



NASCO News 2024

CONSERVING AND
RESTORING WILD
ATLANTIC SALMON

1 MARCH 2023 – 29 FEBRUARY 2024

Welcome from the Secretary

Welcome to the 2024 NASCO News! We were very pleased to get some really positive feedback on our first edition last year and have taken this onboard for this year. Special thanks to Tim Sheehan for suggesting a list of acronyms to make it easier to understand for those of you not familiar with NASCO jargon – we have done this and you will find it at the bottom of this page.

This has been the busiest year in my tenure at NASCO, with a string of inter-sessional meetings working towards very important decisions on the future of NASCO, the future priorities of the Board and major revisions to the Staff Fund Rules and Staff Rules, in addition to all our usual work! As a result we will have very busy Agendas when we meet in Westport in June.

One fantastic piece of news is that we have welcomed Iceland back to NASCO in 2024. This really is wonderful for the conservation of salmon and we look forward to working closely with Iceland once again.

We hope you enjoy reading the NASCO News 2024 and continue to share the publication and its articles widely.



Dr Emma Hatfield, Secretary

Acronyms in the NASCO News

APR	Annual Progress Report	NGO	Non-Government Organization
FAC	Finance and Administration Committee	RFMO	Regional Fisheries Management Organization
ICES	International Council for the Exploration of the Sea	SAG	The International Atlantic Salmon Research Board’s Scientific Advisory Group
IGO	Inter-Governmental Organization	TBSS	Theme-based Special Session
IP	Implementation Plan	UN	United Nations
NAC	North American Commission	WGC	West Greenland Commission
NASCO	North Atlantic Salmon Conservation Organization	WGFON	Working Group on the Future of NASCO
NEA	North-East Atlantic Commission		

The Atlantic Salmon



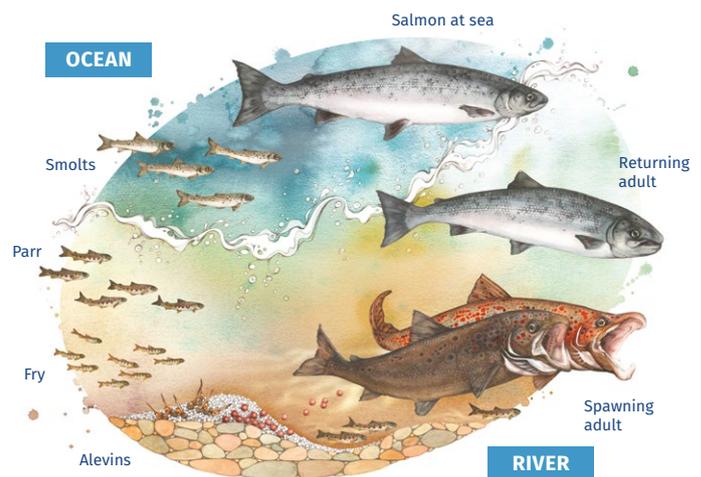
The Atlantic salmon is an iconic and fascinating species, capturing the hearts and imaginations of the communities around it for thousands of years. The extraordinary sight of this magnificent fish leaping over obstacles on its epic homeward migration is truly awe-inspiring and it is of little wonder that the ‘King of Fish’ features in social ceremonies, art and folklore across the North Atlantic.

The Atlantic salmon leaves its river of birth, travels huge distances across the Atlantic Ocean to its feeding grounds and then finds its way back home to the exact river of its birth to spawn, so completing its unique life cycle. In doing so, it brings essential marine nutrients to the river systems in which it lives.

However, this King of Fish is now threatened. In some areas, it is critically endangered. For example, the number of North American salmon, prior to any fisheries taking place, has fallen dramatically from around 1.7 million fish in 1975 to approximately 890,000 fish in 2021 (source: [CNL\(23\)08](#)).

There are many [reasons](#) for this decline, several of which are caused, in some way, by the actions of humans. These include overfishing, habitat degradation and aquaculture and related activities. Of course, climate change is also a major contributing factor and NASCO held a TBSS on this topic at its 2023 Annual Meeting (further details can be found on page 9).

Governments around the North Atlantic work together through the North Atlantic Salmon Conservation Organization to try to prevent the loss of this amazing species.



--- Migration routes

Header photo: ‘Leaping salmon Shrewsbury Weir River Severn’ by © Jason Dale.

Who We Are



NASCO - The North Atlantic Salmon Conservation Organization

NASCO is an inter-governmental organization whose members are the Contracting Parties of the 1982 Convention for the Conservation of Salmon in the North Atlantic Ocean.

