



Draft of an Action Plan for NASCO

Objective 1. Ensure the best evidence-based information is compiled and accessible to address the critical challenges and threats to wild Atlantic salmon at the North Atlantic scale, which are amplified by the climate crisis.

Associated Recommendation Number / Reference	Recommendation	Proposed Action	Secondary Actions	Priority (relates to Proposed Action)	Lead Body (ultimately responsible for action)	Current Status
EPR3	NASCO requests ICES to develop an integrated, seamless process to input data into a common database from a web-based application	NASCO to develop a request to ICES to ensure that ICES databases and web-based applications, both present and future, accommodate salmon, as they do for other assessed stocks. Also to request that Atlantic salmon be placed on the ICES bycatch list		High	Council	
TBSS1(4)	NASCO recognises CC research and facilitates funding	At the 2024 Annual Meeting, Council to consider agreeing to form four theme based working groups (climate change; management of fisheries; habitat protection and restoration; and aquaculture, introductions and transfers and transgenics) as described in the background document. If agreed, Council will finalise the ToRs for the four TBWGs proposed by the WGFON. Council will also agree to the priority order in which these theme-based areas will be addressed. Subsequently, each TBWG will consider its relevant actions and	For CC TBWG	High	Council	
EPR4	NASCO arranges review of most appropriate basis to set CLs for stock complexes and for individual river stocks					
EPR5	NASCO requests ICES to ensure that its catch statistics on catch and release fisheries acknowledge the fact that some of the released salmon will die		For MF TBWG			
EPR14	NASCO to operationalise paragraph 5 of the 1998 Agreement on Adoption of a Precautionary Approach (CNL(98)46 for the by-catch of salmon in other fisheries					

IYS3	The inability to mobilise data is one of the most significant impediments to salmon science and management	prioritise its work for agreement by Council at the Annual Meeting in 2025				
EPR13	NASCO encourages efforts to extend and improve knowledge of the distribution of salmon in the sea	The International Atlantic Salmon Research Board to consider these two recommendations in its deliberations of its research priorities		High	Board	
T10	NASCO supports and continues to encourage research on mortality for Atlantic salmon at the beginning and the end of the marine phase of their life cycle in estuaries and near-coastal areas as well as on the high seas					
IYS1	Broad-scale partnership and collaboration to facilitate scientific research and management approaches are possible, essential and effective	Council to request that the International Atlantic Salmon Research Board considers identifying and implementing a process to enhance partnerships and collaboration related to salmon science		High	Council	
WGFON	Enhance NASCO's website and information base to create a single authoritative source on wild Atlantic salmon, its status and threats and elevate salmon conservation to a higher political level	<p>Council agree wild Atlantic salmon atlas (WASA) at the 2024 Annual Meeting</p> <p>Populate WASA with agreed recent data by the 2025 Annual Meeting</p> <p>Agree the publication of a State of North Atlantic Salmon Report for 2026, primarily based on the updated data for the WASA</p>		High	Council	

Objective 2. Use the information gathered through Objective 1 to ensure that guidance reflecting best management practice is produced and readily available to those seeking to take action to protect wild Atlantic salmon.

