



**REPORT OF THE
FORTY-SECOND
ANNUAL MEETING
OF THE COUNCIL**

Holland House Hotel & Spa by Sunday, Cardiff, Wales

3 – 6 June 2025

President: Kim Damon-Randall (United States)

Vice-President: Ruth Allin (United Kingdom)

Secretary: Emma Hatfield

CNL(25)80rev

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

1. Opening of the Meeting

- 1.1 In the absence of the President, the Acting President, Ruth Allin (UK), opened the meeting and chaired it. She introduced the Deputy Director for International Fisheries Negotiations and Trade of the UK Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, Colin Faulkner, who welcomed delegates to the UK (Annex 1) and the Head of Aquaculture, Freshwater and Migratory Fisheries for Welsh Government, Robert Floyd, who welcomed delegates to Wales (Annex 2). The Acting President made an Opening Statement (Annex 3).
- 1.2 Written Opening Statements were submitted by Canada, Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland), the European Union (EU), Iceland, Norway, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom (UK) and the United States (Annex 4).
- 1.3 A written Opening Statement was submitted on behalf of France (in respect of Saint Pierre and Miquelon) (Annex 5).
- 1.4 A joint written Opening Statement was submitted by the Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) (Annex 6). A written Opening Statement was submitted by the Coomhola Salmon Trust Ltd (Annex 7).
- 1.5 A written Opening Statement was submitted on behalf of the Indigenous Peoples' representatives and institutions (IPRIs) (Annex 8).
- 1.6 A list of participants at the Forty-Second Annual Meeting of the Council of NASCO is given in Annex 9.

2. Adoption of the Agenda

- 2.1 The Council adopted its Agenda, [CNL\(25\)42](#).
- 2.2 Under this Agenda item the Acting President raised the topic of accredited observers. She noted that in 2024 Council adopted new 'Terms and Conditions for Observers at NASCO Meetings', [CNL\(24\)59](#), (T&Cs) which allow both NGOs and IPRIs to attend Council meetings as observers. She welcomed the 22 NGOs and four IPRIs represented at the Meeting.
- 2.3 The Acting President noted that the T&Cs allow each accredited observer organization either to represent themselves and to make a single intervention, of no more than two minutes, over the course of this Council Meeting, or for the Observers to work together using a spokesperson and to pool their interventions accordingly. She raised that the interventions must take place after debate by the Parties, and the Observers cannot participate in decision making.
- 2.4 The Acting President noted that the T&Cs state that the Presiding Officer should determine the format and procedure for such interventions. She raised that in Council, there would initially be two NGO Co-Chair seats at the table, with Co-Chairs signalling an NGO intervention, either to be made by a Co-Chair or by a specific NGO. She noted

¹ Revised 16 September 2025 to include missing Annex (Annex 10).

that there would now be a new IPRI seat at the top table, with IPRIIs working together to ensure that the person at the top table is able to intervene on behalf of the IPRIIs or to bring the relevant IPRI to the table, at the appropriate time. She raised that the intention is to allow both NASCO and its Observers to benefit from observer interventions, while still enabling effective meeting management.

- 2.5 The Acting President reminded delegates that any questions or comments during Council should relate specifically to Agenda items and that there is no open question and answer session. She raised that Special Sessions are run differently and these rules do not apply to Special Sessions, where there is the opportunity for any delegate to ask questions, subject to time constraints.
- 2.6 The Acting President noted that, as agreed in 2022, Parties / NGOs were invited to submit questions on Agenda items, in advance of the Annual Meeting, to the relevant Party. The Secretariat received questions from NGOs. Five of these questions were grouped as questions to Heads of Delegation and the President informed the Meeting that she had met previously with the NGOs and indicated the most appropriate point in the Meeting for each question to be raised verbally. She also raised that some additional questions submitted for Parties were not appropriate to be raised in the Meeting and written responses would be provided and annexed to the Meeting Report (see Annex 10).
- 2.7 The Acting President noted that the practice of submitting written questions was introduced during the Covid pandemic and asked if the Council wished to continue including this procedure at its Annual Meeting.
- 2.8 The Council agreed to continue with written questions.
- 2.9 The Acting President noted that under NASCO's new T&Cs for accredited observers, IPRIIs are now able to attend NASCO meetings. She raised that for 2026 onwards, therefore, NASCO should consider giving IPRIIs as well as Parties and NGOs the opportunity to submit written questions in advance of the Annual Meeting and asked if Parties would be happy to include provision for Parties, NGOs and IPRIIs to ask questions in advance, in future years.
- 2.10 The Council agreed it would be happy to include provision for Parties, NGOs and IPRIIs to ask questions in advance, in future years.

3. Election of Officers

- 3.1 The Council elected Seamus Connor (UK) as President (proposed by Norway and seconded by the EU) and Raoul Bierach (Norway) as Vice-President (proposed by the UK and seconded by Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland)). Both will serve for a two-year period to commence from the close of the 2025 Annual Meeting.

4. Financial and Administrative Issues

a) Report of the Finance and Administration Committee

- 4.1 The Chair of the Finance and Administration Committee (FAC), Seamus Connor (UK), introduced the report of the Meeting of the Finance and Administration Committee, [CNL\(25\)04](#).
- 4.2 At its 2024 Annual Meeting, [CNL\(24\)88rev](#), Council had agreed a process and timeline for a full review of NASCO's Staff Fund Rules and Staff Rules, including incorporating

provisions into the Staff Rule revisions to include interns, in line with many International Organizations. The FAC had met inter-sessionally in March 2025 to finalise this work and had developed 'Proposed Staff Handbook & Staff Rules', FACIS(25)07, and a 'Proposed NASCO Internship Programme', FACIS(25)08, which it recommended for adoption by Council.

- 4.3 The FAC Chair informed Council that there were some further revisions to consider, in relation to the probation period, both in terms of its length and notice period, which had been highlighted by the law firm Gunnercooke LLP in the drawing up of the new letter of appointment for NASCO staff.
- 4.4 The FAC Chair noted that, following discussions with the President, Acting President and himself, and examining the probation period in several other RFMOs, a probation period of six months was proposed for NASCO Staff members, rather than the current 12 months. In addition, it was agreed that if that period did not cover an Annual Meeting, the Secretary could extend the probationary period for an additional period of not more than six months. The other exceptional circumstances clause would remain, where the Secretary could extend the probationary period for an additional period of not more than six months. Additionally, for the protection both of the Organization and the probationer, and in line with modern UK employment practice, a notice period of one month (both by and to the probationer) was proposed.
- 4.5 The FAC Chair stated that the first proposed change to the Staff Rules before Council was to Rule 5.4 under 'Recruitment and Appointment' as follows:

'Staff members shall be appointed subject to a probationary period of ~~one year~~ six months. If this period does not cover an Annual Meeting, the Secretary may extend the probationary period for an additional period of not more than six months. Additionally, in exceptional circumstances the Secretary may extend the probationary period for an additional period of not more than six months.'

- 4.6 The FAC Chair noted that the next proposed change to the Staff Rules before Council was to Rule 14.1 under 'Separation from Service' as follows:

'A Secretariat member holding a permanent position may resign at any time upon giving in writing, three months' notice or such lesser period as may be approved by the Council in the case of the Secretary or by the Secretary in the case of Staff members.'

A Secretariat member on probation may resign at any time upon giving in writing, one month's notice to the President in the case of the Secretary or to the Secretary in the case of Staff members.

In the event of a Secretariat member resigning without giving the required notice, the Council reserves the right to decide whether any allowances shall be paid.'

- 4.7 The FAC Chair raised that the third proposed change to the Staff Rules before Council was to Rule 14.4 'Termination' under 'Separation from Service' as follows:

'A termination within the meaning of these Staff Rules is a separation initiated by the Organization if it is required that appointments be terminated as the result of abolition of posts, reduction in staff or if termination is deemed to be in the interest of the Organization. Due regard shall be had in all cases to the

efficiency, competence, integrity and length of service of the member of staff concerned.

Appointment of Staff members may be terminated upon prior written notice, at least three months in advance, by the Secretary when they deem this to be in the interests of the Organization. The Organization reserves the right to offer pay in lieu of termination notice.

Appointment of a Secretariat member on probation may be terminated upon prior written notice, one month in advance, by the President for the Secretary or the Secretary for a Staff member, when they deem this to be in the interests of the Organization. The Organization reserves the right to offer pay in lieu of termination notice.

For any staff whose date of appointment is on or after 9 June 2024, in the event of the termination by the Organization of a Secretariat member's service, compensation at the rate on one month's salary for each year's service (capped at one year's salary) shall be paid unless the cause of termination has been any type of misconduct.'

- 4.8 Council agreed these revisions and to adopt the:
- 'Staff Handbook & Staff Rules' [CNL\(25\)45](#); and
 - 'NASCO Internship Programme', [CNL\(25\)46](#).
- 4.9 The FAC Chair then introduced the Report of the FAC's Annual Meeting, [CNL\(25\)04](#). He noted that there was a major substantive discussion around the Budget for 2026 in view of no Party or jurisdiction offering to host the 2026 Annual Meeting. He added that significant increases in hotel costs since the Covid pandemic and the additional costs for the Secretariat running the Annual Meeting in 2026 presented a real challenge to the discussions on what could be accepted as the budget maximum for 2026.
- 4.10 The FAC Chair informed the Council of several items that did not require decision, in particular NASCO's MoU with the OSPAR Commission given that the OSPAR Secretariat would be organizing OSPAR's next Status Assessment of Salmon in 2026 and would be interested to know whether members of NASCO would be willing to engage in the process when the next Status Assessment is prepared.
- 4.11 The FAC Chair also informed Council of the election of Rebecca Wintering (USA) as FAC Chair and Dale Marsden (Canada) as FAC Vice-Chair. He also informed Council that Iceland raised the issue of including catches of ranched salmon in its nominal catches, and had agreed it was content for the FAC to note its paper.
- 4.12 The FAC Chair asked Council to adopt the 2024 Audited Accounts, for which there was only budget surplus in 2024 to enable a 'top up' to the NASCO Working Capital Fund. He informed Council that top ups to the Contractual Obligation Fund and Recruitment Fund were unable to be made.
- 4.13 The FAC Chair noted that some Parties had indicated that they could not support the extent of increase in the 2026 Draft Budget given how much difference it made to their contributions. He stated that the Secretary had, therefore, been asked to investigate options to reduce the costs of the 2026 Annual Meeting and find additional savings in other areas of the budget. He informed Council that the Secretary had successfully found savings in the Annual Meeting costs and other areas of the budget, as detailed in

the Report of the FAC, [CNL\(25\)04](#), to enable the FAC to recommend a figure for the 2026 Draft Budget of £735,330, i.e. the 2025 Budget raised by inflation.

4.14 On the recommendation of the Committee, the Council agreed to:

- accept the Audited Accounts for 2024;
- adopt the Budget for 2026, [CNL\(25\)47](#); and
- adopt the Report of the FAC, [CNL\(25\)04](#).

4.15 The Acting President acknowledged the work by the Secretariat to negotiate the revised costs for the 2026 Annual Meeting. She raised that there had been no offers to host the 2027 Annual Meeting and no indications that Parties would be able to host Annual Meetings further into the future. She noted that, on that basis, NASCO needed to make provision to fund future Annual Meetings from its budget, which is funded largely by Party contributions with some income from the Headquarters property and bank interest.

4.16 The UK raised that it recognised Parties were under tight budgetary constraints and hosting the Annual Meeting could incur huge costs, especially when it falls to NASCO and no Parties are able to host it. The UK asked if Council would support the Secretariat developing several options and providing one recommendation on different models of Annual Meeting from 2027 and onwards. The UK recommended that the focus be on the duration and size of the meeting with a view to making it cost efficient while still aiming to achieve the goals of NASCO's Ten-Year Strategy. Several Parties expressed support for this suggested path of action. Canada raised that a key item was to maintain high participation and engagement from key stakeholders.

4.17 Council agreed to:

- a ceiling for the 2027 Budget consisting of the 2026 Budget plus inflation;
- task the Secretariat to review NASCO's meeting model for 2027 and to revert to Council with a proposal in advance of an inter-sessional meeting of the Council which may be scheduled before the end of 2025. This review should provide Council with a discussion document, outlining a limited number of meeting model options with a recommendation on the way forward based on an analysis of the options outlined; and
- to task the Secretary to also prepare a Forecast Budget for 2027 and a five-year Budgeting Plan for 2026 – 2030, also to be discussed at the Council inter-sessional meeting.

b) NASCO Calendar and Working Group Membership

4.18 The Acting President noted that in 2024 Council had agreed that a calendar of inter-sessional meetings and membership of inter-sessional Working Groups would be included on the Agenda of each Annual Meeting for agreement by Council. She indicated that this would provide a greater level of certainty for Parties and the Secretariat, thereby enabling more efficient working for all concerned.

4.19 Council agreed the 'Membership of Working Groups agreed during the Annual Meeting', [CNL\(25\)48rev](#), with any outstanding names to be agreed by Parties as soon as possible.

- 4.20 Council agreed its ‘Calendar of Inter-Sessional Meetings 2025 to 2026’, [CNL\(25\)49rev](#), with Parties asked to provide specific availability information to the Secretariat as soon as possible.

5. Scientific, Technical, Legal and Other Information

a) NASCO News 2025

- 5.1 The Acting President noted that, in 2022, the Council had agreed that the ‘Report on the Activities of the Organization’ and the ‘Secretary’s Report’ would be merged to be a showcase for NASCO’s work. She referred Council to the ‘NASCO News 2025’, [CNL\(25\)05](#).
- 5.2 The Acting President raised that the NASCO News is intended to showcase NASCO’s work and only includes information up to the end of February of the current year. She noted that since then three NGOs (Saami Climate Council, Wye Salmon Association and SalmonCamera) and three IPRIIs (Atlantic Policy Congress of First Nations Chiefs Secretariat (APC), Unama’ki Institute of Natural Resources (UINR) and Houlton Band of Maliseet Indians) had become accredited Observers to NASCO.
- 5.3 The Secretary raised that the communications experts that had produced the Communications and Outreach Strategy had recommended moving to a more frequent newsletter, which would provide more regular updates.

b) Scientific Advice from ICES

(i) A new approach / presentation of the ICES Advice

- 5.4 The Acting President noted that, as requested by Council at its 2022 Annual Meeting, the Secretary had been working with ICES to investigate a more streamlined approach / presentation of the ICES Advice
- 5.5 The ICES Advisory Committee (ACOM) Vice-Chair, Joanne Morgan, provided a ‘2025 Update on the Streamlining of the ICES Advice’, [CNL\(25\)07](#). Her presentation is available as [CNL\(25\)62](#).
- 5.6 The ACOM Vice-Chair noted that the beginnings of streamlined advice are already available, and there remains a decision to be made by the Working Group on North Atlantic Salmon (WGNAS) on the appropriate metrics. She raised that making decisions on the whole Atlantic would help with streamlining regional advice sheets. She also raised that there was a significant difference between the streamlined advice being proposed and the current format, which had to be considered carefully. In addition, ICES had suffered a cyber-attack which had taken several months to recover from.
- 5.7 In response to the ACOM presentation, the UK presented, on behalf of all NASCO Parties, a high-level direction to the NASCO Secretariat on how to progress the streamlining of the ICES advice for 2026. The presentation is available as [CNL\(25\)63](#).
- 5.8 Denmark (in respect of Faroe Islands and Greenland) raised that, while it had been concerned that no progress had been made on streamlining the advice previously, it was very encouraged by the presentation from the ACOM Vice-Chair on what has been done. It also supported the suggestions presented by the UK and was expecting the regional advice for 2026 to be in a streamlined advice sheet. Iceland raised that it also hoped for a different and improved ICES format.
- 5.9 The Acting President noted that it was apparent from the Parties that they wanted to

receive streamlined advice, and from the ACOM Vice-Chair that it was possible, with a proviso that it may be a developmental process.

5.10 Council agreed:

- that the Standing Scientific Committee (SSC) be asked to add new text to the request for scientific advice from ICES to include an overview of the status of salmon in the North Atlantic as a whole in the section on Atlantic salmon in the North Atlantic area in 2026;
- that the SSC be directed to request the advice on salmon in the three regional areas is provided in 2026 in the ‘simplified fisheries advice’ format as presented in [CNL\(25\)62](#) by the ICES ACOM Vice-Chair; and
- to ask the Secretary to work with ICES, including in its advice format sub-group, to enable this to happen.

(ii) *Scientific Advice from ICES*

- 5.11 The Acting President reminded delegates that the ICES advice for North Atlantic salmon stocks was published on 9 May 2025, [CNL\(25\)06](#), and would be presented alongside advice relating to item 7.a) ‘New or Emerging Opportunities for, or Threats to, Salmon Conservation and Management’.
- 5.12 The Chair of the ICES Working Group on North Atlantic Salmon (WGNAS), Alan Walker (UK), presented the advice. His presentation is available as document [CNL\(25\)61](#). He drew attention to the record or near record low returns of 1SW and MSW salmon in the majority of Parties / jurisdictions in 2023 or 2024.
- 5.13 The NGOs raised concerns over the statistics reported by the Chair of the WGNAS, which showed some of the lowest returns on record, and asked him what additional types of data would be required to see a response at the ICES level. The Chair of the WGNAS responded that the data presented are appropriate for the spatial scales considered in the advice, but that a high number of changes at a local level would be required to see the aggregated impact at the high level used by ICES.
- 5.14 The IPRIIs asked for clarification on whether it would be possible to estimate post-release mortality in catch and release, given the increase in it, and also asked what constituted ‘unreported catch’. The Chair of the WGNAS responded that most Parties already estimated mortality in catch and release, and that it would be possible for ICES to reflect this in their statistics. He added that ‘unreported catch’ was the estimate given by each Party of the number of fish caught but not reported, with different methods being used across Parties.

c) *Report of the International Atlantic Salmon Research Board*

- 5.15 The International Atlantic Salmon Research Board (the Board) met on 2 and 5 June. The report of the Meeting of the Board, [CNL\(25\)08](#), was introduced by its Acting Chair, Peder Fiske (Norway). He noted the origin of the Board and its Scientific Advisory Group.
- 5.16 The main topics for the Board’s Annual Meeting were the consideration of a basin-wide marine growth study and the revision of the Terms of Reference of the Board and SAG, enabling IPRIIs to take part in both the Board and SAG meetings. For the marine growth study, a Steering Committee has been set up to co-ordinate the project and to seek funding opportunities.

- 5.17 On the recommendation of the Board, the Council:
- agreed the Report of the Meeting of the Board, [CNL\(25\)08](#); and
 - adopted the ‘Terms of Reference for the International Atlantic Salmon Research Board and its Scientific Advisory Group’, [ICR\(25\)12](#).
- d) Report of the Standing Scientific Committee**
- 5.18 The Acting President informed the Council that Articles 3 and 4 of the Convention require NASCO to take into account the best scientific evidence and establish working arrangements with ICES. During the Annual Meeting, the Standing Scientific Committee (SSC), which assists the Council and Commissions in formulating their questions to ICES, met to develop a draft request for scientific advice from ICES for consideration by the Commissions and the Council.
- 5.19 In response to comments in 2024 on the SSC’s business and working methods, the Acting Co-ordinator of the SSC, Tim Sheehan (USA) explained the process that the SSC follows, noting differences this year because Council had given several instructions directly to the Committee, some of which were charges for text to include and others were for the SSC’s consideration.
- 5.20 He noted that the charges related specifically to including a request for a stock overview for North Atlantic salmon, presenting the ICES advice for the three regions in the ICES standard advice template and including a request for a data call on bycatch of salmon. The Committee was also asked to consider, inter-sessionally, a broader discussion of the advice needed from ICES to enable delivery of NASCO’s Ten-Year Strategy.
- 5.21 Council agreed the ‘Request for Scientific Advice from ICES’, [CNL\(25\)09rev](#).
- e) Report of the Stocking Guidelines Working Group**
- 5.22 The Acting President noted that, in 2024, Council had agreed ‘The Future of NASCO – a Ten-Year Strategy’, [CNL\(24\)71rev](#), which contained a high-level Action Plan. She further noted that within this, Council agreed (see [CNL\(24\)88rev](#)) that the Stocking Guidelines Working Group would reconvene to work on updating the 2004 Stock Rebuilding Programme Guidelines and consider guidelines related to gene banking. To enable this, she noted that ‘Terms of Reference for the Stocking Guidelines Working Group’, [CNL\(24\)68](#), had been agreed.
- 5.23 The Acting President advised Council that the Stocking Guidelines Working Group met inter-sessionally, in late 2024 and early 2025, to draft the two documents ‘Draft Guidelines on the Use of Stock Rebuilding Programmes in the Context of the Precautionary Management of Salmon Stocks’ (Annex 3 of [CNL\(25\)11](#)), and ‘Draft Guidelines for Gene Banking for Wild Atlantic Salmon’ (Annex 4 of [CNL\(25\)11](#)).
- 5.24 The Chair of the Working Group, Stephen Gephard (USA), presented the ‘Draft Guidelines on the Use of Stock Rebuilding Programmes in the Context of the Precautionary Management of Salmon Stocks’ (Annex 3 of [CNL\(25\)11](#)). The UK welcomed the Guidelines and requested some minor amendments as follows:
- to ensure more consistent terminology to avoid confusion, refer to ‘rivers’ rather than ‘streams’ throughout the Guidelines; and
 - include reference to ‘severely depleted’ populations as an additional bullet in the section 2.II.C ‘Nature of Stock Decline’ on page 14 of the Guidelines document.
- 5.25 The NGO Co-Chair asked if the Working Group had considered the possibility that the

precautionary principle could lead to paralysis problems in making decisions related to stock rebuilding programmes. The Chair of the Working Group responded that while it had not been discussed in that regard, the recurring theme of the Guidelines was to start early and not wait for stocks to crash.

- 5.26 The NGO Co-Chair further asked if any additional guidance had been considered that had not been incorporated into the Guidelines. The Chair of the Working Group responded he did not feel that to be the case, that stock decline is very complicated and the Guidelines were not intended to be prescriptive.
- 5.27 Canada suggested some additional amendments to text in section 3.II.B ‘Stocking’ on page 19, from:

*‘NASCO considers that where integrity (i.e. evolutionary and ecological naturalness) of the wild stock is a management priority, stocking should not be considered as a remediation measure. **However, consideration may be given to the need for interim stocking of hatchery products as an emergency stock protection measure. Stocking may be used to circumvent bottlenecks in production while other actions are taken to address the cause of the stock decline.** Further guidance is provided in NASCO’s ‘Guidelines for Stocking Atlantic Salmon’, CNL(24)61.’*

to

*‘NASCO considers that where integrity (i.e. evolutionary and ecological naturalness) of the wild stock is a management priority, stocking should not be considered as a remediation measure. **Despite the risks associated with stocking, there are some limited situations where stocking may be beneficial for wild salmon. Stocking may be beneficial where the wild Atlantic salmon population has been extirpated or is at immediate risk of extirpation.** Further guidance is provided in NASCO’s ‘Guidelines for Stocking Atlantic Salmon’, CNL(24)61.’*

- 5.28 The Chair informed Council that he had consulted with the other members of the Stocking Guidelines Working Group to incorporate the text amendments from Canada and the UK.
- 5.29 Norway asked for clarification on the meaning of ‘interim’ in the context of the Guidelines and expressed concern that stocking could be seen as an easy option rather than finding a better solution. The Chair responded that the Guidelines contained important qualification in its text that stated that ‘stocking should not be considered as a remediation measure’ and should be considered a last resort.
- 5.30 The United States made the following statement:
- ‘The U.S. will not oppose the adoption of the revised Stock Rebuilding Programme Guidelines or Gene Banking Guidelines. While we do not support the multiple references to climate change, we also acknowledge that these documents are technical in nature and ultimately are only guidelines, and therefore not legally binding on any Party.’*
- 5.31 The Council agreed the revisions and adopted the ‘Guidelines on the Use of Stock Rebuilding Programmes in the Context of the Precautionary Management of Salmon Stocks’, [CNL\(25\)50](#).
- 5.32 The Chair of the Working Group presented the ‘Draft Guidelines for Gene Banking for

Wild Atlantic Salmon’ (Annex 4 of [CNL\(25\)11](#)). The UK welcomed the Guidelines and requested a minor amendment as follows:

- the addition of text to the last sentence of section 1. ‘Introduction’ to modify ‘NASCO recommends that Parties / jurisdictions establish frozen gene banks as soon as possible...’ to ‘NASCO recommends that Parties / jurisdictions consider establishing frozen gene banks as soon as possible...’.

5.33 Council agreed the revisions and adopted ‘Guidelines for Gene Banking for Wild Atlantic Salmon’, [CNL\(25\)51](#).

f) The Wild Atlantic Salmon Atlas

5.34 The Acting President noted that in 2022 the Council agreed to develop a Wild Atlantic Salmon Atlas (WASA), [CNL\(22\)53rev](#) and the Atlas development was completed prior to the 2024 Annual Meeting. She further noted that in 2024, [CNL\(24\)88rev](#), Council had agreed to finalise the WASA, and that that Parties would populate the WASA to give a global picture of the status of salmon, using the agreed WASA data metrics, by December 2024.

5.35 The Acting President stated that all Parties and jurisdictions had provided data for inclusion in the Atlas, which had been used by the Secretariat, in conjunction with a GIS expert, to complete the build of the Atlas by April 2025. She noted that Parties / jurisdictions were given the opportunity to review the Atlas by the end of April 2025.

5.36 The Acting President raised that access details for the Atlas would be shared with all delegates by email following the Agenda item, as an official launch at the Annual Meeting. She also informed delegates that the Steering Committee members Helge Dyrendal (Norway), Stephen Gephard (USA), Nora Hanson (UK – Scotland) and Sarah McLean (EU – Ireland) and Secretariat staff would be available for any informal questions at the coffee break. She invited all delegates to try out the Atlas and approach the members of the Steering Committee with any comments or questions.

5.37 The Acting President raised that the translation of the Atlas in the official languages of each of the NASCO Parties was a recommendation of the Rivers Database Working Group, [CNL\(22\)12](#), and agreed by Council, [CNL\(22\)53rev](#). She further raised that making the Atlas available in each of the NASCO Parties’ ‘official’ languages would make it more accessible. Several Parties raised that they would provide translations of text should they wish to have that text in the Atlas. The NGOs offered to help with translation into some languages.

5.38 Council agreed that, if there was sufficient budget in 2025, the Secretariat should effect a translation of the Atlas to French using automated translation where possible.

g) Final Report on the Review of the Effect of Salmon Aquaculture on Wild Atlantic Salmon Populations

5.39 The Acting President reminded Council that, at its 2021 Annual Meeting, [CNL\(21\)62](#), NASCO agreed to fund a study to provide the latest scientific knowledge on the impacts of sea lice and escaped farmed salmon on wild salmon. She noted that a detailed proposal to enable this work to be conducted was provided to Council in 2022, [CNL\(22\)07](#). She further noted that updates on the work were provided in 2023 and 2024 and expressed gratitude to the EU for part-funding this project.

5.40 The Acting President stated that the work is now complete and will be published as two papers in peer-reviewed journals. She noted that a paper entitled ‘Does exposure to sea

lice from aquaculture have a population-reducing effect on wild Atlantic salmon? A systematic review' will be submitted to the journal 'Fish and Fisheries', in summer 2025. She further noted that a second paper entitled 'Genetic introgression of farmed Atlantic salmon in wild salmon populations throughout its native range' has been prepared and will be submitted to the journal 'Nature Communications', in summer 2025. She also raised that a policy brief on the management implications of the key findings of the State of Knowledge studies on the 'Effect of Aquaculture on Wild Atlantic Salmon Populations', [CNL\(25\)18](#), had been provided by the Expert Groups that performed the studies.

- 5.41 The UK asked how the papers would be used aside from being published.
- 5.42 The Secretary raised that it was important to note that the papers submitted for publication to peer-reviewed journals and referred to by the Acting President were not NASCO papers. Rather NASCO had commissioned the research by expert groups following its Theme-based Special Session on aquaculture and provided some of the funding to produce the papers. She further noted that the Groups working on the papers had had free rein, with no guidance or input from NASCO.
- 5.43 The NGO Co-Chair asked why this Agenda item had no decision associated with it, when the Policy Brief raised significant points on introgression as the most serious threat to the viability of wild Atlantic Salmon.
- 5.44 The Acting President noted that NASCO wanted to have independent scientists produce the work to avoid perceptions of bias. The Working Group that would review the relevant Resolutions, Agreements and Guidelines associated with aquaculture would be undertaking its work after the papers had been published and could, therefore, consider how to use and respond to them once they had been published.
- 5.45 The IPRI noted that she was looking forward to the papers being published and highlighted that there was a need to incorporate Indigenous Peoples' views into such work.

6. NASCO's High-Level Action Plan as Contained in 'The Future of NASCO – a Ten-Year Strategy'

a) Update from The Working Group on the Future of NASCO

- 6.1 The Acting President reminded Council that, in 2023, following various recommendations from its third performance review, Council agreed to establish a Working Group on the Future of NASCO (WGFON) to develop a strategy and action plan for the Organization, informed by the many recommendations for improvement received by NASCO, in recent years. She further reminded Council that the WGFON met inter-sessionally in 2023 and in 2024, and at the 2024 Annual Meeting Council adopted the document 'The Future of NASCO – a Ten Year Strategy', [CNL\(24\)71rev](#), which included both a Strategy and a high level Action Plan.
- 6.2 The Acting President raised that at the 2024 Annual Meeting the Council noted that the WGFON had not completed its work and it was reconvened to address some recommendations from the Draft Action Plan that were still to be resolved. She noted that the WGFON met in March 2025 and also worked by correspondence to complete four tasks:
 - develop a proposal for updating NASCO's Action Plan, on an annual basis;
 - make recommendations on how to tackle 19 recommendations that had not been

addressed within either the 2024 Action Plan, or NASCO's wider work;

- develop a position paper on changing the NASCO Convention; and
- further consider the action for 'Parties to share baseline analysis to inform progress on stressors.'

6.3 The Acting President presented an overview of NASCO's five Objectives and high-level Action Plan from its Ten-Year Strategy. She proposed the Action Plan be updated after each Annual Meeting by the Secretariat to reflect the discussion and decision that had taken place. This could include updating the status of actions and / or adding any new action(s) agreed in Council. The updated Action Plan would be published as a standalone document that included details of the updates made in that year, to provide a clear audit trail on progress. She recommended that, to improve accessibility and impact, the Secretariat should work with a web developer to design a web-based platform to highlight progress made in the implementation of NASCO's high-level Action Plan.

6.4 Council agreed to request that the Secretariat:

- create an updated high-level Action Plan, immediately after each Annual Meeting, showing the status of the high-level actions in the Action Plan, e.g. '2025 / 2026 High-Level Action Plan';
- create an accompanying Word document each year to describe the changes to the high-level Action Plan from the previous year, immediately following the Annual Meeting; and
- each year, combine this information into a Council paper, separate from the 'Ten Year Strategy', that serves as the record of Council's decisions.

6.5 The UK and Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland) both raised concerns on the proposal to work with a developer to design a web-based platform to highlight progress made in the implementation of NASCO's high-level Action Plan, and noted that it required further discussion and consideration of the budget implications.

6.6 Council agreed to commission the Secretariat to work with a web developer to make the Action Plan more accessible if this is possible within budget, however, the PI and CCR templates (see paragraph 6.84) should take priority.

6.7 The Acting President raised another piece of work that Council commissioned in 2024, to request that the Secretary work with ICES to develop a request to ensure that ICES databases and web-based applications, both present and future, accommodate salmon, as they do for other assessed stocks, and to request that Atlantic salmon be placed on the ICES bycatch list, to improve understanding of this matter, [CNL\(25\)15](#). She noted that the Group ICES WKFIBRE (Workshop on Fish Species Bycatch Relevance) met in 2024 / 25 and agreed not to add salmon to the ICES bycatch list, following which the Secretary initiated discussions between ACOM leadership in ICES and NASCO. ACOM decided on 28 April 2025 to add both Atlantic salmon and European eel to the list of fish species of bycatch relevance in all ecoregions. The Acting President raised that NASCO will need to include text in the ICES advice request for 2026 to enable a bycatch data call for salmon and for data from Canada and the United States to be included.

