



Agenda Item 5.1
For Information

Council

CNL(15)29

***Annual Progress Report
on Actions Taken Under Implementation Plans for the Calendar Year 2014***

EU – UK (Northern Ireland)

CNL(15)29

Annual Progress Report on Actions taken under Implementation Plans for the Calendar Year 2014

The primary purposes of the Annual Progress Reports are to provide details of:

- any changes to the management regime for salmon and consequent changes to the Implementation Plan;
- actions that have been taken under the Implementation Plan in the previous year;
- significant changes to the status of stocks, and a report on catches; and
- actions taken in accordance with the provisions of the Convention

These reports will be reviewed by the Council. Please complete this form and return it to the Secretariat **by 1 April 2015**.

Party:	European Union
Jurisdiction/Region:	UK (Northern Ireland)

1: Changes to the Implementation Plan
1.1 Describe any proposed revisions to the Implementation Plan <i>(Where changes are proposed, the revised Implementation Plans should be submitted to the Secretariat by 1 December).</i>
1.2 Describe any major new initiatives or achievements for salmon conservation and management that you wish to highlight.
Legislation now in place in the DCAL area to manage salmon exploitation and prevent the taking of salmon from rivers not meeting their MTs.

2: Stock status and catches.
2.1 Provide a description of any new factors which may significantly affect the abundance of salmon stocks and, if there has been any significant change in stock status since the development of the Implementation Plan, provide a brief (200 word max) summary of these changes.

2.2 Provide the following information on catches:(nominal catch equals reported quantity of salmon caught and retained in tonnes ‘round fresh weight’ (i.e. weight of whole, ungutted, unfrozen fish) or ‘round fresh weight equivalent’).				
	In-river	Estuarine	Coastal	Total
(a) provisional nominal catch (which may be subject to revision) for 2014 (tonnes)	5.1	0	0	
(b) confirmed nominal catch of salmon for 2013 (tonnes)	3.8	0	0	
(c) estimated unreported catch for 2014 (tonnes)	0.1	0	0	
(d) number and percentage of salmon caught and released in recreational fisheries in 2014.	DCAL Area 1714 C&R salmon (90%) Loughs Agency Area N/A			

3: Implementation Plan Actions.

3.1 Provide an update on progress against actions relating to the Management of Salmon Fisheries (Section 2.8 of the Implementation Plan).

Note: The reports under ‘Progress on Action to Date’ should provide a brief overview with a quantitative measure of progress made. While referring to additional material (e.g. via links to websites) may assist those seeking more detailed information, this will not be evaluated by the Review Group.

Action	Description of Action	
F1:	(as submitted in the IP):	<p>A voluntary cessation of remaining commercial mixed stock commercial salmon fisheries was obtained in 2012 in the DCAL area and discussions are underway to repeat this for the 2013 season. Legislation will be in place for the DCAL area by 2014 which will prevent commercial netting for salmon until a series of criteria have been met. These criteria are currently being drafted as part of the legislation process and will only permit exploitation on stocks which are above their CL and have an identifiable surplus. A technical panel will meet to determine this and to decide on other restrictions on how the fishery would operate for e.g. quotas etc.</p> <p>No commercial salmon licences have been issued since 2010 in the Loughs Agency area and are contained in the Foyle Area (Control of Fishing) Regulations 2010 http://www.legislation.gov.uk/nisr/2010/199/regulation/3/made.</p>
	Expected Outcome (as submitted in the IP):	No commercial mixed stock fishery permitted on stocks which are below MT.
	Progress on Action to Date (see note above):	New legislation in place for the DCAL area to control the commercial harvesting of salmon based on assessment of individual stocks contributing to the fishery..

