

	<p>Council</p> <p><i>Fourth Interim Report of the Implementation Plan / Annual Progress Report Review Group for the Review of Implementation Plans under the Third Cycle of Reporting (2019 – 2024)</i></p>	<p>CNL(22)15</p> <p>Agenda item: 5b</p>
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Fourth Interim Report of the Implementation Plan / Annual Progress Report Review Group for the Review of Implementation Plans under the Third Cycle of Reporting (2019 – 2024)

By Video Conference

15-19 November 2021

Note: The Interim Report of the Review Group is available as document [CNL\(19\)14](#). The Second Interim Report of the Review Group is available as document [CNL\(20\)17](#). The Third Interim Report of the Review Group is available as document [CNL\(21\)07](#). This Report covers the work of the Review Group at its November 2021 meeting only. It does not repeat background information included in those reports.

1. Opening of the Meeting

- 1.1 The Chair, Cathal Gallagher (European Union), opened the meeting and welcomed members of the Review Group. He thanked them for agreeing to undertake the work assigned to them. Katrine Kærgaard (Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland)) was unable to participate in the meeting.
- 1.2 The Chair reminded the Group of the discussion around Implementation Plans (IPs) at the Annual Meeting of the Council in June 2021. He noted that the following decisions were made that impact the work of the Group:
 - 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;
 - 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; 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.

- 1.3 The Chair also reminded the Group that the Council had agreed in June 2021 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. Dialogue had taken place in September, between himself (as Chair of the Review Group) the NASCO Secretariat and five Parties / jurisdictions: Canada, EU – Germany, EU – Finland, EU – Spain, and EU – Sweden.
- 1.4 As Council had agreed that there would be no major change to the IP process, the task to review and evaluate the revised Implementation Plans remained the same as in 2020. The Chair noted the four areas of assessment:
1. Identifying whether the answers by each Party / jurisdiction to the questions posed are satisfactory;
 2. Identifying clearly that the threats and challenges to the management of wild Atlantic salmon identified under each theme are related to NASCO’s Resolutions, Agreements and Guidelines;
 3. Determining that each action:
 - addresses the main (relevant) threats and challenges identified for that Party / jurisdiction;
 - adheres to the ‘SMART’ descriptors; and
 - moves the Party / jurisdiction clearly towards the implementation of NASCO’s Resolutions, Agreements and Guidelines;
 4. Where applicable, that each Party / jurisdiction presented a satisfactory mandatory action that demonstrated movement towards the achievement of NASCO’s goals in the management of mixed-stock fisheries, effective sea lice management and containment of farmed fish in all production facilities.
- 1.5 The Chair reminded the Group of the requirement to assess as to whether the improvements requested in the previous rounds of review had been addressed in the revised IPs.
- 1.6 It was noted that Council had requested, for this round of IP reviews, that 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 / jurisdictions should be communicated on the NASCO website and social media.
- 1.7 The Chair noted that a Theme-based Special Session (TBSS) on aquaculture had been held during the 2021 Annual Meeting. The TBSS Steering Committee had produced three draft recommendations that were then discussed by Council during its meeting. He noted that the Steering Committee’s third recommendation, which the Council agreed to adopt, was very much in line with document [CNL\(20\)55](#), ‘Enhanced Guidance from the Council of NASCO for the Review of Implementation Plans’, hereinafter referred to as ‘the Enhanced Guidance’, as follows:

‘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.'

- 1.8 The Chair informed the Review Group that Parties / jurisdictions had been reminded of this in advance of preparing their revised IPs for review in November 2021.
- 1.9 The Chair reminded the members of the Review Group that they had been appointed specifically to represent NASCO and not their Party, jurisdiction or organization. He also reminded them that they would not be included in the review relating to their home jurisdiction. He noted that the Secretariat's role was to co-ordinate the work and they would not serve as reviewers.
- 1.10 A list of participants is contained in Annex 1.

2. Adoption of the Agenda

- 2.1 The Review Group adopted its Agenda, IP(21)10 (Annex 2).

3. Review of the Terms of Reference and Consideration of Working Methods

- 3.1 The Review Group noted that while no Terms of Reference had been provided by the Council, the Group's assessments would rely upon instructions for evaluation given in the 'Guidelines for the Preparation and Evaluation of NASCO Implementation Plans and for Reporting on Progress', [CNL\(18\)49](#), hereinafter referred to as 'the IP Guidelines', and the Enhanced Guidance document, [CNL\(20\)55](#).
- 3.2 In accordance with the IP Guidelines, an initial assessment of each revised IP had been conducted by the Secretariat prior to the Group's meeting. The aim of this assessment was to ensure that time was not spent on a full critical review of IPs that contained significant omissions. This assessment also highlighted changes from previous versions of the IPs, where they had not been provided by the Parties / jurisdictions, to support the efficiency of the review.
- 3.3 Prior to the meeting, a template was developed by the Secretariat (CNL40.2181, Annex 3) which was used to record the evaluations.
- 3.4 The Review Group agreed to follow the same working methods and 'ground rules' as for previous meetings. These are described in paragraphs 3.4 and 3.5 of the Review Group's interim report (document [CNL\(19\)14](#)).
- 3.5 In line with the Enhanced Guidance, [CNL\(20\)55](#), the most recent version of each IP was made available on the NASCO website prior to the meeting.

