

WGCIS(26)15
(Duplicated as WGC(26)05)

Report of the Inter-Sessional Meeting of the West Greenland Commission

Nuuk, Greenland
(with virtual access for some delegates)

3 & 4 March 2026

1. Opening of the Meeting

- 1.1 The Chair, Katrine Kaergaard (Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland)), opened the meeting and welcomed participants.
- 1.2 She noted that at the 2022 Annual Meeting of the West Greenland Commission, [WGC\(22\)12](#), the ‘Multi-Annual Regulatory Measure for Fishing for Atlantic Salmon at West Greenland’, [WGC\(22\)10](#), was agreed.
- 1.3 The Chair informed participants that the purpose of the meeting was to start to consider a new multi-annual regulatory measure to apply to the Atlantic salmon fishery at West Greenland from 2026. It is expected that a new multi-annual regulatory measure will be adopted at the Annual meeting in June 2026.
- 1.4 A Written Opening Statement was provided by Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland) (DFG) (Annex 1).
- 1.5 A list of participants is included as Annex 2.

2. Adoption of the Agenda

- 2.1 The Commission adopted its Agenda, WGCIS(26)07 (Annex 3).

3. Nomination of a Rapporteur

- 3.1 The Assistant Secretary was appointed Rapporteur for the meeting.

4. Review of the Report on the 2025 West Greenland Atlantic Salmon Fishery

- 4.1 The Chair noted that prior to the inter-sessional meeting, DFG provided the papers ‘2025 Report on the Salmon Fishery in Greenland’, [WGCIS\(26\)03](#), and ‘Report on Atlantic Salmon Fishery 2021-2025’, [WGCIS\(26\)05](#). She also noted that the Secretariat prepared an overview, [WGCIS\(26\)04](#), of the 2025 report and progress in implementing the ‘Multi-Annual Regulatory Measure for Fishing for Atlantic Salmon at West Greenland’, [WGC\(22\)10](#), in the 2022-2025 seasons. She then invited DFG to provide an update on the West Greenland Atlantic Salmon Fishery.
- 4.2 Representatives from Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland) provided a comprehensive overview of the regulatory framework, management structure, and legislative instruments governing the West Greenland salmon fishery, detailing the roles of various authorities, the licensing process and the rationale behind subsistence-based management.
- 4.3 DFG gave a presentation on ‘The Salmon fishery in Greenland’([WGCIS\(26\)09](#)). The

presentation discussed the culture of self-sufficiency, implementation of the Regulatory Measure and the salmon fishing season in 2025 and the salmon report produced that covered the seasons 2021-2025.

- 4.4 DFG's Greenland Fishing and Hunting Control (GFJK) gave a presentation on 'Review of the report on 2025 West Greenland Atlantic Salmon Fishery' ([WGCIS\(26\)10](#)). The presentation discussed the control of the salmon fishery, covering the salmon reporting template, reporting system and inspection.
- 4.5 Canada raised that it would be interesting to have descriptive statistics on the number of inspections undertaken and the number of different kinds of violations. Such information would help inform discussions on regulatory measures related to the timeliness and comprehensiveness of reporting, as well as support understanding of any unreported catch. DFG responded that the information was available on their website and could be shared.
- 4.6 The NGO Co-Chair noted that of the three options that were available for reporting, one was for fishers to fill out the reporting form digitally and submit it manually. He raised that effective management of the salmon fishery was dependent on timely reporting and queried that if the form was filled out digitally could it also be submitted digitally, with printing a copy an additional option. DFG responded that printing out and handing in a paper was a cultural issue, but removing the option to submit manually could be considered.
- 4.7 The NGO Co-Chair raised that he had believed a basic weight was allocated to each salmon of three kilos on average and asked if fishers are estimating the number of kilos of fish they harvest, or do they weigh them. DFG responded that fishers can weigh the salmon themselves or give estimates, which have been found to be close to the actual weight.
- 4.8 The UK raised that it was interested to understand the split between online and paper reporting. DFG noted that increasing online reporting was being observed and indicated a preference to have all reporting online, but they were conscious of the need to be inclusive in giving everyone an option to report. Consideration is being given to the provision of support to further accommodate online reporting.
- 4.9 The United States noted the option of using paper reports which are submitted to municipalities' offices and asked whether every community had an office. DFG responded that each community has a municipality office and recognised that the process of submitting the report can cause delays and merited consideration of how to improve this process.
- 4.10 The United States noted that monitoring appeared to be a challenge and suggested that commercial fishers with larger historic catches should be expected to report more frequently. DFG raised that several factors may limit the accessibility of reporting, such as the opening hours of the municipality office, while the use of a support person during the reporting process had been observed to be very effective.
- 4.11 The EU asked whether any measures were in place for bigger harvesters that were fishing regularly to ensure they are meeting licence obligations. DFG noted that while some later reporting had occurred, it was not a long way from the closure date and bigger harvesters would incur penalties such as losing their licence if they did not meet their licence obligations. The EU further asked if these fishers are aware of their obligations. DFG responded that the fishers were aware of this and also of the possibility of losing their licence for the year ahead.

