



Council
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Press Release

- *New and innovative conservation and restoration measures were agreed internationally by the North Atlantic Salmon Conservation Organization at its Annual Meeting this week in Mondariz, Galicia, Spain, in response to continuing concern about the status of wild salmon stocks. A further significant step was taken in applying the Precautionary Approach, which has now been extended to the management of salmon habitat. The meeting was held beside one of the most southerly salmon rivers flowing into the Atlantic, the River Tea, at the invitation of the Autonomous Government of Galicia.*
- NASCO has agreed to establish an International Salmon Research Programme to identify and explain the causes of increased marine mortality and to explore the possibilities to counteract this mortality. In spite of restrictive management measures introduced both nationally and internationally in recent years by NASCO and its Contracting Parties, requiring great sacrifices by many people dependent on this resource, salmon stocks are still at seriously low levels.
- In the light of the condition of many salmon stocks agreement was reached on a measure for the Faroese fishery for the year 2002 which relies on the Faroe Islands to use the Precautionary Approach and to take account of the scientific advice and which does not, therefore, set a tonnage for a quota. For the West Greenland salmon fishery, an innovative management measure was agreed that seeks to establish an improved management system which is both precautionary and highly adaptive. Depending on the observed abundance of fish from both North America and Europe at West Greenland, which will be monitored in season, the maximum quota for the fishery can be adjusted during the 2001 fishing season. The effectiveness of this new measure will be evaluated in March 2002.
- In order to give long-term protection to wild salmon stocks, NASCO and its Contracting Parties have agreed to implement the Precautionary Approach to salmon management. The Council had previously adopted a decision structure for use by NASCO and the relevant authorities in implementing a Precautionary Approach to management of salmon fisheries. Initial reports on the implementation of this decision structure were received.
- As the next step, NASCO considered how to apply the Precautionary Approach to habitat protection and restoration, and adopted a Plan of Action with the objective of maintaining and, where possible, increasing the current productive capacity of Atlantic salmon habitat. Under this plan, NASCO's Contracting Parties and their relevant jurisdictions will establish comprehensive salmon habitat protection and restoration plans and report back to NASCO at its 2002 meeting.

- The Council has established a Liaison Group with the North Atlantic salmon farming industry to consider issues of mutual concern. The Council agreed Guidelines on Containment of Farm Salmon which had been developed by the Liaison Group. The objective is to minimise escapes. Each jurisdiction will use the Guidelines as a basis to produce its own national or regional plan. This is considered by all Parties as a fine achievement.
- A Special Liaison Meeting was held in Mondariz to review the measures taken to minimise impacts of aquaculture on the wild stocks. The measures taken by the USA, Faroe Islands and Iceland were reviewed.
- The Council remains concerned about harvest levels at St Pierre and Miquelon and supported a proposal from the United States to improve cooperation with St Pierre and Miquelon through the initiation of a sampling programme there in 2002 to improve understanding of the fishery and to determine the origin of the catch.
- This Press Release was issued in Mondariz, Galicia, Spain on Friday 8 June 2001.

Notes to Editors:

1. The North Atlantic Salmon Conservation is an inter-governmental Organization established by a treaty with the objective of contributing to the conservation, restoration, enhancement and rational management of salmon stocks. The Contracting Parties are Canada, Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland), the European Union, Iceland, Norway, the Russian Federation and the United States of America.
2. The Organization consists of a Council, three regional Commissions (North American, North-East Atlantic, and West Greenland) and a Secretariat.
3. The Eighteenth Annual Meeting of the Organization was held in Mondariz, Galicia, Spain during 4-8 June 2001.
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