4. Evaluation of the Implementation Plans

- 4.1 Parties / jurisdictions were asked to submit their revised Implementation Plans by 1 November 2021 for reassessment.
- 4.2 The following 17 Implementation Plans were received and reviewed.

Party / jurisdiction	Document number	Date received
Canada	IP(19)17rev3	19/10/21
European Union		
<i>Denmark</i>	IP(19)09rev2	26/03/21
<i>Finland</i>	IP(19)12rev2	01/11/21
<i>Germany</i>	IP(19)11rev3	20/10/21

<i>Ireland</i>	IP(19)15rev2	10/11/21
<i>Portugal</i>	IP(19)06rev2	05/11/21
<i>Spain (Asturias)</i>	IP(19)20rev3	26/03/21
<i>Spain (Cantabria)</i>	IP(19)22rev2	26/03/21
<i>Spain (Galicia)</i>	IP(19)19rev2	26/03/21
<i>Spain (Gipuzkoa)</i>	IP(20)04rev	26/03/21
<i>Spain (Navarra)</i>	IP(19)14rev2	26/03/21
<i>Sweden</i>	IP(19)07rev2	28/10/21
United Kingdom		
<i>England and Wales</i>	IP(19)13rev3	26/10/21
<i>Northern Ireland</i>	IP(19)08rev3	26/10/21
<i>Scotland</i>	IP(19)10rev2	26/10/21
Norway	IP(19)18rev3	01/11/21
United States of America	IP(19)25rev2	26/10/21

Interpretation of Assessments

- 4.3 As with previous reviews, a score of ‘1’ (satisfactory answers / information) for an answer meant that a satisfactory answer had been provided. It did not indicate that the Party / jurisdiction was necessarily meeting NASCO’s Resolutions, Agreements and Guidelines.
- 4.4 As set out in the Enhanced Guidance, [CNL\(20\)55](#), the Review Group took the following approach:
- section (1), and each area of sections (2), (3) and (4), were categorised as either ‘satisfactory’ or ‘unsatisfactory’;
 - where a section / area was deemed to be unsatisfactory, the Review Group provided a clear explanation of its decision to the Party / jurisdiction and, where feasible and appropriate, offered suggestions / recommendations for how it could be improved;
 - where the Review Group considered that an action moved the Party / jurisdiction clearly towards the implementation of NASCO’s Resolutions, Agreements and Guidelines even if the action was not entirely in line with the SMART criteria, the Review Group considered such an action as satisfactory; and
 - where the action adhered to the SMART criteria, but the action was considered not to move the Party / jurisdiction towards the implementation of NASCO’s Resolutions, Agreements and Guidelines, it was be deemed unsatisfactory. The Review Group gave a clear explanation of their assessment in their feedback.
- 4.5 The IP Guidelines, [CNL\(18\)49](#), state that the Review Group should provide examples of good practice within the Implementation Plans. Good examples of responses to the questions and of SMART actions to previous review rounds have been listed in the individual feedback to Parties / jurisdictions. However, in light of the decision made by Council in June 2021, for each IP the Review Group noted:
- any aspects of the IP, *in particular*, that moved the Party / jurisdiction clearly towards the achievement of NASCO’s Resolutions, Agreements and Guidelines; and
 - any significant improvements by the Party / jurisdiction that could be communicated on the NASCO website and social media.

Overview of Evaluations

- 4.6 The Review Group discussed whether they wanted to continue with the simple satisfactory / unsatisfactory feedback alone for each of the main sections / areas of the IP, or to provide more nuanced feedback. The Group agreed to provide more nuanced feedback than the previous review. Information on the percentage of satisfactory responses for sections / areas that still contained unsatisfactory responses would be noted and there would be three colour codes, as follows: green (100% satisfactory); orange (not fully satisfactory); and red (100% unsatisfactory).
- 4.7 The summary table / infographic showing the outcome of the evaluation of each section / area of each Implementation Plan reviewed during this fourth review is presented in Annex 4.
- 4.8 Of the 17 IPs evaluated, the Review Group considered that four were satisfactory in each section / area. These are:

Party / jurisdiction	Document number
European Union	
<i>Finland</i>	CNL(21)68
<i>Germany</i>	CNL(21)69
<i>Spain (Navarra)</i>	CNL(21)70
United Kingdom	
<i>England and Wales</i>	CNL(21)71