6.8 Council agreed to ask the SSC to include a new bullet in the request for scientific advice

from ICES for 2026 to enable a bycatch data call for salmon and for data from Canada and the United States to be included.

- 6.9 Finally, the Acting President reminded Council that, in 2024, it had agreed, after discussing what constitutes a baseline analysis, that Parties / jurisdictions each carry out such an analysis after the 2025 Annual Meeting and provide a paper to NASCO by 30 April 2026.
- 6.10 She noted that the Special Session on stressor analyses had demonstrated that these analyses had delivered baselines and several Parties agreed. Council, therefore, agreed that separate baseline analyses would not be required in 2026.
- 6.11 However, there was a general consensus that a review of progress against the baselines for each stressor at the end of the fourth reporting cycle would provide the opportunity to assess any change in the stressor at that time and to inform future action.
- 6.12 Council agreed that Parties / jurisdictions should run their stressor analyses again at the end of the fourth reporting cycle, i.e. in 2033.

b) Decisions on the ‘Draft of an Action Plan for NASCO’, CNL(24)14

- 6.13 The Acting President noted that this Agenda item continued the consideration of the 19 recommendations that remained to be resolved following the 2024 Annual Meeting. A sub-group of the WGFON met in October 2024 and produced a list of recommendations from the ‘Draft of an Action Plan’, [CNL\(24\)14](#), for consideration by the WGFON at its Meeting in March 2025. The WGFON considered these and had recommended them to Council.
- 6.14 The Acting President noted that there were two main sets of recommendations: the first six related to actions by NASCO bodies, i.e. Council, the Standing Scientific Committee (SSC) and the three regional Commissions; and the second related to proposed additions for the revision of NASCO’s Resolutions, Agreements and Guidelines (RAGs).

Actions by NASCO Bodies

- 6.15 The Acting President noted that the recommendations relating to NASCO Bodies were the first six actions of Annex 2 of the ‘Proposed Decisions on the ‘Draft of an Action Plan for NASCO’’, [CNL\(25\)13](#).
- 6.16 Council agreed:
- to consider recommendations EPR1, EPR4, EPR5, EPR26, EPR46 and IP11 at the 2025 Annual Meeting for decision;
 - that recommendations EPR1, EPR4, EPR5, EPR26 and IP11 not be included in the high-level Action Plan but be agreed by Council and recorded in the 2025 Annual Meeting Report, as follows, to request the SSC to:
 - consider addressing recommendations EPR1 and EPR5 in the 2025 Request to ICES for Scientific Advice;
 - consider addressing recommendation EPR4 in the 2025 Request to ICES for Scientific Advice, ensuring that issues like climate change impacts on Conservation Limits would be incorporated in the request text;
 - address those recommendations in the 2025 Request to ICES for Scientific Advice; and

- consider, inter-sessionally, a broader discussion of the advice needed from ICES to enable delivery of NASCO's Ten-Year Strategy.

6.17 Council also agreed:

- that recommendation EPR26 is outside NASCO's remit and no action will, therefore, be taken; and
- to propose that the Commissions consider whether there is a benefit to the provision of information to the Commissions on co-operative approaches to the management of salmon catchments that are shared with other jurisdictions (recommendation IP11).

6.18 The Acting President suggested that the additional action, on the convening of a Ministerial meeting (EPR46) be discussed as part of the outreach and communications strategy.

Proposed additions for the revision of NASCO's Resolutions, Agreements and Guidelines

6.19 The Acting President noted that the thirteen actions in the second set of actions were those shown in pink underlined text in Annex 3 of the 'Proposed Decisions on the 'Draft of an Action Plan for NASCO', [CNL\(25\)13](#).

6.20 The Acting President reminded Council that at the 2024 Annual Meeting it was agreed that recommendations relating specifically to Resolutions, Agreements and Guidelines should be considered further by the relevant Working Group. She raised that as the remaining 13 recommendations fall into this category they should also be considered by the relevant Working Group, as listed alongside other recommendations to be considered by each Working Group, in Annex 3 of paper [CNL\(25\)13](#). She also noted that while these recommendations would be for the consideration of the Working Groups carrying out the revisions of NASCO's Resolutions, Agreements and Guidelines, this does not mean that they would be ultimately incorporated in revision, but rather that they would be given due consideration.

6.21 Council agreed that:

- recommendations TBSS2(1), TBSS2(3) and TBSS2(4) be added to the Annex 1 bullet of [CNL\(24\)71rev](#) relating to the incorporation of climate change as a key element of NASCO's Resolutions, Agreements and Guidelines (RAGs);
- the Terms of Reference to each Working Group revising NASCO's Resolutions, Agreements and Guidelines should be clear that the various recommendations addressing NASCO's key themes areas should be considered as possible examples of best practice that could be considered for incorporation into the revisions rather than instructions to carry out the specific tasks themselves;
- recommendations EPR8, EPR15 and EPR16 should be added to the 'Recommendation' column of the table in Annex 1 of [CNL\(24\)71rev](#) under the 'Habitat' RAGs, to join the recommendation T3 already in the table;
- recommendations EPR11, EPR18, EPR21, EPR22, T8 and T9 should be added to the 'Recommendation' column of the table in Annex 1 of [CNL\(24\)71rev](#) under the 'Aquaculture and disease' RAGs, to join the recommendations EPR19, EPR20 and EPR28 already in the table;
- recommendation EPR25 should be added to the 'Recommendation' column of the

table in Annex 1 of [CNL\(24\)71rev](#) under the ‘Management of salmon fisheries in the light of rapid change’ RAGs, to join the recommendation EPR14 already in the table; and

- all 13 recommendations, i.e. TBSS2(1), TBSS2(3), TBSS2(4), EPR8, EPR11, EPR15, EPR16, EPR18, EPR21, EPR22, EPR25, T8 and T9, should be included as part of any update to the high-level Action Plan following the 2025 Annual Meeting.

c) Decisions on a Position Paper on Changing the NASCO Convention

6.22 The Acting President reminded delegates that one of the unresolved recommendations (EPR42) related to developing a position paper on changing the NASCO Convention. She said that this work included developing a position paper on changing the NASCO Convention – **in response to recommendations from NASCO’s third performance review**, which had been discussed throughout the strategy development process, but not recorded.

6.23 She noted that the proposed position paper, [CNL\(25\)14](#), sets out the four recommendations from NASCO’s third performance review that relate specifically to Convention change. It then explores the processes for amending the Convention, before concluding that, in relation to the recommendations under consideration, it would be more constructive to focus efforts on delivering NASCO’s Strategy and Action Plan, than to invest time and resource into Convention change, as set out in the ‘decision’ on page 4.

6.24 The paper makes it clear that Convention change still remains an option in relation to other matters. The final paragraph reads ‘Should the need to amend the NASCO Convention arise in the future, amendments may be proposed and considered for adoption and ratification or approval in accordance with Article 19 of the Convention’.

6.25 Council agreed to:

- adopt ‘NASCO’s Position on Convention Change’, [CNL\(25\)52](#); and
- instruct the Secretary to ensure that this decision and its rationale be communicated to NASCO stakeholders.

d) Decisions on the Update and Consolidation of NASCO’s Resolutions, Agreements and Guidelines

6.26 The Acting President noted that, as part of the Action Plan adopted in 2024, [CNL\(24\)71rev](#), Council had agreed:

- o *‘to update, and consolidate as appropriate, NASCO’s Resolutions, Agreements and Guidelines, incorporating climate change and other factors (see Annex 1 of ‘The Future of NASCO – a Ten-Year Strategy’, [CNL\(24\)71rev](#)) as key elements of the review with the following priority order, which may change:*

- *habitat: commence 2025; plan to complete 2026;*
- *aquaculture and disease: commence 2026; plan to complete 2027; and*
- *fisheries commence 2027; plan to complete 2028.’*

6.27 The Acting President also reminded Council that the high-level Action Plan contained within the Ten-Year Strategy noted that these actions were for delivery by Theme-based

/ Expert Working Groups. Draft generic Terms of Reference (ToRs) for these Groups, [CNL\(25\)19](#), were considered by Council.

- 6.28 The United States noted that the ToRs state that each Working Group must consider the recommendations from past performance reviews and Theme-based Special Sessions and noted that that does include a Special Session on climate change. However, since each Working Group is only being asked to consider those recommendations in their work and does not say that any Party must do anything in particular at this time, it could support the Terms of Reference as written.
- 6.29 The United States also noted that the ToRs seemed to address only the review of NASCO's Guidelines and questioned whether the Working Groups' scope should be expanded to cover the review of all of NASCO's Resolutions, Agreements and Guidelines.
- 6.30 Council agreed that the ToRs should address only the update of the Guidelines listed within and agreed that the Terms of Reference should be for the Working Groups for the Revision of NASCO's Guidelines.
- 6.31 The UK sought a common understanding of how information discussed in such Working Groups could be shared between members of the Groups and members of their delegations. Various members of the Council felt that as long as the work of the Group was ongoing, that discussion on the work of the Group and sharing of draft text could take place in parallel, to feed into the discussion by the Group. However, once the document was adopted by the Group it would be considered closed for further comment.
- 6.32 Council felt it was unnecessary to reflect this common understanding in the ToRs for the Working Group.
- 6.33 The Acting President then raised the seven topics that the Working Group on Future Reporting (WGFR) had presented in its Report to Council, [CNL\(25\)22](#), for consideration by the Working Groups for the Revision of NASCO's Guidelines.
- 6.34 Council considered that six of the topics should be incorporated into the ToRs for consideration by the Working Groups, but that the first topic, on the definition of wild Atlantic salmon, was not appropriate for the Working Groups' consideration.
- 6.35 Council asked the Secretariat to incorporate the WGFR's second to seventh topics into the ToRs for consideration by the Working Groups.
- 6.36 Council agreed to adopt the 'Generic Terms of Reference for the Working Groups for the Revision of NASCO's Guidelines', [CNL\(25\)53](#).
- 6.37 With respect to the consideration of perspectives on the definition of 'wild Atlantic salmon', the WGFR's first item on its list, Iceland raised the fact that NASCO seemed to be inconsistent in its definitions.
- 6.38 Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland) suggested that a way forward could be to look at the definitions of salmon already agreed within NASCO's various Resolutions, Agreements and Guidelines, as proposed earlier by Iceland. These could be compiled by the Secretariat and shared and could even be used by the new Working Groups to review NASCO's Guidelines to ensure consistency of language going forward.
- 6.39 Iceland proposed the following text as an agreement for Council to make on this matter:

'Council agreed to commission the Secretariat to compile a list of any definition

on salmon to be found in adopted Council Resolutions, Agreements, and Guidelines. This paper shall, at the latest, be tabled at the 43rd annual meeting.'

- 6.40 Council agreed to commission the Secretariat to compile a list of any definition of salmon to be found in NASCO's Resolutions, Agreements and Guidelines. The resulting paper shall, at the latest, be tabled at the Forty-Third Annual Meeting.
- 6.41 The Acting President reminded Council that, in the margins of the 2024 Annual Meeting, the Secretary had been asked to explore with ICES the kind of support that ICES might be able to provide to NASCO in the revision / update of its Resolutions, Agreements and Guidelines and has provided a proposal from ICES, see [CNL\(25\)15](#).
- 6.42 Given the various budgetary constraints, and the level of expertise available with the Parties / jurisdictions, Council agreed that ICES would not be approached for assistance in supporting the NASCO process.
- 6.43 There was then a discussion on whether the two high-impact papers to be published on the impacts of salmon farming on wild salmon should be included in the considerations for the Working Group to revise NASCO's aquaculture guidelines and Council agreed that they should not.
- 6.44 Following some questions raised by the NGOs, the Acting President reminded NASCO's accredited Observers that they could submit papers on areas of concern for consideration by the Working Groups for the Revision of NASCO's Guidelines.
- 6.45 Finally, the Acting President noted that the Standing Scientific Committee had been asked to consider a broader discussion of the advice needed from ICES to enable delivery of NASCO's Ten-Year Strategy.

e) Decisions on a Communications and Outreach Strategy for NASCO

- 6.46 The Acting President reminded Council that at its 2024 Annual Meeting, [CNL\(24\)88rev](#), it agreed to adopt 'The Future of NASCO – a Ten-Year Strategy', [CNL\(24\)71rev](#), incorporating NASCO's high-level actions. The Acting President further noted that Council recognised that communication is central to delivering NASCO's Ten-Year Strategy and included in the high-level actions was a request that the Secretary engage with an appropriate consultant to 'develop a communications and outreach strategy (e.g. running symposia, public & political engagement, industry engagement, certification agencies, improvement to website, etc.)'.
- 6.47 The Acting President informed Council that the Secretariat had worked with a consultancy in the second half of 2024, which provided an outreach and communications strategy, summarised in the paper [CNL\(25\)20](#), with a prioritised list of tasks and timelines for implementing the strategy.
- 6.48 The Acting President reminded Council that consideration of EPR46 from NASCO's third performance review regarding a Ministerial meeting had originally been under Agenda Item 6.b) and had been moved to be considered alongside the NASCO Outreach and Communication Strategy (the strategy).
- 6.49 The Acting President raised that this Agenda item contained several aspects that involved budget implications and therefore discussion and decisions should consider that there may be limitations. She then opened the floor for comments and questions on the strategy and proposed implementation steps / recommendations.
- 6.50 Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland) raised that communication and outreach was an important part of NASCO's Ten-Year Strategy. It further raised

that it could agree to the strategy, and determining next steps and priority based on a limited budget. It also noted that a few stakeholders present at the Annual Meeting had good experience of outreach and could help NASCO with it, going forward.

- 6.51 The UK expressed support for Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland)'s comment and noted that the strategy was comprehensive and had some good points for implementation. The UK raised the importance of upskilling the Secretariat to implement the outreach strategy and reduce future reliance on consultants. It further noted that it believed delivering the strategy was a big task for NASCO to deliver on its own and welcomed the suggestion to consider how others could help with this.
- 6.52 Norway also expressed support for the approaches discussed, if there could be flexibility in the budget required and resources were used efficiently. It also raised that it considered it important to look into the possibility of a Ministerial meeting and offered to work with the Secretariat to investigate how this could be done in the future.
- 6.53 The remaining Parties expressed wide support for the approaches proposed. Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland) suggested NASCO create a LinkedIn profile, which many RFMOs had, to share its knowledge about salmon widely. It raised that the Secretariat should be able to choose how to implement the strategy, and that if money was available in the budget, the Parties could indicate the parts of the strategy to prioritise and allow the Secretary to select how to take them forward.
- 6.54 The NGO Co-Chair raised that the Atlantic Salmon Trust communications and outreach staff would be very happy to work with the Secretariat. He also raised the issue of the International Wild Salmon Day on 1 June, and asked NASCO to consider endorsing it by sharing material on its communication channels and social media.
- 6.55 The UK thanked the NGO Co-Chair for offering help to the Secretariat with its outreach and communications and expressed support for the issue of the International Wild Salmon Day in principle, noting it would need to consult internally first. Canada raised that it thought International Wild Salmon Day aligned well with the strategy.
- 6.56 The IPRI welcomed a day that highlighted salmon and raised that they did not call salmon in the wild 'wild salmon', that they just called it 'salmon' and the only other category they had was for 'farmed salmon'.
- 6.57 The Acting President noted that there was broad support for marking the International Wild Salmon Day and asked the Secretary to explore the possibility of supporting it. She also asked the Secretary to explore creating a LinkedIn profile for NASCO.
- 6.58 The Acting President noted that the Secretary had informed her there were funds available in the 2025 Budget for communication activities, which could be used to initiate the strategy without implications for the 2026 Draft Budget. The Parties discussed the funding that should be allocated to the strategy at this stage, with some clarification from the Secretariat on how it would be utilised.
- 6.59 Council agreed, subject to a capped budget of £10,000, to the following recommendations for inclusion in the high-level Action Plan, to:
- adopt the NASCO Outreach and Communications Strategy, CNL(25)54, including the approach and associated actions summarised in its Annex 1 as a framework;
 - direct the Secretariat to complete an internal assessment of resources in 2025 / 2026 to establish whether it would be beneficial to retain the services of a

communications expert for routine actions identified in the social media strategy (e.g. to produce and schedule evergreen content for social media and the website on a regular basis); and

- direct the Secretariat to explore options for a future Ministerial meeting with Parties and to report back to Council at the 2026 Annual Meeting.

6.60 Council agreed in principle to move forward with the three other recommendations on the Outreach and Communication Strategy, noting that any next steps would also be subject to the capped budget of £10,000.

- direct the Secretariat to work with a communications expert in 2025 / 2026 to develop concise branding guidelines and associated templates for the website, social media posts, written reports (Word) and presentation slides (PowerPoint) to ensure a consistent look and feel to NASCO's outputs;
- direct the Secretariat to work with a communications expert in 2025 / 2026 to develop a social media strategy and implementation guidelines to provide guidance on posting engaging, targeted and consistent content on NASCO's chosen platform(s) (e.g. X, LinkedIn), building on the overarching NASCO outreach strategy; and
- direct the Secretariat to consider the need for and resources available to review and update the website in 2026 / 2027, i.e. the year following the completion of branding guidelines and templates and of a social media strategy as outlined in the previous two recommendations.

f) NASCO Secretariat Environmental Policy

6.61 The Acting President raised that at its 2024 Annual Meeting, [CNL\(24\)88rev](#), Council agreed to adopt 'The Future of NASCO – a Ten-Year Strategy', [CNL\(24\)71rev](#), which incorporates NASCO's high-level actions in a single document. She noted that as part of its high-level Action Plan, Council agreed that the NASCO Secretariat should publish its environmental policy in 2025.

6.62 The Acting President noted that the Secretariat had prepared the 'NASCO Secretariat Environmental Policy', [CNL\(25\)21](#). She raised that Council may wish to decide if what is being done in the Secretariat is enough, or if it would like an energy audit to be done to enable the Secretary to implement higher environmental standards for the HQ building.

6.63 Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland) stated that it was supportive of the policy and believed it showed good changes had been made in the Secretariat. The UK raised that grants were available in Scotland to improve heat efficiency in buildings.

6.64 Council agreed not to undertake an energy audit for the HQ building at this time.

g) Informing the Fourth Reporting Cycle

(i) Special Session: Presentation of the Stressor Analyses Conducted by the Parties / jurisdictions

6.65 The Acting President reminded Council that in response to recommendations from the IP / APR Review Group and the Steering Committee for the 2023 Theme-based Special Session on Climate Change, at its 2024 Annual Meeting, [CNL\(24\)88rev](#), it discussed whether an evidence-based, objective analysis of the key threats and pressures (the

stressors) to wild Atlantic salmon experienced in each jurisdiction under NASCO's umbrella would provide a solid basis for actions under the fourth reporting cycle, to address the issues of greatest risk to the restoration and conservation of salmon.

6.66 The Acting President emphasised that stressor analyses would not be part of the next reporting cycle but would inform it and Council agreed that Parties / jurisdictions would carry out a stressor analysis and each provide a paper to NASCO by 30 April 2025. She also noted that Council agreed to hold a Special Session during which the Parties / jurisdictions would share the results of their stressor analyses as short, rapid-fire presentations.

6.67 Parties / jurisdictions each gave a short presentation on their stressor analysis and the discussions held during the Special Session are contained in Annex 11.

(ii) Special Session: Successful Actions for Wild Atlantic Salmon Management from the Third Reporting Cycle

6.68 In light of the decisions taken on preparations for a fourth reporting cycle where actions will be informed by stressors, the United Kingdom expressed its desire to retain a Special Session on the reporting cycle in 2025 to share the actions carried out by Parties / jurisdictions that have been considered to be a success for wild Atlantic salmon. The other Parties agreed that this would be very useful in planning for the fourth reporting cycle. Council agreed.

6.69 Owing to the length of the Special Sessions on stressors and the fourth reporting cycle, this third Special Session of the Council was unable to be held. The Acting President directed delegates to the authors of the papers and suggested they be spoken to privately if there were any questions.

h) The Fourth Reporting Cycle

(i) Special Session: Report of the Working Group on Future Reporting

6.70 In addition to adopting 'The Future of NASCO – a Ten-Year Strategy', [CNL\(24\)71rev](#), which incorporates NASCO's high-level actions in a single document, at its 2024 Annual Meeting, [CNL\(24\)88rev](#), Council took the following decisions:

- to conduct a fourth reporting cycle;
- to establish a Future Reporting Working Group (WGFR) to undertake a review of the process; and
- to agree the 'Terms of Reference for a Future Reporting Working Group', [CNL\(24\)63](#).

6.71 The Acting President reminded Council that the WGFR had met in November 2024 and developed a series of proposals for a fourth reporting cycle that were, in line with its Terms of Reference, discussed by the WGFON at its Meeting in March 2025. The WGFON's proposed changes were then discussed by the WGFR at its second Meeting in late April 2025.

6.72 The discussions held during the Special Session are contained in Annex 12.

(ii) Decisions on the Fourth Reporting Cycle

6.73 The Acting President noted that this item allows for decisions to be taken on the fourth reporting cycle in light of the Special Session where the proposed content, timing and scheduling for the fourth reporting cycle was discussed.

- 6.74 The Acting President noted that, in the Special Session discussions, an NGO had raised a concern with the ambition of NASCO's Strategic Goal, given that it sought to slow the decline of salmon rather than halt and reverse it.
- 6.75 Various members of the Council commented that the Strategic Goal does not exist in isolation but should be read in conjunction with NASCO's Vision and Mission statements and that the intention of the Strategic Goal is to halt and reverse the decline, but it is not clear if that would be possible by 2033.
- 6.76 The Acting President set out a number of options, including retaining the text agreed in 2024, whilst acknowledging that the Strategic Goal is a stepping stone towards the achievement of NASCO's ambitious Vision and Mission. She proposed that any use of the Strategic Goal in communications should always be in conjunction with NASCO's Vision and Mission.
- 6.77 Canada, the EU and United States agreed with that way forward.
- 6.78 The NGOs raised several concerns with the lack of ambition, noting that words matter, and proposed stronger language in the Strategic Goal, which was rejected by Council. The NGOs noted that salmon conservation is as much of a challenge to the NGOs as to the Parties.
- 6.79 The IPRI noted their alignment with Canada and the United States but acknowledged little success in slowing the decline of salmon thus far.
- 6.80 The Acting President welcomed the interventions from the accredited Observers and stated that NASCO would seek to take their concerns on board to ensure effective communication of the plight of wild Atlantic salmon. To this effect, she asked Council if it could support a proposal not to change the text of the Strategic Goal but to ensure that when it is referred to it is placed in the context of NASCO's Vision and Mission to ensure that NASCO's ambition is clear. Council agreed.
- 6.81 The Acting President moved the Council to consider the recommendations from the Working Group on Future Reporting.
- 6.82 Council agreed the basis of the fourth reporting cycle, see CNL(25)55, 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.
- 6.83 Council agreed that:
- each action associated with each stressor proposed in the Conservation Commitments Reports requires a starting point, in order to measure its progress; and
 - each stressor proposed in the Conservation Commitments Reports also requires a starting point, in order to measure its progress.
- 6.84 Council further agreed to:
- charge the Secretariat to work with a developer to design web-based templates for

the PIs and CCRs, using funds held in the ‘consultancy’ budget;

- 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;
- the ‘Terms of Reference for the Conservation Commitments Reports Review Group’, [CNL\(25\)56](#); and
- the ‘Schedule for the Fourth Reporting Cycle’, [CNL\(25\)57](#).

7. Conservation, Restoration, Enhancement and Rational Management of Atlantic Salmon under the Precautionary Approach

a) New or Emerging Opportunities for, or Threats to, Salmon Conservation and Management

- 7.1 The Chair of the Working Group on North Atlantic Salmon (WGNAS), Alan Walker (UK), presented the advice relevant to this Agenda item. The presentation is available as document [CNL\(25\)61](#).

b) Pink Salmon in the NASCO Convention Area

- 7.2 The Acting President noted that in 2022, the then President had expressed concern regarding the magnitude of pink salmon entering many Atlantic salmon rivers. She further noted that the Council had adopted a ‘Statement of the Council Regarding Pink Salmon, *Oncorhynchus gorbuscha*, in the NASCO Convention Area’, [CNL\(22\)47](#), which included agreement to establish a Standing NASCO Working Group on Pink Salmon (PSWG). She informed Council that revised ‘Terms of Reference for the Working Group on Pink Salmon’, [CNL\(24\)64](#), were adopted in 2024.
- 7.3 The Acting President noted that the next meeting of the Working Group would take place in July 2025.

c) Management and Sampling of the St Pierre and Miquelon Salmon Fishery

- 7.4 The Acting President noted that both the Council and the North American Commission were concerned about catches of salmon at Saint-Pierre and Miquelon which, although low, occurred at a time when there were serious concerns about the abundance of North American stocks and when harvest restrictions have been introduced throughout the North American Commission area.
- 7.5 The Acting President noted that France (in respect of Saint-Pierre and Miquelon) had submitted a written Opening Statement and the report ‘Management and Sampling of the Saint-Pierre and Miquelon Salmon Fishery’, [CNL\(25\)27](#). The fishery report had been considered in the North American Commission Meeting and there were no further comments in the Council Meeting.

d) Reports on the Conservation Work of the Three Regional Commissions

- 7.6 The activities of the three Commissions were reported to the Council by their Chairs.

8. Other Business

- 8.1 To remind Council what had been achieved for salmon during the 2025 Annual Meeting, before the Report of the Meeting was deliberated, the Acting President reminded Council of its Strategy and Action Plan and presented a review of the high-level Action Plan to demonstrate the significant progress made across all five of NASCO's objectives. She also gave a preview of the business for consideration at the 2026 Annual Meeting under each of the Objectives.

9. Date and Place of the Next Meeting

- 9.1 Council agreed to hold its Forty-Third Annual Meeting from 2 – 5 June 2026 in Aviemore, Scotland.

10. Press Release

- 10.1 The Council agreed a Press Release, [CNL\(25\)60](#).
- 10.2 The Council agreed to request the Secretariat to prepare NASCO's Annual Meeting Press Releases from 2026 onwards. Council agreement would not be required but the 2025 Press Release should be used as a template and messaging should be in line with the Outreach and Communications Strategy.

11. Report of the Meeting

- 11.1 The Council agreed its Report of the Meeting.

12. Close of the Meeting

- 12.1 The Acting President thanked the participants for their contributions and closed the Meeting.

Compte rendu de la Quarante-deuxième session annuelle du Conseil de l'Organisation pour la Conservation du Saumon de l'Atlantique Nord

1. Ouverture de la session

- 1.1 En l'absence de la Présidente, la Présidente par intérim, Ruth Allin (RU), a ouvert la session et l'a présidée. Elle a présenté le Directeur adjoint pour les négociations et le commerce international des pêches de la Direction de l'Environnement, de l'Alimentation et des Affaires rurales du Royaume-Uni, Colin Faulkner, qui a souhaité la bienvenue aux délégués au RU (Annexe 1) et le Chef de l'Aquaculture et des Pêches d'eau douce et migratoires du Gouvernement gallois, Robert Floyd, qui a souhaité la bienvenue aux délégués au Pays de Galles (Annexe 2). La Présidente par intérim a fait une déclaration d'ouverture (Annexe 3).
- 1.2 Des déclarations d'ouverture écrites ont été transmises par le Canada, le Danemark (pour les Iles Féroé et le Groenland), l'Union européenne (UE), l'Islande, la Norvège, la Fédération de Russie, le Royaume-Uni (RU) et les États-Unis (Annexe 4).
- 1.3 Une déclaration d'ouverture écrite a été transmise au nom de la France (pour Saint-Pierre et Miquelon) (Annexe 5).
- 1.4 Une déclaration d'ouverture écrite conjointe a été transmise par les Organisations non-gouvernementales (ONGs) (Annexe 6). Une déclaration d'ouverture écrite a été transmise par le Coomhola Salmon Trust Ltd (Annexe 7).
- 1.5 Une déclaration d'ouverture écrite a été transmise au nom des Représentants et Institutions des Peuples Autochtones (RIPAs) (Annexe 8).
- 1.6 Une liste des participants à la Quarante-deuxième session annuelle du Conseil de l'OCSAN est fournie en Annexe 9.

2. Adoption de l'ordre du jour

- 2.1 Le Conseil a adopté son ordre du jour, [CNL\(25\)42](#).
- 2.2 Sous ce point de l'ordre du jour la Présidente par intérim a soulevé la question des observateurs accrédités. Elle a indiqué qu'en 2024 le Conseil avait adopté de nouveaux 'Termes et Conditions de participation des observateurs aux sessions de l'OCSAN', [CNL\(24\)59](#), (T&Cs) qui permettent tant aux ONGs qu'aux RIPAs d'assister aux sessions du Conseil en qualité d'observateurs. Elle a accueilli les 22 ONGs et les quatre RIPAs représentés à la session.
- 2.3 La Présidente par intérim a indiqué que les T&Cs permettent à chaque organisation d'observateurs accréditée soit de se représenter elle-même et de faire une seule intervention, ne dépassant pas deux minutes, sur toute la durée de cette session du Conseil, ou aux observateurs de travailler ensemble en ayant recours à un orateur et ainsi de mettre en commun leurs interventions. Elle a énoncé que les interventions doivent avoir lieu après les débats entre les Parties et que les Observateurs ne peuvent pas participer à la prise de décision.
- 2.4 La Présidente par intérim a indiqué que les T&Cs stipulent que le Président de séance devrait préciser le cadre et la procédure pour de telles interventions. Elle a souligné qu'au Conseil, il devait à l'origine y avoir deux sièges de Co-Présidents d'ONG à la

table, les deux Co-Présidents signalant une intervention d'une ONG, pouvant être faite soit par un Co-Président soit par une ONG particulière. Elle a déclaré qu'il y aurait dorénavant un nouveau siège de RIPA à la table principale, avec une préparation au sein des RIPAs pour garantir que la personne assise à la table principale soit en mesure d'intervenir au nom des RIPAs ou de faire venir le RIPA compétent à la table, au moment approprié. Elle a souligné que l'intention est de permettre tant à l'OCSAN qu'à ses Observateurs de bénéficier des interventions faites par un observateur, tout en continuant de permettre une gestion efficace de la session.

- 2.5 La Présidente par intérim a rappelé aux délégués que toute question ou observation lors du Conseil devrait être liée spécifiquement à des points de l'ordre du jour et qu'il n'y a pas de session pour des questions-réponses libres. Elle a indiqué que les Séances spéciales sont menées différemment et que ces règles ne s'appliquent pas aux Sessions spéciales, où il y a la possibilité pour n'importe quel délégué de poser des questions, dans la limite des contraintes de temps.
- 2.6 La Présidente par intérim a indiqué qu'en 2022, les Parties / ONGs avaient été invitées à soumettre des questions sur les points de l'ordre du jour, avant la session annuelle, à la Partie concernée. Le Secrétariat avait reçu des questions de la part des ONGs. Cinq de ces questions ont été regroupées en tant que questions aux chefs de délégation et la Présidente a porté à la connaissance de la session qu'elle avait rencontré les ONGs au préalable et avait indiqué le point le plus approprié de la session pour que chaque question soit soulevée oralement. Elle a aussi dit que certaines autres questions transmises pour les Parties étaient inappropriées à être posées lors de la session et que des réponses par écrit seraient fournies et annexées au compte rendu de la session (voir l'Annexe 10).
- 2.7 La Présidente par intérim a indiqué que la pratique consistant à transmettre des questions écrites avait été introduite pendant la pandémie de Covid et elle a demandé si le Conseil souhaitait maintenir l'inclusion de cette procédure lors de sa session annuelle.
- 2.8 Le Conseil a décidé de maintenir des questions écrites.
- 2.9 La Présidente par intérim a indiqué qu'en vertu des nouveaux T&Cs de l'OCSAN pour les observateurs accrédités, les RIPAs ont maintenant la possibilité d'assister aux sessions de l'OCSAN. Elle a souligné que pour 2026 et la suite, par conséquent, l'OCSAN devrait réfléchir à donner aux RIPAs ainsi qu'aux Parties et ONGs la possibilité de transmettre des questions écrites préalablement à la session annuelle et elle a demandé si les Parties accepteraient d'inclure des dispositions pour que, dans les années à venir, les Parties, ONGs et RIPAs posent des questions à l'avance.
- 2.10 Le Conseil a décidé qu'il ne voyait pas d'obstacle à inclure des dispositions pour que les Parties, ONGs et RIPAs posent des questions à l'avance, dans les années à venir.

