

ICR(19)07
(Duplicated as CNL(19)09)

***Report of the Eighteenth Meeting of the International Atlantic Salmon
Research Board***

Scandic Ishavshotel, Tromsø, Norway

1 June 2019

1. Opening of the Meeting

In the absence of the Chair, the Secretary opened the meeting and welcomed members of the International Atlantic Salmon Research Board (IASRB), their scientific advisers and observers to Tromsø.

A list of participants is contained in Annex 1.

2. Adoption of the Agenda

The IASRB adopted its Agenda, ICR(19)05 (Annex 2).

3. Election of Officers

The Chair of the IASRB, Rory Saunders (USA), was unable to attend the meeting. Tony Blanchard (Canada) was proposed by the IASRB member from the United States to serve as Chair of the IASRB until the close of the 2019 Annual Meeting. He was seconded by the European Union IASRB member. The IASRB duly elected Tony Blanchard as its Chair, to serve for the remainder of his predecessor's term in office. The Chair then asked for proposals for a Chair to serve the next term beginning immediately after the end of the 2019 Annual Meeting. The IASRB elected Ciaran Byrne (European Union) as its Chair (proposed by the IASRB member from Norway and seconded by the IASRB member from Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland) (DFG)).

4. Report of the Scientific Advisory Group

The Chair of the IASRB's Scientific Advisory Group (SAG), Gérald Chaput (Canada), presented a report on the Group's meeting, SAG(19)05 (Annex 3). During its meeting the SAG had:

- discussed the updated Inventory of Research Relating to Salmon Mortality in the Sea. The Inventory contains 94 completed projects and 52 ongoing projects. Seven new projects have been included since last year, some of which have been ongoing for some time and one of which is completed. One of these new projects involves tracking individual fish;
- recognised several ambitious and resource intensive ongoing projects including: ASF projects in North America that now have a 17 year time-series of smolt / post smolt tracking from 4 rivers; a Norwegian project, 'Salmon at Sea', that addresses a number of research avenues related to the ecology of salmon; several EU-funded initiatives including 'SMOLTrack I and II', and satellite tagging of salmon initiatives from West Greenland;

- discussed the importance of the Inventory, a worthwhile initiative that has led to better collaborations and highlighted initiatives under the SALSEA banner. The SAG Chair welcomed the addition of dropdown menus in the Inventory template to aid reporting and noted the SAG's view that a 2020 review of the Inventory and how it is compiled annually is still appropriate. The opportunity to promote the Inventory better was also raised;
- been informed that there was no update to the metadatabase of salmon survey data and sample collections, but this was not unexpected. The upcoming Likely Suspects Framework workshops may make use of this valuable resource;
- received an update on projects and workshops being held during the International Year of the Salmon (IYS). These included: the International Year of the Salmon workshop hosted by DFO and the NPAFC in January 2019; the 'International Year of the Salmon: Salmon and People in a Changing World – 2019 Atlantic Salmon Ecosystems Forum' held in Quebec in March 2019; the 'Wild Salmon Conference' ('Villakskonferansen') held in Trondheim, Norway, in January 2019; the 'SAMARCH International Coastal and Marine Telemetry Workshop' to be hosted by Salmon & Trout Conservation, Game & Wildlife Conservation Trust and the Atlantic Salmon Trust in November 2019 in Southampton, UK; the ICES / NASCO Likely Suspects Framework 'Workshop for North Atlantic Salmon At-Sea Mortality' to be held in June 2019; and the NGO-led initiative, the 'Missing Salmon Initiative';
- discussed streamlining the annual reporting to the IASRB in terms of SALSEA – Track progress reports and whether updates on these projects can be included in the Inventory;
- discussed developments in relation to SALSEA – Track (see item 5 below);
- received an update on the telemetry programme being conducted by the Atlantic Salmon Federation;
- received an update on the SALSEA – Track initiative, including on a new project, 'SeaMonitor', and the EU sea lice dynamics modelling project; and
- discussed the importance of the IASRB having resources available to support studies in the future, recognising the challenge of raising these funds.

The Chair of the IASRB thanked Mr Chaput for the report. The IASRB then discussed several items relating to the SAG report.

The member of the IASRB from Norway asked the Chair of the SAG whether there were any recommendations from the SAG regarding the proposed Rules of Procedure detailed in ICR(19)03. The Chair of the SAG responded that it felt that some points in ICR(19)03 need to be clarified but in general there was no issue taken with the proposal that the SAG will meet on the recommendations of the IASRB.

The United States IASRB member raised a question regarding SALSEA – Track and how it is entered into the Inventory. The Chair noted that this could be raised in the next agenda item.

