



Agenda item 5.2(a)  
For information

**Council**

**CNL(03)33**

***Report by Canada on Progress with Application of the Decision Structure for  
Management of North Atlantic Salmon Fisheries***



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### *Report by Canada on Progress with Application of the Decision Structure for Management of North Atlantic Salmon Fisheries*

1. Have any new actions been taken to implement the Decision Structure for the management of salmon fisheries? If "yes" please provide details of these actions and a selection of case studies to illustrate its application.

For Atlantic salmon management, Canada has already been using a river classification system for a number of years. River classifications establish certain management measures (e.g. retention limits, closures, catch and release only) for each river, based on factors such as: are conservation spawning requirements being met, level of angling effort, proximity to densely populated areas, and overall size of the river and of the salmon population in it.

Conservation limits are set where enough information exists, management targets are established, and in-season monitoring indicates whether conservation limits will be met. When the limits are not met, the management process provides for pre-agreed management actions to be implemented, such as catch and release fishing only, or complete closure of the river.

The Decision Structure has been applied to a selection of rivers in each Canadian province. Canadian fisheries managers are finding that the Decision Structure is leading to the same decisions that are reached through the usual (pre-Decision Structure) process.

2. Have any new programmes been introduced to monitor the effects of management measures and identify information deficiencies? If "yes" please provide details.

For the Upper Bay of Fundy and Southwest New Brunswick stocks:

- a smolt tracking program has been initiated using sonic tagging devices;
- a live-capture smolt program is conducted in the Bay of Fundy using a marine trawl.

Smolt monitoring programs have been initiated in three major rivers of the southern Gulf of St. Lawrence to assess the level of freshwater production and monitor marine survivals.

3. Have any new measures been introduced to address any failure or trend in abundance or diversity? If "yes" please provide details.

For the Upper Bay of Fundy and Southwest New Brunswick stocks, live gene banking operations are underway for endangered populations.

Emphasis is being placed on reducing or eliminating the use of gillnets in the Aboriginal food fisheries in New Brunswick to allow for selective live release of large salmon.

4. On the basis of on-going experience gained in applying the Decision Structure, please provide suggestions for its further development so as to further enhance its value and its effectiveness.

Generally, Canada is finding that the Decision Structure process mirrors that already used by Canadian fisheries managers, i.e. setting conservation limits, assessing the risks of various scenarios for action, and implementing pre-agreed measures when the limits are not met. At this point, no new approaches to management of Atlantic salmon have arisen in Canada as a result of the Decision Structure.

Canada agrees with the comment of the EU that the Decision Structure could more clearly address environmental considerations (e.g. water quality).