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Press Release

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International Salmon Meetings Reinforce Accountability *Deficient Nations Go Back to the Drawing Board*

The North Atlantic Salmon Conservation Organization (NASCO) honored the letter and spirit of the organization's Resolutions and Agreements on salmon conservation at its annual meeting in Bar Harbor, Maine, by requiring revised implementation plans from member countries by November 1, 2007. All Member Governments, with the exception of Nations that have already submitted perfect plans (the United States, England and Wales) must either present an initial or revised plan that overcomes deficiencies defined by an independent review group. This same review group will re-assess the revised plans.

"We acknowledge the United States for its implementation plan that is a cornerstone of successful restoration of wild Atlantic salmon," said Tom Grasso, Acting Director of the World Wildlife Fund Fisheries Conservation Program. "Now, as a leading partner in this trans-Atlantic effort, we ask the United States to motivate other parties to do the same."

"In Canada's case, the Department of Fisheries and Oceans must revise its plan by disclosing quantifiable commitments on plans and timelines to review and modify fisheries regulations to better protect wild Atlantic salmon, restore critical salmon habitat, and control the impacts of salmon aquaculture and related activities on wild Atlantic salmon populations," said Sue Scott, VP Communications, Atlantic Salmon Federation.

Sue Scott continued, "We are assured that Canada will consult with provincial governments, First Nations and non government organizations, such as the Atlantic Salmon Federation, during this revision process."

The objective is to have a reporting structure that will allow on-going measurement of progress by Nations in reaching the goals of the NASCO agreements. Time is of the essence as salmon populations continue to decline, North American large salmon by 89% in thirty years. The NASCO agreements were made between 1994 and 2002. However, there was little accountability or transparency on action to reach their objectives until non government organizations urged a new vision and approach that was adopted in 2005. Non government organizations accepted implementation plans as the most important measure of government commitment to NASCO.

NASCO has decided that the first agreement to receive detailed reporting by Parties, based on the implementation plan structure, will be salmon fishery management. Parties have been given exacting specifications to guide fishery management implementation plans, which are due for completion by March, 2008. At the recent meeting, NASCO formed a new Review Group that will assess the implementation plans specifically for fishery management.



Other encouraging progress at this year's meeting in Bar Harbor was agreement by NASCO to invite France (in respect of St. Pierre et Miquelon) to join the NASCO Convention. This would allow cooperation toward addressing the interception of migrating salmon from U.S. and Canadian rivers in the St. Pierre et Miquelon fishery. In 2006, the fishery killed 3.55 tonnes or about 800 salmon, the highest catch ever recorded. First Nations and conservation organizations believe that this fishery is actually larger than reported, and are concerned that it is taking endangered salmon and salmon that they have spent thousands of dollars to restore.

A special meeting between Canada and the United States is to take place before NASCO's next annual meeting in June, 2008, which will be hosted by the Spanish Government in Asturias. This intersession is expected to address aquaculture issues, such as escaped farmed salmon that do not recognize the Canada/U.S international border, North American support for research on salmon mortality-at-sea (NASCO's SALSEA program) and ways of addressing acid rain impacts in both the United States and Canada.

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Background on the NASCO meetings and implementation plans is available at www.atlanticsalmonfederation.org

The Atlantic Salmon Federation (ASF) is an international non-profit organization that promotes the conservation and wise management of wild Atlantic salmon and their environment. ASF represents 7 regional councils that have a membership of 135 river associations and 40,000 people, throughout the North American range of the wild Atlantic salmon.

World Wildlife Fund (WWF) is the world's largest and most experienced independent conservation organization with 4.7 million supporters and a global network active in 96 countries. WWF's mission is to stop the degradation of the planet's natural environment and to build a future in which humans live in harmony with nature.

The North Atlantic Salmon Conservation Organization (NASCO) was established to promote the conservation, restoration, enhancement and rational management of salmon stocks in the North Atlantic Ocean through international cooperation. Member Governments are the United States, Canada, European Union (including England & Wales, Scotland, Ireland, Northern Ireland, Denmark, Sweden, Finland, France, Germany, Spain), the Faroe Islands, Greenland, Iceland, Norway, Portugal, and the Russian Federation. NASCO is an international body established under the Convention for the Conservation of Salmon in the North Atlantic Ocean, founded 1 October 1983.