- 4.9 For the other 13, the Review Group considered that further work is still needed for them to be in line fully with the IP Guidelines, [CNL\(18\)49](#), and the Enhanced Guidance, [CNL\(20\)55](#), and to demonstrate, in all areas, progress towards the achievement of NASCO's Resolutions, Agreements and Guidelines.
- 4.10 However, the Review Group noted the general improved engagement in reporting. Of the 20 IPs that were not considered to be wholly satisfactory after their reviews in 2020, 17 were revised. Additionally, the IPs themselves were improved considerably, with only three of the IPs reviewed in November 2021 showing wholly unsatisfactory sections / areas. Of the 36 sections / areas needing improvement across the 13 IPs, over two-thirds were more than 50 % satisfactory.
- 4.11 The Review Group considered that the information provided in the IPs relating to salmon aquaculture provided it with a clearer understanding of the measures that jurisdictions are taking to mitigate impacts on wild salmon. However, it recommended again that the Parties / jurisdictions with responsibility to regulate salmon farming industries should adhere specifically to NASCO's Resolutions, Agreements and Guidelines directed at the protection of wild salmon. In doing so it recognised what was agreed by Council in June 2021, following the Theme-based Special Session on aquaculture, i.e. that:
- '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.'*
- 4.12 The Review Group recommended that this request be reiterated in the letter from the

NASCO President to those Parties / jurisdictions with salmonid aquaculture facilities, and with unsatisfactory sections / areas remaining in the IP following the November 2021 review.

5. Development of Feedback to the Parties / jurisdictions

- 5.1 Each review comprises a summary sheet and the detailed evaluation. The Review Group agreed that, as in 2020, all full reviews should be published on the NASCO website, in the interests of transparency.
- 5.2 The Review Group considered that in the positive feedback section requested by the Council in 2021, noting the aspects that move the Party / jurisdiction clearly towards the achievement of the goals, the main feedback would be the satisfactory actions – given that these have been agreed to move the Party / jurisdiction in that direction. If there were any other outstanding areas of the IP these would also be highlighted. For complete transparency to all Parties / jurisdictions, this feedback has been compiled and is contained in document IP(21)13 (Annex 5).
- 5.3 For the extra section considering significant improvements since the last IP review in November 2021, the Review Group agreed this would contain comments on significant improvements for the protection of wild salmon which would need to be a major initiative of public interest. This feedback is also contained in document IP(21)13 (Annex 5).
- 5.4 Finally, the Review Group noted the procedure set out in the Enhanced Guidance, [CNL\(20\)55](#), in providing feedback to the Parties / jurisdictions.

‘In each year of the third reporting cycle, in November, if the Review Group still considers that any sections / areas of an IP are unsatisfactory, the President will write to the relevant Minister (or other official) of that Party / jurisdiction to bring to their attention the unsatisfactory nature of this part of the IP and the importance of implementing NASCO’s Resolutions, Agreements and Guidelines. The President will remind the Party / jurisdiction of their commitment to make progress on implementing NASCO’s Resolutions, Agreements and Guidelines, which are essential for ensuring that the objectives of the NASCO Convention to conserve, restore, enhance and rationally manage Atlantic salmon can be met, and enquire about their plans to make and report on progress towards that aim.’

Feedback to the Council and Next Steps

- 5.5 Additionally, the Review Group discussed general feedback that it could give to the Council of NASCO rather than the individual Parties / jurisdictions, further to the comments noted during their 2020 review, [CNL\(21\)07](#).
- 5.6 The Review Group noted that the review process, following the provision of the Enhanced Guidance, [CNL\(20\)55](#), has enabled it to reach a greater understanding of how NASCO’s Resolutions, Agreements and Guidelines are being taken into consideration in the work of the Parties and jurisdictions. It has also enabled the Group to reflect this back to the Parties / jurisdictions.
- 5.7 To enable its feedback to be discussed amongst NASCO delegates, the Review Group recommended that consideration be given to facilitating an IP Special Session at the 2022 Annual Meeting.
- 5.8 The Review Group requested that no further guidance on the review of IPs be

forthcoming from Council.

- 5.9 However, the Review Group noted that it was unclear from the original guidance provided by Council to Parties / jurisdictions, i.e. the IP Guidelines, whether any / all revisions of each IP should also 'be prepared in consultation with NGOs and other relevant stakeholders and industries'. The Review Group proposed that this issue should be clarified during discussions for the fourth cycle of reporting.
- 5.10 In line with the IP Guidelines, any revised IPs should be submitted by 1 November in 2022 (and in 2023).
- 5.11 Finally, and as set out in the Enhanced Guidance document, [CNL\(20\)55](#), Parties / jurisdictions should submit their Annual Progress Report (APR) on the basis of their most recent IP submitted, even if the Review Group considers it to contain unsatisfactory sections. The IP / APR Review Group will meet to review the APRs in April 2022. As agreed by Council in June 2021, all actions will be reviewed by the Review Group if it is able to meet in person. If a virtual meeting is needed, it will be up to the discretion of the Chair and Secretary to determine the best approach as to whether both satisfactory and unsatisfactory actions will be reviewed. Any decision reached will be communicated clearly to the Parties.

