



**REPORT OF THE
THIRTY-NINTH
ANNUAL MEETING
OF THE COUNCIL**

**Dalmahoy Hotel & Country Club, Edinburgh, Scotland
6 – 9 June 2022**

President: Arnaud Peyronnet (European Union)

Vice-President: Kim Damon-Randall (United States)

Secretary: Emma Hatfield

CNL(22)53

***Report of the Thirty-Ninth Annual Meeting of the Council of the North
Atlantic Salmon Conservation Organization***

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1. Opening of the Meeting

- 1.1 The President, Arnaud Peyronnet (EU), opened the meeting and made a Statement on behalf of the Organization (Annex 1).
- 1.2 The representatives of Canada, Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland), the European Union (EU), Norway, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom (UK) and the United States made Opening Statements (Annex 2).
- 1.3 Opening Statements were made by the following Inter-Governmental Organizations: the European Inland Fisheries and Aquaculture Advisory Commission (EIFAAC) and the North Pacific Anadromous Fish Commission (NPAFC) (Annex 3).
- 1.4 An Opening Statement was made on behalf of the Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) (Annex 4).
- 1.5 A list of participants at the Thirty-Ninth Annual Meeting of the Council of NASCO is given in Annex 5.

2. Adoption of the Agenda

- 2.1 The Council adopted its Agenda, [CNL\(22\)42](#) (Annex 6).

3. Financial and Administrative Issues

a) Report of the Finance and Administration Committee

- 3.1 The Chair of the Finance and Administration Committee (FAC), Kim Blankenbeker (USA), introduced the Report of the FAC Meeting, [CNL\(22\)05](#).
- 3.2 On the recommendation of the Committee, the Council agreed:
 - to adopt the Audited Accounts for 2021;
 - to adopt a Budget for 2023 and the Forecast Budget for 2024, [CNL\(22\)54](#) (Annex 7);
 - to adopt the ‘Proposed Interim Policy on the Interpretation and Application of NASCO Staff Fund Rule 3.2 and Staff Rule 8.2(b) Concerning the Lump Sum Entitlement’, [CNL\(22\)44](#) (Annex 8); and
 - to adopt the report of the Finance and Administration Committee, [CNL\(22\)05](#).

4. Scientific, Technical, Legal and Other Information

a) Secretary’s Report

- 4.1 The President referred the Council to the Secretary’s Report, [CNL\(22\)06](#), and asked the Secretary to speak to the paper. The Secretary noted that the report would be taken as read but that she wished to highlight section 9. This section provided information on

work that has been undertaken to enable the production of a high-impact scientific review paper on the impact of salmon farming (sea lice and escapes) on wild Atlantic salmon. This follows the Council's consideration of the draft recommendation from the 2021 Theme-based Special Session (TBSS) Steering Committee, [CNL\(21\)62](#) (paragraph 5.10):

'... to establish a Working Group to draft a NASCO report which provides the latest scientific knowledge on the impacts of sea lice and escaped farmed salmon on wild salmon.'

- 4.2 The Secretary noted that an accompanying paper, [CNL\(22\)07](#), laid out a proposal to Council to enable this innovative research to be carried out and the high-impact scientific review paper to be produced. She noted that in 2021 the Parties had wanted such a report to 'be scientifically robust and peer reviewed'; 'that ICES should be involved, noting that the report needs scientific credibility'; 'the report needs to be perceived as independent and scientific'; and 'representatives on the Working Group should be chosen due to their expertise'. The Secretariat was asked to work with the TBSS Steering Committee to identify experts to be invited to serve on the Working Group and to liaise with ICES. The Secretary informed the Council that she had liaised with ICES to determine whether an ICES Working Group or Workshop could be convened to draft such a report for NASCO. However, it emerged that ICES Workshops were fully open to the public for registration and Working Groups rely on nominations from ICES member countries. Additionally, it was acknowledged that, to have the degree of impact that the Council wants, the output of any convened group of experts would need to be submitted as a manuscript for consideration in a high-impact peer-reviewed scientific journal, rather than as an ICES or NASCO report in the grey literature.
- 4.3 The Secretary said that in discussion with the President and the Chair of the 2021 TBSS Steering Committee, an alternative proposed approach was developed, whereby a suitably qualified scientist could co-ordinate a small group of experts, initially to discuss their interest in the production of a manuscript for submission in a high-impact scientific journal.
- 4.4 The Secretary referred to paper, [CNL\(22\)07](#), on a proposal for the production of a systematic review of the effect of salmon aquaculture on wild Atlantic salmon populations. This paper proposes to apply a systematic review of the research on the two most extensively researched routes of interaction between aquaculture and wild fish, namely the impact of sea lice and escapees. The objective was to use a weight of evidence approach to explore the presence and magnitude of any impact of salmon aquaculture. The Secretary informed the Council that if the systematic review provides sufficient quantitative data the study will continue to do a meta-analysis on the effect of these factors on the populations of wild fish. She noted that earlier studies have not used such a systematic or quantitative approach.
- 4.5 The President opened the floor for comments. The representative of Canada supported the proposal for a meta-analysis leading to (if possible) a paper in a peer-reviewed journal. He noted that the remit of the Expert Group might be too narrow and some element of disease pathogens might also be considered, as this was becoming a very important issue.
- 4.6 The representative of Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland) echoed the comments from Canada and supported this approach and expanding the scope of the paper to include disease pathogens. She noted that in order for NASCO to have

more impact and be proactive, this type of initiative was important. The representative of Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland) stated that NASCO must get its extensive knowledge into the wider public domain.

4.7 The representative of the EU supported the previous comments made. The representative of the UK also agreed with the comments made by the representatives of Canada and Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland) and noted support for the work and the expansion of the remit proposed. She asked about the next steps needed to enable that the proposed paper is successful in achieving its objectives. The President noted that if the proposed paper was published in a high ranking journal, that in itself would be confirmation that it was impartial and a robust publication.

4.8 The representative of Norway asked how the proposed paper might be financed. The Secretary responded that the Periodic Projects Special Fund was established:

'to help avoid large swings in NASCO's budget from year-to-year where monies are needed to support necessary and higher cost intermittent activities, such as future performance reviews, International Year of the Salmon (IYS) legacy activities such as those agreed by Council in 2019 (i.e. the updates to the State of North Atlantic Salmon report and follow up Symposia), and other costly special projects.' ([CNL\(20\)51rev](#))

4.9 The Secretary said that this appeared to cover the needs of the proposed paper. She also informed the Council that the Periodic Projects Special Fund had a ceiling of £100,000 and, when used, is built back up from the budget surplus. The representative of the United States asked whether the cost of the proposed paper might be spread over two years. This proposal was supported by the representative of Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland).

4.10 The representative of the NGOs noted that the idea of producing a paper reviewing the effect of salmon aquaculture on wild Atlantic salmon populations originated from the NGO representative on the TBSS Steering Committee. He noted that the NGOs are keen that all relevant evidence is reviewed and included. The representative of the NGOs asked that the Parties did not allow the work to produce the paper to mean that they do nothing on fish farming for the years that the paper is in production. He also supported the proposal that the paper be extended to cover disease pathogens.

4.11 In light of this discussion, the Council agreed to ask the Secretary to liaise with the co-ordinator of the Expert Group to request:

- the feasibility of including the impact of disease pathogens from farmed fish in their analysis;
- the provision of any resulting additional costs;
- the provision of a timetable to illustrate how the funding from NASCO could be provided over two financial years; and
- that a representative of the Expert Group present an update to the Council during the 2023 Annual Meeting.

4.12 Council also agreed to:

- consider the responses from the Expert Group to the requests inter-sessionally; and
- to fund this initiative from the Periodic Projects Special Fund.

b) The Third Performance Review: Presentation to the Council from the Chair of the Performance Review Panel

- 4.13 The President noted that the third performance review of NASCO would take place in 2022. He welcomed the Chair of the Review Panel, Erik Molenaar, to the Annual Meeting. The President encouraged delegates to engage with Dr Molenaar over the coming days. Dr Molenaar made a presentation to the Council to introduce the Review Panel and present its working methods. His presentation is contained in document [CNL\(22\)55](#) (Annex 9).
- 4.14 The representative of Norway asked if the Review Panel had discussed how and when they would seek inputs from those that are not Parties to NASCO, from IGOs and others. Dr Molenaar replied that to some extent the Review Panel had already sought input from those groups through the invitation to submit comments. He added that the Review Panel also intends to consider the wealth of NASCO documentation and then determine whether additional material was needed.
- 4.15 The representative of the United States asked whether it was possible to have an extension to the deadline for submitting views to the Review Panel. Dr Molenaar thought that would be acceptable but would consult with colleagues before confirming a one-month extension to 1 August 2022.
- 4.16 The representative of the NGOs welcomed the third performance review of NASCO and noted that the NGOs would also appreciate an extension to the deadline for submitting views.

c) Report on the Activities of the Organization in 2021

- 4.17 The President noted that under Article 5, paragraph 6, of the Convention ‘The Council shall submit to the Parties an annual report of the activities of the Organization.’ Due to time constraints, there was no presentation on the Report on the Activities of the North Atlantic Salmon Conservation Organization in 2021, [CNL\(22\)08](#). The President asked the Parties if there were any comments.
- 4.18 The representative of Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland) noted that the report was largely a summary of the previous year’s reports. She questioned whether the Report on the Activities of the Organization and the Secretary’s Report could be merged and show all of NASCO’s work. She referred to the NAFO Report, which is an outreach document. The representative of Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland) suggested that a combined document would be an opportunity to showcase NASCO’s work.
- 4.19 The President informed the Council that this suggestion would be considered under Agenda item 4g).

d) Announcement of the Tag Return Incentive Scheme Grand Prize

- 4.20 The President noted that NASCO operates a Tag Return Incentive Scheme. Each year, a Grand Prize of £1,500 is awarded together with three prizes of £1,000, one in each of NASCO’s three Commission areas.
- 4.21 The President announced that the Grand Prize winner for 2022 is William Walsh from Canada. The tag was placed on a large salmon returning to the Northwest Miramichi River (New Brunswick, Canada) in 2020. The fish was captured on 1 October 2020 at the estuary trap net in Cassilis operated by Fisheries and Oceans Canada as part of the assessment programme for Atlantic salmon in the Miramichi River. The fish was sampled for length, sex identification, scale sampled and externally marked with a light

blue Carlin tag prior to release back to the river. It measured 81.7 cm fork length and the salmon was identified as a wild female, based on external characteristics. It was recaptured during the black salmon (kelt) recreational fishery on 19 April 2021 in the Southwest Miramichi River at Gray Rapids. It was subsequently released by the angler as there have been mandatory catch and release measures in place for large Atlantic salmon since 1984.

e) Scientific Advice from ICES

4.22 The President reminded delegates that the ICES advice for North Atlantic Salmon Stocks was published on 6 May 2022, [CNL\(22\)09](#).

4.23 The representative of ICES, Dennis Ensing, presented the report of the Advisory Committee (ACOM). The ICES presentation is available as document [CNL\(22\)56](#).

f) Report of the International Atlantic Salmon Research Board

4.24 The President congratulated Martha Robertson (Canada) on being elected Chair of the International Atlantic Salmon Research Board (the Board), inter-sessionally. The report of the Meeting of the Board, [CNL\(22\)10](#), was introduced by Dr Robertson.

4.25 Dr Robertson reported on the main items considered at the meeting of the Board. She said that the Board met on 5 and 7 June. It agreed to an inter-sessional meeting, when NASCO business allows and preferably in advance of the 2023 Annual Meeting, to consider the overall vision, scope and purpose of the Board following recommendations arising from the review of the Board's Metadatabase. The Board agreed not to continue to maintain its Metadatabase. However, the Secretariat will request a final update of the Metadatabase from each Party prior to posting a final copy online. The Board considered a number of projects and was given a presentation on the ROAM project. The Board also agreed to endorse the concept of composing a new North-East Atlantic salmon genetic baseline for the purpose of assigning salmon samples from Greenland to region of origin following a proposal from the UK.

4.26 The Council agreed to adopt the report of the Board.

g) Consideration of Alternative Ways of Conducting NASCO Business Following the Covid-19 Pandemic

4.27 The President noted that as result of the Covid-19 pandemic, in 2020, for the first time ever, and again in 2021, the NASCO Annual Meeting could not be conducted face to face. Alternative arrangements were put in place. He informed the Council that this Agenda item provided an opportunity to explore whether procedures developed during the pandemic might be incorporated into NASCO's future operations. He referred delegates to the paper 'Alternative Ways of Conducting NASCO Business', [CNL\(22\)11](#).

4.28 The representative of Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland) proposed that most meetings be held virtually, and if there was a need to meet face to face, there should be a hybrid option. She proposed that the Annual Meeting should include a hybrid element, recognising environmental impacts. The representative of the United States agreed that substantive meetings may need to be face to face. She agreed that climate change considerations were important. The representative of the EU agreed that some meetings should be held virtually, and the meeting Chair should decide what is appropriate. The representative of Norway supported hybrid meetings and highlighted the cost of travel as well as environmental impacts. He questioned whether there may be a more cost-effective option for hybrid meetings. The representative of Canada supported colleagues and highlighted the environmental costs of large in-

person meetings. The President suggested that flexibility should be provided so that the Chair of inter-sessional meetings could determine the format that would be most appropriate. He noted that a hybrid option should be standard if there is a face-to-face meeting. The representative of the NGOs highlighted the conservation role of NASCO. The NGOs were in support of hybrid meetings, although they agreed that the Annual Meeting should be held face to face.

- 4.29 The President asked about inter-sessional correspondence. The representative of the UK proposed that there should be no inter-sessional correspondence in general, but that a process should be initiated whereby questions might be submitted in advance or at the start of the meeting to the relevant Party, to enable a comprehensive answer to be provided during the meeting. The representatives of the EU and the United States agreed.
- 4.30 The President noted that the International Salmon Farmers Association (ISFA) had shown no real engagement with NASCO for a number of years. The representative of the EU suggested that NASCO should continue inviting ISFA to the Annual Meeting and it was up to ISFA if they wished to attend. The representative of the United States proposed that the Secretariat send ISFA an invitation to attend the Annual Meeting and submit a statement. Canada suggested that if ISFA does not show interest in engaging with NASCO into the future, NASCO may decide not to continue seeking engagement. The representative of the NGOs agreed with these suggestions. The representative of the United States suggested that ISFA be taken off the Council Agenda unless they accept the invitation to attend the Annual Meeting.
- 4.31 The President asked about reports provided prior to the Annual Meeting. He asked whether there was scope to streamline the reports and to also use them as a communications tool. The representative of Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland) suggested that the Report on the Activities of the Organization and the Secretary's Report should be merged to be a showcase for NASCO's work. She highlighted the Annual Report of the Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organization (NAFO) as a good example. The representative of Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland) also proposed that reports of the meetings should be more concise. This was supported by the representatives of UK and the United States.
- 4.32 The representative of Canada said that Canada had discussed the ICES report and suggested that a single report be made to the NASCO Annual Meeting at Council with all components of the Advice. The President also suggested that the ICES Advice document might be shorter and more focused. The representative of the EU supported both suggestions. The representative of Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland) agreed, noting that the ICES advice for other stocks was much more focused. If additional information was needed, delegates could consult the WGNAS report.
- 4.33 The President asked about the value of the Annotated Agendas and Explanatory Memorandum provided prior to the Annual Meeting by the Secretariat. The representative of the EU said the Annotated Agendas are extremely useful but that perhaps the Explanatory Memorandum was not required.
- 4.34 Council agreed:
- that the NASCO Annual Meetings should be organised to be face to face for participants, with a simple, cost-efficient virtual option for some delegates;
 - by default, consideration would be given for inter-sessional meetings to be virtual,

but the Chair and the Secretary, in consultation with the members, would determine the exact format. Where a face-to-face meeting was selected, a hybrid option would be available;

- that there should be no inter-sessional correspondence prior to NASCO Annual Meetings, but that if Parties / NGOs have questions on Agenda items, they should be invited to submit them in advance to the relevant Party, to enable an answer to be provided during the meeting;
- to request the Secretary to continue to send ISFA an invitation to attend the Annual Meetings of NASCO and submit a statement. If ISFA declines to participate, 'Liaison with the Salmon Farming Industry' will be removed from the Agenda for that year;
- that the Report on the Activities of the Organization and the Secretary's Report be merged to be a showcase for NASCO's work;
- to ask the Secretary to approach ICES to investigate a more streamlined approach / presentation of the ICES Advice;
- that the full ICES Advice should be presented in Council only in future;
- to ask the Secretariat to provide Annotated Agendas prior to the Annual Meetings for the Council, Commissions, FAC and Board, but not to provide the Explanatory Memorandum.

h) Report of the Rivers Database Working Group

- 4.35 The President informed the Council that following decisions made by Council in 2021, the NASCO Rivers Database is now on the website: [NASCO Rivers Database – NASCO](#). At that time, the Council agreed to establish a Working Group to address high-level issues with respect to the Rivers Database, and to report back to the Annual Meeting in 2022. The Rivers Database Working Group met by video conference in November and December 2021.
- 4.36 The Chair of the Working Group, Livia Goodbrand (Canada), presented the 'Report of the Meeting of the Rivers Database Working Group', [CNL\(22\)12](#), to the Council. Her presentation is available as document [CNL\(22\)63](#).
- 4.37 The representative of Canada thanked the Working Group and said that Canada had no objections to any of the recommendations. The representative of the United States noted that the Rivers Database would form the basis of the next State of North Atlantic Salmon Report. She suggested that the Periodic Projects Special Fund could be used to bring someone on board to work on this. The representative of Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland) supported the recommendations and noted that this would be a good outreach project. She particularly welcomed the recommendation about translating the Rivers Database into different languages. The representative of Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland) noted that if the Rivers Database was to be used in Greenland, translation may be needed. The representative of the UK fully supported the recommendations and particularly welcomed the recommendation seeking to clarify the purpose of the Rivers Database.
- 4.38 The representative of Norway also supported the recommendations. He noted Norway's view that it would be important to include information about the pressures that are affecting salmon in the rivers. He stated that the provision of this type of information should be mandatory for Parties / jurisdictions. The representative of the NGOs supported Norway's comments. He also noted that the NGOs were supportive of the

public outreach purpose for the Rivers Database.

- 4.39 The representative of the United States proposed that the spreadsheet holding information on rivers, which Parties are requested to complete, includes a drop-down list, including general broad categories of threats to make it easier to input information and ensure consistency. The representative of Canada also noted that IT specialists would need to be contracted for this work. The representative of the UK noted that the Steering Committee would provide oversight, but that the Parties should have the opportunity to agree the final plans for the ‘Atlas’ and agree the final product before it goes live. The representative of Canada said that the Steering Committee should have the opportunity to consider their membership, such that members could reaffirm their participation.

4.40 Council agreed:

- to accept the recommendations of the Rivers Database Working Group (noting that it should focus on useability and being intuitive, and that Parties should be urged to complete the sections on threats);
- to ask the Rivers Database Working Group to act as the Steering Committee for the development of the ‘Wild Atlantic Salmon Atlas’ and progress this work in line with the discussion recorded in paragraphs 4.37 – 4.39 of this report;
- to ask the Secretary to work with that Steering Committee to develop the online ‘Wild Atlantic Salmon Atlas’;
- to use the Periodic Projects Special Fund to fund this work over two years.

i) Report of the Standing Scientific Committee

- 4.41 The President informed the Council that Articles 3 and 4 of the Convention require NASCO to take into account the best scientific evidence and establish working arrangements with ICES. During the Annual Meeting, the Standing Scientific Committee (SSC), which assists the Council and Commissions in formulating their questions to ICES, met to develop a Draft Request for Scientific Advice from ICES for consideration by the Commissions and the Council. The Co-ordinator of the SSC, Livia Goodbrand (Canada), presented the draft request to ICES for scientific advice.

- 4.42 The Council agreed to adopt the ‘Request for Scientific Advice from ICES’, [CNL\(22\)13](#), (Annex 10).

5. Conservation, Restoration, Enhancement and Rational Management of Atlantic Salmon under the Precautionary Approach

a) Report from the Tromsø Symposium on the Recommendations to Address Future Management Challenges

(i) *Special Session: Report from the Tromsø Symposium on the Recommendations to Address Future Management Challenges*

- 5.1 The President reminded delegates that, to mark the International Year of the Salmon (IYS), a two-day symposium titled ‘Managing the Atlantic salmon in a rapidly changing environment – management challenges and possible responses’ was held immediately prior to the 2019 NASCO Annual Meeting. The IYS Symposium Steering Committee made a number of recommendations to NASCO in its report. He invited the Chair of the Symposium Steering Committee, Eva Thorstad (Norway) to present the report and its recommendations, [CNL\(19\)16](#). Her presentation is available as document [CNL\(22\)57](#).

- 5.2 The discussions held during the Special Session are contained in [CNL\(22\)58](#) (Annex 11).
- (ii) ***Decisions taken in light of the Special Session on the Report from the Tromsø Symposium on the Recommendations to Address Future Management Challenges***
- 5.3 The President informed delegates that this Agenda item allows for decisions to be taken in light of the Special Session. Whilst considering the recommendations of the Tromsø Symposium Steering Committee, he said that Council may wish to note that the third performance review of NASCO will take place in 2022 and will report to the 2023 Annual Meeting. The Terms of Reference for the performance review, [CNL\(21\)22](#), state that:
- ‘The ‘Recommendations to NASCO to Address Future Management Challenges in the Report from the Tromsø Steering Committee’, [CNL\(19\)16](#), [...] including the Council’s responses to these recommendations, should be considered by the Review Panel in formulating their own recommendations’.*
- 5.4 He acknowledged, therefore, that work resulting from the Tromsø Symposium Steering Committee recommendations and the forthcoming third performance review, reporting in 2023, would likely interact.
- 5.5 The President noted that the Parties had engaged in good discussion on the recommendations and had conducted analysis of the NASCO work in progress, planned or completed in the relevant areas. He stated that work on eight of the recommendations was in progress. Work on a further three of the recommendations had not yet started – these concerned recommendations to update NASCO Guidelines. Plans for four activities which relate to the recommendations are underway and an additional activity was being scoped out. The President said that this initial mapping exercise could be shared with the Chair of the third performance review.
- 5.6 The President noted that discussions had already taken place on updating the Stocking Guidelines and comments related to this had been raised during the Special Session. He noted that there was a willingness to move forward on this, benefitting from the 2017 TBSS. He indicated that the Parties recognised this as an important issue and that the Guidelines needed to be reviewed urgently. He proposed that work could begin inter-sessionally, without waiting for the results of the external performance review, by launching a Working Group to review the Guidelines, nominating members of the Working Group and developing Terms of Reference and working methods for the Group.
- 5.7 The President said that Recommendation 8 on aquaculture was particularly important. He highlighted the range of NASCO initiatives that addressed this recommendation. These included:
- development of ‘Enhanced Guidance for the Review of Implementation Plans’, [CNL\(20\)55](#), to strengthen the review of the IPs in the third reporting cycle;
 - the 2021 Theme-based Special Session on Minimising Impacts of Salmon Farming on Wild Atlantic Salmon, [CNL\(21\)65](#);
 - consideration of an Aquaculture Statement which would urge action to address this issue; and
 - work to publish a high impact scientific paper on the effect of salmon aquaculture on wild Atlantic salmon populations.

- 5.8 The President informed delegates that the Parties had identified enhancing the participation of indigenous people in NASCO as a potential priority area and indicated that there was a willingness to act on this urgently. The representative of Canada noted support for this and requested that there be a Special Session at the Annual Meeting in 2023 on indigenous perspectives on Atlantic salmon. The representative of the United States asked if Canada would make a presentation and whether they would expect other Parties to present on this topic. The representative of Canada said they would consider this further.
- 5.9 The representative of the NGOs asked that the Council invite a representative of the NGOs onto any Working Group established to update the Stocking Guidelines. He noted that he was happy to hear of the NASCO initiatives on aquaculture and was also happy that the Council was not waiting until the report of the third performance review before taking action.
- 5.10 The Council agreed that:
- progress on updating the Stocking Guidelines would start inter-sessionally;
 - an NGO representative would be invited to sit on the Stocking Guidelines Working Group; and
 - there would be a Special Session on indigenous perspectives on Atlantic salmon during the 2023 Annual Meeting. Canada would liaise with the Secretariat and other interested Parties on this.
- b) Evaluation of Implementation Plans Under the Third Reporting Cycle (2019 – 2024)**
- (i) Special Session: Evaluation of Implementation Plans Under the Third Reporting Cycle (2019 – 2024)*
- 5.11 The President reminded delegates that NASCO has adopted Resolutions, Agreements and Guidelines that address the Organization’s principal areas of concern for the management of salmon stocks. In 2005 it was agreed that ‘NASCO will be committed to the measures and agreements it develops and actively review progress with implementation plans’, [CNL\(05\)49](#). Parties’ / jurisdictions’ revised Implementation Plans (IPs) under the third reporting cycle (2019 – 2024) were reviewed by the IP / APR Review Group in November 2021.
- 5.12 The Chair of the IP / APR Review Group, Cathal Gallagher (EU), presented the report of the 2021 Meeting of the IP / APR Review Group, [CNL\(22\)15](#), to review the IPs. His presentation is available as document [CNL\(22\)59](#).
- 5.13 The discussions held during the Special Session are contained in [CNL\(22\)60](#) (Annex 12).
- (ii) Decisions Taken Regarding the Evaluation of Implementation Plans Under the Third Reporting Cycle (2019 – 2024)*
- 5.14 The President informed delegates that this Agenda item allowed for decisions to be taken in light of the Special Session: Evaluation of Implementation Plans Under the Third Reporting Cycle (2019 – 2024).
- 5.15 The Council agreed to:
- request that the Chair of the IP / APR Review Group and the Secretary arrange a meeting in November 2022 to review any revised IPs.

c) Evaluation of Annual Progress Reports under the 2019 – 2024 Implementation Plans

(i) *Special Session: Evaluation of Annual Progress Reports under the 2019 – 2024 Implementation Plans*

5.16 The President noted that Parties / jurisdictions submit an Annual Progress Report (APR) to NASCO each year. APRs are the primary medium through which NASCO assesses Parties' / jurisdictions' progress towards the achievement of its Resolutions, Agreements and Guidelines. Additionally, under Article 15 of the NASCO Convention, Parties are required to report catch statistics and other information to Council annually. This is achieved through the submission of APRs.