In the light of the recommendations from the SAG, the IASRB decided to:

- ask the Parties to provide to the Secretariat, by 1 July, any changes or updates for the Inventory, prior to it being uploaded to the IASRB website;
- clarify in any future iterations of the Rules of Procedure details relating to how the SAG would be convened;

- encourage Parties / jurisdictions to provide details of archive scale collections for inclusion in the metadata database and ask the Secretary to contact Parties / jurisdictions in order to seek relevant additional information; and
- issue a revised version of the Progress Report on SALSEA – Track (ICR(19)04) to include the information on the new ‘SeaMonitor’ project.

5. Developments in relation to SALSEA – Track

In 2014, the IASRB had endorsed the need for an international acoustic tracking programme and adopted a Resolution (ICR(14)10) encouraging Parties to continue the development of local collaborative telemetry projects, encouraging the development of large international collaborative projects building on local efforts and encouraging Parties to make efforts to identify funding sources. The IASRB had noted that the telemetry programme should build on the success and identity of the SALSEA Programme.

In 2015, the IASRB received a report from its Telemetry Workshop that had, *inter alia*, developed 12 outline project proposals. The IASRB had recognised that it would be important to liaise with the outline project leaders with a view to following progress and, where appropriate, to provide support to assist with their implementation. The IASRB also recognised the high value of the SALSEA brand and the strong impact of NASCO as the international forum for consultation and co-operation on wild Atlantic salmon. The IASRB reaffirmed its commitment to an international telemetry project under the SALSEA brand, named ‘SALSEA – Track’, by making funds available to prepare a vision statement for SALSEA – Track and other mechanisms as resources allow.

The Secretary introduced document ICR(19)04 (Annex 4) providing an update on developments in relation to SALSEA – Track. Since the IASRB’s 2016 Annual Meeting, applications for funding from the European Union were successfully completed and funding has been granted for three projects. The progress on each is detailed in document ICR(19)04 and a brief update on these projects was provided verbally by the European Union member of the IASRB. Although the European Union projects are not part of the original 12 projects identified in 2015, they do involve differing levels of telemetry-based investigations and are considered to contribute to the overall goals of SALSEA – Track.

The IASRB received an update on the ROAM project from Tim Sheehan (USA). Mr Sheehan noted that the project is still moving forward, although there have been some delays in equipment delivery for some of the components needed to construct the sound sources and prototype tags. The equipment for the sound sources has been acquired and construction on a sound-source unit is currently ongoing. The IASRB was informed that, as a consequence of these delays, the field trials are now planned to be conducted in late summer / early autumn 2019.

The European Union IASRB member enquired as to whether the IASRB contribution of £4,000 identified to support a research workshop for the ROAM project could be spent on a spring 2020 workshop following the field trials in late summer / early autumn 2019. The Chair of the IASRB suggested that a workshop date should be scheduled and, based on the results of the initial field trials, it could then be determined whether the date should be retained and the workshop held. Mr Sheehan asked the IASRB what it anticipated would be the desired outcome of the workshop. A discussion determined that the purpose of the workshop could also be established based on the outcomes of the field trials. The IASRB agreed that the Secretary should liaise with Mr Sheehan to

agree a date and that the purpose of the workshop would be established following the field trials.

The NGO representative suggested that a review of the SALSEA – Track programme should be undertaken. This review could consider a full range of options for the future of the SALSEA – Track programme. As one example, should a broader spectrum of tracking including new technologies be included and whether this would require that a new umbrella programme term is applied.

The European Union IASRB member noted that this suggestion related to the review of the Inventory and could benefit from putting the two reviews together.

Discussions amongst the IASRB recognised that the projects identified under the SALSEA – Track brand have had mixed success coming to fruition. It was acknowledged that SALSEA – Track projects were focused on acoustic tracking technology and that new tracking technology and methods have been developed in the lifetime of SALSEA – Track (e.g. ROAM). In addition, a number of new large-scale collaborative projects have since been initiated whose objectives are in line with the objectives of SALSEA – Track and maybe should also be considered. The IASRB agreed to an inter-sessional review of the SALSEA – Track programme, which would allow this information to be discussed and considered at the next meeting of the IASRB.

It was agreed that the European Union and United States members would lead the drafting of high-level objectives that would form the basis of some Terms of Reference to be developed by the Secretariat / IASRB after the Annual Meeting for a Working Group to review the Inventory and SALSEA – Track programme and, in addition, consider how the Inventory could be best updated and managed going forward. The Secretariat will contact the IASRB for proposals on members for the Working Group and a likely date.

