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***Report on the Activities of
the North Atlantic Salmon Conservation Organization
in 2002***

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Note: This Report is not intended for publication but is submitted to the Council under Article 5, paragraph 6 of the Convention which requires the submission of an annual report to the Parties. The report is a summary of the activities of the Organization in 2002. Full details of the work of the Organization are contained in the reports of the Nineteenth Annual Meeting of the Council and regional Commissions and in the report of the Finance and Administration Committee.

***Report on the Activities of
the North Atlantic Salmon Conservation Organization
in 2002***

1. Introduction

- 1.1 At the invitation of the Ministry of Fisheries and Maritime Affairs, NASCO held its Nineteenth Annual Meeting in Torshavn, Faroe Islands. There were also Committees and other Groups which met inter-sessionally.

2. Council

- 2.1 The Nineteenth Annual Meeting of the Council was held during the period 3 - 7 June 2002 under the Presidency of Mr Jacque Robichaud (Canada) and Vice-Presidency of Mr Eidur Gudnason (Iceland). Representatives of all the Contracting Parties, three inter-governmental organizations, 15 non-governmental organizations, and the Salmon Liaison Group attended the meetings.

The Precautionary Approach to Salmon Management

Habitat protection and restoration

- 2.2 A Special Session was held at which the Contracting Parties reported on the steps taken to develop and implement habitat protection and restoration plans as envisaged under the NASCO Plan of Action adopted in 2001. Presentations were made by Canada, the European Union, Iceland, Norway, Russia and the USA. There were indications that loss of freshwater habitat, which had been highly significant over the last 100 years or so, was stabilising and that some gains were being made. With regard to monitoring the implementation of the Habitat Plan of Action the Council asked that the Secretariat, in consultation with the Contracting Parties, develop a simple reporting format which will highlight concrete and specific accomplishments in relation to habitat protection and restoration on a yearly basis.

Review of progress in applying the Decision Structure for Management of Salmon Fisheries

- 2.3 The Council reviewed the report of its Standing Committee on the Precautionary Approach (SCPA). The Committee had undertaken three tasks since the last Annual Meeting:
- a detailed evaluation and development of the Decision Structure for the management of Atlantic salmon fisheries;
 - development of Terms of Reference for a meeting of the SCPA on how social and economic factors can be taken into account in applying the Precautionary Approach;

- development of Terms of Reference for a meeting of the SCPA on application of the Precautionary Approach to introductions and transfers, aquaculture and transgenics.
- 2.4 The Council adopted a revised Decision Structure, which will be applied by Contracting Parties to the management of salmon fisheries. The Council also agreed that the Parties should report back to the Council, on an annual basis, on their experiences in applying the Decision Structure and on the extent of its implementation. The Secretary was asked to develop, in consultation with the Parties, a simple format for these returns. It is intended that the Decision Structure be widely and immediately applied by managers with stakeholders on salmon rivers. To assist this process the Secretary was asked to produce an introduction to the Decision Structure describing the background to its development and its proposed use, but this process should not delay application of the Decision Structure.

Implications of socio-economic issues for application of the Precautionary Approach

- 2.5 The full social and economic values of wild Atlantic salmon are presently unknown and there is a need to include social and economic factors in management decisions under a Precautionary Approach without negating its effectiveness. The Council agreed Terms of Reference for a meeting of the SCPA on how social and economic factors can be taken into account in applying the Precautionary Approach. These Terms of Reference propose, as an initial step, the development of an internationally agreed framework or template for assessing social and economic values of the Atlantic salmon. The Council agreed that the initial work to develop this framework should be undertaken by a Technical Workshop of the Contracting Parties which would also prepare an inventory of the various social and economic values related to Atlantic salmon. The SCPA would then meet to consider how social and economic factors can be incorporated into the Precautionary Approach so that a report can be made to the Council at its Twenty-First Annual Meeting.

