

## **ICR(11)5**

### ***Draft Report of the Tenth Meeting of the International Atlantic Salmon Research Board Hotel Arctic, Ilulissat, Greenland***

***4 - 6 June, 2011***

#### **1. Opening of the meeting**

- 1.1 The Chairman, Professor Ken Whelan, opened the meeting and welcomed members of the Board, their scientific advisers and representatives of the accredited NGOs to Ilulissat.
- 1.2 A list of participants is contained in Annex 1.

#### **2. Adoption of the agenda**

- 2.1 The Board adopted its agenda, ICR(11)6 (Annex 2).

#### **3. Election of Officers**

- 3.1 The Board elected Mr Raoul Bierach as its Chairman, to serve from the close of the Tenth Annual Meeting of the International Atlantic Salmon Research Board. The Board thanked Professor Whelan for his excellent service over the last four years which had seen major progress in implementing the SALSEA Programme.

#### **4. Report of the Scientific Advisory Group**

- 4.1 The Chairman of the Board's Scientific Advisory Group (SAG), Mr Tim Sheehan, presented a report on the Group's meeting, SAG(11)4 (Annex 3). The SAG had reviewed the updated inventory of research which had been presented using the new format agreed in 2010. This new presentation of the information allows for tracking of projects over time and for complete information to be provided on both ongoing and completed projects. The SAG welcomed this new format and the presentation of the summary table in Excel format and recommends that these be used in future, but does not consider that the inventory should be made available for updating via the Board's website as liaison between the Secretariat and the jurisdictions is an important element of the updating process. The Board agreed with these recommendations from the SAG concerning the inventory. It was noted that the inventory is a valuable tool in increasing awareness of research initiatives relating to salmon and sea and their findings, and in promoting cooperation between researchers in different countries. The SAG had been advised there had been no new applications for funding of projects since last year. It was noted that the funding made available by the Board in 2008 for stable isotope studies in Canada had been invaluable in attracting further funds for this work. The SAG had received an interim report from the Board's Working Group on Marine Salmon Survey Data and Sample Collection and recommends that this Group should be asked

to complete its work by developing a meta-database of relevant data sets and sample collections. The SAG further recommends that the Board should ask that the Chairman of the SAG develop a discussion document on possible approaches to improving access to the data and samples and protocols concerning the possible use, particularly destructive use, of samples (see paragraph 5.3 below). The SAG had also received an update on arrangements for the Salmon Summit and recognised the efforts of the Steering Committee in developing the programme for this event and welcomed arrangements to ensure balance between scientific and management aspects in the programme.

## **5. The SALSEA Programme**

### **(a) Review of progress in implementing SALSEA**

5.1 Reports were presented on SALSEA North America (Gerald Chaput) including acoustic tracking studies (Dave Meerburg), SALSEA West Greenland (Tim Sheehan), and SALSEA Merge (Ken Whelan). Further details on these projects are contained in the report of the SAG. It was noted that while the three components of the SALSEA Programme were independent projects and had led to major improvements in understanding the marine life of salmon, there would be benefits from combining and analysing the datasets generated.

### **(b) Review of progress in promoting SALSEA**

5.2 The Board noted that the Salmon Summit' would be a good opportunity to raise awareness of concerns about the mortality of salmon at sea and to promote the work of the Board. The Board was advised that the Atlantic Salmon Trust is seeking funding for the development of an atlas of salmon migrations and distributions, 'Paths of Silver', which should be a valuable initiative in disseminating the findings from the SALSEA Merge project. It was suggested that the possibility of including information from the Northwest Atlantic might be explored.

### **(c) Coordination of SALSEA**

5.3 Last year, the Board had recognized that recent international initiatives under the SALSEA Programme had generated some extremely valuable databases. These include biological and genetic databases generated under the SALSEA Merge project, and time series of data and historical tagging information compiled by ICES workshops supported by the Board. The Board had recognized that there is a need to ensure that these databases are securely held, maintained and agreed procedures developed to allow access to the data for further research. In addition, the Board had noted the existence of some historical marine survey samples, such as those generated by the international sampling programme at West Greenland, that represent an invaluable resource dating back some 30 years or more and the need to ensure that these samples are being maintained and agreed procedures developed to allow access to them for further research.

5.4 The Board had, therefore, established a Working Group to work by correspondence with the Chairman of the Board and to report back to the Board no later than 1 April 2011. The Terms of Reference were contained in document ICR(10)5. The Working Group's interim report, ICR(11)4 (Annex 3) was presented by its Chairman, Professor Whelan. He noted that important datasets and samples had been collected in the past but that the advent of new tools meant that this material was of considerable interest if it could be

made accessible to scientists. In summary, the Working Group had recommended that the most important role that the IASRB could play with regard to marine salmon survey data and sample coordination would be to establish a meta-database of existing datasets and sample collections, using the list developed by the Group as a basis. This will be an important step. The Working Group had proposed that it continue its work by developing a format for the meta-database and by providing initial information to populate this database prior to the end of 2011. The Working Group had also recommended that where specific issues arise requiring the need for support to maintain these datasets and sample collections the Board may wish to consider if it can offer assistance.

- 5.5 The Board welcomed the progress made by the Working Group and asked that it continue to work by correspondence so as to develop a format for the meta-database and to populate it, in consultation with the jurisdictions, and to report back on progress at the next meeting of the Board. The Board asked that the Chairman of the SAG develop a discussion document on possible approaches to improving access to the data and samples and protocols concerning the possible use, particularly destructive use, of samples.

**(d) The ICES/NASCO Salmon Summit**

- 5.6 The Secretary presented a progress report on arrangements for the 2011 NASCO/ICES ‘Salmon Summit’ entitled ‘Salmon at Sea: Scientific Advances and their implications for management’ which will be held in L’Aquarium, La Rochelle, France during 11-13 October 2011. The aim is to have a prestigious, well organized and well reported event that will raise awareness of the programmes of research on salmon at sea and its implications for management of the resource. He referred to a further meeting being organised by the Atlantic Salmon Trust in December 2011 in order to disseminate the findings of the SALSEA Merge project. He suggested that further dissemination of the messages from the Summit would be valuable and NASCO would be glad to assist.

**(e) Future actions**

- 5.7 The Board discussed its future role. The SALSEA Programme was a major vision that had steered the work of the Board over the last seven years and the Salmon Summit would showcase the recent advances in understanding the marine life of salmon and the management implications of the research facilitated under the SALSEA Programme. It was recognized that the original SALSEA Programme had also identified factors in freshwater that may affect the survival of salmon at sea and noted that the Board may be able to assist with collaboration and coordination of studies in this area. The Board recognized that it would be important for the Board to promote the findings of the SALSEA Programme in the light of the Salmon Summit. In this regard, the Convenor’s report from the Salmon Summit could be a very useful tool. It was also recognized that the Board could continue to play an important role in facilitating better coordination of research related to salmon at sea.

**6. Finance and administrative issues**

- 6.1 The Secretary introduced the 2010 Accounts, ICR(11)2. The accounts indicate a year-end balance of the fund of about £67,000. Presently the Board has around £53,000 available, although £25,000 is needed for the ongoing enhanced sampling

programme at West Greenland. The Board agreed that it should retain a balance of £25,000 as its reserve.

**7. Other business**

7.1 There was no other business.

**8. Report of the meeting**

8.1 The Board agreed a report of its meeting.

**9. Date and place of next meeting**

9.1 The Board agreed to hold its next meeting in conjunction with the Twenty-Ninth Annual Meeting of NASCO.

9.2 The Chairman thanked participants for their contributions and closed the meeting.