5.17 The Chair of the IP / APR Review Group, Cathal Gallagher (EU), presented the report of the IP / APR Review Group for the review of Annual Progress Reports, [CNL\(22\)16](#). His presentation is available as document [CNL\(22\)61](#).

5.18 The discussions held during the Special Session are contained in [CNL\(22\)62](#) (Annex 13).

(ii) *Decisions Taken Regarding the Evaluation of Annual Progress Reports under the 2019 – 2024 Implementation Plans*

5.19 The President informed delegates that this Agenda item allows for decisions to be taken in light of the Special Session: Evaluation of Annual Progress Reports under the 2019 – 2024 Implementation Plans.

5.20 The Council agreed to:

- the minor changes to the APR template requested by the Review Group; and
- request that the Chair of the IP / APR Review Group and the Secretary arrange a meeting in April 2023 to review the 2022 APRs.

5.21 The representative of the United States asked whether, if the IP / APR Review Group meeting in 2023 was in person, the Review Group would review all actions, or just satisfactory actions. The representative of the NGOs asked if a hybrid meeting could be arranged if necessary. In response to both questions, the President said that it was for the Secretary and the Chair make an appropriate decision at the time. He also noted there would be a relevant discussion on this under Agenda item 4g).

d) International Year of the Salmon Legacy Activities

5.22 The President reminded delegates that in 2016, the Council decided to hold an International Year of the Salmon (IYS) in partnership with the North Pacific Anadromous Fish Commission (NPAFC). The focal year for the IYS was 2019 with some efforts continuing to 2022. The aim was to raise awareness of the factors driving salmon abundance, the environmental and anthropogenic challenges they face, and the measures being taken to address these.

5.23 The Secretary reported that the IYS Synthesis Symposium: 'Salmon in a Rapidly Changing World: Synthesis of the International Year of the Salmon and a Roadmap to 2030' would take place in Vancouver, Canada, from 4 – 6 October 2022.

5.24 The Secretary noted that NASCO's first State of North Atlantic Salmon Report was published in 2019. At the 2021 Annual Meeting the Secretariat was asked to consider the timing and structure of the next State of North Atlantic Salmon Report, once the Rivers Database Working Group had reported. The Secretary referred delegates to the paper 'International Year of the Salmon Legacy Activities', [CNL\(22\)18](#).

- 5.25 The representative of the UK noted that the State of North Atlantic Salmon Report was a key tool in strengthening NASCO's outreach work. She stated that there was a need to see more detail of the revised Rivers Database before it is possible to say what the next State of North Atlantic Salmon Report would look like. The two initiatives needed to be taken in parallel. She noted that there were limitations to paper-based reports and thought that a more interactive product might be useful. The representative of the United States agreed. The representative of Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland) said that the 2019 State of North Atlantic Salmon Report was an important outreach tool and stated that it was important to see what the Rivers Database could provide before making decisions about the next State of North Atlantic Salmon Report.
- 5.26 The representative of the NPAFC stated that the NPAFC is very interested in the Rivers Database / atlas concept and would be interested in exploring how Atlantic salmon and Pacific salmon could be portrayed as they redistribute into the Arctic.
- 5.27 The Council agreed to postpone the discussion on the next State of North Atlantic Salmon Report until the Rivers Database is agreed.
- e) Progress in Implementing the 'Action Plan for Taking Forward the Recommendations of the External Performance Review and the Review of the 'Next Steps' for NASCO', CNL(13)38**
- 5.28 The President noted that the Council adopted an 'Action Plan for taking forward the recommendations of the External Performance Review and the review of the 'Next Steps' for NASCO', [CNL\(13\)38](#). Comprehensive progress reports on the recommendations contained in the Action Plan have been submitted to the Council each year since 2014. The 2022 Report on Progress in Implementing the Action Plan, [CNL\(22\)19](#), was circulated in advance of the meeting.
- 5.29 The President also noted the relevance of the third performance review since the purpose of the review, as set out in its Terms of Reference, [CNL\(21\)22](#), is to assess the 'performance of NASCO since its previous review in 2012...' The Review Panel's report of NASCO's third performance review will be published prior to the 2023 Annual Meeting and considered at that meeting. This agenda item (5e) may not, therefore be required in 2023.
- 5.30 Council agreed that the Agenda item 'Progress in Implementing the 'Action Plan for Taking Forward the Recommendations of the External Performance Review and the Review of the 'Next Steps' for NASCO', [CNL\(13\)38](#) would not be required in 2023.
- f) Liaison with the Salmon Farming Industry**
- 5.31 The President informed delegates that in 2013, the Council discontinued the regular meetings of the International Salmon Farming Association (ISFA) / NASCO Liaison Group. An item on the Agenda was retained, during which a representative of ISFA was invited to participate in an exchange of information on issues concerning impacts of aquaculture on wild salmon. ISFA declined an invitation to send a representative to attend this meeting and to contribute a paper or written statement.
- g) New or Emerging Opportunities for, or Threats to, Salmon Conservation and Management**
- 5.32 The representative of ICES presented the advice relevant to this Agenda item. His presentation is available as document [CNL\(22\)56](#).

- 5.33 The President informed delegates about discussions in the North-East Atlantic Commission on addressing the issue of pink salmon. He noted that the magnitude of pink salmon entering many Atlantic salmon rivers is very concerning. There had been work to develop a statement on pink salmon from the NASCO Council.
- 5.34 The representative of Norway noted that it would be valuable to have a standard approach to pink salmon across the NASCO Parties. Therefore, a statement on pink salmon from Council should refer to Guidelines and Resolutions in place as well as the ICES advice. It should include areas of co-operation between the Parties that would address this threat. The representative of Norway said that this was a serious development and other Parties / jurisdictions could face the same situation.
- 5.35 The President noted that a statement on pink salmon from the Council of NASCO should urge the Parties to take actions consistent with the Williamsburg Resolution to co-operate to minimise adverse effects of pink salmon on wild Atlantic salmon. He tabled a 'Draft Statement of the Council Regarding Pink Salmon, *Oncorhynchus gorbuscha*, in the NASCO Convention Area', CNL(22)43, which included the establishment of a Standing NASCO Working Group on Pink Salmon. The President asked for comments on the draft statement. The representative of the EU said this was a very important issue and the EU will work towards the adoption of a monitoring programme with the intention of developing an action plan. The representative of the UK noted that the UK had some pink salmon with evidence of successful reproduction and was keen to work with the Parties to better understand and address the issue. The representative of Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland) agreed and noted increasing numbers of pink salmon in Greenland and evidence of pink salmon in its one salmon river. The representative of Canada also supported this initiative and said Canada would contribute where it could. The representative of the Russian Federation supported fully the NASCO Standing Working Group on Pink Salmon.
- 5.36 The NPAFC informed the Council that it will host a meeting of Atlantic and Pacific pink salmon experts on 2 – 3 October in Vancouver, to discuss co-operative research into the redistribution of pink salmon.
- 5.37 The representative of Norway offered to provide an update on pink salmon during the Annual Meeting in 2023. The President suggested that other Parties should also be encouraged to provide updates when appropriate. The representative of the NGOs asked that the NGOs be included on the Working Group.
- 5.38 The Council agreed:
- to adopt a 'Statement of the Council Regarding Pink Salmon, *Oncorhynchus gorbuscha*, in the NASCO Convention Area', [CNL\(22\)47](#) (Annex 14). This included agreement to establish a Standing NASCO Working Group on pink salmon.
- h) Management and Sampling of the St Pierre and Miquelon Salmon Fishery**
- 5.39 The President noted that the Council and the North American Commission are concerned about catches of salmon at St Pierre and Miquelon which, although low, occur at a time when there are serious concerns about the abundance of North American stocks and when strict harvest restrictions have been introduced throughout the North American Commission area.
- 5.40 The President noted that France (in respect of St Pierre and Miquelon) is an observer to NASCO. In 2021, the Council agreed to write to France (in respect of St Pierre and Miquelon) to invite it to join NASCO. The President's letter on 31 January 2022,

emphasised how NASCO's Implementation Plan process would enable France (in respect of St Pierre and Miquelon) to highlight their positive actions for salmon management. France (in respect of St Pierre and Miquelon) [replied](#) on 22 April 2022 stating, among other things, that:

'France has, therefore, decided to strengthen the framework around the fishery at St Pierre and Miquelon, shortening the fishing season to 1 May – 21 July and capping the number of recreational licenses issued at 80 in 2021[...] France therefore wishes to retain its status as observer to NASCO.'

- 5.41 The President also noted that the 'Report on the 2021 Salmon Fishery at St Pierre and Miquelon', [CNL\(22\)20rev](#), was submitted by France (in respect of St Pierre and Miquelon). The report would also be considered in the North American Commission. The representative of France (in respect of St Pierre and Miquelon), Camille Servetto, presented the highlights of the report.
- 5.42 The representatives of the United States and Canada expressed their appreciation for France (in respect of St Pierre and Miquelon)'s management of their fishery and the provision of catch statistics. They noted that they would ask detailed questions in the North American Commission.
- 5.43 The representative of the NGOs noted that the report showed the vast majority of fish were caught by recreational fishers (around 594 caught by around 80 recreational fishers). He noted that this was greater than any other recreational fishery in any other location in North America. He asked if there was scope in the management plan to reduce the number of fish per recreational fisher that is taken. The representative of France (in respect of St Pierre and Miquelon) said that France is working with the recreational fishers to reduce the number of fish taken. The representative of France (in respect of St Pierre and Miquelon) understood that the catch is high and France (in respect of St Pierre and Miquelon) is also concerned. She noted that the local administrative authorities are engaged in the process of trying to address this.

i) Reports on the Conservation Work of the Three Regional Commissions

- 5.44 The activities of the three Commissions were reported to the Council by their Chairs.

6. Other Business

- 6.1 The President informed delegates that there were two items of 'Other Business'.

Proposal for NASCO Statements on Salmon Farming

- 6.2 The President reminded delegates that NASCO held a Theme-based Special Session (TBSS) on aquaculture in 2021, [CNL\(21\)65](#). The overarching objective was to stimulate urgent action to implement further measures to protect wild salmon from the impacts of salmon farming, and to ensure demonstrable progress by Parties / jurisdictions towards achievement of the international goals for sea lice and escaped farmed salmon, taking into account the recommendations from the Steering Committees of the 2016 TBSS, [CNL\(16\)60](#), and the 2019 IYS Symposium, [CNL\(19\)16](#). The 2021 TBSS Steering Committee made four recommendations to the Council of NASCO. One of them was that:

'A NASCO statement should be issued to:

- promote adoption of innovative and alternative technologies, at sea and on land, to help achieve 100 % containment of farmed fish and for 100 % of farms to have effective sea lice management such that there is no increase*

in sea lice loads, or lice-induced mortality attributed to the farms, for the protection of wild salmon and sea trout; and

- *state that any increase in sea lice loads or lice-induced mortality on wild salmon smolts or genetic introgression of salmon stocks caused by salmon farming is unacceptable when referenced as part of an Implementation Plan action and cannot be considered, under the review process, as progressing the relevant party or jurisdiction towards achieving the international goals.'*

- 6.3 The President noted that there was discussion at the 2021 Annual Meeting regarding the text of a statement, but no agreement. Work had taken place inter-sessionally, during which a number of versions of draft NASCO statements on salmon farming had been considered.
- 6.4 The Council considered a 'Draft Statement on Salmon Farming from the Council of the North Atlantic Salmon Conservation Organization', CNL(22)45, and a 'Draft Statement from the Council of NASCO to Parties / jurisdictions with Salmon Farming Following the IP Reviews in November 2021', CNL(22)46.
- 6.5 The representative of Norway suggested removing 'sometimes significant' from the 'Draft Statement on Salmon Farming from the Council of the North Atlantic Salmon Conservation Organization', CNL(22)45. The President noted that these words should not have been included and would be removed. The representative of the NGOs supported the statement.
- 6.6 The representative of the NGOs noted frustration that the IPs often did not include positive action with respect to aquaculture and the APRs did not show strong progress. The representative of the NGOs welcomed the 'Draft Statement from the Council of NASCO to Parties / jurisdictions with Salmon Farming Following the IP Reviews in November 2021', CNL(22)46.
- 6.7 The Council agreed:
- to adopt a 'Statement on Salmon Farming from the Council of the North Atlantic Salmon Conservation Organization', [CNL\(22\)49](#) (Annex 15); and
 - to adopt a 'Statement from the Council of NASCO to Parties / jurisdictions with Salmon Farming Following the IP Reviews in November 2021', [CNL\(22\)50](#) (Annex 16).

Invitation to join NASCO

- 6.8 The representative of the United States thanked France (in respect of St Pierre and Miquelon) for its continued interest in NASCO and ICES. She proposed that it should be invited to join NASCO. The representative of France (in respect of St Pierre and Miquelon) answered that this request to join NASCO will be discussed with appropriate Ministers. The representative of Canada agreed and suggested that Iceland should also be invited to rejoin NASCO. The representative of the NGOs pointed out that there was an accredited NGO from Iceland, but not Iceland itself. The NGOs fully supported inviting Iceland.
- 6.9 The Council agreed to write to France (in respect of St Pierre and Miquelon) and to Iceland to invite them to join NASCO.

7. Date and Place of the Next Meeting

- 7.1 Following an invitation from Canada, Council agreed to hold its Fortieth Annual Meeting during 6 – 9 June 2023 in Canada. The President asked that Canada liaise with

the Secretariat on this matter and noted that contingency arrangements would need to be considered in light of the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic.

- 7.2 Council confirmed the tentative dates for its Forty-first Annual Meeting as 4 – 7 June 2024. The representative of the EU informed the Council that it was exploring the possibility of offering to host the 2024 Annual Meeting.

8. Press Release

- 8.1 The Council agreed a Press Release, [CNL\(22\)52](#) (Annex 17).

9. Report of the Meeting

- 9.1 The Council agreed the report of its Meeting.

10. Close of the Meeting

- 10.1 A Closing Statement was provided by the Russian Federation (Annex 18).
10.2 A Closing Statement was provided by the NPAFC (Annex 19).
10.3 The President thanked the Parties and observers for their contributions and closed the Thirty-Ninth Annual Meeting of NASCO.

Note. The annexes mentioned above begin after the French translation of the report of the meeting.

*Compte rendu de la trente-neuvième session annuelle du Conseil de
l'Organisation pour la Conservation du Saumon de l'Atlantique nord*

Dalmahoy Hotel & Country Club, Edimbourg, Ecosse

6 – 9 juin 2022

1. Ouverture de la session

- 1.1 Le Président, Arnaud Peyronnet (UE), a ouvert la session et fait une déclaration au nom de l'Organisation (Annexe 1).
- 1.2 Les représentants du Canada, du Danemark (au nom des Iles Féroé et du Groenland), de l'Union européenne (UE), de la Norvège, de la Fédération de Russie, du Royaume-Uni (RU) et des États-Unis ont fait des déclarations d'ouverture (Annexe 2).
- 1.3 Des déclarations d'ouverture ont été faites par les Organisations intergouvernementales suivantes: la Commission européenne consultative pour les pêches et l'aquaculture dans les eaux intérieures (CCEPIA) et la Commission des poissons anadromes du Pacifique nord (CPAPN) (Annexe 3).
- 1.4 Une déclaration d'ouverture a été faite au nom des Organisations non-gouvernementales (ONGs) (Annexe 4).
- 1.5 Une liste des participants à la trente-neuvième session annuelle du Conseil de l'OCSAN est fournie en Annexe 5.

2. Adoption de l'ordre du jour

- 2.1 Le Conseil a adopté son ordre du jour, [CNL\(22\)42](#) (Annexe 6).

3. Questions financières et administratives

a) Rapport du Comité financier et administratif

- 3.1 La Présidente du comité financier et administratif (CFA), Kim Blankenbeker (USA), a présenté le rapport de la réunion du CFA, [CNL\(22\)05](#).
- 3.2 Sur la recommandation du comité, le Conseil a décidé:
 - d'adopter les Comptes vérifiés pour 2021;
 - d'adopter un Budget pour 2023 et le Budget prévisionnel pour 2024, [CNL\(22\)54](#) (Annexe 7);
 - d'adopter la 'Politique provisoire proposée sur l'interprétation et l'application de la règle 3.2 (issue du document règles sur le Fonds du personnel) et de la règle 8.2(b) (issue du document règles sur le Personnel) concernant le droit à la somme forfaitaire', [CNL\(22\)44](#) (Annexe 8); et
 - d'adopter le rapport du comité financier et administratif, [CNL\(22\)05](#).

4. Informations scientifiques, techniques, juridiques et autres

a) Rapport de la Secrétaire

- 4.1 Le Président a renvoyé le Conseil au rapport de la Secrétaire, [CNL\(22\)06](#), et a demandé à la Secrétaire de se référer au document. La Secrétaire a indiqué que le rapport serait considéré comme lu mais qu'elle souhaitait souligner la section 9. Cette section fournit des informations sur le travail entrepris pour permettre la production d'un article de synthèse scientifique à fort impact concernant l'impact de l'élevage du saumon (pou du poisson et échappées) sur le saumon sauvage de l'Atlantique. Ceci fait suite à la prise en compte par le Conseil de la recommandation projet issue du comité de direction de la Session spéciale thématique (SST) 2021, [CNL\(21\)62](#) (paragraphe 5.10):
- ‘... d'établir un groupe de travail pour rédiger un rapport de l'OCSAN donnant les plus récentes connaissances scientifiques sur les impacts du pou du poisson et des saumons d'élevage échappés sur le saumon sauvage.’*
- 4.2 La Secrétaire a indiqué qu'un document d'accompagnement, [CNL\(22\)07](#), exposait une proposition au Conseil pour permettre la réalisation de ce travail de recherche innovant et la production de la publication scientifique à fort impact. Elle a souligné qu'en 2021 les Parties avaient voulu qu'un tel document 'soit scientifiquement robuste et évalué par des pairs'; 'que le CIEM devrait être impliqué, notant que le rapport devait avoir une crédibilité scientifique'; que 'le rapport devrait être perçu comme indépendant et scientifique'; et que 'les représentants au sein du groupe de travail devraient être choisis en fonction de leur expertise'. Il a été demandé au Secrétariat de travailler avec le comité de direction de la SST pour identifier des experts à inviter à participer au Groupe de travail et pour assurer la liaison avec le CIEM. La Secrétaire a porté à la connaissance du Conseil qu'elle avait été en contact avec le CIEM afin de déterminer s'il était possible de réunir un groupe de travail ou un atelier du CIEM pour élaborer un tel document pour l'OCSAN. Cependant, il s'est avéré que les ateliers du CIEM sont entièrement ouverts à l'inscription du public et que les groupes de travail dépendent de nominations par les pays qui sont membres du CIEM. De plus, il a été reconnu que, pour atteindre le degré d'impact voulu par le Conseil, la restitution de tout groupe d'experts réuni devrait être soumise en tant que manuscrit pour examen dans le cadre d'une revue scientifique de fort impact à comité de lecture, plutôt qu'en tant que rapport du CIEM ou de l'OCSAN dans la littérature grise.
- 4.3 La Secrétaire a dit que des discussions avec le Président et le Président du comité de direction de la SST 2021 avaient abouti à proposer une approche alternative, suivant laquelle un scientifique ayant les compétences requises pourrait coordonner un petit groupe d'experts, au départ pour discuter de leur intérêt pour produire un manuscrit à soumettre à une revue scientifique de haut niveau.
- 4.4 La Secrétaire a fait référence au document, [CNL\(22\)07](#), sur une proposition pour la production d'un recensement des effets de l'aquaculture de saumon sur les populations de saumon sauvage de l'Atlantique. Ce document propose de recourir à une revue systématique de la recherche sur les deux voies les plus explorées d'interaction entre l'aquaculture et le poisson sauvage, à savoir le pou du poisson et les échappées. L'objectif était de recourir à une approche de la revue basée sur le poids des éléments de preuve afin d'explorer l'existence et l'amplitude de tout impact de l'aquaculture du saumon. La Secrétaire a dit au Conseil que si la revue systématique apportait suffisamment de données quantitatives, l'étude se poursuivrait en faisant une méta-analyse sur les effets de ces facteurs sur les populations de poisson sauvage. Elle a souligné que les études antérieures n'avaient pas suivi une telle approche systématique ou quantitative.
- 4.5 Le Président a ouvert les débats pour commentaires. Le représentant du Canada a soutenu la proposition d'une méta-analyse conduisant (si possible) à une publication

dans une revue à comité de lecture. Il a signalé que les attributions du groupe d'experts pourraient ne pas être assez larges et qu'une composante concernant les pathogènes agents de maladies pourrait aussi être envisagée, puisque cette question devient très importante.

- 4.6 La représentante du Danemark (pour les Iles Féroé et le Groenland) s'est associée aux commentaires du Canada et a soutenu cette approche et l'élargissement du périmètre de l'étude pour y inclure les pathogènes agents de maladies. Elle a souligné l'importance de ce genre d'initiative pour augmenter l'impact de l'OCSAN et la rendre proactive. La représentante du Danemark (pour les Iles Féroé et le Groenland) a déclaré que l'OCSAN devait porter ses connaissances étendues dans un domaine public plus large.
- 4.7 Le représentant de l'UE a soutenu les commentaires faits précédemment. La représentante du RU a aussi marqué son accord avec les commentaires faits par les représentants du Canada et du Danemark (pour les Iles Féroé et le Groenland) et a fait part de son soutien au travail et aux attributions proposés. Elle a demandé quelles devraient être les prochaines étapes pour garantir l'atteinte des objectifs fixés pour l'article proposé. Le Président a indiqué que si l'article proposé était publié dans une revue de haut niveau, ce serait en soi la confirmation de son impartialité et de sa robustesse.
- 4.8 Le représentant de la Norvège a demandé comment l'article proposé pourrait être financé. La Secrétaire a répondu que le Fonds spécial pour les projets périodiques était établi pour:
- 'aider à éviter de grandes fluctuations du budget de l'OCSAN d'une année sur l'autre lorsque des fonds sont nécessaires pour soutenir les activités intermittentes nécessaires aux coûts plus élevés, telles que les futures évaluations des performances, les activités liées de l'AIS telles que celles convenues par le Conseil en 2019 ((c'est-à-dire les mises à jour du rapport sur l'état du saumon de l'Atlantique nord et Symposia de suivi), et autres projets spéciaux coûteux.'* ([CNL\(20\)51rev](#))
- 4.9 La Secrétaire a indiqué que ceci semblait couvrir les besoins de l'article proposé. Elle a aussi porté à la connaissance du Conseil que le plafond du Fonds spécial pour les projets périodiques était de £100 000 et que, lorsqu'il était atteint, le Fonds se reconstituait à partir de l'excédent budgétaire. La représentante des États-Unis a demandé si le coût de l'article proposé pouvait être réparti sur deux ans. Cette proposition a reçu l'appui de la représentante du Danemark (pour les Iles Féroé et le Groenland).
- 4.10 Le représentant des ONGs a rappelé que c'était le délégué des ONGs au comité de direction de la SST qui était à l'origine de l'idée de produire une publication passant en revue les effets du saumon d'élevage sur les populations de saumon sauvage de l'Atlantique. Il a souligné que les ONGs attachaient de l'importance au passage en revue et à l'inclusion de toute preuve pertinente. Le représentant des ONGs a demandé que l'accord des Parties pour le travail de production de l'article ne signifie pas qu'elles ne fassent rien sur la pisciculture pendant les années de réalisation de cet article. Il a aussi soutenu la proposition d'étendre le périmètre de l'article pour couvrir les pathogènes agents de maladies.
- 4.11 A la lumière de ces débats, le Conseil a décidé de demander à la Secrétaire de faire la liaison avec le coordinateur du groupe d'experts pour poser les questions suivantes:
- la faisabilité de l'inclusion dans leur analyse de l'impact des pathogènes issus de

poissons d'élevage;

- la présentation des coûts additionnels en résultant;
- la fourniture d'un calendrier montrant comment le financement par l'OCSAN pourrait être apporté sur deux années financières; et
- qu'un représentant du groupe d'experts présente une mise à jour au Conseil lors de la session annuelle 2023.