Application of the Precautionary Approach to introductions and transfers, aquaculture and transgenics

- 2.6 The Council agreed Terms of Reference for a meeting of the SCPA in relation to application of the Precautionary Approach to introductions and transfers, aquaculture and transgenics to be held in March 2003. The Council agreed that the report of the SCPA should be widely available to stakeholders.

Unreported Catches

- 2.7 A report was made on information provided by the Parties in relation to unreported catches. These returns indicate that in 2001 unreported catches were estimated to be between 962 and 1,374 tonnes, a small reduction on the estimates for 1999 and 2000. The Council noted the continuing progress in reducing the level of unreported catch and emphasised the need to take further measures to minimise the level of unreported catches. The Council agreed that there is a need for the Contracting Parties to further clarify the methods used to estimate unreported catch, and the reliability of these estimates, and to consider opportunities to enhance harmonisation of approaches used.

The Parties will provide to the Secretariat an update of the approach taken to collect the data on unreported catch in order to find ways to further improve and harmonise reporting. The Council recognised that, although salmon which are caught and subsequently released are not a component of unreported catch, it nonetheless still wished to be advised on an annual basis of the extent of catch and release fishing by the Parties.

Scientific Research Fishing in the Convention Area

- 2.8 A brief report on scientific research fishing conducted by Norway during 2001 was presented.

International Cooperative Research

Report of the Inaugural Meeting of the International Cooperative Salmon Research Board

- 2.9 Last year the Council had established an International Cooperative Salmon Research Board (hereinafter referred to as "the Board") to direct and coordinate a programme of research to identify and explain the causes of marine mortality of salmon and to examine the possibilities to counteract the mortality. The report of the inaugural meeting of the Board, in London in December 2001, was presented. The International Cooperative Salmon Research Programme consists of two elements - Cooperative Salmon Research and the Fund. Three phases to the programme are envisaged, as follows:

- development and maintenance of an inventory of relevant research;
- setting of priorities for research needs and analysis of the inventory against these needs;
- better coordination of research and funding of new research to fill the gaps identified by the Board. The Fund will be used to finance these gaps in the research.

- 2.10 At its inaugural meeting, the Board had developed an inventory of research relating to salmon mortality in the sea, and had developed financial and administrative documents to govern the Board's work and operation of the fund. An initial fund-raising strategy had also been developed.

Future actions in relation to International Cooperative Research

- 2.11 In the light of the proposals from the Board the Council accepted:

- the structure of the Programme comprising Cooperative Salmon Research and a Fund and the proposed phases of this programme;
- the format and content of the Inventory of Research Relating to Salmon Mortality in the Sea;
- the priorities for cooperative research and funding and the proposal that the initial focus be on distribution and migration of salmon at sea;
- the Rules of Procedure for the Board;

- the Financial Rules to govern the administration of the Fund and the Guidelines on Acceptance of Voluntary Contributions to the Fund;
- the proposals on external representation;
- the strategy for initial fund-raising.

- 2.12 The Council welcomed the progress made by the Board and asked that it now proceed to improve coordination of research, and to seek to raise funds so as to finance gaps in research. The President stated that it was now calculated that approximately £4 million was currently being spent by the Parties on research of relevance to mortality of salmon at sea. In addition, provisional commitments totalling £0.5 million, in cash and in kind, were made. The Council asked the Board to establish a relationship with NASCO's NGOs so as to develop a cooperative approach. A further meeting of the Board was held in December 2002. A report of this meeting will be presented to the Council at its Twentieth Annual Meeting.

By-Catch of Atlantic Salmon

- 2.13 Concern had previously been raised within the Council about the possible by-catch of salmon post-smolts in fisheries for pelagic species of fish, particularly mackerel, in the North-East Atlantic. ICES presented estimates of by-catch based on information on catches of post-smolts and mackerel during research vessel surveys in the Norwegian Sea conducted in June 2001 at approximately the same time as the start of the mackerel fishery in the same area. While the methods used by ICES in developing these estimates were preliminary and under development, they suggest that by-catch of salmon post-smolts is potentially significant. Concern was expressed about the potential level of by-catch and the Council recognised the need to further improve these initial estimates. The Council had previously asked that the issue of by-catch be considered by the International Cooperative Salmon Research Board and noted that there were no research proposals specifically focusing on by-catch in the inventory of marine research developed by the Board. The Council recommended to the Board that project proposals to assess by-catch should be afforded a high priority.

