



**REPORT OF THE  
THIRTY-EIGHTH  
ANNUAL MEETING OF THE  
NORTH-EAST ATLANTIC COMMISSION**

**By Video Conference**

**27 May – 4 June 2021**

Chair: Viktor Rozhnov (Russian Federation)

Vice-Chair: Svein Magnason (Denmark in respect of the  
Faroe Islands and Greenland)

Secretary: Emma Hatfield

**NEA(21)17rev**

***Report of the Thirty-Eighth Annual Meeting of the North-East Atlantic Commission of the North Atlantic Salmon Conservation Organization***

***By Video Conference***

***27 May – 4 June 2021***

**1. Opening of the Meeting**

- 1.1 The Chair, Victor Rozhnov (Russian Federation), opened the meeting and welcomed participants to the video conference.
- 1.2 The Chair reminded participants that the period for inter-sessional correspondence had run from 3 – 14 May. Members of the Commission had been able to use this time to consider the documents issued under each Agenda item and ask, and respond to, questions. He noted that no inter-sessional correspondence was received in relation to the North-East Atlantic Commission Agenda. The Chair referred participants to the Annotated Agenda, [NEA\(21\)09A](#), which was issued to all delegates on 21 May to help in their planning for the meeting. The Chair noted that the Agenda, [NEA\(21\)09](#), (Annex 1) was adopted by correspondence on 30 April and prior to the inter-sessional correspondence period.
- 1.3 The representative of the United Kingdom (UK) provided a written Opening Statement. (Annex 2).
- 1.4 The representative of the Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) provided a written Opening Statement (Annex 3).
- 1.5 A list of participants at the Thirty-Eighth Annual Meetings of the Council and Commissions of NASCO is included as Annex 4.

**2. Review of the 2020 Fishery and ACOM Report from ICES on Salmon Stocks in the Commission Area**

- 2.1 A representative of ICES, Dennis Ensing, presented the scientific advice contained in the ICES Advisory Committee (ACOM) report, [CNL\(21\)11](#), in a webinar on 28 May. Dr Ensing's presentation on the advice relevant to the North-East Atlantic Commission is available as document [NEA\(21\)13](#) (Annex 5). The discussions that followed the presentation are contained in document [CNL\(21\)60](#) (Annex 6).

**3. Mixed-Stock Fisheries Conducted by Members of the Commission**

- 3.1 The Commission noted that under the Council's 'Action Plan for taking forward the recommendations of the External Performance Review and the review of the 'Next Steps' for NASCO', [CNL\(13\)38](#), it was agreed that there should be an agenda item in each of the Commissions to allow for a focus on mixed-stock fisheries (MSFs).
- 3.2 The European Union (EU), [NEA\(21\)12](#), Norway, [NEA\(21\)06](#), the Russian Federation, [NEA\(21\)11](#), and the UK, [NEA\(21\)10](#), submitted papers providing an update on the information on MSFs, including a description of any MSFs still operating, the most recent catch data and any changes or developments in the management of MSFs to implement NASCO's agreements.

- 3.3 A ‘Joint Statement on behalf of the European Union and Norway regarding the management of the Fisheries in the Teno Watercourse’, [NEA\(21\)08](#), was provided. This concerned the status of work implementing the bilateral agreement between Norway and Finland on the fisheries in the Tana / Teno river, which include MSFs.
- 3.4 A ‘Joint Statement on behalf of Norway and the Russian Federation on Coastal Fisheries Issues’, [NEA\(21\)07](#), was also provided. It relates to the Memorandum of Understanding between the Ministry of Climate and Environment (Norway) and the Federal Agency for Fishery (Russian Federation) on co-operation in management of, and monitoring and research on, wild Atlantic salmon in Finnmark County (Norway) and the Murmansk region (Russian Federation). The Commission welcomed all the reports.
- 3.5 The representative of the NGOs acknowledged the success story of managing mixed-stock fisheries in the North-East Atlantic Commission. He thanked the Commission members for their efforts. He hoped for improved control in Norway’s MSF. He also noted concern about bycatch of wild salmon in southern France and asked the representative of the EU what action is being taken on this.
- 3.6 The representative of the EU said that he recalled the interventions about this from a French NGO during the Tromsø Symposium in 2019 and that there is a specific action in the French Implementation Plan to take account of this. The action is to examine the origin of these fish and to then to use this information to prepare appropriate management measures.

#### **4. Regulatory Measures**

- 4.1 The Chair reminded the Commission that in 2018 it had adopted a multi-annual ‘Decision Regarding the Salmon Fishery in Faroese Waters in 2018 / 2019, 2019 / 2020 and 2020 / 2021, [NEA\(18\)12rev\\_final](#), together with an updated Framework of Indicators (FWI). This Decision indicated that no quota would be set for the salmon fishery in the Faroese Fisheries Zone for 2018 / 2019, and that it would also apply in 2019 / 2020 and 2020 / 2021, unless the application of the FWI showed that a reassessment was warranted.
- 4.2 The Commission considered a ‘Draft Decision Regarding the Salmon Fishery in Faroese Waters in 2021 / 2022, 2022 / 2023 and 2023 / 2024’, [NEA\(21\)14](#), tabled by the Chair. The Chair noted that, in previous years, the Commission agreed not to set a quota for the salmon fishery on the understanding that the Faroe Islands would manage any salmon fishery on the basis of the advice from ICES regarding the stocks contributing to the Faroese salmon fishery and that it would be managed in a precautionary manner and with a view to sustainability, taking into account relevant factors such as socio-economic needs. The Chair reminded the Commission that Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland) – Faroe Islands had previously indicated that a decision that does not specify a quota is more acceptable to it and in practical terms this has worked well for all Commission members.
- 4.3 The representative of Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland) stated that Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland) remains committed to the goals of NASCO and supports the Draft Decision. The representatives of the EU, UK and NGOs recognised the considerable efforts of Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland) over many years and thanked it for its continued commitment to sustainable fisheries.

- 4.4 The representative of Norway acknowledged that no quota had been set for the salmon fishery in the Faroese Fisheries for many years but noted that ICES is still using an interim approach as a basis for its advice. In the past, the Commission had considered the development of a risk assessment framework for the Faroese Fishery that is needed by ICES to provide improved advice for this fishery. In previous years, Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland) had indicated that it would need more time to consider this issue. The representative of Norway asked about progress in this regard.
- 4.5 The representative of Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland) noted that the fact that there had been no salmon fishery in the Faroe Islands for 20 years is recognition of its commitment to salmon conservation. He said that, given ICES advice for many years had been that there were no catch options, little work has been carried out on further examination of stocks in Faroese waters due to resource constraints. There is, therefore, no update, but the Government remains committed to sustainable fisheries and taking the advice of ICES in managing the salmon fishery.
- 4.6 The representative of Norway encouraged Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland) to provide the required feedback, which would enable agreement on the revised approach for ICES and allow the provision of improved advice.
- 4.7 The ‘Decision Regarding the Salmon Fishery in Faroese Waters in 2021 / 2022, 2022 / 2023 and 2023 / 2024’, [NEA\(21\)16](#), was adopted (Annex 7).
- 4.8 The Commission agreed that the same procedure for applying the FWI as used during the previous multi-annual Decision would apply during the new measure. Under this arrangement, a small group comprising one representative from each member of the Commission would work by correspondence to co-ordinate the data collection and application of the FWI. The Secretariat would contact the members of the Commission to seek their nominations for the group after the meeting. The Secretariat would then liaise with the group’s Chair and report the findings to the members of the Commission and to ICES in January in each year when the FWI is applied.

## **5. Report of the Working Group on *Gyrodactylus salaris***

- 5.1 The Chair reminded the Commission that it had agreed in 2018 that the Working Group on *Gyrodactylus salaris* should meet again in 2021. The Working Group on *Gyrodactylus salaris* met on 17 March 2021 by video conference, and the ‘Report of the Meeting of the Working Group on *Gyrodactylus salaris* in the North-East Atlantic Commission Area’, [NEA\(21\)05](#), is available. The Chair noted that the Parties’ / jurisdictions’ reports on *Gyrodactylus salaris* were included in the annexes of the Report.
- 5.2 A member of the Working Group, Michael Millane (EU), presented the report of the Working Group and its recommendation to the Commission. The Chair thanked Dr Millane and his colleagues for their work.
- 5.3 The Commission agreed that a two-day meeting of the Working Group on *G. salaris* should take place in 2022, at a time when a face-to-face meeting would be possible. The Working Group would have the same Terms of Reference as in 2021.
- 5.4 The Commission agreed that the Secretariat and the Chair of the Working Group should explore a virtual / hybrid element to the meeting to maximise participation and benefit.

## **6. Announcement of the Tag Return Incentive Scheme Prize**

- 6.1 The Chair announced that the winner of the North-East Atlantic Commission £1,000 prize in the NASCO Tag Return Incentive Scheme is Hans Spinner from Switzerland.
- 6.2 He noted that a 72 cm female salmon was tagged at Agdenes near the outlet of the Trondheimsfjord on 26 June 2020. The salmon was caught on rod and line on 8 July 2020 in the river Orkla and the fish was released back into the river after capture. This fish was tagged as part of project to estimate the number of salmon entering the Trondheimsfjord.
- 6.3 The Chair offered congratulations to Mr Spinner on behalf of the Commission.

