

## CNL(22)47

### ***Statement of the Council Regarding Pink Salmon, *Oncorhynchus gorbuscha*, in the NASCO Convention Area***

RECOGNISING that the pink salmon, *Oncorhynchus gorbuscha*, in the NASCO Convention Area is an introduced species native to the Pacific Ocean;

AWARE that ICES advised in 2018 (CNL(18)08rev) that introductions to the White Sea basin in northern Russia in the mid-1980s led to the rapid establishment of self-sustaining, odd-year populations in the White Sea rivers in the Murmansk and Archangelsk regions of Russia and that, despite cessation of these introductions, catches of pink salmon, at previously unrecorded levels, were reported in 2017 in various countries around the North Atlantic over a wide geographical area including all three NASCO Commission areas;

RECOGNISING that ICES advised in 2013 (ICES CM 2013/ACOM:09) that pink salmon can pose threats to wild Atlantic salmon, *Salmo salar*, and ecosystems in a number of ways and potential threats were either not evidenced and unlikely or occurred for short periods of time, an explosive increase in numbers and spread over a wider geographical area may have the potential to increase the risk of adverse impacts on wild Atlantic salmon in some rivers;

NOTING that, in an increasing number of rivers in the Convention area, self-sustaining populations of pink salmon have become established and there was explosive population growth and geographic spread from 2019 to 2021 to the extent that pink salmon have become the most numerous fish species in some rivers, increasing the risk of adverse impacts in the Convention area;

ACKNOWLEDGING that the Steering Committee of the International Year of the Salmon Symposium held in Tromsø in 2019 recommended that NASCO should facilitate co-operation between Parties when there is a need for international collaboration to prevent or reduce the threat to wild Atlantic salmon stocks from invasive species;

RECOGNISING the provisions of the Resolution by the Parties to the Convention for the Conservation of Salmon in the North Atlantic Ocean To Minimise Impacts from Aquaculture, Introductions and Transfers, and Transgenics on the Wild Salmon Stocks, CNL(06)48, the 'Williamsburg Resolution';

The Council of NASCO urges each Party to take the following actions, consistent with the Williamsburg Resolution:

- co-operate to minimise adverse effects of pink salmon on wild Atlantic salmon. Such co-operation could include data sharing and exchange of information on monitoring and surveillance programmes, scientific understanding of impacts and best practice on methods to prevent the spread and establishment of populations of pink salmon without damage to wild Atlantic salmon stocks;
- initiate corrective measures, without delay, when significant adverse effects on wild Atlantic salmon stocks are identified, and that these should be designed to achieve their purpose promptly;
- encourage research and data collection in relation to pink salmon in the Convention area;
- develop and distribute educational materials to increase awareness of the risks that pink salmon pose to wild Atlantic salmon and the need for the measures to control their spread; and

The Council of NASCO agrees to establish a Standing NASCO Working Group on the threat of pink salmon with the aim to agree Terms of Reference for this Group at the Annual Meeting in 2023, taking into consideration the advice from ICES on pink salmon, expected in September 2022, and relevant recommendations of the External Performance Review.