

Council

CNL(09)21

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

EU – UK (Scotland)

Annual Report on actions taken under UK (Scotland) Implementation Plan for the Calendar Year 2008

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 22 April 2009**

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

The Strategic Framework Scottish Freshwater Fisheries referred to in the Implementation Plan for UK (Scotland) was published on 4 July 2008. (Scottish Government, 2008). (Available at <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2008/06/26110733/0>)

This new stakeholder developed strategy covers both salmon, sea trout and all other fish prey species and puts a strong emphasis on partnership working and addressing underlying environmental problems. It places an emphasis on holistic Management aligning it with European Conservation Directives and the European Water Framework Directive (WFD). It identifies a list of actions under 8 main themes aimed at Scotland having sustainably managed freshwater fish and fisheries resources that provide significant economic and social benefits for Scotland's people. Actions for salmon are also included in new River Basin Management Plans for the Scotland River Basin District identified under the WFD planning process.

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 2008; 146.6 tonnes. (Nominal catch)**
- (b) the confirmed catch of salmon in tonnes for 2007; 169.3 tonnes (Nominal catch)**
- (c) an estimate of unreported catch in tonnes for 2008; 19.85 tonnes**
- (d) the number of salmon caught and released in recreational fisheries in 2008. 55366 (representing 63.1% of the rod catch)**

Current Status of Salmon Stocks

Taken over the time series as a whole, the total annual rod catch shows no clear long term trend suggesting stable overall numbers both entering fresh water and escaping to spawn. The increases in the 2004 to 2007 rod catches compared to previous 5-year averages may be taken as evidence of a recent increase in the numbers of fish entering fresh water and, given the record levels of catch and release reported, escaping to spawn. However, the status of stocks on smaller geographical scales (e.g. among or within catchments) may differ both from each other and also from the overall assessments presented above and the long term decline in the total rod catch of spring salmon suggests that the populations associated with this stock component may be particularly weak.

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

The closure of 2 major Scottish coastal fisheries in 2007 should mean that up to 2000 more grilse and salmon will be enabled to return to their natal rivers. This represents an increase of less than 2% which is too small to detect within normal annual variation. Scottish rivers in the North and North-West are likely to be the main beneficiaries of this.

Section 4: An account of all actions taken under the Implementation Plan with regard to the management of salmon fisheries; measures to minimise impacts of aquaculture and related factors; other influences affecting salmon abundance or diversity (including the marine environment).

Management Action	Reporting Update	Achieved Management Action (Yes, No, Ongoing, Completed)
Fisheries Management		
<p>1. In the Esk and Annan Districts, Instruments were made in 2005 requiring mandatory catch and release in the rod fishery until 31 May. In addition, in the Esk District, Instruments were made to extend the annual close time until 30 April and to cap netting effort until 31 May.</p>	<p>During 2009 the instruments will be reviewed by the Scottish Government and the fisheries and altered, renewed or let fall as appropriate.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
<p>2. The Strathy Fishery will be maintained, initially for up to 5 years, in association with salmon management and research interests as a scientific tool to monitor stocks returning to Scottish water.</p>	<p>There were unsuccessful attempts to retain the Strathy fishery owing to the demise of the experienced fisherman. However alternative arrangements were made to continue the dataset using another fishery.</p>	<p>No, Completed</p>
<p>3. ROAME SF0275 aims to extract wetted areas for all Scottish catchments allowing Conservation Limits (CLs) to be transported across Scotland by March 2009.</p>	<p>Wetted areas have been successfully extracted at the geographic level of the original 109 salmon fishery district catchments which cover the whole of Scotland. The determination of wetted areas has been informed by use of distribution maps prepared by local management bodies.</p>	<p>Yes, Completed</p>