- 4.12 DFG gave a presentation on ‘The 2025 salmon fishing season’ ([WGCIS\(26\)11](#)) with detailed statistics, including licence issuance, catch volumes, quota uptake, reporting delays and the impact of communication campaigns on reporting behaviour.
- 4.13 The IPRI asked, in relation to the phone conversations with the fishers regarding the reporting, whether there were any conversations regarding how they could provide solutions to some of the issues that they face regarding reporting. DFG responded, noting that the information relating to this query will be included in a later presentation.
- 4.14 The EU asked whether unreported catches were assumed to be catches of 0 fish. DFG noted that some licence holders may not use their licences and further clarified that reporting of a 0-catch reflected unsuccessful fishing as opposed to not going fishing.
- 4.15 The EU noted the information given by DFG on the extension of the fishing period and asked whether that was decided in advance, or close to the end, and how the percentage was calculated. DFG responded with the example of 2025 which was decided during the fishing period. DFG further clarified that in following the catches being reported in 2025 it was apparent that they were low, leading to the decision to extend the fishing period to allow for more fishing.
- 4.16 The EU raised the instances of the fishery being closed once a certain percentage of the quota had been caught and asked how that percentage was established. DFG referred to the example of 2024, when the fishery was closed once 49% of the quota had been reached. In earlier years a closure at 49% uptake had resulted in the catch being close to the quota, but in 2024 resulted in the total catch falling significantly below the quota, leading to complaints from harvesters that the fishery had been closed too early. As a result, a decision was made in 2025 to take on more risk of an overharvest and to leave the fishery open until a higher percentage (80%) of the quota was reported as caught; this led to the total catch being much higher than the quota. Canada sought clarity on whether this meant that, once 80% quota uptake had been reached and the decision was made and announced to close the fishery, fishers had three days from the notification of closure to remove their fishing gear; DFG confirmed that this was correct, also that the 80% quota uptake was on a specific area and, not the whole West Greenland area.
- 4.17 The NGO Co-Chair queried whether the time lag shown in the Report vs Catch Date figure in DFG’s presentation on ‘Review of the report on 2025 West Greenland Atlantic Salmon Fishery’ ([WGCIS\(26\)10](#)) was calculated every week to see if it was changing. DFG responded that the time lag is calculated regularly but a trend analysis is not done, with the assumption made that the gap will be the same as in the previous year.
- 4.18 Canada asked if there is a maximum net mesh size to correspond to the minimum mesh size of 140 mm. DFG noted that there is not and its implementation is being considered.
- 4.19 DFG gave a presentation on non-reporting, a summary of the 2025 season and implementation of the Regulatory Measure (‘The 2025 salmon fishing season’, [WGCIS\(26\)11](#)). They attempted to make post-season phone calls to a subset of 55 non-reporting harvesters. Of those, 25 either did not receive the call or declined to be interviewed. Among the 30 interviewed, 80% reported that they had not caught any salmon and had not been fishing. Most were happy with the current system, reminding them, and preferred text messages to be included.
- 4.20 The EU asked what would lead to non-reporters losing their licence and whether if someone had forgotten their licence when being inspected would that be sufficient. DFG responded that fishers who did not report would not get a licence.

