



Council
CNL(00)56
Press Release

- *The situation for stocks of wild North Atlantic salmon is extremely difficult, with scientific advice suggesting that their abundance is the lowest ever recorded. In the light of this situation, new, stronger measures designed to conserve wild stocks of Atlantic salmon were agreed internationally by the North Atlantic Salmon Conservation Organization meeting this week. The Annual Meeting was held in Miramichi, New Brunswick at the invitation of the Government of Canada.*
- In spite of restrictive management measures introduced both nationally and internationally in recent years, salmon stocks are still at seriously low levels. The reasons for the decline in abundance appear to be linked to conditions in the marine environment. NASCO will develop ideas for a five-year co-ordinated research programme to identify and explain the causes of increased marine mortality and to develop measures to counteract the problem.
- In the light of this situation, agreement was reached on a regulatory measure for the Faroese fishery for the year 2001 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 a two-year measure agreed in 1999 restricts the catch during 2000 to that amount used for internal consumption in Greenland.
- 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. Use of this approach is in line with international agreements in the United Nations. A Decision Structure for use by NASCO and the relevant authorities in implementing a Precautionary Approach to Management of salmon fisheries was provisionally adopted. As its next steps, NASCO will now consider application of the Precautionary Approach in relation to protection and restoration of habitat and in relation to the interplay of socio-economic aspects under the Precautionary Approach.
- NASCO remains concerned about the potential for negative impacts of aquaculture on wild stocks, including loss of genetic diversity and increased disease and parasite interactions. The Council welcomed the establishment of a Liaison Group to pursue issues of mutual concern, and proposed suggestions on guiding principles for the new relationship. The production of draft Guidelines on Containment by the Liaison Group was viewed as a useful first step, but it

was recognised that further progress is necessary. A final report will be discussed with the industry at the next Liaison Group meeting in February 2001.

- A Special Liaison Meeting was held in Miramichi to review the measures taken to minimise impacts of aquaculture on the wild stocks. The measures taken by the European Union were highlighted this year and those taken by the USA, Faroe Islands and Iceland will be reviewed next year.
- A Resolution was adopted calling for France (in respect of St Pierre and Miquelon) to immediately set harvest limits for the 2000 salmon fishery at the lowest possible level consistent with the scientific advice.
- The Parties agreed to do their utmost to reduce the level of unreported catches and to consider the effects of by-catch in other fisheries.
- NASCO elected a new President, Jacque Robichaud (Canada) and a new Vice-President, Mr Eidur Gudnason (Iceland).
- This Press Release was issued in Miramichi, New Brunswick on Friday 9 June 2000.

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 Seventeenth Annual Meeting of the Organization was held in Miramichi, New Brunswick during 5-9 June 2000.
4. Contact on this press release:

Dr Malcolm Windsor
Secretary
11 Rutland Square
Edinburgh
EH1 2AS

Telephone: Int+ 131 228 2551
Fax: Int+ 131 228 4384
e-mail: hq@nasco.org.uk
website: www.nasco.org.uk