



***Report of the Forty-Second Annual Meeting of the North-East Atlantic
Commission of the North Atlantic Salmon Conservation Organization***

1. Opening of the Meeting

- 1.1 The Chair, Robert Floyd (UK) opened the meeting and welcomed delegates.
- 1.2 A list of participants at the Forty-Second Annual Meetings of the Council and Commissions of NASCO is included as Annex 1.

2. Adoption of the Agenda

- 2.1 The Commission adopted its Agenda, [NEA\(25\)13](#).

3. Nomination of a Rapporteur

- 3.1 Sarah McLean (EU) was appointed Rapporteur.

4. Report of the ICES Advisory Committee on Salmon Stocks in the Commission Area

- 4.1 The Chair reminded delegates that the ICES advice for North Atlantic Salmon Stocks was published on 9 May 2025, [CNL\(25\)06](#). He noted that in 2022 the Council had agreed that full ICES Advice should be presented in Council only in future.
- 4.2 The Chair of the Working Group on North Atlantic Salmon (WGNAS), Alan Walker (UK), had presented the report of the Advisory Committee (ACOM) to Council and this presentation is available as document [CNL\(25\)61](#). Dr Walker attended the Commission meeting to answer questions relevant to the Commission.
- 4.3 The Commission had no comments or questions on this Agenda item.

5. Mixed-Stock Fisheries Conducted by Members of the Commission

- 5.1 The Chair noted that in 2024, Council had agreed to include an agenda item in each of the Commissions to allow for an annual update on coastal, estuarine and in-river mixed-stock fisheries (MSFs) and the justification for their continued prosecution ([CNL\(24\)88rev](#)). He noted that the addition of the request to provide justification for the continued prosecution of MSFs was new and that members of the Commission had been asked to include justification for this in their papers on MSFs. The Chair asked the Commission if there were any questions or comments on these MSF papers, particularly in relation to the justification for the continued prosecution of MSFs in the NEA Commission area.
- 5.2 The EU, [NEA\(25\)07](#), Norway, [NEA\(25\)09](#), the Russian Federation, [NEA\(25\)04](#) and the UK, [NEA\(25\)05](#), submitted papers providing information on MSFs. Iceland did not submit a report as there are no directed mixed-stock salmon fisheries in Iceland.
- 5.3 A 'Joint Statement on behalf of the European Union and Norway regarding the Management of the Fisheries in the Tana Watercourse', [NEA\(25\)10](#), had also been provided in advance of the Annual Meeting. This concerned the status of work implementing the bilateral agreement between Norway and EU – Finland on the fisheries in the Tana / Teno river, which include MSFs.

- 5.4 The Russian Federation noted that whilst Norway had submitted papers on MSFs, no justification for the prosecution of these fisheries had been provided. The Russian Federation asked Norway to provide justification for the continued prosecution of MSFs in Finnmark County.
- 5.5 Norway stated that the MSF fisheries in northern Norway mainly target stocks in good status. However, due to lower numbers of returning salmon in recent years and the critical status of the salmon stocks from Tana river, additional restrictions are being implemented on MSFs in 2025. This means that there are now only a few, very restricted MSFs operational in the fjords in western parts of Finnmark. These MSFs only operate late in the season. Norway stated that all of the remaining MSFs that are prosecuted are associated with Norwegian rivers in which salmon stocks are considered to be in good condition. Norway stated that in the eastern parts of Finnmark there are no longer any MSFs. Norway stated that these additional restrictions were not in place in 2024 but will be in place in 2025.

6. Regulatory Measures

- 6.1 The Chair reminded the Commission that in 2024 the Commission adopted a ‘Decision Regarding the Salmon Fishery in Faroese Waters in 2024 / 2025 and 2025 / 2026’, [NEA\(24\)14](#). Under this Decision, the Commission agreed:

‘Not to set a quota for the salmon fishery in the Faroese Fisheries Zone for 2024 / 2025. This decision will also apply in 2025 / 2026 unless any member of the Commission requests its reconsideration based on a review of the scientific advice provided by ICES. Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland) retains the right to conduct a scientific research fishery in the Faroese Fishery Zone.’

- 6.2 The Chair advised the Commission that the ICES advice ([CNL\(25\)06](#)) stated that:

‘...in the absence of specific management objectives and when the [...] MSY approach is applied, the catch on both the Northern and Southern North-East Atlantic Commission (NEAC) area complexes at the Faroe Islands should be zero in each of the fishing seasons 2025/26 and 2026/27.’

- 6.3 The Commission confirmed that the Decision, [NEA\(24\)14](#), would continue to apply in 2025 / 2026.

7. Risk of Transmission of *Gyrodactylus salaris* in the Commission Area

- 7.1 The Chair reminded the Commission that a ‘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](#), was adopted in 2023, along with best practice recommendations that the Commission encouraged members to disseminate widely.
- 7.2 The Chair thanked the EU, [NEA\(25\)08](#), Norway, [NEA\(25\)11](#), the Russian Federation, [NEA\(25\)03](#), and the UK, [NEA\(25\)06](#), for tabling reports on their work on the Road Map. The Chair congratulated Norway on its eradication measures, noting that at the end of 2024, only six of the originally infected 54 rivers still have the presence of *G. salaris*.
- 7.3 The Chair reminded the Commission that it had agreed in 2023, [NEA\(23\)13](#), that Contingency Plans be presented at the next meeting of the Working Group on *Gyrodactylus salaris* and that strong efforts should be made to encourage Commission

members / jurisdictions that have not previously or recently been involved, to participate in future meetings. It had also agreed that the next meeting of the Working Group would take place in 2025. However, due to the availability of the Working Group Chair in the latter half of 2025, the Commission had agreed, by correspondence, that the next Working Group meeting could take place in 2026 instead.