- 4.21 The United States noted that 80% of fishers reported they had not caught salmon and asked whether data was collected on the remaining 20% that did catch salmon , and if that data was then included in the catch numbers. DFG confirmed that data was collected and noted that those who had caught salmon usually caught one or two fish, at most 20 kg.
- 4.22 The UK asked whether the non-reporters noted in 2025 had previously not reported. DFG responded that they had not checked that and worked from a list of the people who have licences, with the assumption that if you did not report in the previous year you do not get a licence. The NGO Co-Chair suggested that it may be possible to estimate what was not reported from the data and use that estimate to correct for unreported catch.
- 4.23 DFG gave a presentation on ‘The report on 2021-2025 salmon fishing seasons’ ([WGCIS\(26\)12](#)). The presentation included discussions on outlining legislative frameworks, quota allocations, reporting requirements and catch statistics.
- 4.24 The United States thanked DFG for producing a useful report that was above and beyond what was required and asked whether any major changes to the salmon management plan were being considered and the timeline for producing the plan . DFG noted that there is a Working Group considering the needed modifications to the plan, but they did not anticipate that there would be major changes. They noted that they expected the plan to be completed before the Annual Meeting.
- 4.25 The IPRIIs thanked DFG for a very enlightening report, noting that they were interested to know what the average catch of a professional fisher was and they would look in the report for that information.
- 4.26 The EU asked whether to get a licence you need to be a resident. DFG replied that you do need to be a resident to get a licence.

5. Consideration of a New Multi-Annual Regulatory Measure to apply to the Atlantic Salmon Fishery at West Greenland from 2026

- 5.1 DFG gave a presentation ‘Considerations to apply to the Atlantic Salmon Fishery in West Greenland in 2026’ ([WGCIS\(26\)13](#)) The presentation outlined plans for 2026 to automate reporting processes, enhance awareness campaigns through posters, social media, and targeted communications, and address cost and coverage challenges associated with SMS text reminders.
- 5.2 Canada asked why the SMS text reminders were costly to send out. DFG replied that the cost is related to the number of characters in a message and each message may be composed of four texts, with a requirement to send messages in both Danish and Greenlandic. DFG further raised that they would prefer to send out emails, but most private fishers do not read emails, and that they had discussed using Facebook this year as a lot of people follow government pages on it.
- 5.3 The Chair reminded the delegates that for this agenda point they are considering a new multi-annual regulatory measure to apply from the 2026 Atlantic Salmon Fishery in Greenland. She noted that delegates may consider the provisions of the current regulatory measure and whether they should be retained, removed or revised.
- 5.4 DFG presented ‘GINR presentation on the salmon fishery in Greenland’ ([WGCIS\(26\)14](#)). The presentation described ongoing scientific data collection, the history of the fishery and recent citizen science sampling efforts, including public

awareness campaigns and the integration of genetic analysis for stock identification.

