

	<p style="text-align: center;">Council</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Report of the Twenty-Fourth Annual Meeting of the International Atlantic Salmon Research Board</i></p>	<p style="text-align: center;">CNL(25)08</p>
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***Report of the Twenty-Fourth Annual Meeting of the International Atlantic
Salmon Research Board***

***Cardiff Holland House Hotel & Spa by
Sunday, Cardiff, Wales***

2 & 5 June 2025

1. Opening of the Meeting

- 1.1 In the absence of the Chair, the Assistant Secretary opened the meeting and welcomed members of the International Atlantic Salmon Research Board (the Board), their scientific advisers, the Chair of the Board's Scientific Advisory Group (SAG) and observers to the meeting. She noted that the Canadian and Russian Federation Board members were joining the meeting through the virtual platform.
- 1.2 A list of participants is included in Annex 1.

2. Adoption of the Agenda

- 2.1 The Board agreed to amend the order of the Agenda items from those included in the Draft Agenda to allow the Board to elect a Chair for the remainder of the meeting.
- 2.2 The Board adopted its Agenda, ICR(25)07 (Annex 2).

3. Election of Officers

- 3.1 The Chair of the Board, Martha Robertson (Canada), was unable to attend the 2025 Annual Meeting of the Board, which would have been the last in her second two-year term as Chair. She was, therefore, ineligible for re-election. The Board thanked Dr Robertson for her hard work and excellent leadership over the past four years.
- 3.2 The Board elected Peder Fiske (Norway) as its Chair (proposed by the United States and seconded by the European Union) to serve for a period of two years from the close of the 2025 Annual Meeting. The Board agreed that Dr Fiske would also Chair the remainder of the 2025 Annual Meeting.

4. The Inter-Sessional Process to Consider a Basin-Wide Marine Growth Study

- 4.1 The Acting Chair reminded the Board that, at its 2024 Inter-sessional Meeting, [ICR\(24\)03](#), the Board had tasked its Scientific Advisory Group (SAG) with drafting an outline for the requirements of a basin-wide marine growth project based on adult scales and adopted Terms of Reference for this work, [ICRIS\(24\)08](#). At the Board's 2024 Annual Meeting, the SAG Chair had presented the SAG's work to address these Terms of Reference, [ICR\(24\)13](#). He noted that it was agreed at that Meeting that a series of online meetings would be held as an initial scoping workshop, led by Nora Hanson (UK) with assistance from Tim Sheehan (USA), with the objectives of:
 - agreeing the standardisation of obtaining images from scale samples;
 - considering the tools to extract data from the images; and

- further planning the project.
- 4.2 Following the scoping workshop meetings, a small working group comprising Nora Hanson (UK), Cindy Breau (Canada) and Tim Sheehan (USA) continued to develop the project proposal and prepared a ‘Report to the SAG on the Proposed Atlantic Salmon Marine Growth Study Outline’, SAG(24)01, which was evaluated by the SAG by correspondence.
- a) Report of the Inter-Sessional Meeting of the International Atlantic Salmon Research Board**
- 4.3 The Acting Chair reminded the Commission that the Board had met in April 2025, ICR(25)01, to consider the ‘Report of the Scientific Advisory Group of the International Atlantic Salmon Research Board on its Evaluation of the Proposed Atlantic Salmon Marine Growth Study Outline’, [ICRIS\(25\)02](#). The SAG Chair had given a presentation on the report (Annex 3 of [ICR\(25\)01](#)) at that meeting.
- 4.4 The Acting Chair noted that the SAG report contained a preliminary project proposal and list of questions for Parties / jurisdictions to answer in order to develop the proposal further. The Board had agreed that its members would consult with their respective Parties / jurisdictions to answer the questions to assess Parties’ / jurisdictions’ resource availability and requirements, and any potential sources of funding. The small working group agreed to co-ordinate the request for information.
- b) Responses to the Questions for Parties to Further the Board’s Discussions on the Feasibility of a Basin-Wide Marine Growth Study**
- 4.5 The Acting Chair reminded the Board that, following the Inter-Sessional Meeting, the small working group had developed a ‘gap analysis’ request for information to identify the resources each Party / jurisdiction has available, or would require, to take part in the project. This was circulated to Board members and the responses received were collated in the paper ‘Gap Analysis Responses to the Questions for Parties’, ICR(25)06rev, and circulated to the members of the Board.
- 4.6 The Board member for the EU noted that further updates had been received from the EU jurisdictions and that EU – Finland and EU – Spain (Navarra) were also willing to participate in the project where possible. Other EU jurisdictions were still considering the project.
- 4.7 The Board member for the UK noted that the responses indicated that a good number of stock units from across the Atlantic were available to the study. There was evidence of mixed resource availability. Many jurisdictions had the equipment to process the scale samples but not the time required to do so, but others may be able to provide in-kind support. Overall she felt it was a positive response.
- 4.8 The NGO representative reminded the Board that there was a large collection of scales available to it from the SALSEA project. He also advised that the Atlantic Salmon Trust had developed a database for salmon related metadata, [SalHub](#), which may be of use to the project. He stated that the NGO community is expert at fund raising and pulling together large projects in short timescales and would be delighted to work with the Board on this project.
- 4.9 The Board held lengthy discussions on the information and resources required to progress the project. Several Board members indicated that their Party may be able to fund elements of the project, but that a detailed project proposal would be required before they could make any guarantees.