4. Once meaningful CLs are established (above), these will be used to set management targets, which are designed to ensure sustainable fisheries and reviewed annually.	Meaningful CLs have been established but have not yet been used to set management targets. Further work is required to estimate spawning escapement levels before an assessment of compliance of spawning stock with CL can be made.	Ongoing
5. Where it is recognised, relative to these management targets that intervention is required for the conservation of salmon, fishery managers may seek voluntary reductions in fishing mortality or if necessary apply to the Scottish Ministers for Salmon Conservation Regulations made under the Salmon and Freshwater Fisheries (Consolidation)(Scotland)2003 Act. Scottish Ministers may change annual or weekly close times where necessary for conservation purposes.	A number of legislative measures (detailed below) have been introduced and further measures are being considered for the future. Where possible, District Salmon Fishery Boards are encouraged to try to apply voluntary restrictions as a first resort.	Yes, Ongoing
6. Until CLs are available management decisions have to use other measures of abundance. The outcome of detailed investigations by FRS into the use of catch data supports the idea that rod catch data are a proxy for freshwater abundance.	Marine Scotland Science (formerly Fisheries Research Services, an agency of Scottish Government) continues to use rod catch information to assess the status of stocks and to provide management advice. A catch-based assessment tool has been developed for local assessments in the UK (Scotland) Implementation Plan	Ongoing

	and Focus Area Report on Management).	
7. Rivers and Fisheries Trusts Scotland (RAFTS) are currently developing fisheries management plans for each of the Trust areas throughout Scotland.	Rivers and Fisheries Trusts of Scotland (RAFTS) now has 22 members covering over 80% of the salmon catchments of Scotland. In 2008/9 they have, with support from the Scottish Government, prepared, consulted on and published Fisheries Management Plans for 18 Trust areas (4 more still in preparation). These are available on the RAFTS website - rafts.org.uk. In 2009/10 RAFTS members will start to implement many of the priorities identified in these plans including two landmark projects 1) an initiative to genetically type all the major salmon populations and sub-populations in Scotland and 2) to develop a suite of bio-security prevention and control tools to manage invasive plants and animals (inc G.salaris).	Yes, Ongoing
8. A number of habitat protection and restoration initiatives are in place.	National and local habitat improvement plans are in place and further details of these are provided in the Focus Area Report on habitat	Ongoing
9. The statutory Fisheries Committee continues to provide advice to Scottish Ministers and developers on the potential impacts of existing and proposed hydro-electricity and wave and tidal energy schemes on fish stocks.		Yes, Ongoing
10. TWG Restoration guidance notes, including assessment protocols, and proposed restoration pilot projects will be prepared.	Restoration Guidance will be published on the web by summer 2009.	Ongoing,

<p>11. “Salmon in the Classroom”, and its many local derivatives, have been introduced in schools throughout Scotland by the Fishery Trusts, Foundations and DSFBs</p>	<p>By mid 2008 18 out of the then 20 Trusts in Scotland were involved in and running Salmon in the Classroom Projects at various levels of intensity. Two new Trusts are in process of being established both of which will be able to run educational projects. Discussions are underway with an English based charity “Get Hooked on Fishing” that, with the assistance of ‘Inspiring Scotland’, has recently employed a Scottish Development Officer with whom District Salmon Fishery Boards and Trusts will be developing ideas for expanding educational programmes within the Trust network.</p>	<p>Yes, Ongoing</p>
<p>12. DSFBs to continue to provide advice to construction companies and contractors where activities might impinge on rivers.</p>	<p>District Salmon fishery Boards and Trusts are in the process of producing policy guidance notes on required responses to developers of terrestrial wind-farm developments in Scotland. Guidance for roads contractors has been in place for a number of years but will be reviewed. Boards through ASFB have also been involved in a variety of offshore wind farm developments and tidal developments and will encourage members to engage with developers at a pre-planning stage. Input has been supplied through ASFB into the development of Scottish Government formal scoping opinion on development activities which provides advice to developers when planning development activities.</p>	<p>Yes, Ongoing</p>
<p>13. DSFBs to augment natural salmon production through use of hatcheries as appropriate.</p>	<p>Of the 42 Fishery Boards, 17 of them now operate stock restoration / augmentation hatchery programmes. Most of these are targeted at restoring or augmenting either depleted populations (West Coast or early running fish) or at augmenting parts of the catchment where there are accessibility problems due to man-made structures. RAFTS/ASFB also has developed a stocking/fish</p>	<p>Yes, Ongoing</p>