Associated Recommendation Number / Reference	Recommendation	Proposed Action	Secondary Actions	Priority (relates to Proposed Action)	Lead Body (ultimately responsible for action)	Current Status
EPR9	<p>NASCO considers four recommendations from EPR on CC</p> <p>a) develops a dedicated instrument (e.g. a Plan of Action) on climate change or fully and systematically integrates considerations of climate change into its Resolutions, Agreements and Guidelines;</p> <p>b) agrees that the IPs for the next reporting cycle will include a new section on ‘Adaptations to Global Warming/Climate Change’;</p> <p>c) specifies that climate change ‘Adaptations’ be included in individual Salmon Habitat Protection and Restoration Plans; and</p> <p>d) convenes a Theme-based Special Session to identify a suite of practical Adaptive Strategies and their effective deployment</p>	<p>At the 2024 Annual Meeting, Council to consider agreeing to form four theme based working groups (climate change; management of fisheries; habitat protection and restoration; and aquaculture, introductions and transfers and transgenics) as described in the background document. If agreed, Council will finalise the ToRs for the four TBWGs proposed by the WGFON. Council will also agree to the priority order in which these theme-based areas will be addressed. Subsequently, each TBWG will consider its relevant actions and prioritise its work for agreement by Council at the Annual Meeting in 2025</p>	For CC TBWG	High	Council	
T1	<p>NASCO identifies strategic activities to deal with CC and its cascading effects on salmon and salmon habitat</p>					
TBSS1(1)	<p>NASCO sets up Working Group for three years to co-ordinate its CC activities with WG with ToRs</p>					
TBSS1(2)	<p>NASCO produces an overarching statement setting out its commitment to consider CC impacts</p>					

TBSS1(3)	NASCO incorporates best practice related to CC and salmon management into its relevant Resolutions, Agreements and Guidelines					
TBSS2(1)	Parties / jurisdictions consider taking a strategic multidisciplinary approach when developing and implementing their climate adaptive management measures					
TBSS2(3)	Parties / jurisdictions consider incorporating six identified best practices as part of their climate adaptive management strategy					
TBSS2(4)	Parties / jurisdictions consider identifying knowledge gaps that are preventing effective management actions to mitigate the impacts of climate change					
IP11	Jurisdictions provide information on co-operative approaches to the management of salmon catchments that are shared with other jurisdictions			For MF TBWG		
EPR8	NASCO arrange for the development of Salmon Habitat Protection and Restoration Plans, produced on an individual river system basis					
EPR15	NASCO directs the development of specific Salmon Habitat Protection and Restoration Plans to feed into IPs			For HPR TBWG		
EPR16	NASCO directs the adoption of a pressure and actions mapping tool					

	approach for targeting habitat stressors in aquatic environments				
T3	NASCO updates its 2010 'Guidelines for the Protection, Restoration and Enhancement of Atlantic Salmon Habitat'				
EPR11	NASCO considers developing innovative approaches re: biodiversity and assessment of genetic introgression deploying available technologies				
EPR18	NASCO Parties create dedicated, independent government inspectorates with accompanying legal regulatory powers ... to address the impacts of sea lice and farmed escapes				
EPR19	NASCO prescribes that physical tagging of farmed salmon using conventional tagging methods such as coded wire tags or passive integrated transponder tags be mandatory for salmon smolts introduced into sea farms				
EPR20	Sterilisation of farmed salmon should be considered a viable option for reducing genetic impact on wild salmon				
EPR28	NASCO strengthens its instruments on addressing the adverse effects of salmon farming by further operationalising them				
T9	NASCO should establish a new goal to prevent the spread of disease				

For AITT TBWG

	pathogens from fish farms to wild fish					
EPR45*	NASCO considers strengthening its existing instruments by further operationalising them and thereby ensure, among other things, that their content becomes more specific, stringent and prescriptive		For the relevant TBWGs			
T4	NASCO updates and modernises its 2004 'Guidelines for Incorporating Social and Economic Factors in Decisions under the Precautionary Approach'					
EPR17	NASCO considers the establishment of multi-sectoral National Salmon Standing Management (Conservation) Committees	Not relevant		N/A		
EPR23	NASCO further investigates both the scientific and management protocols for gene banking and develops Guidelines in this regard	Stocking Guidelines Working Group is updating the Stocking Guidelines (updating Annex 4 of the Williamsburg Res.) and this needs to be done before these guidelines are considered	Once the new Stocking Guidelines are agreed, Council will take action to determine if / how these guidelines need to be updated	Medium	Council	
T2	NASCO should immediately update its 2004 'Guidelines on the Use of Stock Rebuilding Programmes in the Context of the Precautionary Management of Salmon Stocks'					
EPR27	NASCO should consider three actions to prevent the spread of <i>G. salaris</i> and for its eradication	NEA to direct the <i>G. salaris</i> Working Group to address this recommendation for NEA's subsequent agreement		High	NEA	In progress
TBSS2(5)	Parties / jurisdictions implement management to reduce anthropogenic stressors on salmon populations	Parties / jurisdictions will be encouraged to undertake and report the outcome of an objective stressor analysis in 2024 / 2025 to inform the fourth reporting cycle	Parties / jurisdictions include three significant / tangible actions in their 4RC IPs to	High	Parties / jurisdictions	