- 4.10 The Board considered whether it would be better to focus on moving the project forward with those Parties and jurisdictions that were currently in a position to contribute, or to try to obtain funding for those who could not.

c) Decisions Taken in Light of the Discussions on the Basin-Wide Marine Growth Study

- 4.11 The Board agreed that, at this time, it would be beneficial to move the project forward with those Parties currently able to participate. It was noted that once a detailed project proposal was developed, there would be a much clearer idea of what resources the jurisdictions have and what they are able to do. This may make it easier for other jurisdictions to become involved in the project at that stage, likely to be in 12 months' time. This would also create a strong basis for funding applications.

- 4.12 The Board agreed:

- to form a Steering Committee, comprised of a representative from each Party willing to participate in the study, the NGO representative to the Board and, once a mechanism had been established to allow IPRI participation in the work of the Board, a designee from the IPRI observers to:
 - a) co-ordinate scale sample digitisation through specific points of contact who would be responsible for digitisation; and
 - b) work inter-sessionally to identify and outline potential routes to funding the next phase of the project, including discussions with the NGOs, the IPRIs and the NASCO Secretariat.

- 4.13 Cindy Breau (Canada), Michael Millane (European Union), Hlynur Bárðarson (Iceland), Peder Fiske (Norway), Nora Hanson (UK), Tim Sheehan (USA) and Ken Whelan (NGO representative) were appointed to serve on the Steering Committee. It was noted that the IPRI observers would be invited to provide a participant on the Steering Committee once their involvement in the Board's work was formalised.

- 4.14 The Board also agreed that the Steering Committee would work independently of the NASCO Secretariat but request help as and when necessary. The Steering Committee was asked to prepare:

- an interim report with ballpark costings in February 2026, based on their work so far. This report may include identification of potential funding sources and an indication of how much money would be required to allow those Parties not currently able to participate to join the project; and
- a further progress report in advance of the 2026 Annual Meeting of the Board to inform discussions at that meeting.

- 4.15 The Board noted that the Steering Committee would approach the Secretariat to contact Parties regarding potential funding, with a detailed proposal, when appropriate.

5. Review of the 2024 Inventory of Research

- 5.1 The Acting Chair noted that, at its 2020 Annual Meeting, [CNL\(20\)12](#), the Board had agreed changes to the 'Inventory of Research Relating to Salmon Mortality in the Sea'. The Board had asked the Secretary to engage with the website designer to improve the prominence, searchability and utility of the new Board website and the presentation of the Inventory on that website. It was also agreed that the Secretariat should consider how the utility of the updated website can best be evaluated with the use of hit statistics

and related metrics and that these statistics should be presented annually to the Board to understand the extent to which the Inventory is used.

- 5.2 The Acting Chair referred the Board to the ‘Review of the 2024 Inventory of Research’, [ICR\(25\)03](#). There were no questions or comments on this item.
- 5.3 The Secretariat was requested to ask Board members to update and check the information held in the Inventory relevant to their Party / jurisdiction in November 2025. Board members should return their updates to the Secretariat by 31 December 2025. The Secretariat was asked to post an updated Inventory spreadsheet on the website by the end of January 2026.