4.12 Le Conseil a aussi décidé :

- d'examiner les réponses du groupe d'experts aux demandes en inter-session; et
- de financer cette initiative à l'aide du Fonds spécial pour les projets périodiques.

b) Le troisième examen des performances: Présentation au Conseil par le Président du Panel d'examen des performances

4.13 Le Président a noté que le troisième examen des performances de l'OCSAN aurait lieu en 2022. Il a accueilli le Président du Panel d'examen, Erik Molenaar, à la session annuelle. Le Président a encouragé les délégués à prendre l'attache du Dr Molenaar au cours des jours suivants. Le Dr Molenaar a fait une présentation au Conseil pour introduire le Panel d'examen et exposer ses méthodes de travail. Sa présentation figure sous la cote [CNL\(22\)55](#) (Annexe 9).

4.14 Le représentant de la Norvège a demandé si le Panel d'examen avait discuté de la façon dont il chercherait à obtenir des contributions de ceux qui ne sont pas Parties à l'OCSAN, des OIGs et d'autres. Le Dr Molenaar a répondu que dans une certaine mesure le Panel d'examen avait déjà recherché une contribution de la part de ces groupes via l'invitation à soumettre des commentaires. Il a ajouté que le Panel d'examen avait aussi l'intention d'étudier la riche documentation de l'OCSAN puis de déterminer si du matériel additionnel était nécessaire.

4.15 La représentante des États-Unis a demandé s'il était possible d'obtenir une extension de la date limite de soumission d'opinions au Panel d'examen. Le Dr Molenaar était d'avis que cela serait acceptable mais qu'il consulterait ses collègues avant de confirmer une extension d'un mois, jusqu'au 1er août 2022.

4.16 Le représentant des ONGs s'est félicité du troisième examen des performances de l'OCSAN et il a indiqué que les ONGs aussi apprécieraient une extension de la date limite pour soumettre des opinions.

c) Rapport sur les activités de l'Organisation en 2021

4.17 Le Président a rappelé qu'en vertu de l'Article 5, paragraphe 6, de la Convention 'Le Conseil soumet aux Parties un rapport annuel sur les activités de l'Organisation.' En raison de contraintes de temps, il n'y a pas eu de présentation sur le rapport sur les activités de l'Organisation pour la conservation du saumon de l'Atlantique nord en 2021, [CNL\(22\)08](#). Le Président a demandé aux Parties s'il y avait des commentaires.

4.18 La représentante du Danemark (pour les Îles Féroé et le Groenland) a fait remarquer que le rapport était pour une bonne part un résumé des rapports des années précédentes. Elle s'est interrogée sur une éventuelle fusion du rapport sur les activités de l'Organisation et du rapport de la Secrétaire, montrant l'ensemble du travail de l'OCSAN. Elle a fait référence au rapport de l'OPANO, qui est un document de communication. La représentante du Danemark (pour les Îles Féroé et le Groenland) a suggéré qu'un document fusionné représenterait une opportunité d'exposer le travail de l'OCSAN.

- 4.19 Le Président a informé le Conseil que cette suggestion serait examinée au point 4g) de l'ordre du jour.
- d) Annonce du gagnant du Grand Prix du Programme incitatif au renvoi des marques**
- 4.20 Le Président a rappelé que l'OCSAN a instauré un Programme incitatif au renvoi des marques. Chaque année, un grand prix de £1,500 est décerné ainsi que trois prix de £1,000, un dans chacune des zones des Commissions de l'OCSAN.
- 4.21 Le Président a annoncé que le gagnant du grand prix pour 2022 était William Walsh du Canada. La marque a été posée sur un grand saumon retournant à la rivière Miramichi nord-ouest (Nouveau Brunswick, Canada) en 2020. Le poisson a été capturé le 1er octobre 2020 dans le filet trappe d'estuaire à Cassilis, que Pêche et Océans Canada fait fonctionner dans le cadre du programme d'évaluation du saumon Atlantique dans la rivière Miramichi. Le poisson a été échantillonné en longueur, identification du sexe, prélèvement d'écaille et a reçu un marquage externe avec une étiquette Carlin bleu clair avant d'être relâché dans la rivière. Il mesurait 81,7 cm de longueur à la fourche et a été identifié comme une femelle sauvage sur la base de ses caractéristiques externes. Il a été recapturé pendant la pêche récréative de saumon noir (kelt) le 19 avril 2021 dans la rivière Miramichi sud-ouest à Gray Rapids. Il a ensuite été relâché par le pêcheur à la ligne puisque des mesures de pêche avec remise à l'eau obligatoire sont en place pour les grands saumons depuis 1984.
- e) Avis scientifique du CIEM**
- 4.22 Le Président a rappelé aux délégués que l'avis du CIEM pour les stocks de saumon de l'Atlantique nord avait été publié le 6 mai 2022, [CNL\(22\)09](#).
- 4.23 Le représentant du CIEM, Dennis Ensing, a présenté le rapport du Comité d'avis (ACOM). La présentation du CIEM est disponible comme document [CNL\(22\)56](#).
- f) Rapport de la Commission internationale de recherche sur le saumon atlantique**
- 4.24 Le Président a félicité Martha Robertson (Canada) pour son élection comme Présidente de la Commission internationale de recherche sur le saumon atlantique (la Commission) en inter-session. Le rapport de la réunion de la Commission, [CNL\(22\)10](#), a été présenté par le Dr Robertson.
- 4.25 Le Dr Robertson a rendu compte des principaux points examinés lors de la réunion de la Commission. Elle a indiqué que la Commission s'était réunie les 5 et 7 juin. La Commission a décidé d'une réunion inter-sessionnelle selon les possibilités offertes par les travaux de l'OCSAN, et de préférence avant la session annuelle de 2023, pour examiner la vision, le champ d'application et les objectifs de la Commission à la suite des recommandations issues de l'examen de la base de métadonnées de la Commission. La Commission a décidé de ne pas continuer de mettre à jour sa base de métadonnées. Cependant, le Secrétariat va demander une dernière mise à jour de la base de métadonnées par chaque Partie avant de mettre en ligne une version finale. La Commission a examiné un certain nombre de projets et une présentation du projet ROAM lui a été faite. La Commission a aussi décidé d'approuver le principe de la création d'une nouvelle banque de données génétiques du saumon de l'Atlantique nord-est dans l'objectif d'assigner les échantillons de saumon du Groenland à leur région d'origine, ceci à la suite d'une proposition du RU.
- 4.26 Le Conseil a adopté le rapport de la Commission.

g) Considération d'autres moyens pour mener les travaux de l'OCSAN suite à la pandémie de Covid-19

- 4.27 Le Président a noté que la conséquence de la pandémie de Covid-19 a été qu'en 2020, pour la toute première fois, et de nouveau en 2021, la session annuelle de l'OCSAN n'a pas pu être menée en personne. Des dispositions alternatives ont été mises en place. Il a porté à la connaissance du Conseil que ce point de l'ordre du jour donnait l'occasion d'examiner si les procédures développées pendant la pandémie pourraient être incorporées dans le fonctionnement futur de l'OCSAN. Il a renvoyé les délégués à un document sur des Dispositions alternatives pour mener les travaux de l'OCSAN, [CNL\(22\)11](#).
- 4.28 La représentante du Danemark (pour les Iles Féroé et le Groenland) a proposé qu'une majorité des réunions se tiennent virtuellement, et que s'il était nécessaire de se voir en personne, il y ait une option hybride. Elle a proposé que la session annuelle ait une composante hybride, pour prendre en considération des impacts environnementaux. La représentante des États-Unis a admis que des réunions sur des sujets essentiels pouvaient rendre nécessaire de se voir en personne. Elle a reconnu que la prise en compte du changement climatique était importante. Le représentant de l'UE a accepté que certaines réunions soient virtuelles, et que le Président de séance décide de ce qui était approprié. Le représentant de la Norvège a soutenu des réunions hybrides et a souligné le coût du transport ainsi que ses impacts environnementaux. Il s'est interrogé sur la possibilité d'une option moins coûteuse pour des réunions hybrides. Le représentant du Canada a soutenu ses collègues et mis en lumière les coûts environnementaux de grandes sessions en personne. Le Président a suggéré que de la flexibilité soit donnée pour que le Président de réunions inter-sessionnelles puisse déterminer le format qui serait le plus approprié. Il a indiqué qu'une option hybride devrait être la norme s'il y avait une réunion en personne. Le représentant des ONGs a mis en lumière le rôle de conservation de l'OCSAN. Les ONGs ont soutenu les réunions hybrides, tout en s'accordant pour dire que la session annuelle devrait avoir lieu en personne.
- 4.29 Le Président a posé la question de la correspondance inter-sessionnelle. La représentante du RU a proposé qu'il n'y ait pas de correspondance inter-sessionnelle en général, mais qu'une procédure soit lancée au moyen de laquelle des questions pourraient être soumises à la Partie concernée avant ou au début de la réunion pour permettre la fourniture d'une réponse complète au cours de la session. Cette proposition a reçu l'accord des représentants de l'UE et des États-Unis
- 4.30 Le Président a indiqué que l'Association Internationale des Eleveurs de Saumon (AIES) n'avait fait preuve d'aucun réel engagement envers l'OCSAN depuis plusieurs années. Le représentant de l'UE a suggéré que l'OCSAN continue d'inviter l'AIES à la session annuelle et a dit qu'il revenait à l'AIES de souhaiter participer ou non. La représentante des États-Unis a proposé que le Secrétariat envoie à l'AIES une invitation à participer à la session annuelle et à soumettre une déclaration. Le Canada a suggéré que si l'AIES ne montrait pas d'intérêt à dialoguer avec l'OCSAN à l'avenir, l'OCSAN pourrait décider de ne pas poursuivre la recherche de dialogue. Le représentant des ONGs a été d'accord avec ces suggestions. La représentante des États-Unis a proposé que l'AIES soit retirée de l'ordre du jour du Conseil à moins qu'ils acceptent l'invitation à la session annuelle.
- 4.31 Le Président a posé la question des rapports fournis en amont de la session annuelle. Il a demandé si la possibilité existait de rationaliser les rapports ainsi que de les utiliser comme outils de communication. La représentante du Danemark (pour les Iles Féroé et

le Groenland) a suggéré que le rapport sur les activités de l'Organisation et le rapport de la Secrétaire puissent être fusionnés afin d'être une vitrine du travail de l'OCSAN. Elle a présenté le rapport annuel de l'Organisation des Pêches de l'Atlantique nord-ouest (OPANO) comme un bon exemple. La représentante du Danemark (pour les Îles Féroé et le Groenland) a aussi proposé que les comptes rendus des sessions soient plus concis. Ceci a été soutenu par les représentants du RU et des États-Unis.

4.32 Le représentant du Canada a indiqué que le Canada avait discuté du rapport du CIEM et suggérerait qu'un rapport unique soit fait à la session annuelle du Conseil avec toutes les composantes de l'avis. Le Président a aussi suggéré que le document d'avis du CIEM puisse être plus court et plus ciblé. Le représentant de l'UE a soutenu ces deux suggestions. La représentante du Danemark (pour les Îles Féroé et le Groenland) a aussi été d'accord, indiquant que l'avis du CIEM pour d'autres stocks était beaucoup plus ciblé. En cas de besoin d'information supplémentaire, les délégués pouvaient consulter le rapport du WGNAS.

4.33 Le Président a posé la question de l'intérêt de l'ordre du jour annoté et de l'exposé des motifs fournis par le Secrétariat avant la session. Le représentant de l'UE a indiqué que les ordres du jour annotés étaient extrêmement utiles mais que l'exposé des motifs n'était peut-être pas indispensable.

4.34 Le Conseil a décidé:

- que les sessions annuelles de l'OCSAN devraient être organisées en personne pour les participants, avec une option virtuelle simple et peu coûteuse pour certains délégués;
- que par défaut, il conviendrait d'envisager que les réunions inter-sessionnelles soient virtuelles, mais que le Président et la Secrétaire, en consultation avec les membres, en déterminent le format exact. En cas de choix d'une réunion en personne, une option hybride serait proposée;
- qu'il n'y aurait pas de correspondance inter-sessionnelle avant les sessions annuelles de l'OCSAN, mais que si les Parties / ONGs avaient des questions sur des points de l'ordre du jour, elles devraient être invitées à les soumettre à la Partie concernée, afin de permettre la fourniture d'une réponse pendant la session;
- de demander à la Secrétaire de continuer d'envoyer à l'AIES une invitation à participer aux sessions annuelles de l'OCSAN et à soumettre une déclaration. Si l'AIES refuse de participer, 'Liaison avec l'industrie salmonicole' sera retiré de l'ordre du jour pour l'année concernée;
- que le rapport des activités de l'Organisation et le rapport de la Secrétaire seraient fusionnés pour en faire une vitrine du travail de l'OCSAN;
- de demander à la Secrétaire de prendre l'attache du CIEM pour étudier une approche / présentation plus simples de l'avis du CIEM;
- qu'à l'avenir l'avis complet du CIEM ne serait présenté qu'au Conseil;
- de demander au Secrétariat de fournir des ordres du jour annotés avant les sessions annuelles du Conseil et des Commissions, du CFA et de la Commission internationale de recherche sur le saumon atlantique, mais de ne plus fournir d'exposé des motifs.

h) Compte rendu du Groupe de travail sur la base de données des rivières

4.35 Le Président a informé le Conseil qu'à la suite des décisions prises par le Conseil en

2021, la Base de données des rivières de l'OCSAN est maintenant sur le site internet: [NASCO Rivers Database – NASCO](#). A cette période, le Conseil a décidé de créer un Groupe de travail pour traiter les questions de haut niveau concernant la base de données des rivières, et pour rendre compte à la session annuelle en 2022. Le Groupe de travail base de données des rivières s'est réuni en visioconférence en novembre et en décembre 2021.

- 4.36 La Présidente du Groupe de travail, Livia Goodbrand (Canada), a présenté le compte rendu du Groupe de travail base de données des rivières , [CNL\(22\)12](#), au Conseil. Sa présentation est disponible comme document [CNL\(22\)63](#).
- 4.37 Le représentant du Canada a remercié le Groupe de travail et dit que le Canada n'avait d'objection à aucune des recommandations. La représentante des États-Unis a indiqué que la base de données des rivières formerait la base du nouveau Rapport sur l'état du saumon de l'Atlantique nord. Elle a suggéré que le Fonds spécial pour les projets périodiques puisse être utilisé pour recruter quelqu'un pour y travailler. La représentante du Danemark (pour les Iles Féroé et le Groenland) a appuyé les recommandations et indiqué que ce serait un bon projet de sensibilisation. Elle a particulièrement salué la recommandation de traduire la base de données des rivières dans différentes langues. La représentante du Danemark (pour les Iles Féroé et le Groenland) a indiqué que si la base de données des rivières devait être utilisée au Groenland, une traduction pourrait être nécessaire. La représentante du RU a soutenu pleinement les recommandations et a salué particulièrement celle qui vise à clarifier l'objectif de la base de données des rivières.
- 4.38 Le représentant de la Norvège a aussi soutenu les recommandations. Il a fait part de l'avis de la Norvège selon lequel il serait important d'inclure des informations sur les pressions qui s'exercent sur le saumon dans les rivières. Il a déclaré que la fourniture de ce genre d'information devrait être obligatoire pour les Parties / juridictions. Le représentant des ONGs a appuyé les commentaires de la Norvège. Il a aussi fait part du soutien des ONGs à l'objectif de sensibilisation du public pour la base de données des rivières.
- 4.39 La représentante des États-Unis a proposé que les tableaux contenant les informations sur les rivières, qu'il est demandé aux Parties de compléter, comportent un menu déroulant incluant des catégories générales larges de menaces afin de faciliter la saisie des informations et d'en garantir la cohérence. Le représentant du Canada a aussi indiqué qu'il serait fait appel à des informaticiens spécialistes pour ce travail. La représentante du RU a indiqué que le Comité de direction assurerait la supervision, mais que les Parties auraient l'opportunité de décider du projet définitif pour l'Atlas et d'adopter le produit final avant sa mise en service. Le représentant du Canada a dit que le Comité de direction devrait avoir la possibilité de réfléchir à sa composition, afin que ses membres puissent confirmer leur souhait de prolonger leur participation.
- 4.40 Le Conseil a décidé:
- d'accepter les recommandations du Groupe de travail base de données des rivières (en soulignant qu'il devrait cibler la facilité d'utilisation et l'intuitivité, et que les Parties devraient être exhortées à compléter les sections sur les menaces);
 - de demander au Groupe de travail base de données rivières d'agir en qualité du Comité de direction pour la préparation de l'Atlas du saumon atlantique sauvage et de faire avancer ce travail en ligne avec la discussion consignée dans les paragraphes 4.37 – 4.39 de ce compte rendu;

- de demander à la Secrétaire de travailler avec ce Comité de direction à l'élaboration de l' 'Atlas du saumon atlantique sauvage' en ligne;
- d'utiliser le Fonds spécial pour les projets périodiques pour financer ce travail sur deux années.

i) Compte rendu du Comité scientifique permanent

- 4.41 Le Président a indiqué au Conseil que les Articles 3 et 4 de la Convention imposent à l'OCSAN de tenir compte des meilleures informations scientifiques et d'établir des modalités de collaboration avec le CIEM. Lors de la session annuelle, le Comité scientifique permanent (CSP), qui assiste le Conseil et les Commissions pour formuler leurs questions au CIEM, s'est réuni pour préparer une Demande projet de conseils scientifiques au CIEM pour examen par les Commissions et le Conseil. La coordinatrice du CSP, Livia Goodbrand (Canada), a présenté la demande projet au CIEM pour des conseils scientifiques.
- 4.42 Le Conseil a adopté la 'Demande de conseils scientifiques au CIEM', [CNL\(22\)13](#), (Annexe 10).

5. Conservation, restauration, accroissement et gestion rationnelle du Saumon atlantique dans le cadre de l'approche préventive

a) Compte rendu du Symposium de Tromsø sur les Recommandations pour répondre aux futurs défis de gestion

(i) *Séance spéciale: Compte rendu du Symposium de Tromsø sur les Recommandations pour répondre aux futurs défis de gestion*

- 5.1 Le Président a rappelé aux délégués que, pour marquer l'Année Internationale du Saumon (AIS), un symposium de deux jours intitulé 'Gestion du saumon atlantique dans un environnement qui change rapidement – défis de gestion et réponses possibles' s'est tenu juste avant la session annuelle 2019 de l'OCSAN. Le Comité de direction du symposium a fait un certain nombre de recommandations à l'OCSAN dans son compte rendu. Le Président a invité la Présidente du Comité de direction du symposium, Eva Thorstad (Norvège) à présenter le compte rendu et ses recommandations, [CNL\(19\)16](#). Sa présentation est disponible sous la cote [CNL\(22\)57](#).

- 5.2 Les discussions tenues pendant la Séance spéciale se trouvent dans le document [CNL\(22\)58](#) (Annexe 11).

(ii) *Décisions prises eu égard à la Séance spéciale sur le Compte rendu du Symposium de Tromsø sur les Recommandations pour répondre aux futurs défis de gestion*

- 5.3 Le Président a informé les délégués que ce point de l'ordre du jour permet que des décisions soient prises à la lumière de la séance spéciale. Tout en examinant les recommandations du Comité de direction du Symposium de Tromsø, il a dit que le Conseil pourrait souhaiter noter que le troisième examen des performances de l'OCSAN aura lieu en 2022 avec compte rendu à la session annuelle 2023. Le mandat pour l'examen des performances, [CNL\(21\)22](#), prévoit que:

'Les 'Recommandations à l'OCSAN pour répondre aux futurs défis de gestion dans le compte rendu du Comité de direction du Symposium de Tromsø ', [CNL\(19\)16](#), [...] y compris les réponses du Conseil à ces recommandations, devraient être prises en compte par le Panel d'examen pour formuler ses propres recommandations'.

- 5.4 Il a toutefois admis que le travail résultant des recommandations du Comité de direction du Symposium de Tromsø et le troisième examen des performances qui va bientôt débiter, pour compte rendu en 2023, allaient vraisemblablement interagir.
- 5.5 Le Président a noté que les Parties s'étaient impliquées dans une bonne discussion sur les recommandations et avaient mené une analyse du travail en cours de l'OCSAN, prévu ou déjà réalisé, dans les domaines pertinents. Il a déclaré que le travail était en cours sur huit des recommandations. Le travail sur trois autres des recommandations n'avait pas encore commencé – cela concernait les recommandations de mettre à jour les Directives de l'OCSAN. La planification était en cours pour quatre activités relatives aux recommandations et une autre activité était en cours de repérage. Le Président a dit que cet exercice initial de cartographie pourrait être partagé avec le Président du Panel du troisième examen de la performance.
- 5.6 Le Président a indiqué que des discussions avaient déjà eu lieu sur la mise à jour des Directives sur le peuplement et que des commentaires s'y relatant avaient été soulevés lors de la Session spéciale. Il a souligné qu'il y avait une volonté d'avancer sur ce sujet, en bénéficiant de la SST de 2017. Il a indiqué que les Parties reconnaissent l'importance de ce sujet et que les Directives devaient être révisées très rapidement. Il a proposé que ce travail débute en inter-session, sans attendre les résultats de l'examen externe des performances, en lançant un Groupe de travail de révision des Directives, en nommant les membres de ce Groupe de travail et en élaborant un mandat et des méthodes de travail pour ce Groupe.
- 5.7 Le Président a déclaré que la Recommandation 8 sur l'aquaculture était particulièrement importante. Il a mis en lumière la panoplie d'initiatives de l'OCSAN qui répondait à cette recommandation. Ces dernières comprenaient:
- le développement de 'Lignes directrices détaillées pour l'examen des Plans de mise en œuvre', [CNL\(20\)55](#), pour renforcer l'examen des IPs lors du troisième cycle de reporting;
 - la Session spéciale thématique de 2021 sur la limitation des impacts de l'élevage du saumon sur le saumon atlantique sauvage, [CNL\(21\)65](#);
 - l'étude d'une Déclaration sur l'Aquaculture qui exhorterait à l'action pour répondre à ce problème; et
 - le travail pour publier un article scientifique à fort impact sur les effets de l'aquaculture du saumon sur les populations de saumon atlantique sauvage.
- 5.8 Le Président a porté à la connaissance des délégués que les Parties avaient identifié le renforcement de la participation de peuples autochtones à l'OCSAN comme un domaine prioritaire potentiel et il a indiqué qu'il y avait une volonté d'agir très rapidement en ce sens. Le représentant du Canada a apporté son soutien et demandé qu'il y ait une Session spéciale lors de la session annuelle 2023 sur les perspectives autochtones sur le saumon de l'Atlantique. Le représentant des États-Unis a demandé si le Canada ferait une présentation et si l'on pouvait s'attendre à ce que d'autres Parties présentent sur ce sujet. Le représentant du Canada a dit qu'ils allaient approfondir la réflexion.
- 5.9 Le représentant des ONGs a demandé que le Conseil invite un représentant des ONGs à tout groupe de travail qui serait établi pour mettre à jour les Directives sur le peuplement. Il s'est dit heureux d'entendre parler d'initiatives de l'OCSAN sur l'aquaculture et heureux également que le Conseil ne soit pas en train d'attendre le compte rendu du troisième examen des performances avant de passer à l'action.

5.10 Le Conseil a décidé que:

- les avancées sur la mise à jour des Directives pour le peuplement commenceraient en inter-session;
- un représentant des ONGs serait invité à siéger au Groupe de travail sur les Directives pour le peuplement; et
- il y aurait une Session spéciale sur les perspectives autochtones sur le saumon atlantique lors de la Session annuelle 2023. Le Canada ferait la liaison sur ce point avec le Secrétariat et les autres Parties intéressées.

b) Évaluation des Plans de mise en œuvre dans le cadre du troisième cycle de reporting (2019-2024)

(i) Session spéciale: Évaluation des Plans de mise en œuvre dans le cadre du troisième cycle de reporting (2019 – 2024)

5.11 Le Président a rappelé aux délégués que l'OCSAN a adopté des Résolutions, Accords et Directives qui abordent les domaines principaux de préoccupation pour la gestion des stocks de saumon. En 2005 il a été décidé que 'l'OCSAN sera engagée vis à vis des mesures et accords qu'elle développe et examinera activement les progrès par l'intermédiaire de plans de mise en œuvre', [CNL\(05\)49](#). Les Plans de mise en œuvre révisés des Parties / juridictions dans le cadre du troisième cycle de reporting (2019 – 2024) ont été examinés par le Groupe d'examen des IP / APR en novembre 2021.

5.12 Le Président du Groupe d'examen des IP / APR, Cathal Gallagher (UE), a présenté le compte rendu de la session 2021 du Groupe d'examen des IP / APR, [CNL\(22\)15](#), où les IPs ont été examinés. Sa présentation est disponible comme document [CNL\(22\)59](#).

5.13 Les discussions qui ont eu lieu pendant la Session spéciale figurent en [CNL\(22\)60](#) (Annexe 12).

(ii) Décisions prises concernant l'évaluation des plans de mise en œuvre dans le cadre du troisième cycle de reporting (2019 – 2014)

5.14 Le Président a informé les délégués que ce point de l'ordre du jour permettait de prendre des décisions à la lumière de la Session spéciale: Évaluation des Plans de mise en œuvre dans le cadre du troisième cycle de reporting (2019 – 2024).

