

	<p>International Atlantic Salmon Research Board</p> <p><i>Draft Terms of Reference for the Review of the Metadatabase of Salmon Survey Data and Sample Collections</i></p>	<p>ICR(21)06</p> <p>Agenda item 3</p>
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Draft Terms of Reference for the Review of the Metadatabase of Salmon Survey Data and Sample Collections

Purpose of the Paper

To propose draft Terms of Reference for the Review of NASCO’s Metadatabase of Data and Sample Collections (metadatabase).

Decision

- the Board is requested to consider and agree the Terms of Reference for the Review of NASCO’s Metadatabase of Data and Sample Collections; and
- the Board is requested to consider who will conduct the Review.

Background

In 2020, the Working Group to Review the SALSEA-Track Programme and the Inventory of Research Relating to Salmon Mortality in the Sea, noted that many of the issues relating to the Inventory, such as relevance and utility, may equally relate to the metadatabase, [ICR\(20\)07](#). The Board agreed to the recommendations of the Working Group, one of which was that:

‘the metadatabase be reviewed and consideration be given as to whether other areas of the Board’s work require review, and that this review be conducted by the Board.’

At its Meeting in 2020 the Board agreed that, [ICR\(20\)16](#):

‘the review of the metadatabase should be agreed by the Chair and the Secretary, as and when NASCO business allows. The review will be conducted by correspondence, preferably before the next Annual Meeting of the Board.’

In light of ongoing restrictions related to the Covid-19 pandemic and the high NASCO workload, the Chair and the Secretary agreed that the review should take place after the 2022 Annual Meeting, with the Terms of Reference for the review being agreed at the Board’s Annual Meeting.

The Metadatabase of Data and Sample Collections

In 2011, the Board recognised that recent international initiatives under the [SALSEA Programme](#) had generated some valuable databases, including 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 also 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 forty years or more.

The Board decided that it could play an important role with regard to marine salmon survey data and sample co-ordination by establishing a metadatabase of existing datasets and sample collections of relevance to mortality of salmon at sea.

The metadatabase, established in 2014, is not intended to be a vehicle to provide raw data to researchers and interested parties, but serves to increase awareness among researchers and other interested parties of the availability of these datasets / sample collections related to the marine phase of the Atlantic salmon.

In 2015, the Board agreed that information on archival scale collections should also be included in the metadatabase. The Board's Scientific Advisory Group had noted that these collections may be lost when individual scientists retire, unless appropriate arrangements are in place to archive them. Even if the scales themselves are not lost, the information accompanying them could be or they could be damaged while in storage.

In 2017, it was recognised that the Board could play a role in identifying such scale collections, raising their profile with a view to safeguarding them for future use. The Board agreed that information on these scale collections should, as a first step, be included in the Board's metadatabase. The Board also agreed that information on the West Greenland Sampling Programme Biological Characteristics database should be included in the metadatabase.

Parties / jurisdictions are requested to provide updates to the metadatabase annually.

The Metadatabase of Data and Sample Collections can be found on the [Board Website](#).

Draft Terms of Reference

1. A Working Group reporting to the Board is established with the following high-level objectives:
 - a. Propose a future course for the Metadatabase of Data and Sample Collections (Metadatabase) by considering a full range of options, to increase its relevance and utility;
 - b. Consider how the Metadatabase could be better managed and presented.
2. In carrying out the objectives in paragraph one, the Working Group will:
 - a. Review the relevance and utility of the entries in the Metadatabase;
 - b. Review the processes related to the Metadatabase, including:
 - i. The process for maintaining and providing annual updates;
 - ii. The process of advertising to, or sharing the resource with, non-NASCO salmon researchers; and
 - iii. Propose modifications to procedures and tools related to the Metadatabase;
 - c. Propose ways to enhance awareness of the Metadatabase, to encourage greater use.
3. The Working Group should also consider whether other areas of the Board's work require review.

The Working Group should take into account the following documents and information:

- [ICR\(17\)7](#), Report of the Sixteenth Meeting of the International Atlantic Salmon Research Board;
- [SAG\(15\)7](#), Report of the Meeting of the Scientific Advisory Group of the International Atlantic Salmon Research Board;
- [ICR\(12\)4](#), Progress in Developing a Metadatabase of Salmon Survey Data and Sample Collections of Relevance to Mortality of Salmon at Sea; and
- [ICR\(11\)4](#), Interim Report of the IASRB Working Group on Marine Salmon Survey Data and Sample Collection.

Chair and Secretary of the International Atlantic Salmon Research Board
Edinburgh
30 April 2021