Impacts of Aquaculture on Wild Salmon Stocks

Returns made in accordance with the Oslo Resolution

- 2.14 A report was presented on the returns made in accordance with Article 5 of the Oslo Resolution. Full information on the returns made since 1998 is available in a database which has been established by the Secretariat.

Liaison with the salmon farming industry

- 2.15 The report of the third meeting of the Liaison Group between NASCO and the North Atlantic salmon farming industry, held in Westport, Ireland in April 2002, was presented. At the meeting verbal reports had been made on progress in developing and implementing Action Plans on Containment of Farm Salmon. While it was recognised that salmon farming countries would proceed at different speeds in implementing their Action Plans the Liaison Group had agreed that there was a need to develop a systematic process for reporting on progress. A summary of the work of

the Liaison Group's Salmon Cooperation Group had also been received. This Group will undertake a review of existing cooperative ventures between wild and farmed salmon interests and funding for this review has been secured from industry sources. The industry representatives had proposed that ISFA should, in future, be the organization which would represent the industry within the Liaison Group. The Council:

- endorsed the format for reporting to the Liaison Group annually on implementation of Action Plans on Containment of Farm Salmon;
- noted the proposals from the Salmon Cooperation Group;
- proposed that representatives of ISFA and of the salmon farming industry in Russia be invited to participate in future Liaison Group meetings.

Transgenic Salmon

- 2.16 Under NASCO's Guidelines for Action on Transgenic Salmon the Parties agree to advise the Council of any proposals to permit the rearing of transgenic salmonids. A North American company is currently producing transgenic Atlantic salmon and rainbow trout broodstock in a secure land-based facility and there have been preliminary discussions between this company and the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA). NASCO's concerns about the use of transgenic salmon in aquaculture had been conveyed to the FDA in December 2001. The representative of the US updated the Council on this issue and agreed to keep the Council advised of developments with regard to the FDA permitting process. The Council had previously agreed that when the SCPA considers the issue of introductions and transfers, it should also consider how the Precautionary Approach would apply to transgenic salmon.

St Pierre and Miquelon Salmon Fisheries

- 2.17 In recent years the North American Commission and the Council have become increasingly concerned about catches at St Pierre and Miquelon which, although low, have been increasing at a time when there are serious worries about the abundance of North American stocks and when restrictions on harvest are being introduced all around the North-West Atlantic. Last year the Council had supported a proposal from the US for a sampling programme at St Pierre and Miquelon to determine the origin of the wild salmon in the catch. Consultations had been initiated between NASCO and the authorities at St Pierre and Miquelon during a visit to the islands by the President and Secretary, but it had not been possible to initiate the sampling programme in 2002. The Council adopted a Resolution Concerning Cooperation with St Pierre and Miquelon. This Resolution seeks to encourage France, in respect of St Pierre and Miquelon, to cooperate with NASCO and its members in initiating a scientific sampling programme for the salmon fishery at St Pierre and Miquelon.

NASCO Policy on Communications

- 2.18 The Secretary presented a review of NASCO communications, including the procedures of other inter-governmental organizations. The Council recognised the need to strike a balance between increasing the transparency of NASCO meetings

while maintaining an environment in which effective negotiations can take place. The Council decided:

- (a) to further develop the Organization's website so as to effectively communicate information on the work of NASCO to the public and other interested parties;
- (b) to adopt, with immediate effect, two new conditions concerning NGO participation at its Annual Meetings as follows:
 - "any NGO with observer status to NASCO that has not communicated with the Secretariat or the Contracting Party concerned or attended at least one Annual Meeting of NASCO in the previous three years should cease to be an accredited NGO to NASCO but may reapply in writing to the Secretary";
 - "during NASCO's Annual Meeting, following the close of the Opening Session of the Council, accredited NGOs may not issue press releases or other information to the media on agenda items under discussion at the meeting, until after the Council has agreed its own Press Release".
- (c) to adopt, with immediate effect, a new condition concerning media participation at NASCO's Annual Meetings as follows:
 - "Media representatives may only attend the Opening Session of the Council."