5.15 Le Conseil a décidé de:

- demander que le Président du Groupe d'examen des IP / APR et la Secrétaire organisent une session en novembre 2022 afin d'examiner les éventuels IPs révisés.

c) Évaluation des Rapports annuels de progrès réalisés dans le cadre des Plans de mise en œuvre de 2019 – 2024

(i) Session spéciale: Évaluation des Rapports annuels de progrès réalisés dans le cadre des Plans de mise en œuvre de 2019 – 2024

5.16 Le Président a rappelé que les Parties / juridictions soumettent chaque année à l'OCSAN un Rapport annuel de progrès (APR). Les APRs sont le vecteur principal d'évaluation par l'OCSAN des progrès des Parties' / juridictions' vers la réalisation de ses Résolutions, Accords et Directives. De plus, en vertu de l'Article 15 de la Convention de l'OCSAN, il est demandé aux Parties de fournir annuellement au Conseil les statistiques de captures et toutes autres informations. Ceci est réalisé par la soumission des APRs.

5.17 Le Président du Groupe d'examen des IP / APR, Cathal Gallagher (UE), a présenté le

compte rendu du Groupe d'examen des IP / APR pour l'examen des Rapports annuels de progrès, [CNL\(22\)16](#). Sa présentation est disponible sous la cote [CNL\(22\)61](#).

- 5.18 Les discussions tenues lors de la Séance spéciale figurent dans le document [CNL\(22\)62](#) (Annexe 13).

(ii) *Décisions prises concernant l'évaluation des Rapports annuels de progrès réalisés dans le cadre des Plans de mise en œuvre de 2019 – 2024*

- 5.19 Le Président a indiqué aux délégués que ce point de l'ordre du jour permettait la prise de décisions à la lumière de la Séance spéciale: Evaluation des Rapports annuels de progrès réalisés dans le cadre des Plans de mise en oeuvre de 2019 – 2024.

- 5.20 Le Conseil a décidé:

- d'accepter les changements mineurs du template APR demandés par le Groupe d'examen;
- de demander au Président du Groupe d'examen des IP / APR et à la Secrétaire d'organiser une session en avril 2023 pour examiner les APRs 2022.

- 5.21 La représentante des États-Unis a demandé si, au cas où la réunion du Groupe d'examen des IP / APR de 2023 se ferait en personne, le Groupe examinerait toutes les actions ou seulement les actions satisfaisantes. Le représentant des ONGs a demandé si une réunion hybride pourrait être organisée si nécessaire. En réponse aux deux questions, le Président a indiqué qu'il revenait au Secrétaire et au Président de prendre la décision appropriée en temps utile. Il a aussi indiqué qu'il y aurait une discussion pertinente sur ce sujet sous le point 4g) de l'ordre du jour.

d) *L'Année internationale du saumon : Activités léguées*

- 5.22 Le Président a rappelé aux délégués qu'en 2016, le Conseil a décidé de tenir une Année Internationale du Saumon (AIS) en partenariat avec la Commission des Poissons Anadromes du Pacifique Nord (CPAPN). L'année focale de l'AIS était 2019 avec poursuite de certains efforts jusqu'en 2022. L'objectif était de sensibiliser aux facteurs d'abondance du saumon, aux défis environnementaux et anthropogéniques qu'il affronte, et aux mesures prises pour y répondre.

- 5.23 La Secrétaire a déclaré que le Symposium de Synthèse de l'AIS: 'Saumon dans un monde qui change rapidement: Synthèse de l'Année Internationale du Saumon et Feuille de route vers 2030' aurait lieu à Vancouver, Canada, du 4 au 6 Octobre 2022.

- 5.24 La Secrétaire a noté que le premier Rapport de l'OCSAN sur l'état du saumon de l'Atlantique nord a été publié en 2019. A la session annuelle de 2021 il a été demandé au Secrétariat d'examiner le calendrier et la structure du prochain rapport sur l'état du saumon de l'Atlantique nord, une fois que le Groupe de travail sur la base de données rivières aurait rendu compte. La Secrétaire a renvoyé les délégués à un document sur les Activités léguées de l'Année Internationale du Saumon, [CNL\(22\)18](#).

- 5.25 La représentante du RU a souligné que le Rapport sur l'état du saumon de l'Atlantique nord était un outil clé de renforcement du travail de sensibilisation de l'OCSAN. Elle a déclaré qu'il y avait un besoin de voir plus en détail la base de données des rivières révisée avant de pouvoir dire à quoi ressemblerait le prochain Rapport sur l'état du saumon de l'Atlantique nord. Les deux initiatives devaient être appréhendées en parallèle. Elle a noté qu'il y avait des limitations aux rapports sur support papier et pensait qu'il pourrait être utile de produire sur un support plus interactif. La représentante des États-Unis a approuvé. La représentante du Danemark (pour les Iles Féroé et le Groenland) a dit que le Rapport sur l'état du saumon de l'Atlantique nord

de 2019 était un outil important de sensibilisation et elle a déclaré qu'il était important de voir ce que pouvait apporter la base de données rivières avant de prendre des décisions concernant le prochain Rapport sur l'état du saumon de l'Atlantique nord.

5.26 Le représentant de la CPAPN a déclaré que la CPAPN était très intéressée par le concept de base de données / atlas des rivières et aimerait explorer comment le saumon de l'Atlantique et le saumon du Pacifique pourraient être décrits lors de leur redistribution dans l'Arctique

5.27 Le Conseil a décidé de reporter la discussion sur le prochain Rapport sur l'état du saumon de l'Atlantique nord après l'adoption de la base de données rivières.

e) Progrès effectué dans l'application 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', CNL(13)38

5.28 Le Président a rappelé que le Conseil a adopté un 'Plan d'action pour mettre en œuvre les conseils de l'étude externe des performances et la révision des 'Prochaines Etapes' pour l'OCSAN', [CNL\(13\)38](#). Des rapports de progrès détaillés sur les recommandations contenues dans le Plan d'action ont été soumises au Conseil tous les ans depuis 2014. Le rapport 2022 sur le progrès effectué dans l'application du Plan d'action, [CNL\(22\)19](#), a été distribué avant la session.

5.29 Le Président a aussi souligné la pertinence du troisième examen de la performance puisque l'objectif de l'examen, comme exposé dans son Mandat, [CNL\(21\)22](#), est d'évaluer la 'performance de l'OCSAN depuis son examen précédent en 2012...' Le compte rendu du Panel du troisième examen des performances de l'OCSAN sera publié avant la session annuelle 2023 et examiné lors de cette session. Ce point d'ordre du jour (5e) pourrait par conséquent ne pas être nécessaire en 2023.

5.30 Le Conseil a décidé que le point d'ordre du jour 'Progrès effectué dans l'application du Plan d'action pour mettre en œuvre les conseils de l'étude externe des performances et la révision des 'Prochaines étapes' pour l'OCSAN', [CNL\(13\)38](#) ne serait pas nécessaire en 2023.

f) Liaison avec l'industrie salmonicole

5.31 Le Président a indiqué aux délégués qu'en 2013, le Conseil avait interrompu les sessions habituelles du Groupe de liaison Association Internationale des Eleveurs de Saumon (AIES) / OCSAN. Un point de l'ordre du jour a été maintenu, lors duquel un représentant de l'AIES était invité à participer à un échange d'information sur des questions touchant à l'impact de l'aquaculture sur le saumon sauvage. L'AIES a décliné l'invitation à envoyer un représentant à cette session et à contribuer par un document ou une déclaration écrite.

g) Nouvelles opportunités ou opportunités naissantes pour, ou menaces contre, la conservation et la gestion du saumon

5.32 Le représentant du CIEM a présenté l'avis pertinent pour ce point de l'ordre du jour. Sa présentation est disponible comme document [CNL\(22\)56](#).

5.33 Le Président a apporté des informations aux délégués sur les discussions à la Commission de l'Atlantique du Nord-Est pour répondre au problème du saumon rose. Il a souligné que l'ampleur des entrées de saumon rose dans de nombreuses rivières de l'Atlantique est très inquiétante. Du travail avait été réalisé pour élaborer une déclaration du Conseil de l'OCSAN sur le saumon rose.

- 5.34 Le représentant de la Norvège a noté qu'il serait précieux d'avoir une approche commune du saumon rose entre les Parties à l'OCSAN. Par conséquent, une déclaration sur le saumon rose de la part du Conseil devrait faire référence aux Directives et Résolutions existantes ainsi qu'à l'avis du CIEM. Elle devrait inclure les zones de coopération entre les Parties qui répondraient à cette menace. Le représentant de la Norvège a dit qu'il s'agissait d'une évolution sérieuse et que d'autres Parties / juridictions pourraient affronter la même situation.
- 5.35 Le Président a noté qu'une déclaration sur le saumon rose de la part du Conseil de l'OCSAN devrait exhorter les Parties à prendre des actions cohérentes avec la Résolution de Williamsburg afin de coopérer pour limiter les impacts négatifs du saumon rose sur le saumon atlantique sauvage. Il a déposé une Déclaration Projet du Conseil concernant le Saumon rose, *Oncorhynchus gorbuscha*, dans la zone de la Convention de l'OCSAN, CNL(22)43, qui incluait la création d'un Groupe de travail permanent de l'OCSAN sur le saumon rose. Le Président a demandé s'il y avait des commentaires sur la déclaration projet. Le représentant de l'UE a déclaré qu'il s'agissait d'une question très importante et que l'UE travaillerait en vue de l'adoption d'un programme de suivi, avec l'intention d'élaborer un plan d'action. La représentante du RU a indiqué qu'il y avait du saumon rose au RU avec preuve d'une reproduction réussie, et qu'ils tenaient à travailler avec les Parties pour mieux comprendre et répondre à ce problème. La représentante du Danemark (pour les Îles Féroé et le Groenland) a soutenu et fait part de nombres croissants de saumons roses au Groenland et de la preuve de sa présence dans son unique rivière à saumon. Le représentant du Canada a aussi soutenu cette initiative et dit que le Canada contribuerait là où il pourrait. Le représentant de la Fédération de Russie a pleinement soutenu le Groupe de travail permanent sur le saumon rose de l'OCSAN.
- 5.36 La CPAPN a porté à la connaissance du Conseil qu'elle accueillerait une réunion d'experts du saumon rose de l'Atlantique et du Pacifique les 2 – 3 octobre à Vancouver, pour discuter de recherche coopérative sur la redistribution du saumon rose.
- 5.37 Le représentant de la Norvège a offert d'apporter une mise à jour sur le saumon rose lors de la session annuelle de 2023. Le Président a suggéré que d'autres Parties devraient aussi être encouragées à fournir des mises à jour, le cas échéant. Le représentant des ONGs a demandé que les ONGs soient intégrées au Groupe de travail.
- 5.38 Le Conseil a décidé:
- d'adopter la 'Déclaration du Conseil concernant le saumon rose, *Oncorhynchus gorbuscha*, dans la zone de la Convention de l'OCSAN', [CNL\(22\)47](#) (Annexe 14). Celle-ci comprenait la décision de créer un Groupe de travail permanent de l'OCSAN sur le saumon rose.

h) Pêcherie de saumons à St Pierre et Miquelon - Gestion et échantillonnage

- 5.39 Le Président a noté que le Conseil et la Commission Nord-Américaine sont préoccupés par les captures de saumons à St Pierre et Miquelon qui, bien que faibles, se produisent à une période où il y a de sérieuses inquiétudes quant à l'abondance des stocks nord-américains et où des restrictions de prélèvement strictes ont été instaurées dans toute la zone de la Commission Nord-Américaine.
- 5.40 Le Président a rappelé que la France (pour St Pierre et Miquelon) est observateur à l'OCSAN. En 2021, le Conseil a décidé d'écrire à la France (pour St Pierre et Miquelon) pour l'inviter à se joindre à l'OCSAN. La lettre du Président, en date du 31 janvier 2022, faisait valoir comment la procédure de Plan de mise en œuvre de l'OCSAN

permettrait à la France (pour St Pierre et Miquelon) de valoriser ses actions positives en matière de gestion du saumon. La France (pour St Pierre et Miquelon) a [répondu](#) le 22 avril 2022 en déclarant, entre autres, que:

‘A Saint-Pierre-et-Miquelon, la France a ainsi décidé de renforcer l’encadrement de la pêche, en raccourcissant la période d’ouverture de la pêche, du 1er mai au 21 juillet, et en plafonnant le nombre de licences de pêche récréative à 80 en 2021[...] La France souhaite ainsi maintenir son statut d’observateur à l’OCSAN.’

- 5.41 Le Président a aussi noté que le ‘Rapport relatif à la pêche du saumon à Saint Pierre et Miquelon en 2021’, [CNL\(22\)20rev](#), avait été soumis par la France (pour St Pierre et Miquelon). Le rapport serait aussi examiné à la Commission Nord-Américaine. La représentante de la France (pour St Pierre et Miquelon), Camille Servetto, a présenté les points saillants du rapport.
- 5.42 Les représentants des États-Unis et du Canada ont fait part à la France (pour St Pierre et Miquelon) de leur appréciation de la gestion de la pêche et de la fourniture de statistiques de pêche. Ils ont indiqué qu’ils poseraient des questions détaillées à la Commission Nord-Américaine.
- 5.43 Le représentant des ONGs a souligné que le rapport montrait que la grande majorité des poissons étaient prélevés par les pêcheurs de loisir (autour de 594 capturés par près de 80 pêcheurs récréatifs). Il a indiqué que c’était davantage que toute autre pêche récréative en quelque endroit que ce soit d’Amérique du nord. Il a demandé si le plan de gestion prévoyait de réduire le nombre de poissons qui est prélevé par chaque pêcheur de loisir. La représentante de la France (pour St Pierre et Miquelon) a déclaré que la France travaillait avec les pêcheurs de loisir pour réduire le nombre de poissons prélevés. La représentante de la France (pour St Pierre et Miquelon) a dit comprendre que les captures sont élevées et que la France (pour St Pierre et Miquelon) est aussi préoccupée. Elle a indiqué que les autorités administratives locales sont impliquées dans une démarche pour essayer de répondre à cela.

i) Rapports des trois Commissions régionales concernant leurs activités de conservation

- 5.44 Les activités des trois Commissions ont été rapportées par leurs Présidents.

6. Divers

- 6.1 Le Président a indiqué aux délégués qu’il y avait deux points divers.

Proposition pour des Déclarations de l’OCSAN sur l’élevage du saumon

- 6.2 Le Président a rappelé aux délégués que l’OCSAN a tenu une Session Spéciale Thématique (SST) sur l’aquaculture en 2021, [CNL\(21\)65](#). L’objectif principal était de stimuler des actions urgentes pour mettre en œuvre des mesures supplémentaires de protection du saumon sauvage vis à vis des impacts de l’élevage du saumon, et d’assurer des progrès concrets par les Parties / juridictions vers la réalisation des objectifs internationaux pour le pou de mer et les échappements de saumon d’élevage, en prenant en compte les recommandations du Comité de direction de la SST de 2016, [CNL\(16\)60](#), et le Symposium de l’AIS de 2019, [CNL\(19\)16](#). Le Comité de direction de la SST de 2021 a émis quatre recommandations au Conseil de l’OCSAN. L’une d’elles était:

‘Qu’une déclaration de l’OCSAN soit publiée pour:

- *promouvoir l'adoption de technologies innovantes et alternatives, en mer et à terre, pour aider à atteindre 100 % de confinement des poissons d'élevage et pour que 100 % des élevages aient une gestion efficace du pou du poisson telle qu'il n'y ait pas d'augmentation de charges en pou du poisson, ou de mortalité induite par le pou du poisson attribuée aux élevages, pour la protection du saumon sauvage et de la truite de mer; et*
 - *déclarer que toute augmentation de charges en pou du poisson ou mortalité induite par le pou du poisson chez les saumoneaux sauvages ou introgression génétique de stocks de saumon occasionnées par l'élevage de saumons est inacceptable lorsqu'il y est fait référence dans le cadre d'une action d'un Plan de mise en œuvre, et ne peut être considérée dans le cadre de la procédure de passage en revue comme faisant progresser la Partie ou juridiction concernée vers l'atteinte des objectifs internationaux.'*
- 6.3 Le Président a noté qu'il y avait eu des débats sur le texte d'une déclaration lors de la session annuelle 2021, mais pas d'accord. Du travail avait été fait en inter-session, lors duquel plusieurs versions de déclarations projets de l'OCSAN sur l'élevage du saumon avaient été examinées.
- 6.4 Le Conseil a examiné une 'Déclaration projet sur l'élevage du saumon du Conseil de l'Organisation pour la conservation du saumon de l'Atlantique Nord', CNL(22)45, et une 'Déclaration projet du Conseil de l'OCSAN aux Parties / juridictions ayant de l'élevage de saumon à la suite de l'examen des IP en novembre 2021', CNL(22)46.
- 6.5 Le représentant de la Norvège a proposé de retirer 'parfois significatif' de la 'Déclaration projet sur l'élevage du saumon du Conseil de l'Organisation pour la conservation du saumon de l'Atlantique Nord', CNL(22)45. Le Président a déclaré que ces mots n'auraient pas dû être inclus et qu'ils seraient retirés. Le représentant des ONGs a appuyé cette déclaration.
- 6.6 Le représentant des ONGs a fait part de leur frustration du fait que fréquemment les IPs ne comprenaient pas des actions positives en ce qui concerne l'aquaculture et que les APRs ne montraient pas d'avancées fortes. Le représentant des ONGs a salué la 'Déclaration projet du Conseil de l'OCSAN aux Parties / juridictions ayant de l'élevage de saumon à la suite de l'examen des IP de novembre 2021', CNL(22)46.
- 6.7 Le Conseil a décidé:
- d'adopter une 'Déclaration sur l'élevage du saumon du Conseil de l'Organisation pour la Conservation du saumon de l'Atlantique Nord', [CNL\(22\)49](#) (Annexe 15); et
 - d'adopter une 'Déclaration du Conseil de l'OCSAN aux Parties / juridictions ayant de l'élevage du saumon à la suite de l'examen des IP en novembre 2021', [CNL\(22\)50](#) (Annexe 16).

Invitation à rejoindre l'OCSAN

- 6.8 La représentante des États-Unis a remercié la France (pour St Pierre et Miquelon) du maintien de son intérêt pour l'OCSAN et le CIEM. Elle a proposé qu'elle soit invitée à rejoindre l'OCSAN. La représentante de la France (pour St Pierre et Miquelon) a répondu que cette demande de rejoindre l'OCSAN serait discutée avec les ministres concernés. Le représentant du Canada a apporté son soutien et a suggéré que l'Islande aussi soit invitée à se joindre à nouveau à l'OCSAN. Le représentant des ONGs a ajouté

qu'il y avait une ONG accréditée d'Islande, mais pas l'Islande elle-même. Les ONGs ont soutenu pleinement l'invitation à l'Islande.

- 6.9 Le Conseil a décidé d'écrire à la France (pour St Pierre et Miquelon) et à l'Islande pour les inviter à rejoindre l'OCSAN.

7. Date et lieu de la prochaine session

- 7.1 Donnant suite à l'invitation du Canada, le Conseil a décidé de tenir sa quarantième session annuelle du 6 au 9 juin 2023 au Canada. Le Président a demandé que le Canada se concerte avec le Secrétariat à ce sujet et a indiqué que des dispositions d'urgence devraient être envisagées compte tenu de la pandémie de Covid-19 en cours.
- 7.2 Le Conseil a confirmé les dates provisoires de sa quarante-et-unième session annuelle comme étant du 4 au 7 juin 2024. Le représentant de l'UE a porté à la connaissance du Conseil qu'elle étudiait la possibilité de proposer d'accueillir la session annuelle 2024.

8. Communiqué de presse

- 8.1 Le Conseil a adopté un communiqué de presse, [CNL\(22\)52](#) (Annexe 17).

9. Compte rendu de la session

- 9.1 Le Conseil a accepté le compte rendu de sa session.

10. Clôture de la session

- 10.1 Une déclaration de clôture a été fournie par la Fédération de Russie (Annexe 18).
- 10.2 Une déclaration de clôture a été fournie par la CPAPN (Annexe 19).
- 10.3 Le Président a remercié les Parties et les observateurs pour leurs contributions et a clos la trente-neuvième session annuelle de l'OCSAN.

List of Annexes

Annex 1	Opening Statement from the President of NASCO, Arnaud Peyronnet
Annex 2	Opening Statements Submitted by the Parties
Annex 3	Opening Statements Submitted by Inter-Governmental Organizations
Annex 4	Opening Statement Submitted by NASCO's Accredited Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs)
Annex 5	List of Participants
Annex 6	Agenda, CNL(22)42
Annex 7	2023 Budget and 2024 Forecast Budget, CNL(22)54
Annex 8	Proposed Interim Policy on the Interpretation and Application of NASCO Staff Fund Rule 3.2 and Staff Rule 8.2(b) Concerning the Lump Sum Entitlement, CNL(22)44
Annex 9	Presentation by Dr Eric Molenaar on the Third Performance Review, CNL(22)55
Annex 10	Request for Scientific Advice from ICES, CNL(22)13
Annex 11	Question and Answer Session held during the Special Session of the Council: Report from the Tromsø Symposium on the Recommendations to Address Future Management Challenges, CNL(22)58
Annex 12	Question and Answer Session held during the Special Session of the Council: Evaluation of Implementation Plans Under the Third Reporting Cycle (2019 – 2024), CNL(22)60
Annex 13	Question and Answer Session held during the Special Session of the Council: Evaluation of the Annual Progress Reports under the 2019 – 2024 Implementation Plans, CNL(22)62
Annex 14	Statement of the Council Regarding Pink Salmon, <i>Oncorhynchus gorbuscha</i> , in the NASCO Convention Area, CNL(22)47
Annex 15	Statement on Salmon Farming from the Council of the North Atlantic Salmon Conservation Organization, CNL(22)49
Annex 16	Statement from the Council of NASCO to Parties / jurisdictions with Salmon Farming Following the IP Reviews in November 2021, CNL(22)50
Annex 17	Press Release, CNL(22)52
Annex 18	Closing Statement provided by the Russian Federation
Annex 19	Closing Statement provided by the North Pacific Anadromous Fish Commission

Opening Statement from the President of NASCO

Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen.

It is my great pleasure to open the Thirty-Ninth Annual Meeting of NASCO.

This is an unusual and exciting meeting, not least because it is NASCO's first ever hybrid Annual Meeting, but also because many of you are here in-person for the first time in three years. So I not only welcome the people here in this room, but I would like to also welcome our virtual delegates, especially those who are attending in the more inconvenient time zones!

I would like to start by thanking you all for the huge efforts you made over the past couple of very challenging years, to ensure that NASCO continued to function effectively. We will carry on with that important work over the next few days and I will return to that in more detail, later.

I am delighted that this year's annual meeting takes place in beautiful, sunny Scotland! We last held our Annual Meeting in Edinburgh ten years ago in 2012, but this is the first time we meet at the Dalmahoy Hotel & Country Club.

It's a beautiful venue and is appropriate for NASCO, not least because the River Gogar Burn (which you can see at the front of the hotel) feeds into the River Almond – a river that hosts salmon. And in this catchment the Forth Rivers Trust has just completed a project which enhances habitat and opens up waterways for Atlantic salmon. This work has included easing barriers to salmon migration (and I am particularly interested in the largest rock ramp in the UK!); improvements to the river channel and riparian habitat and the planting of over 1,000 trees.

This project is of interest to us not only because it meets challenges and overcomes obstacles for Atlantic salmon, but for two other reasons.

- 1) You will be able to see some of the highlights of this project on the tour on Thursday and
- 2) Because it features in one of the videos created by Fisheries Management Scotland and funded as part of the International Year of the Salmon – the IYS.

And that leads me nicely onto some of the business we can look forward to over the coming days.

The last time we met face-to face-was in 2019 in Tromsø, Norway. Immediately before that meeting we held the IYS Symposium. In the Council meeting this week, we will be revisiting the Report of the Tromsø Symposium Steering Committee in a Special Session, and considering how to address its recommendations. And we will also be considering the IYS legacy, with discussion on the next State of North Atlantic Salmon Report and the future of the NASCO Rivers Database.

Moving away from the IYS now, I would like to mention the other Special Sessions at this year's meeting. I consider the Implementation Plans and Annual Progress Reports provided by Parties to be one of the most valuable mechanisms that NASCO has developed. As you know, this process requires Parties / jurisdictions to report on the implementation of NASCO's Resolutions, Agreements and Guidelines. On Tuesday, we will hold Special Sessions on the review of the Implementation Plans and the review of the Annual Progress Reports. Since they are Special Sessions, all delegates are encouraged to participate. It is an opportunity for delegates to hold Parties / jurisdictions to account on their actions in relation to wild Atlantic salmon, and also to highlight some of the excellent work that is taking place.

As you know, last year's Theme-Based Special Session was about minimising impacts of salmon farming on wild Atlantic salmon. The impacts highlighted then continue to remain a concern. And in continuing efforts to make progress on minimising these impacts, the Council will consider the text of two NASCO Statements on Salmon Farming in its business this week.

Another important issue for NASCO is the upcoming third performance review. I am pleased to welcome Erik Molenaar to our meeting (and his colleagues online: Jean-Jacques Maguire and Phil McGinnity). Erik is the Chair of the Performance Review Panel and he will make a presentation to the Council about the work of the Review Panel. The Panel will report next year and no doubt this report will feature prominently at our 2023 Annual Meeting.

But staying with this year, in the West Greenland Commission, there will be negotiations on a new regulatory measure to apply to the salmon fishery at West Greenland. And in the North-East Atlantic Commission, we will learn more about the concerns related to the increasing presence of pink salmon in the North Atlantic.

The International Atlantic Salmon Research Board and the Finance and Administration Committee met yesterday, and I look forward to hearing about their deliberations later in the week.

