



Forty-First Annual Meeting of the North American Commission

Knockranny House Hotel & Spa, Westport, Ireland

3 – 7 June 2024

Annotated Agenda

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

Papers for the meeting are on the [website](#).

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. There were questions in relation to Agenda items 6. and 7. These can be found under those Agenda items.

A summary of the decisions before the Commission is contained in Annex 1.

Timings of the Meeting (Westport local time)

The Commission will meet on:

- Tuesday 4 June: 13:30 – 15:00 hrs
- Thursday 6 June: 14:00 – 15:00 hrs

Order of Business

Business will be taken in the order on the Draft Agenda.

1. Opening of the Meeting

The Chair, Isabelle Morisset (Canada), will open the meeting.

Members of the Commission and NGOs may make verbal Opening Statements, as is usual in years when new regulatory measures are negotiated. It would be helpful if the written versions of any 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

A Provisional Agenda, [NAC\(24\)01](#), was issued on 16 February 2024. No supplementary items were proposed by the Parties. The Draft Agenda, [NAC\(24\)02](#), was issued on 5 April.

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

3. **Nomination of a Rapporteur**

- *the Commission may wish to nominate a Rapporteur.*

4. **Report of the ICES Advisory Committee on Salmon Stocks in the Commission Area**

In 2022 the Council agreed that full ICES Advice should be presented in Council only in future, [CNL\(22\)53](#). Therefore, there will be no presentation of ICES advice during the Commission meeting.

However, Article 9 of the Convention states that ‘*In exercising the functions set out in articles 7 and 8, a Commission shall take into account: the best available information, including advice from the International Council for the Exploration of the Sea and other appropriate scientific organizations...*’

This agenda item allows for questions and comment on the ICES Advice, if required. The Chair of the Working Group on North Atlantic Salmon (WGNAS), Alan Walker (UK), will be available to answer questions, if required.

- *no decision is required.*

The following papers are available:

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

5. **Mixed-Stock Fisheries Conducted by Members of the Commission**

This is essential business under Articles 7 and 15 of the Convention. Article 7 states that ‘*The functions of the North American Commission with regard to its area shall be: (a) to provide a forum for consultation and co-operation between the members: (i) on matters related to minimizing catches in the area of fisheries jurisdiction of one member of salmon originating in the rivers of another Party...*’

Additionally, under the Council’s ‘Action Plan for taking forward the recommendations of the External Performance Review and the review of the ‘Next Steps’ for NASCO’, [CNL\(13\)38](#), it was agreed that there should be an agenda item in each of the Commissions to allow for a focus on mixed-stock fisheries.

In 2022, [NAC\(22\)11](#), the Commission agreed that the Agenda items ‘Mixed-Stock Fisheries Conducted by Members of the Commission’ and ‘Sampling in the Labrador Fishery’, previously taken separately, would be consolidated into one item given how closely related they are.

Each member of the Commission with mixed-stock fisheries (MSF) has been requested to provide the Secretariat with a short paper which includes a brief description of any MSFs still operating, the most recent catch data, a description of sampling programmes in these MSFs and any changes or developments in their management. There are no directed wild Atlantic salmon fisheries in the United States, so no report will be provided under this Agenda item by the United States.

- *no decision is required.*

The following paper is available:

- Labrador Subsistence Food Fisheries – Mixed Stock Fisheries Context, [NAC\(24\)03](#).

6. 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.

In 2023, the Council again agreed to write to France (in respect of St Pierre and Miquelon), to invite them to join NASCO. The [Letter from the President of NASCO](#) to the Secretary of State of the Sea was sent on 20 March 2024. No response had been received at the time of writing.

In advance of the Annual Meeting, Canada submitted the following questions to France (in respect of St Pierre and Miquelon). A response will be sought during the meeting and included in the Meeting Report: ‘

- *Canada is pleased with the reduction in professional harvest and the actions that St Pierre and Miquelon has taken to increase the number of inspections in 2023. However, we are disappointed that recreational catch has increased once again despite a welcome reduction in 2022, and the establishment of various voluntary measures over the last few years. Canada would be grateful if France (in respect of St Pierre and Miquelon) could respond to the following questions pertaining to their 2023 fishery report.*
 - *We would like to reiterate our question on whether SPM has plans to reduce the number of recreational permits/licenses issued to recreational fishers.*
 - *SPM's 2022 fishery report indicated that four professional permits were issued in 2022, whereas six permits were issued to professional fishers in 2023. At the 2023 NAC meeting, France (in respect of SPM) had indicated that it would not reallocate professional licences when the current holder no longer fished professionally. Are professional licences renewed annually? If so, why were two additional professional licences issued in 2023?*
 - *On page 12 the report reads: “voluntarily restricting the fishing season to 1 May – 21 July each year, despite the regulations allowing the fishery to be open from 1 May – 31 July”. How is this a voluntary measure when the regulatory framework establishes that the fishery season is restricted to 1 May – 21 July (page 8)?*
 - *Could France (in respect of SPM) please provide more information on the types of at-sea inspections that the new monitoring vessel (the KILDA) will be conducting, starting in 2024?*
 - *Last year France indicated that there was a voluntary pilot project to replace net fishing by trolling for recreational fishers. Could France indicate the results of this project and plans to phase out net fishing for recreational fishers?’*
- ***no decision is required.***

The following paper is available:

- Report from St Pierre and Miquelon on Management and Sampling of the St Pierre and Miquelon Salmon Fishery 2022, [CNL\(24\)22](#).

