

	<p>Council</p> <p><i>Indigenous Perspectives and Roles in Atlantic Salmon Conservation</i></p>	<p>CNL(23)20rev¹</p> <p>Agenda Item: 7b)</p>
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Indigenous Perspectives and Roles in Atlantic Salmon Conservation

A Special Session of the Council of NASCO

Thursday, June 8 2023

Background

Special Sessions of the Council of NASCO offer the opportunity for all delegates to participate in discussion on a topic that has been agreed by the Council.

In 2019 there was an IYS Symposium in Tromsø, entitled ‘Managing the Atlantic Salmon in a Rapidly Changing Environment – Management Challenges and Possible Responses’.

In its report to Council in 2019, the Symposium Steering Committee stated:

‘Most of the issues facing wild salmon are the result of human activities, either directly (e.g., overfishing; aquaculture; habitat destruction, etc.) or indirectly (e.g., climate change). In many cases, existing scientific knowledge of these issues is sufficient to develop potential solutions. However, as many speakers pointed out, our inability to implement timely and effective solutions is often hampered by socio-economic factors. These include conflict of interest, lack of consensus, mistrust, diversity of environmental values and ethics, ineffective governance, failure to consider alternative perspectives (e.g., Indigenous perspectives), and difficulties in motivating governments, communities, and individuals to take appropriate action. Thus, restoration and conservation of Atlantic salmon require attention to the human dimensions from both scientific (i.e., understanding human values, attitudes, and behaviours) and management perspectives (i.e., applying human dimensions knowledge to developing and implementing solutions).’

It also noted that addressing human dimensions

‘would help to strengthen the relationship between wild salmon and people and enhance our capacity to develop solutions, address constraints, take action, and increase the resilience and adaptive capacity of social-ecological systems in support of salmon conservation.’

Additionally, the Symposium Steering Committee noted that representatives for indigenous people in Canada and Norway spoke at the Symposium and that:

‘indigenous peoples’ knowledge systems capture generational data that can include detailed observations about changes in environmental conditions, species abundance, and species behaviour. Given limits to government resources for data collection and monitoring, these additional knowledge systems make significant contributions to salmon restoration, conservation, and management’.

¹ This programme was revised on 4 June as the Opening Session has been revised and one panel speaker has changed.

It also noted that:

‘addressing human dimensions requires incorporation of traditional and local knowledge and indigenous perspectives in activities related to salmon science, conservation and management (page 18).’

On the basis of these comments, the Steering Committee made two recommendations, as follows:

Recommendation 4

Given the advances in the understanding of human dimensions and the importance of incorporating indigenous and local knowledge into salmon conservation, NASCO should update and modernize its 2004 [‘Guidelines for Incorporating Social and Economic Factors in Decisions under the Precautionary Approach’](#). This update should include recent advances in human dimensions and the incorporation of traditional and local knowledge and indigenous perspectives.

Recommendation 5

‘Recognizing the importance of salmon to indigenous peoples and the role that indigenous peoples play in salmon conservation, NASCO should improve the participation of indigenous people in NASCO.’

In 2022 the Council of NASCO discussed the recommendations arising from the 2019 IYS Symposium in Tromsø, to decide how they would be addressed.

During the meeting, 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. 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 United States asked if Canada would make a presentation and whether they would expect other Parties to present on this topic. Canada said it would consider this further.

Council agreed that:

‘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.’

Objectives of the Special Session

The overarching objective of the Special Session is to launch a dialogue between NASCO and Indigenous peoples about their perspectives on wild Atlantic salmon, in view of informing future decisions regarding the participation of Indigenous peoples in NASCO. The session aims to increase understanding of Indigenous people’s connections to and experience with wild Atlantic salmon, including the challenges that they face. Additionally, the importance of Indigenous peoples’ participation in the conservation and sustainable management of Atlantic salmon will be explored, which will set the stage for a meaningful discussion to inform a potential approach toward better engagement of Indigenous peoples at NASCO.

1. Understanding the importance of wild Atlantic Salmon for Indigenous peoples through international and regional perspectives.
 - a. Presentations on the Indigenous relationship with Atlantic salmon, including the challenges that declining salmon populations and current management practices pose on Indigenous peoples.

2. Understanding the current role of Indigenous peoples in Canada in the conservation and management of wild Atlantic salmon.
 - a. Examples of successful Indigenous collaboration and/or leadership in Atlantic salmon conservation and management initiatives.
3. Discussing areas where Indigenous peoples could enhance NASCO's objectives, as well as how Indigenous peoples participation in NASCO might be enhanced, considering the legal impediment in the NASCO convention.
 - a. This objective may be delivered through a panel discussion, building on the presentations under the first and second objectives.

Draft Programme

The Special Session will take place on Thursday 8 June 2023, from 09:00 hrs until 12:00 hrs. The Steering Committee (Doug Bliss; Shelley Denny; Nadia Hamoui; Dan Kircheis; Carl McLean; and Isabelle Morisset) has worked with the Secretariat in planning the Special Session and has developed a Draft Programme (below). The Steering Committee will prepare a report of the Special Session, including key observations for Council's consideration.



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Draft Programme

Time	Title	Contributors
<i>Opening</i>		
<i>Session Chair: Doug Bliss</i>		
09:00-09:30	Opening of the Special Session	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offerings by Canadian Head of Delegation Doug Bliss • Active prayer (e.g., singing; drumming; or smudging) by Keptin Stephen Augustine of the Mi'kmaq Grand Council, Siknikt District • Opening remarks by Chief Terry Richardson, Pabineau First Nation
<i>1. Understanding the importance of wild Atlantic Salmon for Indigenous peoples through international and regional perspectives.</i>		
<i>Session Chair: Wenona LaBillois</i>		
09:30-9:45	Presentation by an Indigenous people in Northern regions (East Atlantic)	Anne Nuorgam, Member of the Sámi Parliament of Finland
9:45-10:15	Presentation by Indigenous peoples in North-Eastern North America (Canada + United States)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chief Clarissa Sabattis, Houlton Band of Maliseets • Patricia Saulis, Knowledge Carrier, Wolastoqiyik/Maliseet, Negotkuk First Nation
10:15-10:30	Coffee Break	

2. Understanding the current role of Indigenous peoples in Canada in the conservation and management of wild Atlantic salmon

Session Chair: Wenona LaBillois

10:30-10:45	Examples of successful Indigenous collaboration and/or leadership in Atlantic salmon conservation and management initiatives: Unama'ki Institute of Natural Resources (UINR) consultation table	Dr Shelley Denny, Director and Senior Advisor, Aquatic Research and Stewardship, UINR
10:45-11:00	Examples of successful Indigenous collaboration and/or leadership in Atlantic salmon conservation and management initiatives: Nunatsiavut co-management system for food fishery.	Todd Broomfield, Director of Renewable Resources at Nunatsiavut Government

3. Panel Discussion: Informing Future Possibilities at NASCO

Session chair: Doug Bliss

11:00-11:10	Q&A from Sessions 1 and 2	All guest speakers
11:10-11:50	Panel Discussion and Questions from the Audience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carl McLean, Labrador Inuit • Melissa Nevin, Atlantic Policy Congress of First Nations Chiefs Secretariat • Anne Nuorgam, Sámi Parliament of Finland, and • George Russell Jr, NunatuKavut Government
11:50-11:55	Closing Remarks	Doug Bliss
11:55-12:00	Closing Prayer	Keptin Stephen Augustine