3. Election des Membres du Bureau

- 3.1 Le Conseil a élu Seamus Connor (RU) comme Président (proposé par la Norvège avec le soutien de l'UE) et Raoul Bierach (Norvège) comme Vice-Président (proposé par le RU avec le soutien du Danemark (pour les Iles Féroé et le Groenland)). Tous deux auront un mandat d'une période de deux ans, commençant à la clôture de la session annuelle 2025.

4. Questions financières et administratives

a) Rapport du Comité financier et administratif

4.1 Le Président du Comité financier et administratif (CFA), Seamus Connor (RU), a présenté le rapport de la session du Comité financier et administratif, [CNL\(25\)04](#).

4.2 Lors de sa session annuelle de 2024, ([CNL\(24\)88rev](#)) le Conseil avait adopté une procédure et un calendrier pour un réexamen complet des règles sur le Fonds du personnel et des règles sur le Personnel, comprenant l'ajout de dispositions dans les règles du Personnel pour inclure des stagiaires, en ligne avec de nombreuses organisations internationales. Le CFA s'était réuni en inter-session en mars 2025 pour finaliser ce travail et avait développé des 'Guide pour le personnel projet & Règles du personnel projet', FACIS(25)07, ainsi qu'une 'Proposition de programme de stages OCSAN', FACIS(25)08, dont il recommandait l'adoption par le Conseil.

4.3 Le Président du CFA a informé le Conseil que d'autres révisions étaient à prendre en compte, relatives à la période d'essai, tant pour sa longueur que pour la durée de préavis, qui avaient été pointées par la société juridique Gunnercooke LLP lors de la rédaction de la nouvelle lettre d'embauche pour le personnel de l'OCSAN.

4.4 Le Président du CFA a indiqué qu'après des discussions entre la Présidente, Présidente par intérim, et lui-même, et après examen de la période d'essai dans plusieurs autres ORGPs, une période d'essai de six mois était proposée pour les membres du personnel de l'OCSAN, plutôt que la période actuelle de 12 mois. En complément, il a été convenu que si la période n'incluait pas une session annuelle, le/la Secrétaire pouvait prolonger la période d'essai d'une période additionnelle n'excédant pas six mois. Il était possible de conserver l'autre clause de circonstances exceptionnelles, selon laquelle le/la Secrétaire pouvait prolonger la période d'essai d'une période maximale n'excédant pas six mois. De plus, pour la protection tant de l'Organisation que du membre du personnel à l'essai, et en ligne avec les pratiques modernes d'emploi du RU, une durée de préavis d'un mois (aussi bien de la part du membre du personnel à l'essai qu'envers lui) était proposée.

4.5 Le Président du CFA a déclaré que la première modification des Règles du personnel proposée au Conseil portait sur la Règle 5.4 sous 'Recrutement et nomination à un poste' comme suit:

'Les membres du personnel seront nommés moyennant une période d'essai de ~~un an~~ six mois. Si cette période ne couvre pas une session annuelle, le/la Secrétaire peut prolonger la période d'essai d'une durée additionnelle n'excédant pas six mois. De plus, en cas de circonstances exceptionnelles le/la Secrétaire peut prolonger la période d'essai d'une période additionnelle n'excédant pas six mois.'

4.6 Le Président du CFA a indiqué que la modification suivante des Règles du personnel proposée au Conseil portait sur la Règle 14.1 sous 'Départ du Service' comme suit:

'Un membre du Secrétariat en poste permanent peut démissionner à n'importe quel moment en donnant par écrit un préavis de trois mois ou d'une durée inférieure pouvant être approuvée par le Conseil en ce qui concerne le/la Secrétaire ou par le/la Secrétaire en ce qui concerne des membres du personnel.'

Un membre du Secrétariat en période d'essai peut démissionner à tout moment en donnant, par écrit, un préavis d'un mois au Président dans le cas

du/de la Secrétaire, ou au/à la Secrétaire dans le cas de membres du personnel.

En cas de démission d'un membre du Secrétariat sans donner le préavis requis, le Conseil se réserve le droit de décider si des indemnités devront être versées.'

- 4.7 Le Président du CFA a indiqué que la troisième modification des Règles du personnel proposée au Conseil était à la Règle 14.4 'Résiliation' sous 'Départ du Service' comme suit:

'Une résiliation selon les termes de ces Règles du personnel est un départ à l'initiative de l'Organisation s'il est nécessaire de résilier des contrats suite à des suppressions de postes, à une réduction de personnel ou si la résiliation est jugée être dans l'intérêt de l'Organisation. Dans tous les cas il sera dument tenu compte de l'efficacité, la compétence, l'intégrité et la durée de service du membre du personnel concerné.

Le contrat de membres du personnel peut être résilié avec préavis écrit, donné au moins trois mois à l'avance par le/la Secrétaire lorsqu'ils jugent que ceci est dans l'intérêt de l'Organisation. L'Organisation se réserve le droit de proposer un paiement à la place du préavis.

Il peut être mis fin au contrat d'un membre du Secrétariat en période d'essai par écrit, avec préavis d'un mois, par le/la Présidente pour le/la Secrétaire ou par le/la Secrétaire pour un membre du personnel, lorsqu'ils le jugent comme étant dans l'intérêt de l'Organisation. L'Organisation se réserve le droit de proposer une indemnité au lieu de la réalisation du préavis.

Pour tout membre du personnel dont la date de début de contrat est le 9 juin 2024 ou une date ultérieure, en cas de résiliation par l'Organisation du contrat d'un membre du Secrétariat, une indemnité correspondant à un mois de salaire pour chaque année de service (plafonnée à une année de salaire) devra être versée sauf si le motif de la résiliation a été une forme quelconque de mauvaise conduite.'

- 4.8 Le Conseil a décidé de ces révisions et d'adopter les:
- 'Guide pour le personnel & Règles du personnel'. [CNL\(25\)45](#); et
 - 'Programme de stages de l'OCSAN', [CNL\(25\)46](#).
- 4.9 Le Président du CFA a ensuite présenté le Rapport de la session annuelle du CFA, [CNL\(25\)04](#). Il a souligné qu'il y avait eu une discussion nourrie sur le Budget pour 2026 en raison de l'absence de proposition par une Partie ou juridiction d'accueillir la session annuelle de 2026. Il a ajouté que les augmentations significatives des prix d'hôtel depuis la pandémie de Covid et les coûts additionnels pour que le Secrétariat gère la session annuelle en 2026 avaient représenté un réel défi pour discuter de ce qui pouvait être accepté comme budget maximum pour 2026.
- 4.10 Le Président du CFA a porté à la connaissance du Conseil plusieurs points qui ne demandaient pas de décision, notamment le MoU de l'OCSAN avec la Commission OSPAR étant donné que le Secrétariat d'OSPAR allait organiser la prochaine évaluation de l'OSPAR du statut du saumon en 2026 et serait intéressé de savoir si des membres de l'OCSAN souhaiteraient participer au processus lors de la préparation de la prochaine évaluation du statut.

- 4.11 Le Président du CFA a aussi fait part au Conseil de l'élection de Rebecca Wintering (États-Unis) comme Présidente du CFA et de Dale Marsden (Canada) comme Vice-Président du CFA. Il a aussi dit au Conseil que l'Islande avait soulevé la question d'inclure les captures de '*ranched salmon*'² dans ses captures nominales, et s'était dite satisfaite que le CFA le mentionne.
- 4.12 Le Président du CFA a demandé au Conseil d'adopter les comptes vérifiés pour 2024, selon lesquels il n'y avait un surplus de budget en 2024 que pour permettre un complément au Fonds de roulement de l'OCSAN. Il a porté à la connaissance du Conseil qu'il n'avait été possible de compléter ni le Fonds Obligation Contractuelle ni le Fonds pour le Recrutement.
- 4.13 Le Président du CFA a dit que certaines Parties avaient indiqué qu'elles ne pouvaient pas soutenir l'étendue de l'augmentation dans le Budget projet de 2026 étant donné l'importance de l'impact sur leurs contributions. Il a déclaré que, par conséquent, il avait été demandé à la Secrétaire de rechercher des options pour réduire les coûts de la session annuelle de 2026 et de trouver des économies supplémentaires dans d'autres postes du budget. Il a porté à la connaissance du Conseil que la Secrétaire avait réussi à trouver des économies dans les coûts de la session annuelle ainsi que dans d'autres postes du budget, comme détaillé dans le Rapport du CFA, [CNL\(25\)04](#), permettant au CFA de proposer un chiffre pour le Budget projet de 2026 de £735 330, c.a.d. le Budget de 2025 augmenté de l'inflation.
- 4.14 Sur recommandation du Comité, le Conseil a décidé d':
- accepter les comptes vérifiés pour 2024;
 - adopter le Budget pour 2026, [CNL\(25\)47](#); et
 - adopter le Rapport du CFA, [CNL\(25\)04](#).
- 4.15 La Présidente par intérim a salué le travail du Secrétariat pour négocier les dépenses révisées pour la session annuelle de 2026. Elle a souligné qu'il n'y avait pas eu d'offre pour accueillir la session annuelle de 2027 et qu'il n'y avait aucune indication que des Parties seraient en mesure d'accueillir des sessions annuelles dans un avenir plus lointain. Elle a indiqué que, dans ce cas, l'OCSAN devait provisionner pour financer les futures sessions annuelles sur son budget, qui repose largement sur les contributions des Parties auxquelles s'ajoutent un revenu foncier venant de la propriété du siège et des intérêts bancaires.
- 4.16 Le RU a indiqué reconnaître que les Parties étaient sous forte contrainte budgétaire et qu'accueillir la session annuelle pouvait générer des coûts énormes, particulièrement lorsque cela revient à l'OCSAN et qu'aucune Partie n'est en mesure de l'accueillir. Le RU a demandé si le Conseil soutiendrait le fait que le Secrétariat élabore plusieurs options et fournisse une recommandation sur différents modèles de session annuelle à partir de 2027 et ensuite. Le RU a recommandé de mettre l'accent sur la durée et le dimensionnement de la session dans un but de rentabilité tout en continuant de viser à atteindre les objectifs de la Stratégie sur dix ans de l'OCSAN. Les Parties ont exprimé leur soutien à cette proposition de piste d'action. Le Canada a indiqué qu'une question clé était de maintenir un haut niveau de participation et d'engagement des principales parties prenantes.

² Smolts d'écloserie relâchés dans le but de capturer tous ceux qui remonteront

4.17 Le Conseil a décidé de:

- plafonner le Budget 2027 au même niveau que le Budget 2026 plus l'inflation;
- charger le Secrétariat d'examiner le modèle de réunion de l'OCSAN pour 2027 et de revenir vers le Conseil avec une proposition préalablement à une réunion en inter-session du Conseil pouvant être programmée avant la fin de 2025. Cet examen fournirait au Conseil un document de base de discussion, présentant un nombre limité d'options de modèle de réunion avec une recommandation sur la façon d'avancer basée sur une analyse des options présentées; et de
- charger la Secrétaire de préparer aussi un Budget prévisionnel pour 2027 et une planification du budget sur 2026 – 2030, également pour discussion à la réunion en inter-session du Conseil.

b) Calendrier de l'OCSAN et nomination des membres des Groupes de travail

4.18 La Présidente par intérim a indiqué qu'en 2024 le Conseil avait décidé qu'un calendrier de réunions en inter-session et la nomination des membres des Groupes de travail seraient inscrits à l'ordre du jour de chaque session annuelle pour décision par le Conseil. Elle a indiqué que ceci donnerait une meilleure visibilité aux Parties et au Secrétariat, permettant ainsi un travail plus efficace de toutes les personnes concernées.

4.19 Le Conseil a adopté le document 'Composition des Groupes de travail décidée lors de la session annuelle', [CNL\(25\)48rev](#), les noms manquants devant être décidés par les Parties dès que possible.

4.20 Le Conseil a adopté son 'Calendrier de réunions en inter-session de 2025 à 2026' [CNL\(25\)49rev](#), avec demande aux Parties de transmettre dès que possible au Secrétariat les informations spécifiques de disponibilité.

5. Informations scientifiques, techniques, juridiques et autres

a) Actualités 2025 de l'OCSAN

5.1 La Présidente par intérim a indiqué qu'en 2022, le Conseil avait décidé que le 'Rapport sur les activités de l'Organisation' et le 'Rapport de la Secrétaire' seraient fusionnés pour être une vitrine du travail de l'OCSAN. Elle a renvoyé le Conseil aux 'Actualités 2025 de l'OCSAN', [CNL\(25\)05](#).

5.2 La Présidente par intérim a souligné que les Actualités de l'OCSAN sont destinées à mettre en valeur le travail de l'OCSAN mais ne contiennent que des informations allant jusqu'à la fin février de l'année en cours. Elle a indiqué que depuis trois ONGs (le Saami Climate Council, la Wye Salmon Association et SalmonCamera) et trois RIPAS (l'Atlantic Policy Congress of First Nations Chiefs Secretariat (APC), l'Unama'ki Institute of Natural Resources (UINR) et le Houlton Band of Maliseet Indians) sont devenus des Observateurs accrédités à l'OCSAN.

5.3 La Secrétaire a dit que les experts en communication qui avaient élaboré la Stratégie de communication et de sensibilisation avaient recommandé d'aller vers une newsletter plus fréquente, qui fournirait des mises à jour plus régulières.

b) Conseils scientifiques du CIEM

(i) Une nouvelle approche de la présentation des Conseils scientifiques du CIEM

5.4 La Présidente par intérim a indiqué que, comme demandé par le Conseil lors de sa session annuelle de 2022, la Secrétaire avait travaillé avec le CIEM pour rechercher

une approche / présentation simplifiée de l'Avis du CIEM.

- 5.5 La Vice-Présidente du Comité d'avis du CIEM (ACOM), Joanne Morgan, a fourni une 'Mise à jour de 2025 sur la simplification de l'avis du CIEM', [CNL\(25\)07](#). Sa présentation est disponible en tant que [CNL\(25\)62](#).
- 5.6 La Vice-Présidente de l'ACOM a indiqué que le début de l'avis simplifié est déjà disponible, et qu'une décision reste à prendre par le Groupe de travail sur le saumon de l'Atlantique Nord (WGNAS) sur les indicateurs appropriés. Elle a dit que prendre des décisions pour l'Atlantique tout entier aiderait à simplifier les fiches d'avis régionales. Elle a aussi souligné qu'il y avait une différence significative entre l'avis simplifié proposé et le format actuel, qu'il fallait examiner avec soin. De plus, le CIEM avait subi une cyber-attaque dont il avait mis plusieurs mois à se remettre.
- 5.7 En réponse à la présentation de l'ACOM, le RU a présenté au nom de toutes les Parties à l'OCSAN, une orientation de haut niveau pour le Secrétariat de l'OCSAN sur la façon de faire avancer la simplification de l'avis du CIEM pour 2026. La présentation est disponible sous [CNL\(25\)63](#).
- 5.8 Le Danemark (pour les Iles Féroé et le Groenland) a indiqué que bien qu'ils aient été préoccupés préalablement par l'absence de progrès sur la simplification de l'avis, ils étaient encouragés par la présentation qu'avait faite la Vice-Présidente de l'ACOM sur ce qui avait été réalisé. Il a aussi soutenu les propositions présentées par le RU et s'attendait à ce que l'avis régional pour 2026 soit dans une fiche d'avis courte. L'Islande a aussi souligné qu'elle espérait un format du CIEM différent et amélioré.
- 5.9 La Présidente par intérim a noté qu'il était clair en ce qui concerne les Parties qu'elles voulaient recevoir un avis simplifié, et de la part de la Vice-Présidente de l'ACOM que c'était possible, sous réserve que cela puisse être un processus évolutif.
- 5.10 Le Conseil a décidé:
- qu'il soit demandé au Comité scientifique permanent (CSP) d'ajouter du nouveau texte à la demande de conseils scientifiques au CIEM pour inclure une vue d'ensemble du statut du saumon dans l'Atlantique nord entier dans la section sur le saumon atlantique dans la zone Atlantique nord en 2026;
 - qu'il soit ordonné au CSP de demander que l'avis sur le saumon dans les trois zones régionales soit transmis en 2026 dans le format 'avis simplifié pour la pêche' tel que présenté dans [CNL\(25\)62](#) par la Vice-Présidente de l'ACOM du CIEM; et
 - de demander à la Secrétaire de travailler avec le CIEM, y compris dans son sous-groupe format de l'avis, pour rendre ceci possible.

(ii) Conseils scientifiques du CIEM

- 5.11 La Présidente par intérim a rappelé aux délégués que l'avis du CIEM pour les stocks de saumon de l'Atlantique nord a été publié le 9 mai 2025, [CNL\(25\)06](#), et serait présenté parallèlement à l'avis concernant le point 7.a) 'Nouvelles opportunités ou opportunités naissantes pour, ou menaces contre, la conservation et la gestion du saumon'.
- 5.12 Le Président du Groupe de travail sur le saumon de l'Atlantique Nord (WGNAS) du CIEM, Alan Walker (RU), a présenté l'avis. Sa présentation est disponible en tant que document [CNL\(25\)61](#). Il a attiré l'attention sur le record ou presque record des plus bas retours de saumons unibermarins et pluribermarins dans la majorité des Parties / juridictions en 2023 ou 2024.

- 5.13 Les ONGs ont fait part de préoccupations quant aux statistiques rapportées par le Président du WGNAS, qui montraient certains des retours les plus faibles connus, et lui ont demandé quelles catégories de données complémentaires seraient nécessaires pour voir une réponse au niveau du CIEM. Le Président du WGNAS a répondu que les données présentées sont adéquates pour les échelles spatiales examinées dans l'avis, mais qu'il faudrait un grand nombre de changements à l'échelon local pour en voir l'impact agrégé à l'échelle large utilisée par le CIEM.
- 5.14 Les RIPAS ont demandé une clarification sur la possibilité d'évaluer la mortalité post-relâchage dans la pêche avec remise à l'eau, étant donnée son augmentation, et ont aussi demandé ce qui constituait les 'captures non rapportées'. Le Président du WGNAS a répondu que la plupart des Parties estimaient déjà la mortalité dans la pêche avec remise à l'eau, et qu'il serait possible pour le CIEM de la prendre en compte dans ses statistiques. Il a ajouté que 'captures non rapportées' était l'estimation par chaque Partie du nombre de poissons capturés mais non déclarés, différentes méthodes étant utilisées selon les Parties.
- c) Rapport de la Commission internationale de recherche sur le saumon atlantique**
- 5.15 La Commission internationale de recherche sur le saumon atlantique (la Commission) s'est réunie les 2 et 5 juin. Le compte rendu de la réunion de la Commission, [CNL\(25\)08](#), a été présenté par son Président par intérim, Peder Fiske (Norvège). Il a mentionné l'origine de la Commission et de son Groupe consultatif scientifique (SAG).
- 5.16 Les sujets principaux de la réunion annuelle de la Commission ont été l'examen d'une étude de croissance en mer à l'échelle du bassin et la révision du mandat de la Commission et du SAG, pour permettre aux RIPAs de prendre part à la fois aux réunions de la Commission et à celles du SAG. Pour l'étude de croissance en mer, un comité de pilotage a été constitué pour coordonner le projet et rechercher des possibilités de financement.
- 5.17 Sur la recommandation de la Commission, le Conseil:
- a adopté le compte rendu de la réunion de la Commission, [CNL\(25\)08](#); et
 - a adopté le 'Mandat pour la Commission internationale de recherche sur le saumon atlantique et son Groupe consultatif scientifique', [ICR\(25\)12](#).
- d) Compte rendu du Comité scientifique permanent**
- 5.18 La Présidente par intérim a indiqué au Conseil que les articles 3 et 4 de la Convention imposent à l'OCSAN de tenir compte des meilleures informations scientifiques et d'établir des modalités de collaboration avec le CIEM. Pendant la session annuelle, le Comité scientifique permanent (CSP) qui assiste le Conseil et les Commissions pour formuler leurs questions au CIEM, se réunit pour préparer une Demande projet de conseils scientifiques au CIEM.
- 5.19 En réponse à des observations en 2024 sur les activités du CSP et ses méthodes de travail, le coordinateur par intérim du CSP, Tim Sheehan (USA) a expliqué la procédure que suit le CSP, mentionnant des différences cette année parce que le Conseil avait donné plusieurs instructions directement au Comité, dont certaines étaient des commandes de texte à inclure et d'autres étaient des demandes d'examen par le CSP.
- 5.20 Il a indiqué que les commandes étaient spécifiquement liées à inclure une demande d'une vue d'ensemble du stock de saumon de l'Atlantique nord, présentant l'avis du CIEM pour les trois régions dans la fiche standard d'avis du CIEM et incluant une

demande pour un appel à données sur les captures accessoires de saumon. Il était aussi demandé au Comité de prendre en compte en inter-session, une discussion plus large sur l'avis du CIEM nécessaire pour permettre de délivrer la Stratégie sur dix ans de l'OCSAN.

- 5.21 Le Conseil a adopté la 'Demande de conseils scientifiques au CIEM', [CNL\(25\)09rev](#).

e) Rapport du Groupe de travail sur les Directives sur le peuplement

- 5.22 La Présidente par intérim a indiqué que, en 2024, le Conseil avait adopté 'L'Avenir de l'OCSAN – une Stratégie sur dix ans', [CNL\(24\)71rev](#), qui contenait un plan d'action de haut niveau. Elle a indiqué en outre que dans ce cadre le Conseil avait décidé (voir [CNL\(24\)88rev](#)) que le Groupe de travail sur les Directives sur le peuplement se réunirait de nouveau pour travailler à actualiser les Directives sur les programmes de reconstitution des stocks de 2004 et réfléchir à des directives relatives aux banques de gènes. Pour en avoir la possibilité, elle a indiqué qu'un 'Mandat pour le Groupe de travail sur les Directives sur le peuplement', [CNL\(24\)68](#), avait été adopté.

- 5.23 La Présidente par intérim a indiqué au Conseil que le Groupe de travail sur les Directives sur le peuplement s'était réuni en inter-session, fin 2024 et début 2025, pour préparer deux documents 'Directives projet sur le recours à des programmes de reconstitution des stocks dans le cadre de la gestion de précaution des stocks de saumon' (Annexe 3 du [CNL\(25\)11](#)), et 'Directives projet sur les banques de gènes pour le saumon atlantique sauvage' (Annexe 4 du [CNL\(25\)11](#)).

- 5.24 Le Président du Groupe de travail sur les Directives sur le peuplement, Stephen Gephard (USA), a présenté les 'Directives projet sur le recours à des programmes de reconstitution des stocks dans le cadre de la gestion de précaution des stocks de saumon' (Annexe 3 du [CNL\(25\)11](#)). Le RU s'est félicité pour ces Directives et a demandé quelques modifications mineures comme suit:

- pour s'assurer d'une terminologie plus homogène afin d'éviter des confusions, parler de 'rivières' plutôt que de 'ruisseaux' dans l'ensemble des Directives; et
- inclure une référence à des populations 'sévérement appauvries' en un bullet point supplémentaire dans la section 2.II.C 'Nature du déclin du stock' en page 14 du document des Directives.

- 5.25 Le Co-Président des ONG a demandé si le Groupe de travail avait pris en compte la possibilité que le principe de précaution puisse mener à des difficultés de blocage de la prise de décisions liées à des programmes de reconstitution des stocks. Le président du Groupe de travail a répondu que bien que cela n'ait pas été discuté sous cet angle, le thème récurrent des Directives était de commencer vite et de ne pas attendre que les stocks s'effondrent.

- 5.26 Le Co-Président des ONG a ensuite demandé si d'autres orientations qui avaient été examinées n'avaient pas été intégrées aux Directives. Le président du Groupe de travail a répondu qu'il n'avait pas le sentiment que cela ait été le cas, que le déclin de stock est très compliqué et que les Directives ne sont pas obligatoires.

- 5.27 Le Canada a proposé quelques modifications supplémentaires au texte de la section 3.II.B 'Peuplement' en page 19, à partir de:

'L'OCSAN considère que lorsque l'intégrité (c.a.d. naturalité évolutionnaire et écologique) de la population sauvage est une priorité de gestion, le peuplement ne devrait pas être considéré comme une mesure corrective. Cependant, le

besoin de peuplement provisoire par des produits d'écloserie pourrait être pris en compte comme mesure de protection d'urgence du stock. Le peuplement pourrait être utilisé pour éviter des goulots d'étranglement dans la production pendant que d'autres actions sont entreprises pour répondre à la cause du déclin du stock. Des orientations supplémentaires sont fournies dans les 'Directives sur le peuplement du saumon atlantique' de l'OCSAN, CNL(24)61.'

jusqu'à

'L'OCSAN considère que lorsque l'intégrité (c.a.d. naturalité évolutionnaire et écologique) de la population sauvage est une priorité de gestion, le peuplement ne devrait pas être considéré comme une mesure corrective. Malgré les risques associés au peuplement, il existe des situations en nombre limité où le peuplement peut être bénéfique au saumon sauvage. Le peuplement peut être bénéfique lorsque la population de saumon atlantique sauvage a disparu ou est en risque immédiat de disparition. Des orientations supplémentaires sont fournies dans les 'Directives sur le peuplement du saumon atlantique' de l'OCSAN, CNL(24)61.'

- 5.28 Le Président du Groupe de travail a informé le Conseil qu'il s'était concerté avec les autres membres du Groupe de travail sur les Directives sur le peuplement pour incorporer les modifications du texte du Canada et du RU.
- 5.29 La Norvège a demandé une clarification sur la signification de "provisaires" dans le contexte des Directives et a fait part de sa préoccupation que le peuplement puisse être vu comme une option facile plutôt que de trouver une meilleure solution. Le Président du Groupe de travail a répondu que les Directives contenaient d'importantes réserves dans leur texte qui établissaient que 'le peuplement ne devrait pas être considéré comme une mesure corrective' et devrait être envisagé en dernier recours.
- 5.30 Les États-Unis ont fait la déclaration suivante:
- 'Les U.S.A. ne s'opposeront pas à l'adoption des Directives révisées sur les programmes de reconstitution des stocks ou à celle des Directives relatives aux banques de gènes. Bien que nous ne soutenions pas les multiples références au changement climatique, nous reconnaissons aussi que ces documents sont de nature technique et que leur objectif ultime est de n'être que des directives, et que par conséquent elles ne sont contraignantes pour aucune Partie.'***
- 5.31 Le Conseil a accepté les révisions et a adopté les 'Directives sur le recours à des programmes de reconstitution des stocks dans le cadre de la gestion de précaution des stocks de saumon', [CNL\(25\)50](#).
- 5.32 Le Président du Groupe de travail a présenté les 'Directives projet sur les banques de gènes pour le saumon atlantique sauvage' (Annexe 4 du [CNL\(25\)11](#)). Le RU s'est réjoui de ces Directives et a demandé un amendement mineur comme suit:
- l'ajout de texte à la dernière phrase de la section 1. 'Introduction' pour modifier 'L'OCSAN recommande que les Parties / juridictions créent des cryobanques de gènes aussi tôt que possible...' en 'L'OCSAN recommande que les Parties / juridictions envisagent de créer des cryobanques de gènes aussi tôt que possible...'.
- 5.33 Le Conseil a accepté les révisions et a adopté les 'Directives sur les banques de gènes pour le saumon atlantique sauvage', [CNL\(25\)51](#).

f) L'Atlas du saumon atlantique sauvage

- 5.34 La Présidente par intérim a indiqué qu'en 2022 le Conseil avait décidé de développer un Atlas du saumon atlantique sauvage (WASA), [CNL\(22\)53rev](#) et que le développement de l'Atlas a été réalisé avant la session annuelle de 2024. Elle a indiqué en outre qu'en 2024, [CNL\(24\)88rev](#), le Conseil avait décidé de finaliser le WASA, et que les Parties contribueraient au WASA pour donner une image globale du statut du saumon, en utilisant les indicateurs agréés du WASA, pour décembre 2024.
- 5.35 La Présidente par intérim a déclaré que toutes les Parties et juridictions avaient transmis des données pour inclusion dans l'Atlas, qui avaient été utilisées par le Secrétariat, en partenariat avec un expert du GIS, pour compléter la construction de l'Atlas en avril 2025. Elle a indiqué que les Parties / juridictions avaient eu la possibilité de passer l'Atlas en revue pour la fin avril 2025.
- 5.36 La Présidente par intérim a dit que les détails d'accès à l'Atlas seraient partagés avec tous les délégués par email à la suite du point d'ordre du jour, en tant que lancement officiel lors de la session annuelle. Elle a aussi informé les délégués que les membres du comité de pilotage Helge Dyrendal (Norvège), Stephen Gephard (USA), Nora Hanson (RU – Ecosse) et Sarah McLean (UE – Irlande) et le personnel du Secrétariat seraient disponibles à la pause-café pour des questions informelles. Elle a invité l'ensemble des délégués à tester l'Atlas et à prendre contact avec des membres du comité de pilotage pour tout commentaire ou question.
- 5.37 La Présidente par intérim a dit que la question de la traduction de l'Atlas dans les langues officielles de chacune des Parties à l'OCSAN était une recommandation du Groupe de travail sur la base de données des rivières, [CNL\(22\)12](#), et décidée par le Conseil, [CNL\(22\)53rev](#). Elle a ajouté que rendre l'Atlas disponible dans chacune des langues 'officielles' des Parties à l'OCSAN le rendrait plus accessible. Plusieurs Parties ont dit qu'elles fourniraient des traductions de texte si elles souhaitaient avoir ce texte dans l'Atlas. Les ONGs ont offert d'aider pour la traduction dans certaines langues.
- 5.38 Le Conseil a décidé que, s'il y avait un budget suffisant en 2025, le Secrétariat effectuerait une traduction de l'Atlas en français en utilisant la traduction automatique lorsque c'était possible.

g) Rapport final de l'étude des impacts de l'aquaculture du saumon sur les populations de saumon sauvage de l'Atlantique

- 5.39 La Présidente par intérim a rappelé au Conseil qu'à sa session annuelle de 2021, [CNL\(21\)62](#), l'OCSAN avait décidé de financer une étude pour fournir les connaissances scientifiques les plus récentes sur les impacts du pou de mer et des saumons d'élevage échappés sur le saumon sauvage. Elle a indiqué qu'une proposition détaillée pour rendre ce travail possible avait été transmise au Conseil en 2022, [CNL\(22\)07](#). Elle a aussi indiqué que des mises à jour sur ces travaux avaient été fournies en 2023 et 2024 et a exprimé sa gratitude à l'UE pour sa participation financière à ce projet.
- 5.40 La Présidente par intérim a déclaré que les travaux étaient maintenant terminés et seraient publiés sous la forme de deux publications dans des revues relues par des pairs. Elle a indiqué qu'une publication intitulée 'L'exposition au pou de mer issu de l'aquaculture a-t-elle un effet de réduction de la population sur le saumon sauvage de l'Atlantique ? Une revue systématique' sera transmise à la revue 'Fish and Fisheries', à l'été 2025. Elle a de plus indiqué qu'une seconde publication intitulée 'Introgression génétique du saumon atlantique d'élevage dans les populations de saumon sauvage

dans toute son aire de répartition naturelle' a été préparée et sera proposée à la revue 'Nature Communications', à l'été 2025. Elle a aussi dit qu'une note d'orientation sur les implications de gestion à tirer des conclusions clé des études sur l'état des connaissances sur l'Impact de l'aquaculture sur les populations de saumon atlantique sauvage', [CNL\(25\)18](#), a été fournie par le Groupe d'experts qui a réalisé les études.

