

## **ICR(13)6**

### ***Report of the Twelfth Meeting of the International Atlantic Salmon Research Board***

***Westcourt Hotel, Drogheda, Ireland***

***Monday 3 June 2013***

#### **1. Opening of the Meeting**

1.1 The Chairman, Mr Raoul Bierach (Norway), opened the meeting and welcomed members of the Board, their scientific advisers and representatives of the accredited NGOs to Drogheda.

1.2 A list of participants is contained in Annex 1.

#### **2. Adoption of the Agenda**

2.1 The Board adopted its Agenda, ICR(13)4 (Annex 2), after agreeing to consider item 7 'Finance and Administrative Issues' after item 3.

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

3.1 The Board re-elected Mr Raoul Bierach (Norway) as Chairman for a period of two years.

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

4.1 The Chairman of the Board's Scientific Advisory Group (SAG), Mr Tim Sheehan (US), summarised the report of the Group's meeting, SAG(13)XX (Annex 3). The SAG had reviewed the updated inventory of research, ICR(13)2, and had noted that in the past, the inventory had been made available to the ICES Working Group on North Atlantic Salmon to assist in identifying data deficiencies, monitoring needs and research requirements. This had not been possible in 2013. The SAG recognized that there was not enough time at either the SAG or IASRB meetings to review the inventory comprehensively, but that there was merit in doing so every 3 or 4 years as had been done by the SAG Sub-Group in 2012 (see 5.1).

4.2 There had been no applications for funding by the Board since last year, but the SAG had recognized that its Sub-Group's recommendations could involve the need for support from the Board. Last year, the Board had agreed to fund the following two projects (£6,000 each):

- a pilot project to undertake genetic stock of origin identification of European salmon captured at West Greenland; and

- a proposal for genetic stock identification of salmon caught in the Faroes fishery. A contribution had also been made to this project through the Board by Marine Scotland (£2,500).

The SAG had received updates on progress with these projects and on the analysis of stable isotopes from salmon sampled at West Greenland and acoustic tracking studies in Canada. These reports are presented in the report of the SAG (See Annex 3).

- 4.3 In 2011, the Board had recognized that recent international initiatives under the SALSEA Programme had generated some extremely valuable databases. Similarly, the Board had noted the existence of some historical marine survey samples and had recognised the need to ensure that these samples are being maintained and agreed procedures developed to allow access to them for further research. The Board had, therefore, decided to establish a metadatabase of existing datasets and sample collections. In 2012, the SAG accepted a format for this metadatabase and requested that jurisdictions provide relevant information. The SAG advised the Board that information had only been submitted by Greenland and the US for inclusion in the metadatabase since last year and that there had been some confusion concerning the scope of the information to be provided. It clarified that the metadatabase will not contain data, but simply details of where databases and sample collections are held together with details of the data or samples and conditions governing their accessibility. The SAG had recommended that the form for providing information be re-issued for completion by Parties/jurisdictions, along with a background explanatory note developed by the Secretariat in conjunction with the SAG Chairman, concerning the metadatabase. The SAG Chairman would then follow up with key individuals with a view to including information in the metadatabase. It had also been agreed that a new category concerning accessibility should be included to indicate that protocols concerning accessibility have not yet been developed. The Board agreed to these proposals and encouraged Parties/jurisdictions to contribute information to the metadatabase.

## **5. The Future Role of the IASRB and its SAG**

- 5.1 At its 2012 Meeting, the Board had agreed to re-convene the Sub-Group of its Scientific Advisory Group that reported in 2009. The Board had agreed the following Terms of Reference for the Sub-Group on the Future Direction of Research on Marine Survival of Salmon:

- Review the outcome of recent scientific investigations and summarise the findings which have significant management implications;
- Review the Inventory of Marine Research and identify opportunities for collaboration within the suite of ongoing projects to facilitate progress with identifying the major causes of salmon mortality at sea;
- Based on the inventory and the results of recent scientific studies published in the literature, identify gaps in research efforts and knowledge which may be important for advising on salmon management actions;
- Review the larger SALSEA project and advise on a “road map” to complete other elements of the research previously identified;
- Arising from these reviews, advise on possible future role of the SAG.