## **7. Recommendations to the Council on the Request to ICES for Scientific Advice**

- 7.1 The Chair of the Standing Scientific Committee (SSC), which assists the Council and Commissions in formulating their questions to ICES, Paddy Gargan, presented the relevant sections of the 'Revised Draft Request to ICES for Scientific Advice', SSC(21)02.
- 7.2 The Commission agreed in principle to accept the relevant section of the SSC's recommendation and referred it to the Council for adoption. The Commission noted that there may need to be adjustment to the questions depending on the outcome of discussions in another Commission and agreed that, if required, adjustments could be made to the Draft Request in Council. The final request to ICES, as agreed by the Council, is contained in document [CNL\(21\)14](#) (Annex 8).

## **8. Other Business**

- 8.1 There was no other business.

## **9. Date and Place of the Next Meeting**

- 9.1 The Commission agreed to hold its next Annual Meeting at the same time and place as the Thirty-Ninth Annual Meeting of the Council.

## **10. Report of the Meeting**

- 10.1 The Commission agreed a report of the Meeting.

## **11. Close of the Meeting**

- 11.1 The Chair thanked the participants for their contributions and closed the Thirty-Eighth Annual Meeting of the North-East Atlantic Commission.

## NEA(21)17rev

### *Compte rendu de la trente-huitième session annuelle de la Commission de l'Atlantique du Nord-Est 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, Victor Rozhnov (Fédération de Russie), a ouvert la session et accueilli les participants à la vidéoconférence.
- 1.2 Le Président a rappelé aux participants que la période de correspondance inter-sessionnelle avait couru du 3 au 14 mai. Les membres de la Commission avaient pu tirer profit de ce temps pour examiner les documents diffusés sous chaque point de l'Ordre du jour et poser, ou répondre à, des questions. Il a indiqué qu'aucune correspondance inter-sessionnelle relative à l'Ordre du jour de la Commission de l'Atlantique du Nord-Est n'avait été reçue. Le Président a prié les participants de se référer à l'Ordre du jour annoté, [NEA\(21\)09A](#), qui avait été diffusé à l'ensemble des délégués le 21 mai pour les aider à s'organiser pour la session. Le Président a indiqué que l'Ordre du jour, [NEA\(21\)09](#), (Annexe 1) avait été adopté par correspondance le 30 avril et préalablement à la période de correspondance inter-sessionnelle.
- 1.3 La représentante du Royaume-Uni (RU) a transmis une déclaration écrite d'ouverture. (Annexe 2).
- 1.4 Le représentant des organisations non-gouvernementales (ONGs) a transmis une déclaration écrite d'ouverture (Annexe 3).
- 1.5 Une liste des participants aux trente-huitièmes sessions du Conseil et des Commissions de l'OCSAN est jointe, en Annexe 4.

#### **2. Examen de la pêcherie de 2020 et du rapport du Comité d'Avis du CIEM (ACOM) sur les stocks de saumons dans la zone de la Commission**

- 2.1 Un représentant du CIEM, Dennis Ensing, a présenté l'avis scientifique figurant dans le rapport du Comité d'Avis du CIEM (ACOM), [CNL\(21\)11](#), en webinaire, le 28 mai. La présentation du Dr Ensing sur l'avis relatif à la Commission de l'Atlantique du Nord-Est est disponible comme document [NEA\(21\)13](#) (Annexe 5). Les discussions qui ont suivi la présentation figurent dans le document [CNL\(21\)60](#) (Annexe 6).

#### **3. Pêcheries de stocks mixtes menées par des Membres de la Commission**

- 3.1 La Commission a noté qu'en vertu 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' du Conseil, [CNL\(13\)38](#), il a été décidé qu'il y aurait un point à l'ordre du jour de chacune des Commissions pour permettre de se concentrer sur les pêcheries de stocks mixtes (PSMs).

- 3.2 L'Union européenne (UE), [NEA\(21\)12](#), la Norvège, [NEA\(21\)06](#), la Fédération de Russie, [NEA\(21\)11](#), et le RU, [NEA\(21\)10](#), ont soumis des documents mettant à jour les informations sur les PSMs, incluant une description de toute PSM encore en activité, les données de captures les plus récentes et tout changement ou évolution dans la gestion des PSMs pour mettre en œuvre les accords de l'OCSAN.
- 3.3 Une 'Déclaration conjointe au nom de l'Union européenne et de la Norvège concernant la gestion des pêcheries dans la rivière Teno', [NEA\(21\)08](#), a été transmise. Celle-ci porte sur l'état d'avancement du travail pour mettre en oeuvre l'accord bilatéral entre la Norvège et la Finlande sur les pêcheries dans la rivière Tana / Teno, qui incluent des PSMs.
- 3.4 Une 'Déclaration conjointe au nom de la Norvège et de la Fédération de Russie sur des questions de pêcheries côtières', [NEA\(21\)07](#), a aussi été transmise. Elle est relative au protocole d'entente entre le Ministère du climat et de l'environnement (Norvège) et l'Agence fédérale des pêcheries (Fédération de Russie) sur la coopération pour la gestion et le suivi du, et la recherche sur, le saumon sauvage de l'Atlantique dans le comté de Finnmark (Norvège) et la région de Mourmansk (Fédération de Russie). La Commission s'est félicitée de tous ces rapports.
- 3.5 Le représentant des ONGs a reconnu le grand succès de la gestion des pêcheries sur stocks mixtes au sein de la CANE. Il a remercié les membres de la Commission pour leurs efforts. Il espérait une amélioration du contrôle dans les PSMs norvégiennes. Il a aussi fait part de sa préoccupation quant aux captures accessoires de saumon dans le sud de la France et a demandé au représentant de l'UE quelles actions étaient prises en la matière.
- 3.6 Le représentant de l'UE a dit qu'il rappelait les interventions à ce sujet d'une ONG française lors du Symposium de Tromsø en 2019 et qu'il y avait une action spécifique dans le Plan de mise en œuvre français pour en tenir compte. Cette action consiste à étudier l'origine de ces poissons puis à utiliser ces informations pour préparer des mesures de gestion appropriées.

#### **4. Mesures de réglementation**

- 4.1 Le Président a rappelé à la Commission qu'en 2018 elle avait adopté une 'Décision concernant la pêche de saumon dans les eaux féringiennes en 2018 / 2019, 2019 / 2020 et 2020 / 2021' pluriannuelle, [NEA\(18\)12rev\\_final](#), en même temps qu'un Cadre d'indicateurs mis à jour. Cette Décision indiquait qu'aucun quota ne serait fixé pour la pêche de saumon dans la zone de pêche des Iles Féroé pour 2018 / 2019, et que cela s'appliquerait aussi en 2019 / 2020 et 2020 / 2021, à moins que l'application du cadre d'indicateurs ne montre qu'une réévaluation était justifiée.
- 4.2 La Commission a examiné une 'Décision Projet concernant la pêche de saumon dans les eaux féringiennes en 2021 / 2022, 2022 / 2023 et 2023 / 2024', [NEA\(21\)14](#), déposée par le Président. Le Président a indiqué que lors des années précédentes, la Commission avait décidé de ne pas fixer de quota pour la pêche de saumon, étant entendu que les Iles Féroé gèreraient toute pêche de saumon sur la base de l'avis du CIEM pour les stocks contribuant à la pêche de saumon féringienne et que la gestion serait faite de manière précautionneuse et avec un objectif de durabilité, prenant en compte les facteurs pertinents tels que les besoins socio-économiques. Le Président a rappelé que le Danemark (pour les Iles Féroé et le Groenland) avait indiqué précédemment qu'une décision ne spécifiant pas de quota était plus acceptable pour eux, et qu'en pratique cela avait bien fonctionné pour tous les membres de la Commission.