- 7.4 The Chair advised the Commission that it would need to consider the Terms of Reference for the next meeting of the Working Group. He also noted that Recommendation 27 of the External Performance Review Panel, [CNL\(23\)17rev](#), is related to *G. salaris* and contains recommended actions to deal with the parasite. He asked the Commission to consider this Recommendation in conjunction with the Terms of Reference for the 2026 meeting of the Working Group. The Chair asked the Commission for comment on the proposed Terms of Reference for the Working Group on *Gyrodactylus salaris* and the duration of the meeting.
- 7.5 The UK asked if the duration of the meeting was to be two days with a third day for a field visit to a treatment facility.
- 7.6 The Secretary noted that the meeting of the Working Group on *Gyrodactylus salaris* will need to be held in spring of 2026 to ensure the report can be available in time for the Forty-Third Annual Meeting (2026). The Secretary noted that the Chair of the Working Group on *Gyrodactylus salaris* had been consulted on the duration of the meeting and a field visit to a treatment facility. The Chair of the Working Group on *Gyrodactylus salaris* had stated that spring would not be the correct time of year for the proposed field visit.
- 7.7 The EU asked if the duration of the meeting could be flexible subject to the decision of the Working Group itself and its specific needs.
- 7.8 The Commission agreed:
- that the meeting of the Working Group on *Gyrodactylus salaris* be held in Spring 2026;
 - that the duration of the meeting is to be agreed by the Working Group itself; and
 - Terms of Reference for the Working Group on *Gyrodactylus salaris*, [NEA\(25\)14](#).

8. Recommendations to the Council on the Request to ICES for Scientific Advice

- 8.1 The Convention requires NASCO to take into account the best scientific evidence and establish working arrangements with ICES. The Standing Scientific Committee (SSC) assists the Council and Commissions in formulating their questions to ICES. During the Annual Meeting, the SSC meets to develop a Draft Request for Scientific Advice from ICES for consideration by the Commissions and the Council.
- 8.2 The UK offered support to the SSC in formulating its request to ICES, to ensure that the NEA advice is provided in the Standard Advice Sheet.
- 8.3 The Commission agreed to defer consideration of the request to ICES for scientific advice in relation to the North-East Atlantic Commission to the Council. The request to ICES, as agreed by Council, is contained in document [CNL\(25\)09rev](#).

9. Other Business

- 9.1 The Chair advised the Commission that under Council Agenda item 6.b), ‘Decisions on

the ‘Draft of an Action Plan for NASCO’, [CNL\(24\)14](#), Council had considered a recommendation from the Working Group on the Future of NASCO relating to the work of the Commissions. The recommendation text (IP11) read as follows:

‘Jurisdictions provide information on co-operative approaches to the management of salmon catchments that are shared with other jurisdictions. This would include information on how fisheries are managed for the full catchment (e.g. quotas, Conservation Limits, catch returns, habitat plans, regulations). Discussion focused on the following rivers: the Teno / Tena in EU – Finland and in Norway, for the Minho / Miño in EU – Portugal and in EU – Spain (Galicia), and for the Bidasoa in EU – France and in EU – Spain (Navarra).’

- 9.2 During its deliberations on this matter, Council had agreed to ask the Commissions to consider whether there is a benefit in the provision of information to the Commissions on co-operative approaches to the management of salmon catchments that are shared with other jurisdictions. The Chair asked the Commission for comments on this and how the Commission envisages this matter going forward.
- 9.3 Norway noted that there are multiple rivers that Norway shares with other jurisdictions. Norway stated that if there is an interest in providing information on co-operative approaches it will work with respective jurisdictions to do so.
- 9.4 The EU stated that, in theory, it was in agreement with this idea. However, there is a need to reflect on mechanisms, instruments and systems already in place and assess the current state of play before taking a position.
- 9.5 The UK made an intervention in relation to EU – Ireland and UK – Northern Ireland. The UK highlighted the systems already in place and the co-operative mechanisms utilised by Northern Ireland, Ireland and the cross-border regions to manage salmon stocks in those areas. The UK supported the EU in the need to assess and present the current systems to the Commission.
- 9.6 The Indigenous Peoples’ representatives and institutions representative noted that it is very important to ensure cross-border co-operation. The representative noted that there is a Sámi report which highlights the knowledge gap when it comes to the management of Atlantic salmon in catchments shared between Norway and Finland with respect to the inclusion of Indigenous Peoples’ knowledge in decision making. The representative noted that the Sámi Parliament in Norway and the Sámi Parliament in Finland should be involved in management decisions to fill this knowledge gap. The representative noted that, at present, the report is only available in Sámi but once it is translated into Norwegian and English, it will be provided to the Commission.
- 9.7 The Chair thanked the Commission members for their responses. The Commission agreed to add an item to the 2026 Agenda that would allow members to provide papers describing the existing co-operative approaches to the management of salmon catchments that are shared with other jurisdictions as a first step to look for co-operative measures.
- 9.8 The Chair thanked the Secretary, Emma Hatfield, on behalf of himself and the North-East Atlantic Commission, for all her hard work, dedication, and support.

10. Date and Place of the Next Meeting

- 10.1 The Commission agreed to hold its next Annual Meeting at the same time and place as the Forty-Third Annual Meeting of the Council.

11. Report of the Meeting

11.1 The Commission agreed a report of the Meeting.

12. Close of the Meeting

12.1 The Chair thanked the participants for their contributions and closed the Meeting.