

NASCO addresses measures to boost Atlantic salmon conservation

The North Atlantic Salmon Conservation Organisation (NASCO) endeavors to better understand the threats and conservation challenges facing the Atlantic salmon, while improving the implementation of already adopted conservation and management measures and guidelines.

At NASCO's 34th annual meeting, held in Varberg, Sweden, in early June, new initiatives were discussed and the effectiveness of restocking programmes in supporting the conservation of the species stocks were discussed.

Further key issues addressed during the meeting included actions aimed at eradicating *Gyrodactylus salaris*, a parasite implicated in the dramatic decrease of some Atlantic salmon populations; potential improvements in the management of mixed stock fisheries; actions for monitoring and controlling commercial, recreational and subsistence fisheries; and the preparation work for the new cycle of implementation plans that will start in 2019.

The European Union (EU) has reaffirmed its commitment to support the work of NASCO and provided a voluntary contribution of EUR 300,000 for research activities aligned with the key priorities of the organisation.

The organisation is also preparing, in cooperation with the North Pacific Anadromous Fish Commission (NPAFC), the International Year of the Salmon, scheduled for 2019, which is expected to trigger stronger and larger partnerships aimed at improving the conservation status of this emblematic species.

During the meeting in Sweden, NASCO also elected its new President, Mr Joannes V. Hansen (Denmark in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland) and its new Secretary, Dr Emma Hatfield.

NASCO was established in 1983 with the main objective of managing Atlantic salmon stocks that migrate beyond the areas of national fisheries jurisdiction north of the 36th parallel north. The NASCO Convention prohibits fishing for wild Atlantic salmon in areas beyond 12 miles from the shore, except for Greenland (40 miles) and Faroe Islands (200 miles).

In particular, given the sharp decline of many wild Atlantic salmon stocks and the decreasing returns of salmons to their originating rivers, NASCO's role is to make sure that mixed-stock fisheries at sea do not target the stocks with the lowest rate of return.

Since distant-water fisheries in waters off Greenland and Faroe Islands are those with the highest degree of mixing (salmons originating from almost 2 000 different rivers in the territory of other NASCO Parties), NASCO Parties agreed on a fishing moratorium in the waters of the Faroe Islands and on subsistence-only fishery in the waters of Greenland.

NASCO has six signatories to its Convention: EU, Canada, Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland), Norway, Russia and the United States. It consists of a Council and three regional Commissions.

Lien article : <http://fis.com/fis/worldnews/worldnews.asp?l=e&id=92408&ndb=1>