- 4.3 Le représentant du Danemark (pour les Iles Féroé et le Groenland) a déclaré que le Danemark (pour les Iles Féroé et le Groenland) restait engagé vis à vis des objectifs de l'OCSAN et soutenait la Décision Projet. Les représentants de l'UE, du RU et des ONGs ont reconnu les efforts considérables du Danemark (pour les Iles Féroé et le Groenland) pendant de nombreuses années et les ont remerciés pour leur engagement soutenu à des pêcheries durables.
- 4.4 Le représentant de la Norvège a acté qu'aucun quota n'avait été fixé pour la pêche du saumon dans les pêcheries féringiennes depuis de nombreuses années, mais a fait remarquer que le CIEM utilise toujours une approche provisoire comme base de son avis. Par le passé, la Commission avait envisagé l'élaboration d'un cadre d'analyse du risque pour la pêcherie féringienne dont le CIEM avait besoin pour fournir un avis amélioré pour cette pêcherie. Les années précédentes, le Danemark (pour les Iles Féroé et le Groenland) avait indiqué qu'il leur faudrait davantage de temps pour étudier cette question. Le représentant de la Norvège a demandé quel était le progrès en la matière.
- 4.5 Le représentant du Danemark (pour les Iles Féroé et le Groenland) a acté que le fait qu'il n'y ait pas eu de pêche de saumon dans les Iles Féroé pendant 20 ans constitue une preuve de leur engagement envers la conservation du saumon. Il a dit que, étant donné que l'avis du CIEM pendant de nombreuses années avait été qu'il n'y avait pas d'options de captures, peu de travail avait été mené pour étudier plus avant les stocks dans les eaux féringiennes, dans un cadre contraint de ressources. Il n'y a par conséquent pas d'actualisation, mais le gouvernement conserve son engagement pour des pêcheries durables et pour prendre en compte l'avis du CIEM dans la gestion de la pêcherie du saumon.
- 4.6 Le représentant de la Norvège a encouragé le Danemark (pour les Iles Féroé et le Groenland) à faire le retour nécessaire, qui rendrait possible une décision sur une approche révisée pour le CIEM et permettrait la fourniture d'un avis amélioré.
- 4.7 La 'Décision Concernant la Pêcherie de Saumon dans les eaux féringiennes en 2021 / 2022, 2022 / 2023 et 2023 / 2024', [NEA\(21\)16](#), a été adoptée (Annexe 7).
- 4.8 La Commission a décidé que la même procédure pour appliquer le cadre d'indicateurs, telle qu'utilisée pendant la période de la précédente Décision pluriannuelle, s'appliquerait lors de la nouvelle mesure. En vertu de cet arrangement, un petit groupe composé d'un représentant pour chaque membre de la Commission travaillerait par correspondance à coordonner la collecte de données et l'application du cadre d'indicateurs. Le Secrétariat contacterait les membres de la Commission après la session pour solliciter leurs nominations pour le groupe. Le Secrétariat ferait ensuite la liaison avec le Président du groupe et rendrait compte des conclusions aux membres de la Commission et au CIEM en janvier de chaque année d'application du cadre d'indicateurs.

## **5. Compte rendu du Groupe de travail sur le *Gyrodactylus salaris***

- 5.1 Le Président a rappelé à la Commission qu'elle avait décidé en 2018 que le Groupe de travail sur le *Gyrodactylus salaris* se réunirait de nouveau en 2021. Le Groupe de travail sur le *Gyrodactylus salaris* s'est réuni le 17 mars 2021 par vidéoconférence, et le 'Compte rendu de la réunion du groupe de travail sur le *Gyrodactylus salaris* dans la zone de la Commission de l'Atlantique du Nord-Est', [NEA\(21\)05](#), est disponible. Le Président a indiqué que les rapports des Parties / juridictions sur le *Gyrodactylus salaris* étaient inclus dans les annexes du compte rendu.



5.2 Un membre du Groupe de travail, Michael Millane (UE), a présenté le compte rendu du Groupe de travail et sa recommandation à la Commission. Le Président a remercié le Dr Millane et ses collègues pour leur travail.

5.3 La Commission a décidé qu'une réunion de deux jours du Groupe de travail sur le *Gyrodactylus salaris* devrait avoir lieu en 2022, à une période où une réunion en présentiel serait possible. Le Groupe de travail aurait le même mandat qu'en 2021.

5.4 La Commission a convenu que le Secrétariat et le Président du Groupe de travail exploreraient une composante virtuelle / hybride de la réunion afin d'en optimiser la participation et le bénéfice.

## **6. Annonce du gagnant du prix du Programme incitatif au renvoi des marques**

6.1 Le Président a annoncé que le gagnant du prix de £1,000 de la Commission de l'Atlantique du Nord-Est du Programme incitatif au renvoi des marques de l'OCSAN était Hans Spinner, de Suisse.

6.2 Il a précisé qu'un saumon femelle de 72 cm avait été marqué à Agdenes près de l'embouchure du Trondheimsfjord le 26 juin 2020. Le saumon a été pris à la pêche à la ligne le 8 juillet 2020 dans la rivière Orkla et a été remis à l'eau dans la rivière après sa capture. Il était marqué dans le cadre d'un projet pour estimer le nombre de saumons qui entrent dans le Trondheimsfjord.

6.3 Le Président a adressé ses félicitations à M. Spinner au nom de la Commission.

## **7. Recommandations au Conseil concernant la demande de conseils scientifiques auprès du CIEM**

7.1 Le Président du Comité scientifique permanent (CSP), qui aide le Conseil et les Commissions à formuler leurs questions au CIEM, Paddy Gargan, a présenté les sections pertinentes de la 'Demande Projet révisée auprès du CIEM pour des conseils scientifiques', SSC(21)02.

7.2 La Commission a décidé sur le principe d'accepter la section pertinente des recommandations du CSP et l'a référée au Conseil pour adoption. La Commission a acté qu'il pourrait y avoir besoin d'ajustements aux questions selon l'issue des débats dans une autre Commission et a accepté que, le cas échéant, des ajustements pourraient être apportés à la Demande Projet à la session du Conseil. La demande finale auprès du CIEM, telle qu'adoptée par le Conseil, figure dans le document [CNL\(21\)14](#) (Annexe 8).

## **8. Divers**

8.1 Il n'y a pas eu d'autre question.

## **9. Date et lieu de la prochaine session**

9.1 La Commission a décidé de tenir sa prochaine session annuelle à la même période et au même lieu que la trente-neuvième session annuelle du Conseil.

## **10. Compte rendu de la session**

10.1 La Commission a accepté un compte rendu de la session

## **11. Clôture de la session**

11.1 Le Président a remercié les participants pour leurs contributions et a clos la trente-huitième session de la Commission de l'Atlantique du Nord-Est.

## **List of Annexes**

- Annex 1      Agenda, NEA(21)09
- Annex 2      Opening Statement Submitted by the United Kingdom
- Annex 3      Opening Statement Submitted by NASCO's Accredited Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs)
- Annex 4      List of Participants
- Annex 5      Presentation of the ICES Advice on Atlantic Salmon from the North-East Atlantic to the North-East Atlantic Commission, NEA(21)13
- Annex 6      Question & Answer Session at the ICES Advice Presentation, CNL(21)60
- Annex 7      Decision Regarding the Salmon Fishery in Faroese Waters in 2021 / 2022, 2022 / 2023 and 2023 / 2024, NEA(21)16
- Annex 8      Request to ICES for Scientific Advice, CNL(21)14

**NEA(21)09**

***Thirty-Eighth Annual Meeting of the North-East Atlantic Commission***

***By Video Conference***

***31 May – 4 June 2021***

***Agenda***

1. Opening of the Meeting
2. Review of the 2020 Fishery and ACOM Report from ICES on Salmon Stocks in the Commission Area
3. Mixed-Stock Fisheries Conducted by Members of the Commission
4. Regulatory Measures
5. Report of the Working Group on *Gyrodactylus salaris*
6. Announcement of the Tag Return Incentive Scheme Prize
7. Recommendations to the Council on the Request to ICES for Scientific Advice
8. Other Business
9. Date and Place of the Next Meeting
10. Report of the Meeting
11. Close of the Meeting

### ***Opening Statement to the North-East Atlantic Commission 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 38<sup>th</sup> 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 across the UK, salmon stock numbers continue to decline.

Following a national Salmon Summit in 2015, England and Wales developed a co-ordinated approach to deliver a better future for salmon. Part of these actions was a commitment to further reducing the exploitation of salmon by nets and rods. This has subsequently included the closure of many mixed stock fisheries; net fisheries, all drift net fisheries and mandatory catch and release in other net fisheries. We have also introduced mandatory catch and release by anglers on rivers with the lowest stocks category and all rivers classified as recovering.

In Northern Ireland commercial fisheries ceased to operate, from 2010 in the Loughs Agency area and 2012 in the DAERA area. All recreational fisheries are subject to mandatory catch and release unless they have exceeded their management targets consistently over a period of time. Only the surplus, above their management targets, may be harvested and all anglers must be licenced. Regular enforcement checks are carried out to ensure compliance with the regulations. There are some signs of improved returns of adult fish to the Neagh Bann catchment but those for coastal rivers remains low. Works to improve habitat has been carried out in a number of rivers in Northern Ireland as reported in our APR. Research carried out to date has focused on smolt survival both in the freshwater and marine phases to try and identify where significant mortality occurs.

Scotland has a rigorous regime of statutory salmon conservation orders in place which are refreshed annually. Salmon caught in rivers with low salmon stocks are not allowed to be retained by anglers, thus ensuring the protection of the species where it is at greatest risk. The Scottish Government has continued the ban on coastal netting of wild salmon around Scotland introduced in 2016.

The reasons for the decline in wild salmon stock are wide-ranging and complex. Alongside pressures on marine and river habitats, climate change seems to be a general driver of decline. The Wild Salmon Strategy currently under development will provide an overarching framework in Scotland to tackle pressures on wild salmon.

