



Forty-First Annual Meeting of the Council

Knockranny House Hotel & Spa, Westport, Ireland

3 – 7 June 2024

Annotated Agenda

The purpose of this paper is to provide the background, decisions and links to papers, for each item on the Agenda for the Meeting of the Council.

Papers for the meeting are on the website, including the Schedule of Meetings.

This Annotated Agenda references papers that the Secretariat is aware of at the time of writing. If additional papers are issued, they will be posted on the website and delegates will be informed by email.

As agreed in 2022, Parties / NGOs were invited to submit questions on Agenda items, in advance to the relevant Party. The Secretariat requested that it be copied into any questions asked, to allow the questions to be included in the Annotated Agenda. No questions were received.

A summary of the decisions before the Council this year is contained in Annex 1.

To assist with decision making, Annex 2 contains a timetable for NASCO work that is expected to be conducted between June 2024 and May 2025 and an indicative schedule of NASCO’s work for the next five years.

During the meeting, interventions by accredited NGOs shall be in accordance with the Revised Conditions for Attendance by Observers at NASCO Meetings, [CNL\(06\)49](#). The President will recognise such requests on all Agenda items other than item 3.

Timings of the Meeting

The Council will meet on:

• Monday 3 June	09:00 – 12:00 hrs
• Monday 3 June	13:00 – 16:00 hrs Special Session of the Council: Working Group on the Future of NASCO
• Tuesday 4 June	09:45 – 12:30 hrs
• Wednesday 5 June	09:00 – 10:15 hrs Special Session of the Council: Implementation Plans / Annual Progress Reports
• Wednesday 5 June	10:30 – 12:00 hrs
• Wednesday 5 June	13:00 – 17:30 hrs Theme-based Special Session of the Council: Management of pink salmon in the North Atlantic and their potential threats to wild Atlantic salmon
• Thursday 6 June	09:00 – 13:00 hrs

• Friday 7 June

09:00 – 13:00 hrs

Order of Business

The meeting will begin on Monday 3 June with the ‘Opening of the Meeting’ followed by a break. Delegates will be advised of the daily order of business during the Annual Meeting.

1. Opening of the Meeting

Following the welcome from our hosts, the President, Kim Damon-Randall (USA), will open the meeting and make a statement on behalf of the Organization.

The President wishes to encourage each Party, Inter-Governmental Organization and NASCO’s accredited Non-Governmental Organizations and France (in respect of St Pierre and Miquelon) to make verbal Opening Statements, as is usual in years when new regulatory measures are negotiated. It would be helpful if the written versions of your verbal opening statements could be sent to the Secretariat by 7 June 2024 so that they can be annexed to the final meeting reports.

- *no decision is required.*

2. Adoption of the Agenda

In accordance with the Rules of Procedure and following consultation with the President, a Provisional Agenda, [CNL\(24\)01](#), was issued on 16 February 2024. No supplementary items were proposed. The Draft Agenda, [CNL\(24\)03](#), was issued on 5 April 2024.

- *the Council may wish to adopt its Agenda.*

3. Financial and Administrative Issues

a) Report of the Finance and Administration Committee

The Finance and Administration Committee (FAC) will meet on 2 June. The Chair, Seamus Connor (UK) will present the Report of the Meeting of the FAC to the Council, CNL(24)04. The Report will be made available on the website and will include the Draft Budget for 2025 and the Forecast Budget for 2026.

Article 16 of the Convention states that ‘The Council shall adopt an annual budget for the Organization.’

FAC Inter-Sessional Meeting

The FAC met twice inter-sessionally, in February and April 2024, to consider its desire to have a set of staff rules that could be considered to be fit for purpose and commensurate with a modern working environment and good management practices and to consider the review of the conditions of attendance of observers at NASCO meeting, including the incorporation of Indigenous peoples.

In relation to the staff rules, legal opinion had been sought on NASCO’s Staff Fund Rules and Staff Rules. The FAC deliberated on the legal opinion in its February meeting and agreed that decisions in relation to the Deferred Salary Scheme and lump sum, i.e. in NASCO’s Staff Fund Rule 3.2 and Staff Rule 8.2(b), needed to be made in June 2024. It recommended that the revisions agreed by the FAC in the Staff Fund Rules, FACIS(24)13rev (Annex 3 of [FAC\(24\)04](#)), and Staff Rules, FACIS(24)14rev (Annex 4 of [FAC\(24\)04](#)) be adopted by the Council.

In relation to the wider consideration of the Staff Rules and Staff Fund Rules, the FAC made three recommendations to Council, that:

- the FAC would work, inter-sessionally through a small working group and by correspondence to revise the full Staff Rules and Staff Fund Rules by the end of November 2024;
- the FAC would engage Gunnercooke to provide legal counsel to ensure compliance with relevant employment law and modern working practice, to be provided by the end of January 2025; and
- the FAC would meet provisionally on 18, 19 and 20 March 2025 to finalise and agree the revised staff rules to enable them to be recommended to Council for their adoption at the 2025 Annual Meeting.

