


|   |   |  |
|---|---|--|
|  | <p>Council</p> <p><i>Report of the Working Group on Future Reporting under<br/>Implementation Plans and Evaluation of these Reports</i></p> | <p>CNL(25)22</p> <p>Agenda item<br/>6.h)</p> |
|---|---|--|

***Report of the Working Group on Future Reporting under  
Implementation Plans and Evaluation of these Reports***

***By Video-Conference***

***28-30 April 2025***

**1. Opening of the Meeting**

1.1 The Chair, Dan Kircheis (USA), opened the meeting and welcomed participants to the meeting. The new NGO representative, Robert Otto, sent his apologies and was unable to attend the meeting.

1.2 A list of participants is contained in Annex 1.

**2. Adoption of the Agenda**

2.1 The Group adopted its Agenda, WGFR(25)02 (Annex 2).

**3. Review of the Feedback from the Working Group on the Future of NASCO (WGFON) to the Working Group on Future Reporting**

3.1 The Chair reminded the Group that at its previous meeting, [CNL\(25\)10](#), it had been tasked with preparing draft proposals for the fourth reporting cycle for review by the WGFON. The Chair informed the Group that the WGFON met from 19-21 March 2025 and much of its deliberation was on the documents submitted on the fourth reporting cycle.

3.2 The Chair noted that the WGFON's feedback on the proposals for the fourth reporting cycle was very positive. Nevertheless, there were some areas where the WGFON felt that the templates etc. could be improved. The Chair raised that given that the Heads of Delegation of all Contracting Parties are in WGFON, plus some key advisers, the majority of the changes that the WGFON has proposed need to be implemented by the Group in its revisions of the various documents.

3.3 The Chair referred the Working Group on Future Reporting (WGFR) to the document 'Feedback from the WGFON to the WGFR' composed by the Chair and Secretariat and reviewed by the WGFON Chair. The Chair noted that the document outlines where items in the various documents on the fourth reporting cycle need to be changed by the Group and where the WGFON has given the flexibility to the Group to decide what changes it wishes to make.

3.4 The Chair reminded the Group that the purpose of the April meeting of the WGFR was to deal with the feedback from the WGFON to produce the documents to submit for Council's consideration in June and not to reopen the various aspects of the fourth reporting cycle for discussion.

**4. Review of the WGFON's Proposed Changes to the Performance Indicators Template**

4.1 The Chair raised that in its review of the proposed Performance Indicators template, the WGFON had asked the Group to add an initial question in each of the three theme areas along the lines of

*'Do you have salmon fisheries in your jurisdiction'? If no, then move to the*

*'Protection and Restoration of Salmon Habitat Indicators' section.*

The Chair added that it had also been raised that some of the questions on Conservation Limits should be answered even where there are no salmon fisheries. The Chair noted that the Group would need to resolve this.

- 4.2 The Chair proposed that for the 'Protection and Restoration of Salmon Habitat Indicators' the initial question might be along the lines of

*'Do you have rivers in your jurisdiction that you manage for wild Atlantic salmon?'  
If no, then move to the 'Indicators for the Management of Aquaculture, Introductions and Transfers and Transgenics' section.*

- 4.3 For the 'Indicators for the Management of Aquaculture, Introductions and Transfers and Transgenics', the Chair proposed there might need to be two initial questions along the lines of:

*'Do you have commercial salmonid aquaculture in your Party / jurisdiction? If yes, please answer the following questions'....and*

*'If you do not have commercial salmonid aquaculture in your Party / jurisdiction, are any of your wild salmon stocks impacted by commercial aquaculture from other Parties / jurisdictions? If yes, please answer the following questions'.*

The Chair invited comments from the Group on these various initial questions.

- 4.4 The Group first discussed the proposal for an initial question for the theme area 'Management of Salmon Fisheries'. Concern was raised that introducing an initial question imposes complications, such as how to answer the question if there are no active fisheries because runs are below their CLs and fisheries have been closed, suggesting instead that the other questions be reviewed. It was also raised that the NASCO guidance on fisheries management specifies that Parties / jurisdictions should have CLs or equivalent for all salmon rivers, indicating that CLs are required for all rivers with salmon and whether there is a fishery or not is irrelevant. It was noted that as CLs do not just apply to fisheries and are a measure of the status of a stock, they provide an important reference point, for example providing a measure of the impact of restoration actions. In addition it was raised that a Party / jurisdiction may have a fishery that does not have a CL and therefore separate questions on the presence / absence of fisheries and presence / absence of CLs were both relevant.
- 4.5 Following extensive further discussion, the Group agreed to retain an initial question on whether a Party / jurisdiction had salmon fisheries, as an important piece of knowledge and relevant to most Parties / jurisdictions. This would ensure that Parties / jurisdictions that have fisheries but no reference point information would be considered. The Group also agreed that the questions following should not be optional and would refer to 'salmon river stocks' to be consistent with the 'NASCO Guidelines for the Management of Salmon Fisheries', [CNL\(09\)43](#).
- 4.6 The Chair noted that the WGFON considered that free text fields are required in the Performance Indicator template and asked the Group to consider which responses may need text boxes. For example, Iceland might need to explain that it is not including ranched fish in the Rangá river system in the relevant section(s). Others might need to explain that although they have many more rivers in their country, only XX are being reported on in the performance metrics. A text box in each theme section would enable Parties / jurisdictions to provide further information and qualify any instances in which they were unable to answer questions, e.g. because a question was not applicable.
- 4.7 The Group discussed the need to present the data from these questions carefully, highlighting that a single river system may have several CLs if it has numerous tributaries. It should be

clear, therefore, that the number of salmon rivers is not necessarily interchangeable with the number of CLs.

- 4.8 The Group discussed the Chair's proposed wording for questions at the start of the section under the theme 'Protection and Restoration of Salmon Habitat Indicators' (see paragraph 4.2) and agreed to include it. The Chair noted that the WGFON felt that the habitat questions in general were about quantity and not quality. This was not resolved during the WGFON. The Chair asked the Group to consider if the section could include metrics relating to habitat quality.
- 4.9 The Group had an extensive discussion on how to capture habitat quality, i.e. ranging from using salmon spawning habitat availability to smolt quality as a measure and raised that metrics on habitat quality should be taken into account when NASCO's habitat guidelines are reviewed. The Group agreed that capturing some information on habitat quality was important and that a generic question that could be answered with a yes or no would be more broadly applicable than using metrics, such as asking if the Party / jurisdiction uses an indicator of habitat quality and if that is improving or declining. The Group agreed to such a question, with reference to NASCO's habitat guidelines, and to the addition of a text box to capture any qualifying comments Parties / jurisdictions could share.
- 4.10 The Chair pointed out that the WGFON noted that most of the questions for the indicators 'Indicators for the Management of Aquaculture, Introductions and Transfers and Transgenics' relate only to aquaculture impacts on salmon rivers. Given that the Faroe Islands has commercial salmon aquaculture but no salmon rivers, the questions as tabled may mean that the Faroe Islands would not have to answer most of the aquaculture questions. The Chair noted this would be a concern given the potential for commercial aquaculture operations in the Faroe Islands to impact wild Atlantic salmon originating from other jurisdictions and asked the Group to consider how to ensure this was adequately accounted for.
- 4.11 The Chair also noted that the WGFON had raised that the 'Indicators for the Management of Aquaculture, Introductions and Transfers and Transgenics' relates only to aquaculture even though the theme area also includes introductions and transfers and transgenics. The Chair asked the Group to consider if the section should include metrics relating to introductions and transfers and transgenics. The Group agreed to include additional questions on pink salmon abundance and following the 'Revised Road Map to Enhance Information Exchange and Co-operation on Monitoring, Research and Measures to Prevent the Spread of *G. salaris* and Eradicate it if Introduced', [NEA\(23\)14](#).
- 4.12 The Group discussed additional comments that had been raised by the United Kingdom at the end of the WGFON on the metrics used for reporting on wild Atlantic salmon catch and release data, which included the suggestion to move to a single unit, i.e. catch, rather than the two units currently in use, i.e. numbers and percentage. A member of the Group raised that doing so would lose the ability to make historical comparisons. The Group discussed the option of having an automated system in the new reporting format, which would give the same units across the categories being reported.
- 4.13 The Group agreed 'Proposed Performance Indicators against NASCO's Resolutions, Agreements and Guidelines for the Fourth Reporting Cycle (2026 to 2032), WGFR(25)03, Annex 3, for the attention of the Council.

## **5. Review of the WGFON's Proposed Changes to the Conservation Commitments Report Template**

- 5.1 The Chair raised that the WGFON had felt that each of the actions in the CCRs having to be urgent and transformative was too much of a simplification, but that collectively, however,

the actions under a particular stressor should be urgent and transformative. The Chair further raised that this would need to be reflected in both the CCR template and elsewhere, e.g. the ToRs for the CCR Review Group.

- 5.2 The Chair raised that the WGFON recommended that it be clarified that the CCRs should include work being carried out by all relevant actors in each Party / jurisdiction, i.e. the work of NGOs and IPRI's should be included. The Chair noted the Group should ensure that the narrative on this is clear in the documentation sent to Council for approval.
- 5.3 The Chair noted that the WGFON considered that including the work of NGOs and IPRI's in the fourth reporting cycle actions was a very important difference to the third reporting cycle, and should be highlighted in the Group's presentation to Council.
- 5.4 The Group discussed reducing the level of information required on individual actions and moving forward with a requirement for information on how the combined actions in a CCR would meet NASCO's Strategic Goal, Vision and Mission to be urgent and transformative. The Chair noted that the burden would be on the Parties / jurisdictions to show a clear rationale on how they believe their action(s) will reduce the associated stressor and to report on how this has been achieved. He added that the reporting was intended to provide transparency and enable the Parties / jurisdictions to be held accountable for addressing their stressors adequately, by other Parties / jurisdictions, the NGOs and IPRI's. The Group raised that the composition of the CCR Review Group was an important aspect in relation to reviewing the level of impact of the actions in a CCR.
- 5.5 The Group agreed to the addition of a text box at the end of each set of questions on individual stressors that requested a description of the overall impacts of the action(s) related to each stressor. The description was required to include an indication of how the action(s) would be urgent and transformative and at an appropriate scale to deliver improvement at a population level for wild Atlantic salmon through the removal or diminishment of the relevant stressor, as per the requirements of NASCO's Strategic Goal, Vision and Mission.
- 5.6 The Group noted that the inclusion of work of NGOs and IPRI's in the CCRs was not just about individual elements, i.e. specific projects, but was also about the wider aspect of including stakeholders and IPRI's in the planning and delivery of the CCRs. The Group agreed to edits in the CCR questions and introductory text to reflect this.
- 5.7 The Group agreed 'Proposed Conservation Commitments Report for the Fourth Reporting Cycle (2026 to 2032), WGFR(25)04, Annex 4, for the attention of the Council.

## **6. Review of the WGFON's Proposed Changes to the Terms of Reference for the CCR Review Group**

- 6.1 The Chair noted that the WGFON had discussed whether there was a need to have a CCR Review Group, with the conclusion that the Review Group will review the draft CCRs and at least do the first biennial review. After this, Council can then review the necessity of the Review Group.
- 6.2 The Chair raised that the WGFON had proposed an extra step at the start of the Draft CCR Review Process, which would require each Party / jurisdiction to make a presentation (virtually) to the Review Group on the rationale for the stressors / actions included in the CCR, once the draft CCRs were received by the Review Group. The Chair asked the Group to consider and implement this recommendation, given it was requested by the WGFON, which includes all the Heads of Delegation, and Council will ultimately agree the process.
- 6.3 The Chair noted that in consideration of appointing Lead Reviewers, the WGFON had considered that the CCRs could be reviewed with the relevant experts being responsible for the review of the three different theme areas, rather than each lead reviewer reviewing

several CCRs in their entirety. The Chair raised that the Group may wish to consider this and revise the ToRs, or clarify that review by theme area could be a possibility that the Review Group can decide.