	Current Status of Action (e.g. 'Not started'; 'Ongoing'; 'Completed'):	Ongoing. A Standing Scientific Committee on Salmon for the DCAL area will be established and it is proposed to hold its first meeting January 2015. It will report to DCAL on the status of salmon rivers and compliance with MTs.
	If 'Completed', has the Action achieved its objective?	Yes
Action F2:	Description of Action (as submitted in the IP):	Voluntary catch and release requested in the DCAL area for 2012 and 2013. Compulsory catch & release on salmon rivers in the PAE in the DCAL area. Figures compiled to date indicate that there has been a good response to this request with catch & release for recreational angling 22% in 2011 and around 60% in 2012. Legislation will be in place for the DCAL area by 2014 which will prevent recreational fishing for salmon except for catch & release until a series of criteria have been met. These criteria are currently being drafted as part of the legislation process and will only permit exploitation on stocks which are above their CL and have an identifiable surplus. A technical panel will meet to determine this and to decide on other restrictions on how the fishery would operate. Compulsory catch and release for the River Finn in the Loughs Agency area from 2010. Continued assessment of adult runs each year against derived management targets.
	Expected Outcome (as submitted in the IP):	Reduce exploitation on stocks below CL
	Progress on Action to Date (see note above):	New legislation in place for the DCAL area to control the recreational harvesting of salmon based on assessment of individual river stocks.
	Current Status of Action (e.g. 'Not started'; 'Ongoing'; 'Completed'):	Ongoing. A Standing Scientific Committee on Salmon for the DCAL area will be established and it is proposed to hold its first meeting January 2015. It will report to DCAL on the status of salmon rivers and compliance with MTs.
	If 'Completed', has the Action achieved its objective?	Yes
Action F3:	Description of Action (as submitted in the IP):	Mandatory catch and release of all rod caught salmon before 1 st June in DCAL area to protect MSW stocks which tend to arrive early in the season. Numbers of MSW fish are low compared to historical data collected. A scientific review of the age structure, run timing and the efficacy of early season exploitation controls will be undertaken. No commercial exploitation of salmon within the Loughs Agency area and catch and release operates on the River Finn.

	Expected Outcome (as submitted in the IP):	Reduced exploitation of MSW component
	Progress on Action to Date (see note above):	
	Current Status of Action (e.g. 'Not started'; 'Ongoing'; 'Completed'):	On going
	If 'Completed', has the Action achieved its objective?	Yes
Action F4:	Description of Action (as submitted in the IP):	Fishery patrolling and enforcement activities. Efficacy of conservation measures to be assessed on each catchment.
	Expected Outcome (as submitted in the IP):	Prevention of illegal activity.
	Progress on Action to Date (see note above):	Monitoring of compliance with legislation is carried out through planned patrols, response to reports of illegal activity, working with Private Water bailiffs etc. Patrols are carried out at various times during the working week, weekends and public holidays. There is also provision for the reporting of illegal activity outside of normal office hours. Enforcement staff can then respond to the information.
	Current Status of Action (e.g. 'Not started'; 'Ongoing'; 'Completed'):	On going
	If 'Completed', has the Action achieved its objective?	On going

3.2 Provide an update on progress against actions relating to Habitat Protection and Restoration (Section 3.4 of the Implementation Plan). <i>Note: The reports under 'Progress on Action to Date' should provide a brief overview with a quantitative measure of progress made. While referring to additional material (e.g. via links to websites) may assist those seeking more detailed information, this will not be evaluated by the Review Group.</i>		
Action H1:	Description of Action (as submitted in the IP):	A DCAL panel of fisheries experts assess all applications for hydro electric generation and applies DCAL powers relating to fish passage at weirs and utilising current Environment Agency guidelines. Loughs Agency and DCAL also advise NIEA on issues relating to salmon habitat protection. Hydro electric schemes require statutory licensing by the NIEA and consideration is given to fish passage issues at each site by setting limits on the amount of water that can be abstracted at any site. All associated river works are subject to assessment by DCAL, Loughs Agency and NIEA to ensure protection of the fisheries habitat present at the site. Compliance inspections by the statutory agencies and the assessment of monitoring returns are carried out by the NIEA. Guidance on "Run of River Hydros" is

		available on the NIEA website. Loughs Agency has commissioned research funded by Interreg IVA into the impact on fisheries of run of river hydros. Loughs Agency also has a set of guidelines for hydro applications received adopted from IFI.
	Expected Outcome (as submitted in the IP):	Maximum possible consideration of fisheries and ecological issues for hydro schemes
	Progress on Action to Date (see note above):	NIEA have set up an interdepartmental working group on hydros to review and update current protocols and procedures used to grant permissions for hydros. Assessment of the impact on fisheries of water abstraction licensing and planning applications continued in 2014.
	Current Status of Action (e.g. 'Not started'; 'Ongoing'; 'Completed'):	On going
	If Completed, has the Action achieved its objective?	On going
Action H2:	Description of Action (as submitted in the IP):	To reduce the impact of drainage/ other works. As statutory consultees DCAL and Loughs Agency provide fisheries advice to review and assess all works proposed. Advice is developed to ensure that works are carried out in such a manner as to protect habitat present or to mitigate potential impacts and /or seek opportunities to improve fish habitat / passage where possible at the sites where works are carried out.
	Expected Outcome (as submitted in the IP):	Ensure sensitive / mitigated engineering solutions To seek opportunities to restore and enhance salmonid habitat within the impacted stretch
	Progress on Action to Date (see note above):	Assessment of the impact on fisheries of drainage and other works continued in 2014.
	Current Status of Action (e.g. 'Not started'; 'Ongoing'; 'Completed'):	On going
	If Completed, has the Action achieved its objective?	No
Action H3:	Description of Action (as submitted in the IP):	Under the Water (Northern Ireland) Order 1999, the consent of NIEA is required to discharge any trade or sewage effluent into our waterways or underground strata. This includes any potentially polluting matter (including site drainage liable to contamination) from commercial, industrial or domestic premises to waterways or underground strata. Both DCAL and Loughs Agency are consulted on discharge consent applications and provide fisheries advice on them. NIEA also have responsibility for 1) Silage Slurry and Agricultural Fuel Oil (SSAFO), the EC Nitrates Directive, and Groundwater Authorisations and 2) authorise the deposit, treating, keeping or disposal of

