CNL(02)15

Returns under Articles 14 and 15 of the Convention

The request for the return of information required under the NASCO Convention and relevant to the period 1 January - 31 December 2001 was circulated on 4 January 2002. All Parties were requested to make a return even if there had been no changes since the last notification. Where changes have been notified under Article 15, and the laws, regulations and programmes concerned have been lodged with the Secretariat, the information will be incorporated into the Laws, Regulations and Programmes database. Copies of the detailed submissions are available from the Secretariat. A summary of the new actions taken under Articles 14 and 15 of the Convention is attached. At the time of preparation of this paper, information has not been received from all EU Member States which have salmon interests. No information is available for France, Portugal and Spain.

Secretary Edinburgh 3 May, 2002

Returns under Article 14 of the Convention

1. Actions Taken To Make Effective The Provisions Of The Convention (Article 14, Paragraph 1)

1.1 The prohibition of fishing for salmon beyond 12* nautical miles from the baselines from which the breadth of the territorial sea is measured. (Article 2, paragraph 2)

* Area of fisheries jurisdiction of the Faroe Islands

Norway

Information on sightings is reported directly to NASCO from the Norwegian Coast Guard Squadron North.

Other Parties

No actions reported by the other Parties.

1.2 Inviting the attention of States not party to the Convention to any matter relating to the activities of the vessels of that State which appears to affect adversely the salmon stocks subject to the Convention. (Article 2, paragraph 3)

Canada

In discussions between Canada and France concerning mutual fishing relations, Canada has continued to voice its concern and those of NASCO regarding the state of the Atlantic salmon stocks, emphasising the negative impact of interception catches (St Pierre and Miquelon) on the rebuilding of salmon stocks in Canadian and US rivers. Further to these discussions, Canada is awaiting France's response to a request to allow sampling of the salmon caught by St Pierre and Miquelon fishermen. Such sampling would provide an indication of the area of origin of the salmon caught.

USA

In 2001, the US attempted to discuss the potential for sampling the Atlantic salmon catch at St Pierre and Miquelon. These discussions were halted when the NASCO Council agreed to have the President and Secretary approach France on this issue.

Other Parties

No actions reported by the other Parties.

^{* 40} nautical miles at West Greenland

1.3 Measures to minimise the by-catches of salmon originating in the rivers of the other member. (Article 7, paragraph 2) [North American Commission members only]

No actions reported by either Party.

1.4 Alteration in fishing patterns in a manner which results in the initiation of fishing or increase in catches of salmon originating in the rivers of another Party, except with the consent of the latter. *(Article 7, paragraph 3)* [North American Commission members only]

No actions reported by either Party.

2. Actions Taken To Implement Regulatory Measures Under Article 13 (Article 14, Paragraph 1)

No actions reported by any Party.

Returns under Article 15 of the Convention

3. Laws, Regulations And Programmes Adopted Or Repealed Since The Last Notification (Article 15, Paragraph 5(a))

Canada

The province of Quebec introduced a catch and release-only licence in 2001.

Denmark (Faroe Islands and Greenland)

Faroe Islands

No changes reported.

Greenland

The Greenland Home Rule Executive Order No. 29 of 8 August 2001 on Salmon Fishing implemented the new *Ad hoc* Management Programme for the 2001 Fishery at West Greenland, agreed at the Annual Meeting of NASCO in June 2001 (WGC(01)16). The new Executive Order introduced the elements of harvest periods, sub-quotas for each harvest period, short periods of notification to the fishermen on the quota coming into force for the next harvest period, etc.

European Union

Ireland

Statutory Instrument No. 256 of 2000, Carcass Tagging and Logbook Scheme for 2001. Under this instrument all salmon fishermen (commercial and recreational) must apply a coded carcass tag to each salmon caught and provide details of landings and subsequent disposal (sale, storage etc.) in official logbooks. The scheme was introduced for 2001.

Sweden

New regulations regarding the salmon fishery were implemented from 1 July 2001 (FIFS 2001:9). The coastal salmon fishery opens on 31 March (previously the last day in February) and closes on 1 October (previously 15 September). The minimum legal length of salmon in coastal and river fisheries was reduced from 50 to 45 cm. Angling in the River Rönneå is now open until 15 October. Additional restrictions have been implemented on the net fishery in the Rolfsån regarding time of the fishery, net length and depth and net mesh size.