- 5.2 Last year, the Board had agreed that it would consider its future working methods at its 2013 meeting in the light of the findings of the Sub-Group, the External Performance Review Panel's recommendations and the outcome of the Working Group established to take these recommendations forward.
- 5.3 The report of the Sub-Group (SAG(13)2) was presented by its Chairman, Mr Ted Potter (European Union). The Sub-Group had considered that a priority should be to analyze the remaining samples and data arising from the SALSEA Programme and it had encouraged the Board to explore opportunities to support these analyses. It had proposed that a particular focus for the Board should be studies to partition mortality of salmon among the phases of the marine migration and recommended that the Board should consider whether it wishes to facilitate a meeting of scientists and external partners to further develop a collaborative international programme of research. A preliminary outline proposal was provided and the aim would be to identify where there may be particular need for international collaboration and coordination and support with fund raising. ICES had recommended that that the IASRB support the further development of this project.
- 5.4 With regard to the SALSEA samples, the Board was advised of on-going initiatives to analyse these and recognised that for the remaining samples, it would be important to first clarify what samples are available, how their analysis could benefit management and how much the analyses would cost. The SAG Chairman indicated that he would be willing to collate the request for information and report back to the Scientific Advisory Group.
- 5.5 In order to take forward the collaborative international programme of research, the Board asked that, as a first step a SAG Telemetry Sub-Group under the Chairmanship of Ted Potter (EU) be established. This Sub-Group will work by correspondence (or hold a workshop, possibly partially supported by funding from IASRB) to develop and document a roadmap outlining a large scale international collaborative telemetry project to ultimately provide information on migration paths and quantitative estimates of mortality during phases of the marine life-cycle of salmon. This document will:
- identify how this project will support the conservation and management of Atlantic salmon stocks (i.e. what outputs will be produced and how these will improve Atlantic salmon management);
  - provide an overview of the resources required with provisional costings;
  - identify key strategic partners for this project;
  - identify current and proposed telemetry programmes that could be linked with and enhanced by the proposed project.
- 5.6 The Sub-Group will aim to develop the roadmap by the autumn and submit it to the IASRB so it may consider possibilities for future developments in this field.
- 5.7 The Sub-Group had noted that as the SAG is the only body within NASCO that identifies research needs and addresses scientific coordination, it concluded that the SAG is the most appropriate and effective forum in which to perform this important

role. The Board decided that the SAG should continue to fulfill this important role in supporting the continuing work of the Board.

## **6. Progress reports on projects funded by the Board**

- 6.1 Reports on projects funded by the Board were presented in the report of the Scientific Advisory Group (see Section 4 above).

## **7. Finance and administrative issues**

- 7.1 The Interim Secretary introduced document ICR(13)3 presenting the Board's accounts for 2012. The decision had been taken not to have the 2012 accounts audited because of the limited funds held and the small number of transactions in the year. At the end of 2012, the balance of the International Atlantic Salmon Research Fund was £9,368.82. However, the Board had made a loan to the Council of £25,000 to be repaid in 2014 (£11,719) and 2015 (£13,281). The Board was advised that a balance of approximately £18,300 remained of the funds contributed by the US for the enhanced sampling programme at West Greenland. The Board agreed that once the loan to NASCO had been repaid to the Board, this sum should be either returned to the US or the US should be consulted on appropriate uses for the funds. The Board decided that, of the £9,000 currently available to it, it would make available up to £6,000 to support the initiative referred to in paragraph 5.5, but that it would retain a reserve of about £3,000.

## **8. Other business**

- 8.1 There was no other business.

## **9. Report of the meeting**

- 9.1 The Board agreed a report of its meeting.

## **10. Date and Place of next meeting**

- 10.1 The Board agreed to hold its next meeting in conjunction with the Thirty-First Annual Meeting of NASCO.
- 10.2 The Chairman thanked participants for their contributions and closed the meeting.