- 5.5 The EU commented that all the information received had been very useful and there was a general trend of progress in terms of reporting, although there was room for improvement. The EU added that on the topic of the regulatory measure it seemed that a new one is needed. In addition the EU raised that the detail of when to close the fishery should be looked into more, including when the data comes in, bearing in mind the sensitivities of the fishers. The EU noted the requirement for people to fish but also the need to balance a sensitive fishery and asked to what context is the scientific advice from ICES is included in the Greenlandic legal framework.
- 5.6 The UK raised that it had been really valuable to hear from the wider fisheries team and positive to hear improvements are already being identified. The UK noted that it seemed the context had changed since the last Regulatory Measure was first developed, with salmon are now critically endangered and NASCO's new Strategy calling for urgent and transformative action. The UK further noted that the new Regulatory Measure has to go further than the present one and raised concerns about overall fishing pressure.
- 5.7 Canada thanked DFG for the information they had presented, which had been really valuable, recognising the advances made in the management of the fishery in recent years. Canada noted that while there is now a clearer picture of the management situation, there are some challenges, such as delays in reporting, overruns, and possible under-reporting. Canada further noted the ongoing decline in the salmon stocks targeted by the West Greenland fishery, as reported by ICES and as reflected in Canada's assessments of the stocks returning to its rivers, with many classified as at risk. Canada explained that it has been taking action and prioritising conservation for many years in response to these declines, including through restricting its fisheries despite serious impacts on subsistence and cultural activities. Canada indicated that, in this context, fishing mortality in the West Greenland fishery is too high and needs to be reduced.
- 5.8 The United States thanked DFG for giving very valuable presentations and noted that they fully understand and appreciate that it is vital for people to have the right to provide for themselves and their families, and that the salmon fishery in West Greenland has strong cultural importance. The United States noted that salmon stocks are classified as endangered in the US and that tribal nations have voluntarily stopped fishing in the name of conservation. The US also noted was NASCO's Parties / jurisdiction recent commitment to taking urgent and transformative actions to address this decline. The United States highlighted that the ICES advice for Atlantic salmon has been 0 harvest since 2002 and its status has not changed since that time, and as such, their preference is to follow scientific advice and to end the mixed stock fishery in West Greenland. The United States also raised that given the complexity of that course of action, they would be open to discussing both short-term and longer-term paths forward in line with some of the recommendations that have already been highlighted.
- 5.9 DFG raised that they would like to retain the same quota preferably over a five-year plan and highlighted that people are starting to come round to the importance of reporting, which has been improving, and the incident of overfishing in 2021 had not happened again. DFG further noted that the quota has been decreasing for last 40 years and stocks have not improved, with the quota now down at 27 metric tonnes, and a further decrease in quotas would not be accepted.
- 5.10 The IPRI raised that many people rely on salmon as their way of life, socially and economically. The IPRI further raised that the current management efforts in place are

ineffective in maintaining fishing at the level of the Total Allowable Catch (TAC), also noting they were very grateful for transparency and reporting efforts around the salmon fishery. The IPRI noted that it is not the entire salmon fishery in Greenland that is having challenges, it is essentially the professional fishery, and focusing efforts there may be more effective. The IPRI further noted this is an opportunity to integrate Indigenous knowledge and explore new data collection tools, such as the Siku app used in Canada, to enhance reporting and management, especially in remote or offline contexts.

- 5.11 The NGO Co-Chair thanked DFG for their presentations and noted that they were very valuable. He further noted that progress could be made around the level of unreported harvest and whether or not it is in keeping with a TAC of 27 metric tonnes.
- 5.12 The Chair invited the members of the West Greenland Commission to review the text of the 'Multi-Annual Regulatory Measure for Fishing for Atlantic Salmon at West Greenland', [WGC\(22\)10](#).
- 5.13 The United States noted that the preamble required updating, such as referencing the current regulatory measure, and proposed tasking the Secretariat with redrafting the text. The Chair agreed that the preamble would be updated, and any specific points relating to this would be happily received.
- 5.14 DFG raised that according to their mandate DFG could not go any lower than 27 metric tonnes and they would like to look into solutions that would allow for this to be agreed on. DFG further noted that they were open to making further improvements, having had some success with surveys and questionnaires in other commercial fisheries, sent out by text and email. DFG raised that it has been started for other fisheries last year.
- 5.15 The EU noted that there has been significant progress in the work around the West Greenland Fishery and congratulated DFG on that. The EU also raised two issues in consideration of the regulatory measure; firstly that a proportion of people were not reporting properly and secondly that the percentage reference of when to pressure the fishery, set at 49%, required addressing. The EU further raised the scientific advice from ICES which states that the fishery should be 0 catch.
- 5.16 Canada supported the points raised by the EU and noted that they were satisfied with most of the items in the regulatory measure, but that some required further discussion, and item 4 would be a suitable starting place.
- 5.17 The Chair noted that the TAC would go in the first section of the draft of the new regulatory measure, with the number in brackets. She further noted that DFG were very clear that 27 metric tonnes is their limit, and she understood that most Parties would be happy if there was an accountability element.
- 5.18 Canada raised that they felt that the TAC must be decreased and accountability is an accompanying measure. They noted that one thing to be further examined was the professional fishers. Canada further noted they have eliminated their own commercial fishery and they were hoping to see a decrease in the TAC.
- 5.19 The US raised that they had a similar situation in that they have no commercial fishery. The US noted that their mandate is to seek a decrease in TAC for those reasons. They further noted that they would encourage everybody to have consultations in the next month and see if any flexibility was available in Parties' mandates.
- 5.20 The UK noted they were similar to Canada and the United States in looking for a decrease in pressure in West Greenland. They noted that 27 metric tonnes does not seem

like a significant quantity, but having checked with their scientists the UK could share that their worst English river has just 12 spawners returning. They raised that even reducing that by one fish is almost a 10% reduction in the spawning stock.