United Kingdom

In England and Wales, the River Tavy (SW Region) Net Limitation Order (NLO) reduced the number of seine nets from 5 to 1.

In Northern Ireland, Fisheries Tagging and Log Book Byelaws and Regulations were introduced on 14 May 2001 in both the Fisheries Conservancy Board (FCB) and Foyle, Carlingford and Irish Lights Commission (FCILC) areas of jurisdiction. Regulations were introduced in the FCB area to reduce angling effort which set bag limits and introduced catch and release for spring salmon. In the FCILC area a bag limit was introduced.

In Scotland, the Salmon Conservation (Scotland) Act 2001 came into force on 15 April 2001. As a result new sections were incorporated in the Salmon Act 1986 to make further provision about the conservation of salmon and sea trout in Scotland. It increases the range of measures that can be introduced for the purposes of management and conservation by the Scottish Ministers, either upon application to them by appropriate parties or otherwise. The Western Isles Salmon Fishery District Designation Order 2001 created a Salmon Fishery District extending over the whole of the islands and islets known as the Western Isles or Outer Hebrides. The districts in force prior to this Order were abolished, having been superseded by the new district.

Iceland

A revised aquaculture section of the Salmonid Fisheries Act was passed by the Icelandic Parliament in June 2001, which increased the licensing, regulatory and enforcement responsibilities of the Directorate of Freshwater Fisheries. The relevant section of the Act has not yet been translated into English but will be submitted to the NASCO Secretariat in due course. The details were presented at the Special Liaison Meeting to review measures to minimise impacts of aquaculture on wild stocks held at the Eighteenth Annual Meeting in Mondariz.

Norway

Minor changes to fishing seasons in some fjords in western Norway.

Other Parties

No changes reported by the other Parties or the other EU Member States.

4. Other New Commitments Relating To The Conservation, Restoration, Enhancement And Rational Management Of Salmon Stocks Subject To The Convention (Article 15, paragraph 5(b))

Canada

In the province of Newfoundland and Labrador, retention of large salmon has been prohibited for 2002 in areas affected by construction of the Trans-Canada Highway.

Denmark (Faroe Islands and Greenland)

Faroe Islands

No changes reported.

Greenland

The Annual Meeting of NASCO in June 2001 agreed upon the West Greenland Fishery Sampling Agreement for 2001 (WGC(01)14), containing details of the cooperative contributions of the Parties of the West Greenland Commission to the process of collecting biological data on Atlantic salmon harvested at West Greenland in 2001.

European Union

Ireland

A considerable investment in 22 new fish counters has been made in order to monitor stock status and to establish biological reference points and conservation limits for these and other salmon rivers. There are approximately 135 main stem rivers in Ireland supporting salmon stocks. Significant investments in both time and manpower have been made to develop Geographical Information Systems on major catchments for the evaluation of salmon productivity. This will greatly enhance estimates of the productive capacity of all Irish salmon rivers as an input into establishing appropriate conservation limits.

Sweden

A more comprehensive monitoring programme for *Gyrodactylus salaris* in wild salmon rivers was implemented in 2001.

United Kingdom

In England and Wales, netsmen have received compensation payments (from various sources) not to fish for all or part of the season in the following salmon fisheries: Tavy, Tamar, Lynher, Fowey, Usk, Severn, Avon and Stour, and Cumbrian coastal fisheries. A number of mixed-stock fisheries continue to be phased out. In the largest of these, the North East coast fishery, the number of drift net licences has now fallen to 70, a 51% reduction since the phase-out began in 1993.

In England, in 2000, the UK Government announced that it would be providing up to \pounds 750,000, subject to matching funds from interested parties, to launch compensation arrangements designed to accelerate the phase-out of mixed-stock salmon net fisheries on a voluntary basis. Discussions with fishermen in the English North East coast fishery and with funding bodies have continued through 2001, but to date there has been no agreement on a possible accelerated phase-out.

In Northern Ireland a commercial salmon fisherman's voluntary buy-out scheme has been introduced and will operate in the FCB area of Northern Ireland during 2002. The Salmon Management Plans in the FCB and FCILC areas continue to operate and be developed further. An Angling Development Programme funded out of EU Peace Monies will provide assistance for in-river habitat improvements.

