

	<p style="text-align: center;"><i>International Atlantic Salmon Research Board</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Report of the Inter-Sessional Meeting of the International Atlantic Salmon Research Board</i></p>	<p style="text-align: center;">ICR(25)01</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Agenda Item: 3a)</p>
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Report of the Inter-Sessional Meeting of the International Atlantic Salmon Research Board

By Video-Conference

9 April 2025

1. Opening of the Meeting

- 1.1 The Chair, Martha Robertson (Canada), opened the meeting and welcomed participants to the meeting.
- 1.2 A list of participants is contained in Annex 1.

2. Adoption of the Agenda

- 2.1 The International Atlantic Salmon Research Board (the Board) adopted its Agenda, ICRIS(25)03 (Annex 2).

3. Report of the Meeting of the Scientific Advisory Group of the International Atlantic Salmon Research Board on its Evaluation of the Proposed Atlantic Salmon Marine Growth Study Outline

- 3.1 The Chair reminded participants that the Board agreed during its 2024 Inter-Sessional Meeting, [ICR\(24\)03](#), to task the Scientific Advisory Group (SAG) with drafting an outline that describes the requirements of a basin-wide marine growth project based on adult scales and adopted Terms of Reference for this work, [ICRIS\(24\)08](#). At the Board's 2024 Annual Meeting, the SAG Chair (Peder Fiske, Norway) presented the work of the SAG in addressing its Terms of Reference, [ICR\(24\)13](#). It was agreed that a series of online meetings would be held as an initial scoping workshop, led by Nora Hanson (UK) with assistance from Tim Sheehan (USA), with the objectives to:

- agree the standardisation of obtaining images from scale samples;
- consider the tools to extract data from the images; and
- further plan the project.

A smaller group would then develop a project proposal and comparison of the potential methods and consider how the SAG's ToRs could be further answered. A series of two short, informal, online meetings were organised in support of developing the project outline.

- 3.2 The SAG was asked to report back to the Board on the scoping workshop by 31 January 2025. The SAG's 'Report of the Scientific Advisory Group of the International Atlantic Salmon Research Board on its Evaluation of the Proposed Atlantic Salmon Marine Growth Study Outline' was issued to the Board on 24 February and the Board was offered the opportunity to raise any questions or make any comments on it by correspondence by 14 March, to be passed on to the small working group or the SAG (or elsewhere as appropriate) with the aim of having a response for consideration at this meeting of the Board on 9 April. No questions or comments were received.
- 3.3 The SAG Chair (Peder Fiske, Norway) presented the 'Report of the Scientific Advisory

Group of the International Atlantic Salmon Research Board on its Evaluation of the Proposed Atlantic Salmon Marine Growth Study Outline’, ICRIS(25)02. His presentation is available in Annex 3.

- 3.4 The Chair thanked Dr Fiske for his presentation and noted that the project proposal is still preliminary and that further information is required to enable a fully costed proposal to be put before the Board. The acquisition of such information could require funding in itself and the Board, therefore, should decide whether they endorsed the project and its further development.
- 3.5 The Chair further noted that in its report the SAG proposed a list of questions to be discussed at the meeting. The questions broadly covered how the project would be led / co-ordinated, to what extent Parties / jurisdictions would need to collaborate and share resources and the level of involvement required from the Board in allocating resources.
- 3.6 Canada raised that the small working group of the SAG could develop the proposal further by addressing the questions. The United States noted that the first step was to identify the willingness of Parties / jurisdictions to provide resources.
- 3.7 The Chair proposed that prior to the Annual Meeting in June, Board members would consult with their respective Parties / jurisdictions to undertake a gap analysis that would identify the resources each has available or requires to take part in the project. She added that this would require clear guidance to the Parties / jurisdictions on what they would need to report back to the Board. Parties / jurisdictions would also need to show what aspects of the project they could commit to or need help with. The Chair also confirmed that a data sharing agreement would be required.
- 3.8 Canada, the UK and the United States agreed to co-ordinate the request for the information required from the Parties / jurisdictions – to be sent via the Secretariat – and collating the responses, to be completed by 23 May 2025. The Board agreed that the information request would be in a structured format that summarised the questions proposed in the SAG report with additional questions to assess Parties’ / jurisdictions’ resource availability and requirements. The Chair proposed the addition of questions on potential sources of funding.

4. Next Steps

- 4.1 Canada, the UK and the United States agreed to develop a gap analysis request in the week following the meeting, to be circulated to all Board members for completion by their respective Parties / jurisdictions. Responses would need to be received and collated by 23 May 2025. This would allow consideration of the responses at the Board’s Annual Meeting on 2 and 5 June.

5. Other Business

- 5.1 There was no other business.

6. Report of the Meeting

- 6.1 The Board agreed the Report of its Meeting by correspondence.

7. Close of the Meeting

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

Participants of the Inter-Sessional Board Meeting 9 April 2025

Canada

****Cindy Breau**
Martha Robertson (Chair)

European Union

****Cathal Gallagher**

Iceland

****Guðni Magnús Eiríksson**

Norway

****Raoul Bierach**
*Helge Dyrendal
Peder Fiske

Russian Federation

****Sergey Prusov** (virtual participant)

United Kingdom

****Nora Hanson**

United States

****Tim Sheehan**

NGOs

Ken Whelan (Nominated NGO Representative)

Secretariat

Emma Hatfield
Clare Cavers

****Nominated Board Member**
***Board Adviser**

ICRIS(25)03

Inter-Sessional Meeting of the International Atlantic Salmon Research Board

By Video Conference

9 April 2025

Agenda

1. Opening of the Meeting
2. Adoption of the Agenda
3. Report of the Scientific Advisory Group of the International Atlantic Salmon Research Board on its Evaluation of the Proposed Atlantic Salmon Marine Growth Study Outline
4. Next Steps
5. Other Business
6. Report of the Meeting
7. Close of the Meeting

Atlantic Salmon Marine Growth Study Outline

A smaller group outlined the project

- Two informal meetings and one «data meeting» (26 people from 12 jurisdictions)
- Delivered a report to SAG
- SAG worked by correspondance
- SAG made minor revision to the report

Candidate hypothesis

- Global growth signatures less synchronous than local
- Positive influence between growth and survival
- Positive influence of growth and the probability of maturing
- Growth signatures driven by environmental conditions
- Critical periods during migration can be identified
- Growth trajectories in the future can be forecasted given different climate scenarios

Outline of project

1. Collect standardized images of scales from at least one population from all (or most) of the 25 stock units used by WGNAS. Samples from mixed stock fisheries should be avoided.
2. Within each stock unit the time series should ideally cover the time period from 1980ies until present.
3. Only scales from maiden 1SW and 2SW salmon should be included to ensure comparable scales across stock units.
4. At least 75 1SW scales and 75 2SW scales per year should be included from each stock unit.
5. Extract growth data from all images using the same automated tool(s) to reduce differences among stock units being caused by different interpretations among scale readers.

Data availability

- A preliminary overview was conducted

- FAIR principle (**F**indable, **A**ccessible, **I**nteroperable, and **R**eusable)
- Agreement on data availability
- Staff and fiscal resources
 - In-kind for data preparation?
 - 4-6 months per stock unit for preparation
- Project at least 3 years
- Dedicated leader
- Steering committee selection based on skills

Potential management implications

- Identify drivers of marine mortality
- Contribute information to forecasting productivity
 - Inform management measurements

SAG endorses the study outline