- 5.21 The EU raised that they would also support a reduction in TAC. The EU also raised that DFG may want to consider a symbolic reduction on TAC in time, e.g. a gradual reduction, such as 24 / 25 metric tonnes next year, 23 metric tonnes in two years' time, etc., taking scientific advice into consideration.
- 5.22 The United States agreed that much of the text was still applicable, with some updating and streamlining needed, and that items 4, 5 and 11 required changes. They further noted that the salmon of US origin caught in this fishery are endangered, that conservation measures are being implemented at home. DFG had previously expressed a preference for a new to a five-year measure which could be acceptable to the United States.
- 5.23 The UK stated that their position was very similar to those heard from other Parties, with a lot of good and strong aspects in the regulatory measure that they would like to see taken forward and some provisions that required more detailed examination. The UK highlighted that item 4 contained the amount of the TAC which they wished to discuss further, noting that the world had changed since the measure was agreed. They further raised that item 5 gave provisions for a closure threshold which had not delivered the desired results, although there had been an improvement, and indicated that they were open to revisiting that or to looking for a more outcome-focused measure. The UK noted that it was very specific to state that the fishery must be closed at that point and they would be willing to discuss removing that provision, but that there would then be a penalty for DFG if the threshold was not met, to act as an incentive. The UK suggested that such an incentive could be that if there was overfishing in one year, there would be a reduction in the following year. The UK also raised that item 8 around additional steps to improve reporting could be amended, that a number of suggestions had been raised which could be reflected in that item.
- 5.24 DFG agreed that the 49% may not be the best way of ensuring that they are below the TAC and agreed that removing it may be a good option. With respect to the concept of a penalty, DFG raised that it may not be the best way forward. DFG also noted that the TAC may need to be redistributed to ensure everyone can catch salmon.
- 5.25 The IPRI raised concerns with the current measures in place as micromanaging the fishery without being transformative or new. The IPRI further raised that, from their perspective, the issue was with the professional fishers. The IPRI noted that the challenge was about reporting and sharing the quota among the professional fishers and recreational or private fishers. The IPRI further noted that they would support an interim measure rather than a five-year measure, which they believe is too long given the current status of salmon. They raised that it would be an interesting concept to try to have professional fisheries have a limit or their own TAC with some salmon for their own personal use plus for their own sale.
- 5.26 DFG raised that having changes made every year had been found to confuse fishers, who did not know what the current legislation was if changes were made every one or two years. DFG further raised that they did not want to overharvest and wanted to get as close to the TAC as possible while remaining under it.
- 5.27 The UK noted that the IPRI suggestion to allocate quotas to individuals was interesting, assuming individuals are able to adhere to their individual quotas, as it is not reactive.

The UK further noted that it would be a fundamentally different approach that would avoid the communication delays, one of the biggest challenges in this fishery.

