NASCO	**Council** ***Report of the Twenty-Fifth Annual Meeting of the International Atlantic Salmon Research Board***	**CNL(26)08**

Report of the Twenty-Fifth Annual Meeting of the International Atlantic Salmon Research Board

Macdonald Aviemore Resort, Scotland

1 & 4 June 2026

1. Opening of the Meeting

1.1 The Chair, Peder Fiske (Norway), opened the meeting and welcomed members of the International Atlantic Salmon Research Board (IASRB), their scientific advisers and observers to the meeting. He noted that the IASRB member for the Russian Federation was joining the meeting through the virtual platform.

1.2 The Chair reminded the IASRB that, at its 2025 Annual Meeting, the Council of NASCO had adopted revised 'Terms of Reference for the International Atlantic Salmon Research Board and its Scientific Advisory Group', ICR(25)12, which had allowed for the appointment of an Indigenous Peoples' representatives and institutions (IPRI) point-of-contact for the IASRB. The Chair welcomed Sharri Venno (Houlton Band of Maliseet Indians) to the Meeting as the first IPRI point-of-contact to the IASRB.

1.3 The Chair noted that the revised Terms of Reference had also created the role of Vice-Chair of the IASRB. He reminded the IASRB that Augusta Jerimiassen (Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland)) had been elected by correspondence as Vice-Chair of the IASRB until the close of the 2027 Annual Meeting. Ms Jerimiassen had been nominated by the IASRB member for the United States and seconded by the IASRB member for the UK. He congratulated Ms Jerimiassen on her appointment.

1.4 A list of participants is included in Annex 1.

2. Adoption of the Agenda

2.1 The IASRB adopted its Agenda, ICR(26)07 (Annex 2).

3. Finance and Administrative Issues

3.1 The Chair advised the IASRB that a voluntary contribution from Canada, of £43,436.79, had been received into the IASRB's accounts a few days in advance of the Annual Meeting. He stated that this contribution, which would be reflected in the report on the 2026 accounts presented at the 2027 Annual Meeting, was intended to partially fund a temporary analyst to support the Basin-Wide Marine Growth Study considered under Agenda Item 4 below. The Chair thanked Canada for this generous contribution to this important project.

3.2 The Chair referred to the 2025 Accounts for the International Atlantic Salmon Research Fund, ICR(26)04. The decision had been taken not to have the 2025 accounts audited and the Secretary had been asked to prepare income and expenditure statements instead.

3.3 The Secretary introduced the 2025 Accounts and noted that the total value of the Sterling accounts within the International Atlantic Salmon Research Fund on 31 December 2025 was £117,474.37. Much of this was ring-fenced for various projects,

including the 2019 and 2025 voluntary contributions from the United States. Once the ring-fenced amounts were taken into consideration, the remaining balance in the Sterling accounts was approximately £32,920. He further noted that value of the Fund's Euro accounts on 31 December 2025 was €412,072.27. All funds in this account were ring-fenced.

3.4 The IASRB agreed to accept the 2025 accounts.

3.5 The Chair reminded the IASRB that, at its 2006 Annual Meeting, it recognised that it was not necessary to have the accounts audited annually and agreed that, in future, the IASRB's accounts should be audited as required in relation to the funds held. For years in which an audit is not conducted, details of the IASRB's income and expenditure statements would be circulated to the members of the IASRB and discussed at its Annual Meeting. Based on previous costings, an audit of the IASRB's accounts would likely cost approximately £3,000. He reminded the IASRB that it had previously indicated that it would be desirable to retain a reserve of £4,000 - £5,000.

3.6 The IASRB agreed not to have its 2026 accounts audited and asked that the Secretary provide income and expenditure statements for consideration at the 2027 Annual Meeting.

3.7 The IASRB member for the EU indicated that the EU intended to make a voluntary contribution to support the Basin-Wide Marine Growth Study and further details would be provided when available.