In relation to the review of the conditions of attendance of observers, the FAC agreed its revisions as ‘Proposed Revised Terms and Conditions for Observers at NASCO Meetings’, FACIS(24)15 (Annex 5 of [FAC\(24\)04](#)), and ‘Proposed Conditions for Media at NASCO Meetings’, FACIS(24)16 (Annex 6 of [FAC\(24\)04](#)), and recommended that the terms and conditions be adopted by the Council.

The Council may wish to:

- *adopt revised NASCO Staff Fund Rules;*
- *adopt revised NASCO Staff Rules;*
- *agree the process and timeline for the full review of NASCO’s Staff Fund Rules and Staff Rules;*
- *adopt Terms and Conditions for Observers at NASCO Meetings; and*
- *adopt Conditions for Media at NASCO Meetings.*

Recurring items of FAC Business

Regarding other FAC issues, the Council may wish to:

- *accept the Audited Accounts for 2023;*
- *approve the budget for 2025 and note a Forecast Budget for 2026;*
- *appoint auditors for NASCO’s accounts for 2024 / 2025 / 2026; and*
- *adopt the Report of the FAC.*

The following papers are available:

- Audited Accounts, [FAC\(24\)02](#);
- Report of the February Inter-Sessional Meeting of the Finance and Administration Committee of the North Atlantic Salmon Conservation Organization, [FAC\(24\)03](#);
- Report of the April Inter-Sessional Meeting of the Finance and Administration Committee of the North Atlantic Salmon Conservation Organization, [FAC\(24\)04](#);
- Proposed Revised NASCO Staff Fund Rules, FACIS(24)13rev, see Annex 3 of [FAC\(24\)04](#);
- Proposed Revised NASCO Staff Rules, FACIS(24)14rev, see Annex 4 of [FAC\(24\)04](#);

- Proposed Revised Terms and Conditions for Observers at NASCO Meetings, FACIS(24)15, see Annex 5 of [FAC\(24\)04](#);
- Proposed Conditions for Media at NASCO Meetings, FACIS(24)16, see Annex 6 of [FAC\(24\)04](#);
- 2025 Draft Budget 2026 Forecast Budget and Five-Year (2025 – 2030) Budgeting Plan, [FAC\(24\)05rev](#);
- Appointment of Auditors, FAC(24)08; and
- Report of the Meeting of the Finance and Administration Committee of the North Atlantic Salmon Conservation Organization, CNL(24)04 (to be made available at the meeting).

Other papers for the FAC are available [here](#).

b) NASCO Calendar and Working Group Membership

In order to improve the efficiency on NASCO’s working, the President has asked that a calendar of inter-sessional meetings is agreed during each Annual Meeting of the Council. She has also requested that the membership of Working Groups is agreed. This will provide a greater level of certainty for Parties and the Secretariat thereby enabling more efficient working for all concerned.

The Council may wish to:

- *agree a calendar of inter-sessional meetings; and*
- *agree the membership of any Working Groups agreed during the meeting.*

Any papers will be made available during the Meeting.

4. Scientific, Technical, Legal and Other Information

a) NASCO News 2024

Article 5, paragraph 6, of the Convention states ‘The Council shall submit to the Parties an annual report of the activities of the Organization.’

In 2022, [CNL\(22\)53rev](#), the Council agreed that ‘the Report on the Activities of the Organization and the Secretary’s Report be merged to be a showcase for NASCO’s work’. ‘NASCO News 2024’ is available. There will be no presentation. However, the President may allow questions and comments, time permitting.

- *no decision is required.*

The following paper is available:

- NASCO News 2024, CNL(24)05.

b) Announcement of the Tag Return Incentive Scheme Grand Prize

NASCO operates a Tag Return Incentive Scheme. External tags that are returned to the appropriate authorities in the country of capture are eligible for inclusion in the draw. 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.

The Grand Prize winner will be announced in the Meeting and then on the website and X; they will be recorded in the Meeting Report.

- *no decision is required.*

c) Scientific Advice from ICES

(i) Scientific Advice from ICES

In 2022 the Council agreed that the full ICES Advice should only be presented in Council in future, [CNL\(22\)53](#), paragraph 4.35.

The Chair of the Working Group on North Atlantic Salmon (WGNAS), Alan Walker (UK), will present the full ICES advice. He will also present the advice relating to item 7(d)(i) ‘New or Emerging Opportunities for, or Threats to, Salmon Conservation and Management’. The Chair of WGNAS will answer questions following the presentation.

- *no decision is required.*

The following papers are available:

- the Report of the ICES Advisory Committee (ACOM), [CNL\(24\)06](#); and
- the [Report of the Working Group on North Atlantic Salmon](#) is on the ICES website.