7. Salmonid Introductions and Transfers

Under Article 7 of the Convention, the Williamsburg Resolution, and the NAC protocols, Members of the Commission must report on salmonid introductions and transfers. In 2010, it was agreed that the Parties should provide focused annual reports to the Commission on issues of mutual concern including salmonid disease incidences, breaches of containment, introductions from outside the Commission area and transgenics.

Prior to the NAC Annual Meeting, Canada and the United States shared reports and held an informal bilateral meeting. This enabled the reports to be reviewed and questions to be asked and responded to.

In advance of the Annual Meeting, Canada submitted the following questions to the United States. A response will be sought during the meeting and included in the Meeting Report: ‘

1. *Is there any monitoring / detection of aquaculture escapes in rivers in the US? If so, could this be reflected in the NAC report as well (as Canada is currently doing)?*
2. *Are there any potential flood risks in the inland ponds and lakes where the majority of fish are stocked in the Commission area?*
3. *What is the genetic strain of the eggs from Riverence, WA? Are they diploid or triploid? Is the purpose for land-based or marine net-pen aquaculture production?’*

In advance of the Annual Meeting, the United States submitted the following questions to Canada. A response will be sought during the meeting and included in the Meeting Report: ‘

1. *In Section 3 – Summary of Salmonid introductions from outside the Commission Area – the disposition states that all these fish are in land-based facilities.*
 - a. *Is land-based facilities just their initial disposition or do they remain in land-based facilities from egg to harvest?*
 - b. *We also noted that over 10 million European triploid salmon were being brought in. Are all these being grown out to maturity in land-based facilities?*
2. *The Addendum noted 65 documented escapees in the Magaguadavic River (Table 1). Based on the U.S. experience with escape events, this appears to be a fairly high number of aquaculture origin fish entering the river relative to the number of escapes being reported.*
 - a. *Does Canada have any insights as to why this might be?*
 - b. *Is there any way to track the escapes back to the farm of origin, or relate it back to a known escape event?*
3. *In the section of the report on the numbers of escapes, in future reports, the U.S would be interested in information on the life stages of the escaped fish.’*

- ***no decision is required.***

The following papers are available:

- Annual Report (Tabled by Canada), [NAC\(24\)04rev](#); and
- Annual Report (Tabled by the United States), [NAC\(24\)05](#).

8. **Announcement of the Tag Return Incentive Scheme 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 winner will be announced at the Meeting and will be recorded in the Meeting Report.

- *no decision is required.*

9. **Recommendations to the Council on the Request to ICES for Scientific Advice**

This item is required under Article 9 of the Convention which requires a Commission to take into account the best scientific evidence. Advice is provided annually under the ICES / NASCO Memorandum of Understanding.

In 1992, the Council established a Standing Scientific Committee (SSC) to assist the Council and Commissions in formulating their questions to ICES. During the Annual Meeting, the SSC will meet to develop a Draft Request for Scientific Advice from ICES for consideration by the Commissions and the Council. 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 Commissions and the Council.

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

- *the Commission will be asked to consider the relevant section of the SSC's recommendation, although it may wish to defer the decision to the Council.*

The following paper may be available:

- Draft Request for Scientific Advice from ICES

10. **Election of Officers**

The election of officers is required under Rule 11 of the Rules of Procedure for the NAC.

The current Chair, Isabelle Morisset (Canada) is not available for re-election. The current Vice-Chair, Patrick Keliher (USA), is both eligible and available for re-election.

No background papers are produced for this item.

Work to seek candidates and Parties' support has been conducted by the Secretary.

The Secretary will introduce this item and will ask for nominations and seconds for the Chair and Vice Chair, respectively.

- *the Commission may wish to elect a Chair and elect / re-elect a Vice-Chair.*

11. Other Business

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

12. Date and Place of the Next Meeting

The Commission will be asked to confirm the date and venue for its next Annual Meeting. It is usual practice for the Commission to meet during the Annual Meeting of the Council of NASCO, and in the same location.

The dates and location for the Forty-Second Annual Meeting of the Council will be considered during the 2024 Annual Meeting of the Council.

- *the Commission may wish to agree to hold its next Annual Meeting in conjunction with the Forty-Second Annual Meeting of the Council.*

13. Report of the Meeting

Rule 29 of the Rules of Procedure for the NAC requires that ‘A draft report shall be considered by the Commission before the end of the meeting.’

A Draft Report of the Meeting will be circulated for review.

- *the Commission may wish to adopt the Report of the Meeting.*

14. Close of the Meeting

The Chair will close the Annual Meeting of the North American Commission.

Secretariat
Edinburgh
24 May 2024

Summary of Commission Decisions

Agenda Item	Decision	Paper No.
2. Adoption of the Agenda	Adopt the Agenda	NAC(24)02
3. Nomination of a Rapporteur	Nominate a Rapporteur	
9. Recommendations to the Council on the Request to ICES for Scientific Advice	Consider the relevant section of the SSC's recommendation, or defer the decision to the Council.	Paper issued at the meeting
10. Election of Officers	Elect a Chair and elect / re-elect a Vice-Chair	
12. Date and Place of the Next Meeting	Agree to hold its next Annual Meeting in conjunction with the Forty-Second Annual Meeting of the Council.	
13. Report of the Meeting	Adopt the Report of the Meeting	Issued at the meeting