

**Council**

**CNL(12)30**

***Annual Report  
on Actions Taken Under Implementation Plans***

***EU – UK (England and Wales)***



**Annual Report on actions taken under Implementation Plans  
for the Calendar Year 2011  
EU-UK- England and Wales**

The Guidelines for the preparation of ‘Implementation Plans and for Reporting on Progress’, NSTF(06)10 (copy attached) indicate that the primary purpose of the annual reports is to provide a summary of all the actions that have been taken under the Implementation Plan in the previous year. In addition, details of any significant changes to the status of stocks, new factors affecting stocks, any changes to the management regime in place, and any changes to the Implementation Plan should be included in the report. Details of actions taken in accordance with Articles 14 and 15 of the Convention are also needed by the Council. **Please provide the following information to the Secretariat by 6 April 2012**

**Section 1: Details of any significant changes to the management outlined in the introduction to the Implementation Plan.**

There have been no significant changes to the management described in the Implementation Plan for England and Wales (as updated in 2009).

The Marine and Coastal Access Act (MCAA) came into force in 2009 and contains a number of provisions which relate to the management of salmon. Some of these came into effect from January 2011. They change the way the Environment Agency permits fishing. Fishing by rod and line, certain (established) salmon and seas trout nets and historic salmon traps must be licensed. Any other fishing method (including for salmon and sea trout) is either prohibited or authorised, and if authorised, can be subject to conditions. As a consequence of this, legislation explicitly prohibiting the use of unauthorised fixed engines for any fish under the Salmon and Freshwater Fisheries Act 1975 has been repealed. This was mainly used to prevent illegal fishing for salmon and sea trout in coastal waters. Setting an unauthorised fixed engine for salmon remains an offence under the Salmon and Freshwater Fisheries Act: setting an unauthorised fixed engine for sea fish is an offence under Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority byelaws.

**Section 2: A description of any significant changes in the status of stocks and information on catches. The Council has asked that the following information on catches be provided:**

- (a) the provisional catch of salmon in tonnes for 2011;**
- (b) the confirmed catch of salmon in tonnes for 2010;**
- (c) an estimate of unreported catch in tonnes for 2011;**
- (d) the number of salmon caught and released in recreational fisheries in 2011.**

**Information on catches:**

- (a) provisional catch of salmon in tonnes for 2011 = 128.7 tonnes (fish caught and retained only)
- (b) confirmed catch of salmon in tonnes for 2010 = 108.7 tonnes (nominal catch, retained only)
- (c) estimate of unreported catch in tonnes for 2011 = 22.5 tonnes [11.2 tonnes under-reporting and 11.3 tonnes due to illegal catches]
- (d) provisional estimate of the number of salmon caught and released in recreational fisheries in 2011 = 14,036 (59.2 tonnes), and representing 62% of the provisional declared rod catch (by number).

**Status of stocks:**

The annual review of stock status for 2011 showed:

- 12 rivers (19%) were classified as ‘not at risk’ – i.e. had a high probability (>95 %) of meeting the management objective;
- 15 rivers (23%) were classified as ‘probably not at risk’ – i.e. had a probability of 50% to 95% of meeting the management objective;
- 16 rivers (25%) were classified as ‘probably at risk’ – i.e. had a probability of 5% to 50% of meeting the management objective;
- 21 rivers (33%) were classified as ‘at risk’ – i.e. had a very low probability (<5%) of meeting the management objective.

[The ‘at risk’ category does not mean that stocks are in danger of becoming extinct, but rather that they are falling well short of the management objective – i.e. of meeting or exceeding the conservation limit in four years out of five, on average.]

There has been a progressive decrease in the proportion of rivers regarded ‘at risk’ over the past 8 years and a marked increase in the proportion of rivers assessed as ‘probably at risk’ and ‘probably not at risk’. These trends are predicted to continue. The changes in categorisation over the time series suggest an overall increase in the number of rivers moving towards compliance with the management objective of meeting the CL four years out of five, on average.

**Section 3: A description of any new factors which may significantly affect the abundance of salmon stocks.**

**Climate:**

- Extreme low flows were widespread in England and Wales in April and May 2011 and there are concerns that this led to an increase in predation on salmon and sea trout smolts by avian predators.
- Parts of South Eastern England have been in drought since June 2011 and areas in central and South West England are being heavily affected by low rainfall. Fish rescues have been necessary in some drought affected reaches.