(ii) A new approach / presentation of the ICES Advice

In 2022 the Council asked the Secretary to approach ICES to investigate a more streamlined approach / presentation of the ICES Advice, [CNL\(22\)53](#), paragraph 4.35. In 2023, an update on the timing and background to the process was provided to Council, CNL(23)09. Since then, a subgroup has been formed that includes the Secretary and experts from Canada, Ireland, France, USA, UK and ICES, with assistance from the ACOM Vice-Chair. The subgroup met in February 2024 and developed a timeline which aims to conclude work by the end of February 2025 for consideration of ACOM (who must approve any format change) in advance of the March 2025 ACOM annual meeting. Under its current timetable, the intention is for the new advice format to be ready to be used in the provision of the ICES Advice in 2025.

The ICES ACOM Vice-Chair will be invited to provide an update on the work to seek agreement on a new approach.

- *no decision is required.*

The following paper is available:

- Update on the Streamlining of the ICES Advice, [CNL\(24\)07](#).

d) Report of the International Atlantic Salmon Research Board

The International Atlantic Salmon Research Board (the Board) will meet on 2 and 4 June. The Report of the Meeting will be presented to Council by the Chair, Martha Robertson (Canada). The Board agreed its research priorities inter-sessionally and issued a statement to publicise that decision, [ICR\(24\)01](#). The main topics for its meetings in June will be the consideration of a number of unresolved issues arising from the review of the Board’s vision, scope and purpose, including a draft project outline being developed by the SAG. The Board will also consider two applications for funding for research projects.

The Council may wish to:

- *adopt the Report of the Meeting of the Board.*

The following papers will be available:

- the Report of the Meeting of the Board, CNL(24)08.

Other papers for the Board meeting (and the February inter-sessional meeting) are available [here](#).

e) Report of the Standing Scientific Committee

Articles 3 and 4 of the [Convention](#) require NASCO to take into account the best scientific evidence and establish working arrangements with ICES. In 1992, the Council established a Standing Scientific Committee (SSC) to assist the Council and Commissions in formulating their questions to ICES. The SSC comprises two representatives from each Commission, ideally one scientist and one manager. Its work is co-ordinated by Livia Goodbrand (Canada).

During the Annual Meeting, the SSC will meet to develop a Draft Request for Scientific Advice from ICES for consideration by the Council and Commissions.

The Council may wish to:

- *adopt a request to ICES for scientific advice.*

The Standing Scientific Committee's recommendations will be available once its work is complete:

- Draft Request for Scientific Advice from ICES.

f) Report of the Stocking Guidelines Working Group

In 2022, [CNL\(22\)53rev](#), the Council agreed that work could begin inter-sessionally on updating the Guidelines for Stocking Atlantic Salmon (i.e. Annex 4 of the Williamsburg Resolution, [CNL\(06\)48](#). The Council agreed the 'Terms of Reference for the Stocking Guidelines Working Group', [CNL\(23\)15](#), in 2023. The Working Group met inter-sessionally, in six meetings in 2023 and 2024, to draft the document 'Draft Revised Guidelines for Stocking Atlantic Salmon'.

The Chair of the Stocking Guidelines Working Group will present the updated guidelines.

The Council may wish to:

- *adopt revised Guidelines for Stocking Atlantic Salmon*

The following papers are available:

- Report of the Meeting of the Stocking Guidelines Working Group, [CNL\(24\)10](#); and
- Draft Revised Guidelines for Stocking Atlantic Salmon, SGWG(24)01, see Annex 3 of [CNL\(24\)10](#).

g) The Wild Atlantic Salmon Atlas

In 2021, [CNL\(21\)62](#), the Council agreed to establish a Working Group to address high-level issues with respect to the Rivers Database.

In 2022 the Council agreed to the recommendations made by the [Rivers Database Working Group](#), to develop a Wild Atlantic Salmon Atlas, [CNL\(22\)53rev](#). It was also agreed 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.'

In 2023, following consideration of a selection of mapping websites by the Steering Committee, the ArcGIS Esri platform was selected and a ArcGIS expert contracted to develop the 'Atlas'. In 2024, the 'Atlas' has now been completed.

The Chair of the Steering Committee, Livia Goodbrand (Canada) will present the Wild Atlantic Salmon Atlas and set out the requirements for new data from the Parties.

Under this agenda item:

- *no decision is required.*

Decisions required on the Wild Atlantic Salmon Atlas are listed under Agenda item 6.b)(ii) NASCO's Action Plan.

The following paper is available:

- The Wild Atlantic Salmon Atlas, [CNL\(24\)11](#).

h) Update on the Review of the Effect of Salmon Aquaculture on Wild Atlantic Salmon Populations

In 2021, the Council adopted 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.*'

In 2022, the Council considered a 'Proposal for the Production of a Systematic Review of the Effect of Salmon Aquaculture on Wild Atlantic Salmon Populations', [CNL\(22\)07](#). In 2023 and 2024, an update on the work has been provided. NASCO is grateful to the EU for part-funding this project.