4. Consideration of a Basin-Wide Marine Growth Study

4.1 The Chair reminded the IASRB that, at its 2025 Annual Meeting, CNL(25)08, the IASRB had agreed to move forward with the proposed Basin-Wide Marine Growth Study, which had been under consideration since 2024. It had been noted that once a detailed project proposal was developed, there would be a much clearer idea of the resources the jurisdictions have and what they are able to achieve with these. It was recognised that such a detailed proposal may allow additional Parties and jurisdictions to participate in future and would also create a strong basis for funding applications. To move matters forward, the IASRB had agreed:

- to form a Steering Committee to:
  a) co-ordinate scale sample digitisation through specific points of contact who would be responsible for digitisation; and
  b) work inter-sessionally to identify and outline potential routes to funding the next phase of the project, including discussions with the NGOs, the IPRIs and the NASCO Secretariat.
- that the Steering Committee would work independently of the NASCO Secretariat but request help as and when necessary. The Steering Committee was asked to prepare:
  - an interim report with ballpark costings in February 2026, based on their work so far. This report was to include identification of potential funding sources and an indication of how much money would be required to allow those Parties not currently able to participate to join the project; and
  - a further progress report in advance of the 2026 Annual Meeting of the IASRB to inform discussions at that meeting.

a) The Reports of the Steering Committee for a Basin-Wide Marine Growth Study

4.2 The Chair reminded the IASRB that the 'Interim Report of the Steering Committee for a Basin-Wide Marine Growth Study', ICR(26)02, had been circulated.

4.3 The IASRB member for the United States advised the Board that, given the short time between submission of the interim report and the Annual Meeting, the Steering Committee had not requested another detailed update from the in-country points-of-contact in an effort to reduce the reporting burden associated with the project. Therefore, a second report had not been made available in advance of the meeting.

4.4 The IASRB was advised that points-of-contact for each of the 25 ICES Stock Units had been asked whether they intended to participate in the Study. Seventeen had indicated that they intended to participate, six could not participate and two had indicated that they may be able to participate. Contacts for five Stock Units not included in the ICES assessments had also been asked, and one had indicated that they may be able to participate. Work in digitising scales had already begun on 15 Stock Units, with plans for this work to commence on several others within the next fiscal year. It was hoped that digitisation would be complete on one Stock Unit by the end of 2026, and a further 10 by the end of 2027. Further details can be found in Annex 3.

b) Next Steps for the Proposed Basin-Wide Marine Growth Study

4.5 The IASRB discussed the information provided. It was noted that much more information would be available in 12 months' time on the datasets, resources and funding available to the Study. Therefore, the IASRB asked the Steering Committee to:

- continue its work over the coming year, noting the importance of maintaining momentum;
- provide a progress update to the IASRB by 31 March 2027 which should include information on the status of the datasets, anticipated timelines and known sources of funding; and
- provide a further update on progress at the 2027 Annual Meeting to inform potential decisions on the next phase of the project at that Meeting.

4.6 The NGO representative stated that the amount of work that had already been conducted on a voluntary basis by the scientists and laboratories involved was impressive. The IPRI point-of-contact echoed this statement.

5. Review of the 2025 Inventory of Research

5.1 The Chair noted that, at its 2020 Annual Meeting, CNL(20)12, the IASRB had agreed changes to the 'Inventory of Research Relating to Salmon Mortality in the Sea'. The IASRB had asked the Secretary to engage with the website designer to improve the prominence, searchability and utility of the new IASRB website and the presentation of the Inventory on that website. It was also agreed that the Secretariat should consider how the utility of the updated website can best be evaluated with the use of hit statistics and related metrics and that these statistics should be presented annually to the IASRB to understand the extent to which the Inventory is used.

5.2 The Chair referred the IASRB to the 'Review of the 2025 Inventory of Research', ICR(26)03. There were no questions or comments on this item.

5.3 The Secretariat was requested to ask IASRB members to update and check the

information held in the Inventory relevant to their Party / jurisdiction in November 2026. IASRB members should return their updates to the Secretariat by 31 December 2026. The Secretariat was asked to post an updated Inventory spreadsheet on the website by the end of January 2027.

6. Projects of Interest to the Board and its Work

6.1 At its 2020 Annual Meeting, the IASRB agreed to retain an Agenda item to allow for updates on projects of interest to the IASRB and its work. The Chair referred to the document entitled 'Projects of Interest to the Board and its Work', ICR(26)05rev.