**Section 4: An account of all actions taken under the Implementation Plan with regard to the management of salmon fisheries; habitat protection and restoration; aquaculture and related activities; and other influences affecting salmon abundance or diversity (including the marine environment).**

Management Action	Reporting Update	Achieved Management Action (Yes, No, Ongoing, Completed)
<b>Fisheries Management</b>		
<p><b>ACTION 1:</b> By 2009, establish the programme for developing new salmon management plans.</p>	<p>The programme for developing salmon management plans has been completed. Sea Trout and Salmon Catchment summaries giving the details to support the 11 River Basin Management Plans (RBMPs) in England &amp; Wales are being developed. These build on the existing Salmon Action Plans but also include other catchments where salmon are recovering from historic degradation. A timetable to produce 82 such plans for salmon (and sea trout as appropriate) by 2014 is in place. Draft plans for the Ribble, Test and Itchen have been prepared.</p>	<p><b>Action completed; further work ongoing</b></p>
<p><b>ACTION 2(i):</b> Continue the development of procedures for using reference points in the assessment and management of salmon stocks</p>	<p>The Environment Agency and Cefas continue to keep the procedures for setting and using Conservation Limits and Management Targets under review. Both the analytical methods and presentation of results have been updated in the Cefas/EA Annual Assessments of Salmon Stocks and Fisheries; the latest report is available on the internet at <a href="http://www.cefas.defra.gov.uk">http://www.cefas.defra.gov.uk</a> and <a href="#">Environment Agency website - salmon report</a></p>	<p><b>Ongoing</b></p>

<b>Management Action</b>	<b>Reporting Update</b>	<b>Achieved Management Action (Yes, No, Ongoing, Completed)</b>
<p><b>ACTION 2(ii):</b> By 2009, apply the Salmon Lifecycle Model (SLM) to a number of salmon rivers in order to evaluate its performance; identify improvements/areas for further model development; and clarify the role of SLM alongside current CL setting and compliance procedures in the management of salmon stocks. <b>UPDATE TO ACTION IN 2009: Action on hold:</b></p>	<p>Salmonid life-cycle models are being developed to support the interpretation of salmonid research and provide management advice (Defra contract SF0257: Salmonid life-cycle models).</p>	<p><b>Action updated; further work ongoing</b></p>
<p><b>ACTION 2:(iii):</b> By 2009, evaluate use of a model to predict rod exploitation rates and to improve current CL compliance procedures.</p>	<p>There is an ongoing programme to review and refine the approaches used to assess salmon stocks. Work has been undertaken to improve the estimation of exploitation rates in stock assessments, and to review the balance between the use of default (generic) and river-specific data.</p>	<p><b>Action completed; further work ongoing</b></p>
<p><b>ACTION 3:</b> By 2012 evaluate and determine the measures for the east coast mixed stock salmon fisheries consistent with England and Wales policy.</p>	<p>A review of the NE Coast fishery is underway. Data on the fishery and exploited stocks is being analysed and extensive discussions have taken place with stakeholder groups. A genetics study has also been completed to investigate the stock composition of catches in the fishery. The review process will be completed in mid 2012 to guide and support the development of new regulations before the current Net Limitation Order (NLO) expires in December 2012</p>	<p><b>Yes, ongoing</b></p>

<p><b>ACTION 4:</b> Undertake annual reviews of the status of stocks in each principal salmon river and determine the need for immediate changes to regulatory measures through the application of the Decision Structure.</p>	<p>The annual reviews for 2011 were completed and the results are shown in Section 2 of this report. These data are published annually in the Cefas/Environment Agency Annual Assessment of Salmon Stocks and Fisheries in England and Wales (see Action 2(i)). [Regulations are also reviewed as part of this process.]</p>	<p><b>Completed for 2011</b></p>
<p><b>ACTION 5:</b> Review Net Limitation Orders (NLOs) for net fisheries prior to their expiry or as required by annual stock status assessments, and determine the requirements for, and implement, new controls. This process will include undertaking stakeholder consultation and applying the Decision Structure.</p>	<p>The following actions were taken in 2011/12:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– <b>NE coastal net fishery:</b> a review of current measures is well advanced. The current NLO expires in Dec 2012;</li> <li>– <b>Rivers Avon &amp; Stour:</b> netting controls were reviewed and it has been proposed that the number of nets should be reduced to zero.</li> <li>– <b>Rivers Derwent &amp; Eden:</b> Salmon rod fishing byelaws are being reviewed in response to requests for changes by local angling associations.</li> <li>– <b>River Exe:</b> A new NLO was introduced in May 2011 maintaining the level of fishing at three licences for 10 years.</li> <li>– <b>Rivers Piddle &amp; Frome:</b> netting controls were reviewed and it has been proposed that the number of nets should remain unchanged at one net licence.</li> <li>– <b>River Taff/Ely:</b> Mandatory catch and release (C&amp;R) byelaws have been promoted through consultation and then statutory advertising in 2011.</li> <li>– <b>Rivers Taw &amp; Torridge:</b> netting controls were reviewed and it has been proposed that the number of nets should be reduced from the current level of three licences to one.</li> <li>– <b>River Yorkshire Esk:</b> restrictions on angling in the tidal reaches have been reviewed and it has been proposed that they should be renewed;</li> <li>– <b>River Wye:</b> Mandatory C&amp;R byelaws for the rod fishery have</li> </ul>	<p><b>Completed for 2011</b></p>

