

Council

CNL(09)28

***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 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 Strategy for the Management of Salmon in England and Wales¹ (NRA, 1996) referred to in the Implementation Plan for UK (England and Wales) has been updated and is set out in the document “Better sea trout and salmon fisheries: our strategy for 2008-2021” (Environment Agency, 2008). (Available at <http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk/business/sectors/32675.aspx>)

The new strategy builds on the 1996 objectives. It covers both salmon and sea trout and also puts a strong emphasis on partnership working and addressing underlying environmental problems. Management planning for salmon is increasingly becoming aligned with the European Water Framework Directive (WFD), and actions for salmon are included in new River Basin Management Plans for the 11 River Basin Districts in England and Wales 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;**
- (b) the confirmed catch of salmon in tonnes for 2007;**
- (c) an estimate of unreported catch in tonnes for 2008;**
- (d) the number of salmon caught and released in recreational fisheries in 2008.**

Information on catches:

- (a) provisional catch of salmon in tonnes for 2008 = 68.4 tonnes (fish caught and retained only)
- (b) confirmed catch of salmon in tonnes for 2007 = 70.6 tonnes (nominal catch, retained only)
- (c) estimate of unreported catch in tonnes for 2008 = 23 tonnes [10 tonnes under-reporting and 13 tonnes due to illegal catches]
- (d) provisional estimate of the number of salmon caught and released in recreational fisheries in 2008 = 11,947 (43.7 tonnes), and representing 54% of the provisional declared rod catch.

Status of stocks:

The annual review of stock status for 2008 shows:

- 13 rivers (20%) were classified as ‘not at risk’ – i.e. had a high probability (> 95%) of meeting the management objective;
- 24 rivers (38%) were classified as ‘probably not at risk’ – i.e. had a probability of 50% to 95% of meeting the management objective;
- 15 rivers (23%) were classified as ‘probably at risk’ – i.e. had a probability of 5% to 50% of meeting the management objective;
- 12 rivers (19%) 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 stocks are in danger of becoming extinct, but rather that they are falling well short of management objectives.]

Information on progress with meeting conservation limits

In 2000, the UK Government set a target of 27 principal salmon rivers in England meeting their Conservation Limits in 2008. The 2008 results show that this has been achieved; 27 rivers in England were at or above their CL.

At the same time, a target to “reduce the estimated illegal and unreported catch from 35 to not more than 25 tonnes by 2008” has also been achieved (see above).

New targets are now under consideration

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

The closure of the Irish drift net fishery in 2007 should mean that up to 5,000 more grilse returned to English and Welsh home-waters, representing about a 4% increase overall. However, this increase is too small to detect above the normal annual variation. Rivers in the south and west of England and Wales are expected to have benefited the most.

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		
ACTION 1: By 2009, establish the programme for developing new salmon management plans.	In 2008, the Environment Agency published a new national Sea Trout and Salmon Fisheries Strategy which provides the basis for a revised approach to management plans. Salmon Action Plans are continuing to be reviewed and updated while the new management plans are being developed.	Yes, ongoing
ACTION 2(i): Continue the development of procedures for using reference points in the assessment and management of salmon stocks.	The Environment Agency is continuing to review and revise its procedures for setting and using Conservation Limits and Management Targets. Both the analytical methods and presentation of results have been updated in the Cefas/EA Annual Assessments of Salmon Stocks and Fisheries; the 2008 report is available at www.cefass.co.uk or at http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk/research/library/publications/100992.aspx	Yes, ongoing
ACTION 2(ii): 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.	Work on the Salmon Lifecycle Model is currently on hold.	On hold due to other priorities

<p>ACTION 2:(iii): By 2009, evaluate use of a model to predict rod exploitation rates and to improve current CL compliance procedures.</p>	<p>Work has been undertaken to reflect real exploitation rates, where these are available, in stock assessments, and to review the balance between use of default (generic) and river-specific data. New compliance procedures are now incorporated into the decision structure which is applied on an annual basis to guide decisions on the level of fishing controls required.</p>	<p>Yes, ongoing</p>
<p>ACTION 3: By 2012 evaluate and determine the measures for the east coast mixed stock salmon fisheries consistent with England and Wales policy.</p>	<p>A mid-term review of the North East coast Net Limitation Order was completed in 2008 and concluded that, whilst most local river stocks are exceeding their CLs and trends are positive, the phasing out provision applying to the remaining 16 drift nets should be maintained and there may be merit in introducing further controls. Proposals are being developed for consultation.</p>	<p>Yes, ongoing</p>
<p>ACTION 4: 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 2008 were completed and the results are shown in Section 2. 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 a 5-10 year rolling review programme.]</p>	<p>Yes, ongoing</p>
<p>ACTION 5: 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 2008/09:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – River Dee: A buy-out of the Dee fishery was completed in 2008; therefore no licenses will be issued for this draft and trammel net fishery in 2009; – River Exe: A buy-off agreement meant that 8 of the 11 licensees were compensated not to fish in 2008; – Rivers Fowey and Camel: NLOs renewed for 10 years with reduced licence numbers; – River Lune: NLO expires in 2009 and is under review; – River Tywi: the seine nets NLO has been renewed until 2017 with reduced licence numbers; 6 of the 9 licensees were compensated not to fish in 2008; – Severn Estuary: a new NLO was confirmed in Feb 2009; – Solway (Rivers Eden & Esk): NLO renewed for 10 years with reduced licence numbers and fishing area. 	<p>Yes, ongoing</p>

