

Agenda item 2  
For information

**Council**

**CNL(04)2**

*Explanatory Memorandum on the Agenda*

**Note:** A summary of all the decisions before the Council will be presented in document CNL(04)27.

## CNL(04)2

### *Explanatory Memorandum on the Agenda*

#### **1. Opening Session**

The Opening Session is open to the Public. The President will make a statement on behalf of the Organization and wishes to encourage an Opening Statement by each Party. Subject to a time limit, the President will invite statements from any Inter-Government Organizations present and from the nominated representatives of Non-Government Organizations.

#### **2. Adoption of Agenda**

In accordance with the Rules of Procedure, and following consultation with the President, a Provisional Agenda (CNL(04)1) is submitted herewith. The Parties may propose supplementary items by informing the Secretary. A Draft Agenda (CNL(04)3), including any supplementary items, will be circulated before the meeting. The Council will be asked to adopt an Agenda. A Draft Schedule of Meetings (CNL(04)4) is submitted herewith.

#### **3. Election of Officers**

In accordance with its Rules of Procedure, the Council will be asked to elect a President and Vice-President (CNL(04)5). The President (Mr Jacque Robichaud, Canada), having served for four years, is not eligible for re-election. The Vice-President (Mr Ole Tougaard, European Union), having served for two years, is eligible for re-election.

#### **4. Administrative Issues**

##### **4.1 Secretary's Report**

The Secretary will report to the Council on a number of procedural, administrative, financial and other matters (CNL(04)6).

##### **4.2 Report of the Finance and Administration Committee**

The Chairman of the Finance and Administration Committee will present a report of the Committee's meeting to the Council (CNL(04)7). The Council will be asked to:

- adopt the 2005 budget;
- accept the audited accounts for 2003;
- approve the appointment of auditors for the 2004 accounts;
- adopt the report of the Finance and Administration Committee;
- take such other actions as it may consider appropriate.

##### **4.3 Report on the Activities of the Organization**

The Council will be asked to adopt, under Article 5, paragraph 6, of the Convention, a report on its activities in 2003 (CNL(04)8). This report is not intended for publication.

#### **4.4 Announcement of the Tag Return Incentive Scheme Grand Prize**

The President will announce the winner of the Grand Prize of \$2,500. The winners of the Commission prizes of \$1,500 will be announced in each of the Commissions by the Chairman.

### **5. Scientific, Technical, Legal and Other Information**

#### **5.1 Scientific Advice from ICES**

The Report of the Advisory Committee on Fishery Management (ACFM) (CNL(04)9) will be circulated and will be briefly introduced at the meeting by a representative of ICES. The detailed advice will be considered by the Commissions separately at their meetings. ICES will be requested to make the report of the Working Group on North Atlantic Salmon available to NASCO delegates on the ICES web site.

#### **5.2 Catch Statistics and their Analysis**

The Secretary will present the catch statistics for 2003 as provided to the Organization by the Parties (CNL(04)10). These data will be used in the calculation of the Schedule of Contributions by the Parties for 2005. The updated historical catch record will be presented for information (CNL(04)11).

#### **5.3 Scientific Research Fishing in the Convention Area**

In 1996, the Council unanimously adopted a Resolution on Scientific Research Fishing. The Secretary will advise the Council of any requests to conduct research fishing since the last Annual Meeting. The President will invite any Party conducting research fishing in the last year to present a brief report on their activities.

#### **5.4 Report of the International Atlantic Salmon Research Board**

At its Eighteenth Annual Meeting the Council established an International Atlantic Salmon Research Board to direct and coordinate a research programme to identify and explain the causes of the increased marine mortality of Atlantic salmon and to examine the possibilities to counteract the mortality. The Board has previously established, and is maintaining, an inventory of research on mortality of salmon at sea and has taken steps to improve coordination of research. Last year the Council supported the Board's proposed approach to fund-raising, although it was recognised that such activities would normally require specialist skills, that large sums could probably not be raised in the short term, and that the success of these initiatives would be highly dependent on the support of the Parties. A report on the Board's progress will be presented (CNL(04)12).

#### **5.5 Report of the Standing Scientific Committee**

The recommendations of the Standing Scientific Committee concerning the request to ICES for scientific advice will be presented by the Chairman of the Committee (CNL(04)13). The Council will be asked to adopt a request for scientific advice from ICES.