In terms of managing disease, in particular *Gyrodactylus salaris*, the UK supports current initiatives in terms of NASCO engagement and has been active in its participation in this area, most recently at the NASCO working group in March. We look forward to continuing to engage on this most important element of this NEAC Commission.

The UK remains steadfast in its commitment to the conservation of wild Atlantic salmon and to NASCO's objectives. However, we believe that the costs of these commitments to UK fishers

should also be recognised by other parties and accounted for when discussing and agreeing future management measures.

### ***Opening Statement to the North-East Atlantic Commission Submitted by NASCO's Accredited Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs)***

Mr Chairman, heads of delegation, delegates, and colleagues;

The NGOs welcome the opportunity to make an opening statement to the North East Atlantic Commission in this 38<sup>th</sup> Annual NASCO meeting, and thank Dr Emma Hatfield and the secretariat for organising another virtual meeting under very trying circumstances this year.

The NGOs were very clear in our opening statement to Council that we believe NASCO must find a way to influence home governments to commit to address the many stressors impacting wild salmon, rather than just talking fine words within this forum. We were particularly impressed with the statement made by Denmark in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland where they spoke of the sacrifices made by their fishermen, many of whom are still hunter gatherers catching salmon for subsistence. The Faroe Islands have not fished for salmon for two decades and Greenland has made great progress towards controlling the number of fish caught by their disparate communities, but their sacrifices have not always been replicated across parties and jurisdictions within NEAC.

The closure of coastal mixed stock fisheries has been one major fisheries management success in several NEAC areas, notably in the UK and Ireland. However, significant fisheries are still prosecuted in Norway, and what is termed as by-catch off the south-west of France is almost certainly exploiting mixed stocks of salmon, with some of those fish strongly suspected of heading for Spanish and Portuguese rivers. In England, successive fisheries ministers have promised a new fish passage order for the past 16 years without ever delivering, while Norway, Scotland and Ireland continue with weak regulation of their salmon farming industries which fail to control the impact of sea lice and escapes on wild fish stocks. Across the NEAC region, water quality and quantity, hydro power installations, fish passage, predation, urbanisation, and many other issues act as barriers to wild salmon protection and conservation, many of which are exacerbated by the consequences of climate change.

The NGOs believe that all other NASCO parties and jurisdictions have a moral responsibility to provide the same political commitment to protect wild Atlantic salmon as has been shown by Greenland and the Faroe Islands. This will be the main thrust of the NGO report to the External Performance Review Group but in the short term, we strongly urge NEAC members to amend their Implementation Plans to include succinct SMART actions that are genuinely targeted at wild salmon conservation and the protection of the ecosystems necessary for them to thrive. Salmon do not exist in isolation from other species or habitats, and we believe the often siloed approach to fisheries management must give way to more cohesive, generic environmental strategies in which salmon are keystone indicators but by no means detached from their ecosystems. As we have reiterated many times, salmon would benefit enormously from actions designed to address poor water quality and quantity, diffuse pollution and the like without anyone referring to fish in particular.

Mr Chairman, it is for your commission members to go home and influence your governments to take salmon and aquatic environmental conservation seriously. The NGOs are, as ever, willing to add their support but, in the end, it is political commitment that is required to address the bottlenecks, not just fine words from this forum.

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Annex 5  
Presentation of the ICES Advice on Atlantic Salmon from the North-East Atlantic to  
the North-East Atlantic Commission

NEA(21)13

*sal.neac.all*

Atlantic salmon in the North-East Atlantic  
Commission Area in 2020



ICES  
CIEM

# Terms of Reference



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

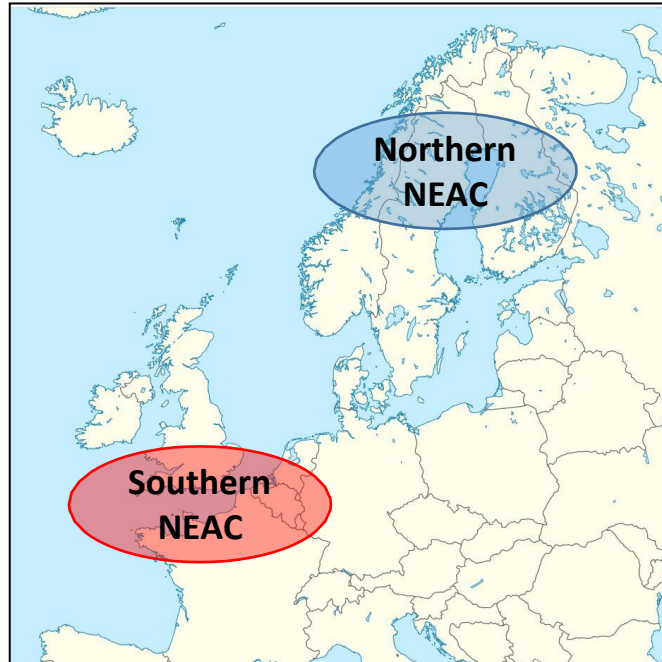
- 2.1 describe the key events of the 2020 fisheries;
- 2.2 review and report on the development of age-specific stock conservation limits, including updating the time-series of the number of river stocks with established CLs by jurisdiction;
- 2.3 describe the status of the stocks, including updating 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 2021 / 2022 – 2023 / 2024 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<sup>4</sup>; and
- 2.5 update the Framework of Indicators used to identify any significant change in the previously provided multi-annual management advice.

# Background

- North-East Atlantic Commission (NEAC) stocks are combined into two groups for the provision of management advice for fisheries at West Greenland and Faroes

## Southern group (Southern NEAC) :

- UK (Scotland)
- UK (England & Wales)
- UK (Northern Ireland)
- Ireland
- France
- Spain
- Iceland (south/west region)
  
- Total of 7 stock units



## Northern group (Northern NEAC) :

- Russia
- Finland
- Norway
- Sweden
- Denmark
- Iceland (north/east region)
  
- Total of 11 stock units

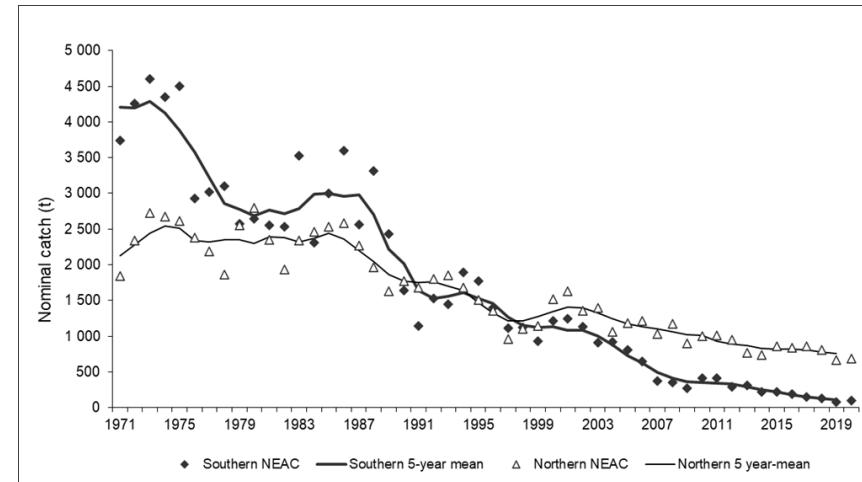
## 2.1 Key Events 2020 Fisheries: Catch

- No significant changes in the gear types used. No fishery Faroes since 2000
- NEAC Reported (i.e. nominal) Catch: 778 t
  - 93 t Southern NEAC
  - 685 t Northern NEAC
- Unreported catch: 239 t

Table 1: sal.neac.all

	Southern NEAC	Northern NEAC	Faroes	Total NEAC
<b>2020 reported catch</b>	<b>93 t</b>	<b>685 t</b>	-	<b>778 t</b>
<b>Catch as % of NEAC total</b>	12%	88%	-	
<b>Unreported catch</b>	<b>8 t</b>	<b>231 t</b>	-	<b>239 t</b>
<b>Location of catches</b>			-	
<b>% in-river</b>	76%	66%	-	67%
<b>% in estuaries</b>	24%	0%	-	3%
<b>% coastal</b>	0%	34%	-	30%

Figure 1: sal.neac.all



## 2.2 Stock Conservation Limits (CLs) and Spawner Escapement Reserves (SERs)

- National CLs summed to four NEAC stock complexes
- **SER** (Spawner Escapement Reserves )
  - Number of fish prior to fisheries to meet CLs when they return to homewaters
  - CLs increased to account for natural mortality ( $M = 0.03$  per month) between 1 January of first winter and return to homewaters

Table 3: sal.neac.all

Complex	Sea age group	CL (number of fish)	SER (number of fish)
Northern NEAC	1SW	138 086	174 727
	MSW	122 268	209 236
Southern NEAC	1SW	436 992	553 846
	MSW	174 735	295 582

## 2.2 Stock Conservation Limits (CLs) and Spawner Escapement Reserves (SERs)



- Nine jurisdictions with river-specific CLs
- Time-series of CLs
- Iceland – one river since 2000

