

Submission by the North Atlantic Salmon Conservation Organization

Contribution to the report of the Secretary-General on oceans and the law of the sea, as mandated by United Nations General Assembly resolution 76/72 of 9 December 2021, entitled “Oceans and the law of the sea”.

Background

NASCO is a single-species (Atlantic salmon) organization, set up under the Convention for the Conservation of Salmon in the North Atlantic Ocean. Under the Convention, fishing for salmon is prohibited beyond 12 nautical miles from the baselines (with exceptions at West Greenland and the Faroe Islands), thus creating an enormous area in the North Atlantic free from any directed salmon fishing. Regulatory measures have been adopted for the distant-waters fisheries in most years since NASCO was established in 1984 and have resulted in major reductions in harvests. There have also been major restrictions on fisheries by States of Origin. Those salmon fisheries which do occur within the permitted areas have been assessed by the International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES) as having ‘no, or only minor, influence on the marine ecosystem’.

Adoption of Measures

At the Thirty-Ninth Annual Meeting of NASCO held in Edinburgh between 6 and 9 June 2022 the West Greenland Commission adopted the ‘Multi-Annual Regulatory Measure for Fishing for Atlantic Salmon at West Greenland’, [WGC\(22\)10](#). The fishery at West Greenland has experienced overharvests of established limits in recent years. To address this, the evidence-based regulatory measure adopted sets a precautionary upper limit that is well below the catch limit. At the latest, the fishery will be closed when the upper limit is reached. This is a dynamic process that will incorporate future fishery data and information to allow the upper limit to be refined for each year of the four-year measure.

The North-East Atlantic Commission confirmed that the ‘Decision Regarding the Salmon Fishery in Faroese Waters in 2021 / 2022, 2022 / 2023 and 2023 / 2024’, [NEA\(21\)16](#), would continue to apply. This sets out that the North-East Atlantic Commission:

‘HEREBY DECIDES: Not to set a quota for the salmon fishery in the Faroese Fisheries Zone for 2021 / 2022. This decision will also apply in 2022 / 2023 and 2023 / 2024 unless the application of the Framework of Indicators shows that a re-assessment is warranted. Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland) retains the right to conduct a scientific research fishery in the Faroese Fishery Zone.’

Statements on Minimising Impacts from Aquaculture, Introductions and Transfers on Wild Salmon Stocks

In other actions, NASCO considered with alarm the threat that Pacific pink salmon, an invasive species spreading throughout the North Atlantic, is now posing to wild north Atlantic salmon. NASCO adopted a statement highlighting this threat and calling on its members to co-operate and initiate corrective measures without delay: ‘Statement of the Council Regarding Pink Salmon, *Oncorhynchus gorbuscha*, in the NASCO Convention Area’, [CNL\(22\)47](#).

NASCO also adopted a ‘Statement on Salmon Farming from the Council of NASCO’, [CNL\(22\)49](#). The Statement urges the development of innovative salmon farming technologies, both at sea and on land, to advance the implementation and attainment of the international goals for the management of sea lice and containment of farmed salmon agreed by NASCO and the International Salmon Farming Association in 2009, [SLG\(09\)5](#).