6. Finance and Administrative Issues

- 6.1 The Acting Chair referred to the 2024 Accounts for the International Atlantic Salmon Research Fund, [ICR\(25\)04](#). The decision had been taken not to have the 2024 accounts audited and the Secretary had been asked to prepare income and expenditure statements instead. He asked the Assistant Secretary to introduce the accounts.
- 6.2 The Assistant Secretary noted that much of the funds in the accounts were ring-fenced for various projects. The remaining balance in the sterling accounts was approximately £32,920. She reminded the Board that it had previously indicated that it is desirable to retain a reserve of £4,000 – £5,000.
- 6.3 In response to a question from the Board member for the EU, the Assistant Secretary stated that NASCO (and the Board) does not charge an overhead for project management when applying for funding. The Board member for the EU indicated that, given the level of work involved, this could be an income source worth considering for future projects.
- 6.4 The Board agreed to accept the 2024 accounts.
- 6.5 The Acting Chair reminded the Board that, at its 2006 Annual Meeting, it recognised that it was not necessary to have the accounts audited annually and agreed that, in future, the Board’s accounts should be audited as required in relation to the funds held. For years in which an audit is not conducted, details of the Board’s income and expenditure statements would be circulated to the members of the Board and discussed at its Annual Meeting. Based on previous costings, an audit of the Board’s accounts would likely cost approximately £2,500.
- 6.6 The Board agreed not to have its 2025 accounts audited and asked that the Secretary provide income and expenditure statements for consideration at the 2026 Annual Meeting.
- 6.7 The Board member for the United States indicated that the United States may consider re-allocating its £40,150 voluntary contribution, currently ring-fenced for the SALSEA-Track or ROAM projects, to the scale project.

7. Projects of Interest to the Board and its Work

- 7.1 At its 2020 Annual Meeting, the Board agreed to retain an Agenda item to allow for updates on projects of interest to the Board and its work. The Acting Chair referred to the document entitled ‘Projects of Interest to the Board and its Work’ [ICR\(25\)05](#). No questions or comments were raised on this document.

8. Other Business

- 8.1 The Acting Chair advised the Board that, in 2024, Council agreed new rules for Observers, 'Terms and Conditions for Observers at NASCO Meetings', [CNL\(24\)59](#). These new Terms and Conditions (T&Cs) introduced a new Observer category – 'accredited Indigenous Peoples' representatives and institutions' or IPRI. He noted that the Board's 'Revised Terms of Reference for the International Atlantic Salmon Research Board and its Scientific Advisory Group', [ICR\(23\)18](#), do not include the IPRI category, given that they were agreed two years ago.
- 8.2 The Acting Chair stated that the Board's Terms of Reference would need to be revised to include the IPRI. It was noted that, to allow any IPRI involvement in the work of the Board or SAG over the next 12 months, Council would need to adopt revised Terms of Reference for the Board at the 2025 Annual Meeting. The Board would, therefore, need to propose the necessary revisions during the 2025 Annual Meeting.
- 8.3 The Board recognised the importance of consulting with the accredited IPRI to seek their views on how they wished to be involved. However, given the very tight time frame, a full formal consultation was not possible. Discussions held between the accredited IPRI observers and the NASCO President on IPRI involvement in NASCO suggested that, in the first instance, the IPRI observers would be willing to be involved in a similar capacity as the NGOs. This was reiterated by further conversation held between the NGO representative to the Board and some of the IPRI participants at the NASCO Annual Meeting.
- 8.4 The Board agreed to allow a designee for the IPRI observers to participate in the Meeting for the discussion on the IPRI observers. Shelley Denny (Unama'ki Institute of Natural Resources) attended the Meeting for this part of the discussion.
- 8.5 The NGO representative noted that in his discussions with some of the IPRI observers at the meeting, he had discussed the possibility of acting as an intermediary between the IPRI observers and the Board until they had had time to fully consider how they would participate in the work of the Board.
- 8.6 To progress matters and facilitate IPRI involvement in the work of the Board and SAG as a matter of urgency, the Secretariat and Chair worked together to produce proposed revisions to the Board and SAG's Terms of Reference. This was tabled as 'Strawman – Proposed Draft Revised Terms of Reference for the International Atlantic Salmon Research Board and its Scientific Advisory Group', ICR(25)09. The Chair noted that a proposal was also included in the strawman document for the Board and SAG to elect a Vice-Chair to act as Chair in case the Chair was unavailable.
- 8.7 The Board considered the strawman document.
- 8.8 The IPRI observer at the Meeting noted that she could agree to these Terms of Reference.
- 8.9 The Board agreed the revisions as 'Draft Revised Terms of Reference for the International Atlantic Salmon Research Board and its Scientific Advisory Group', ICR(25)10 (Annex 3). The Board agreed to recommend to Council that it adopt these changes as the Board's Terms of Reference. However, the Board also noted that it would consider a request from the IPRI observers to review the terms of their participation once they had been able to fully examine them and consult among themselves.
- 8.10 The Board agreed to elect a Vice-Chair by correspondence once these Terms of

Reference are adopted by Council.