- 5.41 Le RU a demandé comment les articles seraient utilisés en dehors de leur publication.
- 5.42 La Secrétaire a dit qu'il était important de noter que les articles transmis pour publication à des revues relues par des pairs et auxquels la Présidente en intérim faisait référence n'étaient pas des publications de l'OCSAN. L'OCSAN avait plutôt commandé cette recherche par des groupes d'experts comme suite à sa Séance spéciale thématique sur l'aquaculture et participé au financement de l'élaboration des articles. Elle a en outre indiqué que les groupes travaillant sur les publications avaient eu carte blanche, sans orientation ni contribution de la part de l'OCSAN.
- 5.43 Le Co-Président des ONGs a demandé pourquoi il n'y avait pas de décision associée à ce point de l'ordre du jour, alors que la note d'orientation soulevait des questions significatives sur l'introgression en tant que menace la plus grave pour la viabilité du saumon atlantique sauvage.
- 5.44 La Présidente par intérim a dit que l'OCSAN voulait que le travail soit réalisé par des scientifiques indépendants afin d'éviter une impression de partialité. Le Groupe de travail qui réviserait les Résolutions, Accords et Lignes directrices associées à l'aquaculture entamerait son travail après la publication des articles et pourrait, par conséquent, réfléchir à la façon de les utiliser et d'y répondre une fois qu'ils seraient publiés.
- 5.45 La représentante des RIPAs a indiqué qu'elle se réjouissait de la publication des articles et a souligné qu'il était nécessaire d'inclure les points de vue des peuples autochtones dans de tels travaux.

6. Plan d'action de haut niveau de l'OCSAN tel qu'inclus dans 'L'Avenir de l'OCSAN – une Stratégie sur dix ans'

a) Mise à jour du Groupe de travail sur l'avenir de l'OCSAN

- 6.1 La Présidente par intérim a rappelé au Conseil que, en 2023, suite à différentes recommandations de sa troisième revue de la performance, le Conseil avait décidé de créer un Groupe de travail sur l'Avenir de l'OCSAN (WGFON) pour développer une stratégie et un plan d'action pour l'Organisation, renseignés par les nombreuses recommandations d'amélioration reçues par l'OCSAN au cours des dernières années. Elle a aussi rappelé au Conseil que le WGFON s'était réuni en inter-session en 2023 et en 2024, et que lors de sa session annuelle 2024 le Conseil avait adopté le document 'L'Avenir de l'OCSAN – une Stratégie sur dix ans', [CNL\(24\)71rev](#), qui comprenait une Stratégie et un Plan d'action de haut niveau.
- 6.2 La Présidente par intérim a dit qu'à la session annuelle de 2024 le Conseil avait indiqué que le WGFON n'avait pas terminé son travail et qu'il a été de nouveau réuni pour répondre à certaines recommandations du Plan d'action projet qui restaient à résoudre. Elle a indiqué que le WGFON s'était réuni en mars 2025 et avait aussi travaillé par correspondance pour terminer quatre tâches:
- développer une proposition pour mettre à jour le Plan d'action de l'OCSAN, sur une base annuelle;

- faire des recommandations sur la façon de réagir à 19 recommandations auxquelles il n'avait été répondu ni dans le Plan d'action de 2024, ni dans le travail de l'OCSAN plus largement;
 - développer un document de position sur des changements à la Convention de l'OCSAN; et
 - examiner plus avant l'action pour que 'Les Parties mettent en commun leur analyse de base pour contribuer aux progrès sur les facteurs de stress.'
- 6.3 La Présidente par intérim a présenté une vue d'ensemble des Cinq objectifs de l'OCSAN et Plan d'action de haut niveau dans sa Stratégie sur dix ans. Elle a proposé que le Plan d'action soit mis à jour par le Secrétariat après chaque session annuelle pour traduire les discussions et décisions ayant eu lieu. Ceci pouvait inclure la mise à jour du statut des actions et / ou l'ajout de toute nouvelle action décidée au Conseil. Le Plan d'action mis à jour serait publié en tant que document indépendant incluant les détails des mises à jour faites cette année-là, pour fournir une trace claire de vérification des progrès. Elle a recommandé que, pour améliorer l'accessibilité et l'impact, le Secrétariat travaille avec un développeur web à créer une plate-forme en ligne pour valoriser les progrès réalisés dans la mise en œuvre du Plan d'action de haut niveau de l'OCSAN.
- 6.4 Le Conseil a décidé de demander que le Secrétariat:
- crée un Plan d'action de haut niveau mis à jour, immédiatement après chaque session annuelle, montrant le statut des actions de haut niveau dans le Plan d'action, par ex. ' Plan d'action de haut niveau 2025 / 2026';
 - crée chaque année un document Word d'accompagnement décrivant les changements apportés au Plan d'action de haut niveau de l'année précédente, ceci immédiatement après la session annuelle; et
 - agrège, chaque année, ces informations en un document du Conseil, séparé de la 'Stratégie sur dix ans', qui tient lieu de rapport des décisions du Conseil.
- 6.5 Le RU et le Danemark (pour les Iles Féroé et le Groenland) ont tous deux fait part de préoccupations quant à la proposition de travailler avec un développeur pour créer une plate-forme en ligne mettant en valeur les progrès réalisés dans la mise en œuvre du Plan d'action de haut niveau de l'OCSAN, et ont indiqué que cela demandait une discussion plus poussée et une prise en compte des implications budgétaires.
- 6.6 Le Conseil a décidé de charger le Secrétariat de travailler avec un développeur web pour rendre le Plan d'action plus accessible si cela est possible dans le cadre du budget, cependant les templates des PI et des CCR (voir le paragraphe 6.84) devraient être prioritaires.
- 6.7 La Présidente par intérim a évoqué un pan de travail que le Conseil a commandé en 2024, consistant à demander à la Secrétaire de travailler avec le CIEM au développement d'une demande visant à assurer que les base de données et les applications en ligne du CIEM, existantes et futures, prennent en compte le saumon, comme elles le font pour les autres stocks évalués, et une demande de faire figurer le saumon atlantique dans la liste de captures accessoires du CIEM afin d'améliorer la compréhension de cette question, [CNL\(25\)15](#). Elle a indiqué que le Groupe du CIEM WKFIBRE (Atelier sur la pertinence des espèces de poissons comme captures accessoires) s'est réuni en 2024 / 25 et a décidé de ne pas ajouter le saumon à la liste

de captures accessoires du CIEM, à la suite de quoi la Secrétaire a lancé des discussions entre les responsables de l'ACOM au CIEM et l'OCSAN. L'ACOM a décidé le 28 avril 2025 d'ajouter à la fois le saumon atlantique et l'anguille européenne à la liste des espèces de poisson pertinentes comme captures accessoires dans toutes les écorégions. La Présidente par intérim a dit que l'OCSAN aurait besoin d'ajouter du texte dans la demande de conseils scientifiques au CIEM pour 2026 afin de permettre l'inclusion d'un appel à données sur les captures accessoires pour le saumon et de données du Canada et des États-Unis.

- 6.8 Le Conseil a décidé de demander au CSP d'ajouter un nouveau bullet point dans la demande de conseils scientifiques au CIEM pour 2026 afin de permettre un appel à données de captures accessoires pour le saumon et pour des données du Canada et des États-Unis.
- 6.9 Enfin, la Présidente par intérim a rappelé au Conseil qu'en 2024, il avait décidé, après avoir discuté de ce qui constitue un état des lieux, que les Parties / juridictions réaliseraient toutes un tel état des lieux après la session annuelle 2025 et transmettraient un document à l'OCSAN pour le 30 avril 2026.
- 6.10 Elle a indiqué que la Séance spéciale sur les analyses de facteurs de stress avait démontré que ces analyses avaient délivré des états des lieux et plusieurs Parties ont acquiescé. Le Conseil, par conséquent, a décidé que des états des lieux séparés ne seraient pas demandés en 2026.
- 6.11 Cependant, il y a eu un large consensus pour dire qu'une revue des progrès par comparaison avec les états des lieux pour chaque facteur de stress à la fin du quatrième cycle de reporting donnerait l'occasion d'évaluer tout changement dans le facteur de stress à ce moment-là et d'en tirer des enseignements pour les futures actions.
- 6.12 Le Conseil a décidé que les Parties / juridictions mèneraient de nouveau leurs analyses de facteurs de stress à la fin du quatrième cycle de reporting, c.a.d. en 2033.

b) Décisions sur le 'Plan d'action projet pour l'OCSAN', CNL(24)14

- 6.13 La Présidente par intérim a indiqué que ce point de l'ordre du jour poursuivait la prise en compte des 19 recommandations qui restaient à résoudre après la session annuelle de 2024. Un sous-groupe du WGFON s'est réuni en octobre 2024 et a élaboré une liste de recommandations issues du 'Plan d'action projet', [CNL\(24\)14](#), pour examen par le WGFON lors de sa réunion de mars 2025. Le WGFON les avait examinées et les avait préconisées au Conseil.
- 6.14 La Présidente par intérim a indiqué qu'il y avait deux groupes principaux de recommandations: les six premières relatives à des actions par des organes de l'OCSAN, c.a.d. le Conseil, le Comité scientifique permanent (CSP) et les trois Commissions régionales; et le second groupe relatif à des compléments proposés pour la révision des Résolutions, Accords et Directives (RAGs) de l'OCSAN.

Actions par des organes de l'OCSAN

- 6.15 La Présidente par intérim a indiqué que les recommandations relatives à des organes de l'OCSAN étaient les six premières actions de l'Annexe 2 des 'Décisions proposées issues du 'Plan d'action projet pour l'OCSAN'', [CNL\(25\)13](#).
- 6.16 Le Conseil a décidé:
- d'examiner les recommandations EPR1, EPR4, EPR5, EPR26, EPR46 et IP11 lors de la session annuelle de 2025 pour décision;

- que les recommandations EPR1, EPR4, EPR5, EPR26 et IP11 ne seraient pas incluses dans le Plan d'action de haut niveau mais seraient adoptées par le Conseil et figureraient au compte rendu de la session annuelle de 2025, comme suit, pour demander au CSP de:
 - examiner de répondre aux recommandations EPR1 et EPR5 dans la demande de conseils scientifiques au CIEM de 2025;
 - examiner de répondre à la recommandation EPR4 dans la demande de conseils scientifiques au CIEM de 2025; en s'assurant que des questions telles que les impacts du changement climatique sur les Limites de conservation soient insérées dans le texte de la demande;
 - répondre à ces recommandations dans la demande de conseils scientifiques au CIEM de 2025; et
 - réfléchir, en inter-session, à une discussion plus large sur les conseils du CIEM nécessaires pour permettre de délivrer la Stratégie sur dix ans de l'OCSAN.

6.17 Le Conseil a aussi décidé:

- que la recommandation EPR26 est hors du domaine de compétence de l'OCSAN et que donc aucune action ne sera prise; et
- de proposer que les Commissions examinent s'il y a un bénéfice à la communication d'information aux Commissions sur des approches coopératives de la gestion de cours d'eau à saumon qui sont partagés avec d'autres juridictions (recommandation IP11).

6.18 La Présidente par intérim a proposé que l'action supplémentaire, sur la tenue d'une réunion ministérielle (EPR46) soit discutée comme faisant partie de la stratégie de communication et de sensibilisation.

Compléments proposés pour la révision des Résolutions, Accords et Directives de l'OCSAN

6.19 La Présidente par intérim a indiqué que les treize actions dans le second groupe d'actions étaient celles qui apparaissaient dans un texte surligné en rose dans l'Annexe 3 des 'Décisions proposées issues du 'Plan d'action projet de l'OCSAN', [CNL\(25\)13](#).

6.20 La Présidente par intérim a rappelé au Conseil que lors de la session annuelle de 2024 il avait été décidé que les recommandations concernant spécifiquement les Résolutions, Accords et Directives devraient être examinées plus avant par le Groupe de travail pertinent. Elle a dit que comme les 13 recommandations restantes tombaient dans cette catégorie elles devraient aussi être examinées par le Groupe de travail pertinent, en étant ajoutées à la liste des autres recommandations devant être examinées par chaque Groupe de travail, dans l'Annexe 3 du document [CNL\(25\)13](#). Elle a aussi indiqué que bien que ces recommandations soient pour examen par les Groupes de travail menant les révisions des Résolutions, Agréments et Directives de l'OCSAN, ceci ne voulait pas dire qu'elles seraient finalement incorporées dans la révision, mais plutôt qu'il leur serait accordé l'attention nécessaire.

6.21 Le Conseil a décidé que:

- les recommandations TBSS2(1), TBSS2(3) et TBSS2(4) soient ajoutées au bullet point de l'Annexe 1 du [CNL\(24\)71rev](#) relatif à la prise en compte du changement climatique comme élément clé des Résolutions, Accords et Directives de l'OCSAN

(RAGs);

- le mandat de chaque groupe de travail révisant les Résolutions, Accords et Directives de l'OCSAN devrait être clair sur le fait que les différentes recommandations touchant aux domaines thématiques clés de l'OCSAN devraient être considérées comme des exemples possibles de bonnes pratiques qui pourraient être pris en compte pour incorporation dans les révisions plutôt que comme des instructions pour mener à bien les tâches spécifiques elles-mêmes;
- les recommandations EPR8, EPR15 et EPR16 devraient être ajoutées à la colonne 'Recommandation' du tableau de l'Annexe 1 du [CNL\(24\)71rev](#) sous les RAGs 'Habitat', pour être jointes à la recommandation T3 déjà dans le tableau;
- les recommandations EPR11, EPR18, EPR21, EPR22, T8 et T9 devraient être ajoutées à la colonne 'Recommandation' du tableau de l'Annexe 1 du [CNL\(24\)71rev](#) sous les RAGs 'Aquaculture et maladie', pour être jointes aux recommandations EPR19, EPR20 et EPR28 déjà dans le tableau;
- la recommandation EPR25 devrait être ajoutée à la colonne 'Recommandation' du tableau de l'Annexe 1 du [CNL\(24\)71rev](#) sous les RAGs 'Gestion des pêcheries de saumon à la lumière d'un changement rapide', pour être jointes à la recommandation EPR14 déjà dans le tableau; et
- l'ensemble des 13 recommandations, c.a.d. TBSS2(1), TBSS2(3), TBSS2(4), EPR8, EPR11, EPR15, EPR16, EPR18, EPR21, EPR22, EPR25, T8 et T9, devraient être incluses comme faisant partie de toute mise à jour du Plan d'action de haut niveau à la suite de la session annuelle de 2025.

c) Décisions sur un document de position sur des changements à la Convention de l'OCSAN

- 6.22 La Présidente par intérim a rappelé aux délégués que l'une des recommandations non résolues (EPR42) était relative au développement d'un document de position sur des changements à la Convention de l'OCSAN. Elle a dit que ce travail consistait à développer un document de position sur des changements à la Convention de l'OCSAN – **en réponse aux recommandations de la troisième revue de performance de l'OCSAN**, qui avaient été discutées tout au long de la procédure de développement de la stratégie, mais pas écrites.
- 6.23 Elle a indiqué que le document de position proposé, [CNL\(25\)14](#), expose les quatre recommandations de la revue de performance de l'OCSAN qui se rapportent spécifiquement aux changements à la Convention. Il explore ensuite les procédures pour amender la Convention, avant de conclure qu'en rapport avec les recommandations prises en compte, il serait plus constructif de concentrer les efforts à délivrer la Stratégie et le Plan d'action de l'OCSAN, plutôt que d'investir du temps et des ressources dans des changements à la Convention, comme exposé dans la 'décision' en page 4.
- 6.24 Le document dit clairement que des changements à la Convention restent une option en lien avec d'autres sujets. Le dernier paragraphe énonce 'Si le besoin de modifier la Convention de l'OCSAN émergeait à l'avenir, des amendements peuvent être proposés et examinés pour adoption et ratification ou approbation en accord avec l'Article 19 de la Convention'.
- 6.25 Le Conseil a décidé:

- d'adopter la 'Position de l'OCSAN sur des changements à la Convention', [CNL\(25\)52](#); et
 - d'enjoindre à la Secrétaire de s'assurer que cette décision et son argumentaire soient communiqués aux parties prenantes de l'OCSAN.
- d) Décisions sur la mise à jour et la consolidation des Résolutions, Accords et Directives de l'OCSAN**
- 6.26 La Présidente par intérim a indiqué que, en tant que faisant partie du Plan d'action adopté en 2024, [CNL\(24\)71rev](#), le Conseil avait décidé:
- *'de mettre à jour, et de consolider le cas échéant, les Résolutions, Accords et Directives de l'OCSAN, en incorporant le changement climatique et d'autres facteurs (voir l'Annexe I de 'L'Avenir de l'OCSAN – une Stratégie sur dix ans', [CNL\(24\)71rev](#)) en tant qu'éléments-clé de la révision avec l'ordre de priorité suivant, pouvant évoluer:*
 - *habitat: commencer en 2025; prévision de terminer en 2026;*
 - *aquaculture et pathologie: commencer en 2026; prévision de fin en 2027; et*
 - *pêcheries: commencer en 2027; prévision de terminer en 2028;'*
- 6.27 La Présidente par intérim a aussi rappelé au Conseil que le Plan d'action de haut niveau contenu dans la Stratégie pour dix ans indiquait que ces actions devaient être délivrées par des Groupes de travail par thématique/Groupes de travail d'experts. Des mandats génériques projets (ToRs) pour ces Groupes, [CNL\(25\)19](#), ont été examinés par le Conseil.
- 6.28 Les États-Unis ont indiqué que les ToRs énoncent que chaque Groupe de travail doit prendre en compte les recommandations issues des revues de la performance antérieures et des Séances spéciales thématiques et ils ont indiqué que cela inclut une Séance spéciale sur le changement climatique. Cependant, puisqu'il n'est demandé à chaque Groupe de travail que d'examiner les recommandations dans son travail et qu'il n'est pas dit qu'une Partie doive faire quoi que ce soit de particulier à ce stade, ils pouvaient soutenir les mandats tels qu'ils étaient écrits.
- 6.29 Les États-Unis ont aussi indiqué que les ToRs semblaient ne répondre qu'à la révision des Directives de l'OCSAN et ont demandé si le périmètre des Groupes de travail devrait être étendu pour couvrir la révision de tous les Résolutions, Accords et Directives de l'OCSAN.
- 6.30 Le Conseil a décidé que les ToRs ne répondraient qu'à la mise à jour des Directives qui y étaient listées et il a décidé que les mandats seraient ceux des Groupes de travail pour la révision des Directives de l'OCSAN.
- 6.31 Le RU a recherché une interprétation commune de la façon dont les informations discutées dans de tels Groupes de travail pouvaient être partagées entre les membres des Groupes et les membres de leurs délégations. Différents membres du Conseil pensaient que tant que le travail des Groupes était en cours, les discussions sur le travail des Groupes et le partage du texte projet pouvaient avoir lieu en parallèle, pour alimenter la discussion par le Groupe. Cependant, une fois que le document serait adopté par le Groupe, il serait considéré comme fermé à de nouvelles observations.
- 6.32 Le Conseil a jugé qu'il n'était pas nécessaire de transcrire cette interprétation commune

dans les ToRs pour le Groupe de travail.

- 6.33 La Présidente par intérim a alors évoqué les sept sujets que le Groupe de travail sur le futur reporting (WGFR) avait présentés dans son Rapport au Conseil, [CNL\(25\)22](#), pour examen par les Groupes de travail pour la révision des Directives de l'OCSAN.
- 6.34 Le Conseil a jugé que six des sujets devaient être incorporés aux ToRs pour examen par les Groupes de travail, mais que le premier sujet, sur la définition du saumon sauvage atlantique, n'était pas approprié pour un examen par les Groupes de travail.
- 6.35 Le Conseil a demandé au Secrétariat d'incorporer les deuxième à septième sujets du WGFR dans les ToRs pour examen par les Groupes de travail.
- 6.36 Le Conseil a décidé d'adopter le 'Mandat générique pour les Groupes de travail pour la révision des Directives de l'OCSAN', [CNL\(25\)53](#).
- 6.37 En ce qui concerne l'examen des perspectives sur la définition du 'saumon sauvage de l'Atlantique', le premier sujet du WGFR sur sa liste, l'Islande a soulevé le fait que l'OCSAN ne semblait pas cohérente dans ses définitions.
- 6.38 Le Danemark (pour les Iles Féroé et le Groenland) a suggéré qu'une façon d'avancer pouvait être de regarder les définitions du saumon déjà adoptées dans le cadre des différents Résolutions, Accords et Directives de l'OCSAN, comme proposé plus tôt par l'Islande. Celles-ci pouvaient être compilées par le Secrétariat et partagées et pouvaient même être utilisées dans les nouveaux Groupes de travail pour la révision des Directives de l'OCSAN afin de garantir une cohérence de langage dans les avancées.
- 6.39 L'Islande a proposé le texte suivant que le Conseil pourrait adopter sur ce sujet:
- 'Le Conseil a décidé de charger le Secrétariat de compiler une liste de chaque définition du saumon que l'on peut trouver dans les Résolutions, Accords et Directives adoptés par le Conseil. Ce document devra être transmis, au plus tard, pour la 43^e session annuelle.'*
- 6.40 Le Conseil a décidé de charger le Secrétariat de compiler une liste de toutes les définitions du saumon se trouvant dans les Résolutions, Accords et Directives de l'OCSAN. Le document résultant sera transmis, au plus tard, pour la quarante-troisième session annuelle.
- 6.41 La Présidente par intérim a rappelé au Conseil que, en marge de la session annuelle de 2024, il avait été demandé à la Secrétaire d'explorer avec le CIEM quel type de soutien le CIEM pourrait être en mesure de fournir à l'OCSAN dans la révision / mise à jour de ses Résolutions, Accords et Directives et qu'elle a transmis une proposition du CIEM, voir [CNL\(25\)15](#).
- 6.42 Etant donné les différentes contraintes budgétaires, et le niveau d'expertise existant au sein des Parties / juridictions, le Conseil a décidé que le CIEM ne serait pas sollicité pour apporter son assistance en appui à la procédure de l'OCSAN.
- 6.43 Il y a eu alors une discussion quant à l'éventuelle inclusion dans les considérants pour le Groupe de travail de révision des Directives sur l'aquaculture de l'OCSAN des deux articles à fort impact devant être publiés sur les impacts de l'élevage du saumon sur le saumon sauvage et le Conseil a décidé qu'ils ne devraient pas être inclus.
- 6.44 A la suite de certaines questions posées par les ONGs, la Présidente par intérim a rappelé aux Observateurs accrédités de l'OCSAN qu'ils pouvaient transmettre des documents sur des sujets de préoccupation pour examen par les Groupes de travail pour

la révision des Directives de l'OCSAN.

- 6.45 Finalement, la Présidente par intérim a indiqué qu'il avait été demandé au Comité scientifique permanent d'envisager une discussion plus large quant aux conseils du CIEM nécessaires pour délivrer la Stratégie sur dix ans de l'OCSAN.

e) Décisions sur une stratégie de communication et de sensibilisation pour l'OCSAN

- 6.46 La Présidente par intérim a rappelé au Conseil qu'à sa session annuelle de 2024, [CNL\(24\)88rev](#), il avait décidé d'adopter 'L'Avenir de l'OCSAN – une Stratégie sur dix ans', [CNL\(24\)71rev](#), comprenant les actions de haut niveau de l'OCSAN. La Présidente par intérim a de plus indiqué que le Conseil reconnaissait la place centrale de la communication pour délivrer la Stratégie sur dix ans de l'OCSAN et qu'il y avait parmi les actions de haut niveau une demande à la Secrétaire de prendre l'attache d'un consultant approprié pour 'développer une stratégie de communication et de sensibilisation (par.ex. en menant des symposia, un engagement public & politique, un engagement auprès de l'industrie, d'agences de certification, en améliorant le site internet, etc.)'.
- 6.47 La Présidente par intérim a porté à la connaissance du Conseil que le Secrétariat avait travaillé dans la seconde partie de 2024 avec un cabinet de conseil, qui avait transmis une stratégie de communication et de sensibilisation figurant dans le document [CNL\(25\)20](#), avec une liste de tâches priorisées et des calendriers pour la mise en œuvre de la stratégie.
- 6.48 La Présidente par intérim a rappelé au Conseil que l'examen de la recommandation EPR46 de la troisième revue de performance de l'OCSAN concernant une réunion ministérielle était à l'origine sous le point de l'ordre du jour 6.b) et avait été déplacé pour être traité en parallèle avec la stratégie de communication et de sensibilisation de l'OCSAN (la stratégie).
- 6.49 La Présidente par intérim a indiqué que ce point de l'ordre du jour contenait plusieurs aspects entraînant des implications budgétaires et que par conséquent les discussions et décisions devraient prendre en compte d'éventuelles limitations. Elle a ensuite ouvert le débat pour des observations et questions sur la stratégie et sur les étapes de mise en œuvre/recommandations proposées.
- 6.50 Le Danemark (pour les Iles Féroé et le Groenland) a dit que la communication et la sensibilisation étaient une part importante de la Stratégie sur dix ans de l'OCSAN. Il a ajouté qu'il pouvait donner son accord pour la stratégie, et pour identifier les étapes suivantes et les priorités sur la base d'un budget limité. Il a aussi indiqué que quelques parties prenantes présentes à la session annuelle avaient une bonne expérience de la sensibilisation et pouvaient aider l'OCSAN à avancer.
- 6.51 Le RU a exprimé son soutien aux observations du Danemark (pour les Iles Féroé et le Groenland) et a indiqué que la stratégie était exhaustive et présentait de bons éléments à mettre en œuvre. Le RU a souligné l'importance de rehausser les compétences du Secrétariat pour mettre en œuvre la stratégie de sensibilisation et diminuer la dépendance future à des consultants. Il a indiqué en outre qu'il pensait que délivrer la stratégie représentait une lourde tâche pour l'OCSAN à elle seule et a accueilli favorablement la suggestion de réfléchir à la façon dont d'autres acteurs pouvaient aider en la matière.
- 6.52 La Norvège a aussi fait part de son soutien aux approches évoquées, s'il pouvait y avoir la flexibilité nécessaire dans le budget et si les ressources étaient utilisées efficacement.

Elle a aussi dit qu'elle attachait de l'importance à examiner la possibilité d'une réunion ministérielle et a offert de travailler avec le Secrétariat à explorer la façon dont cela pourrait se faire à l'avenir.

- 6.53 Les Parties restantes ont exprimé un large soutien aux approches proposées. Le Danemark (pour les Iles Féroé et le Groenland) a suggéré que l'OCSAN se crée un profil LinkedIn, ce que de nombreuses ORGPs avaient fait, afin de partager largement ses connaissances sur le saumon. Il a indiqué que le Secrétariat devrait être en mesure de choisir comment mettre en œuvre la stratégie, et que si un financement était disponible dans le budget, les Parties pouvaient indiquer quelles parties de la stratégie étaient à prioriser et permettre à la Secrétaire de choisir comment les faire avancer.
- 6.54 Le Co-Président des ONGs a indiqué que le personnel de communication et de sensibilisation de la Fondation pour le Saumon atlantique travaillerait avec plaisir avec le Secrétariat. Il a aussi évoqué la question de la Journée internationale du Saumon sauvage le 1er juin, et il a demandé à l'OCSAN d'envisager de la soutenir en partageant du contenu sur ses chaînes de communication et réseaux sociaux.
- 6.55 Le RU a remercié le Co-Président des ONGs pour sa proposition d'aider le Secrétariat pour sa communication et sensibilisation et a exprimé son soutien sur la question de la Journée internationale du Saumon sauvage sur le principe, précisant qu'il devrait consulter en interne au préalable. Le Canada a dit qu'il pensait que la Journée internationale du Saumon sauvage était bien en ligne avec la stratégie.
- 6.56 Les RIPAs se sont réjouis d'une journée qui mettait en lumière le saumon et ont dit qu'ils ne désignaient pas le saumon à l'état sauvage par 'saumon sauvage', qu'ils l'appelaient simplement 'saumon' et qu'ils n'avaient qu'une seule autre catégorie qui était pour le 'saumon d'élevage'.
- 6.57 La Présidente par intérim a noté qu'il y avait un large soutien pour célébrer la Journée internationale du Saumon sauvage et elle a demandé à la Secrétaire d'explorer la possibilité d'y apporter une contribution. Elle a aussi demandé à la Secrétaire d'explorer la création d'un profil LinkedIn pour l'OCSAN.
- 6.58 La Présidente par intérim a indiqué avoir été informée par la Secrétaire qu'il y avait des fonds disponibles dans le Budget 2025 pour des activités de communication, qui pouvaient être utilisés pour démarrer la stratégie sans implications pour le Budget 2026 projet. Les Parties ont discuté du financement pouvant être alloué à la stratégie à ce stade, moyennant clarification de la part du Secrétariat sur la façon dont il pouvait être utilisé.
- 6.59 Le Conseil a décidé, sous réserve d'un budget plafonné à £10 000, les recommandations suivantes pour inclusion dans le Plan d'action de haut niveau:
- adopter la Stratégie de communication et de sensibilisation de l'OCSAN, CNL(25)54, y compris l'approche et les actions associées telles que résumées dans son Annexe 1 en tant que cadre de travail;
 - enjoindre au Secrétariat de compléter une évaluation interne des ressources en 2025 / 2026 pour déterminer s'il serait bénéfique de maintenir les services d'un expert en communication pour des actions de routine identifiées dans la stratégie pour les réseaux sociaux (par.ex. pour produire et programmer de façon régulière du contenu evergreen pour les réseaux sociaux et le site internet); et
 - enjoindre au Secrétariat d'explorer avec les Parties des options pour une future réunion ministérielle et d'en faire rapport au Conseil lors de la session annuelle de

2026.

6.60 Le Conseil a accepté le principe d'avancer sur les trois autres recommandations concernant la Stratégie de communication et de sensibilisation, notant que toute nouvelle étape serait dépendante d'un budget plafonné à £10 000.

- enjoindre au Secrétariat de travailler avec un expert en communication en 2025 / 2026 pour développer des directives de marque concises et des matrices associées pour le site internet, des posts sur les réseaux sociaux, des compte rendus écrits (sous Word) et des diapositives (PowerPoint) pour garantir une cohérence dans la présentation et la sensibilité des réalisations de l'OCSAN;
- enjoindre au Secrétariat de travailler avec un expert en communication en 2025 / 2026 pour développer une stratégie vis-à-vis des réseaux sociaux et des lignes directrices de mise en œuvre pour orienter la mise en ligne de contenu attrayant, ciblé et cohérent sur la(les) plate-forme(s) choisie(s) par l'OCSAN (par.ex. X, LinkedIn), en s'appuyant sur la stratégie principale de sensibilisation de l'OCSAN; et
- enjoindre au Secrétariat d'examiner le besoin et les ressources disponibles pour réviser et mettre à jour le site internet en 2026 / 2027, c.a.d. l'année suivant la finalisation des directives de marque et de matrices et d'une stratégie pour les réseaux sociaux comme décrit dans les deux précédentes recommandations.

f) Les pratiques environnementales du Secrétariat de l'OCSAN

6.61 La Présidente par intérim a indiqué que lors de sa session annuelle de 2024, [CNL\(24\)88rev](#), le Conseil a décidé d'adopter 'L'Avenir de l'OCSAN – une Stratégie sur dix ans', [CNL\(24\)71rev](#), qui contient dans un document unique les actions de haut niveau de l'OCSAN. Elle a dit qu'en tant que faisant partie de son Plan d'action de haut niveau, le Conseil avait décidé que le Secrétariat de l'OCSAN devait publier ses pratiques environnementales en 2025.

6.62 La Présidente par intérim a indiqué que le Secrétariat avait préparé les 'Pratiques environnementales du Secrétariat de l'OCSAN', [CNL\(25\)21](#). Elle a dit que le Conseil pouvait souhaiter décider si ce qui est fait par le Secrétariat est suffisant, ou s'il préférerait qu'un audit soit fait sur l'énergie pour permettre au Secrétariat de mettre en œuvre des standards environnementaux plus élevés pour le bâtiment du siège.

6.63 Le Danemark (pour les Iles Féroé et le Groenland) a déclaré qu'il apportait son soutien aux pratiques et pensait qu'elles montraient une bonne évolution au sein du Secrétariat. Le RU a indiqué que des subventions étaient disponibles en Écosse pour améliorer l'efficacité en chauffage des bâtiments.