- *no decision is required.*

The following paper is available:

- Update on the Review of the Effect of Salmon Aquaculture on Wild Atlantic Salmon Populations – May 2024, [CNL\(24\)12](#).

6. The Working Group on the Future of NASCO

a) Special Session: The Working Group on the Future of NASCO

In 2023, following various recommendations from its third performance review, [CNL\(23\)17rev](#), Council agreed that it had been offered an opportunity to take stock of the achievements of NASCO and also of its constraints, giving a chance to refocus NASCO's work to respond more effectively to the pressures salmon face. However, before responding to the extensive recommendations, the Parties felt it was important to first consider NASCO's priorities in the light of its unique role. Council agreed, therefore, [CNL\(23\)87](#), to

- establish a Working Group on the Future of NASCO (WGFON) with the Terms of Reference as set out in document [CNL\(23\)70](#);
- hold a Special Session during the 2024 Annual Meeting to enable WGFON to present its draft Strategy and Action Plan to Council; and
- request that the Secretary work with the Working Group Chair to establish a schedule of meetings of the WGFON, in consultation with the Parties and NGO Co-Chairs and to identify suitable venues.

The Chair of the WGFON, NASCO's President Kim Damon-Randall, will make a presentation on the work of the WGFON, carried out through two meetings in October 2023 and February 2024, and by correspondence, to present its proposed Strategy and Action Plan.

Additionally, an integral part of the WGFON's deliberations was on the fourth reporting cycle and Ms Damon-Randall will present the results of WGFON's thoughts on what a fourth reporting cycle could look like as well as the 'Draft Terms of Reference for a Future Reporting Working Group', [CNL\(24\)15](#), drafted by the WGFON.

This is a 'Special Session' when all delegates are encouraged to participate.

The following papers are available:

- The Future of NASCO – a Ten Year (Draft) Strategy, [CNL\(24\)13](#);
- The Future of NASCO – a Ten Year Draft Strategy addendum with consultation feedback, CNL(24)13AD;
- Draft of an Action Plan for NASCO, [CNL\(24\)14](#);
- Draft of an Action Plan for NASCO addendum with consultation feedback, CNL(24)14AD and
- Draft Terms of Reference for a Future Reporting Working Group, [CNL\(24\)15](#).

b) Decisions Taken on the Future of NASCO

This Agenda item allows for decisions to be taken in light of the Special Session. Decisions are needed in the following three areas:

- (i) NASCO's Strategy;
- (ii) NASCO's Action Plan; and
- (iii) for the Fourth Reporting Cycle.

The Council may wish to:

- *adopt a Strategy for the Future of NASCO;*
- *adopt an Action Plan for NASCO through agreeing the following decisions:*
 - *agree to (to address 35 recommendations in Objectives 1 – 4):*
 - *form four Theme-based Working Groups (TBWGs) (on climate change; management of fisheries; habitat protection and restoration; and aquaculture, introductions and transfers and transgenics);*
 - *the ToRs for the four TBWGs; and*
 - *the priority order in which these theme-based areas will be addressed;*
 - *request Parties / jurisdictions to undertake and report the outcome of an objective stressor analysis to identify threats most relevant to wild Atlantic salmon in 2024 / 2025 to inform the fourth reporting cycle (to address recommendation TBSS(2)5) in Objective 2);*

If the Terms of Reference for the Future Reporting Working Group, under Agenda Item 6.b)(iii) are agreed, then:

- *task the Future Reporting Working Group to consider that the outcome of the stressor analyses completed by Parties / jurisdictions will inform the*

development of Guidance and Templates by that WG for Council's consideration at the 2025 Annual Meeting;

- *agree that, following the completion of the stressor analysis, for those Parties / jurisdictions where these are considered threats, they would address these in their IP for the fourth reporting cycle (2^o Action from recommendations EPR21 and EPR22);*
- *direct the Secretariat to bring 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 (to address 11 recommendations in Objective 4);*
- *agree to enhance NASCO's website and information base to create a single authoritative source on wild Atlantic salmon, its status and threats, including the use of ICES streamlined advice for simple messaging and tools / products as advised by external outreach / communications expertise (to address recommendation WGFON in Objective 4);*
- *as an integral part of the website enhancement, agree to (to address recommendation WGFON in Objective 1):*
 - *the Wild Atlantic Salmon Atlas (WASA), including consideration of the Steering Committee's recommendations;*
 - *provide the relevant data to enable the WASA to be populated and published, in line with, or otherwise, the Steering Committee's recommendations; and*
 - *the publication of NASCO's Second State of North Atlantic Salmon Report for 2026, based on the updated data for the WASA;*
- *agree to an agenda item in each of the Commissions to allow for an annual update on coastal, estuarine and in-river mixed-stock fisheries and the justification for their continued prosecution (to address recommendation EPR10 in Objective 3);*
- *agree 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, and to request that Atlantic salmon be placed on the ICES bycatch list (to address recommendation EPR3 in Objective 1);*
- *agree to request that the International Atlantic Salmon Research Board considers identifying and implementing a process to enhance partnerships and collaboration related to salmon science (to address recommendation IYS1 in Objective 1); and*
- *agree to ask NEA to direct the G. salaris Working Group to consider actions to prevent the spread of G. salaris and for its eradication in the Terms of Reference for the next G. salaris Working Group meeting in 2025 (to address recommendation EPR27 in Objective 2);*
- *agree to charge 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, and report to Council at*

the 2025 Annual Meeting (to address recommendations EPR38 and IYS2 in Objective 4);