- 2.19 Eleven of the fifteen NGOs present at the Nineteenth Annual Meeting expressed support for the media rule. The President announced that one of the accredited NGOs had violated the rule on media contact during the course of the Nineteenth Annual Meeting.

Predator-Related Mortality

- 2.20 The European Union presented information concerning predator-related mortality. Iceland indicated that there is considerable concern about increased predation by cod on salmon smolts in Icelandic waters in recent years. Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland) referred to the importance of the issue for salmon conservation and salmon aquaculture and noted that it should be considered in relation to application of the Precautionary Approach. The President asked that the Parties provide to the Secretariat, as soon as possible, an update on research and management in relation to predation on salmon, covering the period since the Special Session on this subject in 1996. NAMMCO had also carried out useful work of relevance. The President suggested that the next steps might include another Special Session, asking the International Cooperative Salmon Research Board if it might consider allocating new funds to this matter, and consideration of this issue under the Precautionary Approach.

Scientific Advice

- 2.21 The report of the ICES Advisory Committee on Fishery Management (ACFM) was presented. The Council adopted a request for scientific advice from ICES to be presented in 2003.

Catch Statistics and their Analysis

- 2.22 The official catch returns by the Parties for 2001, and historical data for the period 1960-2001, were presented.

Measures Taken in Accordance with Articles 14 and 15 of the Convention

- 2.23 A report was presented on the returns made under Articles 14 and 15 of the Convention.

Review of International Salmon-Related Literature Published in 2001

- 2.24 The Council took note of a review of the literature concerning Atlantic salmon published during 2001.

Joint Meeting with NPAFC, IBSFC, PICES and ICES on Causes of Marine Mortality of Salmon

- 2.25 Last year the Council had agreed to hold a joint meeting with NPAFC, IBSFC, PICES and ICES focusing on factors affecting marine survival of salmon in the North Pacific and North Atlantic Oceans and in the Baltic Sea. A report of the meeting, which had been held in Vancouver, Canada, during March 2002, was presented. The views of the meeting with regard to research priorities and the way forward appeared generally consistent with the approach being adopted by the NASCO's International Cooperative Salmon Research Board.

Election of Officers

- 2.26 The Council unanimously re-elected Mr Jacque Robichaud (Canada) as President. Mr Ole Tougaard (European Union) was unanimously elected as Vice-President.

Other Issues

- 2.27 The Council received a report from each of the three regional Commissions on its activities (see sections 3, 4 and 5 below).
- 2.28 The Council adopted the report of the Finance and Administration Committee (see section 6 below).
- 2.29 Since the last Annual Meeting the Faroes Sportsfishing Association had been granted observer status to NASCO.

- 2.30 The Council had previously recognised that there could be benefits from a joint meeting of all the North Atlantic Fisheries Commissions (i.e. NASCO, ICCAT, IBSFC, NEAFC and NAFO) to discuss issues of mutual interest. The Secretary reported that a meeting of the Secretariats of the North Atlantic Regional Fisheries Management Organizations had been held in December 2001. The meeting had provided a valuable opportunity for discussion of issues of mutual concern and the Council agreed that the NASCO Secretariat should continue to participate in future meetings of the group. The meeting had expressed the view that regional fisheries management organizations must be seen as independent regional organizations that are not linked to FAO's decision-making process, although these regional organizations are willing to share their experiences and assist FAO bodies to develop their expertise. The Council endorsed this view and stressed that it was not appropriate for FAO to undertake an evaluation of the effectiveness of the regional fisheries organizations in the North Atlantic.
- 2.31 The Council took note of a report on initiatives within FAO of relevance to NASCO. The representative of the European Union announced a policy statement on the reform of the Common Fisheries Policy, incorporating a full review of ecosystem issues.
- 2.32 The winner of the \$2,500 Grand Prize in the Tag Return Incentive Scheme was Mr Steinar Kragset, Trondheim, Norway. The Council offered its congratulations to the winner.
- 2.33 The Council adopted a report to the Parties on the activities of the Organization in 2001.
- 2.34 The Council accepted an invitation from the Scottish Executive, on behalf of the European Union, to hold its Twentieth Annual Meeting in Edinburgh, Scotland, during 2-6 June 2003. The Council agreed to hold its Twenty-First Annual Meeting from 7-11 June 2004, either in Edinburgh or elsewhere at the invitation of a Party.

