

Council

CNL(01)63

***Report of the Meeting of the Working Group on Cooperative Research Planning,
Priorities and Funding***

(Incorporating Further Amendments)

1. Last year ~~the~~ Council agreed to set up a Working Group to develop ideas for a research program to identify and explain the issues of marine mortality of Atlantic salmon and to examine the possibilities to counteract the mortality. The Working Group was asked to advise on possible sources of funding and how to organize it, and to consider the issue of by-catch in pelagic fisheries.
2. Council reviewed the report of the Working Group under reference CNL(01)21 at its 18th annual meeting in Mondariz, Spain. Council established a subsequent Working Group to advise on program coordination, research priorities, and financial and administrative implications and to report back during the 18th meeting. The Working Group met on June 6th under Mr. David Bevan, Head of the Canadian Delegation. Its reports were tabled at the Council's meeting under cover CNL(01)52 and CNL(01)60. The attached report has been revised to address points of clarification raised by Council and Heads of Delegation.

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(Incorporating Further Amendments)

The Chairman, Mr. David Bevan of Canada, opened the meeting by expressing the views of clarifying the request from Heads of Delegation regarding for advice required by Council on steps to implement the *Report of the Working Group on International Cooperative Research*, as summarized under cover of CNL(01)21.

Specifically, Mr. Bevan reported that Heads of Delegation were seeking further advice concerning prioritization of research projects proposed in CNL (01)21; for specific short term project priorities; for coordination of ongoing programming among member States; and for guidelines for solicitation and acceptance of donations from non-government sources in support of a contribution via NASCO to support international cooperative research projects to improve understanding of marine survival of salmon.

The Working Group agrees with the role brought forward at the Council meeting (i.e. broadening the NASCO activity in coordination of marine research, accepting donations, and funding projects to improve understanding of marine survival of salmon). The Working Group therefore advises that Council should direct the NASCO Secretariat to immediately adopt the administrative guidelines of ~~should be directed~~ the Finance Committee and establish mechanisms for ~~solicit, and~~ private donations and a framework for contributionsdonations to fund research projects. However, it is recommended that solicitation of donations should be deferred until a later date.

The Working Group suggests that the NASCO Secretariat ~~is advised to~~ avail itself of this opportunity to strengthen relationships with accredited NGO's and their extensive experience in the area of fund raising, as well as to be aware of certain tax advantages that may accrue to donors forby contributionsag via the NGO's. It is also suggested that any support (i.e., projects receiving contributions or grants, as well as sanctioned research of the Member parties) this program be clearly identified as sanctioned and/or funded by NASCO through its (e.g. the NASCO International Cooperative Research Program.

The Working Group is concerned over the potential for considerable administrative burden on the NASCO Secretariat. The Working Group recommends that Council

establish a Board to oversee this initiative and defer much of the administrative burden from the Secretariat. This Board should be an administrative body that will rely heavily on the Scientific Committee of NASCO. Accordingly, Council should direct the Board to seek advice on all scientific matters from the Scientific Committee of NASCO.

The Board shall consist of a nominee from the Heads of Delegation from each NASCO party and the Chair shall be selected annually, by consensus among the members. Candidates nominated to the Board may be of scientific, management, or related background, as determined by each contracting Member. The Chair will then continue to function using the principal of consensus rather than vote. Where consensus cannot be achieved, issues should be referred to the Heads of Delegation for resolution.

NGO's have also expressed interest in representation on this Board. As noted above, there are certain benefits that may accrue from NGO involvement. Following recommendations from the Board on this matter the Council may therefore wish to consider options for participation of accredited NGO's in Board activities.

The Board should be tasked with the following initial functions:

1. Promote Cooperation on Research: The Board should promote collaboration and cooperation among the member parties in research into marine survival of salmon:
 - It should provide a forum to coordinate efforts of contracting Members in marine research, respectful of the independence of the individual contracting Members.
 - The Secretariat in the name of the Board should initially be asked to inventory all ongoing or scheduled research to improve understanding of marine survival in the high seas and estuarine areas for 2002, 2003, and 2004.
 - With the assistance of the Scientific Committee the Board should review these inputs and advise members on areas of potential co-operative research and compile priorities in the marine research area for the next three years. The Scientific Committee should also take account of the research programs identified in CNL(01)21.
 - This advice should be available to NASCO Council and parties by September 15, 2001

- It has been agreed that the highest immediate priority project is the *Post Smolt and Adult Migration and Distribution*, budgeted in the range of £1.5 million to £3.5 million and defined in CNL (01)21. The Scientific Committee should advise the Board on a detailed research plan for this project. The Board should then divide this project into clearly defined research areas which can be individually funded. As funds become available the Board should allocate these in whole or in part to this key project. The Board should, at its discretion, promote this research initiative, but should not be constrained in funding other appropriate projects.
- The Board should consider the cost-benefits of each project or programme, as well as the views of contracting Members and others in finalizing priorities for research to improve understanding of marine survival of salmon.

2. Establish Administrative Procedures for Funding Projects: At such time as funding may become available, the Board should ensure that Council is fully prepared to define project criteria for tender calls to contracting Members:

- The Board should refer evaluation of project proposals to the Scientific Committee, and reserve its focus to project eligibility, evaluation criteria, and decisions on funding.
- Eligibility for participation in research projects should be discretionary to member states, recognizing that the stated goals and objectives of NASCO must be reflected in all aspects of any project maintained.
- ~~The number of p~~ Larger cooperative proposals among member States should be encouraged.

Contracting Members will be required to assume costs for their participation on this Board. The Working Group feels that the Board should review advice from the Science Committee and adopt priorities via electronic communication. However, it is recommended that Council commit to an early meeting of the Board to finalize its priorities. With this in mind, it is suggested that the Board be requested to convene by mid-autumn 2001, to complete work on its initial tasks outlined above.

June 7, 2001

List of Participants

Canada

David Bevan (Chairman)
Mike Calcutt
David Dunn (Rapporteur)
David Meerburg

European Union

Ken Whelan

Norway

Raoul Bierach
Lars Petter Hansen

United States of America

Russell Brown
Stephen Chase
Steve Gephard
Francis Juanes