			address the priority stressors in each of the four theme areas			
IP24	Council considers requesting jurisdictions to identify potential threats to wild salmonids from salmon aquaculture from outside their jurisdiction	Council to task the Working Group on Future Reporting to include this information, where appropriate, in the Guidance and Templates to be developed by that WG for Council's consideration at the 2025 Annual Meeting		High	Council	

* incorporates EPR7 'In addition to endorsing recommendation EPR 41 of the Second NASCO Performance Review, the current Panel recommends that NASCO considers updating its 1998 Agreement on the Precautionary Approach to better reflect NASCO's entire objective and its subsequent practice.'

Objective 3. Actively promote sustainable conservation and management practices by sharing best practice and holding Parties and jurisdictions accountable in implementing NASCO recommendations and guidance.						
Associated Recommendation Number / Reference	Recommendation	Proposed Action	Secondary Actions	Priority (relates to Proposed Action)	Lead Body (ultimately responsible for action)	Current Status
EPR1	NASCO investigates the reasons for the continuing decreasing PFAs in the NEAC	At the 2024 Annual Meeting, Council to consider agreeing to form four theme based working groups (climate change; management of fisheries; habitat protection and restoration; and aquaculture, introductions and transfers and transgenics) as described in the background document. If agreed, Council will finalise the ToRs for the four TBWGs proposed by the WGFON. Council will also agree to the priority order in which these theme-based areas will be addressed. Subsequently, each TBWG will consider its relevant actions and prioritise its work for agreement by Council at the Annual Meeting in 2025	For MF TBWG	High	Council	
EPR2	NASCO ensures (i) no unreported catches in the NAC and (ii) estimates effect of mortality / lower reproductive success associated with release of fish in rec fisheries					
EPR25	NASCO and its Parties strengthen their efforts to decrease unreported catches in all salmon fisheries conducted by NASCO Parties					
EPR26	NASCO considers adopting port State measures if there are indications of significant IUU fishing for salmon					
EPR37	NASCO considers determining whether the current salmon fishing by France (in respect of St. Pierre and Miquelon) and Iceland undermines the objective of the Convention					
T8	NASCO should strengthen compliance to the agreed international goals for sea lice and escapes					
EPR10	NASCO should be updated regularly on coastal, estuarine, in river MSF	In 2024, Council to agree an agenda item in each of the Commissions to allow for an annual update on coastal,		High	Council	

	operations and the justification for their continued prosecution	estuarine and in-river mixed-stock fisheries and the justification for their continued prosecution				
EPR21	Parties / jurisdictions carry out routine and systematic monitoring of rivers for the quantification of genetic introgression in individual rivers	No primary action, see secondary action	Following the completion of the stressor analysis, for those Parties / jurisdiction where these are considered threats, they would address these in their IP for the fourth reporting cycle	Medium	Parties / jurisdictions	
EPR22	Norwegian sea lice pressure assessment protocol be adopted in all salmon farming areas across the species range taking account of lice loads, lice contact zones and estimates of lice drift					
EPR44	NASCO considers initiating an exercise similar to the Next Steps-process that commenced in 2004, but with a particular focus on new challenges	WGFON process		High (in progress)	Council	In progress
T7	NASCO should facilitate co-operation between Parties when there is a need for international collaboration to prevent or reduce the threat to salmon stocks from invasive species					
TBSS2(2)	Recommendation that Parties / jurisdictions consider undergoing an aligned exercise to assess which stressors to wild Atlantic salmon would be the most relevant for the Parties / jurisdictions	Council to task the Working Group on Future Reporting to include this information, where appropriate, in the Guidance and Templates to be developed by that WG for Council's consideration at the 2025 Annual Meeting	Parties / jurisdictions undertake stressor analysis and Review Group provides feedback to them	High	Council	
IP13	A recommendation that actions be limited to those that are substantially relevant to wild salmon conservation and management					

