

NORTH ATLANTIC SALMON CONSERVATION ORGANIZATION

ORGANISATION POUR LA CONSERVATION DU SAUMON DE L'ATLANTIQUE NORD



**Council**

**CNL(03)53**

***Statement by the General Secretary of ICES***



*Statement by the General Secretary of ICES*

Mr. President, Commissioners, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Thank you for the opportunity to address you. Relationships with ICES go back to the founding of NASCO. We believe that the relationship, and the dialogue stemming from it, has been fruitful and mutually beneficial.

Advancing the sum of human knowledge of salmon and its place in the global ecosystem (or complex of ecosystems) depends on multidisciplinary streams of scientific and management activity. We in ICES are pleased to call on such a multi-strand science network in the service of NASCO; I refer to our eight Science Committees, three Advisory Committees, 100 intersessional Working Groups and our network of approximately 1200 scientists in about 200 research institutes in our nineteen Member Countries and six Affiliate Countries.

You will know of the recent changes in our procedures that we introduced in order to enhance the preparation and delivery of scientific advice from ICES to NASCO:

- the delivery of the ICES advice much earlier than in previous years;
- the increased allocation of ICES human resources to salmonid affairs, both scientific and advisory:
  - we have restored a Science Committee specifically dealing with salmon and other diadromous fish;
  - we have increased the time spent on salmon advice within the ACFM process;
- from now on, we will be sending our leading salmon specialist to present our advice to NASCO - the Chairman of our Working Group on North Atlantic Salmon (currently Dr. Walter Crozier). The ICES advice presented by Dr. Crozier was prepared on behalf of ICES by our Advisory Committee on Fishery Management (ACFM), based on the findings of the ICES Working Group chaired by Dr. Crozier.

I am sure you will agree that these actions by ICES have enhanced, and will continue to enhance, our scientific support for NASCO.

ICES looks forward to further enhancing the working relationships with NASCO through the negotiation of a new Memorandum of Understanding to replace the present one, which is now approaching the planned end of its period in force. ICES regards this matter as one of top priority.

In parallel with that, I wish to draw your attention once more to the situation regarding the position of the post of Chair of the ICES Advisory Committee on Fishery Management. In that post we are fortunate to have the services of Poul Degnbol, an eminent Danish scientist both within the ICES community and in other parts of the world's oceans.

The Chair of ACFM is one of the most important elective posts in ICES, in that it carries a heavy responsibility. We – and NASCO – need the best quality of expertise in that job. To obtain the necessary blend of scientific skills and experience, we must attract senior scientists from within the

ICES network. In the current climate of increasing demands for scientific advice on the one hand (especially in regard to fisheries but also concerning ecosystem considerations), and dwindling national research budgets on the other, it is very difficult for institutes to release a senior scientist for what is virtually a full-time job.

Therefore ICES has had to offer a stipend of 500,000 Danish kroner (about £50,000) in order to continue to have the appropriate qualities represented in the ACFM Chairperson. We have turned to our Partner Fisheries Commissions to fund this, and I am glad to say that three of our four Partner Fisheries Commissions have agreed to do so. NASCO has so far declined to participate in this arrangement.

I exhort NASCO to fully engage with the ICES process, and to play your part in ensuring the best-quality expertise in the post of ACFM Chair. Under the cost-sharing arrangements in the present Memorandum of Understanding, the cost to NASCO for your share in the ACFM Chair's stipend would be approximately 40,000 Danish kroner, equivalent to about £4,000. I look forward to a positive response from NASCO following this meeting.

In closing, I would like to draw attention to the variety of scientific products available from ICES, particularly those in subject-areas traditionally regarded by many people as being outside the mainstream of our fisheries-related activities. A visit to our website, (<http://www.ices.dk>) will reveal much. For the time being, I would like to present you with a copy of the *Annual ICES Ocean Climate Status Summary* (ICES Cooperative Research Report No. 251).