



Agenda item 5.2(b)  
For decision

**Council**

**CNL(03)16**

***Reports on Progress with Development and Implementation of Habitat  
Protection and Restoration Plans***

## CNL(03)16

### *Reports on Progress with Development and Implementation of Habitat Protection and Restoration Plans*

#### Summary

1. At its 2001 Annual Meeting the Council adopted a NASCO Plan of Action for Application of the Precautionary Approach to the Protection and Restoration of Atlantic Salmon Habitat, CNL(01)51. The overall 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 and their relevant jurisdictions, of comprehensive salmon habitat protection and restoration plans. The Parties agree to report to NASCO on progress towards implementation of their plan on an ongoing basis. In order to measure and improve progress in meeting the objective, the Plan proposes the establishment of inventories of rivers, with regular reports to the Council on these inventories.
2. Last year the Council held a Special Session on habitat protection and restoration. The report of this Special Session is presented separately as document CNL(03)15. The information presented suggested that the loss of freshwater habitat, which had been highly significant over the last 100 years or so, may have stabilized and some lost habitat restored. The Secretary was asked to develop, in consultation with the Parties, a simple reporting format for information in relation to implementation of the Plan of Action for use by the Parties on an annual basis and this format was used on a trial basis for the 2003 returns. The Council will be asked to adopt this format for future returns or take such other actions as it considers appropriate. The information provided by the Parties according to this format is attached. At the time of preparation of this report, no return had been received from Canada, the Faroe Islands or some EU Member States with salmon interests (Denmark, France and Spain).
3. Progress in developing inventories of salmon rivers has been reported by the EU (Ireland, Sweden and the United Kingdom), Norway, Russia and the USA, although these are not necessarily based fully on the structure proposed in the Plan of Action. There has also been progress in establishing habitat protection and restoration plans in the EU (Ireland, Sweden and the United Kingdom), Russia and the USA, with monitoring to assess the effectiveness of the plans.

Secretary  
Edinburgh  
2 May, 2003



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| 1. Has an inventory of rivers, as envisaged in Annex 2 of the NASCO Plan of Action, been established or updated since the last notification? If “yes” please provide a brief description of the inventory or of any changes to an existing inventory. |
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## **European Union**

### ***Ireland***

The current Irish inventory of rivers is being modified in line with NASCO's suggested inventory. There are approximately 190 main stem rivers in Ireland. While 120 support salmonids, approximately 93 contain salmon stocks. The current inventory contains the following information for all of these rivers:

- River number (OS index)
- Region
- River name
- Location (latitude and longitude)
- Brief description
- NASCO category
- Catchment area
- Total length
- Axial length
- Maximum altitude
- Hydrographic characteristics
- Presence of trap or counter
- Conservation limit (provisional)

### ***Sweden***

An inventory of all salmon rivers has existed for several years. It describes the physical characteristics of each salmon river, obstacles to migration, and the size and the quality of rearing habitat for salmonids. The salmon population in each river is described with regard to the present status, need for protection, the extent to which it is dependent on continued liming operations, and other factors such as releases and the fishery. A list briefly summarising the actions to be taken for each river has been developed. This list, as well as the inventory, needs to be revised so as to be more consistent with Annex 2 of the NASCO Plan of Action.

### ***United Kingdom***

#### ***England and Wales***

Various inventories are employed for the management of salmon rivers in England and Wales, for example for the establishment and review of conservation limits in 68 principal salmon rivers. A Geographic Information System (GIS)-based method for estimating the extent and quality of salmon habitat is in development, to be completed during 2004.

### *Northern Ireland*

GIS inventories were updated for rivers in the Foyle and Carlingford area, and in the Bush, Glendun, Maine and Blackwater rivers in the FCB area. These record data on habitat quantity and quality, juvenile fish abundance and adult escapement.

### *Scotland*

Salmon fishery management is devolved to District Salmon Fishery Boards. A number of Fishery Trusts has also been established. Trust biologists and biologists employed by DSFBs have established a series of inventories listing either rivers or habitat problems relevant to their areas of jurisdiction.

### **Norway**

A new categorization system for rivers with salmon has been developed (see document CNL(03)14).

### **Russian Federation**

Compilation of an inventory has been initiated. It now includes the complete information required for 2 rivers and partial information for another 76 rivers.

### **USA**

The US is in the process of developing a salmon river habitat database, using the structure contained in Annex 2 of the NASCO Plan of Action. As agreed by NASCO, the inventory will include river data, salmon production data, habitat impact data and salmon river classification. A database template (in Access software) was reviewed at the US Atlantic Salmon Assessment Committee meeting in February 2003. The Committee identified the need for consistent terminology and definitions. A subgroup with a representative from each salmon watershed has been formed to further refine the database structure.