	<p>been promoted through consultation and then statutory advertising in 2011</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Severn Estuary:</b> proposals for the renewal of the two NLOs (for draft and lave nets) have been prepared and are being evaluated.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>ACTION 6:</b> Review the following byelaws for salmon fisheries prior to their expiry in 2008, and determine the requirements for subsequent controls through the application of the Decision Structure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Northeast Region byelaws – annual close season for salmon &amp; trout;</li> <li>• National byelaws: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– annual close season for salmon &amp; trout fishing other than with rod &amp; line;</li> <li>– early season catch and release in specified fisheries and by rod &amp; line;</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>early season method restriction for salmon with rod and line</p>	<p>Completed.</p> <p>The National measures were reintroduced for a further 10 year period, retaining the closure of most salmon net fisheries until 1<sup>st</sup> June and the requirement for catch and release in rod fisheries until 16<sup>th</sup> June.</p> <p>All the Regional byelaws that were tied to the National byelaw were re-examined at the same time as the above review; new byelaws were introduced for the Southwest Region.</p>	<p><b>Completed</b></p>
<p><b>ACTION 7:</b> By positive engagement with other relevant jurisdictions, directly and through the EU and NASCO, seek to ensure that exploitation of any English or Welsh salmon stock in home-water fisheries outside England and Wales does not exceed 1%.</p>	<p>There is no fishery that is known currently to be exploiting more than 1% of any stock in England and Wales outside UK home-waters.</p>	<p><b>Completed for 2011</b></p>



**Habitat Protection and Restoration**

<p><b>ACTION 8:</b> Continue the development and implementation of the River Fisheries Habitat Inventory (RFHI) as part of development of the Salmon Lifecycle Model to 2009 (see Action 2 above).</p>	<p>There has been no specific progress in developing or implementing RFHI during 2011 (see also 2ii above). RFHI has influenced the development of FCS2, a classification system which the Environment Agency is using to help prioritise actions to improve salmon stocks and to meet EU Water Framework Directive (WFD) classification requirements.</p>	<p><b>Ongoing</b></p>
<p><b>ACTION 9:</b> Continue and expand the range of initiatives to bring about significant changes in land use to protect and enhance river habitats - including agri-environment schemes, implementation of the Water Framework Directive (WFD), information campaigns and tighter regulation; report annually on activities.</p>	<p>The WFD assessment process has identified a range of rivers where fish populations are at less than good status, and the reasons why there is an impact have been identified for many. Work is being undertaken to identify the appropriate measures needed to achieve the objectives of the WFD and hence improve failing salmon populations. These measures have been reported in the first RBMP and many are now being implemented through partnerships between Government Agencies and third sector groups such as Rivers Trusts. Programmes include projects aimed at reducing diffuse pollution especially from agricultural runoff.</p>	<p><b>Ongoing</b></p>