	movements guidance note which is on the ASFB/RAFTS website.	
14. The TWG Plenary Group meets twice a year and reviews policy direction and risk register.	TWG Plenary has not met since May 2008 when notes of meeting were published. Next meeting has been arranged for 7 May 2009.	Ongoing
15. FRS to commence enforcement of the 2007 Act in relation to containment and sea lice control.	<p>The provisions contained within the 2007 act were commenced on 1 August 2007.</p> <p>The necessary secondary legislation - The Record Keeping (Scotland) Order 2008 came into force on 10 November 2008. Inspections to establish whether satisfactory measures are in place to contain fish and control sealice commenced in late November 2008.</p> <p>The inspection regime encompasses a risk-based and intelligence based approach involving both inspections and audits. High risk sites will be targeted for audit. Up to 10% of sites will be audited annually, this equates to about 30 seawater sites for sea lice and about 50 sites (freshwater and seawater) for containment.</p> <p>Scottish Ministers have the discretion to serve Enforcement Notices where measures are found to be insufficient or there are problems which need to be rectified. However, the focus will be on working with the industry to encourage and ensure best practice for the benefit of the industry and the wider environment. Reports summarising escapes, the reasons behind them, audits completed, issues identified along with actions of resolution will be published annually by Marine Scotland – Science (formerly Fisheries Research Services).</p> <p><u>Healthier Fish and Shellfish</u> (including a strategy to control sea lice) and <u>Improved containment</u> are key</p>	Yes, Completed

	<p>themes in the renewed Strategic Framework for Scottish Aquaculture is expected to be in place by June 2009.</p>	
<p>16. Scottish Government to hold a full public consultation on and to publish a renewed Strategic Framework for Scottish Aquaculture.</p>	<p>Consultation on renewed Strategic Framework finalised, publication expected June 2009.</p> <p>The Strategic Framework for Scottish Aquaculture is the main policy vehicle to deliver a sustainable Scottish aquaculture industry.</p> <p>A full public consultation on a “Fresh Start” for Scottish Aquaculture closed on 5 November 2008.</p> <p>The “Fresh Start” document was also subject to Scottish Parliamentary debate on 20 November 2008. Non-confidential consultation responses were published on the Scottish Government website on 23 December 2008. An analysis of responses will be published in May 2009.</p> <p>The renewed framework will be based on five themes. These are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Healthier farmed fish and shellfish (including the development of an integrated strategy to control sea lice); • Improved systems for licensing finfish and shellfish developments; • Improved containment; • Better marketing and improved image; • Improved access to finance. <p>It will also focus on smarter regulation, make best use of science, research and development and be driven by a refocused Ministerial Working Group on Aquaculture.</p>	<p>Yes, Ongoing</p>
<p>17. Develop and Publish The Strategic Framework for Scottish Freshwater Fisheries, including a PFA on Mixed Stock Fisheries.</p>	<p>The Strategic Framework for Scottish Freshwater Fisheries was published on 4 July 2008 and contains a Priority For Action on mixed stock fisheries. The Scottish Government has asked a stakeholder working group</p>	<p>Yes, completed</p>

	under an independent Chair to review all aspects of mixed stock fishing, including its impact on management and conservation.	
18. The Steering Group will review the overall progress with the strategic framework within 18 months of its launch, and decide whether further indicators of progress are required.	This is due by December 2009	Ongoing
19. Scottish Government to review the Gs Contingency Plan annually, publish updated Plan.	The contingency plan was reviewed and published April 2008.	Yes, Ongoing
20. Applications from fishery managers for licenses to control piscivorous birds and mammals are dealt with on an ongoing basis.	Applications from fishery managers continue to be dealt with on an ongoing basis. A review of conditions for seal management will be taken forward in the Scottish Government's forthcoming Marine Bill.	Ongoing
21. A recent initiative to improve management of piscivorous predators has been the development of The Moray Firth Seal Management Plan.	The Moray Firth Seal Management Plan was successfully trialled and reviewed and has now been mainstreamed into the predator management process. Consideration is currently being given to an appropriate roll-out of the model on a wider basis.	Yes, Ongoing
22. A number of schemes to eradicate or, where this is not possible, control crayfish, are in place throughout Scotland.	A joint Scottish Natural Heritage, the Scottish Government's statutory advisor on Natural Heritage issues and Rivers and Fisheries trusts of Scotland (RAFTS) mapping programme covering all of Scotland is currently underway. Eradication programmes have been run in a number of locations and a control programme in a large water body is about to be trialled. RAFTS, in November 2008, employed a full time Bio-security and Invasives Project officer who is preparing pilot bio-security plans for 4 catchments in Scotland which will be	Ongoing