There are currently eight Contracting Parties: Canada, Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland), the European Union, Iceland, Norway, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom and the United States of America. Our [vision](#) is to:

‘pursue the restoration of abundant Atlantic salmon stocks throughout the species’ range with the aim of providing the greatest possible benefit to society and individuals’

Under the Convention, no salmon fishing is allowed beyond areas of fisheries jurisdiction and, in most areas of the North Atlantic, beyond 12 nautical miles from the coasts. **This has created an enormous area free from directed salmon fishing across the North Atlantic.**

The Contracting Parties work together through NASCO’s four main bodies (the Council and three regional Commissions) and other subsidiary bodies such as the Finance and Administration Committee and the International Atlantic Salmon Research Board.

The Contracting Parties and Regional Commissions



Canada



Denmark
(in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland)



European Union



Iceland



Norway



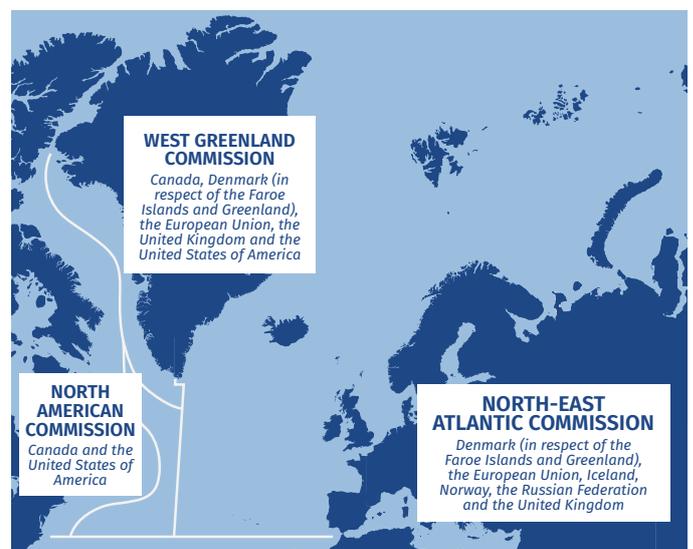
Russian Federation



United Kingdom



United States of America



Header photo: 'Upstream' by Pekka Tuuri.

The Council

The Council is the Organization's overarching body, responsible for co-ordinating the work of the Commissions and providing a space for information exchange across the whole of the North Atlantic. The [Resolutions, Agreements and Guidelines](#) adopted by Council guide the work of the Organization in its three key areas of concern: Fisheries Management, Habitat Protection and Restoration and Aquaculture, Introductions and Transfers and Transgenics.

The Commissions

NASCO has three regional Commissions: the NAC, the NEA and the WGC. It is through the Commissions that agreements are reached on salmon fisheries in the waters of one Contracting Party that catch salmon from rivers in another Contracting Party, such as for the salmon fishery at West Greenland.

Salmon born in rivers on both sides of the North Atlantic are caught in the salmon fishery at West Greenland, and many are from critically endangered stocks. A binding 'regulatory measure' has been agreed for the West Greenland salmon fishery for the period 2022 – 2025, restricting the Total Allowable Catch (TAC) to 27 t (see [WGC\(22\)10](#) for details), far below the record levels of almost 2,700 t in the 1970s.

A 'Decision' has also been reached in the NEA for the salmon fishery in Faroese waters (see [NEA\(21\)16](#)), covering the 2021 / 22 – 2023 / 24 salmon fishing seasons. Under this Decision, the Faroe Islands agrees to manage any salmon fishery on the basis of advice from [ICES](#), the inter-governmental marine science organization that provides NASCO's scientific advice. A similar Decision has been reached for each year since 2001, and as a result **no salmon fishery has taken place at the Faroe Islands since the year 2000.**

At its 2022 Annual Meeting, the NEA recognised the conservation measures taken by Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland) in the last few decades to better protect Atlantic salmon stocks.

Other NASCO Bodies

The Finance and Administration Committee

The FAC deals with the financial and administrative matters related to the running of the Organization. Each Party to NASCO has one member on the FAC and it elects its own Chair from among the Parties. It usually holds its Annual Meeting the day before the main Annual Meetings of the Council and Commissions of NASCO begin.

The International Atlantic Salmon Research Board



The International Atlantic Salmon Research Board (the Board) was set-up to promote collaboration and co-operation on research into the causes of marine mortality of Atlantic salmon and the opportunities to counteract this mortality.

Each Party to NASCO has one member on the Board and there is also an NGO representative. The Chair of the Board is elected from among its members.