- 5.28 The United States noted that considering the actions that NASCO has taken in recognising and inviting in IPRI's they would like to suggest adding a paragraph in the preamble on recognising the rights of IPRI's to fish and that many Indigenous Peoples, for example within the US, have foregone their opportunities for fishing altogether.
- 5.29 Canada recognised that the variability from season to season was challenging to manage and that moving to an outcome-based focus as suggested by the UK would be worth exploring. Canada suggested that one option would be if there was an overage e.g. of 2 metric tonnes, that would be paid back in the same amount in the subsequent year. Canada raised concerns about the decision taken in 2025, in the Northwest professional fishery, to accept more risk of an overage because of concerns on the part of harvesters that there had been an underage in the previous year. Canada noted this decision as being inconsistent with the spirit of the Regulatory Measure that was in place. Canada also raised that many of their stakeholders find it concerning that they are unable to catch and sell the fish that originate in their rivers, but others are.
- 5.30 DFG raised that based on previous questions and discussions, they had looked into the overall data to get an understanding of the commercial fishing and see that for the past couple of years and noted that just a few commercial fishermen fished a lot and had a high quota uptake. DFG further raised that it could make sense to focus on these few individuals, which was less than five people, to ensure that they report regularly, preferably daily, and to track them during the season.
- 5.31 The EU queried if fishers were informed of their obligations for the fishery when they obtained a licence, if they did so in person from a municipality office, and if licences were automatically renewed annually. DFG responded that requirements were stated in the licence, which could be collected from a municipality office or could be digital, and licences were not automatically renewed.
- 5.32 Canada asked if there was information on the five fishers who had the highest proportion of the professional fisher quota, to understand where the fish went. DFG responded that the fish were primarily sold at the fish market.
- 5.33 DFG raised that they would like to improve and do more quality checks on the data being submitted by fishers to ensure they are receiving the correct data.
- 5.34 The Chair noted that the main items of the current regulatory measure that required revision were 4, 5, 8 and 11.
- 5.35 The United States raised that they have similar views to the UK and Canada and are flexible in removing some of the specific provisions, such as 49% in item 5, and streamlining some of the text. The United States further noted that if a five-year measure was proposed, there would be an opportunity to review it every year. They also raised that the quota would not have to be a set a single amount applicable for each year of the measure, but it could be preferable to have a decrease per year in a recognition of working towards scientific advice, recognising the scientific advice has been 0 for 20 plus years.
- 5.36 The UK asked for clarification on the DFG management plan, which DFG confirmed ended in 2025 and a new plan was in development to start in 2026. DFG further confirmed that the plan duration was five years to provide stable management for the fishermen.

- 5.37 The Chair noted that as part of the management plan development DFG would be consulting with stakeholders and confirmed the plan would be available in English.
- 5.38 The Chair proposed that she review and update the preamble text with the Secretariat following the meeting, to allow focus on specific points in the new regulatory measure. She also noted that the majority of information in the current Regulatory Measure is in the legislation as well as the previous Management plan, both of which could be referred to directly in the new regulatory measure. The Chair went through the current Regulatory Measure with the Commission to highlight those items and provisions that are now in legislation and could be removed or edited.
- 5.39 The Chair invited members of the Commission to comment on what accountability would look like, following several points raised earlier in the meeting on outcome focus and accountability, payback and carryover.
- 5.40 DFG queried whether accountability could be in the form of any overfishing in one year would be deducted from the next year and any underfishing could be added on to next year. The United States responded that this was one suggestion but suggested that a limit on the quantity to be transferred may be required.
- 5.41 Canada noted that deciding an acceptable number to carry forward was challenging, as it was difficult considering the scientific advice for allowable catch is still 0. Canada proposed that the best action would be to discuss the principle of a carry-forward in the Meeting, after which each Party would consult with its scientists about what may be appropriate.
- 5.42 The IPRI raised concerns that an implementation of penalties around overharvest could be quite harsh and asked the Commission to remember this is people's way of life. The IPRI further raised that there are examples of restorative justice measures, with actions to make amends for wrongdoing, which was another way that could be considered.
- 5.43 DFG highlighted that their mandate is 27 metric tonnes and a reduction clause could be a reduction on paper that could have unintended consequences, such as discouraging people from reporting. DFG raised that they could improve their management of numbers, although also noting that there is only so much control officers can do.
- 5.44 The Chair noted that the previous Regulatory Measure had a payback provision and the catch was much higher, suggesting something has been done well for the past few years.
- 5.45 DFG raised that the Commission had heard statements about the scientific advice a few times and it was important to keep in mind what was said in its opening statement, that it is not only fishing that has an impact, but also river damming and environmental pollution, of which there is none in Greenland.
- 5.46 Canada queried whether more information was available on the professional fishers which would be helpful to understand the implications of some of the steps being discussed.
- 5.47 DFG shared information on the distribution of catch among the professional fishers with the highest catch and highlighted that some of the information may not have been entered correctly, however it was not followed up at the time. Consideration was being given to contacting those who caught over 5% of the TAC to ensure they report at least weekly, preferably daily and preferably electronically. Those with the highest catches get a call to make direct contact, while those that are high but not the highest catches would get a text message or email. DFG noted that a lot of information could be collected by tracking licences and examining the details of fishers and their catches.