- 8.11 The Board member for the EU noted that he would be unable to attend the meeting in this capacity in future. The EU nominated Michael Millane as the new Board member for the EU.

9. Date and Place of the Next Meeting

- 9.1 The Board agreed to hold its next Annual Meeting in conjunction with the Forty-Third Annual Meeting of NASCO.

10. Report of the Meeting

- 10.1 The Board agreed a report of its Meeting.

11. Close of the Meeting

- 11.1 The Acting Chair thanked participants for their contributions and closed the Meeting.

List of Participants

Canada

**Cindy Breau (virtual participant)
Julien April

Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland)

**Rebekka Nygård Bak
Augusta Jerimiassen

European Union

**Cathal Gallagher
Jaakko Erkinaro
Clemens Fieseler
Ignacio Granell
Seán Kelly
Michael Millane

Iceland

**Guðni Magnús Eiríksson
Kristján Freyr Helgason

Norway

**Raoul Bierach
*Helge Dyrendal
Peder Fiske (Acting Chair)

Russian Federation

**Sergey Prusov (virtual participant)

United Kingdom

**Nora Hanson

United States

**Tim Sheehan

IPRIs

Shelley Denny
Charlie Marshall
Sandra Márjá West

NGOs

Ken Whelan (Nominated NGO Representative)
Heinz Ackmann
Maria Ackmann
Esko Aikio (virtual participant)
Mark Boyden (virtual participant)
Thomas Chrosniak

Rune Jensen
Aimée Hopton

Secretariat

Clare Cavers
Louise Forero

****Nominated Board Member**

***Board Adviser**

ICR(25)07

Twenty-Fourth Meeting of the International Atlantic Salmon Research Board

Cardiff Holland House Hotel & Spa by Sunday, Cardiff, Wales

2 & 5 June 2025

Agenda

1. Opening of the Meeting
2. Adoption of the Agenda
3. Election of Officers
4. The Inter-Sessional Process to Consider a Basin-Wide Marine Growth Study
 - a) Report of the Inter-Sessional Meeting of the International Atlantic Salmon Research Board
 - b) Responses to the Questions for Parties to Further the Board's Discussions on the Feasibility of a Basin-Wide Marine Growth Study
 - c) Decisions Taken in Light of the Discussions on the Basin-Wide Marine Growth Study
5. Review of the 2024 Inventory of Research
6. Finance and Administrative Issues
 - a) The Terms of Reference for the International Atlantic Salmon Research Board and its Scientific Advisory Group
 - b) The International Atlantic Salmon Research Board's Accounts
7. Projects of Interest to the Board and its Work
8. Other Business
9. Date and Place of the Next Meeting
10. Report of the Meeting
11. Close of the Meeting

ICR(25)10

Draft Revised Terms of Reference for the International Atlantic Salmon Research Board and its Scientific Advisory Group

VISION

Factors causing salmon mortality at sea are understood to the level that supports the development of management actions by Parties to reduce mortality to recover, protect and conserve salmon stocks.

PURPOSE AND SCOPE

1. The International Atlantic Salmon Research Board (the Board) is a body, established by, and reporting to, the Council of NASCO, to promote and initiate collaboration and co-operation on research into the causes of marine mortality of Atlantic salmon and the opportunities to counteract this mortality through the following activities:
 - i. maintaining an inventory of relevant research;
 - ii. identifying and prioritising research needs;
 - iii. providing a forum for co-ordination of relevant research efforts by the Contracting Parties of NASCO;
 - iv. maintaining and reviewing the administrative mechanisms to accept financial contributions to an International Atlantic Salmon Research Fund (the Fund);
 - v. seeking and accepting financial contributions and managing the Fund; and
 - vi. evaluating, funding and / or endorsing relevant research projects, according to agreed guidance.