Over the years, the Board has funded, endorsed and / or developed a number of research programmes, including the flagship SALSEA Programme. It also maintains an inventory of research projects relating to salmon mortality at sea on its website. It usually holds its Annual Meeting the day before the Council and Commission meetings begin.

The Scientific Advisory Group

The SAG helps the Board to carry out its activities. Each Party to NASCO has a representative on the SAG and there is also an NGO representative. The SAG elects its Chair from among its members.

The SAG meets to carry out specific tasks as and when asked to do so by the Board.

Our Elected Officers



Kimberly Damon-Randall
President of NASCO



Ruth Allin
Vice-President of NASCO



Isabelle Morisset
North American Commission Chair
(Photo: David Innes)



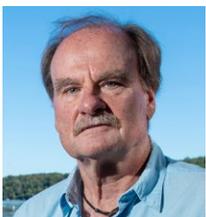
Pat Keliher
North American Commission Vice-Chair



Alexander Kinninmonth,
North-East Atlantic Commission Chair



Helge Dyrendal
North-East Atlantic Commission Vice-Chair



Stephen Gephard
West Greenland Commission Chair (Photo: Cloe Poisson)



Katrine Kærgaard
West Greenland Commission Vice-Chair



Seamus Connor
Finance and Administration Committee Chair



Heidi Hansen
Finance and Administration Committee Vice-Chair



Martha Robertson
International Atlantic Salmon Research Board Chair



Peder Fiske
Scientific Advisory Group Chair

Our Accredited NGOs

As part of our efforts to be inclusive and transparent, we work closely with a number of NGOs who have been given ‘observer status’ to the Organization.

These NGOs are invited to attend NASCO’s Annual Meetings and, through the NGO Co-Chairs (currently Nils Olav Gjone (Norske Lakseelver) and Steve Sutton (Atlantic Salmon Federation)), the NGOs can make interventions on most of the topics discussed at the Annual Meetings. The NGOs are also invited to provide representatives on many of NASCO’s Working Groups and have two permanent members on the IP / APR Review Group (see page 10 for details). In return, NASCO benefits from a wide range of expertise and experience from within our NGO community.

Here are just a few of NASCO’s accredited NGOs:



For a full list of the NGOs accredited by NASCO, please see our [website](#).

Organizations interested in becoming accredited NGOs should contact the Secretary of NASCO (hq@nasco.int).

Our Work

Gyrodactylus salaris



G. salaris on the skin of Atlantic salmon parr by Tor Atle Mo, Norwegian Institute for Nature Research

The *Gyrodactylus salaris* (*G. salaris*) parasite poses a huge threat to Atlantic salmon in rivers where it has been introduced. It has wiped out up to **98 % of salmon parr in some**

Norwegian rivers. According to a 2022 report, the Norwegian Authorities had spent **more than NOK 1 billion** (approx. £73 million) on research, monitoring and combating *G. salaris* and the work remains ongoing.

In response to the threat posed by the parasite, NASCO's NEA has an agreed 'Road Map to enhance information exchange and cooperation on monitoring, research and measures to prevent the spread of *G. salaris* and eradicate it if introduced' and has established a Working Group on *G. salaris* which meets every three years. In addition, Commission members are asked to report annually to the Commission on progress on the recommendations contained within the Road Map.

During its 2023 Annual Meeting, the NEA considered the report of the most recent meeting of the Working Group on *G. salaris*, which was held in October 2022. The Commission agreed a number of revisions to the Road Map and the 'Revised Road Map' can be found [here](#). The Commission also noted a number of best practice recommendations from the Working Group and encouraged the members of the Commission to disseminate them widely:

Best Practice Recommendations on *Gyrodactylus salaris*

At its 2023 Annual Meeting, NASCO's North-East Atlantic Commission agreed a number of best practice recommendations on dealing with *G. salaris* as follows:

- any positive detections of *Gyrodactylus salaris* in an area previously free of the parasite must immediately be reported to the Competent Authorities of the jurisdiction and not be investigated through a non-designated laboratory. Samples should be available for investigation by the Competent Authority;
- salmon restoration programmes should consider the threat posed by *Gyrodactylus salaris* and undertake appropriate surveillance and mitigation measures;
- where possible, only 1+ or older juvenile salmon are used for sampling; and
- the use of chlorine be considered in the development of Contingency Plans as a potential eradication method if *Gyrodactylus salaris* becomes established. However, chlorine should not be considered as an initial treatment in response to an outbreak where fast action is necessary.

Further information on the parasite and NASCO's response to the threat it poses can be found [here](#).