As this is the first face-to-face meeting since 2019, I am sure, that like me, you are all looking forward enjoying the social side of the Annual Meeting. I am very much looking forward to the reception this evening in Edinburgh's spectacular castle. And I thank the Scottish Government for hosting this, especially Antje Branding, Alexander Kinninmonth and Vanessa Brown for their organization behind the scenes. I have already touched briefly on the tours that have been organized for us at the end of the week and would like to thank Alan Wells and the others involved at Fisheries Management Scotland who have done a great job in pulling these together for us. I would also like to thank the Forth Rivers Trust, Tay District Salmon Fishery Board and Spey Fishery Board, without whom these tours could not happen.

So, these are just a few of the business and social highlights of the coming days. As usual we have a packed programme before us and limited time to cover it. But I am looking forward to much lively discussion and debate.

I would also like to thank our Secretary, Emma Hatfield, and her team, for the impressive amount of work that went into preparing this annual meeting. I am confident that this meeting will be a success and this would not be possible without the dedication and professionalism of our Secretariat, who in the last two years had to deal with unforeseen and exceptional events. I am sure you will join me in warmly thanking them.

I would like to conclude my opening remarks with a reminder of why we are all here. NASCO's objective is *'to conserve, restore, enhance and rationally manage Atlantic salmon through international co-operation, taking account of best available scientific information.'* And I would ask that you to keep our objective in your thoughts, throughout the discussions this week.

With that, I would like to move on to Opening Statements by Parties, Observers and the NGOs.

Opening Statements Submitted by the Parties

Opening Statement to Council submitted by Canada

Mr. President, Distinguished Delegates, and Observers:

The Canadian delegation is pleased to return to a face-to-face meeting this year. We want to give special thanks to the NASCO Secretariat for organizing the meeting in Edinburgh, Scotland, and the unwavering support provided on various NASCO business throughout the year.

One of the highlights for Canada in 2021 was the positive review of our latest Implementation Plan. We greatly appreciate the recognition of our ongoing efforts to meet the objective of the NASCO Convention regarding the conservation and management of Atlantic salmon. Canada is committed to remaining transparent, accountable, and rational, as we progress in the implementation of targeted actions to conserve wild Atlantic salmon over the coming year. In doing so, we are keen to advocate for Indigenous peoples to have a more formalized role at NASCO, as we believe we can greatly benefit from their vast knowledge of this species.

Following on last year's disappointing outcome in the negotiation of a regulatory measure for the West Greenland salmon fishery, Canada remains hopeful that Denmark (in respect of the Faroes Islands and Greenland) will be able to concretely demonstrate their willingness and capacity to control the level of harvest and repeated overharvest in the new negotiated regulatory measure. Canada firmly believes that increased conservation efforts are still needed to reverse declining trends across the range of Atlantic salmon stocks, including reducing harvest to sustainable levels.

As always, we look forward to continuing discussions with the U.S. and France (in respect of St. Pierre and Miquelon) on the effective management, monitoring, and control of the mixed-stock fisheries in Labrador and St. Pierre and Miquelon. We continue to encourage France (in respect of St. Pierre and Miquelon) to strive to implement a comprehensive approach to the management of Atlantic salmon, in accordance with the objectives of NASCO.

The Russian Federation's attendance at the meeting this week serves as a reminder of President Putin's unjustifiable and unprovoked invasion of Ukraine. NASCO is based on a multilateral commitment to common goals to be achieved through discussion, good-faith negotiation, and compromise. We look forward to working in that spirit over the next four days, as members of NASCO focus their efforts on the many important discussions. We will continue to be mindful of the ongoing, blatant attack on these principles currently being waged by Russia on Ukraine and its people.

In conclusion, we would like to reiterate how grateful we are for the opportunity to collaborate with the Parties face to face in the coming days, and trust that we will have constructive discussions that will prove beneficial for all involved. We hope to welcome you all to Canada next year for the 40th Annual Meeting.

Thank you.

Opening Statement to Council submitted by Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland)

Mr. President, Ms. Secretary, distinguished Delegates, Observers, Ladies and Gentlemen,

The Faroe Islands and Greenland would like to thank the Scottish authorities for their hospitality and the NASCO Secretariat for their persistent work, under ever so fast changing circumstances, on making the Annual Meeting possible as a face-to-face meeting for the first time in three years, and with a hybrid solution for the first time ever.

The Greenlandic delegation is pleased to be able to attend to the first face-to-face Annual Meeting in three years.

As we begin the NASCO Annual Meeting today, Mr. President, the Governments of the Faroe Islands and Greenland is compelled to make the following statement on our position regarding the Russian aggression in Ukraine:

Denmark in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland (DFG) condemns in the strongest possible terms the Russian Federation's war of aggression against Ukraine. We want to express our full solidarity with Ukraine and the Ukrainian people. We stand in solidarity with our like-minded partners in the international community and support all measures to ensure truth, justice and accountability for violations of international humanitarian law and human rights in Ukraine.

We appreciate the engagement of NASCO members to continue the important work on conserving and restoring wild Atlantic salmon. Nature does not go into quarantine under any circumstances, and so, effort must be made at all times in order to keep up with population dynamics. Greenland's commitment to the NASCO objectives has taken form as a management plan along with law enforcement and multiple new measures during the past few years. Since the introduction of a license system in 2018, many short notice changes have been made in the management of the small scale fishery, and hopefully, multiyear measures will bring stability to this small subsistence fishery, with such profound cultural importance for the Greenlandic people, an indigenous peoples.

Sadly, return rates are declining while salmon farming is increasing. Restoration cannot continue until significant steps are taken in the rivers of origin. The stock cannot survive without completely restored habitats and spawning areas.

As stated in previous years, we empathize the importance of focusing on the external factors that affect the Atlantic salmon stocks such as migratory obstacles, predation, effects of aquaculture, pollution and climate change. Thus, Greenland and the Faroe Islands urge NASCO and States of Origin to increase focus on how to address these local factors that are negatively impacting the stocks.

If in NASCO we aim to conserve and restore a wild Atlantic salmon, this organization has to point out all threats to the population and accordingly act on all threats to the population.

The latest ICES advice states that: *"Despite major changes in fisheries management in the past few decades and increasingly more restrictive fisheries measures, returns have remained low compared to historical levels. It is likely, therefore, that other factors besides fisheries are constraining production."*

Thus, it must be of the greatest interest to NASCO to accordingly allocate time and remedies on main causes.

Salmon habitats can be restored with immediate effect on the population. Denmark has shown the way by taking all necessary measures at once. Let us focus on what works and learn from success stories. Let us focus on progress.

Mr. President, it is our hope that all NASCO members will contribute to improve conditions for the Atlantic Salmon population by taking responsibility for our own respective areas and actions.

Greenland looks forward to a week of productive discussions.

Thank you.

Opening Statement to Council submitted by the European Union

Mr President, Mrs Secretary, Distinguished Delegates, Observers, Ladies and Gentlemen:

The European Union is delighted to participate to the 39th Annual Meeting of NASCO in Edinburgh, and we would like to thank the Secretariat for all the hard work that went into the preparation of this physical meeting after two years of pandemic and virtual meetings.

Being this week in Edinburgh will help us to agree on important items that we have ahead of us in the agenda. These include the adoption of a new regulatory measure for the fishery in West Greenland, the implementation of the third Performance Review, the evaluation of Implementation Plans and Annual Progress Reports, the follow-up of the recommendations highlighted by the Tromsø Symposium, and the consideration of how NASCO should conduct its business in the future, among many others.

In this regard, the EU is looking forward to a fruitful cooperation with all the Parties during this physical meeting, and we are looking forward to decide on issues that will reinforce the conservation of wild Atlantic Salmon.

To conclude Mr. President, let me express the European Union and its Member States' full solidarity with Ukraine and the Ukrainian people.

The EU condemns in the strongest possible terms Russia's unprovoked and unjustified act of aggression against Ukraine, which grossly violates international law and the United Nations Charter, and undermines international security and stability.

The EU demands that Russia immediately cease its military actions, withdraw all its troops from the entire territory of Ukraine and fully respect Ukraine's territorial integrity, sovereignty and independence within its internationally recognised borders and abide by UN General Assembly resolution titled "Aggression against Ukraine" supported by 141 states at the 11th emergency special session.

The EU resolutely supports Ukraine's inherent right of self-defence and the Ukrainian armed forces' efforts to defend Ukraine's territorial integrity and population in accordance with Article 51 of the UN Charter.

At all times Russia must respect its obligations under international law, including international humanitarian and human rights law, including with respect to the protection of civilians, women and children.

Russia also needs to stop its disinformation campaign and cyber-attacks.

Opening statement to Council submitted by Norway

Mr. President, distinguished Delegates, Observers, Ladies and Gentlemen. On behalf of Norway, I would like to thank the Secretariat for hosting the Thirty – Ninth Annual Meeting of NASCO in Edinburgh. The Norwegian delegation is pleased to return to a face-to-face NASCO meeting, and we look forward to productive discussions over the next days.

In Norway, the pre-fishery abundance of wild Atlantic salmon remains low, and the 2021 Atlantic salmon run seem to have been at a historic low level. One of the main reasons continues to be reduced survival at sea, but local and regional differences suggest that adverse human impacts strongly influence the development and status of stocks.

The Scientific Advisory Committee for Atlantic Salmon has reclassified the state of the Norwegian Atlantic salmon stocks according to the National Quality Norm for Wild Salmon, using data from the period 2015-2019. Only 21% of the populations were found to be in a good or very good state while 38 % of the populations are in a poor or very poor state. Escaped farmed salmon and salmon lice infections related to salmon farming remain as the most severe anthropogenic threats to Norwegian wild Atlantic salmon, and the present mitigation measures are insufficient to stabilize and reduce these threats.

The latest report by the Teno Monitoring and Research Group concludes that in 2021 there was not a harvestable surplus in most salmon populations in the Teno system. The forecast for the 2022 salmon run in Teno is low and indicates that this also will be the case this year. In response Finland and Norway have agreed there will be no fishing for salmon in the Teno river system in 2022. As in 2021, a decision is made to close the salmon fisheries in the Teno fjord and in coastal areas in proximity to the Teno fjord.

The occurrence of pink salmon in Norwegian rivers have increased significantly in recent years. Substantial resources were spent trying to capture as much of this alien species as possible to hinder reproduction. In 2021, 150 000 pink salmon and 103 000 Atlantic salmon were caught in Norwegian fjords and rivers. Invasive pink salmon is a new threat, and there is need for national and international measures to reduce the risk of negative impacts on native salmonids. Based on what we have learned so far, along with the historical distribution of the species in its native area, it is possible that pink salmon will colonize all rivers in Norway and rivers in the other countries around the North Atlantic if we fail at controlling the spawning. This will affect native fish species and biodiversity in general.

24 Norwegian salmon rivers are included in the national program for river liming. Salmon catches in limed rivers have increased from about 10 tons in the 1980s to 40 - 60 tons today, and at present this makes up for 10-14 % of total salmon catches in Norwegian rivers.

Of a total of 51 infected rivers by *Gyrodactylus salaris*, 39 are treated and the parasite is successfully eradicated. If all the eradication measures implemented are successful, the number of infected rivers in Norway will be reduced to eight. After several years of testing, a new method for combating *G. salaris* is now ready for use. The use of monochloramine at very low concentrations can remove the parasite from salmon fry within a few days without having negative effects on the fish. This method will be used for combatting of *G. salaris* in two of the four infected rivers in the Driva region in 2022 and 2023.

Norway strongly condemns Russia's war against Ukraine. We demand that Russia stops its aggression and withdraws its troops immediately.

Russia's invasion of Ukraine has changed European security policy and has far-reaching consequences for our bilateral relations with Russia.

It's important with unity between allies and close partners in the reaction against Russian aggression and brutality in Ukraine. We stand together with the EU and other countries to ensure that the sanctions are strong and effective.

In closing, the Norwegian delegation would like to thank the Secretariat for its efforts in all the preparations for this meeting under still quite extraordinary conditions, and we look forward to a productive and successful meeting.

Opening Statement to Council Submitted by the Russian Federation

Mr President, distinguished Delegates, Observers, Ladies and Gentlemen.

On behalf of the Russian delegation and the Federal Agency for Fisheries, which represents the Government of the Russian Federation in NASCO, I am pleased to greet all participants of the Thirty-Ninth Annual Meeting of NASCO.

Russia, guided by agreements and resolutions of NASCO, has done much for conservation of wild Atlantic salmon. As a result of many years of work, commercial salmon fisheries are now prohibited in most rivers, and coastal fisheries remain at minimal levels and in the White Sea only, they represent a traditional type of fishing by residents of coastal communities. At the same time, recreational fishery, and especially catch-and-release fishing, demonstrated great development and was supported by the state, which helped to not only preserve many salmon populations, but also to bring them quite close to pristine state. Many salmon rivers of the Russian North, abundant with salmon, such as Belousikha, Rynda, Kharlovka, Ponoï, Varzuga have become world famous and attractive fishing destinations for both Russian and foreign anglers. In 2022, despite the known restrictions on air travel, the number of bookings has increased even compared to pre-Covid times. We are pleased that many anglers who plan to visit Russian salmon rivers this year will come from other countries.

As in previous years, we are very pleased to work together with other Contracting Parties for conservation of Atlantic salmon, an iconic species in the northern hemisphere. Again, we would like to reiterate the importance of NASCO in uniting efforts to conserve Atlantic salmon for future generations. In the new reality, the Secretariat's work is even more intense and multi-task as probably never before. We are sincerely thankful to the Secretariat for its professionalism! It greatly contributes to the solution of critical problems relating to conservation of Atlantic salmon.

The work of NASCO is regulated by the Convention. In accordance with rule 8 of the Rules of Procedure for the Council *"Unless it decides otherwise, the Council shall not discuss or take a decision on any item which has not been included in the draft agenda for the meeting"*. In order to succeed in addressing the main goals of NASCO we must respect its tasks and priorities and not let geopolitics become part of its deliberations.

Thus, the discussion of issues not related to conservation of Atlantic salmon and activities of NASCO looks destructive and inefficient in the light of tasks that need to be addressed by members of the Organization.

On behalf of the Russian delegation, I wish all of us success in working together during this week. My delegation is looking forward to having important and fruitful discussions during

this meeting.

Opening Statement to Council Submitted by the United Kingdom

Mr. President, Mrs Secretary, Distinguished Delegates, Observers, Ladies and Gentlemen.

First the UK Delegation must recognise the current situation in Ukraine.

Russia's assault on Ukraine is an unprovoked, premeditated attack against a sovereign democratic state. The UK and our international partners stand united in condemning then Russian government's reprehensible actions, which are an egregious violation of international law and the UN Charter. As a Permanent Member of the UN Security Council, Russia has a particular responsibility to uphold international peace and security. Instead, it is violating the borders of another country and its actions are causing widespread suffering.

The Russian Government has shown that it was never serious about engaging in diplomacy – it has deliberately worked to mislead the world, in order to mask its carefully planned aggression. As the UN Secretary-General has said, such unilateral measures conflict directly with the United Nations Charter - the use of force by one country against another is the repudiation of the principles that every country has committed to uphold.

Russia must urgently de-escalate and withdraw its troops. It must be held accountable and stop undermining democracy, global stability, and international law.

It is, however, imperative that we do not let the Russian Governments' actions overshadow the opportunities the 39th Annual Meeting provides for exploring further actions to mitigate the decline of Atlantic salmon stocks. The UK is thankful to be in attendance at this face to face meeting and is very much looking forward to working with those present here today. We hope for a successful meeting driven by collaboration and open discussion.

Despite the implementation of several important management measures to support conservation and stock rebuilding, as well as major reductions in fisheries exploitation, both across the UK and the entire range, salmon numbers have continued to decline significantly over recent decades. Therefore, the UK recognises the importance of shared responsibilities in safeguarding salmon stocks within the convention area, and the need for all parties to work together constructively to ensure we leave this iconic species in a better state than we found it, for the future generations.

Already this year the West Greenland Commission (WGC) have held important intersessional meetings to develop a vital draft regulatory measure for the mixed stock fishery at West Greenland. We would like to thank DFG for their open-ness and collaboration in drawing up a draft measure, which we look forward to developing further throughout the meetings this week. It is important to note that we remain keenly aware that the ICES catch advice continues to be that there are no catching options and that we have seen significant overfishing in recent years. Against this challenging backdrop the UK seeks to continue working collaboratively with DFG and other members of the West Greenland Commission to find a way forward which balances improved protection for salmon with respecting Greenland's cultural heritage.

The UK welcomes this year's Themed Based Special Session on the *Report from the Tromsø Symposium on the Recommendations to Address Future Management Challenges*, and we look forward to agreeing how best to build on these important recommendations.

Furthermore, the opportunity to discuss the development of Implementation Plans and Annual Reports will highlight our firm and ongoing commitment to addressing management challenges within our jurisdiction. We believe that there is much to be done, and that with time we can as both a Party and as a collective make progress in addressing the pressures that salmon face today.

The UK firmly believes in the importance of the work carried out by NASCO and all Parties in support of sustainable salmon stocks. We look forward to a productive meeting that will continue to build on the efforts made so far, and to working successfully with all in 2022 and beyond.

Finally the UK would like to thank the secretariat for all their hard work throughout the year and particularly in enabling this face to face meeting to take place.

Thank you.

Opening Statement to Council Submitted by the United States

Mr. President, Madam Secretary, Distinguished Delegates, Observers, Ladies and Gentlemen:

The United States is very pleased to participate in the 39th Annual Meeting of NASCO. We sincerely thank the NASCO Secretariat for their hard work in preparing for the first in-person Annual Meeting in three years. It is particularly fitting that this meeting is being held near the beautiful city of Edinburgh. A true homecoming, indeed. We have an extensive set of issues before us this week, and we are so pleased that we will be able to be together in person once again with all of our colleagues to complete our work successfully. As always, we count on the strong commitment of all Parties to ensure wild Atlantic salmon are effectively conserved and managed across the North Atlantic.

As we begin our meeting today, Mr. President, we simply cannot move on to the normal business of this organization without reiterating the U.S. position with regard to Russian aggression in Ukraine, as follows:

- Russia's initial invasion and ongoing war against Ukraine is unprovoked and unjustified. President Putin has waged a brutal war that has rendered catastrophic loss of life and human suffering in Ukraine, as well as extensive environmental damage and destruction that will extend far beyond Ukraine's borders. Russia alone is responsible for the death and destruction that this invasion continues to bring, and the world must hold Russia accountable.
- Russia's actions constitute a clear violation of Article 2(4) of the United Nations Charter, which states that all member States shall refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any State.
- The U.S. Delegation stands in solidarity with its like-minded allies and partners in NASCO and the international community more generally to condemn Russia's actions in the strongest possible terms.
- We also join our partners in urgently calling on Russia to immediately cease its use of force against Ukraine, refrain from any further unlawful threat or use of force against any UN member State, and immediately withdraw all of its military forces from the territory of Ukraine within its internationally recognized borders.

While Russia's egregious actions in Ukraine are reprehensible, we cannot and should not allow this heinous situation to derail the important work of this organization. As in past years, the United States is keenly interested in addressing threats to critically endangered U.S. origin Atlantic salmon. Mixed-stock fisheries that intercept U.S.-origin salmon are of particular concern. Numbers of U.S.-origin salmon returning to home waters continue to decline. Estimated adult returns to U.S. rivers in 2021 were 676 fish. This is below both the previous 5 and 10-year mean returns (1156 and 890, respectively) and the lowest since 2014 (379). Our populations are well below recovery goals. This is a dire situation, and every fish counts. Any U.S. fish harvested in a mixed stock interceptory fishery has an outsized impact on these critically endangered populations. We take very seriously the scientific advice from ICES that continues to recommend against the prosecution of fisheries that would intercept these and other depleted populations.

A focus for the United States during the 2022 Annual Meeting will be to work collaboratively with the members of the West Greenland Commission to develop a regulatory measure that balances the need to protect particularly vulnerable Atlantic salmon stocks that contribute to the fishery while still allowing for a small internal use fishery. We hope the WGC will be more successful than it was last year. In 2021, after extensive discussions, agreement could only be reached on a one-year interim regulatory measure. So far, the United States is cautiously optimistic that a new regulatory measure for the 2022 fishing season will provide the basis for a new agreement this year. In addition to the fishery at West Greenland, we look forward to continuing our engagement with Canada and France (in respect to St. Pierre et Miquelon) on monitoring and control of the Labrador and St. Pierre and Miquelon mixed-stock fisheries. The renewed interception of a few U.S. origin salmon in the Labrador fishery will require special attention by the North American Commission this year.

Finally, we look forward to productive discussions surrounding a number of other important issues, including the proposed considerations for alternative ways of doing business, the Recommendations from the Tromsø Symposium, matters related to the third performance review, clarifications of the staff rules and staff fund rules, and the issues surrounding the Implementation Plan and Annual Progress Report process, including the special sessions.

In closing, I want to reaffirm that the United States is fully committed to NASCO and to working cooperatively and collaboratively with our international partners to successfully address the important issues facing us this week and into the future.

Thank you.

Opening Statements Submitted by Inter-Governmental Organizations

Opening Statement to Council submitted by the European Inland Fisheries and Aquaculture Advisory Commission (EIFAAC)

Mr President, Madame Secretary, Mayor, delegates, observers, ladies and gentlemen. I am grateful for the opportunity to provide an opening statement on behalf of the European Inland Fisheries and Aquaculture Advisory Commission (EIFAAC) at this the 39th Annual meeting of NASCO.

By way of background EIFAAC is a statutory, advisory fishery body under the Constitution of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations. Established in 1957, it is an inter-governmental forum for collaboration and information exchange on inland fisheries and aquaculture across European countries. EIFAAC has currently 34 members including the European Union.

Governments, institutions and agencies, including NASCO, can benefit from international advice derived from the EIFAAC's network linking policy-makers, managers, scientists and others working on inland fisheries and aquaculture issues.

EIFAAC's mission is to promote the long-term sustainable development, utilization, conservation, restoration and responsible management of European inland fisheries and aquaculture and to support sustainable economic, social, and recreational activities through:

- providing advice and information
- encouraging enhanced stakeholder participation and communication; and
- the delivery of effective research

EIFAAC has currently active project groups looking at a number of prioritised research areas that maybe of interest to NASCO parties, these include:

- the monitoring the performance of fish passes; developing CEN standard
- the development of advice on sustainable management actions on cormorant populations
- the welfare of fishes in aquaculture
- the downstream passage of fish at hydropower dams

Another EIFAAC project, supported by the Irish Government, facilitates the EIFAAC Symposium Advances which will take place from the 20th to 21st of June in Killarney Ireland. The symposium is titled Technology, Stock Assessment and Citizen Science in an Era of Climate Change This symposium supported a discussion between stakeholders, including anglers, managers, scientists, and legislators on the future of recreational fisheries in an era of climate change.

EIFAAC and NASCO share the common goal of wild Atlantic salmon conservation while respecting the social, economic and cultural value of this unique species. EIFAAC is well positioned to offer expert advice and support to NASCO on issues affecting the Atlantic salmon in the freshwater element of its lifecycle.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank our hosts and facilitators for their wonderful welcome to Portland, Maine and for the facilities and hospitality provided. Finally, may I wish all of you a productive and enjoyable NASCO session.

Opening Statement to Council Submitted by the North Pacific Anadromous Fish Commission (NPAFC)

Distinguished delegates, observers, ladies and gentlemen.

First of all, let me extend my gratitude to Secretary Dr. Emma Hatfield and the Council for the invitation to the 39th NASCO Annual Meeting. On behalf of the North Pacific Anadromous Fish Commission (NPAFC), the sister organization of NASCO, I am pleased to be able to meet with you virtually. Remarkably, we will be completing the International Year of the Salmon this calendar year and we look forward to the IYS Synthesis Symposium being held in Vancouver October 4-6 in Vancouver, British Columbia Canada. We would like to acknowledge the strong spirit of cooperation between our two Secretariats as our Symposium Steering Committee strives for what we believe will be a unique meeting with a focus on synthesis of progress that occurred during the IYS and most importantly on the identification of gaps and the development of strategic roadmap to 2030. We appreciate the excellent work being done by NASCO committee members including Dr. Emma Hatfield, Dr. Alan Walker, Ms. Livia Goodbrand and Dr. Ciaran Byrne. I look forward to agenda items related to the IYS including the special session on the report from the Tromsø Symposium and the update on IYS Legacy Activities. In addition, NPAFC has an interest in the NASCO review of alternative ways of conducting business as a result of the Covid 19 experience as the NPAFC is considering this as well. I wish you every success in your deliberations this week.

Thank you.

Opening Statement to Council Submitted by NASCO's Non-Governmental Organizations

Thank you, Mr President, Secretary, Heads of delegation, distinguished delegates, NGO colleagues, ladies and gentlemen, the NGOs appreciate this opportunity to make an opening statement to NASCO Council and we would like to thank the Secretariat for arranging this Annual meeting in Edinburgh, especially working through the challenges presented by the Covid pandemic recently. We look forward to playing a full and inclusive part in proceedings over the coming four days.

Much has been said already by Heads of Delegation about the appalling situation in Ukraine brought about by President Putin's illegal war. Suffice to say that the NGO observers support all these comments and condemn Russia's aggression and atrocities absolutely.

