

Agenda item 6.2(b)  
For decision

**Council**

**CNL(00)30**

*Next Steps in Relation to Application of the Precautionary Approach*

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### *Next Steps in Relation to Application of the Precautionary Approach*

1. The Action Plan for Application of the Precautionary Approach, adopted by the Council at its Sixteenth Annual Meeting, calls for actions to be taken to apply the Precautionary Approach to:
  - management of North Atlantic salmon fisheries
  - socio-economic aspects
  - unreported catches
  - scientific advice and research requirements
  - stock rebuilding programmes
  - introductions and transfers, aquaculture and transfers (including stocking and ranching)
  - habitat issues
  - by-catches

#### **To date**

2. The first meeting of the Standing Committee on the Precautionary Approach (SCPA), established under the Action Plan, on the subject of application of a Precautionary Approach to Management of North Atlantic Salmon Fisheries, was held in Miami, Florida during 21-23 March. A report of this meeting is provided separately, CNL(00)18, and the Council is asked to decide under Agenda item 6.2(a) on what action to take.

#### **Next steps**

3. The Council had previously agreed that the other areas to be initially considered for application of the Precautionary Approach would be:
  - the formulation of management advice and associated scientific research;
  - the area of introductions and transfers including aquaculture impacts and possible use of transgenic salmon.

#### **Management advice and scientific needs**

4. The Action Plan does not identify a role for the SCPA in relation to the formulation of management advice but rather requests that the Standing Scientific Committee reformulate the request for scientific advice, in the light of management decisions on application of the Precautionary Approach.

#### **Introductions, Transfers and Aquaculture**

5. The Council might, therefore, consider it appropriate to ask the SCPA to address, as its next task, the application of the Precautionary Approach to introductions, transfers, aquaculture and transgenics (including stocking and ranching). Under the Action Plan it is envisaged that, in relation to these issues, the SCPA will:
- develop further objectives for the implementation of the Precautionary Approach for introductions, transfers, aquaculture and transgenics;
  - review the measures contained in the Oslo Resolution, CNL(94)53, Guidelines for Action on Transgenic Salmon, CNL(97)48, and the NEAC Resolution to Protect Wild Salmon Stocks from Introductions and Transfers, NEA(97)12, and advise on their consistency with the Precautionary Approach;
  - make recommendations for additional measures where these are required to safeguard the wild stocks;
  - review measures to prevent unintentional introductions and transfers.

In reviewing these agreements and measures, and in making recommendations for additional measures, the SCPA should take account of appropriate risk assessments. The SCPA should also:

- make recommendations on the review of the NAC Protocols to ensure their consistency with the Precautionary Approach and taking account of appropriate risk assessments;
  - keep under review and improve as required the system for reporting under the NAC Protocols.
6. Under the NASFI/NASCO Declaration (see CNL(00)26), which has not yet been considered by the Council, it is suggested that the Parties would agree to work cooperatively when consideration is given to the application of the Precautionary Approach to salmon aquaculture. A meeting of the NASCO/NASFI Liaison Group is scheduled to take place in North America in February 2001 so it might be possible to hold the SCPA Meeting on Introductions, Transfers and Aquaculture immediately after that.

### **Socio-Economic**

7. Resolving how socio-economic aspects can be included in implementation of the Precautionary Approach without negating its effectiveness will also require careful consideration and possibly the development of guidelines. The interplay between socio-economic factors and biological factors was raised at the first meeting of the SCPA and will influence application of the Precautionary Approach to all aspects of NASCO's work and that of its Contracting Parties. The Action Plan recognises the need to seek preparatory discussion papers from independent sociologists and economists to outline the principles that might need to be considered by the SCPA. (There may be budgetary implications if consultants are to be used).

### **In Summary**

8. The Council is asked to decide on the next steps for application of the Precautionary Approach: These might be:
- (i) to ask the SCPA to address the subject of introductions, transfers and aquaculture;
  - (ii) to commission the necessary discussion documents and ask the SCPA to address the subject of socio-economics;
  - (iii) to agree on dates and places for the necessary meetings.

Secretary  
Edinburgh  
17 April 2000