Share this best practice:

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Indigenous Perspectives and Roles in Atlantic Salmon

One of the recommendations arising from NASCO’s 2019 IYS Symposium held in Tromsø, Norway, was:

‘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’

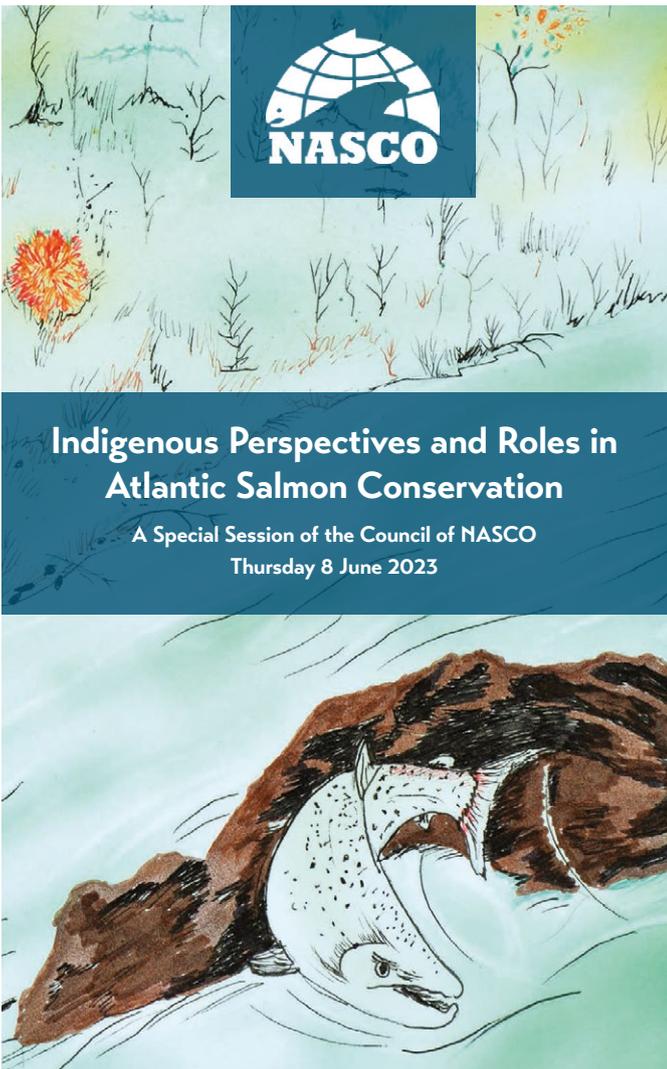


Illustration: Dozay

The Council of NASCO concluded that this recommendation was a priority and should be acted on urgently. During its 2023 Annual Meeting, Council held a three-hour Special Session titled ‘Indigenous Perspectives and Roles in Atlantic Salmon Conservation’ which brought together nine Indigenous guest speakers and panellists from North America

and Europe. The objective was to launch a dialogue between NASCO and Indigenous peoples by increasing NASCO delegates’ understanding of Indigenous peoples’ connections to, and experience with, wild Atlantic salmon, including the legal, social, cultural and governance challenges that they face in their respective regions.

A common message from all the Indigenous speakers was to emphasise that **partnering with Indigenous peoples and including them in discussions is an essential and necessary element, not only for the future preservation of wild Atlantic salmon, but for the future success of NASCO as a conservation organization.** The report of the Steering Committee responsible for organizing the Special Session can be found [here](#).

Following the Special Session, the Parties to NASCO recognised the need to consult with Indigenous peoples in their own jurisdictions, where appropriate, and were supportive of a process to enable Indigenous peoples to participate more fully in the work of NASCO.

As the next steps in this process, Council agreed that the Parties would consider a proposal put forward by Canada to deepen the engagement of Indigenous peoples, including the creation of a new observer category (see [CNL\(23\)72](#) for further details on the proposal) and asked the FAC to consider whether and how the ‘Conditions for Attendance by Observers at NASCO Meetings’, [CNL\(06\)49](#), could be updated to accommodate Indigenous participants in a manner that appropriately recognises their interest in the work of NASCO and the value their strengthened engagement would bring.

The FAC has considered this inter-sessionally and Council will consider this matter further at its 2024 Annual Meeting.

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NASCO Becomes the First RFMO to Undertake Three Performance Reviews

The 2005 UN Resolution on Sustainable Fisheries ([UNGA 60/31](#)) encouraged States, through their participation in RFMOs such as NASCO, to begin a process to review their performance. NASCO is the first RFMO to hold three such performance reviews, with the most recent review reporting to Council in 2023.