6.2 The IASRB member for the EU referred to the EU-Funded PINKTrack projects included in document ICR(26)05rev. He noted the very valuable participation of project partners from Parties / jurisdictions from outside of the EU, notably Norway and Greenland and that he hoped that other Parties / jurisdictions, such as Iceland, the Faroe Islands and the UK, could become involved in future iterations of these projects. The IASRB member for Iceland indicated that Iceland would like to become involved in future and would look to find ways to facilitate this.

7. Other Business

7.1 The Chair reminded the IASRB that, under its Terms of Reference (ICR(25)12), the purpose of the IASRB is to '*promote and initiate collaboration and co-operation on research into the causes of marine mortality of Atlantic salmon and the opportunities to counteract this mortality'* through a number of activities, including 'identifying and prioritising research needs'. In 2024, the IASRB had issued a 'Statement of the International Atlantic Salmon Research Board on Future Research Priorities', ICR(24)01. This statement listed 'Potential interactions between pink salmon and Atlantic salmon' as one of the IASRB's top five research priorities and stated that the IASRB wished 'to be informed of, and support in any way it can, research into each of these priority areas'. However, it was agreed that the IASRB would only pursue research into Basin-wide patterns of marine growth and survival of Atlantic salmon at that time. The Chair advised the IASRB that, in light of this, the Chair of NASCO's Pink Salmon Working Group had submitted the document 'Knowledge Gaps in Pink Salmon Research Impacts on Atlantic Salmon', ICR(26)06, to the IASRB.

7.2 The IASRB considered document ICR(26)06, noting that it was a very useful in highlighting the knowledge gaps surrounding the impacts of pink salmon on wild Atlantic salmon. The IASRB agreed to write to the Chair of the Pink Salmon Working Group to thank the Working Group for the document and indicate that the Board would like to be kept updated on any projects addressing these key research gaps with a view to potentially endorsing these projects. A copy of the letter is contained in Annex 4.

8. Date and Place of the Next Meeting

8.1 The IASRB agreed to hold its next Annual Meeting in conjunction with the Forty-Fourth Annual Meeting of NASCO.

9. Report of the Meeting

9.1 The IASRB agreed a report of its Meeting.

10. Close of the Meeting

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

Annex 1

List of Participants

Canada

**Cindy Breau
Julien April
Charline McCoy (virtual participant)

Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland)

**Augusta Jerimiassen
Masaana Dorph

European Union

**Michael Millane
Jaakko Erkinaro

Iceland

**Guðni Magnús Eiríksson
Hlynur Bárðarson

Norway

**Raoul Bierach
*Helge Dyrendal
Peder Fiske (Chair)

Russian Federation

**Alexey Stesko (virtual participant)

United Kingdom

**Jonathan Gillson

United States

**Tim Sheehan
Dan Kircheis

IGOs

Sarah Gaichas

IPRIs

Sharri Venno (IPRI Point-of-Contact)

NGOs

Ken Whelan (NGO Representative)
Julia McCarthy

Secretariat

Cathal Gallagher
Clare Cavers
Louise Forero

**Nominated Board Member
*Board Adviser

Annex 2

ICR(26)07

Twenty-Fifth Meeting of the International Atlantic Salmon Research Board

Macdonald Aviemore Resort, Scotland

1 & 4 June 2026

Agenda

1. Opening of the Meeting
2. Adoption of the Agenda
3. Finance and Administrative Issues
4. Consideration of a Basin-Wide Marine Growth Study
   a) The Reports of the Steering Committee for a Basin-Wide Marine Growth Study
   b) Next Steps for the Proposed Basin-Wide Marine Growth Study
5. Review of the 2025 Inventory of Research
6. Projects of Interest to the Board and its Work
7. Other Business
8. Date and Place of the Next Meeting
9. Report of the Meeting
10. Close of the Meeting