- *agree that once the Stocking Guidelines Working Group has updated the Stocking Guidelines (Annex 4 of the Williamsburg Resolution CNL(06)48) (to address recommendations EPR23 and T2 in Objective 2):*
 - *to undertake a review of the NASCO Guidelines on the ‘Use of Stock Rebuilding Programmes in the Context of the Precautionary Management of Salmon Stocks’, CNL(04)55; and*
 - *to develop further guidelines on scientific and management protocols for gene banking;*
- *agree to consider options that will allow for open discussion and that will not result in longer meetings (such as HoDs plus senior advisor or more bilateral discussions) (to address recommendation EPR31 in Objective 5);*
- *agree to charge the Secretariat to document its green policies and practices and examine best practice (to address recommendation EPR41 in Objective5);*
- *agree to consider (to address recommendations EPR42 and EPR43 in Objective 5):*
 - *strengthening the NASCO Convention by adopting selected amendments or a complete convention revision to provide Council with a mandate to adopt legally binding instruments on non-fisheries issues;*
 - *using the tool of agreed interpretations in case there is insufficient support for formal amendment of the NASCO Convention; and*
 - *developing a position paper;*
- *agree to charge the Secretariat to identify and use a Project Management tool such as SmartSheet to report progress of the Action Plan to Council at the 2025 Annual Meeting and annually thereafter (to address recommendation WGFON in Objective 5);*
- *agree to remove the three recommendations considered not to be relevant by the WGFON i.e. EPR17, EPR29 and EPR 30, from the Action Plan; and*
- *agree the Terms of Reference for a Future Reporting Working Group.*

The following papers are (or will be) available:

- The Future of NASCO – a Ten Year (Draft) Strategy, [CNL\(24\)13](#);
- The Future of NASCO – a Ten Year Draft Strategy addendum with consultation feedback, CNL(24)13AD;
- Draft of an Action Plan for NASCO, [CNL\(24\)14](#);
- Draft of an Action Plan for NASCO addendum with consultation feedback, CNL(24)14AD and
- Draft Terms of Reference for a Future Reporting Working Group, [CNL\(24\)15](#).

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

a) **Theme-based Special Session: Management of Pink Salmon in the North Atlantic and Their Potential Threats to Wild Atlantic Salmon**

(i) Theme-based Special Session: Management of Pink Salmon in the North Atlantic and Their Potential Threats to Wild Atlantic Salmon

The Theme-based Special Session (TBSS) will take place on 5 June 2024. The overarching objective for the TBSS is to provide an overview of pink salmon's distribution, biology, potential impacts on native Atlantic salmon and management actions in the North Atlantic.

A report of the TBSS will be prepared by the Steering Committee following the Annual Meeting.

This is a 'Special Session' when all delegates are encouraged to participate.

Any decisions related to the TBSS will be taken under Agenda Item 7a)(ii).

The following papers are available:

- Programme for the 2024 Theme-based Special Session, [CNL\(24\)16](#); and
- Speakers' papers are available with the 2024 Council Papers [here](#).

(ii) Decisions Taken in Light of the Theme-based Special Session

This Agenda item allows for decisions to be taken in light of TBSS, if required.

It also allows the Council to decide whether to hold a TBSS in 2025, and if so, on which topic.

The Council may wish to:

- *consider any actions arising from the 2024 TBSS;*
- *decide whether to hold a TBSS in 2025 (pending decisions under the Future of NASCO); and*
- *establish a Steering Committee to plan the 2025 TBSS if so required.*

b) **Evaluation of Implementation Plans and Annual Progress Reports Under the Third Reporting Cycle (2019 – 2024)**

(i) Special Session: Evaluation of Implementation Plans and Annual Progress Reports Under the Third Reporting Cycle (2019 – 2024)

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](#).

In 2023, the Council agreed to extend the third reporting cycle for one year and defer the fourth reporting cycle, [CNL\(23\)87](#).

Revised Implementation Plans (IPs) under the third reporting cycle (2019 – 2024) submitted by Parties / jurisdictions were reviewed by the IP / APR Review Group in November 2023.

Parties / jurisdictions submit an Annual Progress Report (APR) to NASCO each year. APRs were reviewed by the IP / APR Review Group in April 2024.

