



Council

Press Release

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Press Release

North Atlantic Salmon Conservation Organization (NASCO)
Forty First Annual Meeting,
Westport, County Mayo, Ireland
3 – 7 June 2024

Setting the Stage for Atlantic Salmon Over the Next Ten Years

NASCO to Empower Indigenous Peoples in its Work

Westport, 7 June 2024. The North Atlantic Salmon Conservation Organization (NASCO) convened for its Forty-First Annual Meeting, making significant strides in key priority areas aimed at the conservation and sustainable management of wild Atlantic salmon.

NASCO began the meeting by welcoming its newest Party, Iceland, who re-acceded to the Convention on 23 January 2024.

Upon unanimously supporting NASCO's ten-year Strategy in response to the Organization's third performance review in 2023, the Council undertook to prioritise actions to be initiated immediately, and over the next ten years, to ensure a robust commitment to the conservation and restoration of wild Atlantic salmon. These focus on three key pressures: management of salmon fisheries; protection and restoration of Atlantic salmon habitat; and management of aquaculture, introductions and transfers and transgenics – all exacerbated by the climate crisis. The President said:

'I believe that NASCO is about to enter a transformative period where the Parties / jurisdictions have committed to taking urgent action to achieve our ten-year Strategic Goal to slow the decline of wild Atlantic salmon populations and demonstrate that restoration is possible'.

Top priorities identified by Council included prioritising and agreeing a schedule for completing the review and update of NASCO's Resolutions, Agreements and Guidelines, undertaking Party-specific analyses of key stressors to wild Atlantic salmon, and launching the Wild Atlantic Salmon Atlas (WASA).

NASCO welcomed the adoption of revised observer rules, aimed at enhancing the participation of Indigenous peoples in the Organization's proceedings. As the first regional fisheries management organization to develop an accreditation procedure specifically for Indigenous Peoples' representatives and institutions, these new rules allow Indigenous Peoples across the North Atlantic to participate in NASCO meetings, including Council, Commissions, and subsidiary bodies, marking a significant step towards inclusivity and representation within the Organization.

The North-East Atlantic Commission agreed a two-year Decision Regarding the Salmon Fishery in Faroese Waters in 2024 / 2025 and 2025 / 2026. This ensures the continuation of no fishing for Atlantic salmon in the waters around the Faroe Islands.

The West Greenland Commission decided to maintain the multi-annual regulatory measure applying to the West Greenland fishery in its current form for 2024. However, a commitment

was made to reassess the measure's effectiveness in 2025, with the possibility of revisions based on the performance of the 2024 fishery.

A Theme-based Special Session was held to provide an overview of pink salmon's distribution, biology, potential impacts on native Atlantic salmon and management actions in the North Atlantic. A series of presentations provided NASCO with an overview of pink salmon's distribution, biology, potential impacts on native Atlantic salmon and management actions in the North Atlantic.

France (in respect of St Pierre et Miquelon) also attended NASCO as an observer, at which it highlighted the recent signing of a Charter committing recreational fishers to adhere to the regulations to ensure the longevity of Atlantic salmon. France (in respect of St Pierre et Miquelon) conducts a fishery that harvests wild Atlantic salmon originating from the rivers of NASCO Parties. NASCO has urged France (in respect of St Pierre et Miquelon) to join the Organization for many years in light of its ongoing fishing interests, and did so again in 2024. To-date, France (in respect of St Pierre et Miquelon) has declined the invitation, but it is taking steps to ensure transparency in the fishery and conduct sufficient sampling.

The Forty Second Annual Meeting of NASCO will be held in the United Kingdom from 2-5 June 2025.

Notes for Editors:

NASCO is an intergovernmental organization formed by a treaty in 1984 and is based in Edinburgh, Scotland. Its objectives are to promote the conservation, enhancement, restoration and rational management of wild Atlantic salmon stocks, which do not recognise national boundaries. It is the only inter-governmental organization with this mandate which it implements through international consultation, negotiation, and co-operation.

The Parties to the Convention are: 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. There are 47 non-governmental observers accredited to the Organization.

The 2024 Annual Meeting was convened in a hybrid format, with 97 participants joining in-person and 27 joining remotely. The participants included scientists, policy makers and representatives of inter-governmental organizations and non-governmental organizations who met to discuss the status of wild Atlantic salmon and to consider management issues.

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