6. Arrangements for Presenting the Group's Report to the Council

- 6.1 The Review Group agreed that the Chair would present its report to the Council during the Special Session at the 2022 Annual Meeting.

7. Report of the Meeting

- 7.1 The Review Group agreed a report of its meeting.

8. Other Business

- 8.1 There was no other business.

9. Close of the Meeting

- 9.1 The Chair thanked the members of the Review Group for their hard work during and prior to the meeting.

List of Participants

Cathal Gallagher	Inland Fisheries Ireland (Chair)
Paddy Gargan	Inland Fisheries Ireland
Daniel Kircheis	NOAA National Marine Fisheries Service, USA
Paul Knight	Salmon & Trout Conservation UK
Michael Millane	Inland Fisheries Ireland
Steve Sutton	Atlantic Salmon Federation, Canada
Lawrence Talks	Environment Agency, UK
Emma Hatfield	NASCO Secretary
Wendy Kenyon	NASCO Assistant Secretary

IP(21)10

***Meeting of the
Implementation Plan / Annual Progress Report Review Group***

By Video Conference

15-19 November 2021

Agenda

1. Opening of the Meeting
2. Adoption of the Agenda
3. Review of the Terms of Reference and Consideration of Working Methods
4. Evaluation of the Implementation Plans
5. Development of Feedback to the Parties / jurisdictions
6. Arrangements for Presenting the Group's Report to the Council
7. Report of the Meeting
8. Other Business
9. Close of the Meeting

Annex 3***Evaluation in 2021 of Revised Implementation Plans***

Under NASCO's third reporting cycle the Review Group is asked to evaluate the Implementation Plans submitted by Parties / jurisdictions in three key areas of assessment, by:

- 1. identifying whether the answers by each Party / jurisdiction to the questions posed in the Implementation Plan template are satisfactory;*
- 2. identifying clearly that the threats and challenges to the management of wild Atlantic salmon identified under each theme are related to NASCO's Resolutions, Agreements and Guidelines; and*
- 3. assessing the description of each action to ensure that it adheres to the 'SMART' descriptors such that progress over time can be assessed objectively.*

This is described in detail in the 'Guidelines for the Preparation and Evaluation of NASCO Implementation Plans and for Reporting on Progress', [CNL\(18\)49](#).

- 1. Answers to each question in the Implementation Plan template, [CNL\(18\)50](#), are to be assessed as:*
 - 1. Satisfactory answers / information;*
 - 2. Unsatisfactory (including unclear or incomplete answers / information or clear omissions or inadequacies).*
- 2. NASCO's Resolutions, Agreements and Guidelines as they apply to the third cycle of reporting are listed throughout the Implementation Plan template, [CNL\(18\)50](#).*
- 3. The Review Group will be required to assess the description of each action using the 'SMART' criteria laid out in the new Guidelines document, [CNL\(18\)49](#), thereby assessing the quality of each of the actions, not just how clearly the actions are stated.*

Additionally, in 2020, the Council has provided enhanced guidance to the Review Group in their 'Enhanced Guidance for the Review of Implementation Plans' ([CNL\(20\)55](#)) whereby each section / area of the Implementation Plan will be scored as satisfactory or unsatisfactory; the actions will also be assessed on their ability to move the Party / jurisdiction clearly towards the implementation of NASCO's Resolutions, Agreements and Guidelines.

Through this process it will be possible to determine whether the Implementation Plan provides a fair and equitable basis for assessing the progress that the Party / jurisdiction will make in implementing NASCO's Resolutions, Agreements and Guidelines.

Where a section / area is deemed by the Review Group to be unsatisfactory, the Implementation Plan will be returned to the Party / jurisdiction. The Review Group will provide a clear explanation of its decision to the Party / jurisdiction and, where feasible and appropriate, offer specific suggestions / recommendations for how it could be improved. The tables below, for each of the three main areas to be assessed, provide a template for evaluation in each case.

In 2021, Council made decisions which mean that 1) only the revised parts of any resubmitted IP need to be reviewed 2) aspects of the IP that are moving the Party / jurisdiction clearly towards the achievement of NASCO's Resolutions, Agreements and Guidelines should be identified, and 3) significant improvements should be identified, to be communicated on the NASCO website and social media.

Party:

Jurisdiction/Region:

Assessment area 1. Are the questions posed in the Implementation Plan template answered satisfactorily?