## **6. Conservation, Restoration, Enhancement and Rational Management of Atlantic Salmon under the Precautionary Approach**

At its Fifteenth Annual Meeting NASCO and its Contracting Parties agreed to adopt and apply a Precautionary Approach to the conservation, management and exploitation of Atlantic salmon in order to protect the resource and preserve the environments in which it lives. Under the Action Plan for Application of the Precautionary Approach to Salmon Management, adopted by the Council in 1999, a Standing Committee on the Precautionary Approach (SCPA) was established.

### **6.1 Measures Taken in Accordance with Articles 14 and 15 of the Convention**

A summary of the returns made by the Parties under Articles 14 and 15 of the Convention will be presented to the Council (CNL(04)14).

### **6.2 Application of the Decision Structure for Management of North Atlantic Salmon Fisheries**

In 2002 the Council adopted a revised Decision Structure which took into account the initial experiences of the Parties in applying an earlier Decision Structure adopted on a provisional basis in 2000. It was agreed that the revised Decision Structure should be widely applied by managers in collaboration with stakeholders and that the Parties should report back to the Council on an annual basis on their progress and experiences in applying it and on the extent of its implementation. Initial returns were made by the Parties in 2003 and a new reporting format was agreed. A report on the returns made using this new format will be presented (CNL(04)15). The President will invite each Party to present a verbal report to the Council.

### **6.3 Development and Implementation of Habitat Protection and Restoration Plans**

#### *(a) Returns by the Parties*

At its Eighteenth Annual Meeting the Council adopted a Plan of Action for Application of the Precautionary Approach to the Protection and Restoration of Atlantic Salmon Habitat. The objective of this Plan of Action is to maintain and, where possible, increase the current productive capacity of Atlantic salmon habitat through the establishment and implementation by the Contracting Parties of comprehensive salmon habitat protection and restoration plans. In order to measure and improve progress towards this objective the Action Plan proposes the establishment of inventories of salmon rivers. A reporting format developed by the Secretariat was used last year, on a trial basis, for the first reports by the Parties on progress in developing and implementing their habitat plans and on the establishment of inventories. The Council agreed this reporting format and a report on actions taken by the Parties since last year will be presented (CNL(04)16). The President will invite each Party to present a verbal report to the Council.

(b) *Database of Salmon Rivers*

Last year the representative of the US presented an overview of the NASCO Atlantic Salmon Rivers and Habitats Database project. The US had begun the development of a database to hold the US salmon river inventory information. The Council agreed to establish a Working Group to work by correspondence to further develop this database structure and consider its possible use by NASCO. A report on progress will be presented (CNL(04)17).

6.4 **Aquaculture, Introductions and Transfers, and Transgenics**

(a) *The Williamsburg Resolution*

In adopting the Williamsburg Resolution at its Twentieth Annual Meeting the Council had recognised that it would evolve in future in the light of experience with its implementation; consultations; improved scientific understanding of the impacts of aquaculture, introductions and transfers and transgenics on the wild stocks and developments in measures to minimise them. In particular the Council asked that work be undertaken inter-sessionally to further refine the Guidelines for Stocking Atlantic Salmon (Annex 4 of the Resolution), and on the Definitions and Guidelines for Action on Transgenic Salmon (Annexes 1 and 5 of the Resolution respectively). A report on progress will be presented (CNL(04)18).

(b) *Returns made in accordance with the Williamsburg Resolution*

The Williamsburg Resolution consolidated NASCO's five existing agreements into one new umbrella Resolution and included new elements on: burden of proof; risk assessment; mitigation and corrective measures; implementation; and reporting. Guidelines for stocking Atlantic salmon were also included. A new reporting format for return of information under the Williamsburg Resolution has been developed by the Secretariat and will be used on a trial basis for the 2003 returns. A report on these returns will be presented (CNL(04)19). The President will invite each Party to present a verbal report to the Council.

(c) *Liaison with the Salmon Farming Industry*

A report on the Fifth Liaison Group Meeting of NASCO and the North Atlantic salmon farming industry, to be held on March 17 2004, will be presented (CNL(04)20). One of the recommendations of the SALCOOP Project presented to the Council last year was that a Workshop be held in conjunction with the Liaison Group meeting focusing on area management initiatives, restoration programmes and the pros and cons of using sterile salmon in salmon farming. The industry has requested that further consideration be given to arrangements for this Workshop at the fifth Liaison Meeting.

6.5 **Unreported Catches**

The Secretary will introduce a report summarising the annual returns by the Parties in relation to unreported catches (CNL(04)21).