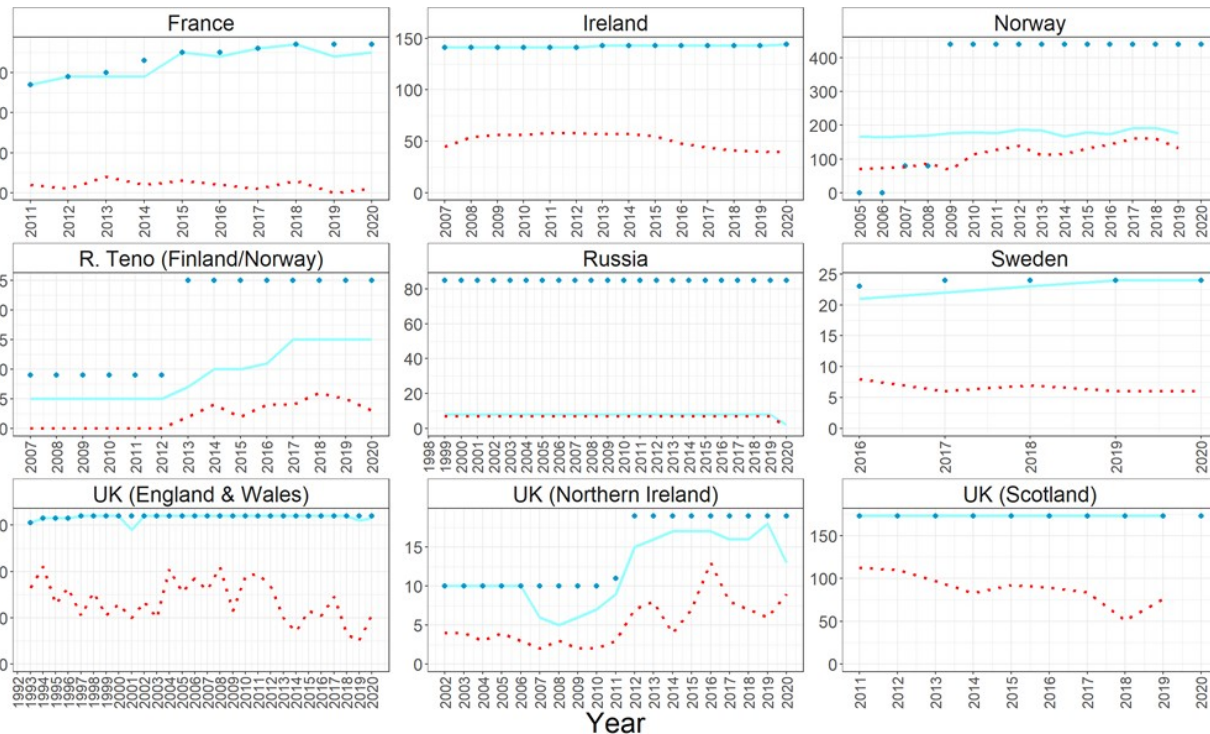
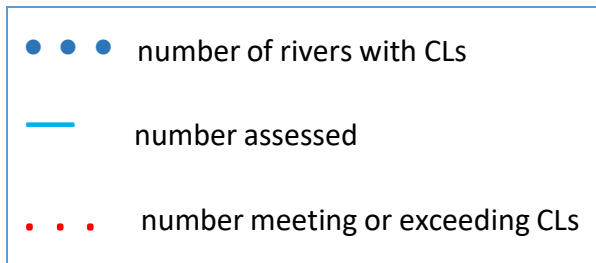


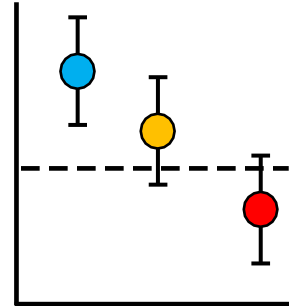
Figure 4: sal.neac.all

## 2.3 Stock Status

- Pre-Fishery Abundance (PFA) : abundance at 1 January of first winter at sea
  - by sea age group (maturing 1SW and non-maturing 1SW (MSW) salmon)
  - by stock complex (Northern NEAC and Southern NEAC) and individual country
- PFA relative to SER (Spawner Escapement Reserve = CL adjusted for natural mortality)
- Spawners relative to CLs

### Risk Assessment Framework

- Full Reproductive Capacity :
  - lower bound of the 90% confidence interval of the estimate above reference point
  - equivalent to a probability of at least 95% of meeting reference point
- At Risk of Suffering Reduced Reproductive Capacity:
  - lower bound of the confidence interval is below reference point, but the midpoint is above
- Suffering Reduced Reproductive Capacity:
  - midpoint is below reference point

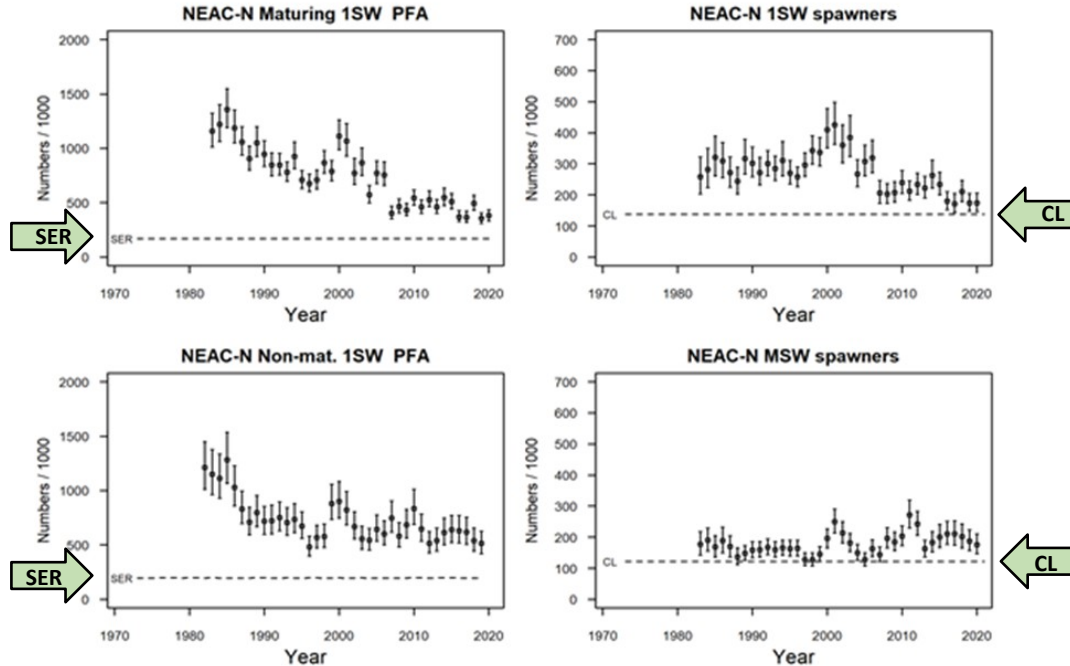




## 2.3 Stock Status: 2020 Northern NEAC (N-NEAC)

### PFA N-NEAC:

- Declining trend
- PFA > SER
- Both complexes at full reproductive capacity



### Spawners N-NEAC:

- Spawners > CLs
- Both complexes at full reproductive capacity

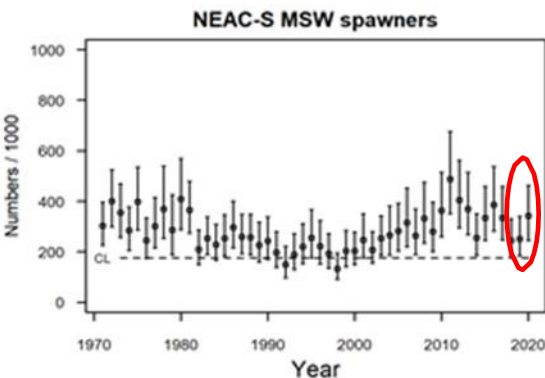
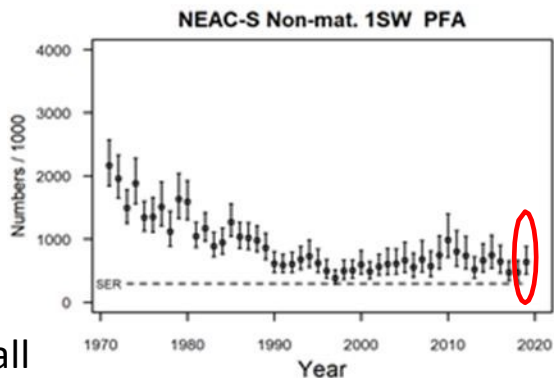
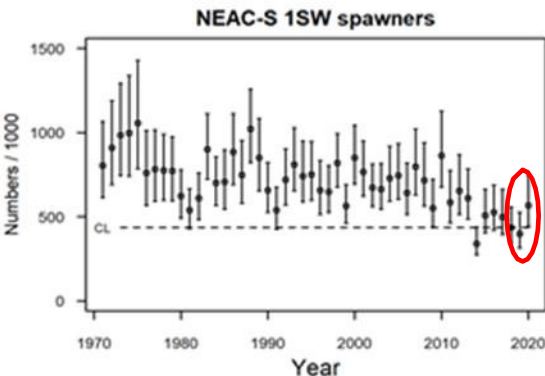
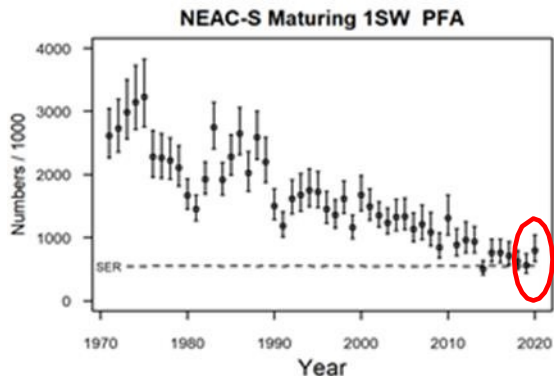
Figure 5: sal.neac.all