- 6.4 The Chair noted that the WGFON felt that NGO / IPRI participants should also be able to be lead reviewers, given that the fourth reporting cycle does not have a pass / fail mentality (as has been the case in the past), and that there is a stronger emphasis on having the right expertise in the Review Group. The Chair asked the Group to consider whether it wished to clarify this in the ToRs or leave it to the discretion of the Review Group.
- 6.5 The Chair raised that the WGFON felt that sections B and C under the Working Methods section of the ToRs could be removed and added at a later date when it was clearer how the work of the Review Group would pan out. He noted that the WGFON also suggested that the wording as written could be left in with the understanding that it could be revised in the future. The Chair asked the Group whether it wished to leave / change / delete sections B and C of the Working Methods in the ToRs.
- 6.6 The Chair noted that the WGFON had recommended the Group could decide whether to leave the various options up to the discretion of the Review Group in the ToRs, and that this may need to be clarified in the ToRs.
- 6.7 The Group held extensive discussions on the WGFON request for Parties / jurisdictions to make presentations on the rationale for the stressors and actions in their CCRs, early in the reporting cycle before the Review Group had completed its initial review of the CCRs. Several options were considered to facilitate this request without over-burdening the members of the Review Group. The Group noted that the burden of time required would only be at the start of the fourth reporting cycle with the intention to have a clearer and more effective process. It was also raised, however, that the time required would need to be acceptable to the employers of the Review Group so that they would be able to participate. The Group agreed to integrate initial (virtual) presentations from the Parties / jurisdictions into the week-long in-person meeting scheduled for the Review Group to conduct the CCR reviews. The Group felt that the new reporting process proposed was significantly less time-consuming than that of the third reporting cycle, and the integration of the interviews could provide clarity over any unclear details and reduce the time required to consider each CCR. The Group also agreed to attend a half-day virtual preparatory meeting in the preceding week to run through the review process.
- 6.8 In addition, the Group agreed that, given the expectation that most queries would have been addressed in the initial review process, the second scheduled interviews with Parties / jurisdictions may not be required.
- 6.9 The Group had extensive discussion on the WGFON's considerations of Lead Reviewers, noting that the equivalent role in the fourth reporting cycle would be more as a co-ordinator of each CCR review, given the more streamlined reporting methods and the presentations from the Parties / jurisdictions. The Group agreed to wording that indicated the review of each CCR would be guided by a participant of the Review Group who would lead the review of that CCR. The Group also discussed whether the CCRs should be reviewed in terms of the Party / jurisdiction or by theme. It was raised that this was difficult to establish without knowing the content of the CCRs. The Group agreed that the ToRs should specify that the Review Group would determine how to review the CCRs.
- 6.10 The Group discussed the WGFON suggestion to remove sections B and C of the Working Methods from the ToRs, noting that in the third reporting cycle working methods had not been agreed before the Review Group met and a substantial amount of time had been spent discussing them. The Secretary raised that the ToRs could be reviewed and adjusted by the

Review Group as needed. The Group agreed to retain sections B and C with some additional text to reflect that the CCRs may be reviewed by CCR or CCR theme area.

- 6.11 The Group agreed ‘Proposed Terms of Reference for the Conservation Commitments Reports Review Group’, WGFR(25)05, Annex 5, for the attention of the Council.

## **7. Review of the Proposed Schedule for the Fourth Reporting Cycle**

- 7.1 The Chair noted that although no changes were proposed to the Schedule, the Group would need to ensure that any changes to the CCR Review Group ToRs are reflected in a revised schedule, such as the timing for the presentation (virtually) to the Review Group on the rationale for the stressors / actions included in the CCR.
- 7.2 The Group agreed to the addition of the presentations by Parties / jurisdictions to the Review Group during the week-long in-person Review Group meeting. In addition the Group agreed to modify the wording of the second interview to make it clear it may not be needed.
- 7.3 The Group also suggested and agreed that the CCR Review Group should be asked to attend the webinar by the Group scheduled for September 2025, which was added to the schedule.
- 7.4 The Group agreed ‘Proposed Schedule for the Fourth Reporting Cycle (2026-2032’, WGFR(25)06, Annex 6, for the attention of the Council.

## **8. Review of the Revised Recommendations to Council for the Fourth Reporting Cycle**

- 8.1 The Chair raised that the WGFON had discussed the proposed recommendations to Council and made some changes for Council to adopt. The Chair noted that the WGFON did not consider the explanatory text above each recommendation. However, he raised that where a recommendation had been changed then the Group would need to reflect this change in the explanatory text, in particular in relation to recommendations 2 and 4.
- 8.2 The Group agreed the changes to recommendations 1 and 4, and associated introductory text, with no changes made to recommendation 3.
- 8.3 The Group had extensive discussion on recommendation 2 and raised concerns that it risked overlapping with the stressor analysis, which was a separate process to the fourth reporting cycle, even though it was intended to be used to inform the fourth reporting cycle. The Group developed and agreed text to reflect that only the stressors associated with the CCRs would be considered by the Review Group, along with the action(s) associated with each stressor. The Group agreed that the process in recommendation 2 would also require a starting point against which to measure progress and included text to state that.
- 8.4 The Working Group on Future Reporting’s recommendations to Council are given in Annex 7.

## **9. Any Other Business**

- 9.1 The Group discussed additional issues that had been raised over the period of the meeting that were considered to be relevant for informing the deliberations of the working groups that will be doing the revisions of NASCO’s Resolutions, Agreements and Guidelines. The Secretary raised that she was preparing generic ToRs for those working groups that would take a wide range of factors into consideration, which could also include recommendations from the WGFR.
- 9.2 The Group raised that the items they would like to put forward for consideration were:
- consideration of perspectives on the definition of ‘wild Atlantic salmon’;
  - guidance in respect to habitat quality;

- defining aquaculture in the context of salmonid and salmon aquaculture, and commercial aquaculture versus conservation hatcheries;
- inclusion of freshwater operations in consideration of salmonid aquaculture;
- consideration of smolt quality, either as an indicator for habitat quality and overall habitat productivity or as an element of its own;
- changing environmental conditions as a driver for changes in habitat quality; and
- fisheries management in terms of larger or broader consideration to catch and release impacts.

## **10. Report of the Meeting**

10.1 The Group agreed the report of its meeting.

## **11. Close of Meeting**

11.1 The Chair thanked participants for their hard work in developing these proposals, which form part of a process of great importance to NASCO. He then closed the meeting.

***Participants in the Working Group on Future Reporting – April 2025***

|                     |   |
|---------------------|---|
| Hlynur Bárðarson    | Marine and Freshwater Research Institute, Iceland                                       |
| Helge Dyrendal      | Norwegian Environment Agency  |
| Cathal Gallagher    | Inland Fisheries Ireland  |
| Livia Goodbrand     | Fisheries and Oceans, Canada  |
| Dan Kircheis        | NOAA Federal, USA (Working Group Chair)   |
| Michael Millane     | Inland Fisheries Ireland  |
| Rebekka Nygaard Bak | Ministry of Fisheries, Hunting and Agriculture, Greenland<br>(participated on 30 April) |
| Alan Walker         | Cefas, England  |
| Ben Wilson          | Natural Resources Wales (participated on 28 & 29 April)                                 |



**WGFR(25)02**

***Working Group on Future Reporting under  
Implementation Plans and Evaluation of these Reports***

***By Video-Conference***

***28-30 April 2025***

***13:00-17:30 hrs, UK time each day***

***Agenda***

1. Opening of the Meeting
2. Adoption of the Agenda
3. Review of the Feedback from the Working Group on the Future of NASCO (WGFON) to the Working Group on Future Reporting
4. Review of the WGFON's Proposed Changes to the Performance Indicators Template
5. Review of the WGFON's Proposed Changes to the Conservation Commitments Report Template
6. Review of the WGFON's Proposed Changes to the Terms of Reference for the CCR Review Group
7. Review of the Proposed Schedule for the Fourth Reporting Cycle
8. Review of the Revised Recommendations to Council for the Fourth Reporting Cycle
9. Any Other Business
10. Report of the Meeting
11. Close of Meeting

## WGFR(25)03

***Proposed Performance Indicators against NASCO's Resolutions, Agreements and Guidelines for the Fourth Reporting Cycle (2026 to 2032)*****Introduction**

NASCO has adopted various Resolutions, Agreements and Guidelines that address the Organization's principal areas of concern for the management of salmon stocks. In 2005, it was agreed that 'NASCO will be committed to the measures and agreements it develops and actively review progress with implementation plans', [CNL\(05\)49](#). Since then, each jurisdiction has developed plans, known as Implementation Plans, detailing measures to be taken over five to six year periods, with each period referred to as a reporting cycle, in relation to three areas: 'Management of Salmon Fisheries'; 'Protection and Restoration of Atlantic Salmon Habitat'; and 'Management of Aquaculture, Introductions and Transfers and Transgenics'.

In 2020, Council considered NASCO's reporting cycle to be vitally important as a mechanism to strengthen the implementation of NASCO's Resolutions, Agreements and Guidelines and to hold Parties / jurisdictions accountable to them. It agreed that the purpose of its reporting cycles is to provide a succinct, transparent, fair and balanced approach for reporting on the implementation of NASCO's Resolutions, Agreements and Guidelines by the Parties / jurisdictions.

In 2024, Council agreed a Ten-Year Strategy and Action Plan, [CNL\(24\)71rev](#). The Strategy identified that NASCO is uniquely positioned to provide leadership in addressing the range of threats to wild Atlantic salmon and support its conservation and recovery, being the only inter-governmental organization with regulatory competency for wild Atlantic salmon fisheries. NASCO is the pre-eminent convener of the wild Atlantic salmon community throughout the North Atlantic Ocean, including governments, Indigenous Peoples, Non-Governmental Organizations, fishers, environmental organizations and other relevant actors.

Recognising this unique position, Council agreed a Strategic Goal, which states:

*'Within the next 10 years, NASCO's goal is to prioritise and drive actions necessary to slow the decline of wild Atlantic salmon populations and demonstrate that restoration is possible'*

and a Mission statement:

*'NASCO will support and promote urgent and transformative actions directed at the protection, conservation and restoration of wild Atlantic salmon throughout the species' range'*

Given this new Goal and Mission statement, together with Council's continuing commitment to the implementation of NASCO's Resolutions, Agreements and Guidelines by the Parties / jurisdictions, as part of its Action Plan Council agreed that a fourth reporting cycle should be developed, [CNL\(24\)88](#), and agreed Terms of Reference for a Working Group on Future Reporting, [CNL\(24\)63](#), to enable its development. It also agreed that each Party / jurisdiction should carry out a stressor analysis before June 2025, to enable an objective understanding of the key threats to wild Atlantic salmon in each Party / jurisdiction. These identified threats would then inform the fourth reporting cycle.

Council noted that the fourth reporting cycle may depart from the format of earlier reporting cycles, whilst remaining a transparent mechanism to strengthen implementation of NASCO's Resolutions, Agreements and Guidelines. However, Council provided a framework around which the fourth reporting cycle should be built: to enable a reporting cycle balancing simplicity, effectiveness and

transparency; to simplify accountability through a limited number of specific outcomes and clear metrics with its focus needing to relate to reducing stressors; for progress to be measured clearly against a tangible outcome for wild Atlantic salmon, to show progress towards the achievement of NASCO's Resolutions, Agreements and Guidelines; that each tangible outcome should be based on an action that improves the conditions for survival and / or populations through the removal or diminishment of a threat; and a clear baseline should be identified to enable progress against each action to be measured.

### **The Fourth Reporting Cycle**

Given Council's instructions to the Working Group on Future Reporting to create a fourth reporting cycle that builds on objective analysis of stressors by each Party / jurisdiction, to enable a reporting cycle balancing simplicity, effectiveness and transparency and to simplify accountability through a limited number of specific outcomes and clear metrics, this reporting cycle comprises two main components:

1. Reporting on theme-based Performance Indicators to demonstrate Parties' / jurisdictions' progress towards the achievement of NASCO's Resolutions, Agreements and Guidelines.
2. Developing and reporting on Parties' / jurisdictions' individual Conservation Commitments that demonstrate their individual commitments towards addressing the highest priority identified stressors within each Party / jurisdiction through a limited number of actions that relate clearly to the conservation of wild Atlantic salmon.

However, catch data also need to be reported each year under Article 15 of the Convention. Catch data will, therefore, continue to be provided under the structure of the fourth reporting cycle.