- 5.48 The Chair proposed that the Commission identify substantial things that they would like to see in the Regulatory Measure and the Chair would draft a new version to circulate. She noted that accountability and a payback / carryover proposal had been raised. Payback could be an overshoot which would then be reduced on the next year's TAC and might include possible carryover if there is an underharvest. The Chair raised that in other international agreements a 10% maximum carryover had been specified.
- 5.49 DFG noted that 10% would not amount to much considering the size of the salmon quota and harvest compared to the size of the quota and harvest for some of their offshore fisheries.
- 5.50 The Commission members reviewed the current Regulatory Measure, [WGC\(22\)10](#), and proposed amendments in wording and structure to the Chair. The UK proposed a structure of three sections for the main body of the document, with section 1 on the TAC, section 2 on the Management Plan and legislation and section 3 on the role of the West Greenland Commission, e.g. the sampling agreement and possibility of review. The first section with the TAC would be where accountability would be addressed and Canada clarified its position that accountability for TAC overharvest was not a substitute for a reduction in the TAC – both are important to Canada.
- 5.51 In further discussion of what to include in the measure, DFG reiterated that it had no mandate to approve a decrease in the quota, while other members indicated that their mandate is to seek a reduction.
- 5.52 The US indicated that it was difficult for them to propose a TAC above zero since that is the science advice.
- 5.53 The IPRI representative noted that they were conscious of the implications of the West Greenland fishery for Indigenous People in Canada and wondered what Greenland could do to help them.
- 5.54 Canada asked that DFG work to come up with a proposal on how the TAC could be reduced.
- 5.55 DFG indicated that they had noted these comments and would consider them in their internal deliberations.
- 5.56 The IPRI representative further wondered whether a potential reopening of the measure could be contingent on future developments; for example, if Indigenous People in Canada are no longer able to fish, could that trigger a reopening of the measure?

6. Other Business

- 6.1 The United States asked for the West Greenland Sampling Program to be considered under Other Business.
- 6.2 The United States gave an overview of the program to the Commission, through which Parties contribute to various parts of the program, some provide scientific samplers while others provide funding to support actions such as genetic analysis and scale analysis. The outputs are captured in working papers which details the programme results and are provided to ICES Working Group who use the outputs as part of its stock assessments (see <https://nasco.int/west-greenland-sampling-programme/>) .
- 6.3 The United States raised that a new co-ordinator of the program would be required in the next 1-2 years and suggested a discussion should be undertaken at the Annual Meeting of the West Greenland Commission to consider the relevance of the program and how it could go forward. The United States acknowledged that budgets are

challenging and funding and resources are limited. The United States noted that the program had a 60+-year time series of samples. DFG noted and provided some details on the Greenland Institute of Natural Resources (GINR) recently developed citizen science program.

- 6.4 The Chair confirmed that the citizen science program in Greenland had received 40 samples from the 2025 fishery.
- 6.5 DFG agreed on the importance of the project and that how it could be done was up for discussion.
- 6.6 The UK queried whether the West Greenland Sampling Program was related to NASCO's ICES advice requests. The Secretary responded that it was not directly related to the ICES advice request and currently, there are no NASCO budgetary funds allocated to support this programme.
- 6.7 The Chair queried whether the citizen science program would be sufficient to continue the time series of data. The United States responded that it would hope it would be and that some of the costs currently used for researchers to travel to Greenland to obtain samples could possibly be used to support the citizen science program.
- 6.8 The Chair queried if someone would need to administer or process samples. The United States responded that yes someone would need to administer or process samples, but there are a lot of different options that could simplify the process where you may not need all the detailed analysis every year and you could get by with every other year of analysis for example.
- 6.9 The NGO Co-Chair raised that this is a long data set and with challenges such as climate change and changes to the ocean environment the program is an important and essential part of understanding what is happening. He noted that if there was a way to continue with the sampling it should definitely be considered.
- 6.10 The United States raised that there had not been a change in mandate regarding the program and Parties would be contacted to initiate a program in 2026. The EU noted that the willingness of the Parties to participate in the program in terms of travel and sampling would be required. The United States noted that the Parties would be contacted before the Annual Meeting with a request for commitment.
- 6.11 DFG raised that it was premature to use the citizen science program in isolation; the two sampling programs support and supplement each other. The United States expressed a desire to keep the current sampling program going until such a time that a fully developed and reliable citizen science program, run out of GINR, could serve as the primary program. The United States shared the importance of the sampling programme to the Commission and the necessity for continued future engagement and support.