A panel made up of three external experts (Jean-Jacques Maguire (Fisheries Science), Philip McGinnity (Salmon Management and Conservation) and Erik J. Molenaar (Marine / Fisheries Law)) worked together to address the [Terms of Reference](#) that had been set for the review. Their report contained 46 recommendations and is available [here](#).

Erik Molenaar chaired the panel and presented its report to Council at a Special Session during the 2023 Annual Meeting. Following a lengthy [Question and Answer](#) session, NASCO’s Parties agreed that **relaunching NASCO’s focus on restoring and conserving wild Atlantic salmon was urgently needed.**

Council therefore agreed to establish the Working Group on the Future of NASCO (WGFON) (Terms of Reference available [here](#)) to propose a Strategy and Action Plan directed at the urgent need to conserve, restore, enhance and rationally manage wild Atlantic salmon in the context of the climate change emergency.

The WGFON was also asked to consider the Strategy and Action Plan in the context of developing the fourth reporting cycle and develop Terms of Reference for a Working Group on Future Reporting. To facilitate this, the IP / APR Review Group was asked to explore options for the fourth reporting cycle which would focus on outcomes, identifying the main challenges and possible outcomes and the third reporting cycle was extended by one year.

The WGFON has been working to address its Terms of Reference inter-sessionally and the Draft Strategy and Action Plan will be considered by Council during a Special Session at the 2024 Annual Meeting.



The EPR Panel at work at NASCO HQ

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NASCO's Action in the face of Climate Change

Climate change is changing the marine and freshwater ecosystems at an unprecedented rate, with impacts on Atlantic salmon expected at both a regional and ocean-wide scale. As part of the process to develop a NASCO 'Strategic Approach' to tackle the impacts of climate change on Atlantic salmon, a TBSS was held during the 2023 Annual Meeting on the theme of climate change.

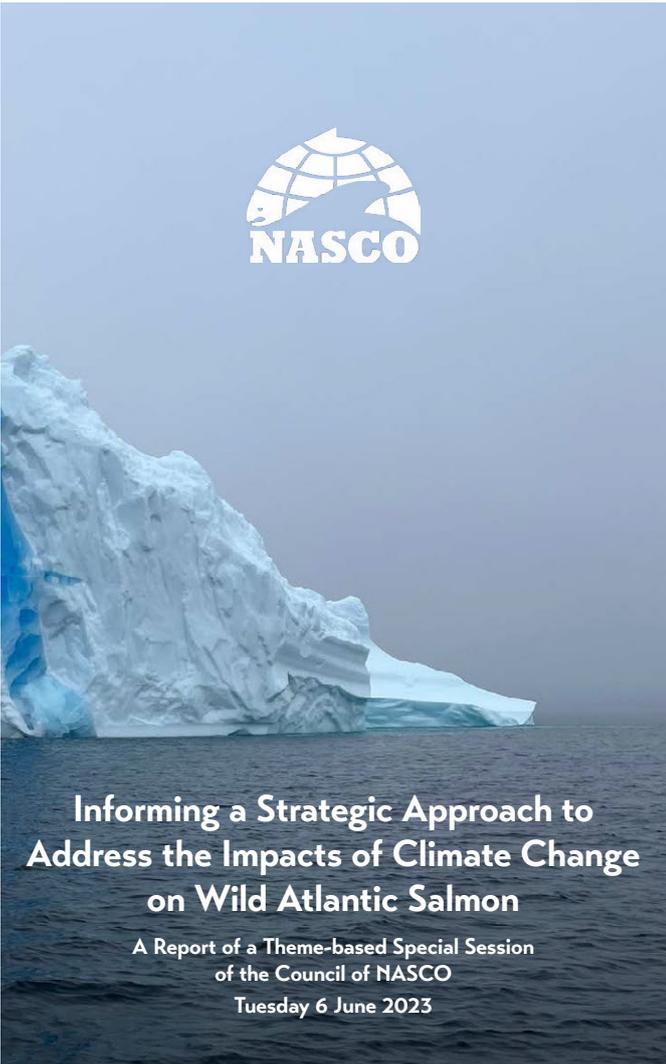


Photo: Tim Sheehan, NOAA Fisheries Service

The goal of the TBSS was to exchange information on the current and future impacts of climate change on salmon in the North Atlantic, on the management measures being implemented and to identify best practices. Invited experts and representatives of NASCO's Parties gave presentations and took part in discussions which are included in the TBSS Steering Committee's report which is available [here](#).



Photo: Kai Benson Photography

The report also includes the Steering Committee's nine recommendations to NASCO and its Parties and jurisdictions on strategic actions that could support the effective implementation of climate adaptive fisheries management for Atlantic Salmon. These recommendations have been discussed during the WGFON process and will be considered as part of the WGFON discussions at the 2024 Annual Meeting.



