

NORTH ATLANTIC SALMON CONSERVATION ORGANIZATION

ORGANISATION POUR LA CONSERVATION DU SAUMON DE L'ATLANTIQUE NORD



Council

CNL(03)45

Implementation of the Precautionary Approach to Management of Atlantic Salmon Fisheries in Norway

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In 2003 Norway revised the regulations for salmon fisheries and introduced a new regulatory regime that will apply for the next five years. During this period adjustments will be made only when necessitated by substantial changes in stock status. Norway used this opportunity to facilitate incorporation of the Council's Decision Structure for the application of the Precautionary Approach to the management of salmon fisheries at all management levels.

To prepare the revision, the Directorate for Nature Management, in cooperation with the county authorities, undertook a comprehensive survey on the status of the salmon stocks. To facilitate the survey a revised system for categorizing the stocks was developed. In order to assign categories to rivers, the system requires identification and evaluation of human impact factors such as river regulation, pollution and exploitation, as required by the Decision Structure developed by NASCO.

The procedure outlined in the NASCO Decision Structure was applied to both single and mixed stock fisheries. In order to assess adequate abundance and diversity of stocks, a number of different indicators were used depending on the information available. The status of the stocks was evaluated relative to abundance criteria and on the basis of professional judgement where information is inadequate. In Norway there are ongoing efforts to develop methods for estimating conservation limits and spawning targets for individual salmon stocks. The goal is that these tools and methods are available for broader use in the next major revision of the fishery regulations in 2008.