In Scotland, the voluntary practice of catch and release in the rod fishery continues to increase, rising from 32% in 2000 to an estimated 39% in 2001. Salmon netsmen repeated their voluntary deferment of the start of the net fishing season by 6 weeks to conserve early-running stocks. Stocking and habitat enhancement schemes reported previously have been maintained throughout Scotland.

Iceland

A regulatory measure came into effect in early 2001 which prohibits the use of fertile salmon in sea cages in areas close to salmon rivers. The details were presented at the Special Liaison Meeting to review measures to minimise impacts of aquaculture on wild stocks at the Eighteenth Annual Meeting in Mondariz.

Norway

National salmon watercourses and fjords

The political process of establishing National Salmon Watercourses and National Salmon Fjords, in which conservation and sustainable use of the wild salmon stocks is given priority, is still in progress and no final decision has been made by the Government in 2001.

National Working Group for Atlantic Salmon

A National Working Group for Atlantic Salmon, appointed by the Directorate for Nature Management in the autumn of 2000, has continued its work in 2001. The Working Group will report on the status of the stocks to both ICES and to the national authorities.

Liming

In 2001, 20 Atlantic salmon rivers were limed in Norway at an annual cost of NOK 45 million (approximately £3.7 million). Most liming projects started during the period 1991 to 1997. It will still take some years before these salmon stocks are reestablished. The largest liming projects are in three large watercourses in southernmost Norway: Tovdalselva, Mandalselva and Bjerkreimselva. In Tovdalselva and Mandalselva, the natural Atlantic salmon stocks are extinct due to acidification. Before acidification, during the late 1800s, yearly catches of salmon in the rivers Mandalselva and Tovdalselva were as high as 30 and 20 tonnes respectively. In both rivers a restocking programme is being carried out in connection with the liming programme. The catches are increasing in the river Mandalselva and were about 10 tons last year, but the catches are still low in the river Tovdalselva. Bjerkreimselva had a small population of its natural salmon stock before liming and catches increased significantly during the first couple of years after liming started. In 2001 more than 14 tons of salmon were caught in the river Bjerkreimselva, the highest catch ever in this river according to official statistics. Financial constraints meant that no new liming projects were initiated in salmon rivers in 2001.

Gyrodactylus salaris

The salmon parasite *Gyrodactylus salaris* is among the most serious threats to Atlantic salmon (*Salmo salar*) today. The parasite has been recorded in 42 watercourses in Norway and the salmon stocks in these watercourses are highly threatened or have been lost. Eradication measures have, however, reduced the occurrence of the parasite.

The Norwegian strategy to combat G. salaris is based on measures to avoid spreading of the parasite from infected areas to healthy rivers and eradication of the parasite A monitoring programme has been established to provide an where possible. overview of the occurrence of G. salaris in Norwegian watercourses and fish-farming facilities. A monitoring programme designed to provide an early warning system for new occurrences of the parasite is necessary so that measures to contain the damage Monitoring will be concentrated in watercourses that are can be implemented. vulnerable to spreading of the infection. Important criteria for selecting the watercourses to be monitored include location in relation to possible sources of infection, the danger of further spreading of the infection once it occurs, and size and importance as a salmon-carrying watercourse. Any discovery of G. salaris will lead to a number of measures being implemented, depending on the nature of the watercourse.

In addition to the monitoring programme, preventive measures are given a high priority. The most effective measure for reducing the risk of infection through fishing and outdoor activities is to inform the general public about the parasite, the laws and regulations in force, the status of the risk of infection, the risk of contamination and procedures for disinfecting gear. Information posters, leaflets and video films are being made. The problem of *G. salaris* is, moreover, often featured in the media. Establishing facilities for disinfecting fishing gear and equipment used in infected

rivers will be a requirement for permission to operate organized outdoor activities such as fishing and canoeing.

The presence of unregistered fish-farming facilities that move fish between sites poses a considerable risk of spreading G. salaris. Obtaining information on these unregistered fish-farming facilities is a priority. When infection is discovered the fish-farming facility concerned will be sanitized, i.e. it will be emptied of fish, disinfected and not used for a period of time before being restocked.

