



CNL39.138

31 January 2022

Mme Annick Girardin
Ministre de la Mer
Ministère de la Mer
20 avenue de Ségur
75007 Paris
France

Dear Ms Girardin,

I am writing on behalf of the North Atlantic Salmon Conservation Organization (NASCO) to invite France (in respect of St Pierre and Miquelon) to join NASCO, in order to facilitate enhanced co-operation and dialogue relating to the conservation and management of Atlantic salmon.

France (in respect of St Pierre and Miquelon) has co-operated with NASCO in relation to the conservation and management of Atlantic salmon for more than 20 years. In that time, France (in respect of St Pierre and Miquelon) has attended NASCO Annual Meetings as an observer, shared information on the operation and outcomes of its fishery and implemented a sampling programme that includes genetic analyses to determine the origin of the salmon taken in the St Pierre and Miquelon fishery. I would like to express appreciation for the information that continues to be provided to NASCO on the fishery at St Pierre and Miquelon. France's long-standing and strong commitment to sustainable fisheries management, including in its homewater salmon fisheries, is well known, and considered extremely valuable in the fight to conserve Atlantic salmon stocks.

Under the United Nations Convention on the law of the sea of 10 December 1982, relating to the conservation and management of straddling fish stocks and highly migratory fish stocks, the relevant coastal States and the States whose nationals fish for such stocks in the adjacent high seas area shall, in accordance with the Convention, pursue co-operation either directly or through appropriate subregional or regional fisheries management organizations (RFMOs) or arrangements, taking into account the specific characteristics of the subregion or region, to ensure effective conservation and management of such stocks. Although NASCO is the RFMO responsible for the conservation and management of wild Atlantic salmon, France (in respect of St Pierre and Miquelon) is still not a member of NASCO, despite the multiple requests formulated over the years.

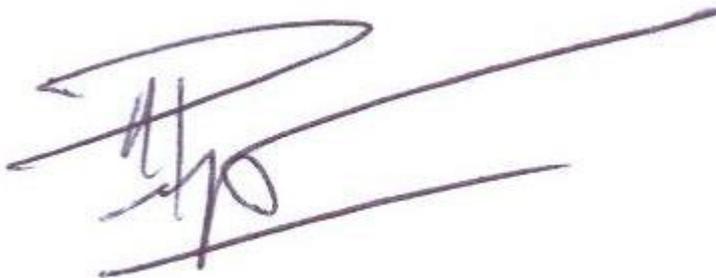
The global status of Atlantic salmon remains of significant concern. Many stocks continue to be at historically low levels of abundance, with several North American-origin stocks threatened with extinction. Both Canada and the United States have had very strict conservation measures in place for many years, including strict prohibitions on fishing. These NASCO Parties are extremely concerned by any fishing activity that may take place in other jurisdictions.

The latest report on the Management and Sampling of the St Pierre and Miquelon Salmon Fishery, CNL(21)21, provided to NASCO last year, included information on the latest genetic analyses which shows that almost 90% of the catch taken in the archipelago's waters originates from the Gaspé Peninsula, the southern part of the Gulf of St Lawrence and Newfoundland. The report also shows a significant increase in total catch in 2020 compared to 2019. Although the report of NASCO's Annual Meeting indicated some positive steps being taken in the St Pierre and Miquelon Salmon Fishery¹, and NASCO acknowledges and appreciates these important actions, NASCO continues to believe that a more formal commitment is needed from France (in respect of St Pierre and Miquelon) to contribute fully to the work of the Organization as a contracting Party to NASCO.

I wish to take this opportunity to highlight the Implementation Plan and Annual Progress Report process implemented by NASCO, currently in its third reporting cycle. This process allows Parties / jurisdictions to highlight positive actions for salmon management and to demonstrate progress towards the implementation of NASCO's Resolutions, Agreements and Guidelines. It is considered to be one of the most valuable mechanisms that NASCO has developed towards the conservation and management of Atlantic salmon and could allow France (in respect of St Pierre and Miquelon) to highlight the good work that is being conducted.

Consequently, the Council of NASCO would like to invite France (in respect of St Pierre and Miquelon) to join NASCO to better facilitate enhanced co-operation and dialogue and, in particular, to enable France (in respect of St Pierre and Miquelon) to participate in NASCO's Implementation Plan and Annual Progress Report process. We would be grateful to receive your response before NASCO's Thirty-Ninth Annual Meeting in June 2022, during which the issues surrounding the fishery at St Pierre and Miquelon will next be considered.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to be 'A. Peyronnet', written over a horizontal line.

Arnaud Peyronnet
President of NASCO

CC: The Minister of the Overseas, Mr Sebastien Lecornu, to be forwarded to the Prefect of St Pierre and Miquelon

¹ These include: legislation which establishes that the fishery is subject to authorisation and an Annual Fishery Plan and that all catch must be declared; the substantial work that has been undertaken to increase awareness among fishers to improve the quality of the available data for sampling and inspections; a new regulation in 2021 to limit the number of licences for the recreational fishery in order to prevent the total harvest from increasing; and the inspection team having their own patrol boat in 2021. We note also the ongoing and successful collaboration with Canada on the sampling programme set up in 2013 between IFREMER – St Pierre and Miquelon and DFO – Newfoundland and Labrador.