6.64 Le Conseil a décidé de ne pas lancer d'audit sur l'énergie du bâtiment du siège pour le moment.

g) Eclairage pour le quatrième cycle de reporting

(i) Séance spéciale: Présentation des analyses des facteurs de stress menées par les Parties/juridictions

6.65 La Présidente par intérim a rappelé au Conseil qu'en réponse aux recommandations du Groupe d'examen des IP / APR et du Comité de pilotage pour la Séance spéciale thématique (SST) sur le changement climatique de 2023 lors de sa session annuelle de 2024, [CNL\(24\)88rev](#), il avait discuté si une analyse objective, factuelle, des menaces et des pressions clés (les facteurs de stress) vis-à-vis du saumon atlantique sauvage

rencontrées dans chaque juridiction sous l'égide de l'OCSAN fournirait une base solide pour des actions dans le cadre du quatrième cycle de reporting, afin de s'attaquer aux obstacles présentant le plus grand risque pour la restauration et la conservation du saumon.

6.66 La Présidente par intérim a insisté sur le fait que les analyses des facteurs de stress ne feraient pas partie du prochain cycle de reporting mais l'éclaireraient et que le Conseil avait décidé que les Parties / juridictions mèneraient une analyse des facteurs de stress et transmettraient chacune un document à l'OCSAN pour le 30 avril 2025. Elle a aussi indiqué que le Conseil avait décidé de tenir une Séance spéciale lors de laquelle les Parties / juridictions mettraient en commun les résultats de leurs analyses sous forme de présentations courtes, en rafale.

6.67 Chacune des Parties / juridictions a donné une courte présentation de leur analyse des facteurs de stress et les discussions tenues lors de la Séance spéciale se trouvent dans l'Annexe 11.

(ii) Séance spéciale: Réussites dans les actions de gestion du saumon atlantique sauvage du troisième cycle de reporting

6.68 Eu égard aux décisions prises sur la préparation d'un quatrième cycle de reporting dans lequel les actions seront tirées des facteurs de stress, le Royaume-Uni avait exprimé son souhait de conserver une Séance spéciale en 2025 sur le cycle de reporting afin de partager les actions menées par les Parties / juridictions qui ont été considérées comme des succès pour le saumon atlantique sauvage. Les autres Parties avaient été d'accord quant à l'utilité de celle-ci pour planifier le quatrième cycle de reporting. Le Conseil avait accepté.

6.69 En raison de la longueur des Séances spéciales sur les facteurs de stress et le quatrième cycle de reporting, il n'a pas été possible de tenir cette troisième Séance spéciale du Conseil. La Présidente par intérim a renvoyé les délégués vers les auteurs des documents et a proposé de leur parler personnellement s'il y avait des questions.

h) Le quatrième cycle de reporting

(ii) Séance spéciale: Compte rendu du Groupe de travail sur le futur reporting

6.70 En plus d'avoir adopté 'L'Avenir de l'OCSAN – une Stratégie sur dix ans', [CNL\(24\)71rev](#), qui contient les actions de haut niveau de l'OCSAN en un document unique, lors de sa session annuelle de 2024, [CNL\(24\)88rev](#), le Conseil a pris les décisions suivantes:

- de conduire un quatrième cycle de reporting;
- de créer un Groupe de travail sur le futur reporting (WGFR) pour entreprendre une révision du processus; et
- d'adopter le 'Mandat pour un Groupe de travail sur le futur reporting', [CNL\(24\)63](#).

6.71 La Présidente par intérim a rappelé au Conseil que le WGFR s'était réuni en novembre 2024 et avait développé une série de propositions pour un quatrième cycle de reporting qui ont été, en ligne avec son mandat, discutées par le WGFR lors de sa réunion de mars 2025. Les modifications proposées par le WGFR ont ensuite été discutées par le WGFR lors de sa seconde réunion fin avril 2025.

6.72 Les discussions ayant eu lieu pendant la Séance spéciale se trouvent en Annexe 12.

(ii) Décisions sur le quatrième cycle de reporting

- 6.73 La Présidente par intérim a indiqué que ce point permet la prise de décisions sur le quatrième cycle de reporting eu égard à la Séance spéciale lors de laquelle le contenu proposé, les délais et le calendrier pour le quatrième cycle de reporting avaient été discutés.
- 6.74 La Présidente par intérim a indiqué que, lors des discussions en Séance spéciale, une ONG avait fait part de sa préoccupation concernant l'ambition de l'Objectif Stratégique de l'OCSAN étant donné qu'il visait à ralentir le déclin du saumon plutôt qu'à le faire cesser et l'inverser.
- 6.75 Plusieurs membres du Conseil ont fait remarquer que l'Objectif Stratégique n'existe pas isolé mais devrait être lu en conjonction avec les déclarations sur la Vision et la Mission de l'OCSAN et que l'intention de l'Objectif Stratégique de l'OCSAN est de faire cesser et inverser le déclin mais qu'il n'est pas évident que cela soit possible d'ici 2033.
- 6.76 La Présidente par intérim a avancé plusieurs options, parmi lesquelles le maintien du texte adopté en 2024, tout en reconnaissant que l'Objectif Stratégique est une pierre angulaire vers la réalisation des ambitieuses Vision et Mission de l'OCSAN. Elle a proposé que toute utilisation de l'Objectif Stratégique en communication soit toujours faite conjointement avec la Vision et la Mission de l'OCSAN.
- 6.77 Le Canada, l'UE et les États-Unis ont soutenu cette façon d'avancer.
- 6.78 Les ONGs ont soulevé plusieurs préoccupations quant au manque d'ambition, soulignant que les mots sont importants, et ils ont proposé un langage plus fort dans l'Objectif Stratégique ce que le Conseil a rejeté. Les ONGs ont indiqué que la conservation du saumon est autant un défi pour les ONGs que pour les Parties.
- 6.79 Les RIPAs ont fait part de leur accord avec le Canada et les États-Unis mais ils ont pris acte du peu de succès obtenu à ce stade dans le ralentissement du déclin du saumon.
- 6.80 La Présidente par intérim s'est réjouie des interventions faites par les Observateurs accrédités et a déclaré que l'OCSAN chercherait à tenir compte de leurs préoccupations visant à garantir une communication adéquate sur le mauvais état du saumon atlantique sauvage. A cet effet, elle a demandé au Conseil s'il pouvait soutenir une proposition non pas de changer le texte de l'Objectif Stratégique mais que lorsqu'il y est fait référence il soit bien encadré par la Vision et la Mission de l'OCSAN, pour s'assurer que l'ambition de l'OCSAN soit claire. Le Conseil a accepté.
- 6.81 La Présidente par intérim a fait passer le Conseil à l'examen des recommandations du Groupe de travail sur le futur reporting.
- 6.82 Le Conseil a décidé que le quatrième cycle de reporting, voir CNL(25)55, serait basé sur:
- l'utilisation de métriques appelés les ' Indicateurs de performance' (PIs), rapportés annuellement, à partir de 2027, par chaque Partie / juridiction sous les trois thématiques de l'OCSAN; et
 - un 'Rapport d'engagements de conservation' individuel développé par chaque Partie / juridiction, à rendre annuellement, à partir de 2027, et passé en revue tous les deux ans, à partir de 2028, consistant en: leurs trois facteurs de stress ayant la priorité la plus élevée (sauf justification par ailleurs) tels qu'identifiés dans leur analyse de facteurs de stress et un minimum d'une et maximum de trois actions par facteur de stress visant à répondre à ces facteurs de stress.

6.83 Le Conseil a décidé que:

- chaque action associée à chaque facteur de stress proposée dans les Rapports d'engagements de conservation devait avoir un point de départ, afin de mesurer ses progrès; et
- chaque facteur de stress proposé dans les Rapports d'engagements de conservation devait aussi avoir un point de départ, afin de mesurer ses progrès.

6.84 Le Conseil a aussi décidé de:

- charger le Secrétariat de travailler avec un développeur à créer des templates en ligne pour les PIs et les CCRs, en recourant aux fonds existant dans le budget sous 'consultants';
- recevoir une recommandation en 2031 de la part du Groupe d'examen des CCR sur la façon de mener:
 - une évaluation des succès du quatrième cycle de reporting en 2032 pour documenter un éventuel cinquième cycle de reporting;
 - une évaluation du succès obtenu par chaque Partie / juridiction en 2033 dans la réalisation de chaque résultat tangible pour soutenir l'Objectif Stratégique de l'OCSAN; et
 - une Séance spéciale d'une journée complète lors de la session annuelle de 2033 pour discuter du succès de la Stratégie sur dix ans de l'OCSAN dans la réalisation de son Objectif Stratégique et de l'avancement des progrès vers la réalisation des Résolutions, Accords et Directives de l'OCSAN;
- un 'Mandat pour le Groupe d'examen des Rapports d'engagements de conservation, [CNL\(25\)56](#); et
- le 'Calendrier pour le quatrième cycle de reporting', [CNL\(25\)57](#).

7. Conservation, restauration, accroissement et gestion rationnelle du Saumon atlantique dans le cadre de l'approche préventive

a) Nouvelles opportunités ou opportunités naissantes pour, ou menaces contre, la conservation et la gestion du saumon

7.1 Le Président du Groupe de travail sur le saumon de l'Atlantique nord (WGNAS), Alan Walker (RU), a présenté l'avis pertinent pour ce point de l'ordre du jour. La présentation est disponible en tant que document [CNL\(25\)61](#).

b) Le saumon rose dans la zone de la Convention de l'OCSAN

7.2 La Présidente par intérim a indiqué qu'en 2022, le Président d'alors avait fait part de sa préoccupation concernant le niveau important des entrées de saumon rose dans de nombreuses rivières de l'Atlantique. Elle a indiqué en outre que le Conseil avait adopté une 'Déclaration du Conseil concernant le saumon rose, *Oncorhynchus gorbuscha*, dans la zone de la Convention de l'OCSAN', [CNL\(22\)47](#), qui comprenait un accord pour créer un Groupe de travail permanent de l'OCSAN sur le saumon rose (PSWG). Elle a porté à la connaissance du Conseil qu'un 'Mandat du Groupe de travail sur le saumon rose' révisé, [CNL\(24\)64](#), avait été adopté en 2024.

7.3 La Présidente par intérim a indiqué que la prochaine réunion du Groupe de travail aurait lieu en juillet 2025.

c) Pêcherie de saumons à St Pierre et Miquelon – Gestion et Échantillonnage

7.4 La Présidente par intérim a indiqué que tant le Conseil que la Commission Nord-Américaine étaient préoccupés par les captures de saumon à Saint-Pierre et Miquelon qui, bien que faibles, intervenaient à un moment où il y avait de sérieuses préoccupations sur l'abondance des stocks nord-américains et où des restrictions de captures ont été mises en place dans toute la zone de la Commission Nord-Américaine.

7.5 La Présidente par intérim a indiqué que la France (pour Saint-Pierre et Miquelon) avait transmis une déclaration d'ouverture écrite et le rapport 'Gestion et échantillonnage de la pêcherie de saumon à Saint-Pierre et Miquelon', [CNL\(25\)27](#). Le rapport sur la pêcherie avait été examiné lors de la session de la Commission Nord-Américaine et il n'y a pas eu d'autres commentaires à la session du Conseil.

d) Rapports des trois Commissions régionales concernant leurs activités de conservation

7.6 Les activités des trois Commissions ont été rapportées au Conseil par leurs Présidents.

8. Divers

8.1 Afin de rappeler au Conseil ce qui avait été réalisé en faveur du saumon lors de la session annuelle de 2025, avant de débattre du compte rendu de cette session, la Présidente par intérim a de nouveau parlé au Conseil de sa Stratégie et de son Plan d'action et elle a passé en revue le Plan d'action de haut niveau pour montrer les progrès significatifs réalisés sur l'ensemble des cinq objectifs de l'OCSAN. Elle a aussi donné un aperçu des sujets qui seraient à examiner lors de la session annuelle de 2026 sous chacun des objectifs.

9. Date et lieu de la prochaine session

9.1 Le Conseil a décidé de tenir sa quarante-troisième session annuelle les 2 – 5 juin 2026 à Aviemore, Ecosse.

10. Communiqué de presse

10.1 Le Conseil a adopté un Communiqué de presse, [CNL\(25\)60](#).

10.2 Le Conseil a décidé de demander au Secrétariat de préparer les Communiqués de presse des sessions annuelles de l'OCSAN à partir de 2026 et à la suite. L'accord du Conseil ne serait pas requis mais le Communiqué de presse de 2025 serait utilisé comme modèle et les messages devraient être en ligne avec la stratégie de communication et de sensibilisation.

11. Compte rendu de la session

11.1 Le Conseil a adopté son compte rendu de session.

12. Clôture de la session

12.1 La Présidente par intérim a remercié les participants pour leurs contributions et elle a clos la session.

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Welcoming Address by Colin Faulkner, Deputy Director for International Fisheries & Trade, Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs

Madam President, Heads of Delegation, national representatives, esteemed colleagues, and representatives of Non-Governmental Organizations and Indigenous Peoples:

On behalf of the UK Government, it is a great honour to welcome you all to Cardiff for the 42nd Annual Meeting of NASCO – a meeting that comes at a time of significant change for the Organization. While this is Emma’s final meeting as the Secretary of NASCO, she leaves the Organization in a strong state and her effort in driving forward the NASCO strategy will have enduring benefits for the conservation of wild Atlantic salmon. In that regard, I’d also like to welcome Cathal Gallagher, who will be stepping in to the role of Secretary in October.

I’d also like to extend a special welcome to the Indigenous Peoples’ representatives and institutions who are attending NASCO as observers for the first time, and to the new NGOs participating in this year’s meeting.

I’d like to thank the NASCO Secretariat team and my colleagues here in the UK delegation for all the work that has gone on behind the scenes to get us here. We’ve already experienced Welsh Government’s generous hospitality in last night’s reception and I know NRW have been working hard to arrange some really interesting salmon tours later in the week. The UK is proud to host this year’s meeting and to gather here in common purpose—as nations of the North Atlantic—united by our shared commitment to the conservation and restoration of wild Atlantic salmon.

Last summer, in his first week in the role, our new Secretary of State for environment set out five key priorities for the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs. Two of those priorities speak directly to the future of wild salmon: the first is to clean up our rivers, lakes and seas; the second is to ensure nature’s recovery. These priorities reflect not just national ambition, but a recognition that healthy ecosystems are the key foundation for thriving species—and that we cannot afford further loss.

Historically, both commercial and recreational salmon fishing have been a key part of the UK’s heritage and tradition. Now, there is almost no commercial salmon fishing in the UK. While our recreational fisheries continue to offer social, economic, and cultural value, almost all salmon caught are now released, alive, to protect depleted stocks. But if salmon are to have a sustainable future in our waters, we must go further and improve the environment in which salmon live. And critically, we must do this together.

As you are all aware the pressures facing wild Atlantic salmon are complex and multifaceted. Salmon originate in freshwater but migrate through estuarine and marine environments and across international boundaries. Their lifecycle is deeply impacted by climate change, habitat loss, pollution, and barriers to migration. No one country can tackle these challenges alone.

That is why NASCO matters. It provides the international platform that this iconic species so urgently needs—bringing together government, scientific institutions, and civil society to share responsibility and drive co-ordinated action. The UK remains fully committed to NASCO’s work and mission, and we are proud of the role NASCO continues to play in advancing conservation across borders.

To give just two examples of that impact:

- NASCO's recently agreed ten-year strategy, which sets a shared vision to halt the decline of Atlantic salmon. The accompanying action plan will keep parties focussed on the most impactful actions to address the range of threats to Atlantic salmon's survival.
- NASCO's guidance on setting conservation limits has underpinned the UK's move to near-universal catch and release in our recreational fisheries—aligning policy with science and long-term sustainability.

But, as NASCO's new strategy rightly recognises, we are in the midst of a crisis. Wild Atlantic salmon populations are declining, and the pace of change must now accelerate. We need to work smarter, faster, and together.

That means:

- Increasing NASCO's outreach and partnership working to raise the profile of salmon more widely, to achieve more action, on the ground;
- Preparing for the Fourth Reporting Cycle, which will keep the parties focussed on meaningful domestic delivery action;
- Improving data on salmon bycatch to assess and address its impact on salmon at sea.

I would also like to commend the efforts of all parties in completing national stressor analyses. These analyses will be essential in identifying priority actions to recover wild stocks.

Importantly, the recovery of wild Atlantic salmon is not a task for governments alone. Non-Governmental Organizations bring extraordinary expertise, dedication, and on-the-ground capacity. Whether through scientific research, community engagement, or direct conservation work, their role is indispensable. It is only by working in close partnership—governments, scientists, NGOs and local communities—that we will achieve NASCO's goal: to halt the decline of wild salmon and demonstrate that restoration is possible by 2034.

As we focus on wild salmon this week, we must also remain aware of the broader context in which we operate. NASCO is not just a treaty organization—it is a Regional Fisheries Management Organization (RFMO), and part of a wider global framework of fisheries governance. NASCO's a leader in looking beyond fisheries to take an ecosystem-based approach to salmon management. Over the course of this week I'd like to challenge you to think more about NASCO's interactions with other RFMOs – what could you share, what could you learn and what do you need from others?

Looking beyond the world of fisheries, next week, the UN Ocean Conference will highlight the urgency of that action to protect and restore marine ecosystems worldwide. These steps complement your work here at NASCO, reinforcing the international effort to protect marine ecosystems which will ultimately benefit migrating salmon stocks.

With these thoughts in mind, I want us to continue to embrace the opportunity—and the responsibility—to advance the conservation of wild Atlantic salmon. By demonstrating what ambitious, science-based co-operation can achieve for salmon, we can also offer a model for how RFMOs can contribute to the protection of the wider marine environment. Your work here is crucial to support this iconic species, but it also supports a healthier, more resilient ocean—leaving it in a better state for future generations.

With that, I wish everyone a fruitful week of dialogue and co-operation here in Cardiff. I am confident that the goodwill and commitment of those present can only lead to driving further meaningful action.

Welcoming Address by Rob Floyd, Welsh Government

Madam vice President, Heads of Delegation, national representatives, esteemed colleagues, and representatives of Non-Governmental Organizations and Indigenous Peoples:

Bore da pawb, croeso i gymru, croeso i gaerdydd; Good morning all, welcome to Wales, welcome to Cardiff.

My name is Rob Floyd, I'm head of Aquaculture, Freshwater and Migratory Fisheries policy in the Welsh Government, and on behalf of Welsh Government it is my privilege to be able to welcome you here to Cardiff, our small but perfectly formed Capital of this proud nation, and you may be able to guess from my accent and terrible attempt at Welsh, my adopted home.

After yesterday's sunshine we have managed to arrange some more traditional Welsh weather this morning but hopefully it should clear up by lunch.

Wales is a proud Celtic nation and those of you who were in Westport last year will no doubt see a number of similarities around the cultural importance of salmon, hopefully we will hear more about this tomorrow when the Deputy First Minister will be joining us to make a short address before dinner.

In the UK we have devolved governments, with many of the decisions which impact on the lives of our citizens being taken closer to them, and those devolved areas include fisheries and environment which here in Wales are the responsibility of Welsh Government.

The Welsh Government acknowledges the twin climate and nature emergencies, and that urgent action must be taken. You heard yesterday about our unique legislative framework within which we work, with the groundbreaking Wellbeing of Future Generations Act embedding sustainable development at the heart of everything we do. The Act also requires us to be globally responsible, and I can't think of a better example than the management of our shared resources. Yesterday saw the introduction of the Nature Positive Bill, further demonstrating this Government's commitment to restoring nature.

We also heard yesterday about the plight of salmon here in Wales, and the actions underway to try and halt and then reverse that decline.

We heard in a powerful call to action from Steve Ormerod the importance of collaboration if we are to be successful in our shared mission to ensure salmon for future generations, and it is with that spirit of collaboration in an increasingly fractured world we approach this week.

Now onto the thank yous, firstly I want to express Welsh Government's thanks to all those who made last night's reception possible, in particular I want to thank Cardiff University and Professor Monjur Mourshed, Dean of sustainability, for hosting us and the staff and students from both Swansea and Cardiff universities for the displays of the fascinating work which is taking place. I also want to thank both Andy Schofield and Jose Constantino for their work in delivering last night as well as Professor Steve Ormerod and Ceri Davies of Natural Resources Wales for their informative speeches and of course Ben Willson for his excellent compering skills.

I also want to thank the UK Government for hosting this week, and in particular Charlotte Beardwell for all of her tireless work in making this week happen.

I want to thank Ben and team who will be delivering the two salmon tours this year. And the various Defra and NRW staff who are working behind the scenes this week.

Finally, I want to thank the Secretariat for their efforts as always, and of course pay tribute to Emma for all of her work over the years, I can't think of a better location for your final Annual Meeting, but then I may be biased.

Diolch

Opening Statement made by the Acting President of NASCO

Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen.

My name is Ruth Allin. I am speaking as the Acting President of NASCO. It is my great pleasure to welcome you to the Forty-Second Annual Meeting of NASCO. I not only welcome the people here in this room, but I would like to welcome our virtual delegates, especially those who are attending in the more inconvenient time zones.

Before formally opening the meeting, I would like to acknowledge and thank the United Kingdom and the Welsh Governments for hosting this year's meeting. On that note, I would like to introduce Colin Faulkner, Deputy Director of Defra, the Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs, who will be addressing us on behalf of the UK Government, and who will be followed by Rob Floyd who is speaking on behalf of the Welsh Government.

Gentlemen, thank you very much for giving your opening addresses, I'd now like to make the President's Opening Statement.

I would like to start by thanking the organizing team comprising individuals from Defra, the Welsh Government, Natural Resources Wales and the NASCO Secretariat for all the work they've put in to bring you this year's Annual Meeting. The beautiful city of Cardiff is a very appropriate place to hold a meeting about salmon. The River Taff rises in the Brecon Beacons as two rivers, the Taf Fechan ('little Taff') and the Taf Fawr ('great Taff') before becoming one just north of Merthyr Tydfil and emptying into the Severn Estuary at Cardiff. The industrial history of the area has seen many changes, on and to the river Taff, from the world's oldest known iron railway bridge, built in the 18th century, to the diversion of the river within Cardiff in the 19th century and most recently the construction of the Cardiff Bay Barrage in the 20th century. As you can imagine from its history, the Taff used to be heavily polluted by industry along its banks but happily in recent years the water quality has improved and as we progress through the 21st century it is becoming one of the best rivers for salmon and trout in Wales. Work to improve connectivity and create fish passes has seen salmon spawning in the upper reaches of the Taff in the last decade, for the first time in 200 years.

We are all too aware of the significant impact people have had on Atlantic salmon through history, but, as salmon become less abundant, we must not forget the connection between people and this 'King of Fish'. Recognising this connection, I am delighted to be able to open the first NASCO Annual Meeting with Indigenous Peoples' representatives and institutions – IPRI's for short – as Accredited Observers. I would like to extend a warm welcome to the four IPRI's that are at this meeting and look forward seeing more IPRI's at NASCO, in future years.

I'd also like to extend a warm welcome to the 22 NGOs that are represented here as Accredited Observers.

We have a very full schedule for our meeting this year, and I would like to highlight some of the most significant items of business that we can look forward to.

Recap on NASCO Strategy & Action Plan

Last year we agreed NASCO's new Strategy and Action Plan, so this year our focus is on delivering actions that will progress each of NASCO's five objectives, with a view to halting the decline of salmon and showing that restoration is possible, by 2034.

Stressor analysis

NASCO's first objective is to ensure the best evidence based information is compiled and accessible to address the critical challenges and threats to north Atlantic salmon.

A robust understanding of the challenges and threats facing Atlantic salmon, at the domestic level, is critical to underpin Parties and jurisdictions' own delivery work. This is why each Party and jurisdiction has recently undertaken its own stressor analysis, which will be presented at Wednesday's Special Session. These analyses will provide the basis for Parties' domestic actions under the fourth reporting cycle, guiding resource to the actions that will make the biggest difference to wild salmon. During this Special Session, I encourage all delegates to get involved, ask questions, and contribute to informing the actions that Parties and jurisdiction will take, to help salmon.

Fourth Reporting Cycle

NASCO's third objective is to actively promote sustainable conservation and management practices by sharing best practice and holding Parties and jurisdictions accountable in implementing NASCO recommendation and guidance.

The NASCO planning and reporting framework – referred to as the reporting cycle – is key to ensuring domestic accountability. We will hear from the Working Group on Future Reporting about the new and exciting plans for NASCO's fourth reporting cycle. The Group has developed recommendations for a streamlined, yet more effective, planning and reporting system, focussing actions where they will make the biggest difference. This approach is central to NASCO achieving its strategic Goal – *'to slow the decline of wild Atlantic salmon populations and demonstrate that restoration is possible'*.

We will hear from Dan Kircheis, the Chair of the Working Group, as he presents the Group's recommendations at Wednesday's Special Session. Again, please, prepare your questions and comments and be ready to participate fully in Wednesday's Special Session.

Time permitting, we will also have a final Special Session on successful actions, which could inform the actions that Parties will take, under the fourth reporting cycle.

While the reporting cycle focusses on domestic action, international mixed-stock fisheries are managed through the Commissions. In each of the Commissions, there will again be an opportunity to present updates. This includes justification for the continued prosecution of mixed stock fisheries– a change from earlier years, in recognition of the increasing scale of the salmon conservation challenge.

I'd like to highlight some good news from the North-East Atlantic Commission. After years of work to eradicate *G. salaris*, Norway has reported that only six of the original 54 infected watercourses still have *G. salaris* present. The infections are contained in just one region and 2025 sees the start of a plan to complete the eradication of this parasite over a four-year period. That really is a significant achievement and very important for the future of Atlantic salmon in that Commission area.

Updating guidelines

You may have noticed that I skipped over NASCO's second objective which is to ensure that guidance reflecting best management practices is produced and readily available to those seeking to protect wild Atlantic salmon.

Council agreed last year that all NASCO's Resolutions, Agreements and Guidelines should be reviewed and updated and set out a rolling programme of work to do so. This year the Stocking Guidelines Working Group will present another two sets of guidelines compiled by experts

from across the Parties, one on stock rebuilding programmes and one on gene banking. Council will also have the opportunity to review proposed Terms of Reference for the Working Groups on habitats, aquaculture and fisheries and confirm when each will be set up.

NASCO's fourth objective is to raise awareness and foster broad collaborative efforts with other international organizations and civil society to encourage decision makers, the public, private sector and the scientific community to work towards solutions that overcome the challenges that wild Atlantic salmon face.

The Wild Atlantic Salmon Atlas, which brings together domestic salmon data to give a global picture, will have its official launch at this meeting. Look out for the accompanying cake, as it truly is a celebration of collaboration, with input from every single Party and jurisdiction! This Atlas will be a valuable outreach tool, which leads me to the development of a new communications and outreach strategy for NASCO. Our task for this meeting will be to decide where NASCO should focus its outreach efforts and how much money should be set aside for undertaking this work.

NASCO's final objective is about organizational excellence. A lot of work has been done inter-sessionally by the Finance and Admin committee to modernise the terms and conditions for the Secretariat staff and these updated Terms and Conditions have been tabled for agreement at Council. Due the tight financial positions that most governments find themselves in Council will also have make some tough decisions about the organization's budget and priorities.

Wider events

But it's not all work. We have already enjoyed some Welsh hospitality at yesterday's drinks reception and can look forward to the Annual Meeting Dinner tomorrow evening, at which we will welcome the Welsh Deputy First Minister as our guest speaker. We will also be entertained before the meal by the Llantrisant Male Voice Choir, one of the oldest traditional Welsh choirs, so please be sure not to miss that. On Friday, delegates have the opportunity to leave dry land to take a boat tour of Cardiff Bay, visiting the barrage and fish pass and on Saturday there is an optional salmon tour to the Brecon Beacons National Park.

So, these are just a few of the business and social highlights of the coming days. I am looking forward to lots of lively discussion and debate.

Thanks

As Acting President of NASCO I know how much work goes on for the many months leading up to a meeting. As I said earlier, several people from Defra, Natural Resources Wales and the Welsh Government have been working with the NASCO Secretariat to make this meeting a success, and on behalf of NASCO, I would like to thank all of you again for the time and hard work that you have contributed. Special thanks go to Charlotte Beardwell for all her organizational work and Ben Wilson for arranging the salmon tours.

Conclusion

As usual, I would like to conclude my opening remarks with a reminder of why we are all here. NASCO's Strategic Goal is *'to prioritise and drive actions necessary to slow the decline of wild Atlantic salmon populations and demonstrate that restoration is possible – by 2034.'* And I would ask you to keep our Goal at the forefront of your mind, throughout the week. I am optimistic that we can speed our progress towards achieving that Goal, with the decisions taken and actions agreed at this meeting.

Thank you.

Opening Statements Submitted by the Parties

Opening Statement to Council submitted by Canada

Madame President, Heads of Delegations, Distinguished Delegates, and Observers:

Canada is pleased to be joining fellow delegates to the 42nd Annual Meeting of NASCO in Cardiff, Wales. We are grateful for the hospitality of our host and look forward to seeing a bit of the city and its surroundings during the week and in the tours after our meetings conclude.

For Canada, the past several years have been marked by intensive strategic planning initiatives for Atlantic salmon: domestically, through its development of a national conservation strategy for Atlantic salmon; and internationally, through the development of the NASCO Strategic Plan. At this year's annual meeting, we look forward to the adoption of the full Action Plan, as well as a new reporting framework.

Canada published its National Strategy to Ensure the Future of Atlantic Salmon in March 2025. The Strategy sets out a vision for the next 12 years, to "create the conditions necessary for Atlantic salmon and the Atlantic salmon community to thrive". Canada worked to build alignment between its domestic Strategy and the resolutions, agreements, and guidelines of NASCO. Canada now looks forward to shifting its efforts for Atlantic salmon from this planning phase towards implementation and the achievement of results. For Canada, our actions will recognize the unequivocal impacts of climate change on Atlantic salmon and its habitat.

Canada also emphasizes the critical importance of continuing to improve Indigenous Peoples' engagement in NASCO. Building on last year's adoption of the new Observer rules, we are glad to see many Indigenous groups have been accredited since then and are here with us in this newly defined role to share their perspectives and knowledge to inform our critical work to protect and restore Wild Atlantic Salmon.

Canada also appreciates Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland) for their continued efforts to manage the mixed-stock fishery at West Greenland. We are glad to see improvements in quota harvest management and reporting and look forward to learning more about the changes put in place last year which would inform the renegotiation of the regulatory measure next year.

Similarly, we value France's (in respect of St. Pierre and Miquelon) participation and collaboration on scientific sampling and data exchange. While progress has been made, including steps toward improving monitoring and compliance, challenges remain. The continued harvest of Canadian-origin salmon adds pressure to already vulnerable stocks. We encourage France to strengthen its management measures and renew our call for France to join NASCO as a member to enhance co-operative conservation efforts.

We also would like to thank Dr Emma Hatfield for her relentless work and support during her tenure as NASCO Secretary in a time of transition and modernisation. We also welcome Dr Cathal Gallagher, who is no stranger to NASCO, and wish him great success as the new NASCO Secretary.

Finally, we wish all delegates a productive and successful meeting as we collectively work to safeguard the future of Atlantic salmon.

Opening Statement to Council Submitted by Denmark (in Respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland)

Madam President, Madam Secretary, Ladies and Gentlemen, Distinguished Delegates,

Greenland and the Faroe Islands are pleased to participate in the 42nd Annual Meeting of NASCO here in Cardiff. Thank you to our gracious Welsh hosts for their warm hospitality and arranging the Annual Meeting in such a beautiful area of the UK.

We extend our heartfelt thanks to the NASCO Secretariat for their tireless work in organizing this meeting, and we especially want to extend our appreciation to Emma for all of her support and contributions to NASCO in her time as Secretary. We wish you all the best for your future endeavours.

Last year, NASCO adopted a 10-year strategy and a high-level action plan. This year, we welcome the proposed next steps, including the development of an outreach strategy. This is a significant move toward enhancing NASCO's impact and establishing it as the central forum for all matters concerning Atlantic salmon.

It is crucial that knowledge about the state of salmon and the need for action extends beyond the NASCO and salmon communities. If we are to realise our shared vision, outreach efforts must be prioritised – and they are of great importance to us.

On the same note, we look forward to beginning the Fourth Reporting Cycle. Considerable work has been undertaken by both the WGFR and the Secretariat to develop the framework and templates for this cycle. Having clear baselines and metrics to measure the development of salmon abundance, is in line with NASCO's strategic 10-year goal of *slowing the decline of wild Atlantic salmon populations and demonstrate that restoration is possible*.