Meanwhile, the NGOs are in the process of producing a strong evidence document for submission to the External Performance Review (EPR) Group, and several NGOs are also submitting their own evidence on issues relevant to their respective party or jurisdiction. We will give credit to NASCO for some successes, particularly in partnership with the respective governments of Greenland and the Faroe Islands for increasing control of their historic salmon fisheries, and also as a hub for the exchange of scientific data and good practice. However, the review group can expect some basic home truths from the NGOs about the often-lamentable attitude towards wild salmon conservation emanating from the members of this forum, and the seeming preference for often supporting activities that damage rather than protect the species.

Some of the issues covered by the NGOs in our EPR submission include:

- We believe that the building blocks are in place within NASCO to genuinely influence the protection and conservation of wild Atlantic salmon across their North Atlantic range.
- We also believe that the IP/APR process is basically sound, albeit that it could be a little less detailed, but the fact that only two IPs out of 21 have so far passed the review group's scrutiny - after four attempts - speaks volumes.
- NASCO Council has signed up to enough resolutions and agreements that, if they were adopted by home governments in their policy making, would be quite sufficient to protect wild salmon from the dangers they face throughout their life cycles.
- What is missing is the commitment of home governments to follow the agreements NASCO makes within Council and turn them into meaningful actions – that is why the vast majority of your IPs have failed. What appears to be missing is the acknowledgement that NASCO is principally a conservation organisation for the protection of wild Atlantic salmon, not a forum for supporting activities with the potential to seriously damage the species.
- Added to this lack of political commitment, several NGOs report that there is a disconnect between what their Parties/jurisdictions' IPs/APRs state and what is actually delivered on the ground.

One of the excuses for inaction we consistently hear from delegations is that NASCO was established to control exploitation at Greenland and the Faroe Islands and it should not, therefore, involve itself in issues such as salmon farming that are the responsibility of home governments. The NGOs could not disagree more! Salmon do not recognise state boundaries and a government's inaction over a particular issue could potentially impact fish from another state as they migrate to or from their ocean feeding grounds. That is why agreements made at

NASCO are so important to wild salmon conservation on a pan-North Atlantic scale, and why inaction within home governments is so frustrating to the NGOs and the wider external salmon world.

So, Mr President, the NGOs believe that we must return to the recommendation from the previous EPR group that NASCO should strengthen its convention, as other RFMOs have done recently, so that home governments have to abide by the agreements made within this Council and include them in their policy actions to protect and conserve wild salmon. If this fails to happen, the wider salmon world will lose all faith that NASCO can ever be a relevant forum in the modern salmon management and conservation worlds. Worse still, it will be acknowledged by all who care about the status of wild salmon stocks that their continual degradation happened on NASCO's watch. Your respective governments will be seen as being more concerned with supporting activities with the potential to damage wild salmon rather than having the courage to adopt policies that protect the species.

The choice will shortly be down to NASCO – take the opportunity offered you by the EPR to develop into a genuinely effective forum for the protection of wild Atlantic salmon, or stay as you are and become increasingly irrelevant in a wider conservation world that is desperate to save the species from its current crisis situation across much of its North Atlantic range.

Thank you, Mr President.

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CNL(22)42

Thirty-Ninth Annual Meeting of the Council

Dalmahoy Hotel & Country Club, Edinburgh, Scotland

6 – 9 June 2022

Agenda

1. **Opening of the Meeting**
2. **Adoption of the Agenda**
3. **Financial and Administrative Issues**
 - a) Report of the Finance and Administration Committee
4. **Scientific, Technical, Legal and Other Information**
 - a) Secretary's Report
 - b) The Third Performance Review: Presentation to the Council from the Chair of the Performance Review Panel
 - c) Report on the Activities of the Organization in 2021
 - d) Announcement of the Tag Return Incentive Scheme Grand Prize
 - e) Scientific Advice from ICES
 - f) Report of the International Atlantic Salmon Research Board
 - g) Consideration of Alternative Ways of Conducting NASCO Business Following the Covid-19 Pandemic
 - h) Report of the Rivers Database Working Group
 - i) Report of the Standing Scientific Committee
5. **Conservation, Restoration, Enhancement and Rational Management of Atlantic Salmon under the Precautionary Approach**
 - a) Report from the Tromsø Symposium on the Recommendations to Address Future Management Challenges
 - (i) Special Session: Report from the Tromsø Symposium on the Recommendations to Address Future Management Challenges
 - (ii) Decisions taken in light of the Special Session on the Report from the Tromsø Symposium on the Recommendations to Address Future Management Challenges
 - b) Evaluation of Implementation Plans Under the Third Reporting Cycle (2019 – 2024)
 - (i) Special Session: Evaluation of Implementation Plans Under the Third Reporting Cycle (2019 – 2024)

- (ii) Decisions Taken Regarding the Evaluation of Implementation Plans Under the Third Reporting Cycle (2019 – 2024)
- c) Evaluation of Annual Progress Reports Under the 2019 – 2024 Implementation Plans
 - (i) Special Session: Evaluation of Annual Progress Reports Under the 2019 – 2024 Implementation Plans
 - (ii) Decisions Taken Regarding the Evaluation of Annual Progress Reports Under the 2019 – 2024 Implementation Plans
- d) International Year of the Salmon Legacy Activities
- e) Progress in Implementing the ‘Action Plan for Taking Forward the Recommendations of the External Performance Review and the Review of the ‘Next Steps’ for NASCO’, CNL(13)38
- f) Liaison with the Salmon Farming Industry
- g) New or Emerging Opportunities for, or Threats to, Salmon Conservation and Management
- h) Management and Sampling of the St Pierre and Miquelon Salmon Fishery
- i) Reports on the Conservation Work of the Three Regional Commissions
- 6. Other Business**
- 7. Date and Place of the Next Meeting**
- 8. Press Release**
- 9. Report of the Meeting**
- 10. Close of the Meeting**

CNL(22)54

North Atlantic Salmon Conservation Organization
2023 Budget and 2024 Forecast Budget (Pounds Sterling)

	Budget 2023	Forecast 2024
Expenditure		
1. Staff-related costs	401,730	416,500
2. Travel and subsistence	27,000	27,000
3. Research and advice	62,800	63,900
4. Contribution to Working Capital Fund	0	0
5. Meetings	52,000	10,400
6. Office supplies, printing and translation	22,000	22,800
7. Communications	19,300	20,000
8. Headquarters Property	47,350	49,100
9. Office furniture and equipment	12,000	1,500
10. Audit and other expenses	14,500	14,850
11. Tag Return Incentive Scheme	4,500	4,500
12. International Atlantic Salmon Research Fund	0	0
13. Contribution to Contractual Obligation Fund	0	0
14. Contribution to Recruitment Fund	0	0
15. Contribution to IYS Fund	0	0
16. Contribution to Periodic Projects Special Fund	0	0
Total Expenditure	663,180	630,550
Income		
17. Contributions - Contracting Parties	608,680	576,050
18. General Fund – Interest	500	500
19. Income from Headquarters Property	54,000	54,000
20. Surplus or Deficit (-) from 2020	0	0
Total Income	663,180	630,550

2023 Draft Budget & 2024 Forecast Budget (Pounds Sterling)
– Expenditure by Sub-Section

		Budget 2023	Forecast 2024
1.	Staff related costs		
1.1	Secretariat members	257,990	267,500
1.2	Temporary and part-time staff costs	57,900	60,000
1.3	Staff Fund, allowances, insurances and other costs	85,840	89,000
	Total	401,730	416,500
2.	Travel & subsistence		
2.1	Travel to Annual Meeting	7,000	7,000
2.2	Official travel and subsistence	20,000	20,000
	Total	27,000	27,000
3.	Research and advice		
3.1	Contribution to ICES	62,800	63,900
3.2	Other research & advice	0	0
	Total	62,800	63,900
4.	Contribution to Working Capital Fund	0	0
5.	Meetings		
5.1	Costs of annual meeting	45,000	3,100
5.2	Costs of other meetings	7,000	7,300
	Total	52,000	10,400
6.	Office supplies, printing and translation		
6.1	Office supplies	12,500	13,000
6.2	Printing	6,500	6,700
6.3	Translations	3,000	3,100
	Total	22,000	22,800
7.	Communications		
7.1	Telecommunications	5,000	5,200
7.2	Postage and courier services	2,500	2,600
7.3	IT Support & Website	11,800	12,200
7.4	Communications, professional support and design	0	0
	Total	19,300	20,000
8.	Headquarters Property		
8.1	Capital and interest payments	0	0
8.2	Maintenance, services and other building related costs	47,350	49,100
	Total	47,350	49,100
9.	Office furniture and equipment		
9.1	Furniture	0	0
9.2	Equipment	12,000	1,500
	Total	12,000	1,500
10.	Audit and other expenses		
10.1	Audit and accountancy fees	11,500	11,750
10.2	Bank charges and insurances	500	500
10.3	Miscellaneous	2,500	2,600
	Total	14,500	14,850
11.	Tag Return Incentive Scheme	4,500	4,500
12.	Contribution to IASRF	0	0
13.	Contribution to Contractual Obligation Fund	0	0
14.	Contribution to Recruitment Fund	5,000	0
15.	Contribution to IYS Fund	0	0
16.	Contribution to Periodic Projects Special Fund	0	0
	Total Expenditure	663,180	630,550

2022 Budget Contributions (Pounds Sterling) Adjusted for Confirmed rather than Provisional 2020 Catches (tonnes)

Party	2020 catch (provisional)	2020 catch (confirmed)	2022 contribution (provisional)	2022 contribution (confirmed)	Adjustment
Canada	104	103	75,548	76,088	541
Denmark (Faroe Islands and Greenland)	31	31	40,135	40,444	309
European Union	117	100	81,854	74,603	-7,251
Norway	527	527	280,747	285,995	5,249
Russian Federation	49	49	48,867	49,355	488
United Kingdom	17	18	33,343	34,008	664
USA	0	0	25,097	25,097	0
Total	845	828	585,590	585,590	0

Note. A positive adjustment represents an underpayment in 2022.

NASCO Budget Contributions for 2023 and Forecast Budget Contributions for 2024 (Pounds Sterling)

Party	2021 catch (provisional)	2023 contribution	Adjustment from 2022	2023 adjusted contribution	2024 forecast contribution
Canada	103	98,986	541	99,527	93,680
Denmark (Faroe Islands and Greenland)	40	54,397	309	54,706	51,481
European Union	99	96,155	-7251	88,904	91,001
Norway	295	234,878	5249	240,127	222,286
Russian Federation	49	60,767	488	61,255	57,509
United Kingdom	16	37,411	664	38,075	35,405
USA	0	26,086	0	26,086	24,688
Total	602	608,680	0	608,680	576,050

Contributions are based on the official returns.

Column totals in both tables can be in error by a few pounds due to rounding.

Five-year NASCO Budgeted Expenditure and Income Projections 2023 – 2027

		Budget 2023	Forecast 2024	Forecast 2025	Forecast 2026	Forecast 2027
Expenditure						
1.	Staff related costs	401,730	416,500	431,911	447,891	464,463
2.	Travel & Subsistence	27,000	27,000	30,000	30,000	30,000
3.	Research & advice	62,800	63,900	64,563	65,661	66,777
4.	Contribution to Working Capital	0	0	0	0	0
5.	Meetings	52,000	10,400	10,750	11,100	11,500
6.	Office supplies, printing and translations	22,000	22,800	23,500	24,350	25,250
7.	Communications	19,300	20,000	19,000	19,550	20,100
8.	Headquarters Property	47,350	49,100	50,000	50,000	50,000
9.	Office furniture & equipment	12,000	1,500	1,550	13,500	1,600
10.	Audit & other expenses	14,500	14,850	14,800	15,220	15,640
11.	Tag return incentive scheme	4,500	4,500	4,500	4,500	4,500
12.	International Co-operative Research	0	0	0	0	0
13.	Contribution to Contractual Obligation Fund	0	0	0	30,000	25,000
14.	Contribution to Recruitment Fund	0	0	0	0	0
15.	Contribution to IYS Fund	0	0	0	0	0
16.	Contribution to Periodic Projects Special Fund	0	0	0	0	0
Total		663,180	630,550	650,574	711,772	714,830
Income						
16.	Contributions of Contracting Parties	608,680	576,050	596,074	657,272	660,330
17.	Interest Received on General Fund	500	500	500	500	500
18.	Income from HQ property	54,000	54,000	54,000	54,000	54,000
Total		663,180	630,550	650,574	711,772	714,830

CNL(22)44

***Proposed Interim Policy on the Interpretation and Application of NASCO
Staff Fund Rule 3.2 and Staff Rule 8.2(b) Concerning the Lump Sum
Entitlement***

Considering previous discussions by the Finance and Administration Committee (FAC) on the need to clarify the NASCO's staff rules and staff fund rules regarding the lump sum issue to remove ambiguity and, if needed and appropriate, to consider if any adjustment to its level might be needed or if some other type of adjustment to NASCO's financial benefits for its staff should be considered;

Recognising the limited time available to fully address this important issue during the 2022 NASCO Annual Meeting and the need for additional discussions to resolve outstanding issues; and

Desiring to balance the need to proceed carefully and deliberately on possible revisions to NASCO's Staff Rules and Staff Fund Rules while providing, without prejudice to future FAC discussions on this matter, near-term certainty to Secretariat staff on an important financial aspect of their employment;

The NASCO Council adopts the following interim policy regarding the interpretation and application of NASCO Staff Fund Rule 3.2 and Staff Rule 8.2(b):

- a) Any member of the Secretariat staff who voluntarily leaves full-time employment with NASCO after completing their probationary employment period is considered to be '*retiring from full-time employment with NASCO*' as that phrase is used in Staff Rule 3.2 and Staff Fund Rule 8.2(b) and is eligible to receive a lump sum payment pursuant to those rules.
- b) The level of lump sum payment to be provided will be one twelfth after tax of the final year's gross salary and allowances for each year of service with NASCO, fractions of a year to count pro-rata, consistent with the Staff Rule 3.2 and Staff Fund Rule 8.2(b).

This interim policy applies through June 9, 2023, unless otherwise decided by the Council. In order to develop a longer term solution to the issues related to the lump sum and other staff benefit issues, the FAC will undertake an inter-sessional process to continue to continue its consideration of these issues and recommend a way forward no later than at the 2023 NASCO Annual Meeting.

Third NASCO Performance Review: Status Update

Dr. Erik J. Molenaar

Overview

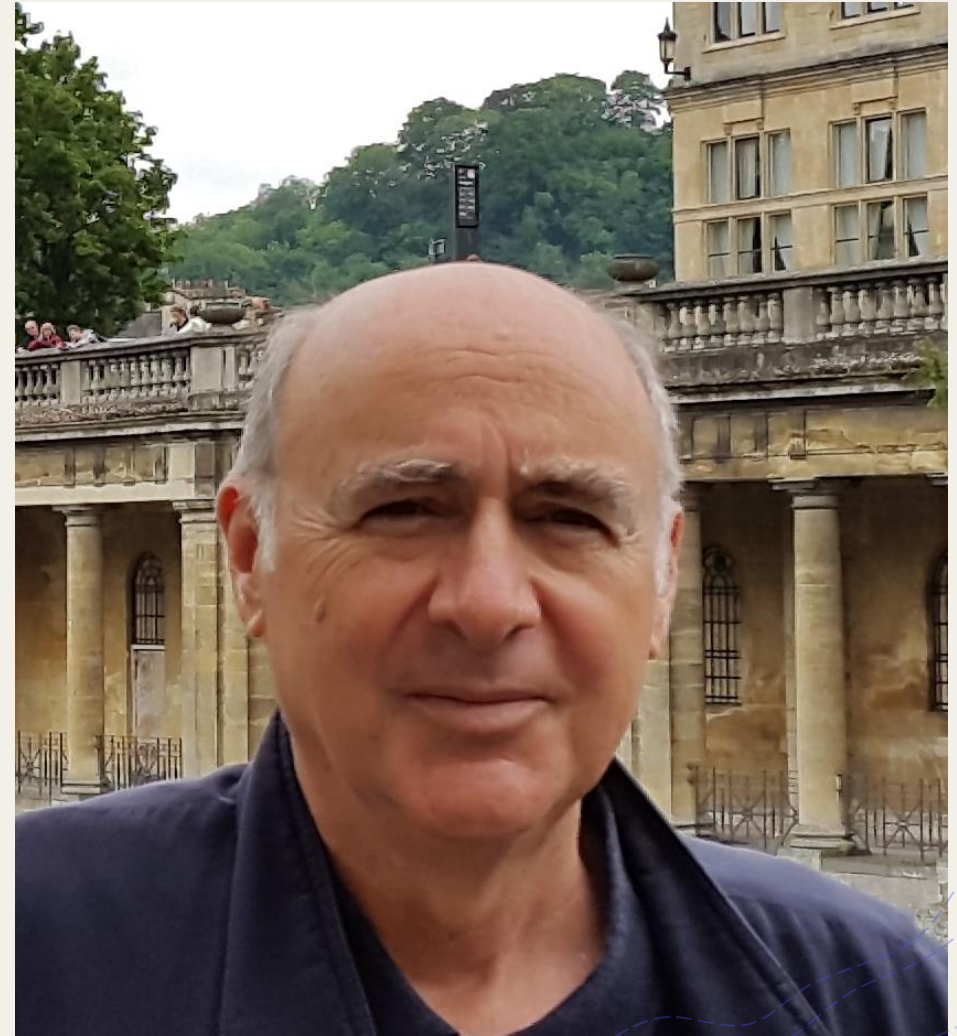
- Foundational Documents
- Introduction Members of the Review Panel
- Activities of the Panel so far
- Next Steps

Foundational Documents

- Terms of Reference for the Third Performance Review of NASCO (doc. CNL(21)22)
 - 35 performance review criteria within five categories
 - Conservation and management
 - Compliance and enforcement
 - Decision-making and dispute settlement
 - International cooperation
 - Financial and administrative issues
- Update on Planning NASCO's Third Performance Review (doc. CNL(21)15))

Jean-Jacques Maguire

- Fisheries Science



Prof. Philip McGinnity

- Salmon Management and Conservation



Dr. Erik J. Molenaar

- International Fisheries Law
- Chair of the Panel



Activities of the Panel so far

- Panel was established in the spring of 2021
- Held various online meetings, including with the Secretariat
- Created a Masterfile for the Panel Report, and decided to use Microsoft Teams as a platform
- Agreed who will be the lead author for each of the 35 performance review criteria
- Sent out an invitation to submit comments and views on NASCO and its performance (deadline 1 July 2022)
- Commenced reviewing NASCO documents

Next steps

1 July 2022	Deadline submission comments and views on NASCO and its performance
June - Dec 2022	Review Panel carries out the performance review and develops its draft report <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Meeting of the Review Panel, 5-9 December 2022, Edinburgh
4 Jan 2023	Deadline for Review Panel to make its draft report available for comment (of technical / factual errors alone) by the Parties, NGOs and Secretariat
Feb 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Deadline for technical and factual corrections by Parties and NGOs to the Review Panel's draft report• Secretariat compiles all technical and factual corrections to the draft report and passes to the Review Panel Chair

Next steps (cont.)

Feb - Mar 2023	Review Panel considers proposed corrections
14 Mar 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Review Panel's final report sent to President (via Secretariat)• Secretariat circulates final report to Parties and NGOs, for discussion at the NASCO Annual Meeting• Report posted on the NASCO website
6-9 June 2023	<p>39th (2023) NASCO Annual Council Meeting (venue to be decided)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Review Panel Chair (or their nominee) presents final report• Council considers the report and agrees follow-up process

CNL(22)13

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 and 2022¹;
- 1.2 report on significant new or emerging threats to, or opportunities for, salmon conservation and management²;
- 1.3 provide information on causes of variability in return rates between rivers within regions in the North Atlantic;
- 1.4 provide a summary of the most recent findings of ongoing research projects investigating the marine phase of Atlantic salmon (e.g. SeaSalar, SeaMonitor, SAMARCH, satellite tagging at Greenland);
- 1.5 provide a summary of the current state of knowledge on freshwater and marine predation by cormorants and impact on stocks;
- 1.6 provide a compilation of tag releases by country in 2021 and 2022; and
- 1.7 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 and 2022 fisheries³;
- 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 advise on the risks of salmon bycatch occurring in pelagic and coastal fisheries, and report on effectiveness and adequacy of current bycatch monitoring programs;

In the event that NASCO informs ICES (response requested by 31 January) that the Framework of Indicators (FWI) indicates that reassessment is required:

- 2.5 provide catch options or alternative management advice for the 2023/2024 - 2025/2026 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 rebuilding⁴ and;
- 2.6 update the Framework of Indicators used to identify any significant change in the previously provided multi-annual management advice; and

3. With respect to Atlantic salmon in the North American Commission area:

- 3.1 describe the key events of the 2021 and 2022 fisheries (including the fishery at St Pierre and Miquelon)³;

- 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;
4. **With respect to Atlantic salmon in the West Greenland Commission area:**
 - 4.1 describe the key events of the 2021 and 2022 fisheries³;
 - 4.2 describe the status of the stocks⁵;

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 question 2.5 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 2022 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.*

CNL(22)58

***Question and Answer Session held during the Special Session of the Council:
Report from the Tromsø Symposium on the Recommendations to Address
Future Management Challenges***

Paul Knight (Salmon and Trout Conservation UK¹): thank you very much, Mr President. And thanks, Eva. That was a superb résumé of recommendations. The NGOs support everything you said wholeheartedly. The NGOs would like to, first of all, remind NASCO that they are a conservation organization first and foremost. And that doesn't always come through. You've been given, by Eva, some brilliant recommendations. I suppose, really, looking to you, Arnaud, as the President, can you confirm that NASCO Council will genuinely look at these recommendations? Because, along with our report to the external performance review, this is all coming together really, I suppose, dare one say thanks to Covid, at the right time. Our real worry is that there's a lack of political commitment from the Parties. The Parties make very good recommendations here, go home, and the political masters say 'no thanks' or ignore them. It doesn't come out in policies that appear in the IPs or APRs.

So, can we have your confirmation, as President, that you'll genuinely look at these recommendations, and find some way, perhaps through the external performance review, that Parties are held to account to action them? Because if they don't, then NASCO becomes an irrelevance and Atlantic salmon will be the worse for it. They will continue to degrade. Really, Mr President, looking to you. Do we have your assurance that these recommendations will be properly debated and actioned upon by Heads of Delegation in Council? Thank you.

Arnaud Peyronnet (President): thank you, Paul, for that question. And yes, if you remember, we came to those conclusions. There was already a strong involvement from the Parties that really reflects consensus on those issues, and what needs to be done. You mentioned the external performance review. Of course, this is going to be an important moment for the Organization. One that we hope will also identify all those issues. They should come true. And there is already a reference in the Terms of Reference for the Panel to work on, to include those recommendations.

So, yes, from that point of view, this is already being considered. But what I can say already, is that this week we're already discussing what we can do, without waiting for the external performance review. And we are looking at some of the actions we have taken in recent times, and some actions that we are likely to take, just after this meeting, particularly looking at those eleven recommendations, because we feel that they are crucial and they are important for NASCO. And this is the role of NASCO, and we completely agree with you with on that.

Paul Knight (Salmon and Trout Conservation UK): thank you.

Dave Meerburg (Atlantic Salmon Federation): yes, I just wanted to echo Paul's comments and make a comment in general on how NASCO is working, in terms of its timeframe to actually get some things into action. Eva's presentation highlighted the issue of stocking. And she said there should be immediate consideration by NASCO to update their guidelines on stocking. And immediate doesn't usually mean waiting three years to even think about developing some way you're going to do that. So, that's a general criticism I have of the way

¹ Salmon and Trout Conservation UK is now known as Wildfish

NASCO works: it is slow to action a lot of the time. And in this case, the Symposium took place in 2019, before the actual 2019 meeting. I would have hoped that at the 2019 meeting that would have been a simple recommendation to take into consideration, of updating the guidelines on stocking, for example. But now, it's three years later. I think we're going to do something for the next year. That's on the agenda for the Council, I believe, to consider. But it's not immediate, by any means. That's my comment. Thank you.

Arnaud Peyronnet (President): thank you, Dave for your comment. I acknowledge myself that there has not been the progress that we probably were all to expect on those issues. I'm going to give you an answer on this. And it's only one side, of course, of the problem, but we also have to take into consideration that we had two very difficult years. I would recall that we barely went through the agenda items of the virtual meetings. We were really focusing on essential business. And it's not an excuse, but it's a fact. We were trying to make sure that NASCO could function. And that we could look at the critical elements for NASCO to function in those difficult times. So yes, we haven't delivered, it's true, but there were particular circumstances.

Paul Knight (Salmon and Trout Conservation UK): I think there are a number of questions coming out of what Eva's said, that I think are probably better said at the IP and the APR stages. Eva was very clear about how we should be protecting the coastal zone, for instance. I think there are various countries that don't do that. I remember, going back to the sea trout conference we had in Cardiff in 2004, which is a lifetime ago now, but there was an example of the Finnish sea trout populations that have been brought to their knees by, basically, bycatch and the coastal gill-net fishery. And we're increasingly finding out that's happening around, for instance, the UK coast, because of the research that's being done. And it's turning that research into positive action, and going back to what Dave has just said. We're getting more and more research results each year. And it's having the flexibility to turn that into action, which is missing.