<p><b>ACTION 10:</b> Deliver strategic programmes targeted to address degraded salmon habitat and involving collaboration between stakeholder groups to optimise what is achieved; report annually on activities.</p>	<p>Strategic programmes are now driven by the outcomes of the WFD assessments of water body status and are delivered through the RBMP, with the Environment Agency and Rivers Trusts working in collaboration. There is an increasing focus on delivering at the catchment level - more information can be found at: <a href="#">Catchment based approach to water management</a>. In 2011, the UK Government allocated £9 million to the Environment Agency to improve water body status under WFD, some of which will have benefited salmon. Formal reporting of progress will be every six years as required by the WFD (next report due in 2015). Salmon specific activities are routinely reported to local liaison groups.</p>	<p><b>Ongoing</b></p>
<p><b>ACTION 11:</b> Deliver the annual programmes of river improvements, including those identified within SAPs and those organised by Rivers Trusts, to advise land managers and protect and restore river and riparian habitats; report annually on activities.</p>	<p>Actions to improve salmon stocks (now identified through the RBMP process – see Action 1 above) have been taken forward in 2011 by individual and joint programmes led by Rivers Trusts and the Environment Agency as described by Actions 9 and 10 above. This has included installation of fish passes and other habitat improvements as part of a UK Government funded £2.6 million Rivers Trusts'. These projects are reported on the Rivers Trusts' website <a href="#">here</a> and through the Environment Agency's corporate performance management systems.</p>	<p><b>Action completed for 2011</b></p>
<p><b>Aquaculture and related activities</b></p>		
<p><b>ACTION 12:</b> Control the stocking of salmonids and other species within the terms of the current national policies for introductions and transfers; report annually on stocking activities.</p>	<p>All fish introductions to inland waters are subject to consenting under Section 30 of the Salmon and Freshwater Fisheries Act 1975. Additional controls apply to high risk non-native species under orders made under the Import of Live Fish Act 1980. Licensed introductions under this act include consent under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 for specific species. The Environment Agency is not able to self consent its own fish introductions, but applies management controls to ensure compliance with best practice. Juvenile salmon are stocked from hatcheries for mitigation, restoration or enhancement purposes in a number of catchments. These programmes are conducted within the terms of the National Stocking Policy and</p>	<p><b>Action completed for 2011</b></p>

	specific guidance on ‘Schemes to stock rivers with salmon, sea trout and brown trout from locally sourced broodstock’. Full details of the numbers of fish stocked in these programmes, and the stage (eggs, fry, parr and smolts) of release, are included in the Salmonid and Freshwater Fisheries Statistics published annually by the Environment Agency (available at <a href="#">Annual Fisheries Statistics</a> )	
<b>ACTION 13:</b> Continue to assess the incidence of salmon farm escapees in monitored rivers in England and Wales, and take appropriate action if levels increase significantly.	There were no reports of salmon suspected to be of farmed origin being caught in rod or net fisheries in England or Wales in 2011.	<b>Action completed for 2011</b>
<b>ACTION 14:</b> In 2008, report on results of research on the impacts of in-river aquaculture facilities on juvenile and adult salmon; plan and implement appropriate follow-up work by 2010.	Defra Project SF0241 – “The impact of intensive in-river aquaculture on wild salmonids” was completed. A further project was undertaken to determine the accuracy of methods used in SF0241 to measure steroid levels and to confirm or otherwise the results of the previous study. The study showed broad agreement between the steroid measurements obtained by two techniques, and high steroid concentrations were not recorded in any river water samples collected upstream or downstream of the farms. Follow-on research (Defra Project SF0256 – “The impacts of contaminants and temperature on freshwater fish populations”) on the impacts of effluents on smolt survival has been initiated.	<b>Action completed; new research initiated</b>
<b>Other influences affecting salmon abundance or diversity (including marine environment)</b>		
<b>ACTION 15:</b> Report annually on results of research into factors affecting marine survival of salmon and develop new research programmes; plan and implement appropriate follow-up actions.	Results of current and completed research projects along with new research programmes relating to salmon survival at sea are reported annually in the IASRB Inventory of Salmon Research.	<b>Action completed for 2011</b>

<p><b>ACTION 16:</b> Maintain on-going monitoring programmes and publish results with an assessment of the status of salmon stocks in England and Wales in April each year for dissemination to ICES and stakeholders.</p>	<p>The annual Cefas/Environment Agency Annual Assessment of Salmon Stocks and Fisheries in England and Wales is published in April and presented to the ICES Working Group on North Atlantic Salmon. This contains further details of developments summarised above in this progress report. The full report is available at <a href="http://www.cefas.defra.gov.uk">http://www.cefas.defra.gov.uk</a> or <a href="#">Environment Agency website - salmon report</a>)</p>	<p><b>Action completed for 2011</b></p>
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**Section 5: Details of any proposed revisions to the Implementation Plan.**

No new revisions