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6 February 2015

Mr Miguel de Serpa Soares
Under Secretary-General for Legal Affairs
And United Nations Legal Counsel
United Nations Headquarters
New York
NY10017
US



Dear Mr de Serpa Soares,

Thank you for your letter of 11 December requesting (i) information regarding the relevant activities of this Organization fostering an integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development with regard to oceans; and (ii) challenges and opportunities in integrating the three dimensions of sustainable development in that regard, including matters which may require further consideration with a view to fostering integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development with regard to oceans, with an emphasis on areas where coordination and cooperation at the governmental and inter-agency levels could be enhanced.

The report for NASCO on this topic is brief and is as follows:

The wild Atlantic salmon is a small but highly valuable resource, with many facets to its value (see www.nasco.int/value_thevalues.html, including its importance as a foodstuff to dependent communities.

ICES advises that environmental conditions in both freshwater and marine environments have a marked effect on the status of salmon stocks. Across the North Atlantic, a range of problems in the freshwater environment play a significant role in explaining the poor status of stocks. In many cases, factors such as river damming and habitat deterioration have had a devastating effect on freshwater environmental conditions. In the marine environment, return rates of adult salmon have declined through the 1980s and are now at the lowest levels in the time-series for some stocks, even after closure of marine fisheries. Climatic factors modifying ecosystem conditions and predator fields of salmon at sea are considered to be important contributory factors to lower productivity, which is expressed almost entirely in terms of lower marine survival.

Production of farmed Atlantic salmon in the North Atlantic amounted of 1.4 million tonnes in 2013, approximately 1,000 times the harvest of wild Atlantic salmon by NASCO Parties. NASCO has no role in aquaculture production but it is concerned about aquaculture impacts, particularly from sea lice and escaped farmed salmon, on the wild stocks and has developed agreements intended to minimise these impacts.

In response to continuing low abundance of wild Atlantic salmon, there have been major reductions in fishing effort all around the North Atlantic and increasing use of catch and release fishing in recreational fisheries.

NASCO's Guidelines for the Management of Salmon Fisheries state that fishing on stocks that are below conservation limits should not be permitted. If a decision is made to allow fishing on a stock that is below its conservation limit, on the basis of overriding socio-economic factors, fishing should clearly be limited to a level that will still permit stock recovery within a stated timeframe. They further state that in evaluating management options conservation of the salmon resource should take precedence and transparent policies and processes should be in place to take account of socio-economic factors in making management decisions and for consulting stakeholders.

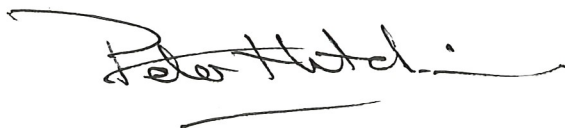
In establishing regulatory measures, the NASCO Convention requires that a range of factors be taken into consideration including the best available information and the interests of communities which are particularly dependent on salmon fisheries. The regulatory measures adopted by NASCO for the West Greenland fishery since 1998 reflect this by continuing to allocate harvests for an internal-use fishery when the advice indicates that there is no harvestable surplus.

Under NASCO regulatory measures/decisions there has been no salmon fishery around the Faroe Islands since 2001.

With regard to the effect of salmon fishing on the ecosystem, ICES advises that the current salmon fishery probably has no, or only minor, influence on the marine ecosystem.

I hope this is of assistance; further details of our work are available at www.nasco.int.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Peter Hutchinson', with a horizontal line underneath it.

Peter Hutchinson
Secretary