IP14	The development of a NASCO standardised risk assessment tool capturing the main threats to wild Atlantic salmon, such as presented in recent years by Norway, should be considered to inform an assessment of the highest priority threats / challenges to populate the IPs for all of NASCO's Parties / jurisdictions					
WGFON	Provide clarity on where Parties / jurisdictions are upholding / working to NASCO's Resolutions, Agreements, Guidelines, Tools and Structures					

Objective 4. Communicate information on wild Atlantic salmon to educate, raise public and political awareness and foster broad collaborative efforts with other international organizations and civil society to encourage decision-makers, the public, private sector and the scientific community to work towards solutions that overcome the challenges wild Atlantic salmon face.

Associated Recommendation Number / Reference	Recommendation	Proposed Action	Secondary Actions	Priority (relates to Proposed Action)	Lead Body (ultimately responsible for action)	Current Status
EPR6	NASCO commissions an assessment of bycatch in large-scale small pelagic fisheries in the North-East Atlantic	At the 2024 Annual Meeting, Council to consider agreeing to form four theme based working groups (climate change; management of fisheries; habitat protection and restoration; and aquaculture, introductions and transfers and transgenics) as described in the background document. If agreed, Council will finalise the ToRs for the four TBWGs proposed by the WGFON. Council will also agree to the priority order in which these theme-based areas will be addressed. Subsequently, each TBWG will consider its relevant actions and prioritise its work for agreement by Council at the Annual Meeting in 2025	For MF TBWG	High	Council	
EPR12	NASCO addresses the absence of reliable data on bycatch of salmon in pelagic fisheries					
EPR24	The Panel concurs with and endorses Recommendations EPR 63 and 64 from the second PR and encourages NASCO to continue its associated implementation actions					
EPR34	NASCO considers developing a dedicated communications and outreach strategy (considering various options and recommendations of Second PR)	At the 2024 Annual Meeting, Council to consider directing the Secretariat to explore bringing in an external consultant focused on outreach / communications to develop an outreach plan that NASCO can use to raise public and political awareness regarding the plight of wild Atlantic salmon and advise on tools / products that NASCO could pursue	Once an outreach plan is developed, Council consider directing the Secretariat to implement the Outreach Plan including determining the process for	High	Council	
EPR35	NASCO to be more active in communicating the troublesome status of wild Atlantic salmon and the many threats it faces, to the general public					

EPR46	NASCO should consider other actions aimed at elevating salmon conservation to a higher political level, for instance by periodically convening high-level (Ministerial) segments to Annual NASCO Meetings. A possible topic for such a high-level segment could be the management of Atlantic salmon aquaculture		publishing the State of Salmon report beginning in 2026 and every five years thereafter as well as planning the corresponding symposium			
T6	NASCO continues efforts, begun under the International Year of the Salmon, to raise global awareness about the status of wild Atlantic salmon, the threats they face, potential solutions, and actions that can be taken					
T11	NASCO considers hosting similar events to the Tromsø Symposium in the future					
WGFON	Provide / create simple content of the complex guidance and advice from NASCO (e.g. clear annual abundance trends from ICES advice)					
WGFON	Disseminate clear messages					
WGFON	Enhance public and stakeholder engagement					
WGFON	Collaborate with organizations / entities / influencers to inform the public on the plight of wild Atlantic salmon					
EPR36	NASCO should continue to cooperate with France (in respect of St. Pierre and Miquelon) and Iceland,	In progress. SPM invited to Annual Meeting each year, letters written to		Ongoing	Council	In progress