#	Question in IP Template	Initial Assessment (1 or 2)	Draft feedback on any improvements required (for answers assessed as 2)	Comments relating to previous review round: changed as requested by IP RG?
1. Introduction				
1.1	What are the objectives for the management of wild salmon?			
1.2	What reference points (e.g. conservation limits, management targets or other measures of abundance) are used to assess the status of stocks?			
1.3	What is the current status of stocks under the new classification system outlined in CNL(16)11?			
1.4	How is stock diversity (e.g. genetics, age composition, run-timing, etc.) taken into account in the management of salmon stocks?			
1.5	To provide a baseline for future comparison, what is the current and potential quantity of salmon habitat?			
1.6	What is the current extent of freshwater and marine salmonid aquaculture? <i>Append one or more maps showing the location of aquaculture facilities and aquaculture free zones in rivers and the sea.</i>			
1.7	Please describe the process used to consult NGOs and other stakeholders and industries in the development of this Implementation Plan.			
Overall score by Review Group for 1. Introduction			Satisfactory / Unsatisfactory (<i>delete as appropriate</i>)	

2. Management of Salmon Fisheries:				
<i>In this section please review the management approach to each of the fisheries in your jurisdiction (i.e. commercial, recreational and other fisheries) in line with the relevant NASCO Resolutions, Agreements and Guidelines. For Parties / jurisdictions that prosecute mixed-stock fisheries, there should be at least one action related to their management.</i>				
2.1	What are the objectives for the management of the fisheries for wild salmon?			
2.2	What is the decision-making process for the management of salmon fisheries, including predetermined decisions taken under different stock conditions (e.g. the stock level at which regulations are triggered)?			
2.3	(a) Are fisheries permitted to operate on salmon stocks that are below their reference point (e.g. Conservation Limits)? If so, (b) how many such fisheries			

	are there and (c) what approach is taken to managing them that still promotes stock rebuilding?			
2.4	(a) Are there any mixed-stock salmon fisheries? If so, (b) how are these defined, (c) what was the mean catch in these fisheries in the last five years and (d) how are they managed to ensure that all the contributing stocks are meeting their conservation objectives?			
2.5	How are socio-economic factors taken into account in making decisions on management of salmon fisheries?			
2.6	What is the current level of unreported catch and what measures are being taken to reduce this?			
2.7	Has an assessment under the Six Tenets for Effective Management of an Atlantic Salmon Fishery been conducted? If so, (a) has the assessment been made available to the Secretariat and (b) what actions are planned to improve the monitoring and control of the fishery? (c) If the six tenets have not been applied, what is the timescale for doing so?			
Overall score by Review Group for 2. Management of Salmon Fisheries			Satisfactory / Unsatisfactory (<i>delete as appropriate</i>)	

3. Protection and Restoration of Salmon Habitat:				
<i>In this section please review the management approach to the protection and restoration of habitat in your jurisdiction in line with the relevant NASCO Resolutions, Agreements and Guidelines.</i>				
3.1	How are risks to productive capacity identified and options for restoring degraded or lost salmon habitat prioritised, taking into account the principle of 'no net loss' and the need for inventories to provide baseline data?			
3.2	How are socio-economic factors taken into account in making decisions on salmon habitat management?			
3.3	What management measures are planned to protect wild Atlantic salmon and its habitats from (a) climate change and (b) invasive aquatic species?			
Overall score by Review Group for 3. Protection and Restoration of Salmon Habitat			Satisfactory / Unsatisfactory (<i>delete as appropriate</i>)	

4.	<p>Management of Aquaculture, Introductions and Transfers and Transgenics</p> <p><i>Council has requested that for Parties / jurisdictions with salmon farms, there should be a greater focus on actions to minimise impacts of salmon farming on wild salmonid stocks. Each Party / jurisdiction with salmon farming should therefore include at least one action relating to sea lice management and at least one action relating to containment, providing quantitative data in Annual Progress Reports to demonstrate progress towards the international goals agreed by NASCO and the International Salmon Farmers Association (ISFA):</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 100% of farms to have effective sea lice management such that there is no increase in sea lice loads or lice-induced mortality of wild salmonids attributable to the farms; • 100% farmed fish to be retained in all production facilities. <p><i>In this section please provide information on all types of aquaculture, introductions and transfers, and transgenics (including freshwater hatcheries, smolt-rearing etc.</i></p>		
4.1	(a) Is the current policy concerning the protection of wild salmonids consistent with the international goals on sea lice and containment agreed by NASCO and ISFA? (b) If the current policy is not consistent with these international goals, when will current policy be adapted to ensure consistency with the international goals and what management measures are planned to ensure achievement of these goals and in what timescale?		
4.2	(a) What quantifiable progress can be demonstrated towards the achievement of the international goals for 100% of farms to have effective sea lice management such that there is no increase in sea lice loads, or lice-induced mortality of wild salmonids attributable to sea lice? (b) How is this progress monitored, including monitoring of wild fish? (c) If progress cannot be demonstrated, what additional measures are proposed and in what timescale?		
4.3	(a) What quantifiable progress can be demonstrated towards the achievement of the international goals for achieving 100% containment in all (i) freshwater and (ii) marine aquaculture production facilities? (b) How is this progress monitored, including monitoring of wild fish (genetic introgression) and proportion of escaped farmed salmon in the spawning populations? (c) If progress cannot be demonstrated, what additional measures (e.g. use of sterile salmon in fish farming) are proposed and in what timescale?		
4.4	What adaptive management and / or scientific research is underway that could facilitate better achievement of NASCO's international goals for sea lice and containment such that the environmental impact on wild salmonids can be minimised?		
4.5	What is the approach for determining the location of aquaculture facilities in (a) freshwater and (b) marine environments to minimise the risks to wild salmonid stocks?		
4.6	What progress has been made to implement NASCO's guidance on introductions, transfers and stocking?		