#### **1. Performance Indicators**

The theme-based Performance Indicators include between six and 12 key metrics for each theme area that will serve as indicators of progress towards reducing the threats associated with fisheries and aquaculture and increasing the productive capacity of freshwater habitats.

These will be reported on annually by Parties / jurisdictions, with the first round commencing in 2027. Reporting will be carried out via a web-based form, a departure from earlier reporting cycles. The reports will be public-facing documents. The reporting schedule is available in document CNL(25)XX. The Performance Indicators will not be reviewed. However, the selected Performance Indicators will help Council assess progress towards the achievement of NASCO's Resolutions, Agreements and Guidelines. They will also form the basis for information on trends in the Indicators that can be used by the NASCO Secretariat for outreach and communications on the state of wild Atlantic salmon and its management across the North Atlantic.

#### **2. Conservation Commitments**

Parties / jurisdictions will develop their Conservation Commitments in relation to the key stressors identified in a separate exercise presented to Council at the 2025 Annual Meeting.

The three stressors identified as highest priority in each stressor analysis will form the basis for the Conservation Commitments Report (CCR). If any of the three stressors in each CCR are not one of the three highest priorities identified in the stressor analysis, a justification must be provided.

To address each of the three highest-priority stressors identified, each Party / jurisdiction must provide details of one to three specific actions per stressor that they plan to implement. The actions related to each stressor must result in the improvement of conditions for wild Atlantic salmon through the effective management, i.e. removal or reduction, of the relevant stressor. Each action will be developed and reviewed in accordance with criteria agreed by Council – including that it has a clear and measurable tangible outcome. Collectively, the overall impact of the combined actions

must be urgent and transformative. These aspects will enable an understanding of the progress towards the achievement of NASCO's Strategic Goal.

Work being carried out by all relevant actors in each Party / jurisdiction that can contribute to the planning and delivery of an action should be included, such as the work of stakeholders and Indigenous Peoples representatives and institutions (IPRIs). Input from, and engagement with, stakeholders and IPRIs will be reported on in each CCR.

Reporting will be carried out via a web-based form, a departure from earlier reporting cycles. Each CCR will be a public-facing document. The schedule for the review of, and reporting on, the CCR is available in document CNL(25)XX. Reporting by Parties / jurisdictions will be done annually. The reviews by the Review Group will be carried out biennially. The Terms of Reference (ToRs) for the Review Group established to review the CCRs are available in document CNL(25)YY. These ToRs identify clearly what will be reviewed both in the initial review of the CCRs and in review of progress against each action biennially.

|                      |
|----------------------|
| <b>Party:</b>        |
| <b>Jurisdiction:</b> |

### Wild Atlantic Salmon Catch Data

|  | 2025                                      | 2026                                      | 2027                                      | 2028                                      | 2029                                      | 2030                                      | 2031                                      | 2032                                      |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| <b>Confirmed nominal* catch (tonnes)</b>   | In river<br>Estuarine<br>Coastal<br>Total | In river<br>Estuarine<br>Coastal<br>Total | In river<br>Estuarine<br>Coastal<br>Total | In river<br>Estuarine<br>Coastal<br>Total | In river<br>Estuarine<br>Coastal<br>Total | In river<br>Estuarine<br>Coastal<br>Total | In river<br>Estuarine<br>Coastal<br>Total | In river<br>Estuarine<br>Coastal<br>Total |
| <b>Provisional nominal catch (tonnes)</b>  | In river<br>Estuarine<br>Coastal<br>Total | In river<br>Estuarine<br>Coastal<br>Total | In river<br>Estuarine<br>Coastal<br>Total | In river<br>Estuarine<br>Coastal<br>Total | In river<br>Estuarine<br>Coastal<br>Total | In river<br>Estuarine<br>Coastal<br>Total | In river<br>Estuarine<br>Coastal<br>Total | In river<br>Estuarine<br>Coastal<br>Total |
| <b>Estimated unreported catch (tonnes)</b>   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| <b>Confirmed number / percentage of salmon caught and released in recreational fisheries</b>   | Number<br>Percentage                      | Number<br>Percentage                      | Number<br>Percentage                      | Number<br>Percentage                      | Number<br>Percentage                      | Number<br>Percentage                      | Number<br>Percentage                      | Number<br>Percentage                      |
| <b>Provisional number / percentage of salmon caught and released in recreational fisheries</b> | Number<br>Percentage                      | Number<br>Percentage                      | Number<br>Percentage                      | Number<br>Percentage                      | Number<br>Percentage                      | Number<br>Percentage                      | Number<br>Percentage                      | Number<br>Percentage                      |

\*nominal catch equals reported quantity of salmon caught and retained in tonnes ‘round fresh weight’ (i.e. weight of whole, ungutted, unfrozen fish) or ‘round fresh weight equivalent’

### Baseline Indicators

- B.1. How many salmon rivers in your jurisdiction in 2024?<sup>1</sup> \_\_\_\_\_
- B.2. On the basis of NASCO’s Strategic Goal to slow the decline of wild Atlantic salmon by 2034, what is the estimate of the number of adult wild Atlantic salmon in your jurisdiction for 2024, and then in subsequent years? Use your preferred method of calculation and ensure consistency between years.

| Number in 2024 | Number in 2025 | Number in 2026 | Number in 2027 | Number in 2028 | Number in 2029 | Number in 2030 | Number in 2031 |
|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
|                |                |                |                |                |                |                |                |

### Management of Salmon Fisheries Indicators

The objective of NASCO and its Parties for the management of salmon fisheries is ‘to promote and protect the diversity and abundance of salmon stocks’, [CNL\(09\)43](#).

Section 2.4 a. of the ‘NASCO Guidelines for the Management of Salmon Fisheries’, [CNL\(09\)43](#), states that ‘Conservation limits (CLs) should be established to define adequate levels of abundance for all river stocks of salmon’ and ‘these should be established for separate sea age components (i.e. one-sea-winter (1SW) and multi-sea-winter (MSW) salmon’. Section 2.4 d. allows that ‘Where CLs

<sup>1</sup> Please note. This number has been provided as part of the input to the Wild Atlantic Salmon Atlas

have not been established, alternative measures should be used as reference points’. Section 2.4 e. states that ‘Management targets should also be established at a level above the CL to assist fishery managers in ensuring there is a high probability of stocks exceeding their CLs, or alternative reference point’.

Section 2.7 e. of the Guidelines states that ‘Fishing on stocks that are below CLs should not be permitted. If a decision is made to allow fishing on a stock that is below its CL, on the basis of overriding socio-economic factors, fishing should clearly be limited to a level that will still permit stock recovery within a stated timeframe’.

Section 2.8 c. of the Guidelines, on mixed-stock fisheries (MSFs), states that ‘Management actions should aim to protect the weakest of the contributing stocks’.

F.1. Do you have salmon fisheries in your jurisdiction? (Y / N)

To provide a basis for understanding how salmon river stocks are managed within your jurisdiction, please answer the following questions:

F.2. Do you have CLs or alternative reference points for salmon river stocks in your jurisdiction? (Y / N)

F.2.a. If yes, are you using CLs or alternative reference points, in your fisheries management decision making? (Y / N)

F.3. Do you have CLs or alternative reference points for separate sea-age components (i.e. one-sea-winter (1SW) and multi-sea-winter (MSW) salmon)? (Y / N)

F.3.a. If yes, are you using age-specific CLs or alternative reference points, in your fisheries management decision making? (Y / N)

F.4. Do you have Management Targets based on your CLs or alternative reference points? (Y / N)

F.4.a. If yes, are you using Management Targets in your fisheries management decision making? (Y / N)

F.5. How many salmon river stocks had CLs, or alternative reference points, in your jurisdiction in the year?

| 2026 | 2027 | 2028 | 2029 | 2030 | 2031 | 2032 |
|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
|      |      |      |      |      |      |      |

F.6. What percentage of salmon river stocks with CLs, or alternative reference points, were assessed for CL, or the alternative reference point, compliance in the year?

| 2026 | 2027 | 2028 | 2029 | 2030 | 2031 | 2032 |
|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
|      |      |      |      |      |      |      |

F.7. How many salmon river stocks attained their CLs, or alternative reference points, in the year?

| 2026 | 2027 | 2028 | 2029 | 2030 | 2031 | 2032 |
|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
|      |      |      |      |      |      |      |

F.8. What percentage of assessed salmon river stocks attained their CLs, or alternative reference points, in the year?

| 2026 | 2027 | 2028 | 2029 | 2030 | 2031 | 2032 |
|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
|      |      |      |      |      |      |      |

F.9. For how many salmon river stocks where wild Atlantic salmon stocks are below their CL, or alternative reference point, did you allow any fishing activities for salmon in the year (including all retention and catch & release)?

| 2026 | 2027 | 2028 | 2029 | 2030 | 2031 | 2032 |
|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
|      |      |      |      |      |      |      |

F.10. On how many salmon rivers without CLs, or alternative reference points, did you allow any fishing activities for salmon in the year (including all retention and catch & release)?

| 2026 | 2027 | 2028 | 2029 | 2030 | 2031 | 2032 |
|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
|      |      |      |      |      |      |      |

F.11. How many mixed-stock fisheries exist where one or more contributory salmon river stocks were below their CLs in the year?

| 2026 | 2027 | 2028 | 2029 | 2030 | 2031 | 2032 |
|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
|      |      |      |      |      |      |      |

F.12. In your assessment of compliance with CLs or alternative reference points for managing fisheries, do you account for post-release impacts of catch and release angling for wild Atlantic salmon? (Y / N)

F.13 In light of increasing climate change impacts, do you apply warm-water protocols in your management of catch and release angling for wild Atlantic salmon? (Y / N)

If there is anything that you would like to explain about your answers in F.1 to F.13 above, please do so in the text box below.

|  |
|--|
|  |
|--|

## Protection and Restoration of Salmon Habitat Indicators

### Part 1

To protect and restore the resource and the environment in which salmon live, in 1998, NASCO and its Parties agreed to adopt and apply a [Precautionary Approach](#) to the conservation, management and exploitation of salmon. The objective of NASCO and its Parties for the protection and restoration of salmon habitat is to ‘maintain, and where possible, increase the current productive capacity of Atlantic salmon habitat’, [CNL\(10\)51](#).

Section 3.1 of the ‘NASCO Guidelines for the Protection, Restoration and Enhancement of Atlantic Salmon Habitat’, [CNL\(10\)51](#), states that ‘A range of information should be collected on a routine basis through reporting and monitoring programmes relating to the productive capacity of salmon stocks and any factors that may be adversely affecting it.’... ‘In particular, the quantity and quality of salmon habitat currently available should be determined’ and, ‘Where available, information on the quantity of habitat historically available to salmon should be used to inform restoration initiatives.’ To provide a baseline for future comparison please answer the following questions:

- H.1. Provide your estimate of the kilometres of river that would be available to Atlantic salmon in the absence of man-made barriers (i.e. the historically available habitat).

If the answer is zero then move to the ‘Indicators for the Management of Aquaculture, Introductions and Transfers and Transgenics’ section.

- H.2. Provide your estimate of the kilometres of river that were accessible to Atlantic salmon in the year

| 2026 | 2027 | 2028 | 2029 | 2030 | 2031 | 2032 |
|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
|      |      |      |      |      |      |      |

### Part 2

Although there are a large number of factors that affect the productive capacity of freshwater habitats, well-connected habitats are paramount to salmon’s ability to effectively use these habitats.

Consistent with Section 3.6 of the Guidelines, addressing passage at barriers provides the most direct means of increasing productive capacity of freshwater habitats and restoring the overall value of ecosystem services.

