

	Council <i>Update on the NASCO Communications and Outreach Strategy</i>	CNL(26)37 Agenda item: 4.e)
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Update on the NASCO Communications and Outreach Strategy

Purpose

The purpose of this paper is to provide an update on the implementation of NASCO's Communications and Outreach Strategy, [CNL\(25\)54](#), in the period between the 2025 and 2026 Annual Meetings.

Decisions

Council agrees to:

- direct the Secretariat to explore options for a future Ministerial meeting in 2027 / 2028 associated with the Annual Meeting or in association with another event such as a seminar on pink salmon.

Background

At the 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 Action Plan. 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.)'.

The Council request directly addressed Recommendation EPR34 from NASCO's 2023 external performance review, [CNL\(23\)17rev](#), that asked '*NASCO to consider developing a dedicated communications and outreach strategy*'. Development of the strategy also addressed Recommendation EPR 46 from the external performance review, two recommendations from the 2019 Tromsø Symposium (T6, T11), [CNL\(22\)14](#), and five recommendations from the 2023 / 2024 WGFON (see Annex 2 of [CNL\(25\)20](#)). The 'NASCO Communications and Outreach Strategy' is intended to address the specific recommendations to NASCO as set out in Annex 2 of [CNL\(25\)20](#).

Following the 2024 Annual Meeting, the Secretariat worked with the communications consultants [Mindfully Wired Consulting](#) to map NASCO's stakeholders and develop a communications and outreach strategy. At its 2025 Annual Meeting, Council agreed to adopt NASCO's Communications and Outreach Strategy, [CNL\(25\)54](#). A prioritised list of tasks and timelines for implementing the Strategy was considered, and Council agreed five further tasks, [CNL\(25\)80rev](#) paragraphs 6.59-6.60, for the Secretariat, subject to a capped budget of £10,000:

- 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;
- 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;

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

Branding Guidelines and Templates

The Secretariat worked with Mindfully Wired to develop branding guidelines for NASCO's public-facing engagement materials, including such as (but not limited to) NASCO's main website, infographics, social media posts, reports intended for the general public and presentations given on behalf of NASCO. The use of the branding guidelines will ensure that a cohesive visual identity can be maintained across all materials and NASCO presents a unified and professional image across all its outreach and communication channels.

In association with the branding guidelines, templates were developed for social media, presentations, email signatures, email banners and documents such as reports. A portable exhibition banner was designed and produced by Mindfully Wired based on the branding guidelines, for use at NASCO meetings. All products were completed by the end of 2025.

Social Media Strategy

The Secretariat worked with Mindfully Wired to develop a social media strategy with the five core objectives, in 2026, to:

- 1) increase policymaker engagement;
- 2) expand NGO and partner amplification;
- 3) grow public awareness and advocacy;
- 4) highlight progress and solutions; and
- 5) drive traffic to NASCO's resources.

The social media strategy included an analysis of NASCO's current social media channels on X (formerly Twitter) and LinkedIn. NASCO's LinkedIn account was established following the 2025 Annual Meeting, see [CNL\(25\)80rev](#) paragraph 6.57.

The Secretariat is on target to achieve these core objectives through the development of an internal communications plan, a social media policy, an artificial intelligence policy and the use of internal resources.

Website Review

A preliminary website review was conducted by Mindfully Wired and a 'light-touch' update was completed of the main NASCO website to incorporate the new branding guidelines. An indicative quote given in 2025, see Annex 3 of [CNL\(25\)20](#), estimated a cost of £9,450 to review the website design and content, develop an updated design and associated content, and implement the redesigned elements. Currently these resources are not budgeted for..

Internal Assessment of Resources

The Secretariat has assessed its internal resources and has identified a member of the team who will focus their continuing professional development on communications and outreach. The focus will be principally on NASCO's social media and the development of associated resources. Funds allocated to training in NASCO's budget have enabled several members of the Secretariat to undertake training in communication and outreach and to enrol in further courses.

Ministerial Meeting

Recommendation EPR 46 from NASCO's third external performance review, [CNL\(23\)17rev](#), states

'NASCO should consider other actions aimed at elevating salmon conservation to a higher political level, for instance by periodically convening high-level (Ministerial) segments to Annual NASCO Meetings. A possible topic for such a high-level segment could be the management of Atlantic salmon aquaculture.'

In its recommendations to Council at the 2025 Annual Meeting, [CNL\(25\)13](#), the Working Group on the Future of NASCO (WGFON) considered that the communications and outreach strategy should address most of Recommendation EPR46. However, it recommended that the specific element related to a possible high-level meeting would need *'to be discussed further by Council to understand timelines etc'*. In discussion at Council, [CNL\(25\)80rev](#) paragraph 6.52, Norway 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. Norway and the Secretariat have had an initial discussion around the Ministerial meeting; however, it is expected that discussion, with Norway and Parties, will continue before, during and after the 2026 Annual Meeting.

At the 2026 meeting of NASCO's Working Group on Pink Salmon, [CNL\(26\)16](#) paragraph 5.6, the Group discussed the possibility of expanding an international seminar on pink salmon that has been routinely held in Norway since 2019. Several options were discussed such as hosting it in a larger venue to enable a larger meeting every second year and organizing such a meeting in collaboration with the Group and NASCO. Such a meeting could provide an opportunity for engagement at a Ministerial level.

Next Steps and Recommendations

The Secretariat will continue to develop its internal resources for communications and outreach, including creating materials and enhancing Secretariat skills through training. NASCO's internal resources will be used to develop the second report on the State of North Atlantic Salmon, scheduled for completion at the end of 2026. The report could also provide a focus for a symposium or seminar on North Atlantic salmon, with a ministerial meeting incorporated.

Council may, therefore, wish to direct the Secretariat to explore options for a future Ministerial meeting in 2027 / 2028 associated with the Annual Meeting or in association with another event, such as a seminar on pink salmon.