6. Finance and Administrative Issues

6.1 Report on 2018 Accounts – Income and Expenditure Statements

The Secretary introduced document ICR(19)02 presenting the IASRB's accounts for 2018. The decision had been taken not to have the 2018 accounts audited, but rather income and expenditure statements were prepared. At the end of 2018, the balance of the International Atlantic Salmon Research Fund was £406,802.64. Of this, approximately £396,600 is ring-fenced for the EU-funded projects. For the IASRB's general account, the year-end balance was £10,200 after the sum of £5,000 was paid to the Atlantic Salmon Trust to support the workshop for the Likely Suspects Framework and £2,400 for the costs in 2018 of the 2017 audit. The IASRB had previously agreed that it was desirable to retain a reserve of £4,000 – £5,000.

The Chair thanked the European Union for its continuing generous support.

At its 2006 Annual Meeting, the IASRB 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. In accordance with this decision, the IASRB decided not to have its 2019 accounts audited. The Secretary was asked to provide income and expenditure statements at next year's IASRB meeting.

6.2 **Rules of Procedure of the Board and the Scientific Advisory Group**

At its 2017 Annual Meeting, the Council asked the Secretary to prepare a review of the procedures relating to the work of the IASRB. The Secretary had provided a summary of the review in 2018, CNL(18)10, which included the history of the establishment of the IASRB, its Rules of Procedure and past and current membership. In conducting the review, the Secretary identified some issues that were somewhat unclear, including the clarification of the role of the Scientific Advisory Group (SAG) for which there are no Terms of Reference currently. This document was considered both by the IASRB and Council of NASCO at their respective 2018 Annual Meetings. The then Chair of the IASRB, Rory Saunders (USA), was asked to work inter-sessionally, in consultation with the Secretary, members of the IASRB and current and past Chairs of the SAG, to propose new Rules of Procedure and clarify the Terms of Reference for the IASRB and SAG for consideration by the IASRB at its 2019 Meeting.

The Secretary presented document CNL(19)10, containing the Review of the Procedures relating to the work of the International Atlantic Salmon Research Board and its Scientific Advisory Group. This document will also be considered by the Council at its 2019 Annual Meeting.

Mark Saunders (NPAFC) posed a question regarding observers such as other RFMOs and asked if they could better engage with the working of the IASRB. Members of the IASRB felt that observers, such as RFMOs, should not be official members of the IASRB, but they are encouraged to attend the meetings as observers. They should also be encouraged to participate in these meetings in accordance with the Rules of Procedure of the Board and at the discretion of the Chair and could be invited to participate in relevant Sub- or Working Groups as appropriate.

The member from the United States raised a number of issues with document CNL(19)10 that he wished to see addressed and corrected before the IASRB considers the document for adoption (e.g. use of correct terminology within the document clarifying that the Chair is elected and not appointed, clearly identifying if a Chair can serve more than two terms if there is a hiatus between their terms, etc). While there was some uncertainty as to whether the IASRB is bound by NASCO Council's Rules of Procedure, the IASRB agreed to follow them. Following discussion, the IASRB concluded that the United States member would lead on the initial redrafting of document CNL(19)10 inter-sessionally, which would include consideration of the issues raised by the SAG Chair in relation to clarifying how the SAG would be convened in future. The United States member would liaise with the other members of the IASRB and Secretariat during this process and a revised document will be considered for approval by the IASRB members inter-sessionally. During this process the IASRB will need to decide if it is necessary to convene a meeting of the SAG prior to or during the 2020 IASRB Meeting and, if so, the IASRB will need to address Terms of Reference for the SAG.

7. **Other Business**

The Chair noted thanks to Rory Saunders for all his preparation for the meeting of the IASRB and for his work as Chair of the IASRB. All present requested that their thanks and well wishes be passed on to Rory and his family.

The member for the European Union noted thanks to Tony Blanchard for taking on the role of Chair at short notice.

8. **Report of the Meeting**

The IASRB agreed a report of its meeting.

9. Date and Place of the Next Meeting

The IASRB agreed to hold its next meeting in conjunction with the Thirty-Seventh Annual Meeting of NASCO.

10. Close of the Meeting

The Chair thanked participants for their contributions and closed the meeting.

2019 IASRB List of Participants

Canada

**Tony Blanchard (Chair)
Doug Bliss
Gérald Chaput
Lis Sondergaard

Denmark (in respect of the FI & G)

**Rasmus Nygaard
Katrine Kærgaard

European Union

**Cathal Gallagher
Dennis Ensing
Niall Ó Maoiléidigh
Michael Millane

Norway

**Raoul Bierach
Peder Fiske
Heidi Hansen

Russian Federation

Sergey Prusov (for **Alexander Khatuntsov)

United States

** Tim Sheehan
Kim Damon-Randall

IGO

Mark Saunders

NGO

Ken Whelan (nominated NGO representative)
Dave Meerburg

Secretariat

Emma Hatfield
Sarah Robinson

**Nominated IASRB Member