Annex 3

June 2026 status update on Phase 1 of the Basin-wide Marine Growth Study

	Stock complex	NASCO Party	County	ICES Stock Unit	Participating?	Imaging?	Estimated completion date	Comments
	NAC							
1		Canada	Canada	Labrador	yes	yes	Sep-27	2 of 5 datasets almost completed
2		Canada	Canada	Newfoundland	yes	yes	Sep-27	"
3		Canada	Canada	Quebec	yes	yes	Sep-27	"
4		Canada	Canada	Gulf of St Lawrence	yes	yes	Sep-27	"
5		Canada	Canada	Scotia-Fundy	yes	yes	Sep-27	"
6		USA	USA	USA	yes	yes	Dec-26	
	N NEAC							
7		Russian Federation	Russian Federation	Archangelsk	no	-	-	
8		Russian Federation	Russian Federation	Kola / White Sea	no	-	-	
9		Russian Federation	Russian Federation	Kola / Barents Sea	no	-	-	
10		Russian Federation	Russian Federation	Pechora River	no	-	-	
11		EU	Norway & Finland	River Tana/Teno	yes	yes	-	
12		Norway	Norway	Southeast	yes	yes	-	5 of 23K images completed, seeking additional funding, completion date of June 2027 unlikely
13		Norway	Norway	Southwest	yes	yes	-	"
14		Norway	Norway	Mid	yes	yes	-	"
15		Norway	Norway	North	yes	yes	-	"
16		EU	Sweden	Sweden	-	-	-	
17		Iceland	Iceland	Northeast	yes	yes	Jun-27	
	S NEAC							
18		Iceland	Iceland	Southwest	yes	yes	Jun-27	
19		UK	UK (Scotland)	East	yes	yes	Nov-26	pairs of years every 5 years 1967/68, 1972/73…2018
20		UK	UK (Scotland)	West	no	-	-	low sample sizes

	Stock complex	NASCO Party	County	ICES Stock Unit	Participating?	Imaging?	Estimated completion date	Comments
21		UK	UK (England)	UK - E&W	maybe	no	-	resource constraints, seeking alternative solution
22		UK	UK (N. Ireland)	DAERA areas	maybe	no	-	resource constraints
23		EU	Ireland & UK (N. Ireland)	River Foyle	yes	no	Dec-27	inventorying, will budget project next year
24		EU	Ireland	Ireland	yes	no	-	initiate imaging in 2026
25		EU	France	France	yes	yes	Jun-27	
	N NEAC							
26		EU	Denmark	*na*	no	-	-	low sample sizes
	S NEAC							
27		EU	Portugal	*na*	no	-	-	low sample sizes
28		EU	Spain (Cantabria)	*na*				
29		EU	Spain (Galicia)	*na*	maybe	no	-	need to inventory, sample sizes will determine ability to participate
30		EU	Germany	*na*	no	-	-	low sample sizes

Annex 4

CNL38.3587

4 June 2026

To the Chair of the Pink Salmon Working
Group, Ms Eva Thorstad
Norwegian Institute for Nature Research (NINA)

Dear Ms Thorstad,

On behalf of the International Atlantic Salmon Research Board (IASRB), I would like to thank NASCO's Working Group on Pink Salmon for the paper submitted to the 2026 Annual Meeting of the IASRB entitled 'Knowledge Gaps in Pink Salmon Research Related to Impacts on Atlantic Salmon', ICR(26)06.

As you are aware, in 2024, the IASRB agreed its top five research priorities and issued a 'Statement of the International Atlantic Salmon Research Board on Future Research Priorities', ICR(24)01. Potential Interactions between pink salmon and Atlantic salmon were listed fourth on the prioritised list of research topics.

The IASRB found your paper very informative, concisely identifying key knowledge gaps regarding the impacts of pink salmon on wild Atlantic salmon stocks. It also underscores the uncertainty around how best to monitor and manage pink salmon while minimising risks to native salmon. Overall, it provides a valuable foundation for guiding future research efforts. The IASRB would request that the Pink Salmon Working Group keep the Board informed of any research projects that are under development. The IASRB encourages continued research in this area, particularly efforts to address research gaps that support effective, science-based decisions.

If any member of the Working Group wishes to seek endorsement from the Board in support of related funding applications, then the IASRB's 'Guidelines on Submitting Proposals for Support by the International Atlantic Salmon Research Board', ICR(24)12, provide guidance on the process and should be followed.

Yours sincerely,

Dr Peder Fiske
Chair, International Atlantic Research Board