The Chair of the IP / APR Review Group, Cathal Gallagher (EU), will present the Sixth

Interim Report of the IP/ APR Review Group for the Review of IPs, together with the Report of the IP / APR Review Group for the Review of APRs.

This is a ‘Special Session’ when all delegates are encouraged to participate.

The following papers are available:

- Sixth Interim Report of the IP / APR Review Group for the Review of IPs, [CNL\(24\)17](#);
- Report of the IP / APR Review Group for the Review of APRs, [CNL\(24\)18](#); and
- APR Summary, [CNL\(24\)19](#).

IPs, APRs and relevant papers are available on the [Third Reporting Cycle webpage](#).

(ii) Decisions Taken Regarding the Evaluation of Implementation Plans Under the Third Reporting Cycle (2019 – 2024)

This Agenda item allows for decisions on the IPs to be taken in light of the IP / APR Special Session, if required.

The Council may wish to:

- *agree that there will be no more reviews of revised IPs under the third reporting cycle; and*
- *consider any actions arising from the Special Session relating to IPs.*

The following paper is available:

- Sixth Interim Report of the IP / APR Review Group for the Review of IPs, [CNL\(24\)17](#).

(iii) Decisions Taken Regarding the Evaluation of Annual Progress Reports Under the 2019 – 2024 Implementation Plans

This Agenda item allows for decisions on the APRs to be taken in light of the IP / APR Special Session, if required.

The Council may wish to:

- *defer the next review of APRs to 2026 (taking into consideration the decisions of Council in relation to the work of the Future Reporting Working Group in Spring 2025); and*
- *consider actions arising from the Special Session relating to APRs.*

The following paper is available:

- Report of the IP / APR Review Group for the Review of APRs, [CNL\(24\)18](#).

c) Liaison with the Salmon Farming Industry

In 2013, the Council agreed that the regular meetings of the International Salmon Farming Association (ISFA) / NASCO Liaison Group would not continue but that if a specific need arose, consideration would be given to convening a joint *ad hoc* group. The Council decided to retain an item on its Agenda during which a representative of the ISFA could be invited to participate in an exchange of information on issues concerning impacts of aquaculture on wild salmon.

In 2022 it was agreed ‘to take ‘Liaison with the Salmon Farming Industry’ off the Agenda (unless ISFA was participating) and to request the Secretary to continue to send

ISFA an invitation to attend and submit a statement.

ISFA has been invited to contribute a paper or written statement.

- *no decision is required.*

The following paper is available:

- International Salmon Farmers Association (ISFA) Report to NASCO 2024, [CNL\(24\)20](#).

d) New or Emerging Opportunities for, or Threats to, Salmon Conservation and Management

(i) New or Emerging Opportunities for, or Threats to, Salmon Conservation and Management

This is addressed under Agenda item 4c)(i), Scientific Advice from ICES, above.

(ii) The NASCO Working Group on Pink Salmon

At the 2022 Annual Meeting, [CNL\(22\)53rev](#), the President noted that the magnitude of pink salmon entering many Atlantic salmon rivers is very concerning. The Council adopted a ‘Statement of the Council Regarding Pink Salmon, *Oncorhynchus gorbuscha*, in the NASCO Convention Area’, [CNL\(22\)47](#). This included agreement to establish a Standing NASCO Working Group on pink salmon. The ‘Terms of Reference for the Pink Salmon Working Group’, [CNL\(23\)69](#), were agreed in 2023 and the Working Group met inter-sessionally.

One of the Pink Salmon Working Group’s Terms of Reference was to ‘propose revised Terms of Reference and a timeframe for regular meetings of NASCO’s Working Group on Pink Salmon.’ These are annexed to the Working Group’s report.

The Chair of the Pink Salmon Working Group, Jarle Steinkjer (Norway) will present the Group’s report.

The Council may wish to:

- *agree Terms of Reference for the Pink Salmon Working Group.*

The following papers are available:

- Report of the Meeting of the Working Group on Pink Salmon, [CNL\(24\)21](#); and
- Draft Terms of Reference for the Working Group on Pink Salmon, PSWG(24)19, see Annex 18 of [CNL\(24\)21](#).

e) Management and Sampling of the St Pierre and Miquelon Salmon Fishery

In recent years, the Council and the North American Commission have been 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. France (in respect of St Pierre and Miquelon) has provided a Report on the 2023 Salmon Fishery at St Pierre and Miquelon.

- *no decision is required.*

The following paper is available:

- Management and Sampling of the St Pierre and Miquelon Salmon Fishery, [CNL\(24\)22](#).

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

Under Article 10 of the Convention ‘*Each Commission, shall, on a timely basis, make a report of its activities to Council.*’ The President will ask the Chairs of each of the regional Commissions of NASCO to report to the Council on the work of their Commission.

- *no decision is required.*

8. Other Business

At the time of writing, the Secretariat had not been made aware of any other business.