	<p>tested in 2009 and then rolled out throughout Scotland. These plans aim to focus on both preventing invasive species incursions into catchments as well as looking at containment, management and, where possible, eradication strategies. Signal crayfish are a high priority invasive species and specific tools for their management and eradication are being considered.</p>	
<p>23. Section 35 of the Aquaculture and Fisheries (Scotland) Act 2007 Act provides provisions for the regulation of introductions of freshwater fish into inland Scottish waters. This provision is intended principally for the protection of biodiversity.</p>	<p>This was commenced on 1 August 2008 and an agreed system is now in place.</p>	<p>Yes, Completed</p>
<p>24. The development of fisheries management plans by the Fisheries Trusts will include monitoring and evaluation procedures.</p>	<p>The management plans identified in Action 7 all have built in monitoring and evaluation procedures and are increasingly being aligned with the Water Framework Directive 6 year planning cycle. The process is overseen by both a Joint Government/RAFTS Liaison Group and a Technical Working Group which can evaluate progress and identify weaknesses.</p>	<p>Yes, Ongoing</p>
Measures to minimize the impact of Aquaculture and other related factors		
<p>25. Develop and agree remaining TWG Area Management Agreements (AMA)</p>	<p>2 new AMAs have been signed. 1 new draft agreement has been drawn up.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
<p>26. CR/2007/26 'Strategic sea lice treatments: implementation and impact within Scottish Tripartite Working Group Area Management Agreements'</p>	<p>CR/2007/26 has been completed, peer reviewed and awaits Ministerial decision.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
<p>27. CR/2007/22 'RESEARCH INTO THE</p>	<p>CR/2007/22 research has been completed, peer reviewed</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>

COSTS AND BENEFITS OF TRIPARTITE WORKING GROUP (TWG) AREA MANAGEMENT AGREEMENTS (AMAs)'	and awaits Ministerial decision.	
Other influences affecting salmon abundance or diversity (including marine environment)		
Marine Scotland is engaged in the research into factors affecting salmon abundance and diversity.	The following research programmes are currently underway: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Post-smolt mortality of Atlantic salmon • Analysis of post-smolt life history by scale reading • Coastal mortality and seal predation on salmonid fish • Fisheries-induced evolution • Size and condition of returning grilse (1SW) and MSW salmon • Fishery management models for interacting, sustainable Scottish salmon sub-populations • Development of a general spatial model of within-river population structuring in Scottish Atlantic salmon 	
Other information required under the Convention		
Details of any laws, regulations and programmes that have been adopted or repealed since the last notification;	Commencement of the Aquaculture and Fisheries (Scotland) Act 2007 Commencement of The Scotland Act 1998(River Tweed) Order 2006 The Annual Close Time (River Dee-Aberdeenshire) Salmon Fishery District Order 2008 The Conservation of Salmon (Collection of Statistics)(Scotland) Regulations 2006. The River Ness Salmon Fishery District (Baits and Lures) Regulations 2007	
Details of any new commitments concerning the adoption or maintenance in force for	Conservation Regulations for a number of rivers are being considered.	

specified periods of time of conservation, restoration and other management measures.	
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Section 5: Details of any proposed revisions to the Implementation Plan.

Evaluation for the impact of the implementation of the priorities for action contained within the Strategic Framework for Scottish Freshwater Fisheries will inform changes to the NASCO Implementation Plan for Scotland. An additional action detailing the wider research programme being undertaken will be considered.
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