### **Other Parties**

No progress in establishing inventories of salmon rivers has been reported by the other Parties or the other EU Member States.

2. Has a comprehensive salmon habitat protection and restoration plan been developed in accordance with the aims of the NASCO Plan of Action, or an existing plan updated, since the last notification? If "yes" please provide brief details of the plan and the extent of its implementation or of any changes to an existing plan since the last notification.

## **European Union**

### ***Ireland***

No specific plan has been developed. However, the objectives of National Programmes run by state agencies are in accordance with the NASCO Plan of Action.

The Irish plan can be summarised as follows:

- Establish a river inventory
- Quantify the extent of existing habitat
- Estimate the productive capacity of this habitat
- Estimate the current level of production
- Identify shortfalls and the potential for recovery in damaged habitats
- Enhance damaged habitat
- Monitor outcome and recovery rate

### ***Sweden***

A full description of the current situation is given in section 1 above. The present protection and restoration plan needs to be revised and expanded to be consistent with the NASCO Plan of Action.

### ***United Kingdom***

#### ***England and Wales***

Salmon Action Plans (SAPs) are being developed for all principal salmon rivers in England and Wales. Each SAP comprises two documents. The Consultation document reviews stock and fishery status, identifies factors limiting performance and lists a series of costed options to address these. Following consultation on this document, a Final Plan is prepared containing an agreed list of actions to be addressed within five years. Progress against these actions is reviewed annually. SAPs are expected to be completed for all principal salmon rivers in England and Wales by the end of 2003.

#### ***Northern Ireland***

A Habitat Restoration Plan has been prepared and funding for implementation is being sought. This will build on the work on the Salmon Management Plans referred to in section 1 above.

### *Scotland*

In line with the local management structure in Scotland, DSFBs and Fishery Trusts have been developing plans relevant to their areas of jurisdiction. A number of habitat enhancement programmes are in place throughout Scotland, including river bank stabilisation, riparian buffer strips, removal/easing of man-made and natural obstructions, guidance on construction of culverts, bridge aprons and other river crossings. Introduction by the Forestry Commission of the *Forests and Water Guidelines* has been of major significance in ensuring sustainable forestry development while reducing impacts on water courses.

### **Russian Federation**

Salmon habitat protection and restoration plans have been developed for two rivers.

### **USA**

A great deal of time and effort over the past year has been focused on the development of a recovery plan for endangered populations of Atlantic salmon. This plan includes provisions for the protection and restoration of Atlantic salmon habitat. Atlantic salmon restoration programs on other rivers, such as the Connecticut and Merrimack, are conducted under management plans that include provisions for salmon management and habitat protection.

### **Other Parties**

No progress in developing comprehensive salmon habitat protection and restoration plans has been reported by the other Parties or the other EU Member States.

3. If a Plan has been developed or updated since the last notification have evaluation and monitoring systems been introduced or updated to assess the effectiveness of the plan in protecting and restoring salmon habitat? If the response to question 2 was "yes" please provide details of these systems or of changes to existing systems since the last notification.

### **European Union**

#### *Ireland*

Monitoring of EU-funded physical enhancement works continued in 2002 as part of project deliverables.

#### *United Kingdom*

##### *England and Wales*

Evaluation and monitoring programmes are reviewed annually as part of the development and implementation of Salmon Action Plans. The national fisheries

monitoring programme was revised in 2000. Implementation in 2001 was impaired by the Foot and Mouth Disease outbreak and 2002 was the first full year of the new programme (comprising electrofishing, trapping, counters and catch recording). A review has been completed of salmon stocks in recovering rivers.

#### *Northern Ireland*

Monitoring data on specified catchments as follows:

- Adult escapement
- Juvenile populations
- Habitat quantity and quality

#### *Scotland*

The Scottish Fisheries Coordination Centre has developed protocols for electrofishing and habitat surveys to ensure standard sampling procedures are used throughout Scotland. Trust and DSFB biologists undertake regular sampling to assess fish population and habitat status.

#### **Russian Federation**

Federal nature conservation authorities assess the effectiveness of plans for protection of salmon habitat on the basis of plans of actions developed by the water users and approved by the relevant authorities, and annual mandatory reports provided by the users.

#### **USA**

Monitoring provisions will be included as part of the recovery plan for endangered Atlantic salmon populations. The process of identifying appropriate systems and evaluation criteria is ongoing.

#### **Other Parties**

No progress in developing evaluation and monitoring systems has been reported by the other Parties or the other EU Member States.