	and seek their co-operation with NASCO	encourage it to join NASCO; Iceland rejoined in 2024				
EPR38	NASCO should strengthen its co-operation with (other) RFMOs and other relevant international organizations	Council to consider charging the Secretariat with exploring the work of other international RFMOs of relevance to NASCO's remit and, where applicable, developing a plan to strengthen co-operation with other RFMOs and international organizations including response to climate change. The Secretariat will report to Council at the 2025 Annual Meeting	Once a process is determined and agreed, the Secretariat would report to Council on progress on an annual basis	Medium	Council	
IYS2	RFMOs share a common challenge in responding to CC and can benefit by co-ordinating their efforts					
WGFON	Collaborate with industries impacting wild Atlantic salmon, certification agencies and others to enable an understanding of what is important for wild Atlantic salmon with the aim to incorporate guidance from NASCO related to salmon's needs	Incorporate into the outreach plan	TBWGs to identify the relevant industry bodies / agencies to include in NASCO's outreach	High	Council	
WGFON	Enhance NASCO's website and information base to create a single authoritative source on wild Atlantic salmon, its status and threats and elevate salmon conservation to a higher political level	Use ICES streamlined advice for simple messaging such as North Atlantic-wide PFA annually Other tools / products as advised by comms experts		High	Council	

Objective 5. Improve its organizational practices and work in an efficient, effective, inclusive, and transparent manner.

Associated Recommendation Number / Reference	Recommendation	Proposed Action	Secondary Actions	Priority (relates to Proposed Action)	Lead Body (ultimately responsible for action)	Current Status
EPR29	NASCO considers adjustments of the decision-making rules and procedures of its Commissions to better align them with best practices in certain scenarios	Not relevant		N/A		
EPR30	NASCO considers the development of a modern dispute settlement mechanism, which would be included in the Convention by means of an amendment	Not relevant		N/A		
EPR31	NASCO considers options to ensure that convening meetings by the Council and its Commission in the format of HoDs meetings becomes the exception rather than the rule	Council to consider options that will not result in longer meetings that will allow for open discussion (recommendations such as HoDs plus senior advisor or more bilateral discussions)		Medium	NEA	
EPR32	NASCO considers revising CNL(06)49 to, among other things, codify NASCO's existing practices on participation by NGOs	The FAC to consider this, together with the recommendations in T5 and IYS4, in its 2024 Annual Meeting and recommend to Council an updated document of conditions for all observers at NASCO meetings		High	FAC	
EPR33	NASCO considers updating its Handbook of Basic Texts	Secretariat to continue to update the 'Officers' section of the Handbook online each year after the Annual Meeting where new Officers have been elected		Ongoing	Secretariat	In progress
EPR39	NASCO Secretary should assess the needs for training and that training	For Secretariat		Ongoing	Secretariat	In progress

	should be provided where considered necessary					
EPR40	Secretariat to complete documenting its standard operating procedures at an accelerated pace					
IYS5	Virtual meeting environments are extremely effective when paired with appropriate in-person opportunities					
EPR41	NASCO develops a NASCO Carbon Policy to ensure that NASCO's carbon emissions are in line with best practices on achieving carbon neutrality	Secretariat to document its green policies and practices and examine best practice		Medium	Secretariat	
EPR42	NASCO considers strengthening the NASCO Convention by adopting selected amendments or a complete convention revision to provide the NASCO Council with a mandate to adopt legally binding instruments on non-fisheries issues	Council to consider these recommendations and develop a position paper		Medium	Council	
EPR43	NASCO considers using the tool of agreed interpretations in case there is insufficient support for formal amendment of the NASCO Convention					
T5*	NASCO improves the participation of indigenous people in NASCO					
IYS4*	Indigenous salmon management systems are under-represented in RFMOs	See EPR 32		See EPR 32	FAC	
WGFON	Review Action Plan to evaluate, update and track progress over time	Secretariat to identify and use a Project Management tool such as SmartSheet to report progress to Council at the 2025 Annual Meeting and annually thereafter		Medium	Secretariat	

