	Council *Update on NASCO's Fourth Reporting Cycle (2026 to 2032)*	**CNL(26)36** **Agenda item: 6.a)ii)**

Update on NASCO's Fourth Reporting Cycle (2026 to 2032)

Purpose

The purpose of this paper is to provide an update on the implementation of NASCO's Fourth Reporting Cycle as agreed by Council at the 2025 Annual Meeting, CNL(25)80rev.

Decisions

Council may wish to consider the recommendation that:

- each Party / jurisdiction is required to finalise their Conservation Commitment Report (CCR) by 30 November 2026 as specified in the original Schedule of the Fourth Reporting Cycle, CNL(25)57.

Background

NASCO has adopted various Resolutions, Agreements and Guidelines that address the Organization's principal areas of concern for the management and conservation of salmon stocks. In 2005, it was agreed that 'NASCO will be committed to the measures and agreements it develops and actively review progress with implementation plans', CNL(05)49. Since then, each jurisdiction has developed plans, known as Implementation Plans, detailing measures to be taken over five- to six-year periods, with each period referred to as a reporting cycle, in relation to three areas: 'Management of Salmon Fisheries'; 'Protection and Restoration of Atlantic Salmon Habitat'; and 'Management of Aquaculture, Introductions and Transfers and Transgenics'.

In 2020, Council considered NASCO's reporting cycle to be vitally important as a mechanism to strengthen the implementation of NASCO's Resolutions, Agreements and Guidelines and to hold Parties / jurisdictions accountable to them. It agreed that the purpose of its reporting cycles is to provide a succinct, transparent, fair and balanced approach to reporting on the implementation of NASCO's Resolutions, Agreements and Guidelines by the Parties / jurisdictions.

In 2024, Council agreed to adopt 'The Future of NASCO – a Ten-Year Strategy', CNL(24)71rev, which incorporates NASCO's high-level Action Plan. As part of its Action Plan Council agreed that a fourth reporting cycle should be developed, CNL(24)88, and agreed Terms of Reference for a Working Group on Future Reporting, CNL(24)63, which enabled its development.

The fourth reporting cycle comprises two main components:

- **Conservation Commitment Reports (CCRs)**

  Each Party / jurisdiction will develop individual Conservation Commitments that demonstrate their commitment to addressing their highest-priority identified stressors through a limited number of actions that relate clearly to the conservation of wild Atlantic salmon. The actions of each Party / jurisdiction will be detailed in public-facing documents, Conservation Commitment Reports (CCRS).

  Reporting on the progress of the actions will be done annually, with reviews by the Review Group carried out biennially. The Terms of Reference (ToRs) for the Review Group established to review the CCRs are available in document CNL(25)56. These ToRs identify clearly what will be reviewed both in the initial review of the CCRs and in the review of progress against each action biennially.

- **Performance Indicators**

  Reporting will also be required on theme-based Performance Indicators to demonstrate Parties' / jurisdictions' progress towards the achievement of NASCO's Resolutions, Agreements and Guidelines. The reporting of catch data each year, as required under Article 15 of the Convention, will be included. The theme-based Performance Indicators include between six and 12 key metrics for each theme area that will serve as indicators of progress towards reducing threats associated with fisheries and aquaculture and increasing the productive capacity of freshwater habitats. Performance Indicators will be reported on annually by Parties / jurisdictions, with the first round commencing in 2027, and will not be reviewed.

Progress on the Fourth Reporting Cycle

Following the 2025 Annual Meeting, Parties / jurisdictions were provided with templates for the Conservation Commitment Reports and Performance Indicators, CNL(25)55rev, agreed by Council, to enable preparation of the information required for the fourth reporting cycle. As detailed in the Schedule of the Fourth Reporting Cycle, CNL(25)57, two webinars were held, with the Working Group on Future Reporting, in September 2025 to provide an overview of the new reporting process and enable Parties / jurisdictions to ask questions.

The Secretariat developed a web-based form for the Conservation Commitment Reports (CCRs) on the Airtable application, a departure from earlier reporting cycles. Parties / jurisdictions developed their Conservation Commitments to address the key stressors identified in a separate exercise presented to Council at the 2025 Annual Meeting. The online forms were made available in January 2026 for the submission of Parties' / jurisdictions' Draft CCRs for review by the CCR Review Group in February 2026. The review process included a short interview between the Review Group and each Party / jurisdiction that submitted a Draft CCR; A total of 18 out of a possible 22 Draft CCRs were submitted (see CNL(26)13). Following the review written feedback was then completed for each CCR and shared directly with the relevant Party / jurisdiction. The Parties / jurisdictions subsequently were provided with an opportunity to update their Draft CCRs. This enabled the Review Group to update written feedback, before both Draft CCRs and written feedback were published on the NASCO website at the end of April.

Next Steps and Recommendation

The Parties / jurisdictions may modify their Conservation Commitment Reports until 30 November 2026, at which time they will become final. Parties / jurisdictions will then be required to report against their actions annually, with the Review Group reviewing progress of the CCRs biennially in 2028, 2030 and 2032.

Council may wish to recommend that each Party / jurisdiction finalise their Conservation Commitment Report (CCR) by 30 November 2026 as specified in the original Schedule of the Fourth Reporting Cycle, CNL(25)57.

Reporting on the Performance Indicators will begin in January 2027 via a web-based form currently in development on the Airtable application. These will be reported on annually by Parties / jurisdictions and will not be subject to review. However, the selected Performance Indicators will help Council assess progress towards the achievement of NASCO's Resolutions, Agreements and Guidelines. They will also serve as the basis for information on trends in the Indicators that can be used by the NASCO Secretariat for outreach and communications on the state of wild Atlantic salmon and its management across the North Atlantic.