		controlled waste on any land, or treatment or disposal of controlled waste by means of mobile plant.
	Expected Outcome (as submitted in the IP):	Reduction in degradation of salmonid habitat through pollution or waste disposals
	Progress on Action to Date (see note above):	Detailed monitoring programmes were undertaken in 2014 for the complete range of parameters as required under the WFD. This now includes indicative classifications from NASCO fishing data and this information is utilised in the formulation of WFD programme of measures. Pro active engagement with stakeholders is carried out to prevent incidents occurring and procedures are in place to deal with incidents once they occur.
	Current Status of Action (e.g. 'Not started'; 'Ongoing'; 'Completed'):	On going
	If Completed, has the Action achieved its objective?	No
Action H4:	Description of Action (as submitted in the IP):	Inter-agency group to co-ordinate effort on river restoration and continuity issues has now been established and an inventory of connectivity issues will be drawn up and co-operation sought to address these impacts subject to funding and the access approvals in an agreed plan. Regular Inter agencies co-operation meetings are held, with stakeholder engagement, to identify, ground truth and address possible connectivity problems. Further research (through IBIS Interreg IVA funding & AFBI / DCAL) / monitoring has been commissioned to investigate specific anthropogenic impacts on connectivity.
	Expected Outcome (as submitted in the IP):	To improve connectivity by reducing the number of barriers to fish passage
	Progress on Action to Date (see note above):	Work to identify barriers still in progress for major salmon rivers. Habitat improvement works have been carried out on the following rivers – River Rhee, R Flesk, R Bush, Ballinderry river, Dibney river. A river continuity scheme has commenced on the Ballymoney river to restore a section of river channel previously incorporating a dam in collaboration with the local council and Rivers Agency. Post enhancement monitoring work has also been conducted on the Sixmile water. A scientific assessment of DCAL salmon enhancement work on the R Main was published (Kennedy et al. Fisheries Management and Ecology. 2014, 21, 275-287. The salmon restorative breeding programme for the R Lagan was also continued in 2014. Extensive in stream works were undertaken in the Foyle area in the Loughs Agency area in 2014, including approximately 1500 trees

		planted on the Upper Roe as part of a four year enhancement scheme. Detailed barrier assessments have been carried out in the Lagan, Six Mile Water, Maine and Moyola catchments. An overall continuity classification covering the majority of NI is also being put together for Water Framework Directive classification in 2015.
	Current Status of Action (e.g. 'Not started'; 'Ongoing'; 'Completed'):	On going
	If Completed, has the Action achieved its objective?	No
Action H5:	Description of Action (as submitted in the IP):	Protection against illegal impacts on salmonid habitat by carrying out regular patrols to identify and investigate breaches of fishery legislation e.g. removal of spawning gravels, unauthorised removal of material from the river bed etc. Routine patrols of rivers are carried out by enforcement staff from DCAL and the Loughs Agency and regular liaison / communication with angling clubs and the general public to identify habitat impacts. To create a public awareness campaign on the impacts of the removal of salmon habitat on salmon stocks. Consents to remove material from the river bed require authorisation from the statutory authorities.
	Expected Outcome (as submitted in the IP):	Reduction in illegal alterations of salmonid habitat. Increase the education of landowners on the negative impacts of the loss of habitat for salmon stocks.
	Progress on Action to Date (see note above):	A new interagency guidance information booklet has been completed on the necessary legal requirements for those working in or near rivers. This has been published and distributed to the public.
	Current Status of Action (e.g. 'Not started'; 'Ongoing'; 'Completed'):	On going
	If Completed, has the Action achieved its objective?	No
Action H6:	Description of Action (as submitted in the IP):	To survey all outstanding principle salmon rivers within the region and to produce an overall inventory of current and potential salmon habitat. We will seek to work with partners in the Republic of Ireland (ROI) to complete these within cross border catchments.
	Expected Outcome (as submitted in the IP):	To have surveyed all the major salmon rivers within NI and to have salmon habitat inventory data on a GIS database. This will help to assess the quality and quantity of salmon habitat and identify habitat bottlenecks. This information will then be used to inform where habitat management, refurbishment and enhancement works are required. All Loughs Agency