## 2.3 Stock Status: 2020 Southern NEAC (S-NEAC)



### PFA S-NEAC:

- PFA > SER
- Thus, both complexes at full reproductive capacity in 2020
- Effects of reduction of national SER/CL for UK (Scotland)



### Spawners S-NEAC:

- Spawners > CLs in 2020
- Thus, both complexes at full reproductive capacity in 2020
- Effects of reduction of national CL for UK (Scotland)

Figure 5: sal.neac.all

## 2.3 Stock Status: 2020 PFA by Jurisdiction

### Northern NEAC PFA

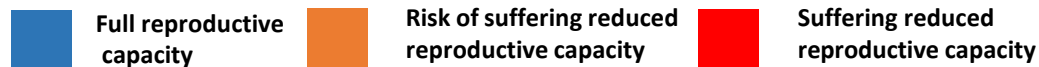
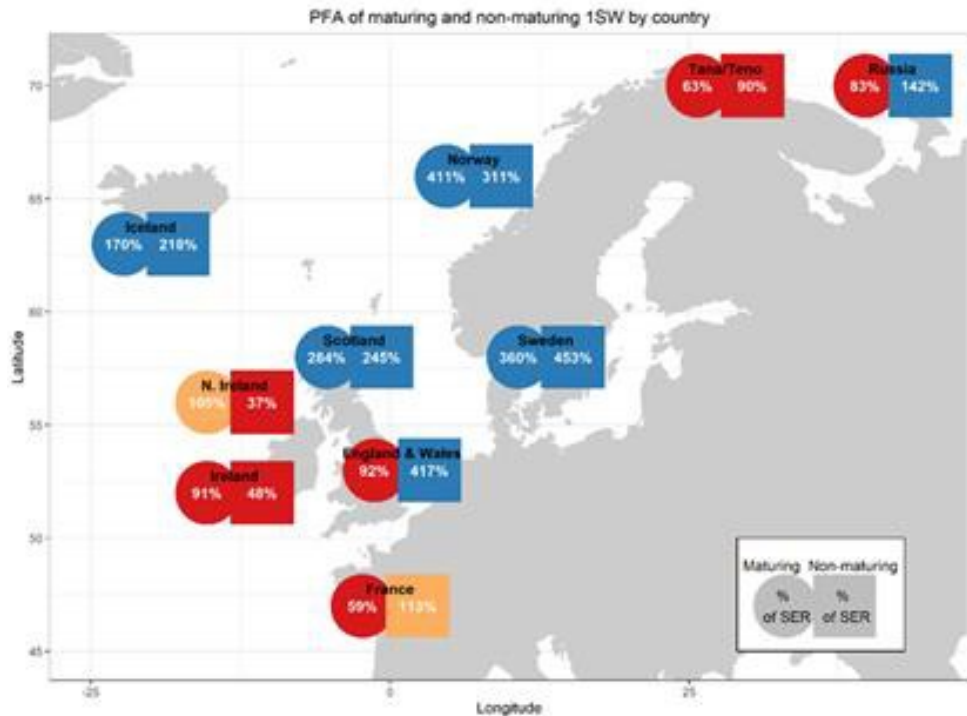
- Maturing 1SW:
  - full reproductive capacity Norway, Sweden, and Iceland
  - suffering Teno/Tana, Russia
- Non-maturing 1SW:
  - full reproductive capacity, except Teno/Tana (suffering)

### Southern NEAC PFA

- Maturing 1SW:
  - full reproductive capacity in UK (Scotland)
  - others at risk or suffering
- Non-maturing 1SW:
  - full reproductive capacity in UK (E&W and Scotland)
  - others at risk or suffering

Note: changes to UK (Scotland) CLs in 2020

Figure 6: sal.neac.all



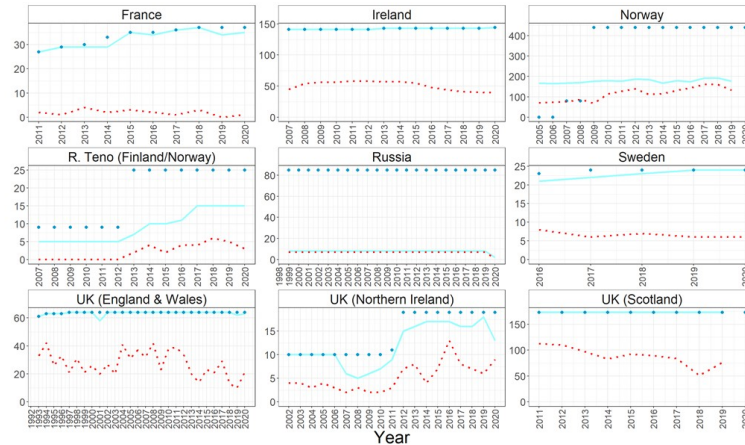
## 2.3 Stock Status: Trends in Rivers Meeting CLs



Table 4: sal.neac.all Spawners assessed against CLs

Country /Jurisdiction	Number of rivers with CLs	Number of rivers assessed for compliance	Number of rivers attaining CL	% of assessed rivers attaining CL	Trend statement
<b>Northern NEAC</b>					
Russia	85	2	1	50	Stable (less rivers assessed in 2020)
Finland/Norway (Tana/Teno)	25	15	3	20	Decreasing
Norway	439	177	133	75	Minor variability
Sweden	24	24	6	25	Minor variability
<b>Southern NEAC</b>					
UK (Scotland)	173	173	76	44	Decreasing (upturn in 2019)
UK (Northern Ireland)	19	13	9	69	Variable (less rivers assessed in 2020)
UK (England and Wales)	64	63	21	33	Decreasing (upturn in 2020)
Ireland	144	144	39	27	Decreasing
France	37	35	1	3	Variable

Figure 4: sal.neac.all



- • • number of rivers with CLs
- number assessed
- ... number meeting or exceeding CLs

## 2.3 Stock Status: Return Rates (Marine Survival)

- 1SW declining trend since 1980
- 2SW no trend
- Little improvement of stock status over time
- Mainly a consequence of continuing poor survival in the marine environment

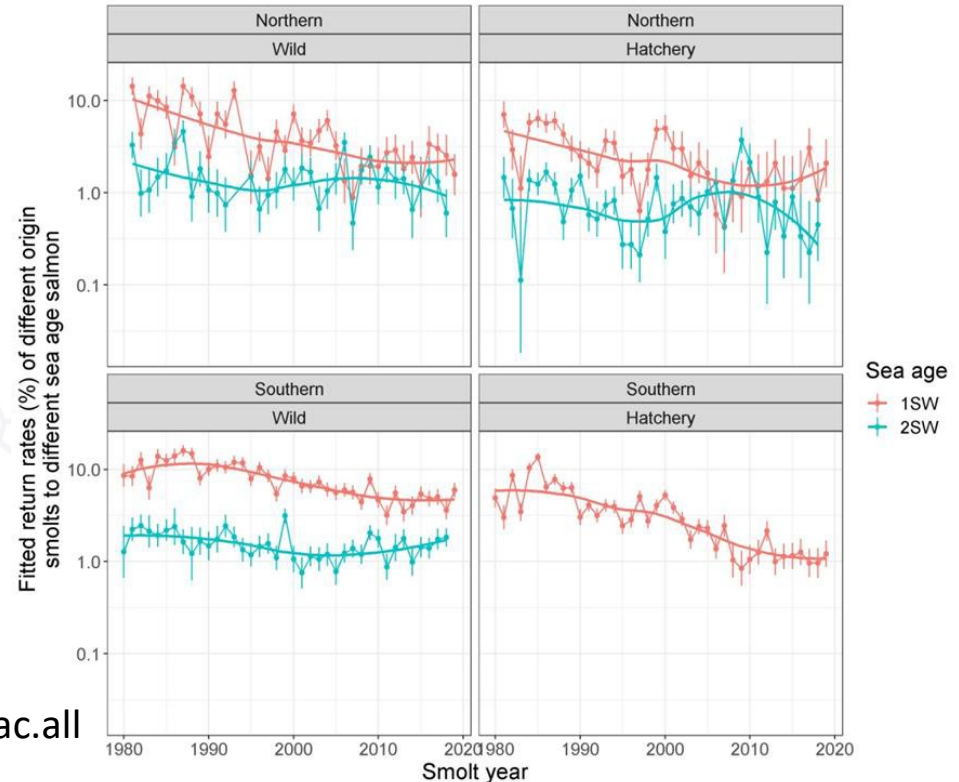


Figure 9: sal.neac.all

# 3.4 Catch options or alternative management advice



N NEAC

## PFA Forecast N. NEAC

- 1SW maturing and 1SW non-maturing currently at full reproductive capacity
- But forecast indicates could both be at risk of suffering reduced reproductive capacity (lower 95<sup>th</sup> percentile Bayesian credible intervals below SERs)