As a key indicator, and to provide a baseline of understanding on the extent that barriers are blocking or impeding access to freshwater habitats, including climate resilient habitats, please answer the following questions:

- H.4. Estimate the number of man-made physical barriers (e.g. dams, bridges and weirs and hydropower facilities) to salmon migration within your jurisdiction in the year 2025

- H.5. How many man-made physical barriers in salmon rivers were removed in the year?

| 2026 | 2027 | 2028 | 2029 | 2030 | 2031 | 2032 |
|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
|      |      |      |      |      |      |      |

- H.6. How many (enabling both upstream and downstream passage) barrier mitigation measures (e.g. fishways or fish lifts, nature-like fishways, bypass reaches, etc.) in salmon rivers were implemented in the year?



| 2026 | 2027 | 2028 | 2029 | 2030 | 2031 | 2032 |
|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
|      |      |      |      |      |      |      |

H.7. How many new barriers were constructed in salmon rivers in the year?

| 2026 | 2027 | 2028 | 2029 | 2030 | 2031 | 2032 |
|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
|      |      |      |      |      |      |      |

H.8. Noting the complexities of defining and measuring habitat quality, do you have any means to determine salmon habitat quality. (Y / N)

If Y, is this quality improving or declining (with reference to 2010<sup>2</sup>)?

If there is anything that you would like to explain about your answers in H.1 to H.8 above, please do so in the text box below.

---

<sup>2</sup> The NASCO Guidelines for the Protection, Restoration and Enhancement of Atlantic salmon Habitat, CNL(10)51 were published in 2010.

## Indicators for the Management of Aquaculture, Introductions and Transfers and Transgenics

The Williamsburg Resolution, [CNL\(06\)48](#), requests the Parties to the Convention for the Conservation of Salmon in the North Atlantic Ocean to ‘cooperate to minimise adverse effects to the wild salmon stocks from impacts from aquaculture, introductions and transfers and transgenics’.

In 2009, NASCO and the International Salmon Farmers Association agreed ‘Guidance on Best Management Practices to address impacts of sea lice and escaped farmed salmon on wild salmon stocks’, [SLG\(09\)5](#), setting out the two international goals:

- 100% of farms to have effective sea lice management such that there is no increase in sea lice loads or lice-induced mortality of wild salmonids attributable to the farms; and
- 100% farmed fish to be retained in all production facilities.

A.1. Do you have commercial<sup>3</sup> salmon aquaculture (freshwater and / or marine) in your Party / jurisdiction? (Y / N)

A.2. Do you have concerns over wild salmon stocks being impacted by commercial aquaculture from other Parties / jurisdictions? (Y / N)

What basis do you have to support these concerns?

|  |
|--|
|  |
|--|

To understand progress towards the international goals, please answer the following questions:

A.3. Does your jurisdiction gather estimates of farmed salmon escaped from commercial aquaculture annually? (Y / N)

A.3.a. If yes, provide an estimate of the total number of escaped individuals for the year

| 2026 | 2027 | 2028 | 2029 | 2030 | 2031 | 2032 |
|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
|      |      |      |      |      |      |      |

If you have rivers in your jurisdiction where wild salmon are likely impacted by salmonid aquaculture, please answer the following questions:

A.4. Provide the number of rivers in your jurisdiction where wild salmon are likely impacted by commercial aquaculture in the year

| 2026 | 2027 | 2028 | 2029 | 2030 | 2031 | 2032 |
|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
|      |      |      |      |      |      |      |

A.5. Provide an estimate of the number of rivers where wild salmon stocks are likely being impacted by sea lice emanating from commercial aquaculture facilities in the year

| 2026 | 2027 | 2028 | 2029 | 2030 | 2031 | 2032 |
|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
|      |      |      |      |      |      |      |

Please explain how you arrive at this estimate

|  |
|--|
|  |
|--|

<sup>3</sup> Please note – this does not include conservation hatcheries

A.6. Are rivers monitored routinely to assess the number of farmed salmon escapees from commercial aquaculture? (Y / N)

A.6.a. If yes, provide the number of rivers that are monitored for escapes of farmed salmon from commercial aquaculture in the year

| 2026 | 2027 | 2028 | 2029 | 2030 | 2031 | 2032 |
|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
|      |      |      |      |      |      |      |

A.7. Are rivers monitored routinely to assess the level of genetic introgression in wild salmon stocks by farmed salmon from commercial aquaculture? (Y / N)

A.7.a. If yes, provide the number of rivers that are monitored for genetic introgression from farmed salmon from commercial aquaculture in the year

| 2026 | 2027 | 2028 | 2029 | 2030 | 2031 | 2032 |
|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
|      |      |      |      |      |      |      |

A.8. Do all stocking programmes for Atlantic salmon in your Party or jurisdiction follow the NASCO ‘Guidelines for Stocking Atlantic Salmon’, [CNL\(24\)61](#)? (Y / N / NA)

A.9 Please give estimated numbers of adult pink salmon abundance (including from both commercial and recreational fisheries catch data, as well as removals and counts) in the year:

| 2026 | 2027 | 2028 | 2029 | 2030 | 2031 | 2032 |
|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
|      |      |      |      |      |      |      |

For Members of the North-East Atlantic Commission only:

A.10 Do you follow the ‘Revised Road Map to Enhance Information Exchange and Co-operation on Monitoring, Research and Measures to Prevent the Spread of *G. salaris* and Eradicate it if Introduced’, [NEA\(23\)14](#)? (Y / N)

If there is anything that you would like to explain about your answers in A.1 to A.10 above, please do so in the text box below.

## Additional Information Required Under the Convention

- C.1. Details of any laws, regulations and programmes that have been adopted or repealed since the last notification

|      |                            |
|------|----------------------------|
| 2026 | <i>Report details here</i> |
| 2027 | <i>Report details here</i> |
| 2028 | <i>Report details here</i> |
| 2029 | <i>Report details here</i> |
| 2030 | <i>Report details here</i> |
| 2031 | <i>Report details here</i> |
| 2032 | <i>Report details here</i> |

- C.2. Details of any new commitments concerning the adoption or maintenance in force for specified periods of time of conservation, restoration, and other management measures

|      |                            |
|------|----------------------------|
| 2026 | <i>Report details here</i> |
| 2027 | <i>Report details here</i> |
| 2028 | <i>Report details here</i> |
| 2029 | <i>Report details here</i> |
| 2030 | <i>Report details here</i> |
| 2031 | <i>Report details here</i> |
| 2032 | <i>Report details here</i> |

- C.3. Details of any new actions to prohibit fishing for salmon beyond 12 nautical miles

|      |                            |
|------|----------------------------|
| 2026 | <i>Report details here</i> |
| 2027 | <i>Report details here</i> |
| 2028 | <i>Report details here</i> |
| 2029 | <i>Report details here</i> |
| 2030 | <i>Report details here</i> |
| 2031 | <i>Report details here</i> |
| 2032 | <i>Report details here</i> |

- C.4. Details of any new actions to invite the attention of States not party to the Convention to matters relating to the activities of its vessels which could adversely affect salmon stocks subject to the Convention

|      |                            |
|------|----------------------------|
| 2026 | <i>Report details here</i> |
| 2027 | <i>Report details here</i> |
| 2028 | <i>Report details here</i> |
| 2029 | <i>Report details here</i> |
| 2030 | <i>Report details here</i> |
| 2031 | <i>Report details here</i> |
| 2032 | <i>Report details here</i> |

- C.5. Details of any actions taken to implement regulatory measures under Article 13 of the Convention including imposition of adequate penalties for violations

|      |                            |
|------|----------------------------|
| 2026 | <i>Report details here</i> |
| 2027 | <i>Report details here</i> |
| 2028 | <i>Report details here</i> |
| 2029 | <i>Report details here</i> |
| 2030 | <i>Report details here</i> |
| 2031 | <i>Report details here</i> |
| 2032 | <i>Report details here</i> |

**North American Commission Members only:**

- C.6. Details of any new measures to minimise bycatches of salmon originating in the rivers of the other member

|      |                            |
|------|----------------------------|
| 2026 | <i>Report details here</i> |
| 2027 | <i>Report details here</i> |
| 2028 | <i>Report details here</i> |
| 2029 | <i>Report details here</i> |
| 2030 | <i>Report details here</i> |
| 2031 | <i>Report details here</i> |
| 2032 | <i>Report details here</i> |

- C.7 Details of any alteration to fishing patterns that result in the initiation of fishing or increase in catches of salmon originating in the rivers of another Party except with the consent of the latter

|      |                            |
|------|----------------------------|
| 2026 | <i>Report details here</i> |
| 2027 | <i>Report details here</i> |
| 2028 | <i>Report details here</i> |
| 2029 | <i>Report details here</i> |
| 2030 | <i>Report details here</i> |
| 2031 | <i>Report details here</i> |
| 2032 | <i>Report details here</i> |

## WGFR(25)04

***Proposed Conservation Commitments Report for the Fourth Reporting Cycle  
(2026 to 2032)***

## **Introduction**

NASCO has adopted various Resolutions, Agreements and Guidelines that address the Organization's principal areas of concern for the management of salmon stocks. In 2005, it was agreed that 'NASCO will be committed to the measures and agreements it develops and actively review progress with implementation plans', [CNL\(05\)49](#). Since then, each jurisdiction has developed plans, known as Implementation Plans, detailing measures to be taken over five to six year periods, with each period referred to as a reporting cycle, in relation to three areas: 'Management of Salmon Fisheries'; 'Protection and Restoration of Atlantic Salmon Habitat'; and 'Management of Aquaculture, Introductions and Transfers and Transgenics'.

In 2020, Council considered NASCO's reporting cycle to be vitally important as a mechanism to strengthen the implementation of NASCO's Resolutions, Agreements and Guidelines and to hold Parties / jurisdictions accountable to them. It agreed that the purpose of its reporting cycles is to provide a succinct, transparent, fair and balanced approach for reporting on the implementation of NASCO's Resolutions, Agreements and Guidelines by the Parties / jurisdictions.

In 2024, Council agreed a Ten-Year Strategy and Action Plan, [CNL\(24\)71rev](#). The Strategy identified that NASCO is uniquely positioned to provide leadership in addressing the range of threats to wild Atlantic salmon and support its conservation and recovery, being the only inter-governmental organization with regulatory competency for wild Atlantic salmon fisheries. NASCO is the pre-eminent convener of the wild Atlantic salmon community throughout the North Atlantic Ocean, including governments, Indigenous Peoples, Non-Governmental Organizations, fishers, environmental organizations and other relevant actors.

Recognising this unique position, Council agreed a Strategic Goal, which states:

*'Within the next 10 years, NASCO's goal is to prioritise and drive actions necessary to slow the decline of wild Atlantic salmon populations and demonstrate that restoration is possible'*

and a Mission statement:

*'NASCO will support and promote urgent and transformative actions directed at the protection, conservation and restoration of wild Atlantic salmon throughout the species' range'*

Given this new Goal and Mission statement, together with Council's continuing commitment to the implementation of NASCO's Resolutions, Agreements and Guidelines by the Parties / jurisdictions, as part of its Action Plan Council agreed that a fourth reporting cycle should be developed, [CNL\(24\)88](#), and agreed Terms of Reference for a Working Group on Future Reporting, [CNL\(24\)63](#), to enable its development. It also agreed that each Party / jurisdiction should carry out a stressor analysis before June 2025, to enable an objective understanding of the key threats to wild Atlantic salmon in each Party / jurisdiction. These identified threats would then inform the fourth reporting cycle.

Council noted that the fourth reporting cycle may depart from the format of earlier reporting cycles, whilst remaining a transparent mechanism to strengthen implementation of NASCO's Resolutions, Agreements and Guidelines. However, Council provided a framework around which the fourth reporting cycle should be built: to enable a reporting cycle balancing simplicity, effectiveness and

transparency; to simplify accountability through a limited number of specific outcomes and clear metrics with its focus needing to relate to reducing stressors; for progress to be measured clearly against a tangible outcome for wild Atlantic salmon, to show progress towards the achievement of NASCO's Resolutions, Agreements and Guidelines; that each tangible outcome should be based on an action that improves the conditions for survival and / or populations through the removal or diminishment of a threat; and a clear baseline should be identified to enable progress against each action to be measured.

### **The Fourth Reporting Cycle**

Given Council's instructions to the Working Group on Future Reporting to create a fourth reporting cycle that builds on objective analysis of stressors by each Party / jurisdiction, to enable a reporting cycle balancing simplicity, effectiveness and transparency and to simplify accountability through a limited number of specific outcomes and clear metrics, this reporting cycle comprises two main components:

3. Reporting on theme-based Performance Indicators to demonstrate Parties' / jurisdictions' progress towards the achievement of NASCO's Resolutions, Agreements and Guidelines.
4. Developing and reporting on Parties' / jurisdictions' individual Conservation Commitments that demonstrate their individual commitments towards addressing the highest priority identified stressors within each Party / jurisdiction through a limited number of actions that relate clearly to the conservation of wild Atlantic salmon.