Photo: Kai Benson Photography

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Updating NASCO's Stocking Guidelines

A Stocking Guidelines Working Group has been working together to produce updated guidance for people interested in stocking Atlantic salmon. The [Group's report](#) and the Draft Revised Guidelines will be considered at Council's 2024 Annual Meeting.

Tag Winners

The 2023 NASCO Tag Return Incentive Scheme winners were Tor Hynne (Norway – Grand Prize winner of £1,500), David Au (Canada – NAC Prize winner of £1,000), Tore Kristoffersen (Norway – NEA Prize Winner of £1,000) and Svend Johansen (Greenland – WGC Prize winner of £1,000). NASCO operates this scheme to encourage the return of tags and improve recapture information. Around 170 returned tags were entered into the 2023 draws. The winners of the 2024 draws will be announced at the Forty-First Annual Meetings of the Council and Commissions.

NASCO's Implementation Plan Process

Over the years, NASCO has adopted a number of [Resolutions, Agreements and Guidelines](#) that address the Organization's three key areas of concern. In 2005, it was agreed that each Party and jurisdiction should develop an 'Implementation Plan' for meeting the objectives of these agreements and report on the steps taken under their Plans (see [CNL\(05\)49](#) for full details). This was the beginning of NASCO's Implementation Plan Process, one of the most valuable mechanisms that NASCO has developed, of vital importance in strengthening implementation of NASCO's Resolutions, Agreements and Guidelines.

Implementation Plans

Under this process, each jurisdiction of NASCO develops a five-year plan, detailing the measures to be taken in relation to:

- the management of salmon fisheries;
- the protection and restoration of Atlantic salmon habitat; and
- the management of aquaculture, introductions and transfers and transgenics.

These IPs are evaluated by a Review Group comprising representatives of the Parties and NGOs. The Review Group provides feedback on the IPs, including whether it considers each section and area of the IP to be satisfactory or unsatisfactory.

NASCO is now in its third round of IPs, with the current plans covering the period from 2019 – 2025. The most recent review of the IPs took place in November 2023.

In summary, of the 21 IPs that have been submitted under the third round of review, six have been assessed as satisfactory in each section / area.

Annual Progress Reports

Each year, the Parties and jurisdictions provide a report on the progress made in implementing the measures contained in their IP through an APR. These APRs are also evaluated by the Review Group and feedback is provided to the Parties and jurisdictions. The Review Group meets each April to evaluate the APRs submitted each year. It provides its report to Council, to be considered at a Special Session during the NASCO Annual Meeting.

When published, the reports of the Review Group meetings can be found [here](#), along with further details on the IP Process, the IPs and APRs.

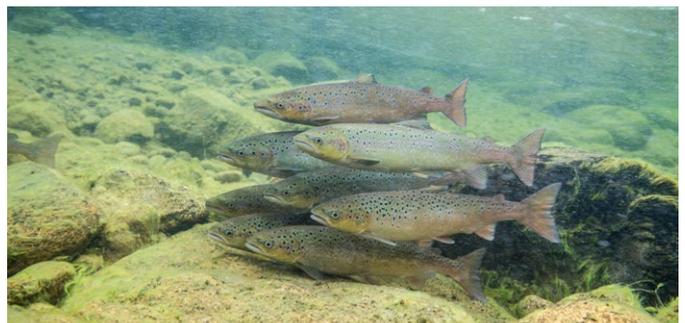


Photo: Pekka Tuuri

Recap: the 2023 Annual Meetings



Delegates at the 2023 NASCO Annual Meeting

The Canadian Government kindly hosted NASCO’s 2023 Annual Meetings in Moncton, New Brunswick, Canada. Representatives of the Parties and observers from Iceland, France (in respect of St Pierre and Miquelon), two IGOs and 21 NGOs attended the Meetings, along with 13 speakers who were invited to speak on specific topics. The 98 delegates who were able to attend in person had the opportunity to visit some of the amazing salmon conservation work taking place in the region. A further 37 delegates participated virtually in the Meetings.

Full details of each can be found in the Annual Reports of the [Council](#), [North American Commission](#), [North-East Atlantic Commission](#), [West Greenland Commission](#), [Finance and Administration Committee](#) and [International Atlantic Salmon Research Board Meetings](#).