		major river systems have been surveyed and the information is on GIS.
	Progress on Action to Date (see note above):	The Glenarm and Kilkeel rivers have been surveyed for salmon habitat. Habitat information on the Melvin system has also been reviewed in the DCAL area..
	Current Status of Action (e.g. 'Not started'; 'Ongoing'; 'Completed'):	On going
	If Completed, has the Action achieved its objective?	No

3.3 Provide an update on progress against actions relating to Aquaculture, Introductions and Transfers and Transgenics (Section 4.8 of the Implementation Plan).

Note: The reports under 'Progress on Action to Date' should provide a brief overview with a quantitative measure of progress made. While referring to additional material (e.g. via links to websites) may assist those seeking more detailed information, this will not be evaluated by the Review Group.

Action A1:	Description of Action (as submitted in the IP):	Initiation of a research project by DARD aimed to; a) monitor sea lice levels in a single wild Northern Irish salmon stock (River Bush), and b) determine the level of genetic introgression of escaped aquaculture salmon on the wild salmon stocks of Northern Ireland.
	Expected Outcome (as submitted in the IP):	An assessment of sea lice levels in a wild salmon stock in Northern Ireland. An assessment of the level of genetic introgression from salmon of aquaculture origin in the wild stocks in Northern Ireland
	Progress on Action to Date (see note above):	<p>a) Sea lice Sea lice (<i>Lepeophtheirus salmonis</i>) infestation levels on individual returning adult salmon were assessed at the River Bush Salmon Station in Bushmills, Co. Antrim, on the lower reaches of the River Bush for two consecutive years (2012 and 2013). In 2012 a total of 2,835 adult fish were assessed for lice infestation, showing 74% of fish having no sea lice, 12% low to moderate, and 14% moderate to high numbers of sea lice. In 2013 1,558 fish were assessed of which 90% of fish had no sea lice, 5% low to moderate, and also 5% moderate to high infestation levels.</p> <p>b) Farmed Salmon Genetic analysis was used to examine samples of juvenile salmon taken from rivers and adult salmon taken at sea for the presence of farmed salmon. The results obtained indicated that between 2.6% and 6.7% of 1,009 "wild" salmon juveniles sampled across a range of ten rivers across Northern Ireland could be classified as having a farmed or part-farmed origin. Most of these fish were first generation (F1) hybrids between the wild and farmed salmon, however the results also indicated that some were possibly second generation (F2) back crosses between these hybrids and wild salmon. The matching part of the study that looked for farm origin salmon in coastal waters</p>

		using historical genetic samples taken from (1,200) adult salmon commercially caught in nets catches around the Antrim coast in 2006-2007 indicated that between 0.7 and 2.9% of these fish were of farmed origin.
	Current Status of Action (e.g. 'Not started'; 'Ongoing'; 'Completed'):	On going final; report due in 2015
	If Completed, has the Action achieved its objective?	No

4: Additional information required under the Convention	
4.1	Details of any laws, regulations and programmes that have been adopted or repealed since the last notification.
	New Salmon Conservation legislation supports the precautionary management of salmon stocks in the DCAL area. The legislation prohibits the harvest of salmon by commercial fishing unless all rivers affected consistently attain their MTs and ensures default catch & release for recreational fishing except where a river consistently attains MT.
4.2	Details of any new commitments concerning the adoption or maintenance in force for specified periods of time of conservation, restoration and other management measures.
4.3	Details of any new actions to prohibit fishing for salmon beyond 12 nautical miles.
4.4	Details of any new actions to invite the attention of States not Party to the Convention to matters relating to the activities of its vessels which could adversely affect salmon stocks subject to the Convention.
4.5	Details of any actions taken to implement regulatory measures under Article 13 of the Convention including imposition of adequate penalties for violations.