4.7	Is there (a) a requirement to evaluate thoroughly risks and benefits before undertaking any stocking programme and (b) a presumption against stocking for purely socio-political / economic reasons?			
4.8	What is the policy / strategy on use of transgenic salmon?			
4.9	<i>For Members of the North-East Atlantic Commission only:</i> What measures are in place, or are planned, to implement the eleven recommendations contained in the 'Road Map' to enhance information exchange and co-operation on monitoring, research and measures to prevent the spread of <i>Gyrodactylus salaris</i> and eradicate it if introduced, including the development and testing of contingency plans?			
Overall score by Review Group for 4. Management of Aquaculture, Introductions and Transfers and Transgenics			Satisfactory / Unsatisfactory (<i>delete as appropriate</i>)	

Assessment area 2. Are the threats and challenges to the management of wild Atlantic salmon identified under each theme related clearly to NASCO’s Resolutions, Agreements and Guidelines?

2.8 Threats identified to wild salmon and challenges for management associated with their exploitation in fisheries, including bycatch of salmon in fisheries targeting other species	Initial Assessment (yes / no)	Draft feedback on any improvements required	Comments relating to previous review round: changed as requested by IP RG?
Threat / challenge F1			
Threat / challenge F2			
Threat / challenge F3			
Threat / challenge F4			
Overall score by Review Group for 2.8: threats / challenges associated with exploitation in fisheries, including bycatch of salmon in fisheries targeting other species			Satisfactory / Unsatisfactory (<i>delete as appropriate</i>)

Copy and paste lines to add in other challenges in the relevant Implementation Plan

3.4 Threats identified to wild salmon and challenges for management in relation to estuarine and freshwater habitat.	Initial Assessment (yes / no)	Draft feedback on any improvements required	Comments relating to previous review round: changed as requested by IP RG?
Threat / challenge H1			
Threat / challenge H2			
Threat / challenge H3			
Threat / challenge H4			
Overall score by Review Group for 3.4: threats / challenges in relation to estuarine and freshwater habitat			Satisfactory / Unsatisfactory (<i>delete as appropriate</i>)

Copy and paste lines to add in other challenges in the relevant Implementation Plan

4.10 Threats identified to wild salmon and challenges for management in relation to aquaculture,	Initial Assessment (yes / no)	Draft feedback on any improvements required	Comments relating to previous review round: changed as requested by IP RG?

introductions and transfers, and transgenics.			
Threat / challenge A1			
Threat / challenge A2			
Threat / challenge A3			
Threat / challenge A4			
Overall score by Review Group for 4.10: threats / challenges in relation to aquaculture, introductions and transfers, and transgenics			Satisfactory / Unsatisfactory (<i>delete as appropriate</i>)

Copy and paste lines to add in other challenges in the relevant Implementation Plan

Assessment area 3. Does each action adhere to the ‘SMART’ descriptors laid out in the new Guidelines document, CNL(18)49?

As a reminder, the ‘SMART’ approach includes reporting on both quantitative and qualitative information. Quantitative information is expected wherever possible and should be presented to demonstrate progress made over the period of the plan towards NASCO’s goals. This should be clear and concise. Where a deviation must be made from a quantitative metric, the reason for the deviation should be explained.

2.9 What SMART actions are planned during the period covered by this Implementation Plan (2019 – 2024) to address each of the threats and challenges identified in section 2.8 to implement NASCO’s Resolutions, Agreements and Guidelines and demonstrate progress towards achievement of its goals and objectives for the management of salmon fisheries?								
#	Action in IP Template	Is the action clearly related to stated threat / challenge?	Is it ‘SMART’? (yes / no)	If ‘no’, which descriptor needs to be reflected more clearly in the action?	If the proposed monitoring is qualitative (as allowed in the Guidelines), is the reason and proposed non-quantitative alternative for monitoring progress acceptable?	Does the action move the Party / jurisdiction clearly towards the achievement of NASCO’s Resolutions, Agreements and Guidelines?	Given the previous question, is the action considered satisfactory or unsatisfactory overall?	Comments relating to previous review round: changed as requested by IP RG?
F1								
F2								
F3								
F4								
Overall score by Review Group for 2.9: SMART actions to implement NASCO’s Resolutions, Agreements and Guidelines and demonstrate progress towards achievement of its goals and objectives for the management of salmon fisheries							Satisfactory / Unsatisfactory <i>(delete as appropriate)</i>	