I think, as one would expect from Eva, some brilliant recommendations, but I think you'll find more questions and more statements being made at the relevant time during the IP and the APR Special Sessions. But I'd like to thank Eva and her Steering Group again. Certainly from the NGO point of view, it's all we've been asking for, for 20, 30, 40 years. And I think this is the time. I think this is a crossroads for NASCO. You've got Eva's recommendations. You've got the external performance review coming up. If we don't make the changes we need now, and that doesn't result in political commitment from home governments to change their policies and have updated IPs and APRs every year, then I think we've missed a huge trick. And I'm really worried that NASCO will become more and more irrelevant, as time goes on. So, this is the time, folks. Take it. It's 40 years nearly, since you've been in existence. Now's the time to catch the wave, as they say. Thank you.

Dave Meerburg (Atlantic Salmon Federation): I'm asking, Mr President, if it'd be an opportune time to ask the Parties what they are doing, in terms of some of these recommendations that have come out of the Symposium? It's just a suggestion, but if you have some time, it might be interesting to hear from the Parties, saying that we've started addressing number one or number three, or whatever. Just to hear what's going on.

Arnaud Peyronnet (President): thank you, Dave. Yes, we could do that. I'm aware that we are in the process of preparing a document that could show what is being done. And I'd rather wait for that document to be ready and made available, so that people can understand and have a better overview.

CNL(22)60

***Question and Answer Session held during the Special Session of the Council:
Evaluation of Implementation Plans Under the Third Reporting Cycle
(2019 – 2024)***

Arnaud Peyronnet (President): thank you very much, Cathal. That was a great presentation. Some of it, I think, some people were familiar with, but I think what was interesting also, was to see the evolution, not only of the rules, the guidelines, but also, in terms of all the Parties who were responding to those. I would like to acknowledge your work and the work of the Review Group over the last few years. It is quite amazing what you have been able to achieve, in particular, again, during the context of having virtual meetings.

I'm also aware of the role of the Secretariat there, in supporting those meetings and participating. I really would like to thank you all, because this is, as we said, a crucial element of the work of NASCO, and one of the most important processes. So, thank you very much for that.

And also, I sympathise because it is true that we have revisited those guidelines. It was a bit of an intuitive process, in a way. We were trying to find the right balance between making sure that what was not being addressed by the Parties would be and, I think we can see clearly, and Paul will probably point to that, that there are still some issues, in particular with aquaculture. There's no doubt that this shows in what you're presenting. But we're also trying to find a balance, as I said, with what was being achieved, because there was a lot of good work there. We wanted to make sure that that would be shown as well, during the review. Yes, it took a bit of time to get there, but I think, hopefully, we'll have a bit of stability on that.

Dale Marsden (Canada): thanks, President and thanks, Cathal, for the presentation. It's helpful, for me, as I feel like a new person at NASCO. As somebody relatively new to NASCO, it's helpful to have the presentation, to go back to the history and see how the process has evolved over many years. So I appreciate that reminder.

I guess my comment is just to note that one of the innovations in the last round of the process that was really especially helpful for us, was that informal dialogue that we had in September. One of the struggles that we've had in working on our IP in recent years has been understanding a lot of the nuance that exists in the process, in the IP, and trying to reflect a really broad set of work and a deep set of work in the very restricted space that we have in the IP template. And so, what we found a challenge in the past was reading the response from the Review Group and not quite having the understanding of what was being sought in the different questions. So, what the dialogue allowed us to do, you'll remember, was to talk through some of the particular challenges that we had, get a better understanding of what the Review Group was looking for, and what they weren't seeing. And then, when we developed our response, that was actually really helpful for us, to make what, in some cases, turned out to be relatively, I would say, small changes: the information was the same, but it was presented in the way that the Review Group was looking for. It's really especially helpful for us. I suppose it's something for the Council to consider, going forward. I'm not going to try to propose putting something else on the Review Group's plate, because I think actually the dialogues that happened last year gave us what we needed to better understand that. But I guess, it's something for us to consider collectively, or I guess, for the Council to consider, going forward: will there be a point at

which, maybe allowing for that degree of interaction, might be helpful again for the Parties to fine-tune what they present? Thanks.

Elvar Örn Fridriksson (NASF Iceland): my question is more for the Parties than the Review Group, and my question is on aquaculture. I'm wondering specifically about the use of cleaner fish in aquaculture. Something that you start hearing more and more about. This is, in a lot of places, being promoted as some sort of a sustainable solution when the fact is that, just as an example, in Norway it's estimated that about 150,000 cleaner fish die in the pens every day.

My question is, does NASCO have an IP or a specific action on this? And if not, is there intent to do so?

Arnaud Peyronnet (President): thank you. I'll try to answer your question. Maybe some of the Parties present might have additional elements to bring. I just verified there with the Chair, we don't have any IPs at the moment that include particular measures concerning cleaner fish. But it's important also to keep in mind that, as reflected in the presentation from the Chair, the Parties have some latitude to choose which action they want to have, in order to meet a particular objective. And while they may not use those fish, they may actually have other actions. So, it would be difficult, I think, to actually push in a particular direction and to make a compulsory use. It may not be adapted to all the situations either. So, I'm not too sure if this is something that could go forward, but maybe some Parties would have different views. And I look, in particular, at the colleagues who have a lot of salmon farming around, if they want to intervene.

Raoul Bierach (Norway): I think in general, the cleaner fish is one possibility to control sea lice. And so, it's a method which is used within aquaculture. And I think we look at whether these cleaner fish, or other measures, are giving the result we want, in relation to wild salmon. We don't have any opinion on how the aquaculture industry is solving their problems. And the IPs are not designed to have any judgement on this and more general questions about sustainable methods of aquaculture. That's a different area, which NASCO in general is not so involved in. It's just one possibility, so we just look at the output it delivers. It's up for others to consider whether it's a good method or whether it's sustainable, in other respects. Thank you.

Cathal Gallagher (Chair of the IP / APR Review Group): thank you. Probably in agreement with the Review Group, I think the issue of cleaner fish in the aquaculture facility would need to address how that is going to ensure, or mitigate, or move towards 100 % protection of the wild salmon. And there's always a bit of a jump between any of those problems, where you're trying to control lice on a farm. What we're really interested in doing is ensuring that the wild fish pick up no lice at all and moving in that direction in a progressive way. So, while it could be an action, I don't think we've seen one as a Review Group. We'd be looking at the impacts on wild fish, so there'd have to be a close relation to that. Thank you.

Steve Sutton (Atlantic Salmon Federation): I have a question for Canada on the aquaculture part of their Implementation Plan. A lot has been said about aquaculture and the impacts on wild salmon over the last couple of days. Last year we had a Special Session on salmon farming. And one of the conclusions of the Steering Committee for that session is that there is now overwhelming evidence across the northern hemisphere of the adverse impacts of traditional salmon farming methods on wild salmon. And, also, that there is now an urgent need for all Parties to adopt stronger measures if their international responsibilities are to be met.

In Canada's most recent Implementation Plan, their mandatory actions on sea lice and escapes were not accepted because Canada is proposing to do research, rather than take management actions. And so, I guess, I'm trying to understand from Canada, why we're still proposing

research, in light of everything we know, and in light of the conclusions from the Special Session last year?

I guess my question is in two parts. Does Canada not accept the conclusions from the Special Session last year, about the overwhelming evidence and the need for urgent actions? And when might we see Canada proposing actions to address sea lice and escapes?

Doug Bliss (Canada): thank you very much for your question, Steve. Two questions, actually. Your first question was in response to Canada's reaction to the recommendations from the Special Session last year. And we are participating with Council, in terms of the development of a statement for that. Our support will be reflected in the statement that comes out. On the second issue, which is a very difficult question to answer, in terms of saying, why aren't you doing something? There is lots of progress going on. And, as you know, various regulators in Canada have different approaches to this. They're at different timescales in doing things. You are probably aware, at the federal level, that we are undertaking quite an extensive discussion with your organization, amongst others, about the development of a more comprehensive Canadian salmon conservation strategy. And these kinds of discussions are also included in that. Thank you.

Dave Meerburg (Atlantic Salmon Federation): Doug mentioned there's many different regulatory authorities dealing with aquaculture in Canada. And I'm wondering why we have only one IP for Canada, which is complex because of all these different jurisdictions and yet I see for the country of Spain, five different IPs for a very small geographic area.

So, I'm wondering if a solution to that in the future may well be to have Canada submit different IPs for different areas, some of which have no aquaculture, and may well score very well on their IPs. And the ones that do have aquaculture are at different levels of progress in solving some of the problems they do have with the aquaculture situation. Thank you.

Doug Bliss (Canada): thank you for your suggestion, Dave. We'll take that under advisement. And recognising also that ups the level of work, but that's not an excuse for not doing the right thing. We will consider the proposition. Thank you.

Alan Wells (Fisheries Management Scotland): thank you. This is a question for UK – Scotland. With regard to the impacts of fish farming, a Scottish parliamentary enquiry published its recommendations in November 2018, concluding that the *status quo*, in terms of regulation and enforcement is not acceptable. Subsequently, the Scottish Government's Salmon Interactions Working Group published 41 recommendations to manage wild / farmed interactions in May 2020. As yet, these recommendations have not been implemented in full.

Is the Scottish Government committed to introducing a fit-for-purpose regulatory regime for fish farming, which protects wild salmonids? And if so, can you confirm that the reformed regulatory regime will protect wild migratory salmonids and meet the international goals on salmon farming in full? Thank you.

Alexander Kinninmonth (UK): thanks, Alan. I'd also like to thank the Review Group for the detailed feedback on the UK – Scotland IP and APR. I can confirm that Scottish Ministers are committed to moving beyond the *status quo* and ensuring that the aquaculture regulatory framework in Scotland is as efficient and effective as it can be.

As you know, the Shared Policy Programme published last year, between the Scottish Government and the Scottish Green Party (which is known as the Bute House Agreement) commits to a step change in how we manage the marine environment, including reform to the aquaculture regulatory framework. And that's alongside a comprehensive programme of work to better protect wildlife and the environment, which is described in the Scottish Government's

response to the Interactions Working Group that you mentioned.

As is clearly stated in that response, Scottish Ministers are committed to the implementation of the Williamsburg Resolution to minimise the impact and risks presented by aquaculture to wild salmon. Government is also committed to continued progress towards the achievement of the international goals, described in the guidelines. We are currently progressing a new risk-based sea lice framework, alongside the Scottish Environment Protection Agency, and we are also taking action to strengthen the controls on fish escapes, including exploring the introduction of penalties, with the ultimate aim of redistributing the money to support wild salmon conservation and research. And just finally, I know you'll be aware, Alan, but Scottish Ministers have also announced a new Scottish Aquaculture Council. I very much hope Fisheries Management Scotland will take the invite to represent the wild salmon interests on that Council. Thank you.

John Murphy (Salmon Watch Ireland): a question for the Irish delegation. What is the Irish response to the statement about salmon farming, made by the head of the EU delegation at the last NASCO conference?

I'm asking this question in the light of what are obviously very divergent views on the continuation of open cage farming in Ireland, revealed recently in correspondence obtained under Freedom of Information laws between the two ministers with primary responsibility in the area.

Denis Maher (European Union): thank you John, for the question. You're quite right. Our Minister, who is the Minister with responsibility for wild salmonids, has written in fairly robust terms to his counterpart, who has statutory responsibility for aquaculture licensing and regulation. I think I have outlined to this group before, on a number of occasions, that we are not the authority for aquaculture. But that correspondence was issued, and I think we've shared it with you, John, at this stage, so you know the direction of travel. Our Minister is very anxious to engage with his counterpart on the aquaculture side, in the sense that he would like both sectors to coexist and there's no reason why impacts from the aquaculture industry should be so stark, in terms of the wild fish.

That letter, and the impending conversation between the Ministers, is concentrating on the sea lice issue, but also on potential escapes and introgression, and the issue, I know it was raised here earlier in a different context, of the use of feeder fish. So, it'll be a broad discussion, but I think our Minister's adamant that some level of mitigation, or a high level of mitigation, is brought to bear, in terms of the impacts of aquaculture. Thanks.

Nigel Milner (Institute of Fisheries Management): the background to my question is an apparent increase in the focus and intensity of marine pelagic fisheries, coincident with the smolt migration corridor off the western British Isles. So, it's a question, I guess, for the UK delegation. I wonder what their opinion is, of the impact of any marine bycatch in the pelagic fishery on smolt mortality at sea. That's the first part.

And I wanted to know whether they felt the monitoring of that bycatch was adequate to make a reliable assessment of mortality. And if not, are there any plans to do so? In other words, might that be featured in future IPs? Thank you.

Simon Toms (United Kingdom): thank you very much. Yes, it's a very good question, Nigel. And one that we are looking into. In terms of bycatch, the real issue seems to be for gill net fisheries, particularly in the western coast of England, and we have undertaken some research there with Game Wildlife Conservancy Trust. And that has identified that sea trout, in particular, and salmon are both susceptible to bycatch mortality.

We are working with the Inshore Fisheries Conservation Authorities to implement new bylaws to actually protect salmon and sea trout whilst they migrate through inshore coastal areas. In terms of smolt migration, that isn't something we're looking into at the moment, but there clearly are developing pelagic fisheries, particularly for pilchards, which are an increasingly important catch in the western approaches at the current time. Thank you.

Torfinn Evensen (Norske Lakseelver): I have a question for Norway. It's about habitat protection and restoration and the revision of terms for hydropower production licences. We are now on the doorstep of a revision of approximately 85 salmon rivers which need more water. And we need some more ambitious action, actually. We have an example of this last year; the two revisions were fulfilled.

Revision of terms of the Aura hydropower licence was completed in June 2021. Environmental flow was not implemented due to high cost compared to potential benefits. New terms were implemented and will allow other environmental improvements to be implemented. In the report to NASCO the following is reported as achieved: "Both revisions (Aura / Surna) are completed and are expected to improve conditions for salmon."

To this we must ask, what are the improved conditions specifically for the river Aura? With no environmental flow agreed in the new hydropower regime, salmon are extinct from 8 km of the river system. Furthermore, salmon are attracted to enter Aura on occasionally high waterflows, and so the effect is even worse as both adult salmon and parr are killed when the water stops. This revision of the hydro power regime is valid for the next 30 years under Norwegian law and ESA has now opened a separate investigation to evaluate if this is in accordance with the rules of the water directive.

Raoul Bierach (Norway): yes. Thank you for the question. Well, I think our delegation is well aware of what you just said about this specific case. Although we are aware of it, it's not really in the area of our expertise and, unfortunately, we will have to answer this question in writing at a later stage, if that's acceptable, because we have to involve the responsible authorities in answering this question, and it's not possible just now².

Paul Knight (Salmon & Trout Conservation UK³): thank you very much. Just following up, first of all, what Elvar said about cleaner fish. And this is one of the points the NGOs have been trying to put forward for a long time. There can never be any solution. If you think about it logically, you have a problem with fish farming producing lice, which impact wild migratory salmonids, so part of the solution to that is to take fish from the wild, lumpfish, wrasse, to eat the lice. They then get harvested with the salmon, because they can't be used again, for health reasons, they're killed. So, to solve one environmental problem, you're causing another one. It's just ridiculous. Anyway, that's just a bit of a statement, really.

Following on from what Simon Toms just said, about the coastal zone and what Eva was saying earlier on. It's such an important part. We feel that with most jurisdictions, what happens in fresh water is generally covered by legislation. The regulation of that legislation leaves a lot to be desired, in many cases. And the high seas fisheries, the marine zone, as far as we know, is pretty well covered albeit, as Nigel Milner just said, bycatch of post smolts in pelagic fisheries – I think a lot more needs to be known about that. But what we do know is, and what we're increasingly knowing in the UK, is that the coastal zone is so important, particularly from a potential bycatch.

So, my question really is to the UK Government. As we know more and more, from the

² The response provided by Norway, in writing, following the Special Session can be found [here](#).

³ Salmon & Trout Conservation UK is now known as Wildfish

SAMARCH work (many of you will be familiar with it: SAMARCH is a cross-Channel work between UK and France to find out what happens in estuaries in the coastal zones to our migratory fish), we are increasingly, year on year, finding out that gill nets are causing potentially extreme issues as bycatch, not only with adult fish but actually, gill nets with meshes that should allow juveniles to pass through are catching the smolts as well, because they're rolling up and getting caught and obviously getting killed. That's rather a garbled way of saying, how quickly can we turn in the scientific evidence from projects such as SAMARCH, which have EU and government backing, into action, i.e. in England, Defra does not have complete control, bizarrely, over the inshore coastal area.

So, I guess, to Simon, when will the research from SAMARCH be turned into policy that protects wild salmonids from supposedly unintentional bycatch from other commercial fisheries? Thank you.

Simon Toms (United Kingdom): thanks for the question again, Paul. Yes. We are working closely with GWCT to actually develop the evidence base, first and foremost. It's actually the evidence that you need to be able to influence management within the inshore zone. We are also engaging with the new fisheries management plans that the UK government is developing and we are inputting to that the risk of bycatch as part of that management activity, to try and find the best solution to actually overcome the risks that gill netting, in particular, play. It's been known about for quite some time, but it is very difficult to actually influence the activity on the ground, as you know. It does take time and it does take additional evidence, but we are getting there, I think.

Noel Carr (Federation of Irish Salmon and Sea-Trout Anglers): I direct this question to Norway. What has been done to monitor and prevent the hydro power companies following the terms for production and rules of operation? What action has been taken in salmon rivers where terms and rules have not been followed? Thank you.

Raoul Bierach (Norway): again, unfortunately, I'm not able to answer this question at the moment, but we will try to answer that in writing as fast as possible. Of course there are some enforcement mechanisms in place, but I don't know the details well enough to give a good answer to that question⁴.

Charlotte Middleton (Fisheries Management Scotland): I have a question for the Norwegian delegation as well, with regards to fish farming and, specifically, the implementation of the Traffic Light System. How could the Norwegian government accept 30 % mortality in wild salmon stocks, particularly in rivers failing to meet their conservation limit, in production areas for farmed salmon?

Raoul Bierach (Norway): unfortunately, I can't answer this question either, because we have not the right persons with us at present, but I promise that we'll answer also this question in writing as fast as we are able⁵. But it's a good question.

Dave Meerburg (Atlantic Salmon Federation): it may be directed at Cathal or it may be directed to Denmark (in respect of the Faroes and Greenland). I sit as the NGO representative in the West Greenland Commission. Cathal has indicated that Greenland has done very good in their IP, and I certainly would congratulate Greenland in recent years on their greatly improved management and control of their fishery.

In their fisheries management plan, they've identified separate quotas for various parts of the fishery, including for East Greenland. In the past, in our West Greenland Commission, in the

⁴ The response provided by Norway, in writing, following the Special Session can be found [here](#).

⁵ The response provided by Norway, in writing, following the Special Session can be found [here](#).

negotiation of quotas it was inferred that East Greenland was included. It's a very small fishery. In recent negotiations it's very clear that it's a West Greenland Commission dealing with the West Greenland fishery only. And hence, we now have an East Greenland fishery that's somewhat of an orphan. It's not included in the West Greenland Commission. It's not on the Agenda for the North-East Atlantic Commission to discuss.

So, this is a question concerning the IPs, how should the East Greenland fishery be addressed? And for the external performance review, alternatively, is this something that should be discussed in terms of changing the boundaries of the Greenland Commission, from being West Greenland to all of Greenland as a suggestion? And so, I guess I'd like a response, either from Cathal, or maybe from Greenland themselves.

Cathal Gallagher (Chair of the IP / APR Review Group): well, I think that's something that needs a broader discussion because we're in the boundaries of what we can and can't do.

It's not the role of the IP Review Group to question any of the information that's provided to us. We base it on the information that's provided. They might not present on the East Greenland fishery for example, there might not be an action. We just wouldn't have any information to be able to make judgements on that. So, it's a broader discussion that maybe has to go through Council, I think, to understand what should be included or not included.

Steve Sutton (Atlantic Salmon Federation): I have a question that is relevant to both Canada and the United States. It's an aquaculture question, and it concerns reporting of escapes. Both the United States, and at least one part of Canada, have a policy of not requiring the industry to report escapes from salmon farms of less than 50 fish. But in their IPs, both Canada and the US also say that their policy on escapes is consistent with the NASCO goal.

The NASCO goal is zero escapes. So, I'm not sure how you can have, on the one hand, a policy of having zero escapes, and on the other hand, tell the industry that we're not going to worry about any escapes less than 50 fish. I'm wondering if Canada or the United States or both would help me understand their thinking here, in terms of how they're answering the question around whether their policy is consistent with the goal of zero escapes.

Arnaud Peyronnet (President): at the moment we don't have any representatives here, but if they come back, I will get back to that question⁶.

Ken Whelan (Atlantic Salmon Trust): thank you, Mr President. This is more by way of a suggestion than it is a question. I've been struck over recent months in relation to this question of bycatch, in terms of awareness. I stand to be corrected in this, but from memory, we had a wonderful meeting of the SAMARCH group a few weeks ago, in Brittany. I don't think there was a single sea trout recorded for scientific purposes, outside of the fish that were released and tagged along the French coast.

We're also extraordinarily short of information in other areas in France as well, just by way of example, because I do some work on the Loire. In the Loire basin, we are aware of very extensive small traditional fisheries that are really important, in terms of keeping them alive. We know that there are interceptions, but our problem is, at the moment, in terms of the point that Simon made, to try and get changes, we need the data. We need the information.

We had discussions some years ago through the Atlantic Salmon Trust with the Pelagic Advisory Committee, and the skippers of the major pelagic boats were very keen to get some idea of the actual transitory routes of the smolts. Without any regulation, they were willing to actually look at the situation where, in their wheelhouse, if they had a map showing at least

⁶ A written response was submitted by the United States following the Special Session and can be found [here](#).

potentially where smolts might be at a particular time of the year, then at least a proportion of the boats could be encouraged to stay clear of that particular zone. It does strike me that we're sitting here today, and we all know that in May the red flag should be up, but how many fishermen actually know that? How many IFCA's (Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authorities), in terms of what Simon is now doing? The IFCA's are now becoming aware. But this idea of the use of the NASCO website, I do think there's a lot we could do in raising awareness about the key times, in terms of the transitory movement of our salmon and our salmon smolts, that would help greatly in actually making people aware that they're in a particular area, potentially at a particular time, but most importantly, that any information that they gather, in terms of individual fish or small numbers of fish, could be so valuable to us, in terms of understanding how these bycatches are taken, and where they're taken. So, I do think that there's a public relations component to this, outside of the time we have to wait for the scientific results. And I'm greatly encouraged by the response we got in our discussions with the pelagic fishermen in this regard.

Arnaud Peyronnet (President): thank you very much, Ken, for that insightful comment, as always. I think you're absolutely right. I would agree that there is scope to do much better out there, in terms of raising awareness. And I've seen similar initiatives for other bycatch issues where, if you talk to fishermen and you start engaging them on sensitive bycatch issues, they are willing to participate and to help. So, certainly I presume this is something we should really consider. And thank you for the comment. I see that Doug is back. We had a question from Steve. Steve, would you mind reintroducing your question there, now that the Canadian delegate is there?

Steve Sutton (Atlantic Salmon Federation): it revolves around the reporting of escapes, particularly in New Brunswick: the policy of not requiring the industry to report escapes of less than 50 fish. But, in the Canadian IP, Canada says that their policy on escapes is consistent with NASCO's international goal, which is zero escapes. So, I'm trying to understand how, on the one hand you can say you have a policy of zero escapes, while on the other hand, telling the industry that we're not going to worry about escapes of less than 50 fish.

Doug Bliss (Canada): what I would say is Canada doesn't have a policy. We're trying to summarise the policies of various other jurisdictions. And I guess, the best answer I have to your question is that Dave brought up an earlier question about how come we don't have five IPs. And I think that's something we have to think about. Thank you.

Dave Meerburg (Atlantic Salmon Federation): I'll try to make this shorter, in that I guess the record will show my earlier question in more detail, but basically the issue was, we're seeming to forget about East Greenland in the future, in terms of any NASCO involvement in the regulation of that fishery. It's not on the North-East Atlantic Commission to discuss. It's very clear in the West Greenland Commission that we're only talking about the West Greenland fishery.

Admittedly, it's a very small fishery, but it's something that may have to be addressed by the external performance review, in terms of suggesting a change in boundaries for Greenland, to make Greenland all one, rather than separating West Greenland and East Greenland not being considered at all. Or it may be something that could be taken up with the North-East Atlantic Commission. And I asked the question of Cathal originally, because Greenland was getting a very good score on their IP. And I said, yes, but they're not considering East Greenland anymore. Greenland's certainly considering it. They have a very defined quota. They have a good management plan for it etc. But it's something that's an orphan to NASCO now.

Katrine Kærgaard (Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland)): I think, from the point of view of being a very small administration, we would prefer to be in one Commission, instead of two, certainly. But as you point out, we have a management plan that covers all of Greenland, including East Greenland. We have always managed the fishery for all of Greenland. I think we should also wait for what we get from ICES, because there's a question about East Greenland. Hopefully we will know more by the time we get the answer in, I think, October.

I also want to point out, actually, that last year we continued the citizens sampling programme that we started during the pandemic. And for the first time ever, there were actually samples from salmon caught in East Greenland. So, that is also another point where we get more information. And I think we should wait on making any conclusions until we have more information. And then, we'll see. Thank you.

