, where possible, indicate the location of the unreported catch in the following categories: in-river; estuarine; and coastal. Numbers of salmon caught and released in recreational fisheries should be provided.*
2. *With regard to question 1.2, ICES is requested to include reports on any significant advances in understanding of the biology of Atlantic salmon that is pertinent to NASCO.*
3. *In the responses to questions 2.1, 3.1 and 4.1, ICES is asked to provide details of catch, gear, effort, composition and origin of the catch and rates of exploitation. For homewater fisheries, the information provided should indicate the location of the catch in the following categories: in-river; estuarine; and coastal. Information on any other sources of fishing mortality for salmon is also requested. For 4.1, if any new surveys are conducted and reported to ICES, ICES should review the results and advise on the appropriateness of incorporating resulting estimates into the assessment process.*
4. *In response to questions 2.4, 3.4 and 4.3, provide a detailed explanation and critical examination of any changes to the models used to provide catch advice and report on any developments in relation to incorporating environmental variables in these models. Also provide a detailed explanation and critical examination of any concerns with salmon data collected in 2021 which may affect the catch advice considering the restrictions on data collection programmes and fisheries due to the COVID 19 pandemic.*
5. *In response to question 4.2, ICES is requested to provide a brief summary of the status of North American and North-East Atlantic salmon stocks. The detailed information on the status of these stocks should be provided in response to questions 2.3 and 3.3.*

Attendees:

Sergey Prusov (NEAC, manager representative)

Peder Fiske (NEAC, scientist representative)

Tony Blanchard (NAC, manager representative)

Tim Sheehan (NAC, scientist representative)

Maria Strandgård Rasmussen (WGC, manager representative)

Niall Ó Maoiléidigh (WGC, scientist representative)

Dennis Ensing (ICES representative, Observer)

Patrick Gargan (Co-ordinator)

New questions, originator:

- 1.3 (EU)
- 1.4 (US)

Annex 13

Comments from Norway and the European Union following the 2021 Theme-Based Special Session

Comments from Norway on draft recommendation 2.b) from the TBSS Steering Committee

The representative of Norway proposed that, for any statement to be issued by the Council of NASCO, the text in the Steering Committee's draft recommendation 2.b) could be modified as follows, to focus the statement to be in line with the TBSS theme:

> *state that any Implementation Plan that is not in line with NASCO's Resolutions, Agreements and Guidelines, relevant to salmon? farming, and any action that will not clearly and substantially move the relevant Party or jurisdiction towards achieving NASCO's goals, cannot be accepted as satisfactory by NASCO.*

Additionally, he proposed that the Secretariat could add in a preamble referring to NASCO's relevant Resolutions, Agreements and Guidelines to strengthen the statement.

Proposed text from the European Union for a statement on salmon farming

The representative of the European Union proposed the following text for possible inclusion on a statement on salmon farming by Council:

> *Parties/Jurisdictions should consider adopting a policy of phasing out open net pen salmon aquaculture over a specified period or licence term and restrict any new licences to those utilising alternative technologies in order to make significant progress towards achievement of the International Goals for sea lice and containment. This policy should be prioritised in sensitive areas such as the estuaries of NASCO Class I salmon rivers or salmon rivers in Special Areas of Conservation and other protected areas and along salmon migration routes.*

Annex 14

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Question & Answer Session held during the Special Session on the Evaluation of the Annual Progress Reports under the 2019 – 2024 Implementation Plans

Paul Knight (Salmon and Trout Conservation, UK): it would be good to hear from Parties / jurisdictions regarding what they thought about the way the Review Group worked. From an NGO point of view, we felt that some of the APRs [Annual Progress Reports] were overly verbose… I think the NGOs feel that if the IP / APRs were more succinct and actually aimed at genuine wild fish protection, which is what we are all about, it would be a lot easier. We would be very interested to hear from Parties / jurisdictions whether they thought their evaluations were fair / unfair. What is their general feedback? It would be really useful, as a Review Group, to hear that.

Raoul Bierach (Norway): thanks, Cathal for the presentation and also to the Review Group for their work. In response to Paul, I think all the work done by the Review Group was good and, in our case, we got some really good feedback which is helpful for us to improve our report in coming years. I think you have done a good job. We look forward to future reviews and doing better.

Ruth Allin (United Kingdom): the UK would also like to thank the Review Group for all their efforts. We found the process very helpful in terms of bringing focus and we felt that the feedback was fair and valuable. We liked the fact that things that had been done well were highlighted. In that sense it was good for sharing good practice.

Kim Damon-Randall (United States): all I wanted to say is that I agree with the comments from my colleagues in Norway and the UK and thank the Review Group for all their great work.

Ignacio Granell (European Union): I just want to echo the previous speakers' comments, I think the Review Group has done an amazing job reviewing all those reports. Thank you very much on behalf of the European Union.

Doug Bliss (Canada): thank you Cathal and the Review Group for all of your work on the reviews.

Serge Doucet (President): I would also like to echo the Parties / NGOs in thanking Cathal as Chair and the members of the Review Group for all their very important work and for the hours they have spent on this.

Annex 15

Statement to Council from the International Salmon Farmers Association

Thank you Mr President and Council

On behalf of Mr Trond Davidsen, the President of the International Salmon Farmers Association (ISFA), and its member countries I want to sincerely thank you all for allowing me to participate again this year, this is my second year. Like last year, it has been an absolute honour and privilege to be able to represent the International Salmon Farming community at this year's NASCO meeting.

In particular, Mr President, I would like to thank you and the steering committee on the Theme-based Special Session for the opportunity to participate both as a panellist and a presenter and I'm hoping that your delegates at NASCO in general have a better understanding of the current status of the industry and of course, of the significant progress that has been made and continues to be made in relation to such things as technological advancements in areas of course such as sea lice control and management and obviously containment, which were the two main topics of the international goals that were discussed during the TBSS.

I'll close with this Mr President, so to be amongst fellow conservationists and environmentalists and salmon enthusiasts is always a privilege and again thank you for the opportunity to allow me to join. This liaison between our industry and NASCO has been long-standing and we want to certainly continue that. I assure you that from Mr Trond Davidsen, who I spoke to last evening, ISFA and its member countries look forward to working with you Mr President and your council and the steering committees that are involved within NASCO. If you ever need to reach out at anytime between now and the next meeting, certainly I can be available or Mr Trond Davidsen would certainly be available as well. So again on that, I have already sent notification of the steering committee's recommendations and that will be tabled and put on the agenda at the next ISFA meeting and I look forward to updating you again next year, potentially, on that.

So, with that Mr President, I'll end and turn it back to you. Thank you.