ADMINISTRATION OF THE BOARD

2. The Board will comprise one representative from each Party. Each Party's representative will be considered a Member of the Board and may be assisted, as appropriate, by one or more advisers. Each Party is responsible for covering the costs associated with its participation on the Board. In exceptional circumstances, the Board may, by consensus, deviate from the terms of this paragraph.
3. The Board will work by consensus but in the event that agreement cannot be reached the matter concerned will be referred to the Council for resolution.
4. The Board will meet on an annual basis or at more frequent intervals if it, or the Council of NASCO, so decides.
5. Between meetings, the Board may conduct its work and take decisions by correspondence and / or conference calls.
6. The Board will elect a Chair and Vice-Chair, who will serve for a term of two years and will be eligible for re-election provided that the individual does not serve for more than four years in succession. The Chair and Vice-Chair shall not be from the same Party. A Party providing the Chair (or Vice-Chair if acting as Chair) will be entitled to provide a replacement representative to serve as a Member of the Board and one or more advisers as appropriate.

7. If needed, the Chair with agreement from the Members of the Board may establish informal, ad hoc, Working Groups to enable progress in specific areas of its work. Discussions and any outputs or recommendations from such Groups will be presented to the Board for consideration.
8. The Board may seek advice from NASCO's Standing Scientific Committee.
9. As necessary and appropriate, the Board may make arrangements for external scientific evaluation of research projects funded by the Board or any research projects considered for funding.

NGO AND IPRI INVOLVEMENT

10. The Board will invite one of the Co-Chairs of NASCO's accredited NGOs, or their designee from within the accredited NGOs, to participate in the meetings of the Board and to provide relevant input on the issues under discussion. The Chair of the Board may recognise requests from the floor by the NGO representative on any agenda item under discussion. The NGO representative will be included in all correspondence to the Board.
11. The Board will invite the IPRI point of contact (see clause 19 below) to participate in the meetings of the Board and to provide relevant input on the issues under discussion, or ask them to designate another person attending the meeting to do so. The Chair of the Board may recognise requests from the floor by the IPRI designee on any agenda item under discussion. The IPRI point of contact will be included in all correspondence to the Board.

SCIENTIFIC ADVISORY GROUP

124. To assist the Board in carrying out its responsibilities, a Scientific Advisory Group (the SAG) may be established to provide scientific and technical input and advice to the Board where needed.
132. The SAG will meet only at the behest of the Board. To enable the work of the SAG, the Board will establish separate Terms of Reference to outline appropriate tasks, timelines, and meeting procedures.
143. The SAG will be composed of one representative from each Party. Each Party's representative will be considered a Member of the SAG. Each Party is responsible for covering the costs associated with its participation on the SAG. In exceptional circumstances the Board may, by consensus, deviate from the terms of this paragraph.
145. The SAG will elect a Chair and Vice-Chair who will serve for a term of two years and who will be eligible for re-election provided that the individual does not serve for more than four years in succession. The Chair and Vice-Chair shall not be from the same Party. A Party providing the Chair (or Vice-Chair if acting as Chair) of the SAG will be entitled to provide a replacement representative to serve as a Member of the SAG if necessary.
165. The Board will invite one of the Co-Chairs of NASCO's accredited NGOs, or their designee from within the accredited NGOs, to participate in SAG meetings and to provide relevant input on the issues under discussion. The NGO representative will be included in all correspondence to the SAG.
17. The SAG will invite the IPRI point of contact (see clause 19 below) to participate in SAG meetings and to provide relevant input on the issues under discussion, or ask them

to designate another person attending the meeting to do so. The IPRI point of contact will be included in all correspondence to the SAG.

SUPPORT, REPORTING and REVIEW

186. The Secretariat will provide support to the Board and the SAG, including serving as Rapporteur as necessary and appropriate. Reports of the meetings will be finalised in a timely manner for presentation to the relevant NASCO body. SAG meeting reports will be considered by the Board for adoption. Board meeting reports will be considered by the Council for adoption.
197. To maintain an up-to-date inventory of the current Board and SAG Members, the Secretary will request confirmation of this information from each Party, ~~and~~ the NGO Co-Chairs and current IPRI point of contact every two years. Further, any time there is a change in the representation on either the Board or the SAG, the Party, ~~or~~ NGO Co-Chair or current IPRI point of contact making the change will notify the Secretariat of the name of its new Member without delay.
2018. These Terms of Reference are subject to review by the Council at any time.