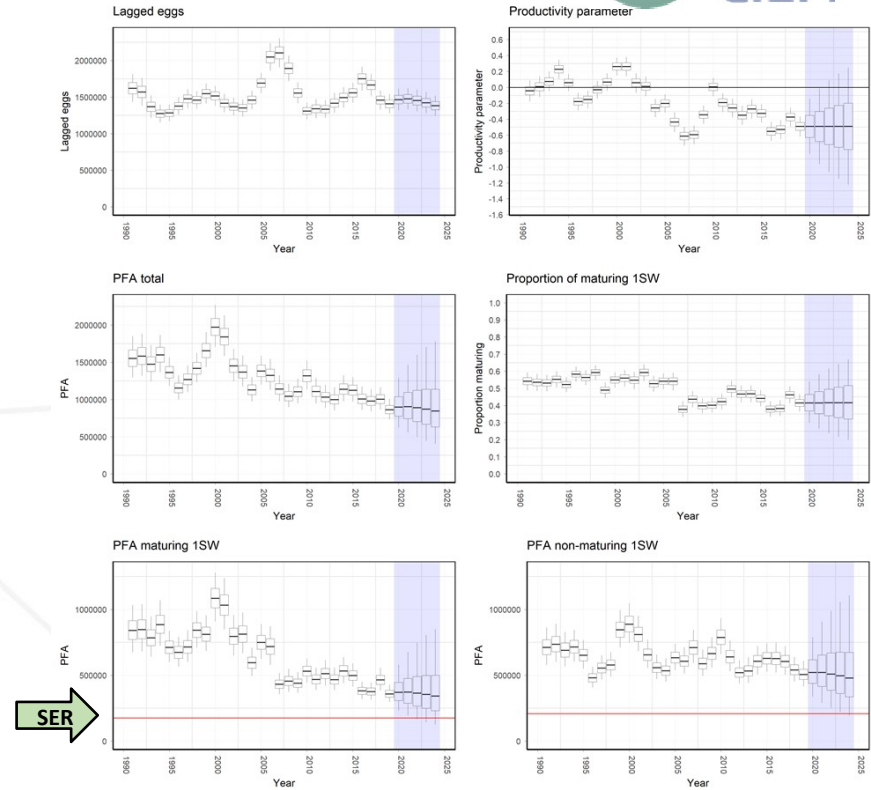


Figure 10: sal.neac.all

# 3.4 Catch options or alternative management advice



S NEAC

## PFA Forecast S. NEAC

- 1SW maturing currently at risk of suffering reduced reproductive capacity
- 1SW non-maturing currently at full reproductive capacity
- Forecast indicates 1SW maturing could be suffering reduced reproductive capacity in future
- Forecast indicates 1SW non-maturing could at risk of suffering reduced reproductive capacity in future

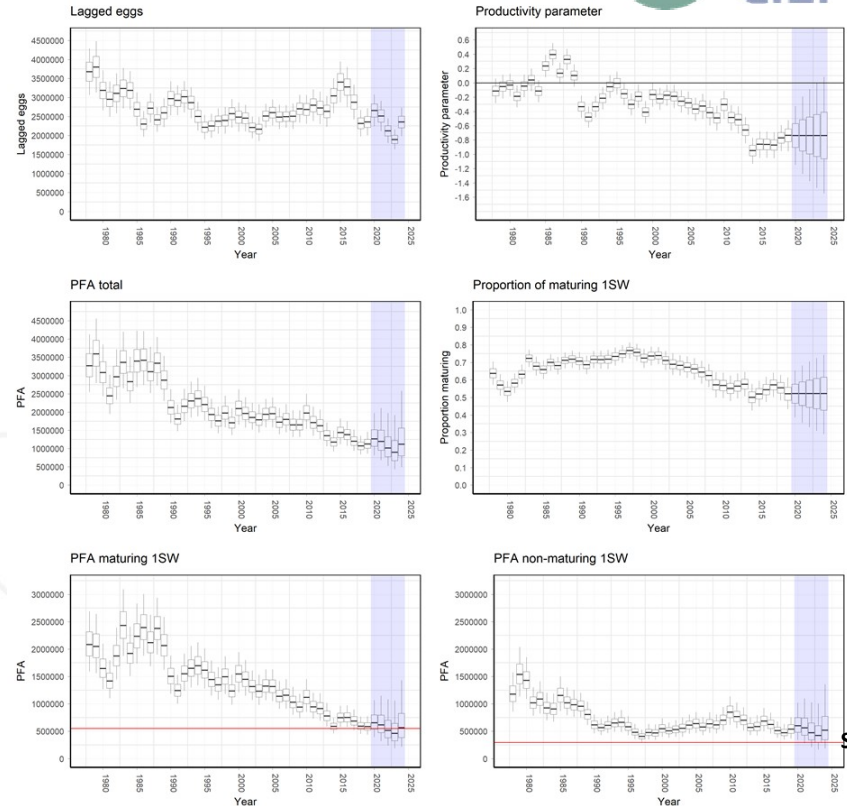


Figure 11: sal.neac.all

# 3.4 Catch options or alternative management advice



Catch options season	TAC option (t)	NEAC-N-1SW	NEAC-N-MSW	NEAC-S-1SW	NEAC-S-MSW	All complexes simultaneous
2021/22	0	94 %	99 %	45 %	94 %	40 %
	20	94 %	98 %	44 %	92 %	38 %
	40	94 %	94 %	43 %	89 %	36 %
	60	94 %	87 %	42 %	87 %	32 %
	80	94 %	78 %	42 %	84 %	28 %
	100	94 %	67 %	41 %	81 %	23 %
	120	93 %	56 %	40 %	78 %	19 %
	140	93 %	46 %	40 %	75 %	15 %
	160	93 %	37 %	39 %	71 %	11 %
	180	93 %	29 %	38 %	68 %	9 %
200	93 %	23 %	38 %	64 %	7 %	
2022/23	0	91 %	98 %	36 %	84 %	30 %
	20	91 %	94 %	35 %	80 %	28 %
	40	90 %	89 %	35 %	77 %	25 %
	60	90 %	81 %	34 %	73 %	22 %
	80	90 %	72 %	34 %	69 %	19 %
	100	90 %	63 %	33 %	66 %	15 %
	120	90 %	53 %	32 %	62 %	13 %
	140	90 %	45 %	32 %	58 %	10 %
	160	90 %	37 %	31 %	55 %	8 %
	180	90 %	31 %	31 %	51 %	6 %
200	90 %	25 %	30 %	48 %	5 %	
2023/24	0	87 %	96 %	52 %	75 %	37 %
	20	87 %	91 %	52 %	71 %	34 %
	40	87 %	85 %	51 %	67 %	30 %
	60	87 %	77 %	51 %	63 %	26 %
	80	87 %	67 %	50 %	59 %	22 %
	100	86 %	59 %	50 %	56 %	18 %
	120	86 %	51 %	49 %	52 %	15 %
	140	86 %	43 %	49 %	49 %	12 %
	160	86 %	36 %	48 %	45 %	10 %
	180	86 %	30 %	47 %	42 %	8 %
200	86 %	26 %	47 %	39 %	6 %	

Table 7: sal.neac.all

- No probabilities that the NEAC 1SW and MSW will meet or exceed the SER simultaneously for both regions at any TAC option
- No 2021-2024 catch options**



# 3.4 Catch options or alternative management advice



- No probabilities (0% or close to 0%) that the 1SW (L) and MSW (R) will meet or exceed the SER simultaneously at country level for any TAC option
- No 2021-2024 catch options

