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|  | <p>Council</p> <p><i>Terms of Reference for the Stocking Guidelines Working Group</i></p> | <p>CNL(23)15¹</p> |
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Terms of Reference for the Stocking Guidelines Working Group

Taking into account:

- the definition of ‘stocking’ used in Annex 1 of the Williamsburg Resolution, [CNL\(06\)48](#), i.e.

‘The deliberate release of Atlantic salmon into the wild at any stage of their life-cycle for enhancement, mitigation, restoration, rehabilitation or ranching purposes’;

N.B. This definition is considered to include translocation of wild caught fish.

- Annex 4 of the Williamsburg Resolution [CNL\(06\)48](#), ‘Guidelines for Stocking Atlantic Salmon’ which differentiates stocking approaches appropriate to river classes as defined by NASCO and the responsibility of proponents and regulators of stocking;
- the NASCO Guidelines on the ‘Use of Stock Rebuilding Programmes in the Context of the Precautionary Management of Salmon Stocks’, [CNL\(04\)55](#), which, amongst other things, indicates the need to identify and involve stakeholders and assess social and economic factors;
- the NASCO Guidelines for ‘Incorporating Social and Economic Factors in Decisions under the Precautionary Approach’ [CNL\(04\)57](#), which indicates these guidelines should also be consulted when considering stock rebuilding programs;
- the 2017 Theme-based Special Session on ‘Understanding the Risks and Benefits of Hatchery and Stocking Activities to Wild Atlantic Salmon Populations’, [CNL\(17\)61](#), which acknowledges there may be new approaches to stocking that could offer benefits while avoiding the risks associated with current hatchery operations and calling for the Council to consider the need for revisions to its Guidelines for Stocking Atlantic Salmon;
- the 2019 IYS Symposium Report: Managing the Atlantic Salmon in a Rapidly Changing Environment – Management Challenges and Possible Responses’, [CNL\(19\)16](#). In particular, point 4 of the Summary of Advice for Agencies and Organizations which sets out principles for those involved in stocking to artificially supplement populations of any life stage; and
- recent literature on stocking Atlantic salmon (including on management and policy issues).

The Working Group is tasked with:

1. Considering the biological / ecological risks and benefits arising from stocking.
2. Evaluating new approaches and perspectives and / or policies to stocking that could minimise negative effects or risks associated with some hatchery operations.
3. Recommending to Council, for agreement at the 2024 Annual Meeting, an updated document ‘Guidelines for Stocking Atlantic Salmon’ (Annex 4 of the Williamsburg Resolution) which provides guidance to NASCO’s Parties on applying the Precautionary Approach to the authorisation and conduct of any stocking of Atlantic salmon into the wild.

¹ Please note this was originally agreed as CNL(23)14rev2

Working Methods for the Stocking Guidelines Working Group

The following people have been nominated to sit on the Stocking Guidelines Working Group:

- Livia Goodbrand, Canada
- Sarah McClean, European Union
- Lovise Marie Varhus, Norway
- Simon Toms, United Kingdom
- Steve Gephard, United States
- Steve Sutton, NGO

The Working Group should use the following working methods:

- the Working Group should meet inter-sessionally as required, to address its Terms of Reference;
- meetings shall be via video conference;
- the Working Group will decide how to conduct its business to allow it to address its Terms of Reference effectively;
- the Working Group should seek consensus in agreeing its report and in drafting updated 'Guidelines for Stocking Atlantic Salmon';
- in conducting its work the Working Group may wish to communicate with, and request information from experts in the field;
- the Secretariat will provide logistical support and background information to the Working Group, as requested; and
- the Working Group should submit its report to the Council of NASCO for its consideration.