3. North American Commission

- 3.1 The Nineteenth Annual Meeting of the North American Commission was held in Torshavn, Faroe Islands, during the period 3-7 June 2002 under the Chairmanship of Mr Pierre Tremblay (Canada).

Review of the 2001 Fishery and Scientific Advice from ICES

- 3.2 The Commission reviewed the 2001 fishery and considered the scientific advice from ICES.

Review of the 2002 Salmon Management Measures

- 3.3 The United States presented a report on the US Atlantic salmon management and research activities in 2001. There were no documented returns to two of the eight rivers listed in 2000 on the US Endangered Species Act. Collaborative work has been undertaken with Canada to track ultrasonically-tagged smolts as they leave US waters

and migrate through the Bay of Fundy towards the Gulf of Maine. A review of Canada's Atlantic salmon management measures for 2002, by region, was presented.

Application of the Precautionary Approach to the Work of the Commission

- 3.4 Canada reported that it was piloting the use of the Precautionary Approach Decision Structure for fisheries management on several rivers. While Canada's current fisheries management approach does not follow completely the Decision Structure, the approach is based on risk assessment and Canada intends to incorporate the Decision Structure fully in the future.
- 3.5 There are no fisheries left in the United States to which the Decision Structure can be applied; the listing of Atlantic salmon populations under the US Endangered Species Act was inherently precautionary and highlighted the special actions that must be taken to ensure the survival of the resource, such as the development and implementation of recovery plans.

St Pierre and Miquelon Salmon Fisheries

- 3.6 The Secretary presented catch and other information on St Pierre and Miquelon's mixed stock Atlantic salmon fishery. The reported catch for 2001 was 2.155 t, which represents a slight decrease from the previous three-year period but is higher than the 15-year mean catch of approximately 2 t. In addition, the number of licences issued for participation in the salmon fishery increased from 43 in 2000 to 52 in 2001.
- 3.7 Canada and the United States reported on their respective bilateral efforts to seek enhanced cooperation from France (in respect of St Pierre and Miquelon). The Commission stressed that NASCO's Contracting Parties should use all means and influence at their disposal to encourage France to improve its cooperation with NASCO. The Commission developed a Resolution Concerning Cooperation with St Pierre and Miquelon and agreed to recommend its adoption by the Council.

Salmonid Introductions and Transfers

- 3.8 A report on the activities of the Working Group in 2001/2002 was presented. Canada has adopted a policy entitled "National Code on Introductions and Transfers of Aquatic Organisms," which incorporates risk assessment and risk management processes to assist in making decisions on introductions and transfers. This Code was developed by and has the support of federal, provincial and territorial governments and stakeholders, and is being applied in order to govern intentional introductions and transfers. The objectives of the Canadian National Code are consistent with the objectives and intent of the North American Commission Protocols. It provides a process of sound and consistent scientific criteria to evaluate and facilitate the safe movement of all live aquatic organisms in an environmentally sustainable manner. Canada would like to continue the process to modify the 1994 North American Commission Protocols, taking into consideration its National Code and will engage in a public and private sector review of the protocols in the light of the adoption of the National Code. Application of the National Code could result in some deviations from the existing NAC Protocols. The United States underscored their interest in

consulting with Canada on issues surrounding the NAC Protocols since they affect both countries and notified its interest in completing the consultations by the spring of 2003 so that the revised Protocols would be available for review by the SCPA in March 2003 and eligible for consideration and possible adoption at the June 2003 NASCO meeting.