9. Date and Place of the Next Meeting

The provisional dates for NASCO’s Forty-Second Annual Meeting are 3 – 6 June 2025. Council will be asked to confirm the dates and location for the meeting.

Council will be asked to confirm the dates, and consider the location for, its Forty-Third Annual Meeting in 2026.

The Council may wish to:

- *confirm the dates of, and consider the location for, its Annual Meeting in 2025; and*
- *agree on the dates of 2-5 June for the 2026 Annual Meeting.*

10. Press Release

A draft Press Release will be circulated during the meeting.

Council may wish to:

- *agree a Press Release.*

11. Report of the Meeting

Rule 29 of the Rules of Procedure for Council requires that ‘A draft report shall be considered by the Council before the end of the meeting.’ A Draft Report of the Meeting will be circulated for review.

The Council may wish to:

- *adopt the Report of the Meeting.*

12. Close of the Meeting

The President will close the Forty-First Annual Meeting.

Secretariat
Edinburgh
24 May 2024

Summary of Council Decisions

Agenda Item	Decision	Paper No.
2. Adoption of the Agenda	Adopt the Agenda	CNL(24)03
3.a) Report of the Finance and Administration Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • adopt revised NASCO Staff Fund Rules; • adopt revised NASCO Staff Rules; • agree the process and timeline for the full review of NASCO’s Staff Fund Rules and Staff Rules; • adopt Terms and Conditions for Observers at NASCO Meetings; • adopt Conditions for Media at NASCO Meetings; • accept the Audited Accounts for 2023; • approve the budget for 2025 and note a Forecast Budget for 2026 • appoint auditors for NASCO’s accounts for 2024 / 2025 / 2026; and • adopt the Report of the FAC. 	FAC(24)04 FAC(24)02 FAC(24)05rev FAC(24)08 CNL(24)04 (Issued at meeting)
3.b) NASCO Calendar and Working Group Membership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • agree a calendar of inter-sessional meetings; and • agree the membership of any Working Groups agreed during the meeting 	
4.d) Report of the International Atlantic Salmon Research Board	Adopt the Report of the Meeting of the Board	CNL(24)08 (Issued at meeting)
4.e) Report of the Standing Scientific Committee	Adopt a request to ICES for scientific advice	Issued at meeting
4.f) Report of the Stocking Guidelines Working Group	Adopt revised Guidelines for Stocking Atlantic Salmon	CNL(24)10
6.b)(i) NASCO’s Strategy	Adopt a Strategy for the Future of NASCO	CNL(24)13
6.b)(ii) NASCO’s Action Plan	Adopt an Action Plan for NASCO through agreeing the decisions to:	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • form four Theme-based Working Groups (TBWGs); the ToRs for the TBWGs; and the priority order to address the theme-based areas; • request Parties / jurisdictions to undertake and report stressor analysis; • task the Future Reporting Working Group to consider the outcome of stressor analyses; and agree Parties / jurisdictions will address these in their IP; • direct Secretariat to bring in an outreach / communications consultant; • enhance NASCO’s website; • agree to the Wild Atlantic Salmon Atlas including the Steering Committees recommendations; provide the relevant data; and publication of a State of North Atlantic Salmon Report for 2026; • agree an agenda item in each Commission for an annual update on mixed-stock fisheries; • develop a request to ICES to accommodate salmon in databases and applications, and include Atlantic salmon on the ICES bycatch list; • request to the Board to identify a process to enhance collaboration related to salmon science; • ask NEA to direct the <i>G. salaris</i> Working Group to consider actions to prevent the spread of <i>G. salaris</i> and its eradication in the ToRs for the next Group meeting in 2025; • charge the Secretariat to explore the work of other relevant international RFMOs and international organisations to develop / strengthen co-operation; • agree, once the Stocking Guidelines Working Group has updated the Stocking Guidelines, to undertake a review of CNL(04)55; and develop guidelines for gene banking; • consider options to allow for open discussion and not longer HoDs meetings; 	<p>CNL(24)14</p>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • charge the Secretariat to document green policies and practices; • consider adopting amendments to the NASCO Convention or a complete revision; using the tool of agreed interpretation; and developing a position paper; • charge the Secretariat to identify and use a Project Management tool to report on the Action Plan; and • remove the three recommendations EPR17, EPR29 and EPR30. 	
6.b)(iii) the Fourth Reporting Cycle	Agree the Terms of Reference for a Future Reporting Working Group	CNL(24)15
7.a)(ii) Decisions Taken in Light of the Theme-based Special Session	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • consider actions arising from the 2024 TBSS; • decide whether to hold a TBSS in 2025 (pending decisions under the Future of NASCO); and • establish a Steering Committee to plan the 2025 TBSS if required. 	CNL(24)16 and TBSS papers
7.b)(ii) Decisions Taken Regarding Evaluation of Implementation Plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • agree there will be no more reviews of revised IPs under the third reporting cycle; and • consider any actions arising from the Special Session relating to IPs 	CNL(24)17
7.b)(iii) Decisions Taken Regarding the Evaluation of Annual Progress Reports Under the 2019 – 2024 Implementation Plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • defer the review of APRs to 2026; and • consider any actions arising from the Special Session relating to APRs. 	CNL(24)18
7.d)(ii) The NASCO Working Group on Pink Salmon	Agree Terms of Reference for the Pink Salmon Working Group	CNL(24)21
9. Date and Place of the Next Meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • confirm the dates of, and consider the venue for, its Annual Meeting in 2025; and • Council may wish to agree on the dates of 2-5 June for the 2026 Annual Meeting. 	
10. Press Release	Agree the Press Release	
11. Report of the Meeting	Adopt the Report of the Meeting	Issued at meeting