The key outcomes of these Meetings are listed below:

- the WGC reviewed the 2022 salmon fishery at West Greenland and agreed that the regulatory measure agreed in 2022, [WGC\(22\)10](#), would continue to apply in 2023;
- the NEA confirmed that the Decision on the Faroese salmon fishery adopted in 2021, [NEA\(21\)16](#), would continue to apply in the 2023 / 2024 salmon fishing season;
- Special Sessions were held to discuss the Report of the Performance Review Panel (see pg 8 for details) and on Indigenous Perspectives and Roles in Atlantic Salmon Conservation (see pg 7 for full details). A TBSS was held on the cross-cutting theme of climate change (see pg 9 for full details);
- Council agreed to extend the current IP reporting cycle by one year to allow for the WGFON to develop its Strategy and Action Plan;

- the NEA considered the report of its Working Group on the parasite *Gyrodactylus salaris*, [NEA\(23\)09](#), (see pg 6 for details) and agreed:
 - four matters of best practice in dealing with the parasite;
 - that a further meeting of the Working Group would take place in 2025; and
 - a number of revisions to its [Road Map on *Gyrodactylus salaris*](#);
- following on from Council's 2022 statement on pink salmon, [CNL\(22\)47](#), Council agreed Terms of Reference for the Pink Salmon Working Group, [CNL\(23\)69](#) and to hold a TBSS on pink salmon in 2024;
- the Board continued with its review of its vision, scope and purpose. On the recommendation of the Board, Council adopted [Revised Terms of Reference](#) for the Board and its SAG and the Board agreed 'Revised Financial Rules of the International Atlantic Salmon Research Fund', [ICR\(23\)15](#). The Board also asked its SAG to identify potential research priorities for the Board, [ICR\(23\)14](#). The SAG met in the final quarter of 2023 to undertake this work and its report was considered at an Inter-Sessional Meeting of the Board in February 2024. The report of that meeting and follow-up actions by the SAG will be considered at the Board's 2024 Annual Meeting;
- the FAC agreed to review the conditions for attendance by Observers at NASCO Meetings, [CNL\(06\)49](#), continued its review of the Staff Rules and Staff Fund Rules and that a generic training budget for Secretariat staff could be agreed in the annual budget each year;
- Council agreed that NASCO should continue to encourage France (in respect of St Pierre and Miquelon) to join the Organization and asked the President to write to France (in respect of St Pierre and Miquelon) again;
- Kimberly Damon-Randall (USA) was elected President of NASCO, with Ruth Allin (UK) elected as Vice-President. The Board re-elected Martha Robertson as its Chair. All three were elected for a two-year period from the close of the 2023 Annual Meetings.



Photo: Alan Walker

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Roundup from the Secretariat



Administrative News from the Secretariat

Staff Changes at HQ

Dr Clare Cavers joined the Secretariat team as the Assistant Secretary in January 2024 and is doing a fantastic job in her new role, bringing a range of new ideas and insight to the team. Clare replaces Dr Wendy Kenyon who left in October 2023. We wish her well in her new role at the Missing Salmon Alliance.

Financial Status Update

The Organization was, once again, in a sound financial position at the end of 2022, with the Working Capital Fund, Contractual Obligation Fund and Recruitment Fund at their ceilings.

The 2023 Budget, [CNL\(22\)54rev](#), had been set at £663,180. Details on actual expenditure are available in document [FAC\(24\)02](#). In addition to providing funding for the 2024 Annual Meeting, the EU generously made a voluntary contribution of £29,595 as a first payment towards the 'State of Knowledge' paper on the impacts of salmon farming on wild Atlantic salmon. We are very grateful for this contribution.

The 2024 Budget, [CNL\(23\)67rev](#), was set at £661,550. At the time of writing, the 2024 contributions have been received for all but one Party. The delay is due to administrative issues with the banks involved.

Fishing for Salmon in International Waters

Each year, the NASCO Secretariat asks the EU, the NEAFC, NAFO and ICCAT Secretariats and the Icelandic and Norwegian coastguards for any information they may hold on fishing activities on the high seas of the North Atlantic that may undermine the conservation measures

adopted by NASCO. At the time of writing, responses have been received from the EU, NAFO, ICCAT and the Icelandic Coastguard. None had received any reports of such fishing taking place. The last known incidences of fishing for salmon in international waters by non-NASCO Parties were in the early 1990s.

Website and Twitter Account

In the period 1 March 2023 – 29 February 2024, the NASCO website saw 12,000 users and 24,000 sessions, with over 50,000 page views. The average session duration was 51 seconds, with 2.1 pages viewed per session. This is an increase in sessions but a slight decrease in users and page views from the period 1 March 2022 – 28 February 2023, when there were 22,000 sessions on the NASCO website and over 14,000 users, with over 52,200 page views. Detailed information on the Board's website usage can be found in document [ICR\(24\)06](#). We hope you are enjoying our website and find it easy to use. If you have any suggestions or feedback, please do let us know.