Catch options season	TACoption (t)	Russia	Finlan	Norway	Svede	Italian	UK (Scotland)	UK (N. Ireland)	Ireland	UK (England & Wales)	France	All 1SW MSW simultaneous	Catch options season	TACoption (t)	Russia	Finlan	Norway	Sweden	Iceland	UK (Scotland)	UK (N. Ireland)	Ireland	UK (England & Wales)	0.5%	
																									0
2021/22	0	28%	38%	97%	82%	74%	70%	30%	25%	22%	40%	0.0%	2021/22	0	62%	40%	99%	96%	93%	89%	20%	24%	97%	57%	0.5%
	20	28%	38%	97%	82%	74%	69%	30%	25%	22%	40%	0.0%	20	47%	32%	98%	94%	90%	87%	19%	23%	96%	56%	0.3%	
	40	28%	38%	97%	82%	73%	69%	30%	24%	22%	40%	0.0%	40	34%	26%	95%	92%	87%	85%	18%	22%	95%	54%	0.1%	
	60	28%	38%	97%	82%	73%	68%	29%	24%	21%	40%	0.0%	60	24%	21%	92%	89%	83%	82%	18%	22%	94%	52%	0.0%	
	80	28%	38%	97%	82%	73%	67%	29%	24%	21%	40%	0.0%	80	17%	17%	87%	87%	80%	79%	17%	21%	93%	51%	0.0%	
	100	28%	37%	97%	81%	73%	67%	29%	24%	21%	40%	0.0%	100	12%	14%	81%	84%	76%	76%	16%	20%	91%	49%	0.0%	
	120	28%	37%	97%	81%	72%	66%	29%	24%	21%	39%	0.0%	120	8%	11%	75%	81%	73%	73%	16%	20%	90%	48%	0.0%	
	140	27%	37%	97%	81%	72%	65%	29%	23%	21%	39%	0.0%	140	6%	9%	68%	79%	69%	70%	15%	19%	89%	46%	0.0%	
	160	27%	37%	97%	81%	72%	65%	28%	23%	21%	39%	0.0%	160	4%	8%	61%	76%	66%	67%	15%	19%	87%	45%	0.0%	
	180	27%	37%	97%	81%	72%	64%	28%	23%	21%	39%	0.0%	180	3%	7%	55%	74%	62%	64%	14%	18%	86%	44%	0.0%	
	200	27%	37%	97%	81%	71%	63%	28%	23%	20%	39%	0.0%	200	2%	6%	48%	71%	59%	61%	14%	18%	84%	43%	0.0%	
2022/23	0	27%	33%	95%	84%	66%	63%	25%	24%	23%	28%	0.0%	2022/23	0	43%	41%	98%	95%	87%	78%	18%	22%	94%	64%	0.2%
	20	27%	33%	95%	84%	65%	63%	25%	24%	23%	28%	0.0%	20	31%	34%	96%	93%	83%	74%	18%	21%	92%	63%	0.1%	
	40	27%	33%	95%	84%	65%	62%	24%	24%	23%	28%	0.0%	40	21%	28%	93%	91%	80%	71%	17%	21%	91%	62%	0.0%	
	60	27%	33%	95%	84%	65%	61%	24%	23%	22%	28%	0.0%	60	15%	24%	89%	89%	76%	67%	16%	20%	90%	60%	0.0%	
	80	27%	33%	94%	84%	65%	61%	24%	23%	22%	28%	0.0%	80	10%	20%	85%	87%	72%	64%	16%	20%	89%	59%	0.0%	
	100	27%	33%	94%	84%	64%	60%	24%	23%	22%	28%	0.0%	100	7%	17%	80%	84%	69%	60%	15%	19%	87%	58%	0.0%	
	120	26%	33%	94%	84%	64%	60%	24%	23%	22%	28%	0.0%	120	5%	15%	74%	82%	65%	57%	15%	19%	86%	57%	0.0%	
	140	26%	33%	94%	84%	64%	59%	23%	23%	22%	28%	0.0%	140	4%	13%	68%	80%	62%	53%	15%	18%	84%	55%	0.0%	
	160	26%	32%	94%	84%	64%	58%	23%	22%	22%	27%	0.0%	160	3%	11%	63%	78%	59%	50%	14%	18%	83%	54%	0.0%	
	180	26%	32%	94%	84%	63%	58%	23%	22%	21%	27%	0.0%	180	2%	10%	57%	76%	56%	47%	14%	18%	81%	53%	0.0%	
	200	26%	32%	94%	84%	63%	57%	23%	22%	21%	27%	0.0%	200	1%	8%	52%	73%	53%	43%	13%	17%	80%	52%	0.0%	
2023/24	0	37%	29%	92%	83%	55%	68%	34%	32%	34%	32%	0.1%	2023/24	0	40%	36%	97%	95%	81%	70%	17%	22%	90%	49%	0.1%
	20	37%	28%	92%	83%	54%	67%	33%	32%	34%	32%	0.0%	20	29%	30%	94%	94%	77%	66%	16%	22%	89%	48%	0.0%	
	40	36%	28%	92%	83%	54%	67%	33%	32%	34%	32%	0.0%	40	21%	25%	90%	92%	73%	63%	16%	21%	87%	47%	0.0%	
	60	36%	28%	92%	83%	54%	66%	33%	32%	33%	32%	0.0%	60	15%	21%	85%	90%	70%	59%	15%	21%	86%	46%	0.0%	
	80	36%	28%	92%	83%	54%	66%	33%	31%	33%	32%	0.0%	80	11%	18%	80%	89%	66%	56%	15%	20%	84%	45%	0.0%	
	100	36%	28%	92%	83%	54%	65%	32%	31%	33%	31%	0.0%	100	8%	16%	75%	87%	63%	52%	14%	20%	82%	43%	0.0%	
	120	36%	28%	91%	83%	53%	65%	32%	31%	33%	31%	0.0%	120	6%	14%	70%	85%	60%	49%	14%	19%	81%	42%	0.0%	
	140	36%	28%	91%	83%	53%	64%	32%	31%	33%	31%	0.0%	140	4%	12%	65%	84%	57%	46%	13%	19%	79%	41%	0.0%	
	160	36%	28%	91%	83%	53%	64%	32%	31%	33%	31%	0.0%	160	3%	11%	59%	82%	54%	43%	13%	19%	77%	40%	0.0%	
	180	36%	28%	91%	83%	53%	63%	31%	31%	32%	31%	0.0%	180	3%	10%	54%	81%	51%	40%	13%	18%	76%	39%	0.0%	
	200	35%	28%	91%	82%	52%	63%	31%	30%	32%	31%	0.0%	200	2%	8%	49%	79%	48%	37%	13%	18%	74%	38%	0.0%	

Table 9/10: [sal.neac.a](http://sal.neac.a) II



## 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.

NEA(21)16

***Decision Regarding the Salmon Fishery in Faroese Waters  
in 2021 / 2022, 2022 / 2023 and 2023 / 2024***

The North-East Atlantic Commission:

RECOGNISING the right of the Faroe Islands to fish for salmon in their area of fisheries jurisdiction;

ACKNOWLEDGING the restraint demonstrated by the Faroe Islands by not having commercial salmon fisheries for a number of years;

RECALLING that the Parties to the North-East Atlantic Commission have previously agreed decisions for the Faroese fishery based on the scientific advice from ICES;

ACKNOWLEDGING that in the past the Faroe Islands has managed the salmon fishery in the area of its fisheries jurisdiction in consideration of the advice from ICES concerning the biological situation and the status of the stocks contributing to the fishery;

AGREEING to continue to work together to establish an agreed mechanism to allocate any exploitable surplus between the Faroe Islands and homewater fisheries on a fair and equitable basis;

NOTING that the Faroe Islands will manage any salmon fishery on the basis of the advice from ICES regarding the stocks contributing to the Faroese salmon fishery in a precautionary manner and with a view to sustainability, taking into account relevant factors, such as socio-economic needs;

ACKNOWLEDGING that Faroese management decisions will be made with due consideration to the advice of ICES concerning the biological situation and the status of the stocks contributing to the fishery;

RECOGNISING that ICES considers it highly unlikely that the catch options provided for the North-East Atlantic Commission will change during the next three years;

NOTING that Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland) will, in case of any decision to open the fishery, inform the NASCO Secretariat and all members of the Commission of that decision and the attached conditions. In that event, other members of the Commission could call for a Commission meeting in accordance with Article 10 (7) of the Convention. In such a case, it is agreed to derogate from the provisions of Rule 16 of Procedure;

RECOGNISING that a Framework of Indicators has been provided by ICES and will be applied in 2022 and 2023 to evaluate if a significant change is signalled by the indicators and therefore that a re-assessment is warranted;

HEREBY DECIDES:

Not to set a quota for the salmon fishery in the Faroese Fisheries Zone for 2021 / 2022. This decision will also apply in 2022 / 2023 and 2023 / 2024 unless the application of the Framework of Indicators shows that a re-assessment is warranted. Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland) retains the right to conduct a scientific research fishery in the Faroese Fishery Zone.

## 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<sup>1</sup>;
  - 1.2 report on significant new or emerging threats to, or opportunities for, salmon conservation and management<sup>2</sup>;
  - 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<sup>3</sup>;
  - 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<sup>4</sup>; 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)<sup>3</sup>;
  - 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<sup>4</sup>; 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<sup>3</sup>;

4.2 describe the status of the stocks<sup>5</sup>;

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<sup>4</sup>; 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)