Between us, there is only one (known) salmon river – The Kapisillit River in Greenland. We look forward to increasing our focus on the Kapisillit River, to make impactful management and habitat actions, that will have a positive effect on the long-term sustainability of our endemic salmon.

We also recognize the importance of the stressor analysis, which highlights the significant challenges all parties face in reversing the decline of Atlantic salmon populations. These analyses underscore the urgency and complexity of our shared mission.

Finally, we look forward to welcoming Indigenous Peoples' representatives and institutions into NASCO. We look forward to engaging and sharing knowledge in our common pursuit to restore Atlantic salmon.

Thank you.

Opening statement to Council Submitted by the European Union

Ms President, Mrs Secretary, Distinguished Delegates, Observers, Ladies and Gentlemen:

The European Union is delighted to participate at the 42nd Annual Meeting of NASCO in this historic town of Cardiff, and we would like to thank the Secretariat and the United Kingdom for all the hard work that went into the preparation of this meeting.

Meeting in Cardiff will help us to discuss and agree on important items that we have ahead of us in the agenda, including the special session on stressor analyses and the adoption of the next Reporting Cycle, an important instrument to slow the decline of wild Atlantic Salmon.

In addition, the new Wild Atlantic Salmon Atlas will be a valuable tool to disseminate the situation of salmon in our rivers and we also look forward to receiving an update of the situation of Pink Salmon in the Convention area. And finally, initial discussions on the next Regulatory Measure concerning the fishery in West Greenland will need to promote the long-term conservation of the stocks.

In this regard, the EU is looking forward to a fruitful co-operation with all the Parties during this meeting, and we are looking forward to deciding on issues that will reinforce the conservation of wild Atlantic Salmon.

Opening Statement to Council Submitted by Iceland

It gives us great pleasure to attend the 42nd Annual Meeting of NASCO in the beautiful city of Cardiff, the capital of Wales. This is the second Annual Meeting for Iceland since re-joining NASCO. We look forward to the work ahead and hope to benefit from and contribute to, the important task of NASCO in supporting the sustainability of wild salmon stocks.

Last year we used this opportunity to share some of the current issues concerning the stock status and potential threats to Atlantic salmon in Iceland. These concerns remain the same. We also informed you about legislative work on strengthening the regulatory framework for aquaculture in Iceland. Unfortunately, the proposed bill did not advance but under a new minister it will be reintroduced next autumn. The changes involved are important and they will bring much needed regulatory enforcements.

Revision is also planned on the legal framework for wild salmon in Iceland. The same approach will be applied for this work, as was applied in the case of aquaculture framework mentioned earlier. A special request will be made to the Icelandic National Audit Office to identify strengths and weaknesses under the current legal framework, identifying the optional roles of different governmental agencies and advising how we can improve the legal framework and enhance prospects of wild salmon in Iceland.

Madam President, we want to thank you and the NASCO Secretariat for the efficient preparation of this meeting. We would also like to use this opportunity to thank the outgoing NASCO Secretary, Dr Emma Hatfield, for her excellent work and commitment for this organization for the last 8 years. We also want to welcome Dr Cathal Gallagher as he takes on the post as a new Secretary later this year. We expect a lot from him and hope he will do the best of both worlds, preserving important principles in the work of NASCO, as well as introducing his own visions in this regard.

Finally, we want to thank our Welsh and UK hosts for their hospitality and for providing these excellent meeting facilities. We wish us all a fruitful Annual Meeting.

Opening Statement to Council Submitted by Norway

Ms. President, Madam Secretary, distinguished Delegates, Observers, Ladies and Gentlemen, Norway is pleased to participate in the Forty-Second Annual Meeting of NASCO. It is, as always, a pleasure to meet all delegates in person. First and foremost, we extend our sincere gratitude to the United Kingdom for hosting this meeting in Cardiff. We look forward to productive discussions in the days ahead and are confident in the strong commitment of all Parties to identify effective solutions to secure the future of wild Atlantic salmon.

The situation for Norwegian wild Atlantic salmon in 2024 was critical. The pre-fishery abundance reached an all-time low, and more than one-third of rivers had no harvestable surplus. In response to the poor returns, many important rivers and some coastal areas were closed to fishing at short notice, and the sea salmon fishery also dropped to historic lows. If the harvestable surplus this season and in the coming years remains at such low levels, it will be difficult to sustain a viable salmon fishery.

The Tana River system exemplifies the seriousness of this situation. Salmon populations there have been in sharp decline for several years. The most recent report from the Tana Monitoring and Research Group confirms that the Tana stocks are at an all-time low. In May 2024, following more than three years of bilateral negotiations, new fishing regulations for the Tana River entered into force. Nevertheless, forecasts for the 2025 run remain poor, and salmon fishing will not be permitted in the Tana this season. Fisheries in the Tana Fjord and adjacent coastal areas have remained closed since 2021.

In 2023, over 360,000 invasive pink salmon were removed from Norwegian waters, primarily through targeted trapping and direct measures in rivers. More than 40 traps were installed in the most affected watercourses in Finnmark, in addition to efforts in numerous smaller rivers. We again expect a large influx of pink salmon this summer and are planning to install traps in even more rivers. Due to the status of many salmon stocks, particularly in North-Eastern Norway, the mixed-stock sea salmon fishery has been closed in most areas.

Norway remains committed to close co-operation with all Parties to address the growing threat posed by pink salmon to native Atlantic salmon across the North Atlantic. Through a co-ordinated response, we believe that we still can prevent the establishment of pink salmon populations in rivers across Norway and beyond.

Sea lice and escaped farmed salmon continue to be the most serious human-induced threats to wild salmon in Norway. We are committed to strengthening monitoring systems, improving sea lice control, and enhancing preparedness to manage escape events. We recognize that addressing the challenges at the interface between aquaculture and wild salmon demands both robust national measures and strong international co-operation. A recently proposed White Paper on aquaculture suggests major regulatory reforms. A key proposal is to replace the current traffic light system with a new framework based on sea lice quotas. The objective is to create a more accurate and predictable system that incentivizes technological innovation and reduces environmental impacts. The Norwegian Parliament will vote on the proposed changes later this month.

The accelerating impacts of climate change further underscore the urgency of reducing other anthropogenic pressures on wild salmon. Climate change is altering the conditions of rivers, estuaries, and oceans, while amplifying the effects of existing threats. The climate crisis adds a critical layer of urgency to our efforts. As Atlantic salmon face mounting pressures in a

rapidly changing environment, NASCO's work is more vital than ever. Just as the salmon must adapt, so must we.

Finally, the Norwegian delegation would like to thank the NASCO Secretariat for their tireless efforts in preparing this meeting. Organising these annual meetings is no small task, and your dedication is deeply appreciated. We also extend our thanks to our Welsh hosts and the people of Cardiff for their warm hospitality. We look forward to a constructive dialogue and continued collaboration to protect and restore wild Atlantic salmon across the North Atlantic.

Opening Statement to Council Submitted by the Russian Federation

Madam President, Distinguished Delegates, Observers, Ladies and Gentlemen!

I am pleased on behalf of the Russian Delegation and the Federal Agency for Fisheries, representing the Russian Government to NASCO, to greet all participants of the Forty-Second Annual Meeting of NASCO.

I would like to start by thanking the United Kingdom for organising and hosting the Annual Meeting and the Secretariat for its continued support.

Once again, we have come together to discuss the key challenges to protecting wild Atlantic salmon and to reaffirm our commitment to this mission and to working together.

Many wild salmon populations in the North Atlantic have experienced significant declines, with some populations disappearing or reaching record lows. These record low adult abundances, the estimated declines in post-smolt survival and the general absence of any improvements in the adult fish returns highlight the concern that large-scale marine stressors are impacting salmon.

Unsustainable fisheries and overexploitation were once thought to be the primary stressor and actions taken by NASCO and its Contracting Parties to reduce fishing pressure have been successful in some areas. Although current knowledge shows that Atlantic salmon stocks decline is a complex issue and direct management interventions to mitigate the impacts of oceanic factors are limited, management measures to reduce fishing effort in remaining marine fisheries will benefit exploited stocks.

One of the most important issues on today's agenda is the discussion of the Fourth Reporting Cycle by the Parties. The development of this cycle is aimed at increasing the transparency of Parties' actions, identifying their specific commitments and establishing indicators to measure the progress of actions. We very much hope that this unconventional approach will focus efforts on addressing key threats to wild salmon stocks, which are more likely to be found in Parties' jurisdictions, rather than in international waters.

In this regard, we are deeply concerned about interceptory mixed-stock fisheries of salmon at sea, which to a great extent is continuing to pose a threat to some salmon populations, in particular in the Barents Sea. Although some regulatory measures in the last ten years have led to a decline in catches of salmon of Russian origin, migrating through territorial waters of other Contracting Party, the harvest still remains at high level. In this light, we urge the Parties to continue their efforts to fully implement the NASCO agreements relating to salmon mixed-stock fisheries.

We note with regret the sudden departure from NASCO of its President Kimberly Damon-

Randall and express our gratitude for her contribution to the organization. This Annual Meeting is led by Ruth Allin, who has taken over the duties of the Acting President and we are looking forward to her professionalism and competent leadership.

We also note the coming change of Secretary this year. I would like to express my deep appreciation to Dr. Emma Hatfield for her many years of service and welcome Dr. Cathal Gallagher, who will take up his duties soon.

Given the urgency of the current situation with wild Atlantic salmon stocks, we must rely on clearly defined priorities and rational allocation of resources. This is the only way to ensure sustainable progress in conserving this species and achieving NASCO's goals.

Thank you for your attention and I wish you all a productive week!

Opening Statement to Council Submitted by the United Kingdom

Madam President, Madam Secretary, Distinguished Delegates, Observers, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am delighted to be with you in Cardiff, the capital of Wales and one of the European continent's youngest capital cities. Before I delve into the important matters which have brought us all together this week, let me first introduce myself.

My name is Catherine Perez. I lead the UK bilateral fisheries agreements with four North Atlantic countries, namely the Faroe Islands, Greenland, Iceland and Norway, at the UK Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs.

It is a great honour to join you at this year's NASCO Annual Meeting as the UK's Head of Delegation. I am stepping into this role in Ruth Allin's stead, who, as many of you know, is acting as NASCO President this year. I would like to take this opportunity to thank her for her continued leadership and service.

The UK is pleased to be hosting this year and looks forward to another successful meeting—one that builds on our collective efforts to protect and restore wild Atlantic salmon.

We meet this year against the backdrop of a new UK Government, with a strong commitment to environmental protection, nature recovery, and the long-term sustainability of endangered species. This renewed focus on tackling biodiversity loss and restoring ecosystems aligns closely with the mission and work of NASCO.

At the same time, we are operating in a challenging fiscal environment, as recognised in the UK Government's most recent Budget. This makes it all the more important that we prioritise evidence-based conservation efforts that deliver real impact.

As you are all aware, despite significant conservation measures and reductions in exploitation, salmon numbers continue to decline across their range. This is a sobering reality and a reminder of the scale of the challenge we face.

The UK believes NASCO's greatest value lies in its ability to facilitate international co-operation, scrutiny, and knowledge sharing. We are committed to continuing this work in the spirit of openness and co-operation, and we remain determined to leave our shared salmon heritage in a better state for future generations.

I would like to thank the NASCO Secretariat and the Chairs of the Working Groups and Commissions on behalf of the UK delegation for the considerable work undertaken since last year's meeting. In particular, the UK welcomes the progress made on key technical and management issues, namely:

- **The Staff Handbook and Staff Rules:** The modernisation of the staff rules goes a step forward in providing clarity and certainty for Secretariat staff around staff conditions and benefits—essential for a well-supported and effective Secretariat.
- **The 2024 West Greenland Salmon Fishery Report:** The UK recognises Greenland's extensive efforts to manage the West Greenland fishery within quota in 2024, and hope for a similarly successful outcome in 2025.
- **National Stressor Analyses:** These represent a valuable evidence base to inform future actions and we are pleased that this work will underpin NASCO's upcoming Fourth Reporting Cycle.
- **The Fourth Reporting Cycle Framework:** The UK supports this transparent and robust model, which will strengthen our collective accountability in driving forward efforts to conserve salmon stocks.
- **NASCO's Regulations, Agreements, and Guidelines (RAGs):** The UK welcomes the successful update of the Stocking Guidance and look forward to engaging with the forthcoming Working Group to update the Habitat Guidelines and the Conservation Commitment Review Group.

The UK also values the opportunity to engage with Indigenous Peoples' representatives and institutions and our NGO community throughout the week, and the perspectives and knowledge each group bring to our shared efforts to protect and restore wild Atlantic salmon.

I and the UK delegates look forward to another constructive and productive Annual Meeting.

Thank you.

Opening Statement to Council Submitted by the United States

Madam President, Madam Secretary, Distinguished Delegates, Observers, Ladies and Gentlemen:

The United States is very pleased to participate in the 42nd Annual Meeting of NASCO in Cardiff, Wales. We are looking forward to a productive week working together with our international partners to improve the conservation and management of wild Atlantic salmon. We sincerely thank our hosts for the wonderful meeting venue and arrangements, as well as the NASCO Secretariat for their hard work in preparing for this meeting. We would especially like to extend a special thank you to Emma as she concludes her final term as NASCO Secretary. We would like to express our sincere appreciation for Emma's integrity, dedication and commitment to NASCO during her time as Secretary. Her meticulous attention to detail has been both an anchor and a catalyst for NASCO's achievements. She will leave behind a culture of accountability and purpose that will continue to guide us after her retirement.

As in past years, mixed-stock fisheries that intercept U.S.- origin salmon continue to be of concern to the United States. Numbers of U.S.-origin salmon returning to home waters continues to be very low. Estimated adult returns to U.S. rivers in 2024 were 1,520 fish.

Although this is above the previous 5 and 10-year mean return, it is still well below our recovery goals. Although the West Greenland fishery has been near, or even below the agreed upon quota of 30 metric tons over the last couple years, any U.S. fish harvested in a mixed-stock interceptory fishery has an outsized impact on these critically endangered populations. We take very seriously the scientific advice from ICES that continues to recommend against the prosecution of fisheries that would intercept these and other depleted populations.

During the 2025 Annual Meeting the United States is looking forward to Wednesday's Special Session where we will seek to agree to a 4th reporting cycle process that will enhance NASCO's strategic goal of prioritising and driving actions necessary to slow the decline of wild salmon populations. This process should ensure transparency and accountability of the participating Parties and Jurisdictions in upholding our commitments to NASCO's Convention and its resolutions, agreements and guidelines. We also look forward to reviewing progress on implementing NASCO's Ten-Year Strategy and associated Action Plan, agreeing to a schedule to update NASCO's resolutions, agreements and guidelines, and adopting a decision on potential amendments to NASCO's convention.

In closing, I want to reaffirm the United States' commitment to the conservation of Atlantic salmon and to working co-operatively and collaboratively with our international partners to successfully address the important issues and challenges that the salmon face now and into the future.

Opening Statement to Council Submitted by France (in respect of Saint-Pierre-et-Miquelon)

First, The French delegation would like to thank the secretariat and the Chair for their invitation to take part in these important discussions as an observer, and for organizing this conference.

Each year, the French delegation would like to underline its attachment to this observer status, but also its attachment to continue and maintain co-operation for the conservation and management of North Atlantic salmon

The French delegation would like to highlight also her willingness to have a sustainable and reasoned management of salmon fisheries.

Salmon fishing in Saint Pierre and Miquelon is traditional, for personal consumption without commercial intent and part of the territory's culture. This year, fishing has increased. This increase is limited and does not call into question the willingness of the French delegation to co-operate with the NASCO. SPM salmon fishery is residual and there is no intention of expansion.

About the management of the SPM salmon fishery by recreational fishermen:

SPM is working to promote a sustainable management of the resource. To this end, I can mention some measures adopted locally, as the contingentement of annual fishing authorisations for recreational fishermen (there is a quota of 80 annual authorizations since 2021).

French delegation underlines the voluntary steps taken by recreational fishermen to actively participate in the long-term preservation of the resource. To this end, fishermen voluntarily keep a fishing logbook in which they declare all the captures of salmon. However, under French legislation, this obligation does not apply to recreational fishermen.

Besides, it can be report that the president of the association of recreational fishermen, the authorities of Saint-Pierre & Miquelon and the French Scientific Institute (IFREMER) has signed a charter last December including regulatory and voluntary measures to ensure the sustainability of Atlantic salmon resources and the marine ecosystems. The charter came into effect since May 1, 2025. The specificity of the charter is that it allows each recreational fisherman to make an individual commitment by signing an individual appendix and by voluntarily submitting to controls. Without individual signature, licenses should not be renewed. Moreover, it is specifically mentioned in the charter that recreational fishermen are engaged to co-operate with the French Research Institute IFREMER in sampling and they are engaged to co-operate with the administrations on illegal captures of salmons.

The charter reinforces the quality of recreational fishermen's participation in the sustainable maintenance of salmon stocks.

Besides, the number of salmon catches by recreational fishermen has decreased, only the weight has increased.

About professional fishermen:

Fishing decreased and it is also important to remember that professional salmon fishing in SPM is a secondary activity and no fisherman carries out this activity as a principal activity. This sector is not attractive for companies from SPM.

About the sampling of the SPM salmon fishery:

The French delegation is also particularly satisfied about the scientific co-operation with Canada on the evaluation and analysis of sampling carried out by the French Institute IFREMER to improve the understanding of the biological characteristics and origin of salmon caught by the Saint-Pierre & Miquelon fishery.

It can report the voluntary participation of recreational fishermen in the development of scientific knowledge. Fifty fishing kits have been given to recreational fishermen, and a further fifty will be given out during the fishing season.

About inspections:

Inspections did not reveal any infringements. A nautical mean have been deployed since 2024 for sea control, and landing controls have been constant compared to the 2023 season.

Finally, French delegation recall number for salmon fishing in SPM, which are relatively low and stagnant. (in 2024: 192 kg for professional fishermen and 1 519 kg for recreational fishermen). French delegation recalls also SPM collaboration with NASCO to ensure the sustainability of the resource.

Opening Statement to Council Submitted by NASCO's Non-Governmental Organizations

Madam President, Secretary, Heads of Delegation, Distinguished Delegates, NGO colleagues, ladies and gentlemen, the NGOs appreciate this opportunity to make an opening statement to NASCO Council at the 2025 Annual Meeting. The NGOs would like to thank Wales for arranging this meeting in Cardiff and we look forward to contributing to best outcomes for our wild Atlantic salmon.

To start, the NGOs recognise this is the last meeting of Dr. Emma Hatfield as NASCO Secretary and thank her for all the work she has done for NASCO these past 8 years. We wish Emma every success in the future, whatever that may be.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Dr. Stephen Sutton from Canada who has co-Chaired the Accredited NGOs at NASCO since 2016 until earlier this year. On a personal note from Robert, and as a colleague of Steve's at the Atlantic Salmon Federation, and a friend, I can attest to Steve's deep commitment to wild Atlantic salmon conservation. I will continue to seek and value his insightful counsel.

The wild salmon is an iconic symbolic species that is a concrete example of the consequences of the natural crisis we are in the midst of. The crisis for wild salmon is a clear picture of how humanity is unable to adjust its activities so that we can coexist with living nature. Wild salmon are also a species that is of great importance to many people, many of which have deep and enduring relationships. In this way, wild salmon can also play an important role in creating motivation, acceptance and action for a more sustainable social development on nature's terms.

In January earlier this year many of us gathered in London for Wild Salmon Connections. Its goal was to activate an urgent, renewed international focus on wild salmon, inspiring action to secure thriving wild salmon at the heart of healthy ecosystems". It aimed to inspire urgent action, enable positive solutions to accelerate wild salmon recovery, and focus on the future for people and the planet. These are important objectives that should be borrowed by NASCO – I'm sure the organisers of the conference wouldn't mind one bit. Wild Salmon Connections generated a Declaration, and called upon any person or organization to sign (slightly condensed below):

- deliver strong policies, action, and funding to ensure salmon have free access to cold, clean water;
- ensure action to conserve, protect, and restore rivers at catchment scale and pace commensurate with urgency of the crisis;
- deliver co-ordinated action to prioritise evidence gaps;
- recognise the vital importance of the leadership of Indigenous Peoples;
- urgently address the dramatic decline in salmon sea survival rates; and
- develop and implement effective public and private funding mechanisms.

It is within the power of NASCO combined with its constituent Parties, to achieve all of these outcomes. But the NGOs believe NASCO must help raise the conservation of wild salmon on the international political agenda. The Missing Salmon Alliance managed to bring together 3 ministers from three different countries in London earlier this year. Let this be a prelude to a

northern political summit under the auspices of NASCO with the ambition of effective measures and actions to save wild salmon for future generations throughout the North Atlantic.

In 2025, the NGOs will continue to focus on the future of NASCO, both literally through the Future of NASCO Working Group, and also generally. We have serious concerns about this future particularly as NASCO pursues a 10-year strategic plan with objectives that, even were NASCO able to achieve, will not get us where we need to be to meet this moment. NASCO is, after all, the North Atlantic Salmon *Conservation* Organization – not the *Preservation* organization, not the *Slow the Decline* organization, not the *Restoration* organization, not the *Gene Banking* organization. Conservation implies human use of resources, and its simplest definition is “wise use”. To support wise use, we must have abundance across the salmon range.

Yet we are witness to alarming developments, like 33 rivers closed to angling in Norway on short notice in 2024. Think how serious the situation for wild salmon returns must be for this action to have been taken mid-season. While returns to north America might have been slightly increasing overall up to the early 2020s, this statistic masks regional shifts that in some areas are now in crisis, and are similar to Norway in 2024. For instance, the recently released ICES report reports returns of 1SW salmon to NAC were the lowest since 1973 while the abundance of 2SW maiden and all other MSW salmon returns were the lowest of the 55-year time series. Clearly, extremely serious signs are visible. Can NASCO meet the challenge? NASCO must meet the challenge, it is NASCO’s responsibility.

We know much about key impacts and threats to wild Atlantic salmon. Migration barriers, water temperature and quality, salmon aquaculture, land use, and invasive species. And we have tantalizing clues to additional drivers of recruitment and survival – phenological shifts, predation, oceanographic changes – but we must not let perfect be the enemy of better. NASCO must concentrate on what we know and act, now. NASCO and Parties must acknowledge known impacts on wild salmon and take action *commensurate with the urgency of the crisis*. And refuse to allow salmon populations to continue to decline.

The NGOs will continue to work hard at NASCO to save wild salmon. We will continue to work hard in our home jurisdictions and do what needs to be done with or without the involvement of our home Parties. And we will continue to work hard raising our visibility and involvement both at NASCO and in all salmon jurisdictions through a collaborative, co-ordinated and mutually supporting approach. Collectively, the NGOs believe that without a redoubled commitment from NGOs, NASCO is a diminished organization. We’ll continue to question, challenge, demand, and criticize. To do otherwise fails salmon.

In turn, the NASCO Parties must demand more of themselves and each other. NASCO is embarking on a 10-year strategic plan and making important and needed revisions to the process for the next reporting cycle. We point out that what is essential to success are the attributes of accountability and courageous action from the Parties. The NASCO process gives us structure but does not, on its own, drive or demand success.

“But I refuse to accept the fact that we are happy with what we have as proof that we lack nothing; there is no absolute instinct that makes one demand something as yet unconceived.”

Thank you, Madam President, and everyone here today, for this opportunity.

Opening Statement to Council Submitted by Coomhola Salmon Trust Ltd

Madam President, Secretary, Heads of Delegation, Distinguished Delegates, & fellow NGO colleagues: we appreciate the opportunity to provide this opening statement to the 2025 NASCO Annual Meeting. We thank Dr. Emma Hatfield for all of her patient support over the past eight years, and congratulate Dr. Cathal Gallagher on his ascendency to the Secretariat from October this year.

As an accredited NGO Observer since 1997, we have advocated for the importance of effecting community-based outreach & engagement initiatives to support wider NASCO activities. To instil the wonder of wild salmon in our midst, as well as to communicate ‘best-practice’ principles in the pursuit of livelihood, recreation, and domestic management, is a vital intercession, and equips relevant local populations with the tools to play an essential role in our collective efforts. This Conference assembles the finest minds in salmon management, but the imperative remains: to translate the high science of this esteemed Forum to the everyday practices of millions of people who have the capacity to effect the viability of our beloved species: *creative community engagement is a key intervention*.

During the International Year of the Salmon ‘Education and Outreach Project’, our ‘StreamScapes’ programme (<https://streamscapes.ie/>) proudly worked with Dr. Hatfield and Dr. Wendy Kenyon of NASCO to produce the ‘Salmon Sanctuaries’ resource, consisting of a Booklet available at:

<https://streamscapes.ie/wp-content/uploads/2025/03/Salmon-Sanctuaries-.pdf>

and a short film (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wuQ9Hu6vIU8>)

Arising from our extensive experience in *salmon education* since 1989, we urge Council to incorporate further awareness initiatives into the ‘[Draft of an Action Plan for NASCO](#)’ (CNL(25)13) and, moreover, we encourage the International Salmon Research Board to consider including general salmon education initiatives within the context of ‘Projects of Interest to the Board and its Work’ ([ICR\(25\)05](#)), as well as to stress ‘education’ within the remit of the Working Group on the Future of NASCO (WGFON). Finally, through this 2025 NASCO General Meeting, we invite all NASCO parties to reach out to us to collaborate on effective Salmon Awareness initiatives by contacting:

Maggie McColgan, CEO

StreamScapes CLG c/o Coomhola Salmon Trust Ltd.

Coomhola, Bantry, Co. Cork, IRE P75 TY47

t: +353 852 672 595

e: info@streamscapes.ie

w: <https://streamscapes.ie/>

Thank you.

***Opening Statement Submitted to Council by the Indigenous Peoples’
Representatives and Institutions***

Mme President, Distinguished Delegates, Observers, Ladies and Gentlemen

This is an opening statement on behalf of the four Indigenous Peoples’ Representatives and Institutions with observer status in NASCO. We speak here for the Atlantic Policy Congress of First Nations Chiefs Secretariat, Houlton Band of Maliseet Indians, The Sámi Parliament in Norway and the Unama’ki Institute of Natural Resources.

We would like to extend our gratitude to NASCO Council for making space for Indigenous Peoples at NASCO and allowing us to take space as observers for the first time. The decisions that are made here affect us and we believe that we have valuable knowledge to offer to safeguard the salmon and its waters. We hope to further develop our role in NASCO, to better serve the salmon.

The salmon is affected both by climate change and by the nature crisis. Indigenous Peoples’ knowledge is recognized by leading researchers as a way to address the global biodiversity crisis. Our ways of being are to use sparsely, to be in dialogue with nature, and to leave our surroundings for our children, in as good as, or better state, than was left to us by our ancestors.

Last October Indigenous Peoples from across the northern hemisphere gathered in Kárášjohka for the second International Indigenous Salmon Peoples Gathering, hosted by the Sámi nation. There we wrote a statement that outlines some important common principles for salmon stewardship.

We declare that as Indigenous Salmon Peoples we continue to steward and live interconnectedly with the Salmon and Waters and it is our responsibility to uphold our relationship with the Salmon and their habitat.

We declare that the impacts from climate crisis and climate change-related stressors and industrial and commercial activities must be addressed with meaningful and holistic salmon rebuilding plans backed by significant resourcing and led by Indigenous Salmon Peoples.

We declare our rightful role as the caretakers of Salmon.

We declare that Indigenous Peoples’ authority, governance, jurisdiction and knowledge systems be recognized, respected and upheld. We emphasize that Indigenous Peoples and Indigenous Peoples’ Knowledge must be the foundation for all stewardship of Salmon.

When Salmon are healthy, Indigenous Salmon Peoples are healthy. Salmon are the lifeblood of our communities, Tribes, and Nations. Salmon are integral to our food security and food sovereignty and feature prominently in our spiritual and ceremonial practices. When Salmon do not return, Salmon Peoples practices, foodways and the Indigenous Peoples Knowledge surrounding them leads to losses in all realms of our lives, including our and the world's health and wellbeing.

As we stand here in solidarity, we would like to bring to NASCO’s attention that many of our Indigenous nations have voluntarily reduced harvests and no longer harvest in many of our traditional areas. We are proud of the good condition that our rivers are in, and we are doing our best to protect the habitats so that the salmon will return.

But we know we cannot do it alone. None of us can.

We would like to invite you to read the Declaration of the International Indigenous Salmon Peoples Gathering [IISPN - Karasjok Declaration](#). Any person or organization can sign it in solidarity with us.

We are looking forward to meaningful conversations and to contribute with our knowledge to the benefit of salmon. Giitu, Wela'liek, Woliwon, thank you, to the NASCO Council for giving us the floor.

Indigenous Peoples' representatives and institutions

2025 List of Participants

* Denotes Head of Delegation

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Responses to Questions Submitted to Parties by the NGOs in Advance of the Annual Meeting

Questions to Canada:

Question 1: Agenda Item 6gi. Regarding Canada's draft Threat Assessment for wild Atlantic salmon:

'When discussing use of the COSEWIC threat assessment by Canada for NASCO, did COSEWIC make Canada aware of the concerns expressed by third parties on the threat assessment?'

Response from Canada:

'Canada relies on [The Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada](#) (COSEWIC) to provide advice regarding the status of species that are nationally at risk of extinction or extirpation, including Atlantic salmon. COSEWIC is an independent, arms-length advisory panel to the Government of Canada, with members that include scientists drawn from academia, government, non-governmental organizations and the private sector.

COSEWIC is in the process of reassessing stock status and threat assessments for all Canada's Atlantic salmon designatable units (DUs). The updated COSEWIC assessments are anticipated to be finalized in Fall 2025. COSEWIC provided Canada with the draft results of its threat assessments for 2025, in order to ensure the most up-to-date information could be used to inform Canada's NASCO stressors analysis. Following on feedback received at the Special Session and further deliberation, Canada will finalize how the ranking of stressors may be revised to produce its final, published NASCO threat assessment for the purposes of the fourth reporting cycle.'

'If so, what assurances / explanations did COSEWIC provide that made Canada comfortable moving ahead with the assessment?'

Response from Canada:

'Discussions with the lead author of the COSEWIC report ahead of the NASCO annual meeting indicated that the draft COSEWIC threat assessment data used by Canada for the purpose of its NASCO stressors analysis remains consistent with the anticipated final data to be published in the autumn of 2025.'

'What concerns, if any, did Canada have when preparing and reviewing the threat assessment report by Breau and Imlay?'

Response from Canada:

'Canada considered a number of questions and potential concerns with the draft analysis, including: that the approach underestimates the impact of climate change; that certain threats (e.g., genetic material) reflect inputs from multiple sources; that the approach possibly over-estimates the impact of fisheries as it reflects an average of fisheries data, and several provinces have placed further restrictions on catches that are not reflected in this approach. Canada provided an overview of these challenges and considerations in its presentation to NASCO. In general, Canada felt that the input received was most relevant to the final selection of priority threats and mitigative actions, as opposed to feedback that would change Canada's science-based ranking of stressors. For example, that introduced genetic material considers

inputs from two discreet sources (aquaculture and stocking) does not change its ranking; however, mitigating the risks of introduced genetic material would require different actions to address the two discreet sources’

‘If any, how were these concerns addressed in the report?’

Response from Canada:

‘Feedback on Canada’s stressors analysis was invited from Canadian stakeholders and partners, including Indigenous groups, provincial governments, and non-governmental organizations. This feedback and these concerns were described in the draft stressors analysis paper submitted to NASCO, and during the presentation at the NASCO annual meeting. All of these groups will be invited to remain involved throughout the development of Canada’s Conservation Commitments.’

Question 2: Agenda Item 7a.

‘In March of this year, Canada released it’s years-in-the-making Wild Atlantic Salmon Conservation Strategy (WASCS), following on the heels of many policy pieces on Atlantic salmon in Canada over the last decade including the Ministerial Committee on Atlantic Salmon Report, the Wild Atlantic Salmon Conservation Policy, and the Wild Atlantic Salmon Conservation Policy – Implementation Plan. The announcement included approximately \$1 million CAD of new funding, along with re-announcements totaling \$5-6 million CAD. The recently released Wild Pacific Salmon Strategy was funded by Canada at \$647 million CAD. What is Canada’s plan to deliver on the promises made to Atlantic salmon conservation? When and to what level will the WASCS be funded?’