Copy and paste lines to add in other actions in the relevant Implementation Plan

3.5 What SMART actions are planned during the period covered by this Implementation Plan (2019 – 2024) to address each of the threats and challenges identified in section 3.4 to implement NASCO’s Resolutions, Agreements and Guidelines and demonstrate progress towards achievement of its goals and objectives for the Protection, Restoration and Enhancement of Atlantic Salmon Habitat?								
#	Action in IP Template	Is the action clearly related to stated	Is it ‘SMART’? (yes / no)	If ‘no’, which descriptor needs to be reflected more	If the proposed monitoring is qualitative (as allowed in the Guidelines), is	Does the action move the Party / jurisdiction clearly towards	Given the previous question, is the action considered	Comments relating to previous review round:

		threat / challenge?		clearly in the action?	the reason and proposed non-quantitative alternative for monitoring progress acceptable?	the achievement of NASCO’s Resolutions, Agreements and Guidelines?	satisfactory or unsatisfactory overall?	changed as requested by IP RG?
H1								
H2								
H3								
H4								
Overall score by Review Group for 3.5: SMART actions to implement NASCO’s Resolutions, Agreements and Guidelines and demonstrate progress towards achievement of its goals and objectives for the Protection, Restoration and Enhancement of Atlantic Salmon Habitat							Satisfactory / Unsatisfactory <i>(delete as appropriate)</i>	

Copy and paste lines to add in other actions in the relevant Implementation Plan

4.11 What SMART actions are planned during the period covered by this Implementation Plan (2019 – 2024) to address each of the threats and challenges identified in section 4.10 to implement NASCO’s Resolutions, Agreements and Guidelines and demonstrate progress towards achievement of its goals and objectives for aquaculture, introductions and transfers, and transgenics?								
#	Action in IP Template	Is the action clearly related to stated threat / challenge?	Is it ‘SMART’? (yes / no)	If ‘no’, which descriptor needs to be reflected more clearly in the action?	If the proposed monitoring is qualitative (as allowed in the Guidelines), is the reason and proposed non-quantitative alternative for monitoring progress acceptable?	Does the action move the Party / jurisdiction clearly towards the achievement of NASCO’s Resolutions, Agreements and Guidelines?	Given the previous question, is the action considered satisfactory or unsatisfactory overall?	Comments relating to previous review round: changed as requested by IP RG?
A1								
A2								
A3								
A4								

Overall score by Review Group for 4.11: SMART actions to implement NASCO’s Resolutions, Agreements and Guidelines and demonstrate progress towards achievement of its goals and objectives for aquaculture, introductions and transfers, and transgenics	Satisfactory / Unsatisfactory <i>(delete as appropriate)</i>
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Copy and paste lines to add in other actions in the relevant Implementation Plan

Mandatory action check	Is such a mandatory action required for this Party / jurisdiction?	Is such an action contained in the Implementation Plan?
For Parties / jurisdictions that prosecute mixed-stock fisheries, there should be at least one action related to their management.	Yes / No <i>(delete as appropriate)</i>	Yes / No <i>(delete as appropriate)</i>
Each Party / jurisdiction with salmon farming should include at least one action relating to sea lice management.	Yes / No <i>(delete as appropriate)</i>	Yes / No <i>(delete as appropriate)</i>
Each Party / jurisdiction with salmon farming should include at least one action relating to containment.	Yes / No <i>(delete as appropriate)</i>	Yes / No <i>(delete as appropriate)</i>

Positive Feedback

Are there any aspects of the IP, <i>in particular</i>, that move the Party / jurisdiction clearly towards the achievement of NASCO’s Resolutions, Agreements and Guidelines? <i>(please state below)</i>

Are there any significant improvements by the Party / jurisdiction that could be communicated on the NASCO website and social media? <i>(please state below)</i>

Review Infographic for Implementation Plans Reviewed in November 2021

	Key										
	Section / area 'satisfactory'										
	50 Section / area partly 'satisfactory'; % satisfactory denoted										
	Section / area 'unsatisfactory'										
	Questions on Salmon Management				Threats / Challenges to Wild Salmon			SMART Actions			Mandatory Actions
	Introduction / Background	Management of Salmon Fisheries	Habitat Protection & Restoration	Aquaculture, Introductions & Transfers & Transgenics	Management of Salmon Fisheries	Habitat Protection & Restoration	Aquaculture, Introductions & Transfers & Transgenic	Management of Salmon Fisheries	Habitat Protection & Restoration	Aquaculture, Introductions & Transfers & Transgenics	
Canada				59						33	33
EU - Denmark		86		82							
EU - Finland											
EU - Germany											
EU - Ireland				59						33	
EU - Portugal	57	57	50	76				67			
EU - Spain (Asturias)				82							
EU - Spain (Cantabria)				94							67
EU - Spain (Galicia)	71	50	25	35				50			67
EU - Spain (Gipuzkoa)								67			
EU - Spain (Navarra)											
EU - Sweden				94				90			
Norway				65					50	92	67
UK - England and Wales											
UK - Northern Ireland										83	67
UK - Scotland				41						40	33
United States				88						75	67

