

	<p><b>Council</b></p> <p><i>Proposed Performance Indicators against NASCO's Resolutions, Agreements and Guidelines for the Fourth Reporting Cycle (2026 to 2032)</i></p>	<p><b>CNL(25)23</b></p> <p>Agenda item 6.h)</p>
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## ***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 Estuarine Coastal Total	In river Estuarine Coastal Total	In river Estuarine Coastal Total	In river Estuarine Coastal Total	In river Estuarine Coastal Total	In river Estuarine Coastal Total	In river Estuarine Coastal Total	In river Estuarine Coastal Total
<b>Provisional nominal catch (tonnes)</b>	In river Estuarine Coastal Total	In river Estuarine Coastal Total	In river Estuarine Coastal Total	In river Estuarine Coastal Total	In river Estuarine Coastal Total	In river Estuarine Coastal Total	In river Estuarine Coastal Total	In river Estuarine Coastal Total
<b>Estimated unreported catch (tonnes)</b>								
<b>Confirmed number / percentage of salmon caught and released in recreational fisheries</b>	Number	Number	Number	Number	Number	Number	Number	Number
	Percentage	Percentage	Percentage	Percentage	Percentage	Percentage	Percentage	Percentage
<b>Provisional number / percentage of salmon caught and released in recreational fisheries</b>	Number	Number	Number	Number	Number	Number	Number	Number
	Percentage	Percentage	Percentage	Percentage	Percentage	Percentage	Percentage	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

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

## 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 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.

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# 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).

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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

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- 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.

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<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?

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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

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

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A.6. Are rivers monitored routinely to assess the number of farmed salmon escapes 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)

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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)

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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.

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## 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>