However, catch data also need to be reported each year under Article 15 of the Convention. Catch data will, therefore, continue to be provided under the structure of the fourth reporting cycle.

#### **1. Performance Indicators**

The theme-based Performance Indicators include between six and 12 key metrics for each theme area that will serve as indicators of progress towards reducing the threats associated with fisheries and aquaculture and increasing the productive capacity of freshwater habitats.

These will be reported on annually by Parties / jurisdictions, with the first round commencing in 2027. Reporting will be carried out via a web-based form, a departure from earlier reporting cycles. The reports will be public-facing documents. The reporting schedule is available in document CNL(25)XX. The Performance Indicators will not be reviewed. However, the selected Performance Indicators will help Council assess progress towards the achievement of NASCO's Resolutions, Agreements and Guidelines. They will also form the basis for information on trends in the Indicators that can be used by the NASCO Secretariat for outreach and communications on the state of wild Atlantic salmon and its management across the North Atlantic.

#### **2. Conservation Commitments**

Parties / jurisdictions will develop their Conservation Commitments in relation to the key stressors identified in a separate exercise presented to Council at the 2025 Annual Meeting.

The three stressors identified as highest priority in each stressor analysis will form the basis for the Conservation Commitments Report (CCR). If any of the three stressors in each CCR are not one of the three highest priorities identified in the stressor analysis, a justification must be provided.

To address each of the three highest-priority stressors identified, each Party / jurisdiction must provide details of one to three specific actions per stressor that they plan to implement. The actions related to each stressor must result in the improvement of conditions for wild Atlantic salmon through the effective management, i.e. removal or reduction, of the relevant stressor. Each action will be developed and reviewed in accordance with criteria agreed by Council – including that it has a clear and measurable tangible outcome. Collectively, the overall impact of the combined actions

must be urgent and transformative. These aspects will enable an understanding of the progress towards the achievement of NASCO's Strategic Goal.

Work being carried out by all relevant actors in each Party / jurisdiction that can contribute to the planning and delivery of an action should be included, such as the work of stakeholders and Indigenous Peoples representatives and institutions (IPRIs). Input from, and engagement with, stakeholders and IPRIs will be reported on in each CCR.

Reporting will be carried out via a web-based form, a departure from earlier reporting cycles. Each CCR will be a public-facing document. The schedule for the review of, and reporting on, the CCR is available in document CNL(25)XX. Reporting by Parties / jurisdictions will be done annually. The reviews by the Review Group will be carried out biennially. The Terms of Reference (ToRs) for the Review Group established to review the CCRs are available in document CNL(25)YY. These ToRs identify clearly what will be reviewed both in the initial review of the CCRs and in review of progress against each action biennially.



|                      |
|----------------------|
| <b>Party:</b>        |
| <b>Jurisdiction:</b> |

**Consultation and Engagement**

How was stakeholder and IPRI input included in the development of the Conservation Commitments Report?

|  |
|--|
|  |
|--|

How will stakeholders and IPRI be engaged in the delivery of the Conservation Commitments Report?

|  |
|--|
|  |
|--|

**Stressors**

The top three highest-priority stressors identified in your stressor analysis form the basis for the Conservation Commitments Report.

If any of your three stressors in this Conservation Commitments Report are not one of the three highest priorities identified in your stressor analysis, you must provide the justification why your choices are the most transformative for wild Atlantic salmon within your Party / jurisdiction.

|  |
|--|
|  |
|--|

**Stressor 1**

Name of stressor:

Please identify the theme area that the stressor most closely relates to (drop-down menu of three themes, i.e.)

|  |
|--|
| Management of Salmon Fisheries   |
| Protection and Restoration of Atlantic Salmon Habitat                  |
| Management of Aquaculture, Introductions and Transfers and Transgenics |

With reference to your stressor analysis, CNL(25)XX, please describe, briefly, the stressor in relation to its impact on wild Atlantic salmon, including a quantitative baseline and tangible outcome to enable progress towards the achievement of the Strategic Goal to be measured.

|  |
|--|
|  |
|--|

**Stressor 2**

Name of stressor:

Please identify the theme area that the stressor most closely relates to (drop-down menu of three themes, i.e.)

|  |
|--|
| Management of Salmon Fisheries   |
| Protection and Restoration of Atlantic Salmon Habitat                  |
| Management of Aquaculture, Introductions and Transfers and Transgenics |

With reference to your stressor analysis, CNL(25)XX, please describe, briefly, the stressor in relation to its impact on wild Atlantic salmon, including a quantitative baseline and tangible outcome to enable progress towards the achievement of the Strategic Goal to be measured.

|  |
|--|
|  |
|--|

### Stressor 3

Name of stressor:

Please identify the theme area that the stressor most closely relates to (drop-down menu of three themes, i.e.)

|  |
|--|
| Management of Salmon Fisheries   |
| Protection and Restoration of Atlantic Salmon Habitat                  |
| Management of Aquaculture, Introductions and Transfers and Transgenics |

With reference to your stressor analysis, CNL(25)XX, please describe, briefly, the stressor in relation to its impact on wild Atlantic salmon, including a quantitative baseline and tangible outcome to enable progress towards the achievement of the Strategic Goal to be measured.

### Actions

Each of the three stressors must have at least one action but no more than three. The actions related to each stressor must result in the improvement of conditions for wild Atlantic salmon through the removal or diminishment of the relevant stressor, to achieve the Strategic Goal of slowing the decline of wild Atlantic salmon populations and demonstrating that restoration is possible. Collectively, the overall impact of the combined actions must be urgent and transformative.

#### Stressor 1

##### Action S.1.1

Name of the action

Describe, succinctly, the nature of this action, including the lead entity (i.e. government / institute / stakeholder / IPRI)

Describe how this action contributes to the significant reduction of the impact of the stressor

What is the measurable starting point against which this action will be measured, i.e. the baseline?

Provide high-level milestones, i.e. interim goals as measurable outcomes, at least for each review point of the reporting cycle, i.e. in 2028, 2030 and 2032

|       |
|-------|
| 2028: |
| 2030: |
| 2032: |

What is the expected clear and measurable tangible outcome of this action? Please note. This outcome should improve conditions for salmon survival through the removal or diminishment of the stressor to achieve the Strategic Goal of slowing the decline of wild Atlantic salmon populations and demonstrating that restoration is possible

Provide a quantitative measure of expected and actual progress against the expected tangible outcome in the year (specify the units in which progress is measured \_\_\_\_\_)  
 Please note: progress will be reviewed biennially

**2026 Starting Point:** \_\_\_\_\_

| Year                     | 2027 | 2028                   | 2029 | 2030      | 2031 | 2032      |
|--------------------------|------|------------------------|------|-----------|------|-----------|
|                          |      | Milestone <sup>4</sup> |      | Milestone |      | Milestone |
| <b>Expected Progress</b> |      |                        |      |           |      |           |
| <b>Actual Progress</b>   |      |                        |      |           |      |           |

Report clearly to explain your progress made towards the achievement of the high-level milestones (interim goals) in the year, noting any significant events that may have impacted achievement

|      |                             |
|------|-----------------------------|
| 2027 | <i>Report progress here</i> |
| 2028 | <i>Report progress here</i> |
| 2029 | <i>Report progress here</i> |
| 2030 | <i>Report progress here</i> |
| 2031 | <i>Report progress here</i> |

**Action S.1.2**

Name of the action

Describe, succinctly, the nature of this action, including the lead entity (i.e. government / institute / stakeholder / IPRI)

Describe how this action contributes to the significant reduction of the impact of the stressor

What is the measurable starting point against which this action will be measured, i.e. the baseline?

Provide high-level milestones, i.e. interim goals as measurable outcomes, at least for each review point of the reporting cycle, *i.e. in 2028, 2030 and 2032*

|              |
|--------------|
| <b>2028:</b> |
| <b>2030:</b> |
| <b>2032:</b> |

What is the expected clear and measurable tangible outcome of this action? Please note. This outcome should improve conditions for salmon survival through the removal or diminishment of the stressor to achieve the Strategic Goal of slowing the decline of wild Atlantic salmon populations and demonstrating that restoration is possible

Provide a quantitative measure of expected and actual progress against the expected tangible outcome in the year (specify the units in which progress is measured \_\_\_\_\_)

<sup>4</sup> For each action in the Conservation Commitments Report, in the online template the relevant cells in these tables will be pre-populated with the data provided for the milestones

Please note: progress will be reviewed biennially

**2026 Starting Point:** \_\_\_\_\_

| Year                     | 2027 | 2028      | 2029 | 2030      | 2031 | 2032      |
|--------------------------|------|-----------|------|-----------|------|-----------|
|                          |      | Milestone |      | Milestone |      | Milestone |
| <b>Expected Progress</b> |      |           |      |           |      |           |
| <b>Actual Progress</b>   |      |           |      |           |      |           |

Report clearly to explain your progress made towards the achievement of the high-level milestones (interim goals) in the year, noting any significant events that may have impacted achievement

|      |                             |
|------|-----------------------------|
| 2027 | <i>Report progress here</i> |
| 2028 | <i>Report progress here</i> |
| 2029 | <i>Report progress here</i> |
| 2030 | <i>Report progress here</i> |
| 2031 | <i>Report progress here</i> |

**Action S.1.3**

Name of the action

Describe, succinctly, the nature of this action, including the lead entity (i.e. government / institute / stakeholder / IPRI)

Describe how this action contributes to the significant reduction of the impact of the stressor

What is the measurable starting point against which this action will be measured, i.e. the baseline?

Provide high-level milestones, i.e. interim goals as measurable outcomes, at least for each review point of the reporting cycle, i.e. in 2028, 2030 and 2032

|              |
|--------------|
| <b>2028:</b> |
| <b>2030:</b> |
| <b>2032:</b> |

What is the expected clear and measurable tangible outcome of this action? Please note. This outcome should improve conditions for salmon survival through the removal or diminishment of the stressor to achieve the Strategic Goal of slowing the decline of wild Atlantic salmon populations and demonstrating that restoration is possible

Provide a quantitative measure of expected and actual progress against the expected tangible outcome in the year (specify the units in which progress is measured \_\_\_\_\_)

Please note: progress will be reviewed biennially

**2026 Starting Point:** \_\_\_\_\_

| Year | 2027 | 2028      | 2029 | 2030      | 2031 | 2032      |
|------|------|-----------|------|-----------|------|-----------|
|      |      | Milestone |      | Milestone |      | Milestone |

|                          |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|--------------------------|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| <b>Expected Progress</b> |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| <b>Actual Progress</b>   |  |  |  |  |  |  |

Report clearly to explain your progress made towards the achievement of the high-level milestones (interim goals) in the year, noting any significant events that may have impacted achievement

|      |                             |
|------|-----------------------------|
| 2027 | <i>Report progress here</i> |
| 2028 | <i>Report progress here</i> |
| 2029 | <i>Report progress here</i> |
| 2030 | <i>Report progress here</i> |
| 2031 | <i>Report progress here</i> |

Describe how the overall impacts of the stated action(s) will be urgent and transformative and at an appropriate scale to deliver improvement at a population level for wild Atlantic salmon through the removal or diminishment of Stressor 1 (with reference to the quantitative baseline [.....] and tangible outcome [.....] for this stressor).

**Stressor 2**

**Action S.2.1**

Name of the action

Describe, succinctly, the nature of this action, including the lead entity (i.e. government / institute / stakeholder / IPRI)

Describe how this action contributes to the significant reduction of the impact of the stressor

What is the measurable starting point against which this action will be measured, i.e. the baseline?