- 3.9 Canada reported that the Government of Canada, in partnership with provincial governments and industry associations, is developing a National Aquatic Animal Health Program, which will provide a framework for aquatic animal health in Canada. Containment Codes are in place in Canada.

Acid Rain

- 3.10 Canada noted that acid rain is a continuing problem for Atlantic salmon, that data on this issue had been provided in the past but that Canada had not contacted the Council on Environmental Cooperation (CEC) established under the North American Free Trade Agreement about the matter. Canada now proposed liaising with Norway about possible solutions given the efforts that country has made to address a similar problem. The United States noted that most rivers of the Atlantic coast and southern uplands of Nova Scotia are significantly acidified (as high as pH 4.3) and that the salmon populations in many rivers have been extirpated. While some progress has been achieved, the acid rain problem has not been resolved; it remains a problem for wild Atlantic salmon.
- 3.11 Canada and the United States agreed to meet inter-sessionally and to report back to the 2003 Commission meeting on the results of bilateral consultations and to consider at that time possible future actions that could be taken to begin to address this problem.

Sampling in the Labrador Fishery

- 3.12 Canada reported that Can\$ 500,000 was being spent on sampling efforts in Labrador. It was noted that there had been lapses in the Labrador sampling effort in previous years leading to data gaps. The United States commended Canada for its efforts to improve sampling in Labrador, data from which are essential for the effective functioning of the scientific model that predicts pre-fishery abundance for the West Greenland fishery.

Election of Officers

- 3.13 Mr Pierre Tremblay (Canada) was re-elected as Chairman and Mr George Lapointe (USA) was elected to serve as Vice-Chairman. The Commission appointed Julia Barrow (Canada) to the Standing Scientific Committee.

Other Issues

- 3.14 The winner of the Commission's \$1,500 prize in the Tag Return Incentive Scheme was Mr Joseph P Cook, Miramichi, New Brunswick.

4. North-East Atlantic Commission

- 4.1 The Nineteenth Annual Meeting of the North-East Atlantic Commission was held in Torshavn, Faroe Islands, during the period 3-7 June 2002 under the Chairmanship of Mr Vladimir Moskalenko (Russian Federation).

Review of the 2001 Fishery and Scientific Advice from ICES

- 4.2 The Commission reviewed the 2001 fishery and considered the scientific advice from ICES. Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland) informed the Commission that there had been no commercial fishery for salmon at Faroes in 2001 or during the 2002 season to date and no applications had been received for salmon fishing licences. There had been no research fishing in 2001.

Salmonid Introductions and Transfers

- 4.3 The Commission reviewed the returns under the Resolution to Protect Wild Salmon Stocks from Introductions and Transfers. The Commission considered a definition of the term "non-indigenous" as this is not defined in the Resolution. The European Union referred to other definitions of the term "non-indigenous" in the EU Habitats Directive, in an FAO report on introductions and transfers and that used by EIFAC. The Secretary was asked to consult with the Parties on these different definitions with a view to adopting a definition for use by the Commission. In the event that a definition other than that used by the North American Commission was adopted, the issue would need to be referred to the Council for resolution.
- 4.4 Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland) provided details on the incidence of the disease Infectious Salmon Anaemia (ISA) in aquaculture in the Faroe Islands. All fish in infected farms had been destroyed in accordance with EC Directive 93/53/EC. The European Union stated that ISA was first confirmed in Scotland in May 1998 and the last confirmed case was April 1999. The last suspected case was in November 1999. In total 11 cases had been confirmed. An ISA contingency plan has been tabled at the Standing Veterinary Committee.