One Year and Five Year NASCO Schedule of Work

One-Year Work Schedule

The inter-sessional work listed below will involve representatives from NASCO Parties. Each is likely to involve multiple sub-meetings. Work involving the Secretariat only is not listed. The list is subject to decisions made at the Annual Meeting.

Description	Comments
Meetings of the FAC small working group and correspondence with wider FAC to revise full Staff Rules and Staff Fund Rules	Virtual meetings
Meetings of the Theme-based Working Group on Climate Change	Subject to Council's agreement – at HQ
Meetings of the Theme-based Working Group on Management of Fisheries	Subject to Council's agreement – at HQ
Meetings of the Theme-based Working Group on Habitat Protection and Restoration	Subject to Council's agreement – at HQ
Meetings of the Theme-based Working Group on Aquaculture, Introductions and Transfers and Transgenics	Subject to Council's agreement – at HQ
Meetings of the Future Reporting Working Group	In person (at HQ) and virtual meetings – one week in November 2024 and (?) in place of APR RG in April 2025
Inter-Sessional Meeting of the FAC to finalise and agree staff rules for recommendation to Council	In person 18-20 March 2025 (provisional) – at HQ
Meetings of the Working Group on the Future of NASCO	Subject to Council's agreement
Meetings of the Wild Atlantic Salmon Atlas Steering Committee	Virtual meetings
Meetings of the Working Group on Pink Salmon	Summer 2025 in person – at ??
Possible Theme-based Special Session 2025 Steering Committee	Virtual meetings
Meeting of the Working Group on <i>Gyrodactylus salaris</i>	Autumn 2025 in person – at HQ
Possible Workshop on Outreach	Virtual meeting
Possible meeting of the SAG to develop a research proposal for the Board	Virtual meeting

Five-Year Work Schedule

The five-year work schedule will be dependent on decisions made in response to the proposed Strategy and Action Plan. In addition to any work agreed in that regard, the following work is also planned.

Date	Description
2024	Negotiation of a New Decision Regarding the Salmon Fishery in Faroese Waters for 2024 / 2025 onwards
2024	Agree recruitment process and job description for the next NASCO Secretary
2024 / 2025	Work inter-sessionally towards the recruitment of the next NASCO Secretary
2024 / 2025	Parties / jurisdictions carry out stressor analysis to inform actions under fourth reporting cycle
2024 / 2025	Planning for the fourth reporting cycle – arranging / supporting the Working Group on Future Reporting
2024 / 2025	Parties / jurisdictions supply data for the Wild Atlantic Salmon Atlas
2025	Planning for the fourth reporting cycle – arranging / supporting the Working Group on the Future of NASCO
2025	Agree the documentation for the fourth reporting cycle
2025	Finalise the Action Plan
2025	Publish the Wild Atlantic Salmon Atlas
2025	Meeting of the Pink Salmon Working Group
2025	Next NASCO Secretary to commence work in the Secretariat in second half of year
2025	Meeting of the Working Group on <i>Gyrodactylus salaris</i>
2025 / 2026	Parties / jurisdictions prepare Implementation Plans under the fourth reporting cycle; actions based on stressor analyses
2026	Review of the Implementation Plans under the fourth reporting cycle
2026	Final review of Annual Progress Reports under the third reporting cycle
2026	Negotiation of a new Regulatory Measure for Fishing for Atlantic Salmon at West Greenland from 2026
2026	Negotiation of a New Decision Regarding the Salmon Fishery in Faroese Waters for 2026 / 2027 onwards
2026	Revision of Implementation Plans following review
2026	Review of revised Implementation Plans
2026	Meeting of the Pink Salmon Working Group
TBC	Publication of the Second State of North Atlantic Salmon Report
2027	First review of Annual Progress Reports under the fourth reporting cycle
2027	Meeting of the Pink Salmon Working Group
2028	Second review of Annual Progress Reports under the fourth reporting cycle
2028	Meeting of the Pink Salmon Working Group
2028	Meeting of the Working Group on <i>Gyrodactylus salaris</i>