Response from Canada:

‘Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) has provided \$6.1 million for projects underway that reinforce the early implementation of the Strategy and address threats to Atlantic salmon in Canada. These funds are in addition to \$25 million for projects underway that was announced in October 2024.

DFO will also be providing an additional \$1 million for projects that support Atlantic Salmon restoration. Projects will be determined through a call for proposals process that will be launched in the coming months. These funds represent a first step to support the implementation of the Strategy. Going forward, the Department will continue to seek opportunities to support Atlantic salmon restoration efforts.’

Question 3: Agenda Item 7a.

‘In the summer of 2024, ASF documented a site in Newfoundland and Labrador that had been used as a dump by Cooke Aquaculture since at least 2011. A subsequent satellite survey of the coast using Google Earth and Maxar satellite imagery revealed at least six other locations with visible accumulations of aquaculture debris. This dumping at sea appears to be a violation of multiple federal and provincial licenses and laws, including the Fisheries Act. On [ADD DATE], ASF made a formal complaint to DFO’s Conservation and Protection Division, the enforcement arm of the department. As of May 15, 2025, we are unaware of any action taken by DFO to investigate dumping by the aquaculture industry in Newfoundland.

- 1. Has the department opened an investigation regarding plastic dumping by salmon farming companies in Newfoundland?***
- 2. Is the deposition of plastic waste in coves and inlets permitted by DFO under any of the laws, regulations, and policies that the department is responsible for?***

3. ***Has DFO done a survey to determine the quantity and severity of plastic dumping by salmon farming companies in Newfoundland?***
4. ***If not, does the department plan to do this?’***

Response from Canada:

‘DFO takes complaints of potential risks to fish and fish habitat seriously. After reviewing the reports of marine debris in Newfoundland and Labrador according to fish and fish habitat provisions under the Fisheries Act, DFO determined that no harmful alteration, disruption, or destruction of fish habitat or death of fish had taken place. Given regulatory authority for aquaculture siting, operations, and waste management is the responsibility of the province, the case was referred to the Department of Fisheries, Forestry and Agriculture of Newfoundland and Labrador.’

Questions to the UK:

Question 1: Agenda Item 5g.

‘What additional action is the Scottish Government taking to protect wild salmon and sea trout from the impact of sea lice, in the light of appeals against conditions on fish farms, associated with the sea lice regulatory framework?’

Response from UK – Scotland:

‘The Scottish Government will continue to work with the Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA) and the sector to support development of the monitoring strategy underpinning SEPA’s sea lice risk assessment framework (including introduction of sentinel cage monitoring in 2025), and to manage the transition of governance of this issue under existing local authority Environmental Management Plans.’

Question 2: Agenda Item 6gii.

‘Action H6 states that fish passage is recognised as one of the three main priorities of RBMP2 (2015 – 2021), including the challenges faced by Atlantic salmon smolts in their downstream migration, particularly in relation to hydro schemes. The second RBMPs identified fish migration pressures in 392 water bodies across Scotland. Progress on action reported in 2023 was that:

- 1. Works to ease fish passage on 2 active barriers were completed (84 are identified in the WSSIP to be eased or removed by 2027).***
- 2. Works to ease fish passage on 3 historic barriers were completed (94 are identified in the WSSIP to be eased or removed by 2027).***

Please provide an update on progress for 2024 and plans to meet the target by 2027.’

Response from UK – Scotland:

‘Through delivery of Scotland’s River Basin Management Plans to date, 1400 kilometres of previously inaccessible habitat has been opened through the removal and easement of barriers to fish migration.

Scotland’s Wild Salmon Strategy Implementation Plan [annual report](#), published at the end of May this year provides detail on the types and number of barriers scoped, moved to design and licensing stage, and eased in 2024. In summary, during 2024, 73 barriers to fish migration were scoped and 16 advanced to the design and licensing stage. Works to ease passage were completed on 5 barriers, bringing the total eased to 26.

Work continues to deliver actions set out in our River Basin Management Plan to ease active barriers and ease or remove historic barriers, including through the Scottish Environment Protection Agency's regulatory work and continued delivery of the Water Environment Fund.

Information on the Water Environment Fund is available here: [Water environment fund | Scottish Environment Protection Agency \(SEPA\)](#). Information on River Basin Management Planning in Scotland here: [River basin management planning | Scottish Environment Protection Agency \(SEPA\)](#).'

Question 3: Agenda Item 7a.

'Action A1 states that 'Marine Scotland has reviewed the policy permitting salmon introductions (stocking), and will also revisit options for a new licensing regime under that policy'. And that 'Marine Scotland, the licensing authority, considers each stocking application on its individual merits, fully evaluating the risks and benefits as advised in NASCO's Guidelines for incorporating social and economic factors in decisions under the Precautionary Approach'.

How does Marine Scotland ensure that social and economic factors are incorporated into stocking applications currently and how will it do so going forward?'

Response from UK – Scotland:

'The Scottish Government's Marine Directorate considers all of the evidence provided by the applicant. Each application, and the supporting information provided, is considered on its own merits with the overarching goal of Scotland's rivers having healthy, self-sustaining populations of wild Atlantic salmon that are achieving good conservation status.

In many cases local bodies comprising representatives of fisheries owners are the statutory authorities who licence stocking within Scottish rivers and much of the decision making is done at this local level.

Recovery stocking of Atlantic salmon (intervention when populations are at risk of extinction) is currently being considered by the Wild Salmon Strategy Delivery Group and Science and Evidence Board, to help guide the Scottish Government's policy on stocking.'

Question 4: Agenda Item 6gii.

'Action A2 & A3(ii) relates to The Scottish Environment Protection Agency's Sea Lice Regulatory Framework. We understand that implementation of Framework is now expected to be paused following appeals against it from the fish farming sector.'

Response from UK – Scotland:

'The Scottish Government remains committed to supporting Scotland's salmon farming sector but also to the implementation of the sea lice risk assessment framework by the Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA).

New licence conditions planned to be imposed by SEPA on existing marine fish farms will not come into force before the submitted appeals are resolved. The appeals process is a legitimate part of the environmental licencing system. Given these are live appeals, it would not be appropriate to comment on the merits of the appeals or their handling at this stage.

SEPA continues to implement the framework as directed to ensure environmental protection via its licencing process for new fish farm developments and for applications from producers wishing to increase the fish biomass limits in an existing fish farm licence.

The Scottish Government is supporting SEPA in the process of implementing a multi-year programme of environmental monitoring to underpin the sea lice risk assessment framework.'

‘How long does Scotland think it will take to address the appeals, and in the interim, what urgent action is being taken to protect wild salmon from sea lice from fish farms?’

Response from UK – Scotland:

‘Given these are live appeals, it would not be appropriate to comment on the merits of the appeals at this stage. The Scottish Government Directorate for Planning and Environmental Appeals is currently considering how to handle these appeals and parties will be informed of these conclusions in due course.

We will continue to work with the Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA) and the sector to support development of the monitoring strategy underpinning SEPA’s sea lice risk assessment framework (including introduction of sentinel cage monitoring in 2025), and to manage the transition of governance of this issue under existing local authority Environmental Management Plans.’

‘NB: We await with interest for publication of the Final Report of the Review of the Effect of Salmon Aquaculture on Wild Atlantic Salmon Populations which may provide conclusive evidence on just how significant the impact of sea lice from fish farms is on wild Atlantic salmon.’

Response from UK – Scotland:

‘As stated in our response to the [Rural Affairs and Islands Committee’s report on Salmon farming in Scotland](#), the Scottish Government has contributed scientific expertise to support the NASCO state of knowledge paper on the risk that sea lice from fish farms pose to wild salmon.

We will work with the Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA) to consider whether the outcomes of this review have any material impact on SEPA’s sea lice risk assessment framework.

SEPA remains committed to ensuring the framework is based on best available evidence and can adapt to new evidence in future.’

Discussions held during the Special Session of the Council on Stressor Analyses

Ruth Allin (Acting President): just to reiterate, thanks to all the presenters for presenting so much information. And I can see we've already got our first question. That's fantastic. Thank you.

William Entwisle (South West Rivers Association): thank you. William Entwisle, Southwest Rivers Association, again. First of all, as Madam President said, thank you all so much. What a fascinating collection of issues. I think any of us who are interested in this will recognise all of those as problems that are facing Atlantic salmon.

However, Madam President, you made clear at the beginning that NASCO had not said to people, you must do this analysis in a certain way. But if I may, I think NASCO did situate the appreciation somewhat by saying that it was about what was in jurisdiction.

Now, do tell me that I'm wrong, but for me, the elephant in the room in all of this is what is happening on the high seas. And I think what is therefore missing from this excellent analysis of what's in jurisdictions is some sense of the relative importance of what is happening in fresh water, in coastal waters, and on the high seas.

I went to the last SAMARCH conference in Southampton, which many of you were probably at as well, two years ago. And one of the SAMARCH scientists said to me that, in their view, 70% of the problem facing salmon is on the high seas. I, therefore, would suggest, if that is true, whilst all of these things that you have mentioned are important, if 70% of it is on the high seas, we risk rearranging the deck chairs whilst the hole in the Titanic makes the salmon Titanic sink.

There is an old English joke about our beloved French cousins. Or, for those of you whose French is even worse than mine, there are only three ingredients in French cooking, butter, butter, and butter. Here are my top three, if I may, having listened over the last several years to thousands of people offering their views about what the most important stressors are facing Atlantic salmon. Number one, what is happening on the high seas. Number two, what is happening on the high seas. Number three, what is happening on the high seas.

I am, therefore, delighted that Ireland, America, Russia, England, Wales, and the United States all chose to ignore the constraints that were placed on them in jurisdictions and mentioned those things.

If you just mention in jurisdiction, it's a bit like a doctor saying to a child with severe asthma, what are the lifestyle choices that are within your control that will improve your asthma? And the child says, well, I don't smoke because I'm a child, but I have poor diet, and I don't take enough exercise. Right, let's concentrate on poor diet and not taking enough exercise, whilst ignoring the fact that the child lives 200 yards downwind of an enormous chemical factory that is belching out toxic smoke 24 hours a day.

I think, deep into this crisis, this presents a challenge for NASCO. We must concentrate on working out what the problem is on the high seas. Ten years ago, southwest river smolts were coming back somewhere between 10 and 20% of what went to sea, every year. Last year, the Frome reported 0.4% of smolts returning as adults. We know, therefore, that something terrible

is happening on the high seas. I think there needs to be an extra bit of analysis about the relationship between high seas, coastal waters, and what's happening on shore.

I'm nearly finished. I think deep into this crisis this poses a real challenge for NASCO. I recognise this is an inter-governmental body. On Monday, you will all go back to your day jobs, which is working for your Fisheries Ministers mostly. And your Fisheries Ministers will not be hugely pleased if you say, hey, we've agreed to ban fishing at certain times of the year on the Vöring Plateau and the smolt highway. I recognise there are lots of other challenges.

But I think this stage of the crisis represents a conflict of interest for NASCO going forward. We have to work out how NASCO does its job to conserve Atlantic salmon with the problems on the high seas. Whilst at the same time recognising that NASCO is an inter-governmental body, and that governments have many, many other things to deal with. Thank you so much.

Ruth Allin (Acting President): thank you for that intervention, Willie. I think you've covered an awful lot of topics there. The scope of the stressor analysis, you're absolutely right, the purpose of the stressor analysis was to inform the fourth reporting cycle, which we've heard about today, which is about domestic actions to conserve and restore salmon stocks. That's why a lot of Parties did choose to focus on the domestic stressors, rather than the marine stressors.

In terms of NASCO's work in the marine environment, we have the International Atlantic Salmon Research Board with a role to better understand the causes of mortality at sea and the opportunities to act on that. And we're due to hear the report of the Board later in the Annual Meeting. So, that will provide another opportunity for discussion.

I think within the questions here, we do need to focus on what we've heard about domestic stressors and how countries have assessed those stressors at home, because that's what will inform the fourth reporting cycle. Which I understand what you're saying, marine mortality is a really important part of the picture, but I think it's harder to control. And we know that domestic action is not. It helps.

And we want to see that domestic action, as well as maybe a broader discussion about marine mortality. I think in terms of this Session, we need to continue looking at stressor analysis-specific questions. But I acknowledge your points. And I'd like to hand over to the Secretary to speak to this a little bit further.

Emma Hatfield (Secretary): thank you. I think everyone acknowledges that it's very difficult. The vast majority of people in this room that work on salmon are freshwater people. They're not marine scientists. I set up a series of workshops with ICES for freshwater salmon scientists and ICES marine scientists to work together. And there were two very successful workshops, I would say, that mostly the NGOs have run with.

And there's a grouping of NGOs in the UK called The Missing Salmon Alliance. They've put together a project called the Likely Suspects Framework. I will maybe direct you to talk to Wendy about what's being done, and who the key players are, and the papers that have been published. But it was very successful in the outcome that the Likely Suspects Framework are now collaborating with a large number of people and producing some really interesting work on salmon at sea, where the smolts are at different times of year, etc. That kind of information, because the information just isn't there.

I'm a pelagic fishery biologist by training and I worked in this area for a long time. And there are very few salmon and very many small pelagic fish. And you can't spot one smolt in hundreds of tons of herring or mackerel going through a chute. There are different ways and means that need to be adopted to do that work. But the Likely Suspects Framework is doing a lot of really good work on that.

And then, as Ruth said, the Board is about to look at adopting work forward in a project to look at growth of salmon across the North Atlantic. And that work can help people understand where the problems are. The North Atlantic is vast. There aren't that many salmon. You need to be able to start somewhere. And I think right now, there's some good work going on to enable some of those big questions to be answered.

Rune Jensen (SalmonCamera): Rune Jensen from SalmonCamera Norway. Thank you, William. There is no shred of doubt that the deep blue is taking a huge toll on our salmon. There's never been a doubt about it. It's been like that for thousands of years. I think, on the other hand, as I support the need for more science going in to figure out what is going on in the open blue, and what we can do about it, we must not lose focus on the elements we can do something about.

And in a situation where the conditions in the deep blue alters to the worse, it becomes extra necessary to do what we can do about the things we do know something about. Even though it's brilliant, and, of course, obvious point to make that we are losing the salmon in the sea. Let's look into it. But first, let's do something or parallel to that, let's do something with the things we do know. And we're running out of time. Don't wait for the science from the marine environment. Don't wait for it and forget what we have to do with the rest. Thank you.

Wendy Kenyon (Atlantic Salmon Trust): hello, it's Wendy Kenyon, Atlantic Salmon Trust. And I've got a question for Nora, and probably Claire, sitting next to her, about aquaculture. And I'm bringing in one of the questions that was submitted in advance. Is that right, to do that now? Okay. My first question probably to Nora is that, excuse me, you talked about weighting of the process which meant that it was weighted largely by the big salmon rivers on the East Coast.

What we know is there's a presumption against aquaculture, salmon farming on the east coast of Scotland. So, what impact might that have had on how aquaculture appeared in the stressor analysis? That's my question to you. And then my question, which was the one that's been in the written questions, Claire, is about the appeals that the Scottish Government has had with respect to the Sea Lice Framework and what is going to be done about all that stuff.

Nora Hanson (UK): Nora Hanson, Marine Directorate. Thanks, Wendy. I can hopefully answer that one quite easily with respect to the weighting. Absolutely the weighting at that national level, summary, represents those East Coast rivers more strongly, because it was thought that we wanted to represent the spatial extent of the potential to impact on juvenile production, or on production in general. But also note that that's where 80% of the stock lies in terms of abundance is on those large East Coast rivers.

When you look at the same sort of maps that I put up there for the regional level summaries, you will see that in the west and in the northwest, that aquaculture comes out more prominently there. I think when it comes to our next steps in our development, that's why I noted that it masks that regional variation. That's something we might want to consider.

Claire Speedie (UK): hi, my name is Claire Speedie. I work in the Marine Directorate of the Scottish government. Thanks, Wendy. Just to provide people with a bit of background, I don't know how many people know about the Sea Lice Framework, but in February last year, our Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA) launched a Sea Lice Risk Assessment Framework. The tool is designed to help support sustainable development of fish farming in Scotland.

I introduced these wild salmon protection zones on the West Coast and on the Western Isles to help try to guide development towards the least sensitive locations. And also introduced a

higher degree of sea lice control for finfish operators in those areas. The framework applies to new, expanding, and existing fish farms.

And as Wendy said, as part of the framework's implementation, SEPA has issued sea lice reporting and limit conditions through the Controlled Activity Regulation licences to a proportion of existing fish farms that have been assessed as in the higher risk category.

Now, fish farming companies have appealed the variation, citing scientific and economic concerns. Given that these are live appeals, I obviously can't comment on them. However, our Scottish Government Directorate for Planning and Environmental Appeals is currently considering how to handle those appeals. And Parties will obviously be updated and informed of the conclusions in due course.

But in the meantime, I think it's important to say as well, that aquaculture and science colleagues are continuing to work with SEPA and the sector to support development of a monitoring strategy that will underpin the Sea Lice Risk Framework. Thanks, Wendy. And happy to pick up afterwards as well if there are any more questions.

Ruth Allin (Acting President): we've got a virtual question.

Mari Kuoppamaa (Saami Climate Council): hi, my name is Mari Kuoppamaa from the Saami Climate Council NGO. And the Saami Climate Council would like to express its deep concern regarding the impact of climate change on the salmon stocks. And it's important that the interactions that are related to this issue are thoroughly investigated, and that all Parties and jurisdictions involved intensify their climate actions immediately.

In light of this, I know that this is a complicated issue, but could Norway and EU – Finland please share what actions you are considering for climate change mitigation and adaptation in your stressor analysis? And how those efforts could help protecting the Atlantic salmon, and especially the Teno River population? And additionally, how could all NASCO Parties and jurisdictions incorporate this matter into the guidelines and perhaps implement more robust climate strategies?

Tapio Hakaste (EU): Tapio Hakaste from EU – Finland answering to what the question is, but, like I said in our presentation, our possibilities to mitigate climate change effects are very limited. What we have done, and what we will continue to cover with Norway, is to take care that the spawning stocks entering River Tana, and also entering River Neiden / Nääämö, in the future will be as large as possible, because what has been shown in some publications is advice to react to it, to a situation.

Unfortunately, there are not many other possibilities to do than to regulate the fishery in a way, but there would be as much spawners as possible in order to fill the spawning and production areas in these rivers. Thank you.

Ruth Allin (Acting President): thank you, Tapio. Did anyone else want to speak to that question? Thank you.

Robert Otto (Atlantic Salmon Federation, Canada): hi there, Robert Otto, with the NGOs. One thing that struck me in at least several of the presentations was various sorts of approaches to, I think a couple of people have used the term, lumping and splitting of stressors.

But I'm just wondering... and the implementation or the effect of that sort of thing may differ from Party to Party. And I'll pick on Dale, and Canada a little bit here. But I know that, for instance, fisheries seem to be lumped together, while impacts from things like salmon farming have a tendency to be split up. Things like therapeutants and other chemicals that might be used in the industry.

Things like huge amounts of plastic, and trash, and things that are littering the coast, certainly in Canada. But these things seem to be separated out a little bit. I'm just wondering if, I don't know if Dan can make some comment or anybody else is interested, but it's high level.

And it just struck me as I was watching the presentations today, is there some sort of general approach that can be used to give guidance to the Parties about when lumping and splitting is appropriate? And whether there's any analysis or assessment that might be done to determine whether or not that approach is having an effect on which of the three stressors for each Party bubble to the top? Thank you.

Dan Kircheis (USA): I hear where you're coming from, but I'm not sure I have a good answer, because it was the mechanism that was put in place to provide that flexibility. And the system that we have in place for the fourth round of reporting didn't include providing recommendations on how to do the stressor analysis, because that came directly from Council. I certainly understand what you're coming from, but I don't think I have a good answer for you. I don't know, Ruth, if you want to add to that.

Ruth Allin (Acting President): I think what I can come in on is the rationale for the approach that was taken, which was we recognised we needed to do this work. We didn't want to commission a working group to develop an approach to do this work and delay this work by a year.

In some ways, maybe this is the start. If stressor analyses are carried out in the future, there are advantages to each jurisdiction doing them in the same way, because they can see how they've developed. But there's also learning from this round that may lead to NASCO deciding that a standardised approach is better.

I think that analysis would need to be carried out at a later date. But certainly, the reason that we didn't go for a standardised approach this year was about moving forward more quickly, rather than more slowly.

Robert Otto (Atlantic Salmon Federation, Canada): and apologies, I didn't mean to say that having a standardised approach is the way to go. I realise exactly why it was done the opposite way. Maybe it's just a cautionary note, and maybe this is something that's just bubbled to the surface in the presentations today, as we can see them in aggregate. That perhaps there's something here for the Group to just be aware of as they're going through the stressor analyses that come in from the Parties.

Vanessa Mitchell (Maritime Aboriginal Peoples Council): thank you. Good afternoon. Vanessa Mitchell, Maritime Aboriginal Peoples Council, NGOs. I have a question to pose for Canada, please. The stressors analysis, in reviewing that and some of the other documentation that was submitted by Canada, is a little bit concerning.

Realistically, it's gravely concerning when I take a look at the threats that have been identified as those priority threats, those ones that have been listed as being those high-level threats, and lumping and splitting aside, because I do support my colleague, Rob, at the front, in those comments. But I look at those threats and the ones that we don't have a lot of activities and actions moving towards our boots on the ground, or waders in the water, is occurring for those threats that are at the lowest level.

And it is next to impossible to find funding to be able to work in the greater regions. And when we do find funding for NGOs like myself it can be quite minimal, where the actions themselves... Yes, we get stuff done, but it's a very small piece of the puzzle.

And one of the things that you had mentioned was urgent and transformative change. We have to flip that proverbial switch and put that support for actions for people to get those boots on

the ground, waders in the water, boats in the water. And has Canada done any form of consideration around how to move forward on those threats, when so many of them are really big, nuanced issues?

Nicole Bouchard (Canada): thank you for the question. I'm not going to go through the threat assessment, but if we want more detail of the scientists who worked on it, to explain the methodology. But in terms of what next, I think we still have all the information that we need to then take the next step on what do we focus on. And so, our choice of the stressors can be not the same as the ranking we have, but we are informed by those, for sure.

Patrick Martin (Conservatoire National du Saumon Sauvage): Patrick Martin, Conservatoire National du Saumon Sauvage, France. NGO. Thank you so much for all presentations we had for each jurisdiction, with the three main stressors. My colleague from England talked about conflict of interest in the case of ICES. But there are so many conflicts of interest in many sectors, like aquaculture, like fisheries, like predation.

And my question: predation, for example, appears in eight or nine different jurisdictions as a top three. But how can we manage the predation problem where, in the same time, for example, for the cormorant, the species is protected. Then the predation is protected.

Then my question is could we have a list of conflicts of interest in each sector? To be very clear, and in transparency, I think that NASCO, I went for my first time 20 years ago, and I think that NASCO is going for more and more transparency. But I think that a list of conflicts of interest need to be done to do a proper job. Sorry for my English. I try to express myself as best as I can.

Ruth Allin (Acting President): thank you for that question. I think it's one for us to take away and come back on.

Torfinn Evensen (Norwegian Salmon Rivers): thank you, Torfinn Evensen from Norwegian Salmon Rivers. I have a question to the Icelandic presentation. Why have you just used the freshwater stressors in your analysis?

Hlynur Bárðarson (Iceland): that's just the way we did it. But I do have to mention that we say that this is a preliminary analysis. And we welcome all, as Dan mentioned earlier, we want challengers. Do challenge us on our stressor analysis and do point out if we need to amend them. This is a question that we will consider.

William Entwisle (South West Rivers Association): thank you, forgive me again, William Entwisle from Southwest Rivers Association. If I may, I'd just like to offer some reassurance to the room. I'm not for one moment suggesting that we must not do absolutely everything we can. We must throw, to use another English idiom, the kitchen sink, at this problem. And that means doing all the things that everybody has identified as a problem and everything else.

My concern about the way this stressor analysis has been approached is there is a risk, Madam President, perhaps you can reassure me that it will be written up as, the jurisdictions at NASCO have identified the following things as the most important stressors facing their salmon. When patently, if SAMARCH is saying 70% of the problem is at sea, we are missing a whole other chunk in that statement. And it lets a whole lot of other things, to use another metaphor, through the net.

I hope that reassures you, that I'm not saying we shouldn't do it. We should do the lot, everything. If I may, we earlier had a conversation about key performance indicators in terms of the fourth session. Madam President, I'd be hugely interested to know if NASCO is going to set some key performance indicators for itself in that period, in terms of whether it is achieving its aim, which is to be the North Atlantic Salmon Conservation Organization. I think that would

be really helpful, alongside the key performance indicators about whether the salmon itself is doing better or worse. Thank you.

Ruth Allin (Acting President): in response to the question about NASCO's key performance indicators, we're measuring our progress on various levels. We've got our Action Plan, which sets out the actions that are going to be undertaken. Some of those actions are enabling rather than on the ground actions because that is the nature of NASCO.

NASCO is not an organization with boots on the ground. It's an organization that enables others to do more for salmon. Our Action Plan sets out our commitments as to what we're going to deliver, and that gives a very transparent platform for monitoring our progress against our actions.

We've got the fourth reporting cycle that we've heard about today, where individual Parties make their commitments for boots on the ground. And the Conservation Commitment and Performance Indicator Reporting Framework that you've heard about is the way in which Parties will be held to account, both for setting out actions in the first place, that's what the Conservation Commitments Review Group will look at, and then for delivering on those actions.

We have those clear and transparent frameworks in place already, I would say, with the scientific advice that is delivered annually telling us how the salmon are doing. We've got different levels at which the Organization's effectiveness is being monitored. We know that ultimately, it's about the salmon, but effecting change in salmon populations takes time.

So, we're also being clear in the actions that will be carried out to try and effect that change. We've got both leading indicators and lagging indicators of NASCO's work.

Marcus McAuley (Institute of Fisheries Management): Marcus McAuley, Institute of Fisheries Management UK and Ireland, and NGO. I don't require an answer, just three observations, I think, to reflect upon. I think there is something around predation that struck me, as it has struck others, that predation has come up as a key stressor a number of times, and the challenges in dealing with it.

I think there is something around working out when tradition is as a result of anthropogenic activity. I think some people mentioned where barriers might present the opportunity for predation, which would not exist had the anthropogenic barrier not been there.

That's one thing. I think, if I can read my writing, if I may say so, the Secretary, with her background, pointed to something important. That the salmon isn't really in the conversations or in the marine assessment processes. It tends to be legally and culturally a freshwater fish and dealt with as such. And as we've pointed out, it is both. It is as an adult, a marine fish.

There is something to think about, I think, for Parties at NASCO, on how we include salmon in the ecosystem assessment process, as it is carried out for mackerel, and herring, and all other things. And finally, I don't think I need to underline the passion of my colleagues in the NGO sector. I think a very useful observation or fact, for want of a better word, was that NGOs should be a party we should consider. And the Conservation Reports, or CCRs, is that the right word? Should be not considered the governments' alone. They should be the jurisdictions'.

In short, NGOs want to help. And just for the Parties to think about that. That it is not just a government commitment or report, it is for the jurisdiction. Thank you.

Ken Whelan (Atlantic Salmon Trust): thank you very much, Ken Whelan, Atlantic Salmon Trust NGO. Following on from what Willie and Marcus had to say, I'm delighted that my Icelandic friend threw out the challenge in terms of what we really need, by way of looking at

things differently. And the Secretary knows well my views that are very well reflective of what Marcus had to say. I think we really are missing a trick, given my marine background, in terms of trying to get a system in place whereby we are recognised as legitimate scientists within the marine world.

But the most important thing I want to say is that salt water doesn't stay in the open ocean. It's also in the nearshore and the estuaries. In the context of the process that was going on, particularly when Richard put up that lovely picture of all the people gathered around the table. It was striking me how many folks have been asked, in terms of your assessment of pressures, in relation to the nearshore and the estuarine pressures?

It's worth your while to look at that SAMARCH programme that was run some years ago. The results are online. There's also been fantastic work done by the Environment Agency in the UK and also continuing work being done by the Game and Wildlife Conservation Trust. There are real numbers, there are real statistics in relation to the levels of bycatch that are inshore.

They are literally only kilometres away from the areas that were covered in terms of the actual stressors that were described. And the significance of that inshore bycatch, that is manageable, that is something that would fall into the category which I don't like, of manage the manageables. All of that, I would suggest, needs to be reflected in terms of any sort of stressor analysis.

As an NGO group, I was asked to say that we were really pleased to see that, at long last, on the high seas, I know we're not going to go there again. But we were really pleased to see as an element in terms of the reportage, that bycatch of salmon was going to be included in ICES. We have one major concern, and that concern is that one single column would appear on the next ICES report and would give us just a number of silver fish that were actually taken as a bycatch. That's not what we're after.

We want to know, as SAMARCH has done, the quantities, the significance of it, and put it in proportion in terms of the so-called marine element, which has all sorts of complexities in terms, as I say, of the different regions within the marine. A lot of which we can tackle, and we tend now, I think, to put it all down as one single element. Certainly, I'd love to see a revised approach in terms of the stressor assessments to include those areas that are easily within control of the jurisdictions. Thank you.

Torfinn Evensen (Norwegian Salmon Rivers): I will use this opportunity to thank the Norwegian scientists that have developed the method for this stressors analysis. As an NGO, we use the results in Norway in our advocacy for the wild salmon, in our meeting in the parliament, and different situations.

It's very useful for us, and it brings us much closer to the good solution for the wild salmon. Especially when the industry, both the hydropower and aquaculture, argue for other problems for the wild salmon, to lead the focus away from the really big issues. Thank you very much.

Robert Otto (Atlantic Salmon Federation, Canada): Robert Otto of Atlantic Salmon Federation, NGOs. And for Canada, a question eventually, a little preamble. Really great to hear over the last couple of days that these are jurisdictional stressor analyses. And I just want to reinforce with Canada that I know the Atlantic Salmon Federation, I'm sure other Canadian NGOs in the room, I won't speak for them, but I've got a sense that they would love to be involved as well.

And just to let Canada know that we're looking forward to being part, going forward, of the ongoing stressor analysis, and the stressors are production for NASCO. But just a question for

Canada is around... I know that a couple of your staff were heavily involved in putting together the report to NASCO.

It's based very heavily on a committee formed under the Species at Risk Act in Canada. And that process around a threat assessment for that Species at Risk Act has been going on for some time. And we've been involved in that previous process, ongoing process for some years and have some pretty significant concerns with how it was put together as far as the data that was used was outdated. There was data that was available, particularly from a wide range of NGOs that wasn't included.

Some of the data used was, in our opinion anyway, wrong. And really concerned about the garbage in, garbage out principle. If you could make some comment about the level of discussion you had with that group, about using their quote / unquote 'product'. And whether or not there was any discussion about the level of concern that existed even within Canada, about its development and concerns that it might lead us in a wrong direction. Thank you.

Nicole Bouchard (Canada): thank you for the question. So, yes, Canada uses COSEWIC, it's an acronym for the Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife. And it is part of our legislation, as an independent committee who would provide the status as an independent committee, at arm's length from government, of scientists, who are doing quality, robust peer review science. And for salmon, they did an assessment in 2010.

They're working on a reassessment of all the status of all the DUs, which, according to their schedule, should be completed in November. They are updating the data, and all the data that they're using are submitted by jurisdictions, provinces, DFO too. And then they do their own assessment. It's not a governmental report. That's about it. It's peer-reviewed science used for the rest of the process. I missed the point of your question, I think.

Robert Otto (Atlantic Salmon Federation, Canada): thank you very much. The pointy bit on the question is, we had been back and forth with that same Committee for several years and written a couple of letters about our deep concerns with its development and, in our opinion, some serious flaws from the beginning.

I'm just wondering if, in your official's discussion with that group, whether or not they ever raised the level of concern that we have expressed, and I know others had expressed similarly in its use. And whether or not that was taken into account by Canada in essentially using that arm's-length process in the development of the stressor analysis for NASCO.