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Positive Feedback to Parties / jurisdictions from the Fourth Round of Review of Implementation Plans, in November 2021**1. Positive feedback*****EU – Germany***

The Review Group previously called attention to action H4 as being a very good action. The action aims to conduct food web manipulations to restore the hyporheic zone in eutrophic rivers. The RG considered this as an ambitious, unique and innovative study that may inform efforts to address predator / prey imbalances throughout the species range.

EU – Ireland

In taking account of stock diversity in the management of salmon populations, EU – Ireland manages stocks on a catchment-by-catchment basis and assesses for 1SW and 2SW components with specific management advice such as bag limits to restrict the numbers of fish that can be taken. Extensive genetic analysis and genotyping of salmon stocks has also enabled differentiation of stocks to help define remaining mixed-stock fisheries.

The Review Group previously called attention to Action H2 as being a very good action. This action establishes a prioritised programme of fish passage improvements and environmental drainage maintenance procedures to address hydromorphological threats. It has clearly identified metrics and ambitious goals, which, if completed, would provide considerable conservation benefit to salmon.

EU- Spain (Cantabria).

The Review Group considered that Actions F4 and F5 represent concise, quantitative actions that are linked clearly back to an identified threat, and that can be easily reported on and evaluated in the Annual Progress Report. Action F4 will enable the determination of in-river exploitation levels, using tagging and catch and effort statistics; Action F5 enables in-river, index river, monitoring (smolt & spawner census, tagging of smolts, electrofishing).

EU- Spain (Galicia)

In Galicia, new fish passage facilities are being tested to improve connectivity and accessibility allowing salmon to reach upper river reaches. Improvement of fish passage at barriers and removal of barriers is also being undertaken.

EU- Spain (Gipuzkoa)

The Review Group welcomed the continued precautionary approach to prohibit fishing activities and also the efforts to re-establish stocks through the conservation hatchery programme.

The Review Group considered action F1 to be a very good action. This action, on annual monitoring of salmon, has clearly set out components that, if undertaken, should provide valuable information to support efforts to rehabilitate salmon stocks and inform the development of conservation limits.

EU - Sweden

Sweden is proposing new national legislation that all large multi sea winter salmon caught will have to be released in river fisheries. An increase in egg deposition of at least 25% is expected from this management action. It is also noted that the practice of catch and release is increasing, with ca 30% of the catch is released currently.

Norway

Norway has a national program for monitoring escaped salmon in rivers, and approximately 200 rivers are monitored annually to calculate the prevalence of escaped salmon in the spawning populations. Based on the monitoring programme, active removal of escaped farmed salmon takes place. The monitoring program has shown a steady decline in the proportion of escaped salmon in Norwegian rivers since 2016. A program monitoring genetic integrity in salmon rivers also takes place.

The Review Group considered Action F3, for a major revision of regulatory measures in rivers and in mixed-stock fisheries in the sea for the period 2021-2026, to be a very good action. It has clear goals and timelines and, if implemented, has the potential to reduce exploitation and lead to considerable conservation benefits to salmon.

UK – England and Wales

UK – England and Wales' focus on restoration and conservation is bold and ambitious and remains unique across all Parties and jurisdictions. Despite being first adopted in 2014, the policy that recognises and reinforces the risks that stocking has on wild salmonids has, ultimately, led to the end of their stocking programmes in Welsh rivers and severely limited them in English rivers.

The Review Group previously called attention to action H3, to improve fish passage and salmon habitat through implementing River Basin Management Plans, as being a very good action. It has clearly identified metrics and ambitious goals, which, if completed, would provide considerable conservation benefit to salmon.

UK – Northern Ireland

The Review Group considered that the revised Action H5, which aims to enhance degraded habitat or improve salmon habitat on two primary salmon rivers annually, is an ambitious action that is very succinct with clear, quantitative goals.

United States

The Review Group welcomed the United States' plans to explore the efficacy, cost and resources to monitor sea lice presence / abundance in waters associated with aquaculture. **The Review Group would like to see this added as an action in section 4.11 to enable progress to be followed through the Annual Progress Reports.**

2. Significant Improvements

UK – Scotland

The first national assessment of genetic introgression of escaped farmed salmon in Scotland has been released. This documents the adverse impact that escaped farmed fish is having on the native wild salmon population.