Provide high-level milestones, i.e. interim goals as measurable outcomes, at least for each review point of the reporting cycle, i.e. in 2028, 2030 and 2032

|              |
|--------------|
| <b>2028:</b> |
| <b>2030:</b> |
| <b>2032:</b> |

What is the expected clear and measurable tangible outcome of this action? Please note. This outcome should improve conditions for salmon survival through the removal or diminishment of the stressor to achieve the Strategic Goal of slowing the decline of wild Atlantic salmon populations and demonstrating that restoration is possible

Provide a quantitative measure of expected and actual progress against the expected tangible outcome in the year (specify the units in which progress is measured \_\_\_\_\_)

Please note: progress will be reviewed biennially

**2026 Starting Point:** \_\_\_\_\_

| Year              | 2027 | 2028      | 2029 | 2030      | 2031 | 2032      |
|-------------------|------|-----------|------|-----------|------|-----------|
|                   |      | Milestone |      | Milestone |      | Milestone |
| Expected Progress |      |           |      |           |      |           |
| Actual Progress   |      |           |      |           |      |           |

Report clearly to explain your progress made towards the achievement of the high-level milestones (interim goals) in the year, noting any significant events that may have impacted achievement

|      |                             |
|------|-----------------------------|
| 2027 | <i>Report progress here</i> |
| 2028 | <i>Report progress here</i> |
| 2029 | <i>Report progress here</i> |
| 2030 | <i>Report progress here</i> |
| 2031 | <i>Report progress here</i> |

**Action S.2.2**

Name of the action

Describe, succinctly, the nature of this action, including the lead entity (i.e. government / institute / stakeholder / IPRI)

Describe how this action contributes to the significant reduction of the impact of the stressor

What is the measurable starting point against which this action will be measured, i.e. the baseline?

Provide high-level milestones, i.e. interim goals as measurable outcomes, at least for each review point of the reporting cycle, i.e. in 2028, 2030 and 2032

|              |
|--------------|
| <b>2028:</b> |
| <b>2030:</b> |
| <b>2032:</b> |

What is the expected clear and measurable tangible outcome of this action? Please note. This outcome should improve conditions for salmon survival through the removal or diminishment of the stressor to achieve the Strategic Goal of slowing the decline of wild Atlantic salmon populations and demonstrating that restoration is possible

Provide a quantitative measure of expected and actual progress against the expected tangible outcome in the year (specify the units in which progress is measured \_\_\_\_\_)

Please note: progress will be reviewed biennially

**2026 Starting Point:** \_\_\_\_\_

| Year              | 2027 | 2028      | 2029 | 2030      | 2031 | 2032      |
|-------------------|------|-----------|------|-----------|------|-----------|
|                   |      | Milestone |      | Milestone |      | Milestone |
| Expected Progress |      |           |      |           |      |           |
| Actual Progress   |      |           |      |           |      |           |

Report clearly to explain your progress made towards the achievement of the high-level milestones (interim goals) in the year, noting any significant events that may have impacted achievement

|      |                             |
|------|-----------------------------|
| 2027 | <i>Report progress here</i> |
| 2028 | <i>Report progress here</i> |
| 2029 | <i>Report progress here</i> |
| 2030 | <i>Report progress here</i> |
| 2031 | <i>Report progress here</i> |

**Action S.2.3**

Name of the action

Describe, succinctly, the nature of this action, including the lead entity (i.e. government / institute / stakeholder / IPRI)

Describe how this action contributes to the significant reduction of the impact of the stressor

What is the measurable starting point against which this action will be measured, i.e. the baseline?

Provide high-level milestones, i.e. interim goals as measurable outcomes, at least for each review point of the reporting cycle, i.e. in 2028, 2030 and 2032

|              |
|--------------|
| <b>2028:</b> |
| <b>2030:</b> |
| <b>2032:</b> |

What is the expected clear and measurable tangible outcome of this action? Please note. This outcome should improve conditions for salmon survival through the removal or diminishment of the stressor to achieve the Strategic Goal of slowing the decline of wild Atlantic salmon populations and demonstrating that restoration is possible

Provide a quantitative measure of expected and actual progress against the expected tangible outcome in the year (specify the units in which progress is measured \_\_\_\_\_)

Please note: progress will be reviewed biennially

**2026 Starting Point:** \_\_\_\_\_

| Year                     | 2027 | 2028             | 2029 | 2030             | 2031 | 2032             |
|--------------------------|------|------------------|------|------------------|------|------------------|
|                          |      | <b>Milestone</b> |      | <b>Milestone</b> |      | <b>Milestone</b> |
| <b>Expected Progress</b> |      |                  |      |                  |      |                  |
| <b>Actual Progress</b>   |      |                  |      |                  |      |                  |

Report clearly to explain your progress made towards the achievement of the high-level milestones (interim goals) in the year, noting any significant events that may have impacted achievement

|      |                             |
|------|-----------------------------|
| 2027 | <i>Report progress here</i> |
| 2028 | <i>Report progress here</i> |
| 2029 | <i>Report progress here</i> |

|      |                             |
|------|-----------------------------|
| 2030 | <i>Report progress here</i> |
| 2031 | <i>Report progress here</i> |

Describe how the overall impacts of the stated action(s) will be urgent and transformative and at an appropriate scale to deliver improvement at a population level for wild Atlantic salmon through the removal or diminishment of Stressor 2 (with reference to the quantitative baseline [.....] and tangible outcome [.....] for this stressor).

**Stressor 3**

**Action S.3.1**

Name of the action

Describe, succinctly, the nature of this action, including the lead entity (i.e. government / institute / stakeholder / IPRI)

Describe how this action contributes to the significant reduction of the impact of the stressor

What is the measurable starting point against which this action will be measured, i.e. the baseline?

Provide high-level milestones, i.e. interim goals as measurable outcomes, at least for each review point of the reporting cycle, i.e. in 2028, 2030 and 2032

|              |
|--------------|
| <b>2028:</b> |
| <b>2030:</b> |
| <b>2032:</b> |

What is the expected clear and measurable tangible outcome of this action? Please note. This outcome should improve conditions for salmon survival through the removal or diminishment of the stressor to achieve the Strategic Goal of slowing the decline of wild Atlantic salmon populations and demonstrating that restoration is possible

Provide a quantitative measure of expected and actual progress against the expected tangible outcome in the year (specify the units in which progress is measured \_\_\_\_\_)

Please note: progress will be reviewed biennially

**2026 Starting Point:** \_\_\_\_\_

| Year                     | 2027 | 2028             | 2029 | 2030             | 2031 | 2032             |
|--------------------------|------|------------------|------|------------------|------|------------------|
|                          |      | <b>Milestone</b> |      | <b>Milestone</b> |      | <b>Milestone</b> |
| <b>Expected Progress</b> |      |                  |      |                  |      |                  |
| <b>Actual Progress</b>   |      |                  |      |                  |      |                  |

Report clearly to explain your progress made towards the achievement of the high-level milestones (interim goals) in the year, noting any significant events that may have impacted achievement



|      |                             |
|------|-----------------------------|
| 2027 | <i>Report progress here</i> |
| 2028 | <i>Report progress here</i> |
| 2029 | <i>Report progress here</i> |
| 2030 | <i>Report progress here</i> |
| 2031 | <i>Report progress here</i> |

**Action S.3.2**

Name of the action

Describe, succinctly, the nature of this action, including the lead entity (i.e. government / institute / stakeholder / IPRI)

Describe how this action contributes to the significant reduction of the impact of the stressor

What is the measurable starting point against which this action will be measured, i.e. the baseline?

Provide high-level milestones, i.e. interim goals as measurable outcomes, at least for each review point of the reporting cycle, i.e. in 2028, 2030 and 2032

|              |
|--------------|
| <b>2028:</b> |
| <b>2030:</b> |
| <b>2032:</b> |

What is the expected clear and measurable tangible outcome of this action? Please note. This outcome should improve conditions for salmon survival through the removal or diminishment of the stressor to achieve the Strategic Goal of slowing the decline of wild Atlantic salmon populations and demonstrating that restoration is possible

Provide a quantitative measure of expected and actual progress against the expected tangible outcome in the year (specify the units in which progress is measured \_\_\_\_\_)

Please note: progress will be reviewed biennially

**2026 Starting Point:** \_\_\_\_\_

| Year                     | 2027 | 2028             | 2029 | 2030             | 2031 | 2032             |
|--------------------------|------|------------------|------|------------------|------|------------------|
|                          |      | <b>Milestone</b> |      | <b>Milestone</b> |      | <b>Milestone</b> |
| <b>Expected Progress</b> |      |                  |      |                  |      |                  |
| <b>Actual Progress</b>   |      |                  |      |                  |      |                  |

Report clearly to explain your progress made towards the achievement of the high-level milestones (interim goals) in the year, noting any significant events that may have impacted achievement

|      |                             |
|------|-----------------------------|
| 2027 | <i>Report progress here</i> |
| 2028 | <i>Report progress here</i> |
| 2029 | <i>Report progress here</i> |
| 2030 | <i>Report progress here</i> |
| 2031 | <i>Report progress here</i> |

**Action S.3.3**

Name of the action

Describe, succinctly, the nature of this action, including the lead entity (i.e. government / institute / stakeholder / IPRI)

Describe how this action contributes to the significant reduction of the impact of the stressor

What is the measurable starting point against which this action will be measured, i.e. the baseline?

Provide high-level milestones, i.e. interim goals as measurable outcomes, at least for each review point of the reporting cycle, i.e. in 2028, 2030 and 2032

|              |
|--------------|
| <b>2028:</b> |
| <b>2030:</b> |
| <b>2032:</b> |

What is the expected clear and measurable tangible outcome of this action? Please note. This outcome should improve conditions for salmon survival through the removal or diminishment of the stressor to achieve the Strategic Goal of slowing the decline of wild Atlantic salmon populations and demonstrating that restoration is possible

Provide a quantitative measure of expected and actual progress against the expected tangible outcome in the year (specify the units in which progress is measured \_\_\_\_\_)

Please note: progress will be reviewed biennially

**2026 Starting Point:** \_\_\_\_\_

| Year                     | 2027 | 2028      | 2029 | 2030      | 2031 | 2032      |
|--------------------------|------|-----------|------|-----------|------|-----------|
|                          |      | Milestone |      | Milestone |      | Milestone |
| <b>Expected Progress</b> |      |           |      |           |      |           |
| <b>Actual Progress</b>   |      |           |      |           |      |           |

Report clearly to explain your progress made towards the achievement of the high-level milestones (interim goals) in the year, noting any significant events that may have impacted achievement

|      |                             |
|------|-----------------------------|
| 2027 | <i>Report progress here</i> |
| 2028 | <i>Report progress here</i> |
| 2029 | <i>Report progress here</i> |
| 2030 | <i>Report progress here</i> |
| 2031 | <i>Report progress here</i> |

Describe how the overall impacts of the stated action(s) will be urgent and transformative and at an appropriate scale to deliver improvement at a population level for wild Atlantic salmon through the removal or diminishment of Stressor 3 (with reference to the quantitative baseline [.....] and tangible outcome [.....] for this stressor).

**Any Significant Highlights from the Conservation Commitments Report**

Do you have any other significant highlights to report during the year

|      |                             |
|------|-----------------------------|
| 2027 | <i>Report progress here</i> |
| 2028 | <i>Report progress here</i> |
| 2029 | <i>Report progress here</i> |
| 2030 | <i>Report progress here</i> |
| 2031 | <i>Report progress here</i> |

## WGFR(25)05

***Proposed Terms of Reference for the  
Conservation Commitments Reports Review Group***

**The Group should comprise members and representatives as follows:**

- one member from the Western Atlantic;
- one member from the Mid-Atlantic;
- three members from the Eastern Atlantic;
- one representative from NASCO's accredited NGOs;
- one representative from an accredited IPRI (Indigenous Peoples' representatives and institutions); and
- one member from the Standing Scientific Committee.

The participants in the Review Group will be appointed by Council specifically to represent NASCO and not their Party or Organization, to act as independent reviewers, seeking to provide a balance of expertise across NASCO's key theme areas, and other relevant topic areas. To provide continuity, they should be appointed to serve for a period of at least three years. The Chair will be elected from among the members and serve for a term of three years and may be re-elected to serve a second term. The NASCO Secretariat will co-ordinate the Review Group's work but will not serve as reviewers. The Review Group will review the Conservation Commitments Reports.

**Please note:** given that all meetings may have a hybrid component, the Chair is expected to attend any meeting in person.