Parasite-specific chemicals have not as yet been fully developed, but the use of metal ions is showing promising results in tests. At present, however, the only method to eradicate *G. salaris* is to remove its hosts from the watercourse by the use of rotenone. A total of 25 of the 42 infected watercourses in Norway have been treated with rotenone. In 15 of the treated watercourses, the parasite has been eradicated. Two rivers are still being monitored. In eight rivers the parasite has reappeared after treatment.

For the last couple of years, considerable efforts have been made to improve the methods used for rotenone treatment of rivers. These include increased rotenone concentrations, multiple treatments, better planning, new equipment and new methods of application. These improvements have been combined with the use of artificial barriers to migration. These barriers reduce the river stretches that have to be treated with rotenone, reduce the quantity of chemical required and thereby reduce the conflict with other environmental interests. The methodological improvements will increase the probability of successfully eradicating the parasite in the future.

In addition to an increased national effort, steps have occasionally been taken to promote regional cooperation between Sweden, Finland, Russia and Norway to reduce infections with and prevent the spread of G. salaris. The need to strengthen regional cooperation on a political and technical level has been clearly demonstrated by the infection with G. salaris of a rainbow trout farm in Lake Bullaren, Sweden. This lake drains into the Norwegian river Enningdalselven, which has a genetically unique stock of Atlantic salmon. G. salaris was found at this farm in the autumn of 2001. Norway immediately appealed to the Swedish authorities to take action urgently to treat the infected fish and clear the infected farm, and since then has worked actively for implementation of effective measures at the infected farm. These efforts have had no result to date and, according to the Swedish authorities, lack of a legal basis has prevented them from taking the necessary measures to eliminate the parasite. As a result, no measures had been taken by 5 April 2002 and at that time there were still 6 metric tonnes of infected fish in the lake, and the risk of transmission of G. salaris to the wild stock of salmon in the river Enningdalselven was still imminent, almost 6 months after the parasite was detected at the farm. The Swedish authorities have, however, agreed to remove or treat all the remaining fish in the farm by the end of April.

Gene-bank and milt-bank

In the period 1986 - 2001, milt from a total of 6,502 wild salmon from 169 stocks had been frozen in the Norwegian Gene Bank to provide an opportunity to protect stocks from extinction. In 2001, milt from 72 individuals, from 7 different stocks, was frozen. At present 32 characteristic and valuable stocks are being protected in "living gene banks". In 2001 material from 18 stocks was used for re-establishing or enhancing the salmon stocks in their native rivers. Two stocks, one from northern Norway and one from mid-Norway, have been successfully re-established in their native rivers using the gene bank. The stock from mid-Norway has been removed from the gene bank. Norway today operates 3 living gene banks: one in northern Norway, one in mid-Norway and one in south-western Norway.

International research programmes

Cooperation between Norway and Russia on environmental issues, on research and management of Atlantic salmon has continued, especially concerning the Pechora River.

Supervision

In 2001 the total cost of supervision in territorial sea areas and watercourses was NOK 6.5 million (approximately £0.5 million).

USA

Following the listing of the Gulf of Maine distinct population segment of Atlantic salmon as endangered under the US Endangered Species Act, the US is currently in the process of drafting a recovery plan for the species. A team consisting of the US Fish and Wildlife Service, the National Marine Fisheries Service and the Maine Atlantic Salmon Commission is currently in the process of preparing a draft plan. The plan will include recovery criteria and recovery tasks including identification of the responsible entity and costs. The draft plan is expected to be distributed this summer for public review and comment.

Other Parties

No new commitments reported by the other Parties or the other EU Member States.

5. Other Factors Which May Significantly Affect The Abundance Of Salmon Stocks Subject To The Convention (Article 15, Paragraph 5(c))

European Union

Ireland

Catchment management groups have been established in 6 major catchments in Ireland by the Minister for the Marine and Natural Resources. These groups comprise representations from all of the major users of the freshwater resource including agricultural, tourism, state utilities and local councils as well as fishery interests. The process of catchment management is seen as an inclusive process to bring the interests of all user groups to the fore with the intention of allocating and sharing the resource by the local communities and their representatives. Two significant draft net fisheries ceased fishing in 2000 following local financial arrangements negotiated by Catchment Management Groups.

Other Parties

No factors reported by the other Parties or the other EU Member States.