## **6.6 By-catch of Atlantic Salmon**

The Council is concerned about the potential level of by-catch of salmon post-smolts in pelagic fisheries for mackerel in the North-East Atlantic Commission area. The advice from ICES in relation to by-catch will be presented. Last year the Council decided that, consistent with the Precautionary Approach, it would encourage and seek appropriate funding for research on the distribution of salmon at sea, on the spatial and temporal overlap between salmon at sea and pelagic fisheries, on the vertical distribution and behaviour of salmon in the feeding areas, and on the by-catch of salmon in pelagic fisheries, and encourage pilot studies on technical adjustments to the deployment of gear in pelagic fisheries so as to minimise by-catch. The results of this research will be reviewed at the Council's 2005 Annual Meeting but the President will invite the Parties to report on any developments in relation to by-catch.

## **6.7 Development of Guidelines on Stock Rebuilding Programmes**

A stock rebuilding programme has been defined by the Council as an array of management measures including habitat improvement, exploitation control and stocking, designed to restore a stock above its conservation limit. These management measures are being addressed by the Council in application of the Precautionary Approach. However, the Council agreed that it would be useful to develop guidelines for stock rebuilding programmes and last year preliminary guidelines were adopted. It was agreed that these guidelines should be further refined, through correspondence or, if necessary, at an inter-sessional meeting. A report on progress will be presented (CNL(04)22).

## **6.8 Report of the Technical Workshop on Development of a Decision Structure for Incorporating Social and Economic Values in Application of the Precautionary Approach**

The SCPA has previously recognised that the full social and economic values of wild Atlantic salmon are unknown, that there is a need to include social and economic factors in management decisions under a Precautionary Approach without negating its effectiveness, and that consideration of social and economic factors may be complementary to conservation and management objectives. The Council had asked that, as an initial step, an inventory of social and economic values and an internationally agreed framework or template for assessing social and economic values of the wild Atlantic salmon be developed by a Technical Workshop, the report of which was presented to the Council last year. The Council then asked that case studies on how social and economic factors are incorporated into decisions under a Precautionary Approach be provided by the Parties so as to form the basis of a desk study to develop standard methodologies. The results of this study will be reviewed by a further Technical Workshop which has also been asked to develop a Decision Structure for incorporating social and economic factors into management decisions under a Precautionary Approach. A report of the Workshop, to be held in New Orleans during 23-26 March 2004, will be presented (CNL(04)23).

## **6.9 Future Actions in relation to Application of the Precautionary Approach**

The Council will be asked to consider possible future actions in relation to the Precautionary Approach. A brief paper summarising possible actions will be presented (CNL(04)24).

## **7. Predator-related Mortality**

Last year the Council agreed that as a first step in addressing this issue it would gather together available information on this subject so that a compendium could be prepared for the 2004 meeting. Each Party was asked to name a coordinator for this work. A report on the returns from the Parties will be presented (CNL(04)25).

## **8. St Pierre and Miquelon Salmon Fisheries**

In recent years the North American Commission and the Council have become increasingly concerned about catches at St Pierre and Miquelon which, although low, have been increasing at a time when there are serious worries about the abundance of North American stocks and when restrictions are being introduced all around the North-West Atlantic. In 2002 the Council adopted a Resolution Concerning Cooperation with St Pierre and Miquelon which urged the Contracting Parties to encourage France (in respect of St Pierre and Miquelon) to cooperate with NASCO and its Contracting Parties in instituting a scientific sampling programme in 2003. Last year the Council welcomed a positive response from France (in respect of St Pierre and Miquelon) indicating France's intention to implement the sampling programme in 2003. A report on progress will be presented (CNL(04)26).

## **9. Reports on the Work of the Three Regional Commissions**

The President will ask the Chairman of each of the regional Commissions of NASCO to report to the Council on the work of their Commission.

## **10. Other Business**

Any other business may be raised.

## **11. Date and Place of Next Meeting**

The Council has agreed to hold its Twenty-Second Annual Meeting during 6-10 June 2005 either in Edinburgh or elsewhere at the invitation of a Party.

The proposal will be made that the Twenty-Third Annual Meeting be held during 5-9 June 2006 either in Edinburgh or elsewhere at the invitation of a Party.

## **12. Report of the Meeting**

A draft report of the meeting will be circulated for the approval of the Council.

## **13. Press Release**

A draft Press Release will be prepared for consideration by the Council.

Secretary  
Edinburgh  
15 January, 2004