**Terms of Reference**

Taking into consideration the agreement of Council to conduct a fourth reporting cycle that prioritises actions based on an objective analysis of stressors by each Party / jurisdiction, to enable a reporting cycle balancing simplicity, effectiveness and transparency and to simplify accountability through a limited number of specific outcomes and clear metrics, the Conservation Commitments Reports Review Group (CCRRG) will work as follows:

***I. Review of Conservation Commitments Reports***

1. In April 2026, carry out a detailed and critical review of each of the Conservation Commitments Reports (CCRs) submitted by Parties / jurisdictions to evaluate the quality of the information contained and determine whether it provides a fair and equitable basis for assessing the progress that the Party / jurisdiction will make towards the achievement of NASCO's Strategic Goal, as follows:
  - a. Are the questions in the 'Consultation and Engagement' section of the CCRs answered fully?
  - b. Are the top three stressors identified in the Party's / jurisdiction's stressor analysis used as the basis for the CCRs?
    - i. If not, are the justifications provided for the substitutions adequate?
  - c. Are NASCO's theme areas identified for each stressor?
  - d. Is the impact of each stressor on wild Atlantic salmon described clearly?

- e. Are there no more than three actions per stressor?
  - f. Does each action have a clear and measurable tangible outcome to improve conditions for salmon survival through the removal or diminishment of the identified stressor (i.e. in line with NASCO's Strategic Goal)?
  - g. Does each action have a clear starting point (baseline) against which progress towards the outcome can be measured?
  - h. Are clear interim goals / milestones identified for each action?
  - i. Does each stressor include a quantitative baseline and tangible outcome to enable progress towards the achievement of the Strategic Goal to be measured?
2. As part of the 2026 review process:
    - a. Once the draft CCRs are received by the Review Group, each Party / jurisdiction will make a presentation (virtually) to the Review Group on the rationale for the stressors / actions included in the CCR;
    - b. The Review Group will provide confidential written feedback to each Party / jurisdiction to improve its draft CCR, with the purpose of: enabling it to achieve its stated outcome; demonstrate movement towards the achievement of NASCO's Strategic Goal; facilitating efficient and effective reporting throughout its lifetime;
    - c. There may be an interview between each Party / jurisdiction and RG to allow for discussion on revisions it undertook, based on written feedback;
    - d. Post-interview, the Review Group will provide feedback to each Party / jurisdiction that will be published, together with the draft CCRs that have been submitted.
  3. Provide feedback to NASCO on the draft CCRs and their reviews in a Special Session of the Council at the 2026 Annual Meeting, using a format that encourages discussion on trends, highlights and challenges. The Special Session should be open to the public / media and broadcast via webinar.
  4. In subsequent years (up to 2030), the modification of CCRs, in the event of an exceptional change in salmon management or stressor or other exceptional circumstance, would be discussed with the Review Group Chair / Secretariat to establish a process / timeline. Any new CCRs would be reviewed following bullets 1.a. to 1.i. above.

## ***II. Biennial Review of Conservation Commitments Reports***

1. Starting in April 2028, and then in 2030 and 2032, carry out a detailed and critical review of the progress made on the actions in each of the CCRs submitted by Parties / jurisdictions to ensure that Parties / jurisdictions have provided a clear account of their progress in implementing and evaluating the actions detailed in their CCRs, as follows:
  - a. Is progress reported clearly for each action in relation to the achievement of the high-level milestones, and against the relevant baseline specified in the CCR?
  - b. Is the quantitative measure of progress provided both in the reporting year and previous years?
  - c. Are any other significant developments reported under each action both in the reporting year and previous years?
  - d. Is progress reported clearly for removing or reducing the impact of the stressors?

2. As part of the biennial review process highlight at least one interesting (positive) development or challenge in the CCR related to the achievement of NASCO's Strategic Goal.
3. In 2028, to provide the Review Group with a clear understanding of the progress made for each CCR, where necessary, invite Parties / jurisdictions to attend an 'interview' with the Review Group both to clarify uncertainty in progress in that Party / jurisdiction's CCR and discuss significant developments. Thereafter, provide written feedback to each Party / jurisdiction on a detailed and critical review of the progress made on the actions and any information necessary to improve the reporting of progress.
4. In 2030 and 2032, carry out a detailed and critical review of the progress made on the actions in each of the CCRs submitted by Parties / jurisdictions and provide written feedback to them.
5. In 2028 / 2030 / 2032 – Review Group Chair presents the Review Group's feedback to NASCO on the review of progress against the milestones / baselines in the CCRs in a Special Session of the Council at the Annual Meetings using a format that encourages discussion on trends, highlights and challenges. The Special Session should be open to the public / media and broadcast via webinar.

### ***III. Review of the Fourth Reporting Cycle in 2033***

1. In April 2033, carry out a detailed and critical review of the success of the fourth reporting cycle, based on the final reports from each Party / jurisdiction, as measured in terms of the achievement of NASCO's Strategic Goal by NASCO's Parties / jurisdictions as the period covered by NASCO's Ten-Year Strategy and Action Plan comes to an end. Success will be measured by an analysis of whether each CCR had driven through the actions necessary to slow the decline of wild Atlantic salmon populations and demonstrate that restoration is possible, as follows:
  - a. Have the goals / milestones identified for each action been met?
  - b. Has the expected tangible outcome for each action been achieved?
    - i. If no, at least has clear progress against the expected tangible outcome for each action been made over the duration of the CCR?
  - c. Does the Review Group consider that the actions have been urgent and transformative?
  - d. Does the Review Group consider that the impact of each of the identified stressors in the CCR has been reduced or removed?
  - e. Is it clear that the conditions for salmon survival in {Party / jurisdiction} have improved over the duration of the CCR?
2. Provide feedback to NASCO on the success of the fourth reporting cycle against NASCO's Strategic Goal in a Special Session of the Council at the 2033 Annual Meeting using a format that encourages discussion on trends, highlights and challenges. The Special Session should be open to the public / media and broadcast via webinar.

The Review Group will report in line with the agreed schedule, i.e. 'Schedule for the Fourth Reporting Cycle (2026-2032)', CNL(25)XX.

Council reserves the right to review and revise these Terms of Reference.

### **Working Methods**

#### ***A. Conservation Commitments Reports Review***

The Review Group will assess its composition and expertise and determine whether to review the CCRs by individual CCR or by each CCR theme area. The Chair / Secretary will assign a 'guiding

reviewer’ for each CCR or CCR theme area from among the Review Group participants, including stakeholders and IPRI. In the review meeting, the main tasks of the guiding reviewer are to:

- develop the initial assessment of the assigned CCR or CCR theme area in advance of the meeting, based on the criteria 1.a. to 1.i. under ‘I. Review of Conservation Commitments Reports’ in the Terms of Reference;
- lead discussion of the assigned CCRs or CCR theme areas;
- when needed, develop clear guidance for the Party / jurisdiction on how to improve descriptions of stressors or actions (or other components of the CCR) in consultation with the Review Group; and
- lead discussion of that guidance.

The process for the interviews with Parties / jurisdictions will be led by the Review Group Chair.

The Review Group will work in accordance with the Terms of Reference under ‘I. Review of Conservation Commitments Reports’.

### ***B. Reporting on Progress***

The Chair / Secretary will assign a ‘guiding reviewer’ for each CCR or CCR theme area from among the Review Group participants, including stakeholders and IPRI. The main tasks of the guiding reviewer are to:

- develop the initial assessment of progress against the actions in the assigned CCR in advance of the review meeting, including an assessment of progress against the baselines in each of the actions in the CCR and the reporting on the progress made towards the achievement of the high-level milestones in the relevant year;
- lead discussion of progress made in the assigned CCR or CCR theme area at the review meeting;
- when needed, and in consultation with the Review Group at the review meeting, develop clear guidance for the Party / jurisdiction on how to improve any shortcomings in reporting in each case and develop written feedback to each Party / jurisdiction to explain these shortcomings and what kind of information is required to improve the reporting of progress for the CCR to enable demonstration of movement towards the achievement of NASCO’s Strategic Goal; and
- lead discussion of that guidance at the review meeting.

In 2028, the process for the interviews with Parties / jurisdictions will be led by the Review Group Chair.

The Review Group will work in accordance with the Terms of Reference under ‘II. Biennial Reporting on Conservation Commitments Reports’.

### ***C. Review of the Fourth Reporting Cycle in 2033***

The Chair / Secretary will assign a ‘guiding reviewer’ for each final report from among the Review Group participants, including stakeholders and IPRI. The main tasks of the guiding reviewer are to:

- develop the initial assessment of the Party’s / jurisdiction’s final report towards achievement of NASCO’s Strategic Goal to slow the decline of wild Atlantic salmon populations and demonstrate that restoration is possible, in advance of the final review meeting;
- lead discussion on their assigned final reports at the final review meeting;

The Review Group will develop its analysis and overview of the success of the fourth reporting cycle, based on the final reports from each Party / jurisdiction, as measured in terms of the

achievement of NASCO's Strategic Goal by Parties / jurisdictions as the period covered by NASCO's Ten-Year Strategy and Action Plan comes to an end.

The Review Group will work in accordance with the Terms of Reference under 'III. Review of the Fourth Reporting Cycle in 2033'.

### **Ground Rules**

- the Review Group will limit its assessments to the information presented in the CCRs and their reports on progress for the fourth reporting cycle. Links or attached reports will not be reviewed;
- to avoid the perception of bias during the CCR review, the review of individual CCRs will not involve participants from a country whose CCR is being reviewed or the NGO / IPRI participant if they have been involved in that particular CCR in any way;
- the guiding reviewers will remain anonymous in the meeting report. In the event that one or more members of the Review Group do not agree with a particular aspect or aspects of the review, then the meeting report may indicate that there are dissenting views;
- following the completion of all the initial evaluations, the Review Group will re-examine each assessment to ensure consistency;
- the Review Group recognises that the extent of the salmon stocks and the resources available to manage them varies markedly between Parties / jurisdictions. However, the Review Group bases its reviews on an assessment of the anticipated tangible outcomes and reported progress against each action by each Party / jurisdiction to ensure equality of reviews across all of the CCRs;
- the Review Group recognises that in some Parties / jurisdictions the responsibility for the conservation and management of salmon stocks may be multifaceted. Nonetheless, Parties / jurisdictions have committed to NASCO's Strategic Goal and it should, therefore, be possible for reporting authorities to summarise in the CCRs the management actions that are expected to be taken by the appropriate bodies in the coming years, regardless of who is responsible for delivery. Such issues of delivery are not, therefore, taken into account in reviewing the reports.



