



Published on *Fisheries* (<https://ec.europa.eu/fisheries>)

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## **Improving the state of wild salmon stocks - NASCO to strengthen cooperation and raise awareness through an International Year of the Salmon**

- Press Release

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13/06/2016

The 33rd meeting of the North Atlantic Salmon Conservation Organisation (NASCO) took place between 7 and 10 June in Bad Neuenahr Ahrweiler (Germany).

In 2014 many Southern European rivers hit historically low levels of wild Atlantic salmon return rates. Returns in 2015 did not show significant improvement and the scientific advice released by ICES in May 2016 did not contain any catch options for West Greenland and the Faroe Islands. At the meeting NASCO agreed to continue the measures in force for both these areas. It reviewed the implementation of the regulatory measure for the West Greenland fishery, and the West Greenland Commission adopted 6 Tenets for the effective management of an Atlantic salmon fishery.

Agreement was also reached on a new classification system for the status of the salmon stock, to be applied by December 2017 and to support the development of a "State of the Salmon" report due in 2018. The NASCO parties in the North-East Atlantic Commission expressed their concerns for *Gyrodactylus salaris*, a parasite threatening wild salmon stocks. A working group was set up to find collaborative ways to prevent the parasite from spreading further and to possibly eradicate it.

On June 8 a special session brought together managers, scientists, NGOs and the farming industry to discuss the impacts of salmon farming on wild Atlantic salmon. The information presented will contribute to the identification of best practices to protect wild Atlantic salmon.

The EU asked the parties to strengthen their commitments and renew efforts to improve the existing regulatory framework, underlining how they can benefit from each other's experiences.

Finally, NASCO supported the organisation of an International Year of the Salmon, with the objective

to raise awareness on salmon health and environmental and man-made dangers. The International Year of the Salmon is due to take place in 2019, and will be preceded by an International Symposium at the end of 2018. NASCO and the North Pacific Anadromous Fish Commission (NPAFC) will coordinate closely for the organisation and will seek the involvement of other core partners, such as those working with wild salmon in the Baltic Sea and in the Arctic.

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