Application of the Precautionary Approach to the Work of the Commission

- 4.5 The European Union presented a paper on developments in salmon management in EU Member States. Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland) noted that while the Commission had been precautionary in managing fisheries, there had been no consideration of predation of salmon. He referred to the work carried out by the North Atlantic Marine Mammal Commission (NAMMCO) and suggested that the issue of predation of salmon should also be considered under the Precautionary Approach.

Risk of Transmission of *Gyrodactylus salaris* in the Commission Area

- 4.6 Norway tabled a document referring to the very serious threat to wild salmon stocks posed by the parasite *Gyrodactylus salaris* and the need for close cooperation among members of the Commission to minimise the risk of its further transmission in the Commission area. Norway indicated its willingness to develop, in consultation with other members of the Commission, proposals as to how the issues raised in this document might be addressed. The objective would be to minimise the risk of further transmission of this damaging parasite within the Commission area. The European Union detailed the measures taken by its Member States to prevent the spread of the parasite, supported the proposal from Norway and suggested that cooperation with the International Baltic Sea Fishery Commission (IBSFC) might also offer benefits. Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland) and Russia also supported the proposal from Norway. The Commission asked that Norway coordinate the initial exchange of information in accordance with its proposal through correspondence with other members of the Commission.

Regulatory Measures

- 4.7 The Commission adopted a decision regarding the salmon fishery in Faroese waters in 2003. Under this decision the Commission agreed not to set a quota for the Faroe Islands salmon fishery in 2003 on the basis that salmon fishing will be limited in scope and subject to close national surveillance and control, and in light of the intention of the Faroe Islands to manage the salmon fishery in a precautionary manner and to make management decisions with due consideration to the ICES advice concerning the biological status of the stocks contributing to the fishery.

Election of Officers

- 4.8 The Commission unanimously elected Mr Árni Ólafsson (Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland)) as its Chairman and Mr Steinar Hermansen (Norway) as its Vice-Chairman.

Other Issues

- 4.9 The winner of the Commission's \$1,500 prize in the Tag Return Incentive Scheme was Mr Robert Ritchie, Montrose, Scotland.

5. West Greenland Commission

- 5.1 The Nineteenth Annual Meeting of the West Greenland Commission was held in Torshavn, Faroe Islands, during the period 3-7 June 2002 under the Chairmanship of Mr Andrew Thomson (European Union).

Review of the 2001 Fishery and Scientific Advice from ICES

- 5.2 The Commission reviewed the 2001 fishery at West Greenland and considered the scientific advice from ICES.

- 5.3 The fishery was based on the *Ad hoc* Management Programme established for 2001, under which quotas in the commercial fishery were allocated according to average catch per unit effort (CPUE) during specified harvest periods. A total of 34.5 tonnes was landed for commercial sale, 5.7 tonnes were sold privately to local markets and a further 1.9 tonnes were caught for local consumption. Thus the total recorded harvest for 2001 was 42.2 tonnes.

Regulatory Measures

- 5.4 The Commission adopted by consensus an “*Ad Hoc* Management Programme for the 2002 Fishery at West Greenland.” As for 2001, this programme sets out a system of corroborating evidence of abundance using CPUE. There would be two fishery openings, with the second dependent on abundance indicated by information gathered during the first opening. This strategy may allow higher harvest levels, if appropriate, based on observed abundance without significantly increasing the risk to stocks. Any data gathered will help in assessing stocks in future years.

Application of the Precautionary Approach Decision Structure to the Work of the Commission

- 5.5 The European Union described developments in salmon management in EU Member States. Canada commented that the Precautionary Approach Decision Structure was being used on several rivers. It is the intent of Canada to fully implement the Decision Structure system in its management processes.

Sampling in the West Greenland Fishery

- 5.6 Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland) and the European Union provided an overview of the sampling programme for the 2001 West Greenland fishery. The sampling personnel were provided by the European Union, Canada and the United States. There was excellent cooperation from the fishermen and fish plant staff during the sampling programme. The Commission developed an agreement detailing the commitments by the various Parties to the West Greenland fishery sampling programme for 2002.