Nicole Bouchard (Canada): yes, because they are independent, we don't interfere in their process. We provide the data. If our legislative process for the Species at Risk Act says that we can either accept their evaluation or reject it for listing a species. But then we can refer back if we think there is a flaw in their process. But it would need to be that they didn't include any data or something quite significant, I should say, to do that. Other than that, it's the best available information we're using for the process. And then if you have any concerns, the best is really to contact them.

Ruth Allin (Acting President): were there any further final questions? In that case, I would very much like to thank all of those who presented their stressor analyses and contributed also to those stressor analyses behind the scenes. It's been a really informative session. I'd also like to thank all the delegates who contributed questions.

It's been a good discussion. I think we've looked at specific questions in relation to specific stressor analyses. We've heard about cross-cutting issues such as cormorant predation. And we've been asked to look out at marine mortality, and consider whether we're doing enough on

that, as well as looking at our domestic work. Lots of food for thought here. And I think a reminder to make links to other organizations as well.

Emma's mentioned the Likely Suspects Framework and the progress that's being made there, driven by NGOs. And I know similarly, there is a European conference on cormorant management that took place yesterday. I think that seems like a really clear link to make. And I think as Chair of EIFAAC, Cathal may be able to tell you more about that over dinner.

Thank you very much to everyone for a really engaging session on stressor analysis.

***Discussions held during the Special Session of the Council:
Informing the Fourth Reporting Cycle***

Robert Otto (Atlantic Salmon Federation, Canada): Robert Otto, Atlantic Salmon Federation, NGOs. Thanks, Dan, for the presentation and all the work that everybody has put into this. Just a question on the baseline, and I notice that the first year is going to be the baseline. And I'm wondering if there was any concern amongst the Group as to whether or not something besides that earlier could have been a baseline, given various circumstances? I don't have a good example off the top of my head, but I'm just wondering if that was considered or was a discussion point.

Dan Kircheis (USA): yes, we did talk about that. And what we ultimately decided is that we wanted to measure progress during the duration of the fourth reporting cycle. We wanted to see where did we start in this reporting cycle, and where did we end? And if whether or not we actually made progress in this reporting cycle. We should be able to have a clear indication by the end, you should be able to draw a line through many of these to show whether or not things are getting better, getting worse, or staying the same by the time we're done. We did have a lot of conversations about that early on in the process.

Shelley Denny (Unama'ki Institute of Natural Resources): hello, Shelley Denny with the IPRIs. I was just wondering, maybe this is addressed later on, but I understand this is a quantitative survey, not necessarily an assessment. But were there any questions regarding as to what are the challenges that prevented you from increasing, decreasing these certain, I consider them criteria, for performance?

Dan Kircheis (USA): we provide the opportunity for people to provide a remark on there. For each section, for each theme area, we have this open space where people can say look, we didn't make progress here because of these reasons or these were the roadblocks that prevented us from making progress in these areas. We provide that opportunity for comments, because we know people, to provide a straight answer, there's usually not a straight answer for many of these. But we're asking for people, just give us a yes or a no, or give us a number.

And we know that, like a lot of Parties, they want to provide a narrative as to no, it's more complicated than just a yes or a no. We provide that opportunity for comments on that.

Shelley Denny (Unama'ki Institute of Natural Resources): if they provided the response, wouldn't you include that into the report?

Dan Kircheis (USA): it'll be included in the reporting template. All of these reports are recorded online, and they become part of the report, so those narratives.

Shelley Denny (Unama'ki Institute of Natural Resources): to me, that would indicate a great way to track what your challenges are, so that you can address the challenges to enhance the performance of your indicators.

Dan Kircheis (USA): yes.

Wendy Kenyon (Atlantic Salmon Trust): hello, I'm Wendy Kenyon. I'm with the Atlantic Salmon Trust, the NGO. And you may be coming on to this, Dan, but how will this be reviewed? And so what? What happens with it?

Dan Kircheis (USA): thank you. I will get into that a bit. I'll give a precursor. The Performance

Indicators will not be reviewed by the Review Group, but there are other aspects to this, so I'm going to move into that a little bit now. And maybe this question comes back up again later on, but let me move through the other parts of the other sections to provide some context as to why.

Simon Toms (UK): Simon Toms, Environment Agency, England. I was just going to ask a question about why you included fish passage under habitat. I'm just wondering whether water quantity or water quality wasn't also considered as a metric?

Dan Kircheis (USA): we talked a lot about that. And, basically, we were very dependent on the Resolutions, Agreements and Guidelines. We wanted to make sure that we're being very consistent with that. And the one clear area that was really clear in the Guidelines for habitat related to connectivity. There was a lot of ambiguity around the water quality issues and around the other issues that affect habitat quality, and it's something that we think could be addressed as we update the Habitat Guidelines.

We may want to be more specific and more clear moving forward, but that's the one area that we could actually extract something that would give us a clear indicator of progress and related to habitat, that was in the Guidelines as written. We had a lot of ideas, but that didn't necessarily fit within the Guidelines as they're currently written.

Nora Hanson (UK): I was just wondering if the Review Group gave some consideration for the potential for overlap between the Performance Indicators and potential actions included under the Conservation Commitments Reports? And, as the Conservation Commitments Reports will be reviewed, maybe that's just fine.

Dan Kircheis (USA): there very well could be overlap. We were looking for these. We wanted to come up with common metrics that all Parties could report on. But we also realised some of those metrics might be the highest priority threats that come out in the stressor analysis that will then be reported on through the CCRs. There will be some overlap in that regard. The stressor analysis and the reporting on the stressor analysis will provide considerably more detail in terms of what Parties plan to do in order to address those stressors. Where this is, it's numbers, yes and no, without the details.

Dan Kircheis (USA): I'm going to stop there on the CCRs. I'm going to ask if there are any questions specific to the CCRs on that process. Cathal, you were on the Working Group, come on.

Cathal Gallagher (EU): Cathal Gallagher, Ireland. It's just something that I know we discussed, but maybe it might be helpful, just around the scale of the actions that we're expecting. There's a word there, significant. We're not expecting, I think, one minor action in one catchment. Maybe a little bit of background around that might be useful.

Dan Kircheis (USA): thanks for cueing me up on that. Collectively, the actions must be transformative. That's the way it's described in the plan in moving the needle to addressing these stressors. We recognise that one action might not be transformative, but collectively, the three actions should move the needle with respect to addressing the stressors that you identify.

It's a pretty tall order in a relatively short timeframe in order to move the needle on some of these stressors, we realise that. What we want to do is demonstrate to make sure people are taking aggressive action to address these stressors. We want to see you're really putting your best foot forward and really identifying tangible actions that are meaningful and robust.

Put your best foot forward. It's going to be hard to move that dot on your stressor analysis, but we want you to really give us your best shot. Give us your top, the highest priority, actions. We don't want you playing around with low-level actions, like are we going to replant 30 feet of riparian buffer. That's not moving the needle. We want it to be substantial. We're looking for

your best foot forward on addressing these actions.

Bénédicte Valadou (EU): hello, I'm Bénédicte, EU – France. Could you move to the last slide, please? Thank you. What I want to know is, why don't you put the cost of the action? I think it could be efficient to have the cost of this kind of action. And to know how to do that, and which costs we can manage. Thank you.

Dan Kircheis (USA): we didn't include the cost. But we do provide the opportunity for narrative, like we did with the Performance Indicators, an opportunity for narrative to provide context. What are the things that are holding you up from making progress? Because we know costs can get in the way. We're all at the will of our governments to provide us a budget for a lot of this stuff, to implement this stuff.

Even our NGOs are at the will of grants and all this other stuff. We don't always have the resources to make this happen, and we provide the opportunity to provide comments on that, if that's the case, so that everybody has an understanding; we tried really hard, but the resources weren't available for us to do it. That's okay, we provide that space to do that.

Alan Wells (Fisheries Management, Scotland): thank you, Alan Wells, Fisheries Management, Scotland, NGO. Whilst I absolutely recognise that you want to keep this process manageable and totally understand where you're coming from there, having been involved in the stressors analysis in Scotland, and I can see how three is appropriate to a number of jurisdictions. But in the case of Scotland, it's not really immediately obvious what the top three stressors would be. There are multiple stressors and they operate in different ways, in different parts of the country as well, different regions.

Whilst accepting you want to manage the process, is there any flexibility to try and address your sure degree of ambition by addressing the things that absolutely need to be addressed, even if it's more than three years?

Dan Kircheis (USA): I'll just say, speaking on behalf of the US and with respect to our stressor analysis, we're somewhat in the same boat. We have all these stressors that are identified and not a clear... and we definitely have more than three, but we can kind of compress them into three, to the categories of actions that basically that we thought were highest priority.

You have some flexibility to do this. You were given the flexibility in your stressor analysis to do the stressor analysis in the way that you thought was best fit for your Party. You have that same flexibility to do that in identifying the top three stressors that you plan to implement in your stressor analysis, by nature that you had that flexibility in how you do your stressor analysis. You have that flexibility to do that. I'm sorry, we're limiting you to three. You might have a number of actions, up to three actions under each stressor. Cathal, you want to comment on that?

Cathal Gallagher (EU): I think we were talking as part of the Group, we had to come up with a number that we could manage, otherwise it's up to the jurisdiction. But it's clear through our discussions that you've identified the stressors. There's no reason that you shouldn't be addressing the other stressors. This is the process the stressor analysis should have helped in identifying. And certainly jurisdictions will have stressors in each catchment; I think, if you did your review, you're going to have different stressors. But what we're talking about here is the size and the scale of actions. We're looking to get three stressors dealt with at scale to make an impact, to move the needle.

Wendy Kenyon (Atlantic Salmon Trust): hello again, Wendy Kenyon, Atlantic Salmon Trust. You started, Dan, by providing some context with the NASCO Strategic Plan. And above that, I think, sets the wider context that we heard from Alan Wells about the state of salmon

and what a terrible state we're in, lots of red boxes, all that kind of stuff. And there's something that I'm slightly concerned about in the NASCO Strategy, which is the Strategic Goal, which you've referred to a number of times.

And the Strategic Goal is something, something, something, something, to slow the decline of wild Atlantic salmon. And then you go on to talk about aggressive actions, transformative actions, blah, blah, blah. My question is, maybe not actually to you. But my question is, can someone provide the rationale for this wording, which is slow the decline of Atlantic salmon, which seems to lack ambition, perhaps?

And then, secondly, does that level of ambition in that wording reflect what NASCO would like to get out of this fourth reporting cycle?

Dan Kircheis (USA): I'm going to defer this to Ruth in a second. But I want to say, there's a couple of things going on here. One thing we say, we also say that the actions have to be, or in combination of the actions, they have to be transformative, which is pretty aggressive relative to the wording of slow the decline. Transformative, it's like you're moving that dot on your stressor analysis. You want to see that dot move in a positive direction.

That's going to take a lot. Moving these dots is going to be really, really hard. But I'm going to defer how we came up with a wording, if we had some context on the wording behind this and where we came up with a slow the decline part, because that was a Council decision.

Ruth Allin (Acting President): thank you, Dan. We did discuss in the Working Group on the Future of NASCO, which is the Group that developed the Strategy that was adopted by Council last year. There was a lot of discussion about both NASCO's Vision in the long term, which is set out in the Strategy, which is the decline of wild Atlantic salmon has reversed, and populations are recovering to healthy and resilient levels across their range. I think that's where you see NASCO's long-term ambition.

We then said to ourselves, what does that mean? We can't do that tomorrow. What do we think is realistic over a ten-year time frame? We challenged ourselves to set a much more meaningful goal and almost a smart target, you could say. Something that was measurable over a defined time frame. And that's where the halt the decline came from. And I think we heard from our scientists yesterday, from ICES, how we are seeing decline. And almost all the metrics were lowest in the time series. We're absolutely seeing those populations are continuing to decline.

And as Dan has said, actually, we need to take transformative action just to halt that decline. That, in itself would be a great achievement. The ten-year goal then goes on to say and show that restoration is possible. And we felt that that was really important in the next ten years. It would be unrealistic to restore all salmon populations everywhere. A wonderful ambition, but unrealistic for the next ten years. But we felt that it was important to be able to demonstrate that restoration can be done.

And then, assuming that the decline has been halted by 2034, the question becomes, how do we expand those restoration initiatives? How do we start going back up the curve now that we've stopped going down? That's where I think NASCO does have the ambition, but the tempering of that ambition over the ten-year time period was really about setting something that was realistic.

Wendy Kenyon (Atlantic Salmon Trust): my second question was whether that slowing the decline is a level of ambition for this fourth reporting cycle, and not anything more ambitious, like actually stopping the decline?

Dan Kircheis (USA): I'll just add, the fourth reporting cycle, from its inception to the end is going to be less than ten years, which is less than two generations. To have a biological

response in less than two generations is going to be, I don't know how to say impossible without saying impossible. It's going to be really difficult to see a biological response in that short of a time frame.

What you can show, in respect to your actions, there's a difference between what's substantive in terms of removing barriers. While you can remove one barrier, that's not meaningful. Or you could remove 100 barriers and open up a lot of habitat, and that's really meaningful. That's where you can see we've made substantial progress in addressing the actions that would ultimately address the stressor. But the biological response of salmon, to respond to that 100 dams that are removed, it's going to take longer than this reporting cycle.

That that response time is a lot longer than just the seven years of this cycle by the time we kick it off to the time it's completed.

Robert Otto (Atlantic Salmon Federation, Canada): hi, Robert Otto, NGOs. Dan, obviously, I'm going to focus in a little bit on the word transformative a little bit more. It's, I think, obvious from your description that there was a lot of discussion, and that word was used because there was a reason for it, or you would have used another word, presumably.

Just thinking about the word transformative, juxtaposing that with, say, the word strategic, which is an approach to achieving an objective. Transformative is usually used in the context of fundamental change, either in organizations or in the approach to which you are doing things. It's an incredible separation between those two. I just want to be clear that the Group was on board, and we're here having the presentation today, and that the Parties understand what transformative means and the level of expectation that it confers.

Dan Kircheis (USA): the word transformative was actually handed to us by Council, and it was described in our Terms of Reference for the Working Group on what we should do. We had that, that was part of our direction from Council, was to build in that transformative aspect of actions that are implemented, to change the direction of the needle for salmon, slow the decline. Did I cover that right? Do you want to add more, Cathal?

Cathal Gallagher (EU): I suppose, just to recognise that transformative, we did mention the issue of scale, etc., that there would be moving the needle, but the other word that is mentioned as well is urgent. And the two words were put together, urgent and transformative actions. There also is that we have measures against these transformations. Everything is tied back to the salmon numbers where possible. I'm probably missing something else.

Ruth Allin (Acting President): and just linking that back to the Strategy, I think what you've said is absolutely right, but where that came from within the Strategy, as well as defining that Vision, as well as defining that Strategic Goal, we set out NASCO's Mission, which is what NASCO would do in moving us forwards. And that that Mission Statement is for NASCO to support and promote urgent and transformative actions directed at the protection, conservation and restoration of wild Atlantic salmon throughout the species' range.

Being true to that Mission, we're trying to promote those actions, both to be delivered by Parties, by governments, by NGOs, by IPRIIs, by anyone operating in that world. And I agree, it's an ambitious statement.

Rune Jensen (SalmonCamera): Rune Jensen, from the NGO SalmonCamera, Norway. I'm a little bit disappointed here, because I think it's a very defensive strategy or defensive way of saying it, that you need two full generations to get a biological response that is measurable. And if you look to western Canada and look what happened there, just doing one thing, and you saw the tremendous response immediately following that action. I think we are well not to lock ourselves in the belief that everything has to take two generations before you see the

response.

Dan Kircheis (USA): I totally understand that. And you're right, there are types of actions that you can take that can show an immediate response. I can use an example, in the U.S., when we took actions in respect to downstream passage at dams, we went from having relatively low survival, 60 to 80% survival going through those dams, to over 95% survival going through those dams.

There are some actions that you can do. I was more being generalistic, and thinking of the full life cycle. I was largely thinking in the context of the U.S., that has two-sea-winter fish, where that lifecycle is a little bit longer than a one-sea-winter fish, and the response time for that. There are definitely circumstances that you can see a more immediate response, but oftentimes that's not the case, it often takes longer than that.

Rune Jensen (SalmonCamera): just to follow up on that, in terms of sea survival, marine survival, if the biomass is in the river, the number of smolts, for instance, it's in the river. By doing one thing and removing a factor, you grossly increase the marine survival. Hence, you could see the immediate response, not over years.

Dan Kircheis (USA): and there are some circumstances where that can be the case. But in a lot of circumstances, it's very complicated to move that needle where you have so many cumulative threats that build upon each other, to actually increase the number of smolts that are coming out of your system takes a long time. I was being generalistic, but I understand where you're coming from on that.

Ruth Allin (Acting President): thank you. I think just to build on what's been said already, I think it's worth pointing out that there are many things that are being measured in the PIs and the CCR reports. I think one, the B2 baseline, is the number of adult salmon in a jurisdiction. Clearly, that's the number we want to go up. But the CCRs are also measuring actions, so the commitments, removal of fish passages or barriers to fish passage, for example.

Through this reporting, we'll be able to see, are our stocks starting to improve, but also, are we delivering on the actions we've committed? And I think, depending on the answer to those two questions at the end of the reporting cycle, your next steps would look very different. If we failed to commit to deliver our actions, and the salmon aren't doing very well, well, we just need to try harder. Well, we need to try harder on our actions, maybe not just.

If all those actions have been delivered, and more, and then I think I would defer to the biologists as to how much improvement it would be reasonable to expect over the reporting period. But if there is no signal at all, I imagine that would be a very different story. And our next round, that will determine the fifth reporting cycle and the conversations we have about priorities in ten years' time.

Dan Kircheis (USA): both the Performance Indicators and the CCRs work together. The Performance Indicators show that you're making a difference, because you should be able to see the direction of the arrows conceivably change as you're implementing your CCRs, conceivably. That's at a relative scale. Like increasing the amount of habitat, you should see, if you're increasing, that needle should change. If you're taking out barriers relative to the number of barriers that are being put in place, which happens still.

In those cases, or the impacts of fisheries or the impacts of aquaculture, like number of escapes, you can see the direction of the arrow change in respect to those. Those may, in fact, be, like we said earlier, a high priority action for one of the Parties that is reflected in the CCRs. You can measure the progress from that action or actions which are in your CCR, as it relates to the indicators in your Performance Indicators report.

William Entwisle (South West Rivers Association): good afternoon, everybody. William Entwisle from Southwest Rivers Association. I represent some 20 rivers in the southwest of England, at the southern end of the Atlantic salmon's range. I'd just like to point out, you've got to start somewhere, and this is a great start. I will not be here in ten years, not because I am old, but because the salmon in my region will be extinct in ten years' time. I reckon we've got two to three years, and then it's gone. We really, really, really do need to get some urgency into this.

Dan Kircheis (USA): totally agree.

Marcus McAuley (Institute of Fisheries Management): hi, Marcus McAuley, Institute of Fisheries Management, UK and Ireland, NGOs. Just to bottom out, if you will, on ambition, on some of the conversations, I think halt and the slow are different things. I think we should, recognising that the Strategy is agreed, that we obviously want to slow, but if we can halt that ambition, I think should be there. And likewise, the point made about I think it is right, and I congratulate the work on bringing focus, but I think Parties should not shy away from also dealing with the other stressors. It's just really to have common understanding about that ambition. Thank you.

Dan Kircheis (USA): I appreciate that. And we really wanted to see.... In the last round of reporting, we ended up getting these very long reports back, which described every action that everyone was taking to address their issues for salmon, which was great. But we really wanted to focus in. That also created a tremendous amount of work for the Review Group, and it also wasn't real. It took away from what the intent was, to really understand the meaningful things, the aggressive things that you're taking. That's what we really wanted to see come forward from this.

This was the approach, was to try to key in on those highest priority structures, recognising Parties are doing a tremendous amount more work on the ground that needs to be done. And that's all really important. But it's really important here, in order to provide that emphasis, to focus in on those that are the most significant and most important, so that we're not losing sight of those most important actions.

Cathal Gallagher (EU): there were a couple of things around the discussion that might be helpful, that in previous iterations we were getting lots of detailed actions, many of which were, we all have jurisdictions, whether it's water quality, it was actions in the Water Framework Directive. The step change here is that we're expecting that there will be a focus on salmon and that these are new. And maybe that's a piece as well, that these are actions that need to be described as new actions. They need to be urgent, they need to be transformative, and they need to be directed at salmon, so that they're measurable.

We can talk about the Strategy and the decline, but that's the basis which we're expecting for the actions. And we were very conscious in the Group that that's the step change we want to see, is tying it to improvements in numbers. And you have the measures there to achieve that. And the words urgent and transformative from the Strategy are equally important, that we expect that it's going to happen.

And I suppose the new piece is something that it does take some time to develop new actions, to implement them, to get them at scale, to be able to roll them out. But we're trying to encourage that these are new focused actions for the benefit of salmon, and they can be measured in that way. Thanks.

Paul Vernon (Wye Salmon Association): Paul Vernon from the Wye Salmon Association. Just a point of clarification. Appreciating the importance of everything that you've done and really respect it. A point of clarification. Earlier on, you mentioned that if the top three stressors

for a catchment or whatever had been identified and there was an issue of resourcing, that there would be scope to understand that. Does that mean, I'll choose my words carefully, that they're off the hook? Or are you going to look further down the pack and say, you can't do those, but you can do this?

Dan Kircheis (USA): the Party's going to have to make a really strong justification for why they can't implement their top three, if they choose not to focus on their top three. Because we don't want them to just say, we don't want to work on this stressor, we want to work on these stressors. Recognising that this stressor is really a high priority. We can't change marine survival, which is our highest priority stressor, because it's bigger than Denmark to change marine survival, just to give an example.

That's what we're getting at, is it can't be because you don't want to do it or you're not willing to commit the resources to do it. It's not something that's within your remit to actually do, so you have to provide that justification in order to back away from one of your top three.

Patrick Martin (Conservatoire National du Saumon Sauvage): thank you very much, Patrick Martin, Conservatoire National du Saumon France. If I understand, each jurisdiction will choose three main stressors. It normally is a collaborative decision. My question is, which committee will make an evaluation of this choice which have been done? Because, as my colleague said before, if they choose a huge, very ambitious one, like dams or things like that, we make a nice paper on Nature a few years ago. We don't really have the money for that. And some cases could take 30 years, 40 years.

But if they choose this kind of thing, which is quite an easy one, not to attend, but to put on the paper, who will make the evaluation that they make the bad choice of the three stressors? Because we don't have time, salmon hasn't time. And do you make an evaluation the year they propose the three stressors? And because the plane is crashing, it's on autopilot now. But who is in the control tower to say switch off the autopilot, now you have to make the plane going to 10,000 feet and not just reducing your level?

Dan Kircheis (USA): that's a very good question. To talk a little bit about the stressor analysis and how that unfolded, that was a directive from Council. Council made the decision that set the course for doing the stressor analysis. In doing so, they provided the flexibility to the Parties to conduct the stressor analysis in the best way that they saw fit. Recognising that not everybody can or wants to do it in the same way that Norway did, which was the model that we use for the stressor analysis.

There's a tremendous amount of flexibility, go ahead and do a stressor analysis and identify your top three stressors, that they're going to be coming back with this afternoon at this meeting. That was outside of the remit of our Group to evaluate or even consider that stressor analysis beyond what was already directed by Council to do.

What we have to work with is what comes forward from this meeting forward, where the Parties are going to provide to us their top three stressors later on this year, the first round of reporting. And they're going to basically, this is how, describe to us what the outcome of their stressor analysis was and what stressors they have chosen to put in their CCRs, and how that fits into the top three stressors.

That's the limit of our control of what we have to evaluate. We are going to evaluate that. We're going to be looking at each of the stressors. We're going to look at their justification for the stressors that they provided and their justification for why, if they chose not to do their top three stressors, as to why. That's going to be the work of the next Review Group. I say we, but it's actually the Review Group that will come forward from this meeting, the 2025 meeting, after this. It won't be the Group that developed the Reporting Cycle.

It's a little convoluted, but just to provide some of that separation there and how this came about, to provide understanding of how we're moving forward.

Ruth Allin (Acting President): just to add to that, Dan, the Special Session this afternoon on the stressor analysis; the objective of that Session is to provide the opportunity to challenge those assessments. If you feel a Party is presenting something and you don't understand the basis, you're surprised at their evaluation, this is the opportunity for that challenge to take place.

Alan Wells (Fisheries Management, Scotland): I'd just like to come back to the point that's come up a couple of times about the Strategic Goal. And I notice it comes up a number of times in the Terms of Reference and the other documentation. I get what was said earlier on about the Strategic Goal and trying to keep it sensible and deliverable and all the rest of it, but there's also a Vision and a Mission. And I think as NGOs, we're pretty frustrated about the level of ambition that's coming through this whole meeting, really, and the processes that we're involved in here.

Why not make reference to the Vision and the Mission in terms of what you're trying to achieve here, rather than that Strategic Goal? Because slowing the decline is still a declining salmon population.

Dan Kircheis (USA): and that really relates to the time frame of the fourth reporting cycle, in what we can expect within that time cycle. Even though, again, we'd like to make more progress than just slow the decline, but there's that reality that we have to work within. The Strategic Goal is much bigger than that, it's more long term. And we were trying to fit it within the context of that shorter time frame.

Alan Wells (Fisheries Management, Scotland): I understand that point, but this is about setting that ambition and really setting out that target. And it's dispiriting to see that sort of language used here. I think it's a minor change, but it would fundamentally change the context of what we're trying to do.

Dan Kircheis (USA): I hear you. I totally understand where you're coming from and we'll think about that.

Ruth Allin (Acting President): from a process point of view, I can just say that this will be discussed at Council tomorrow morning. That's when the recommendations from the Working Group will be considered. That's the point at which it might be helpful to restate that intervention.

Wendy Kenyon (Atlantic Salmon Trust): Wendy Kenyon from Atlantic Salmon Trust. Right at the start, I asked you a so-what question about the review. In the Implementation Plans, I believe there was a spreadsheet done with red, green and amber type things of what had passed and so on. I bring that up here. And then when there was a fail, or whatever you want to call it, there was a point in time where the President wrote to the relevant minister and said, naughty, naughty, pull your socks up. What is the so-what when you do the review is my question?

Dan Kircheis (USA): a good point. We're going to have arrows this time, probably. It depends on... We're going to have the reporting every year, which was going to show whether we're making progress on these Performance Indicators or not. And that report will be presented every year. I remember we talked a lot about whether or not we were going to write the letter or not. I don't remember how we left off, though. Do you, Emma? I can't recall how we left off. I'm sorry I put you on the spot.

Emma Hatfield (Secretary): in the schedule, starting in April 2027, NASCO will send letters to ministers, introducing them to the fourth reporting cycle. And for information, the finalised CCRs and completed PI reports for each relevant jurisdiction will be sent to the relevant

ministers for information with a link to the overview document.

That's a starting position. And then for each biennial review, the reviews from the Review Group and the latest Performance Indicator reports will again be sent to the relevant ministers. It's different, there are not going to be letters sent out as you're doing badly, because that isn't how this is being reviewed. But the information will be sent out, the reviews will be sent out, and it can then be up to the relevant Heads of Delegation to follow up with their ministers, to answer questions. That will all be public.

Robert Otto (Atlantic Salmon Federation, Canada): thanks again, Dan. Robert Otto, NGOs. Just a question. It follows up, and since I was thinking about this question, the discussion around this has been helpful. I'm wondering, was there any consideration to, for instance, if a Party is consistently missing their milestones.

The milestones are important, and I think you did a great job of explaining why you want those milestones, because you don't want to get to eight or nine years, and suddenly you find out that you didn't do very much. Is there any sort of safety net provision or something? If there's some consistent pattern to missing milestones or not doing those things, is there any diversionary remedial action? I think there was a little bit of discussion here, but I think it would be good to tackle that one head-on.

Dan Kircheis (USA): we provide the opportunity to re-engage with the Parties every couple of years to get at that point. We can ask those questions, if you're not meeting your milestones, why? There's also an opportunity, maybe all of a sudden you had this other stressor that all of a sudden is more important. It wasn't even on the radar, but it is now, and we really need to focus our attention there. That's the opportunity. There are those opportunities to, we need to put our attention over here. We can't put all our energy here when this is elevated up.

There will be that opportunity to come back and update, make those changes if you need to.

Emma Hatfield (Secretary): at the end of the day, there will be a Special Session of the Council every year. And it will either be on the Performance Indicators or on the Performance Indicators and the Conservation Commitment Reports. And the reason why NASCO likes having lots of accredited Observers is because they hold the Parties and jurisdictions to account.

Your job is to hold the Parties and jurisdictions to account. We also want you to work with the Parties and jurisdictions. This is trying to be a much more inclusive process to ensure that it is the work, as Dan said at the beginning, being done by everybody within a jurisdiction to help salmon restoration. You, NGOs, you, IPRI's, are a very important component of NASCO's reporting cycles.

The transparency of the cycle allows you to be fully involved. All the papers will be available, normally at least a month in advance of the meeting. You have time to look at them. You know who the people are, you can go and talk to them. But at the end of the day, the Parties and jurisdictions do not criticise each other in these sessions. It is up to the NGOs and the IPRI's to really ram home the problems that you have with the work that is not being done.

And if the work is being done, please tell them it's being done. And if it's being done well, tell them. Because a lot of the feedback is quite often negative, and there's a lot of good stuff being done. And we're hoping that this fourth reporting cycle is going to have demonstrably more good stuff being done without it being lost in the weeds of all the other stuff. Part of the other thing, and we talk about outreach and comms in Council tomorrow, very much underpinning a lot of this development was how does this allow NASCO to demonstrate in a simple way what is being done by the Parties and jurisdictions?

The Performance Indicators, very clear, simple questions, yes / no answers. Maybe not simple

responses, but they're straightforward questions. There will be a report every year. The Secretariat will be able to produce infographics of the different indicators, the different metrics, to show very clearly for one metric, right the way across the Atlantic, what is the state of that metric for salmon.

There's a lot of ways in which the messaging from this can be much clearer. It'll be much more easily understood. And it's therefore more able to be able to be critiqued by the NGOs and the IPRI's, because the information is more clearly presented.

Ken Whelan (Atlantic Salmon Trust): thank you very much, indeed. Ken Whelan, Atlantic Salmon Trust, NGO. Just by chance, I happen to be engaged in a similar process to the process we're about at the moment, in terms of salmon. And we drew the analogy that what we have here, as you've heard from Willie, we have here a very sick patient. Since 1983, we've been doing the triage on that patient.

We didn't think it was a particularly bright idea to actually then put down as a goal, that we would slow the death of the patient. That wasn't a really clever thing to do. We thought maybe the word we'd use would be stabilise. At the end of the day, I think the least we could expect as NGOs is that the Parties would have the ambition of stabilising the population. And then we get to the recovery, etc.

But I really think that that thing about slowing the decline, I really think that's a really important point that was made. And I think we need some other wordage, and that's my suggestion, in terms of getting it across, that we're really keen to try and make a difference. Stabilising will make a difference. Slowing the death of the animal will not make a difference.

Dan Kircheis (USA): I appreciate that. Again, I think Ruth had mentioned that we can bring this up on the floor tomorrow to have this discussion, because this was a decision that was made on the floor by Council last year. And I think that would be the place to take that into account, to figure out how we want to deal with that. There will be a little deviation. I'm trying to think, we already made a decision on the wording as slow the decline.

Ruth Allin (Acting President): Emma and I will discuss. It sounds like a reopening of the Strategy. I don't know whether that's possible or not, but we've heard the point. I think we need to work out how that can be addressed.

Rune Jensen (SalmonCamera): thank you for an excellent presentation, it was really a thrill, very good. I do, however, have one question and one question only. And I might ask a stupid question. I really understand the need to go to prioritise the three most important stressors, I do understand that. But several times during the years, a new thing or a new science report comes in our hands, and we see that we need to change attention. I'm sure you have already established an emergency brake for changing the prioritising.

Dan Kircheis (USA): we do allow for that opportunity to revisit your stressors if you need to. There may be a time that something else just comes up that you have to put this forward first. And we provide that opportunity to do so any time during the Reporting Cycle, that can happen. And it's basically just come to us, say we need to change it, and we'll definitely consider that. Or come to the Review Group, they'll be prepared for that type of thing.