

APR43.086

10 June 2016

Mr. Victor Escobar
Chairman
The OSPAR Commission
Victoria House
37-63 Southampton Row
London
WC1B 4DA
United Kingdom



Dear Mr Escobar

On behalf of the Council of North Atlantic Salmon Conservation Organization (NASCO), I am writing with regard to the invitation from your Organization to provide input on the 'Draft OSPAR Recommendation 2016/XX on furthering the protection and conservation of the Atlantic salmon (*Salmo salar*) in Regions I, II, III, and IV of the OSPAR maritime area' dated 28 April 2016 (HOD 16/2/2 Add.2). We appreciate your efforts to coordinate with us on this issue of mutual interest, as we had requested and as envisioned by our Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) adopted in 2013. We understand that the Draft Recommendation will be presented for adoption at the OSPAR Commission's 2016 Annual Meeting, which commences on June 20.

NASCO has just concluded its 2016 Annual Meeting at which the Draft Recommendation was considered. We greatly appreciated the attendance, at part of our meeting, of your Secretary and the clarification he provided that the OSPAR Commission's intention is to complement and support NASCO's actions. In reviewing the proposal, the Council recognised the considerable work that has gone into revising the document over the course of the last year, including changes aimed at addressing the concerns NASCO conveyed to you in our letter dated 4 June 2015. In considering its feedback, the Council noted that its primary interest is that the document:

(1) clearly articulate the respective and distinct competences of NASCO and the OSPAR Commission so that there is no ambiguity or misunderstanding regarding the roles and responsibilities of our two Organizations as articulated in our MOU and in accordance with our respective Conventions. Specifically, the document should reflect NASCO's primary role as the RFMO charged with the conservation, restoration, enhancement and rational management of salmon stocks throughout their range in the North Atlantic Ocean whilst indicating the OSPAR Commission's complementary role in taking measures to

protect the marine environment in the North-East Atlantic from adverse effects of human activities to safeguard human health, conserve marine ecosystems and their biological diversity and, where practicable, restore marine areas that have been adversely affected.

(2) reflect relevant, factually correct information about NASCO and its work, including recognition of measures and actions taken by NASCO and its Parties to implement the objectives of the Convention.

Recognising the revisions that have already been made by the OSPAR Commission to incorporate earlier comments by NASCO in the current version of the Draft Recommendation, we have suggested a few additional revisions to the text to improve its clarity and better reflect the interests set forth above. These are presented in line in/line out form in the attached Annex.

Finally, the Council wished me to underscore that the feedback provided on this OSPAR Commission proposal should not be interpreted as agreement on, endorsement of, or support for its contents. We have taken note of the Draft Recommendation, and furthermore, we are interested in being apprised of its final disposition and of any actions of relevance to NASCO's work that may flow from its implementation consistent with our MOU. NASCO, however, is not expressing any policy position regarding the proposal as a whole or any element within it.

Thank you again for the opportunity to comment on the Draft Recommendation. We look forward to an update on this matter after the close of the OSPAR Commission's Annual Meeting.

Yours sincerely,



Steinar Hermansen
President of NASCO

cc: the OSPAR Commission Secretary

Annex

NASCO suggested edits to excerpted paragraphs of the 'Draft OSPAR Recommendation 2016/XX on furthering the protection and conservation of the Atlantic salmon (*Salmo salar*) in Regions I, II, III, and IV of the OSPAR maritime area' dated 28 April 2016 (HOD 16/2/2 Add.2).

Affected Preambular Paragraphs:

13. Noting that under Article 2 of the Convention for the Conservation of Salmon in the North Atlantic Ocean, fishing for Atlantic salmon is prohibited beyond areas of fisheries jurisdiction of coastal States and within areas of fisheries jurisdiction beyond 12 nautical miles, subject to exceptions at West Greenland and the Faroe Islands.

~~14. Noting that under Article 2 of the Convention for the Conservation of Salmon in the North Atlantic Ocean, fishing for Atlantic salmon is prohibited beyond areas of fisheries jurisdiction of coastal states within areas of fisheries jurisdiction beyond territorial seas, subject to exceptions at West Greenland and the Faroe Islands.~~

15. Noting that several Contracting Parties to OSPAR have fully or partially prohibited fishing of Atlantic salmon within their territorial sea;

Affected Operative Paragraphs:

2.1. The purpose of this Recommendation is to assist in strengthening the protection of the Atlantic salmon at all life stages in order to restore its populations, to improve its status, and to ensure that its populations are effectively conserved in Regions I, II, III, and IV of the OSPAR maritime area.

3.1 Each Contracting Party should consider in Regions I, II, III, and IV:

a. ~~the possibility of introducing legislation~~ need to introduce additional measures applicable to its jurisdiction to enhance the conservation and protection of the Atlantic salmon at all relevant life stages in light of the review carried out pursuant to paragraph 3.1.b;

b. ~~assessing whether all existing management~~ measures applicable to its jurisdiction that contribute to the conservation, protection, and restoration of Atlantic salmon and its ecosystems, including those under NASCO, are effectively addressing the key threats as identified in the Background document (OSPAR publication 2010/480) including:...

c. encouraging liaison within their national administration in developing future NASCO Implementation Plans, and in reporting on progress ~~with their implementation~~ against those plans as well as the effectiveness of the actions taken, as reported through NASCO Annual Progress Reports;

e. improving scientific communication and information exchange, including participating in and supporting NASCO's research priorities, to coordinate research on Atlantic salmon;

3.2. Acting collectively within the framework of the OSPAR Commission and, where relevant, working under the MoU with NASCO, with the aim of promoting an ecosystem-based approach, Contracting Parties should:

e. in accordance with Article 4 of Annex V of the OSPAR Convention, where coordination and cooperation with other international organisations and bodies is appropriate concerning a question relating to the management of fisheries, draw ~~the~~ that question of ~~strengthening the protection of Atlantic salmon~~ to the attention of the relevant authority or international body competent for that question, and ~~encourage that authority or international body to take appropriate measures~~, drawing upon the actions and measures suggested in the Background Document (OSPAR publication 2010/480) to address in particular:

- (i) any bycatch in fisheries that leads to overexploitation of Atlantic salmon;
- (ii) overfishing of food sources of the Atlantic salmon (e.g. sand eel).
- ~~(iii) diseases, parasites and gene pool dilution from aquaculture activities; and~~
- ~~(iv) the obstacles to migration as the key threats, having regard to management objectives and the supporting scientific advice, where this is necessary for conservation and recovery of Atlantic salmon.~~