Conferences and Events

[NASF Salmon Summit, 16 – 17 March 2023](#)

Our Secretary was delighted to be asked to speak at the NASF Salmon Summit in Reykjavik, Iceland on 16 and 17 March 2023. She also took the opportunity to meet with representatives of the Icelandic Government to discuss Iceland's return to NASCO. The Icelandic Minister of Food, Agriculture and Fisheries, Svandís Svavarsdóttir, used the occasion of the Salmon Summit to announce that Iceland would be taking all the necessary steps to become a full member of NASCO in 2024.

Header photo: 'Beautiful lady' by Pekka Tuuri.



Emma Hatfield speaking at the NASF Salmon Summit in Iceland, March 2023

Discovering the Forth, 4 April 2023

The former Assistant Secretary attended the Forth Rivers Trust Conference, entitled 'Discovering the Forth' on 4 April 2023. This was the Trust's first conference dedicated to catchment restoration, environmental science and the communities that live along the rivers in the Forth catchment.

SMOLTrack Meeting, 27 – 30 June 2023

The former Assistant Secretary attended a meeting held in Portugal of the scientists behind the SMOLTrack projects. These projects are funded by the EU, through NASCO, and are unveiling the survival rate of Atlantic Salmon smolts during their migration through streams, estuaries and fjords, and back.



Meeting of the scientists behind the SMOLTrack projects in Portugal, June 2023

Salmon and Men 3 Conference, 19 October 2023

The Secretary made a virtual presentation giving an overview of the current status of salmon stocks across the North Atlantic and the work of NASCO at this conference organised by the European Rivers Network and SOS Loire Vivante. The conference was attended by over 100 people from seven countries.

Meta-Organizations' Role within the Field of Ocean Governance Interview, 30 January 2024

The Secretary took part in an on-line research interview with Kurt Rachlitz, a PhD candidate at the Norwegian University of Science and Technology. The purpose of the research project is to analyse organizations making the ocean an object of concern and the data gathered will be used for academic articles, teaching purposes and giving feedback to the involved organizations. No feedback has been received at the time of writing.

NEAFC / OSPAR Collective Arrangement Meeting, 21 & 22 February 2024

The Collective Arrangement is a formal agreement between legally competent authorities managing human activities in the Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction (ABNJ) in the North-East Atlantic. Its essential aim is to become a collective and multilateral forum composed of all competent entities addressing the management of human activities in this region.

The Secretary attended its seventh meeting in London, at the NEAFC HQ, as an observer and in line with discussions in WGFON for NASCO to foster and improve collaboration with other IGOs and other relevant entities.

Liaison with other RFMOs

The Secretary has remained in close contact with other RFMOs, including NAFO, NEAFC, NPAFC, ICCAT, CCAMLR, PSC, SPRFMO and IWC. The Secretariats of these organizations share information on matters such as staff rules, financial rules and other administrative aspects of running RFMOs. This has allowed NASCO to learn from other RFMOs to improve practices and allowed other RFMOs to learn from NASCO.

UN-related Activities, including the FAO

The Secretariat contributed to the report of the Secretary-General on Oceans and the Law of the Sea, as mandated by United Nations General Assembly Resolution 77/248 of 30 December 2022.

Coming Up

A Brief Look at the Major Issues Coming Up in the Next 12 months

The Forty-First Annual Meeting of NASCO

The Forty-First Annual Meeting will be held in Westport, Ireland during 3 – 7 June 2024, with some delegates joining virtually. There will once again be a very busy schedule this year, with important decisions to be made on the future of NASCO, a Theme-based Special Session on Pink Salmon and a Special Session on the IPs and APRs! Not to be outdone, the Board will also be considering a potential future flagship programme of research.

Preparations for the Fourth Reporting Cycle

As the third reporting cycle has been extended by one year, the fourth cycle will now begin in 2026. Once it has considered the work of the WGFON, Council will need to make decisions on the process for the fourth reporting cycle.

The Future of NASCO

At its 41st Annual Meeting, Council will consider a Draft Strategy and Draft Action Plan for the Future of NASCO. The Working Group on the Future of NASCO has put a huge amount of effort into creating these documents and it will be exciting to see how this develops at the Annual Meeting and beyond.

Recruitment of a New Secretary

The current Secretary's contract will end in 2025 and, under the terms of the contract, cannot be extended. NASCO will need, therefore, to start the recruitment process for a new Secretary.



NASCO News 2024

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Cover photo: 'Under Yellow Foliage' – Pekka Tuuri.