7. Date and Place of the Next Meeting

- 7.1 It was agreed that a half-day virtual inter-sessional meeting would be required to review the 'Draft Regulatory Measure for the Salmon Fishery in West Greenland', WGCIS(26)08 and a doodle poll would be circulated by the Secretariat.
- 7.2 It was agreed that another meeting of the West Greenland Commission would be at the Annual Meeting held on 2 and 4 June 2026.

8. Report of the Meeting

- 8.1 The Commission agreed that the report of the meeting would be completed by correspondence.

9. Close of the Meeting

- 9.1 The Chair closed the meeting.

***Opening Statement to the West Greenland Commission submitted by
Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland)***

Chair, Mr. Secretary, Distinguished Delegates, Observers, Ladies and Gentlemen,

We are pleased to host this inter-sessional meeting in Nuuk. We welcome the opportunity to present the continued progress that the Government of Greenland has made since the last regulatory measure was agreed.

Greenland has invested a lot of effort and resources to live up to the obligations set out by NASCO and to safeguard the Greenlandic people's right to access and utilize the natural resources of the land and sea, as stated by our Fisheries Act. Salmon is part of our heritage, culturally and socioeconomically. Greenland has improved the management and control of the subsistence fishery of Atlantic salmon. A new management plan will be developed this spring, and we will continue to focus on further improvements as we have up till now.

Unfortunately, the stock continues to decline, despite the sacrifices made by the Greenlandic people limiting our fishing – and thereby, our possibility of sustaining ourselves. Therefore, broader concerns regarding habitat deteriorations and better protections for rivers still need to be addressed, so we look forward to seeing the planned effort by States of Origin in the conservation commitment reports at the Annual meeting in Aviemore. We also strongly support the continued initiatives under the NASCO strategy focusing on more than just fisheries.

Greenland looks forward to some constructive discussions on the West Greenland fishery, here in West Greenland.

Thank you.

*List of Participants – Inter-Sessional Meeting of the West Greenland
Commission – 3 & 4 March 2026*

Canada

*Nicole Bouchard
Dale Marsden
David Dunn (Virtual Participant)
Carl McLean (Virtual Participant)
William Harris (Virtual Participant)

DFG

Katrine Kærgaard (Chair)
*Masaana Dorph
Augusta Jerimiassen
Rebekka Nygård Bak
Rasmus Nygaard
Jacqui Schandorf

EU

*Ignacio Granell

UK

*Ruth Allin
Charlotte Beardwell

US

*Shannon Dionne
Tim Sheehan
Rebecca Wintering

IPRI

Shelley Denny (Virtual Participant)
Sharri Venno (Virtual Participant)

NGO

Robert Otto (NGO-Co-Chair)
Aimee Hopton (Virtual Participant)
Heinz Ackmann (Virtual Participant)
Maria Ackmann (Virtual Participant)
Ken Whelan (Virtual Participant)

Secretariat

Cathal Gallagher
Clare Cavers

WGCIS(26)07

Inter-Sessional Meeting of the West Greenland Commission

***Nuuk, Greenland
(with virtual access for some delegates)***

3 & 4 March 2026

Agenda

- 1. Opening of the Meeting**
- 2. Adoption of the Agenda**
- 3. Nomination of a Rapporteur**
- 4. Review of the Report on the 2025 West Greenland Atlantic Salmon Fishery**
- 5. Consideration of a New Multi-Annual Regulatory Measure to apply to the Atlantic Salmon Fishery at West Greenland from 2026**
- 6. Other Business**
- 7. Date and Place of the Next Meeting**
- 8. Report of the Meeting**
- 9. Close of the Meeting**