Election of Officers

- 5.7 Mr Rollie Schmitten (USA) was unanimously elected as Chairman and Ms Julia Barrow (Canada) was elected as Vice-Chairman for a two-year period with effect from the end of the 2002 Annual Meeting.

Other Issues

- 5.8 No tags had been returned from the West Greenland Commission area in 2001.

6. Finance and Administration Matters

- 6.1 The Finance and Administration Committee met prior to the Nineteenth Annual Meeting of the Council under the Acting Chairmanship of Mr Andrew Thomson (European Union).

Review of the Annual Payment to ICES

- 6.2 A report was presented on the continuing discussions with ICES. The Committee agreed that the existing MoU with ICES should be renewed for a period of one year, during which the contribution by NASCO to ICES should only increase from the 2002 payment to take account of inflation in Denmark. The Committee asked the Secretary to liaise with ICES and the other fishery Commissions in the development of a new MoU and stressed the need for:

- stability in NASCO's payments to ICES through continuation of the present level of fixed-rate payment adjusted only to take account of inflation in Denmark;
- a mechanism for improved consultation with NASCO before any additional costs are attributed to NASCO;
- continuation of the new arrangements for providing the advice on a timely basis and for an examination of the opportunities to make this arrangement more cost-effective;
- a critical re-examination of the balance between the advisory and core functions of ICES.

- 6.3 The Committee agreed that, in the interests of maintaining the neutrality of the advice from ICES, NASCO would not participate as observers at ACFM meetings. Different views were expressed about a proposal that the Chairman of ACFM should be a paid member of the ICES Secretariat.

NASCO Staff Fund

- 6.4 In 2001 the Council had agreed to establish a NASCO Staff Fund. This arrangement had been necessary because of the financial difficulties experienced by Equitable Life which had resulted in substantial losses for all the Secretariat Members. In order to ensure the smooth running of the Fund, rules had been developed after consulting the auditors. The Committee recommended to the Council the adoption of Rules for the NASCO Staff Fund.
- 6.5 The Committee suggested that the sum of £28,000 approved by the Heads of Delegations to cover additional losses in terms of fees and charges on re-investment of the Secretariat Members' funds should now be transferred from the Working Capital Fund to the NASCO Staff Fund. The contributions by the Organization and the Secretariat staff to the NASCO Staff Fund were lower than those of other international organizations based in the UK and the Committee agreed that these should be adjusted.

International Cooperative Salmon Research Fund and Donations to NASCO

- 6.6 In 2001 the Council had established an International Cooperative Salmon Research Board (ICSRB) to direct and coordinate a programme of research to identify and explain the causes of marine mortality of Atlantic salmon and the possibilities to counteract this mortality. The inaugural meeting of the Board was held in December 2001. A summary of the financial and administrative issues arising from this meeting was presented.
- 6.7 The Committee reviewed the recommendations from the inaugural meeting of the Board and agreed to recommend to the Council the acceptance of:
- the Rules of Procedure for the International Cooperative Salmon Research Board;
 - the Guidelines on Acceptance of Voluntary Contributions to the International Cooperative Salmon Research Fund;
 - the Financial Rules of the International Cooperative Salmon Research Fund;
 - the Strategy for the Initial Fund-Raising Activities of the International Cooperative Salmon Research Board.

Consideration of the 2004 Draft Budget

- 6.8 The Committee agreed to recommend to the Council the adoption of the Draft 2004 Budget and Schedule of Contributions.

Protection of NASCO's Name and Logo

- 6.9 The Secretary advised that a firm of Chartered Patent Agents had been instructed to proceed but the process is likely to take some time. It is hoped that the logo will be registered before the end of the current year.

Audited Accounts

- 6.10 The Committee recommended to the Council the adoption of the audited accounts for 2001 and recommended to the Council the appointment of PricewaterhouseCoopers of Queen Street, Edinburgh as auditors for the 2002 accounts or such other company as may be agreed by the Secretary in consultation with the Chairman of the Finance and Administration Committee.

Secretary
Edinburgh
7 April, 2003