Responses Received in Writing from the Parties to Questions Posed During the Special Session

Response from Norway to a [Question](#) from Torfinn Evensen

In Aura there is a potential to improve conditions for anadromous fish by physically altering parts of the river stretch from Eikesdalsvatnet and up to a distance above Litlevatnet, especially with regard to migration for sea trout and small salmon. In this part of the river Aura there is always some water, though sometimes low. When implementing only physical measures, however, there may be periods in the winter where low water flows will affect the survival of the fish, and the recruitment of salmon can be expected to vary annually on this stretch. Statkraft has been instructed by the Norwegian Environment Agency to conduct an environmental design study in Aura, and based on the results from this study prepare a plan for mitigation measures to increase production of salmon and sea trout. Relevant physical measures in accordance with the plan may be imposed by the Norwegian Energy Regulatory Authority (NVE) pursuant to conditions regarding thresholds etc.

Response from Norway to a [Question](#) from Noel Carr

In the operational phase, the focus is on the plant being operated within the law and the requirements stipulated in the license. The hydro power companies must establish and apply an internal control system for the facility.

NVE perform physical controls to ensure that the hydropower companies has established an internal control system which secure that requirements following the law, regulations, licenses and orders are complied with. In addition, specific control are made of the water level in the reservoir and the release of the minimum water flow.

In situations where terms and rules are somehow broken, NVE has means for action. Following an accidental breach of the maneuvering regulations for the Alta power plant in the river Alta in January 2017, NVE imposed a violation fee of NOK 200,000 on Statkraft. Violation fees has also been imposed for a few other salmon rivers, but overall, the hydropower owners put a lot of effort in running their powerplants in accordance with rules and regulations.

Response from Norway to a [Question](#) from Charlotte Middleton

The traffic light system is implemented to provide support in determining the aquaculture industry's production capacity on the production area level. In production areas where the sea lice-induced mortality on the wild salmon population is more than 30 %, the production capacity will be reduced by 6 %. In the traffic light system, sea lice induced mortality is measured on a regional level, not on a stock level.

The traffic light system is only one of several measures to preserve the wild salmon, and is not intended to be the sole course of action. The main regulatory framework for preserving wild Atlantic salmon stocks is the quality standard for wild salmon. In addition, there are sea lice regulations for each site, water management plans and national salmon watercourses and fjords.

Response from the United States to a [Question](#) from Steve Sutton

Although U.S. policy has not attained NASCO's goals of 0 escapes, we believe U.S. policies demonstrate clear and considerable progress towards meeting that goal. The Aquaculture industry in areas proximate to endangered Atlantic salmon is held accountable for any escapes that exceed the required reportable levels, or for any aquaculture fish that are found in State of

Maine salmon rivers. As mentioned in the question that was posed to the U.S., any escape event that occurs from a commercial aquaculture facility that exceeds 50 fish 2 Kg or greater, or 25% of biomass for smaller fish is considered a reportable event. It is in the best interest of industry to report escape events as failing to do so would violate the conditions of the operators' permits that could lead to additional restrictive measures imposed on the operator and possibly fines. The reportable level of escapes imposed on the industry was established recognizing that there is a minimum level of escapees that can be reasonably detected by site managers, either through routine inspections and/or changes in food consumption. In addition to the reporting requirement, the U.S. requires genetic marking of all aquaculture salmon, which allows us to track escaped fish back to the company and site from which it originated. When an escaped salmon is captured, the origin of that fish is identified, and a third party audit is triggered to identify operational procedures or equipment deficiencies that may have resulted in the escape event, which also triggers a requirement for the company to rectify any identified problems. In 2021, this third party audit requirement was initiated when four aquaculture origin fish were trapped in the Union River, Maine. As a result of the audit process, it was concluded that the fish likely escaped when the net pens were being depopulated following a low dissolved oxygen mass mortality event. Based on these findings, the responsible aquaculture company identified and modified standard operating procedures with additional precautionary measures to help prevent similar escapes from happening in the future.

CNL(22)62

***Question and Answer Session during the Special Session of the Council:
Evaluation of the Annual Progress Reports under the 2019 – 2024
Implementation Plans***

Nigel Milner (Institute of Fisheries Management): it's a question, I think, for Cathal and it's about the general APR process. Often resolving a problem requires understanding why it has arisen. I don't see anywhere in the APRs, any reasons when things are not completed, when things aren't done. Now, this may lie outwith your Terms of Reference for the APRs, I guess, the question I have. I wonder why there is never any explanation of why things aren't done. Do you see this as lying outside the IP / APR process?

Cathal Gallagher (Chair of the IP / APR Review Group): yes. That's an interesting point. We sometimes do. We've had a number of occasions in the last year, and we accepted it as an excuse, due to Covid, for example, we had a couple of actions that come to my mind that were like that. Yes, you're dead right, but, do you know what? The issue we have is that we're trying to look forward all the time, so what I'd love to get, as mentioned – if something's not started, when is it going to start? On the positive side, because the actions are failing.

But it's a very good point, and maybe something could be considered for the next cycle. But that just opens up an avenue, maybe, for excuses, which is something we're trying to avoid. I think the process as it is, is progressive, if we want to say that. So we're looking too, if someone hasn't done something, the question we ask is when is it going to be done?

Arnaud Peyronnet (President): thank you, Cathal. And I'll just add something to this because I think it's important, what you raised there, Nigel. It's also in relation to sometimes IPs being prepared, but then we don't have an APR. And I really don't see the point in going through all the difficult work in putting together an Implementation Plan if you don't report on the actions. That raises questions, there's no doubt. I think it's something that Parties need to keep in mind and really try to provide explanation as to why. Sometimes there are very good reasons, administrative reasons, others, but they should be documented. Absolutely.

Elvar Örn Fridriksson (NASF Iceland): my question is to the Norwegian delegation and it pertains to action A1-4 about a national programme for monitoring escaped salmon. The genetic pollution from escaped farmed salmon is one of the two biggest threats to wild salmon. This problem increases each year when escapees occur. The number of escapees is still too high, and the industries' promises for a tracing-program are repeatedly delayed. The 2021 assessment showed that in 10 of 13 production areas for farmed salmon, there is a risk for further genetic changes in wild salmon due to introgression from escaped farmed salmon. There is an urgent need for a tagging program designed to immediately detect and trace the source of escaped farmed salmon, usable for ordinary fishermen and with transparency for the authorities. What is the Norwegian government doing to design a tagging program to prohibit further escapees?

Raoul Bierach (Norway): I've checked with my delegation. Unfortunately, we are not able to answer that question fully either. We are aware of the problem, of course. We are concerned about it. I think everyone is. But to our knowledge, there is no immediate plan to have some sort of mandatory tagging of farmed salmon. But again, we have to check back. There might be something ongoing that we are not fully aware of. It could be. We'll have to answer that

also in writing. I'm sorry. ⁷

Torfinn Evensen (Norske Lakseelver): the wild salmon in Norway were, in November 2021, for the first time put on the red list of endangered species, as a threatened species. In addition to that, we will credit the Norwegian Government for their new regulatory measures in rivers and especially, in the mixed-stock fisheries in the sea. In 184 out of 450 rivers, fishing for salmon is now prohibited.

To protect those weak stocks, it is crucial to give the salmon the same strong protection in the sea. So the question is, why are the mixed-stock fisheries still allowed in the Trondheim Fjord, where several rivers are closed? Thank you.

Helge Dyrendal (Norway): a river being closed doesn't necessarily mean that the stock is in bad condition. It might be due to lack of catch statistics from the river. Or lack of mandatory organization. The mixed-stock fisheries in Norway are based upon risk analysis conducted by the Scientific Advisory Committee. And they, under the formal regulation regime, calculated that the risk was moderate, 5.8 % for at least one stock being overharvested in a five-year period. As a result of that, we reduced the fisheries by 25 % fishing time, number of days allowed fishing. And a recent risk analysis concluded that the risk has been reduced to 1 % for overharvesting within a five-year period. So, that's the reason why. Thank you.

Lawrence Talks (United Kingdom): it really is a point or a question, I don't know if this is appropriate, to the Scientific Advisory Group, which is relevant to the tracing of escaped salmon, and also bycatch. I was wondering whether there's a role for NASCO, in terms of establishing a genetic baseline of salmon stocks across the North Atlantic that could help trace salmon, whether caught as bycatch, or whether intercepted as part of a scientific study, to see where those fish originate from? I know that there have been some advancements in genetic investigations, changes in approach, but I think that would be a really valuable role that NASCO could play.

Nora Hanson (United Kingdom): just to let you know, this was raised in the Board meeting as well, and the UK tabled a proposal on developing a more comprehensive SNP baseline that would greatly, hopefully, enhance our ability to assign, not only fish caught in high seas fisheries, but also those caught in other bycatch scenarios as well.

There's quite a good baseline on the North American side of the North Atlantic, but previous efforts, using micro-satellites haven't been able to resolve any more finer detail than regional assignments, especially for the British Isles. So that is something that's in development, hopefully in the coming year or two.

Nigel Milner (Institute of Fisheries Management): it's a question for Norway. Looking at the APR, under the F4 action on management of salmon, there's a provisional nominal coastal catch of 98 tonnes. And the estimated unreported catch is almost the same, at 94 tonnes. And I wondered, are these catches from mixed-stock fisheries? And are there any actions in place to reduce what appears to be a very high level of unreported catch?

Helge Dyrendal (Norway): yes, there are mixed-stock fisheries. For the 94 tonnes, the number consists of catches from unreported illegal fisheries, unreported legal fisheries and unreported angling in sea. And we established a system for reporting catch statistics during the season, but it's not mandatory. So, the system is there, the legalisation is almost there, but it's not taken into account yet.

⁷The response provided by Norway, in writing, following the Special Session can be found [here](#).

Paul Knight (Salmon & Trout Conservation UK⁸): thank you very much. I've actually got a question to ask on behalf of one of our Canadian colleagues, who can't be here for this meeting. And it's to be asked of the Canadian delegation. While Canada has committed to phasing out open net salmon farming off the Pacific coast of British Columbia, why has a similar commitment not been applied to salmon aquaculture off the Atlantic coast? Thank you.

Doug Bliss (Canada): yes, I guess the short answer to that one is, as you likely know, aquaculture in British Columbia and the Pacific Ocean is entirely within federal jurisdiction. And of course, there have been very big investigations, like the Cohen Commission and others. And it's a very different situation, about why the policy recommendation was to close open pen aquaculture there.

But all that's to say is, at the same time, given that regulation of aquaculture in the Atlantic Ocean is invested in provincial governments, discussions are ongoing on these kinds of policy questions. Thank you.

Steve Sutton (Atlantic Salmon Federation): I have a comment and a question for Canada. My comment first. I just wanted to acknowledge that in Canada's APR this year, they have mentioned the development of a new conservation strategy for wild salmon, and an ongoing engagement programme. And Doug Bliss did mention that in his response to one of my questions in the previous Special Session this morning. I would say that we are encouraged by the approach that they are taking with the development of that strategy. And by the depth of the discussions that we've had with them, in the various engagement sessions. And so, I'm optimistic and hopeful that that process will lead to something very good for wild salmon. And I look forward to Canada continuing to report on the development of that strategy in their Annual Progress Reports and to seeing the results of that in Canada's IP.

And now for my question. I also note in Canada's APR, that they have indicated that science advice has been sought to underpin the development of a stocking policy, which I think is a positive development, but not much more information has been provided about the process, and when we might see something out of that process. So, my question is, will there be any opportunities for people outside of DFO, stakeholders and indigenous people, to engage in that process and to provide advice around that stocking policy? And, I guess, when might we expect to see something coming out of that?

Doug Bliss (Canada): the scientific peer-review process that we use in DFO, called the Canadian Science Advisory Secretariat, is a peer-review process. That is on the schedule for our CSAS reviews: to go through the science elements of providing advice for stocking policy. I'm not sure exactly what the timeline is for that, but that's coming up soon, if it hasn't already somehow begun.

Similarly, once the science advice is received, there will be policy development going on. Certainly, as we move forward with the Wild Atlantic Salmon Conservation Strategy, those kinds of policies will be part of consultation and engagement, as we move forward. Now, exact timelines, I can't give you, because there isn't, we have to wait for the science advice draft policy and this sort of thing. But arguably, I hesitate to even say that there are specific timelines, but there's going to be a lot of work done in the next three years. Thank you.

Steve Sutton (Atlantic Salmon Federation): I think, in Canada, we all understand the difference between the east coast and the west coast. Well, many of us do, anyhow. And how it came to be that the federal government has jurisdiction over all aspects of the aquaculture industry on the west coast and not so much on the east coast.

⁸ Salmon & Trout Conservation UK is now known as Wildfish.

I would like to just add though, that even though the provinces have jurisdiction over managing most of the aquaculture industry on Canada's east coast, the Government of Canada still retains exclusive jurisdiction over protecting wild fish and fisheries. So, while the situation may make it more difficult for Canada to step in and simply say, we are transitioning away from open net pens, and I understand the constraints around that, I do think it is fair though, to expect the federal government to at least, on both coasts, be taking significant action to address the impacts of salmon farming on wild salmon. It is their jurisdiction on both coasts. And they are taking significant action on the west coast to address the issues and the impacts on wild Pacific salmon and we certainly believe that it is the federal Government's jurisdiction and responsibility to take equally strong action to address the impacts of the salmon farming industry on wild salmon on Canada's east coast.

Responses Received in Writing from the Parties to Questions Posed During the Special Session

Response Provided by Norway to a [Question](#) from Elvar Örn Fridriksson

The national monitoring program of escaped salmon shows that the share of escapees in Norwegian rivers is in decline, which is good news. It shows that the effort we put in to remove escaped fish in rivers before spawning season is working. However, we acknowledge that the escape of farmed fish is one of the great threats to the wild Atlantic salmon and that the genetic changes in the wild salmon stocks are accumulating. Norway is positively inclined towards establishing a tracking scheme, provided the administration is appropriate and efficient. The Norwegian government has expressed that it will establish a clearer strategy for tracking and preventing farmed salmon from escaping.

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.

CNL(22)49

***Statement on Salmon Farming from the Council of the North Atlantic
Salmon Conservation Organization***

The North Atlantic Salmon Conservation Organization (NASCO) has recognised the adverse impacts of some salmon farming practices and operations on wild Atlantic salmon populations since 1988. Since the early 1980s, salmon farming around the North Atlantic has increased dramatically, from an industry in its infancy producing around five million farmed salmon per annum to over 360 million farmed salmon in 2020. Meanwhile, the abundance of adult wild Atlantic salmon has plummeted from seven million fish in the early 1980s to some 2.8 million fish in 2019 due to a complex variety of stressors caused by human activity affecting both rivers and the marine environment.

In 2006, NASCO adopted a ‘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](#), also known as the ‘Williamsburg Resolution’. Under this Resolution, NASCO Parties have agreed to co-operate to minimise the adverse effects to the wild salmon stocks from aquaculture, including:

- minimising escapes of farmed salmon to a level that is as close as practicable to zero; and
- minimising the risk of disease and parasite transmission between aquaculture activities and wild salmon stocks.

Further, NASCO has worked with the International Salmon Farmers Association (ISFA), to develop ‘Guidance on Best Management Practices to Address Impacts of Sea Lice and Escaped Farmed Salmon on Wild Salmon Stocks’, [SLG\(09\)5](#). The international goals of this Guidance, agreed jointly by NASCO and ISFA, are:

- 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; and
- 100% farmed fish to be retained in all production facilities.

Despite these efforts, an increasing body of evidence continues to point to the adverse impacts of salmon farming practices and operations on wild Atlantic salmon, both from sea lice and escaped farmed salmon. This message was reinforced in the recent NASCO Theme-based Special Session on ‘Minimising Impacts of Salmon Farming on Wild Atlantic Salmon’, held at NASCO’s Thirty-Eighth Annual Meeting in June 2021.

Following that Theme-based Special Session, the Council of NASCO has agreed that:

- Highlighting the conservation needs of wild Atlantic salmon, NASCO urges the development of innovative salmon farming technologies, both at sea and on land, and, where those technologies provide additional environmental protections, encourages their use, or the use of equally effective alternative approaches, to enable further progress toward the attainment of the international goals on effective sea lice management and containment agreed by ISFA and NASCO in 2009. One possible strategy for implementation, should a Party deem it appropriate, would be to prioritise this approach initially in sensitive areas, such as in areas where wild salmon stocks are

already severely weakened or threatened, the estuaries of NASCO Class I⁹ salmon rivers or salmon rivers and other areas designated by Parties and jurisdictions for conservation and / or protection, and along salmon migration routes. NASCO recognises the importance of Atlantic salmon, both wild and farmed, especially in coastal and rural areas and notes the need for careful continuance and development of farming practices to attain the mutually agreed upon international goals.

⁹ Rivers are classified as Class I when they are pristine. Class I rivers have no significant human-induced habitat alterations, and neither any history of introductions or transfers of fish into the watersheds nor any fish-rearing operations in the watersheds, and no aquaculture has been conducted in marine cage culture within a specified distance of the river.

CNL(22)50

Statement from the Council of NASCO to Parties / jurisdictions with Salmon Farming Following the IP Reviews in November 2021

In 2020, Parties confirmed their commitment to a strengthened Implementation Plan process in the third reporting cycle and acknowledged that some revision was needed to enable it to work better. Council agreed its ‘Enhanced Guidance from the Council of NASCO for the Review of Implementation Plans’, [CNL\(20\)55](#), to, among other things, provide further Guidance to the IP / APR Review Group.

Among other things, the Enhanced Guidance stated:

‘Council recognises the use, and review, of SMART actions as recommended in the IP Guidelines. Where the Review Group considers that an action moves the Party / jurisdiction clearly towards the implementation of NASCO’s Resolutions, Agreements and Guidelines even if the action is not entirely in line with the SMART criteria, the Review Group may consider such an action as satisfactory.’

and:

‘However, where the elements of an action may appear to adhere to the SMART criteria but the action is considered by the Review Group not to move the Party / jurisdiction towards the implementation of NASCO’s Resolutions, Agreements and Guidelines, it should be deemed unsatisfactory. The Review Group should give a clear explanation of their assessment in their feedback.’

The NASCO Theme-based Special Session on ‘Minimising Impacts of Salmon Farming on Wild Atlantic Salmon’, held at NASCO’s Thirty-Eighth Annual Meeting in June 2021, made clear that there is an increasing body of evidence that continues to point to the significant adverse impacts of salmon farming on wild Atlantic salmon, where farming is conducted, both from sea lice and escaped farmed salmon. Given this evidence, the Council of NASCO has agreed that:

- all Parties and jurisdictions with salmon farming should produce SMART actions in their Implementation Plans (IPs) for the management of sea lice and escapes from aquaculture facilities. These actions should reflect sustained progress towards meeting the international goals of 100 % containment of farmed fish, and 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 the farms. Monitoring of sea lice of farmed fish and escapes should be a secondary activity to help better assess the effectiveness of the SMART management actions with the primary objective being the assessment and mitigation of impacts on wild fish; and
- IPs where such management actions are not forthcoming will not be considered under the review process as progressing the relevant Party or jurisdiction towards achieving the international goals.

CNL(22)52

Press Release

North Atlantic Salmon Conservation Organization (NASCO)
Thirty-Ninth Annual Meeting,
Edinburgh, UK
6 – 9 June 2022

**Wild Atlantic Salmon Conference Agrees to Innovative Actions to
Protect Atlantic Salmon and the Environment**

The international body responsible for the conservation and rational management of wild Atlantic salmon just closed its Thirty-Ninth Annual Meeting. The North Atlantic Salmon Conservation Organization (NASCO), meeting in a hybrid format in its home city of Edinburgh, Scotland, this week, made important new commitments to enhance the conservation of imperiled wild Atlantic salmon populations and agreed on approaches for its future work aimed at reducing its overall carbon footprint.

After almost two years of negotiations, a key outcome of the meeting was adoption of an innovative approach for the regulation of the salmon fishery at West Greenland. This fishery has experienced overharvests of established limits in recent years. To address this, the evidence-based regulatory measure sets a precautionary upper limit that is well below the catch limit. At the latest, the fishery will be closed when the upper limit is reached. This is a dynamic process that will incorporate future fishery data and information to allow the upper limit to be refined for each year of the four-year measure. The President of NASCO, Arnaud Peyronnet, welcomed the breakthrough, stating,

‘This agreement is a real step forward in the management of the West Greenland fishery. Without the flexibility and cooperation of all Parties and the hard work of scientists and managers, development of and agreement on this innovative approach would not have been possible. This decision highlights the value of being able to work face-to-face to solve complex issues.’

In other actions, NASCO considered with alarm the threat that Pacific pink salmon, an invasive species spreading throughout the North Atlantic, is now posing to wild North Atlantic salmon. NASCO adopted a statement highlighting this threat and calling on its members to co-operate and initiate corrective measures without delay.

The threats to the wild stocks posed by salmon farming and how to address them was high on NASCO’s agenda again this year. NASCO adopted a statement on this issue pressing Parties to develop and implement effective innovative salmon farming technologies, both at sea and on land, to advance the implementation and attainment of the international goals for the management of sea lice and containment of farmed salmon agreed by NASCO and the International Salmon Farming Association in 2009.

Finally, NASCO agreed forward-leaning approaches for conducting its work in the future that includes expanded use of electronic meetings to reduce the carbon footprint of the organization. Said the President, “The totality of the decisions made in Edinburgh this week are important to

protect the environment and to ensure the future viability of one of the most iconic species in the world. Salmon are an indicator species, and we must continue to take strong actions to ensure they will be around for generations to come.”

The Thirty-Ninth Annual Meeting of NASCO was held during 6 – 9 June 2022 in Edinburgh, Scotland. The Fortieth Annual Meeting will be held in Canada during 6 – 9 June 2023.

Notes for Editors:

NASCO is an intergovernmental organization formed by a treaty in 1984 and is based in Edinburgh, Scotland. Its objectives are the conservation, restoration and rational management of wild Atlantic salmon stocks, which do not recognise national boundaries. It is the only inter-governmental organisation with this mandate which it implements through international consultation, negotiation, and co-operation.

The Parties to the Convention are: Canada, Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland), the European Union, Norway, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom and the United States. There are 45 non-governmental observers accredited to the Organization.

The 2022 Annual Meeting was convened in a hybrid format, with 80 participants joining in-person and 31 joining remotely. The participants included scientists, policy makers and representatives of inter-governmental organisations and non-governmental organisations who met to discuss the status of wild Atlantic salmon and to consider management issues. The Fortieth Annual Meeting will be held in Canada in June 2023.

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Closing Statement to Council Submitted by the Russian Federation

Mr President, dear Secretary and colleagues!

On behalf of the Russian delegation, I would like to thank you for the efficient cooperation in the course of the 39th NASCO Annual Meeting.

Despite the fact that the Russian delegates were not able to participate in person at this annual meeting, we were very pleased to connect virtually and participate in the first NASCO hybrid meeting ever. However, we do hope that we will break this range of online meetings and see you all face-to-face.

We managed to make a good progress in a number of the issues that we faced this year. We would like to note the professional work of the NASCO Secretariat. You have done an enormous work to arrange and host the annual meeting.

Thanks to all the delegations for their work and we are looking forward to productive cooperation in future.

Alexander Khatuntsov

and other members of the Russian delegation

Closing Statement to Council Submitted by the North Pacific Anadromous Fish Commission (NPAFC)

Distinguished delegates, observers, ladies and gentlemen.

On behalf of the North Pacific Anadromous Fish Commission, I would like to congratulate the Council and Secretariat on a very successful meeting. While I would have preferred to be present in person, I must complement the Secretariat on the technical implementation of the virtual environment. The high quality of the sound and visual camera views made participation very effective.

While it is unclear how 2023 will unfold, it is clear that it has the potential to be a productive, if not defining, year in terms of the relationship between NASCO and the NPAFC. Our two organizations share common goals related to salmon conservation in our respective basins and we are experiencing a common crisis in declining salmon abundance and productivity resulting from shared climate and human impact drivers. Both organizations are undergoing performance reviews and considering organizational approaches to remain relevant in the push to sustain salmon in the face of highly uncertain climate and geo-political conditions.

I want to thank the International Atlantic Salmon Research Board for allowing me to introduce them to our ambitious UN Decade of Ocean Science endorsed project Basin Events to Coastal Impacts (BECI) project. This project is relevant to Tromsø recommendation 10 regarding understanding the survival of Atlantic salmon at sea and I will keep the Board informed of its development with particular emphasis on the potential implementation of ROAM tagging systems. I have quite a long list of additional potential areas of joint interest that could be considered in particular the majority of the Tromsø recommendations. NPAFC will liaise with the NASCO secretariat with respect these areas of potential future collaboration and of course we anticipate that our joint IYS Synthesis Symposium will provide the basis for our two organizations to consider the nature of our relationship as we consider the Symposium Roadmap to 2030.

The NPAFC plans to resume in-person meetings with our 2023 annual meeting to take place in Korea. We look forward to working closely with our NASCO to see the IYS Synthesis Symposium through to a successful completion and we hope to have NASCO representatives join us in Korea for our annual meeting in 2023 as the NPAFC considers the outcomes of the Symposium and works to establish strategic science and business plans through 2030. I look forward to seeing many of you in Vancouver in October as we host the IYS Synthesis Symposium and side events including a meeting of Pink Salmon Experts from both basins to consider how they can share knowledge and a gathering of indigenous delegations from across the Northern Hemisphere to examine the experience and future role of indigenous peoples in salmon management systems .

Again, congratulations and I wish all of you safe travels.

Mr. President