## WGFR(25)06

*Proposed Schedule for the Fourth Reporting Cycle (2026-2032)***1. Proposed Schedule for Submission / Review**

| <b>Date / deadline</b>      | <b>Responsibility</b>                   | <b>Action required</b>   |
|-----------------------------|---|--|
| June 2025                   | Secretariat                             | Provides information on requirements for Performance Indicators (PIs) and Conservation Commitments Reports (CCRs) to Parties / jurisdictions   |
| July-December 2025          | Parties / jurisdictions                 | Develop CCRs, using information provided   |
| July-December 2025          | Secretariat                             | Works with developer to create web-based templates for the PIs and CCRs  |
| September 2025              | WGFR<br>Parties / jurisdictions         | WGFR hosts training webinar to answer questions about the CCRs template and the review process<br>CCR Review Group to attend webinar   |
| January 2026                | Secretariat                             | Web-based templates opened for completion by each Party / jurisdiction for completion of CCRs  |
| 5 February 2026             | Parties / jurisdictions<br>Secretariat  | Submit Draft CCRs to Secretariat via web-based template<br>Shares Draft CCRs with Review Group   |
| Week of 16<br>February 2026 | Review Group                            | Half-day meeting to agree working methods for in-person RG meeting   |
| 23-27 February 2026         | Review Group<br>Parties / jurisdictions | RG meets (in person) and conducts its evaluations of the Draft CCRs. The evaluations will include a virtual presentation by each Party / jurisdiction of the rationale for inclusion of stressors and actions included in the CCRs. The RG develops written feedback |
| 2-6 March 2026              | Secretariat                             | Provides RG's written feedback to each Party / jurisdiction on its Draft CCR   |
| 13-24 April 2026            | Review Group<br>Parties / jurisdictions | RG may meet virtually to 'interview' each Party / jurisdiction for the review of its Draft CCR. After interviews RG finalises written feedback   |
| 30 April 2026               | Secretariat                             | Draft CCRs made available on NASCO website   |
| 30 April 2026               | Secretariat                             | Finalised written RG feedback on CCRs for Parties / jurisdictions made available on the website  |
| June 2026                   | Review Group                            | Presents report to the Council in Special Session on CCRs  |
| June 2026                   | Secretariat                             | Web-based templates opened for completion by each Party / jurisdiction for completion of revised CCRs  |
| 30 November 2026            | Parties / jurisdictions                 | Submit revised CCRs to Secretariat via web-based template  |

|   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
| 1 December 2026   | Secretariat                             | Revised CCRs made available on NASCO website*   |
| December 2026   | Secretariat                             | Combines Performance Indicators and Conservation Commitments Report into a single web-based template for each Party / jurisdiction  |
| <b>1 January 2027 Conservation Commitments Reports come into effect, with first report on progress due April 2028</b> |   |   |
| 6 January 2027  | Secretariat                             | Web-based templates opened for completion by each Party / jurisdiction for PIs only   |
| 1 April 2027  | Parties / jurisdictions                 | Submit completed PI reports to Secretariat via web-based template   |
| 30 April 2027   | Secretariat                             | Provides paper on overview of NASCO PIs   |
| 30 April 2027   | Secretariat on behalf of President      | Sends letter to Ministers introducing them to the fourth reporting cycle. For information, include finalised CCRs and completed PI reports to relevant Ministers for information for each Party / jurisdiction with link to the overview document |
| Annual Meeting 2027   | Parties / jurisdictions                 | PI reports and overview discussed at a Special Session of the Council   |
| <b>Each Year Starting in 2028</b>   |   |   |
| 6 January   | Secretariat                             | Web-based templates opened for completion by each Party / jurisdiction for reporting on PIs and CCRs  |
| 1 March   | Secretariat                             | Sends reminders for completion of PIs and CCRs  |
| 1 April   | Parties / jurisdictions                 | Submit PIs and CCRs to Secretariat via web-based template   |
| 10 April  | Secretariat                             | PIs and CCRs made available on the website  |
| 30 April  | Secretariat                             | Provides paper on overview of NASCO PIs   |
| Annual Meeting 2029 & 2031  | Parties / jurisdictions                 | PI reports and overview alone discussed at a Special Session of the Council   |
| <b>In 2028, 2030 &amp; 2032 Review Group carries out biennial review of Conservation Commitment Reports</b>           |   |   |
| Mid-April 2028  | Review Group<br>Parties / jurisdictions | Meets and develops its evaluation of the CCRs<br>Invited to attend an 'interview' with Review Group for its CCR to clarify uncertainty in progress  |
| Mid-April 2030 / 2032   | Review Group                            | Meets and develops its evaluation of the CCRs   |
| 1 May 2028 / 2030 / 2032  | Secretariat                             | CCR reviews sent to Parties / jurisdictions and made available on the website   |
| 1 May 2028 / 2030 / 2032  | Secretariat on behalf of President      | Sends CCR reviews and PI reports to relevant Ministers for biennial update for each Party / jurisdiction  |

|                                      |                         |  |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------------|--|
| Annual Meeting<br>2028 / 2030 / 2032 | Parties / jurisdictions | Special Session in the Annual Meeting of the Council provides opportunity for dialogue among Parties / jurisdictions, accredited observers, the Review Group and the media on key challenges to, and highlights of, salmon conservation identified in CCRs / PIs in a transparent format engaging to all |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------------|--|

\*Note. The Conservation Commitments Reports as at 1 December 2026 will be used as the basis for reporting in 2028

In the event of an **exceptional** change in salmon management or stressor or other exceptional circumstance a CCR may be revised. The Chair / Secretariat will advise on the timeline.

|  |
|--|
| <b>Please note. Under the fourth reporting cycle, Performance Indicators will be provided annually in 2027, 2028, 2029, 2030, 2031, 2032 and 2033 – each reporting on the previous year</b>  |
| <b>Please note. Under the fourth reporting cycle, progress on Conservation Commitments Reports will be provided in 2028, 2029, 2030, 2031 and 2032 – each reporting on the previous year</b> |

## 2. Proposed Schedule for Review of Fourth Reporting Cycle in 2033

In 2033, instead of providing the annual update on progress against actions within the Conservation Commitments Report, Parties / jurisdictions will deliver a report on progress made throughout the fourth reporting cycle towards the achievement of their tangible outcomes, i.e. on their success in delivering to reduce or remove the impact of their identified stressors such that an understanding of how well NASCO has performed in the achievement of its Strategic Goal can be determined.

| Date / deadline        | Responsibility                              | Action required   |
|------------------------|---|---|
| 28 February 2033       | Parties / jurisdictions                     | Submit reports reviewing the success of each Party's / jurisdiction's progress in slowing the decline of wild Atlantic salmon populations and demonstrating that restoration is possible, i.e. towards the achievement of NASCO's Strategic Goal  |
| 1 March 2033           | Secretariat                                 | Shares overall progress reports with Review Group   |
| 15 March 2033          | Parties / jurisdictions                     | Submit completed PI reports to Secretariat via web-based template   |
| 4-8 April 2033         | Review Group                                | Meets and conducts its evaluation of the fourth reporting cycle and develops its report   |
| 30 April 2033          | Secretariat                                 | Provides Annual Meeting paper on overview of progress towards the achievement of NASCO's Resolutions, Agreements and Guidelines as measured by the PIs over the full duration of the fourth reporting cycle   |
| 30 April 2033          | Secretariat                                 | Review Group's Report on the fourth reporting cycle made available on the website as Annual Meeting paper   |
| Annual Meeting<br>2033 | Parties / jurisdictions<br><br>Review Group | Special Session in the Annual Meeting of the Council provides opportunity for dialogue among Parties / jurisdictions, accredited observers, the Review Group and the media on progress towards the achievement of NASCO's Strategic Goal in a transparent format engaging to all<br>Each presents its overall summary and analysis of its progress towards the achievement of NASCO's Strategic Goal<br>Presents report on the fourth reporting cycle to the Council in all-day Special Session |

|  |  |   |
|--|--|---|
|  |  | All to support Council in revising / updating NASCO's Strategic Goal and in the deliberation of future reporting cycles |
|--|--|---|

## *Recommendations to Council*

### **Recommendation 1.**

The high-level Action Plan within ‘The Future of NASCO – a Ten-Year Strategy’, [CNL\(24\)71rev](#), stipulates that the fourth reporting cycle be developed to ‘plan domestic actions and demonstrate progress’ under the themes of ‘Management of Salmon Fisheries’, ‘Protection and Restoration of Salmon Habitat’ and ‘Management of Aquaculture, Introductions and Transfers and Transgenics’. To address this requirement the Group agreed on the use of ‘Performance Indicators’ (PIs), to replace Implementation Plans, which would consist mainly of metrics to be reported annually under the three themes. Included in this reporting would be the catch statistics data and information from the Wild Atlantic Salmon Atlas. NASCO’s high-level Action Plan also stipulates that Parties / jurisdictions plan / document a fourth round of salmon actions linked to their key stressors. To address this requirement each Party / jurisdiction is required to carry out a stressor analysis initially, which the Group suggested is then used to detail three top stressors against which Parties / jurisdictions specify actions to address those stressors. The three highest-priority stressors and associated actions of each Party / jurisdiction will form a ‘Conservation Commitments Report’ (CCR) specific to each Party / jurisdiction with urgent and transformative actions to slow the decline and demonstrate the potential for restoration, in line with NASCO’s Strategic Goal.

**The Working Group recommends that:**

**1. Council agrees the basis of the fourth reporting cycle to be:**

- **the use of metrics called ‘Performance Indicators’ (PIs), to be reported annually, starting in 2027, by each Party / jurisdiction under NASCO’s three themes, and**
- **an individual ‘Conservation Commitments Report’ developed by each Party / jurisdiction, to be reported on annually, starting in 2027, and reviewed biennially, starting in 2028, consisting of their three top-priority (unless otherwise justified) stressors as identified in their stressor analysis and a minimum of one and maximum of three actions per stressor to address those stressors.**

### **Recommendation 2.**

The Working Group raised concerns that conducting the baseline analysis process agreed by Council in 2024, reporting in 2026, would hold up the development of Parties’ / jurisdictions’ Conservation Commitments Report (CCR), while the rate of salmon decline merited actions that would collectively have urgent and transformative impacts with minimal delay. The Group emphasised that setting baselines for each action in each Party’s / jurisdiction’s CCRs would be a necessary part of each Party’s / jurisdiction’s CCR process in 2025. The Group noted, therefore, that, to show progress in an action, a starting point (baseline) is required against which to measure the progress, and this would be needed to inform the CCR process in 2025. The Group also noted that a starting point would be required for each individual stressor in the CCR, to enable the overall impact of the stated action(s) associated with each stressor to be reviewed.

**The Working Group recommends that:**

**2. Council agrees that:**

- a) **each action associated with each stressor proposed in the Conservation Commitments Reports requires a starting point, in order to measure its progress; and**
- b) **each stressor proposed in the Conservation Commitments Reports also requires a starting point, in order to measure its progress.**

### **Recommendation 3.**

The Group suggested that where two Word documents had been used in the third reporting cycle, one with an initial plan (IPs) and one with reported progress (APRs), a single web-based document (template) should be developed for each Party's / jurisdiction's Performance Indicators (PI) and for each Conservation Commitments Report (CCR). In each template, sections for each relevant year would be made available to be updated, in the applicable year. However, information entered previously would be greyed out and not available for editing, with just the relevant annual data then able to be added in.

**The Working Group recommends that:**

- 3. Council charges the Secretariat to work with a developer to design web-based templates for the PIs and CCRs, using funds held in the 'consultancy' budget.**

### **Recommendation 4.**

Finally, the Group proposed that the fourth reporting cycle should align with NASCO's Ten-Year Strategy<sup>5</sup>, as this will provide Council with the special opportunity to understand the Strategy's success, specifically the achievement of its Strategic Goal, and to understand progress made towards the achievement of NASCO's Resolutions, Agreements and Guidelines.

The Group considered that the Conservation Commitments Report (CCR) Review Group may best be able to carry out a final evaluation of the success of the fourth reporting cycle in 2032 to inform a possible fifth reporting cycle. The CCR Review Group also may best be able to carry out a further evaluation in 2033 on the progress made by each Party / jurisdiction towards the achievement of NASCO's Strategic Goal. Such an evaluation could be informed by final reports produced by each Party / jurisdiction to demonstrate the collective success of their actions in slowing the decline of wild Atlantic salmon. Additionally, the report to Council could include a critique of the achievement of NASCO's Resolutions, Agreements and Guidelines, considering relevant changes over time reported by each Party / jurisdiction through the Performance Indicators (which could be compiled by the Secretariat).

These reports would be presented to Council in a day-long Special Session where the Review Group would present a final report and each Party / jurisdiction would present its overall summary and analysis of its progress towards the achievement of NASCO's Strategic Goal / NASCO's Resolutions, Agreements and Guidelines.

The CCR Review Group could be engaged by Council to propose a process for both an evaluation of the success of the fourth reporting cycle and NASCO's Ten-Year Strategy.

**The Working Group recommends that:**

#### **4. Council agrees to:**

- **receive a recommendation in 2031 from the CCR Review Group on the process for conducting:**
  - **an evaluation of the success of the fourth reporting cycle in 2032 to inform a possible fifth reporting cycle;**
  - **an evaluation of the success of each Party's / jurisdiction's achievement in 2033 of each stated tangible outcome to support NASCO's Strategic Goal; and**
  - **an all-day Special Session at the 2033 Annual Meeting to discuss the success of NASCO's Ten-Year Strategy in achieving its Strategic Goal and advancing progress towards the achievement of NASCO's Resolutions, Agreements and Guidelines.**

---

<sup>5</sup> This increases the duration of the fourth reporting cycle by one year compared to the previous reporting cycles