<p>ACTION 6: 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"> • Northeast Region byelaws – annual close season for salmon & trout; • National byelaws: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – annual close season for salmon & trout fishing other than with rod & line; – early season catch and release in specified fisheries and by rod & line; – early season method restriction for salmon with rod and line. 	<p>Consultations on options for measures required to protect early-running MSW salmon after 2008 (to replace the National byelaws introduced in 1999) were completed. The National measures were reintroduced for a further 10 year period, retaining the closure of most salmon net fisheries until 1st June and the requirement for catch and release in rod fisheries until 16th 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>Yes, completed</p>
<p>ACTION 7: 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>Following the closure of the Irish coastal drift net fishery in 2007, 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>Yes, ongoing</p>
<p>Measures to minimize the impact of Aquaculture and other related factors</p>		
<p>ACTION 12: 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>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. 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 http://www.ea-transactions.com/research/library/publications/33945.aspx)</p> <p>Introductions and transfers of other species are controlled under the Introduction of Live Fish Act and Wildlife and Countryside Act. Research is underway to more fully investigate the risks associated with past and potential introductions and evaluate the potential consequences of climate change.</p>	<p>Yes, ongoing</p>

<p>ACTION 13: Continue to assess the incidence of salmon farm escapees in monitored rivers in England and Wales, and take appropriate action if levels increase significantly.</p>	<p>There were no reports of salmon suspected to be of farmed origin being caught in rod or net fisheries in England or Wales in 2008.</p>	<p>Yes, ongoing</p>
<p>ACTION 14: 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.</p>	<p>Defra Project SF0241 – “The impact of intensive in-river aquaculture on wild salmonids” was completed. The research has suggested that the effluents from fish farms can have significant impacts on Atlantic salmon particularly during sensitive life history stages such as reproduction and smoltification. In addition, effluents from rainbow trout farms may also have a deleterious effect on the macro-invertebrate populations, which include many of the prey items of juvenile salmonids.</p> <p>Scientific publications from this research are being prepared, and consultations are underway for the development of follow-on research in this area.</p>	<p>Yes, ongoing</p>
<p>Other influences affecting salmon abundance or diversity (including marine environment)</p>		
<p>ACTION 15: 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.</p>	<p>Defra Project SF0237 - “Modelling the bioenergetics of Salmon migration” was completed. This project used a physiologically and physically-based numerical modelling approach to investigate the effects of changing oceanographic conditions on the growth and survival of migrating Atlantic salmon. A bio-energetic approach was taken, which seeks to assess survival and growth by quantifying the balance between energy gained from feeding and energy lost through maintenance, activity, digestion, food capture, growth, nitrogenous excretion and faeces. The results have been published in Booker, D.J., Wells, N.C., Smith, I.P. (2008) Modelling the trajectories of migrating Atlantic salmon (<i>Salmo salar</i>) Canadian Journal of Fisheries and Aquatic Sciences 65 (3), pp. 352-361.</p> <p>New research programmes are being developed and will be reported in the IASRB Research Inventory.</p>	<p>Yes, ongoing</p>

<p>ACTION 16: 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 Cefas/Environment Agency Annual Assessment of Salmon Stocks and Fisheries in England and Wales in 2008 was published in April 2009 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 www.cefas.co.uk or at http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk/research/library/publications/100992.aspx</p>	<p>Yes, ongoing</p>
<p>Other information required under the Convention</p>		
<p>Details of any laws, regulations and programmes that have been adopted or repealed since the last notification;</p>	<p>In addition to measures referred to above, the following byelaws were renewed or modified:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Southwest Region: rod fishery byelaws renewed (see Action 6 above) – River Wye: rod fishery byelaws renewed <p>Rivers Eden and Esk: New rod byelaws introduced as part of the package that includes the new Solway NLO (see Action 5 above)</p>	
<p>Details of any new commitments concerning the adoption or maintenance in force for specified periods of time of conservation, restoration and other management measures.</p>	<p>The Environment Agency has set a target of 70% of salmon rivers to be outside the “At risk” category by 2011 in its new Strategy “Better sea trout and salmon fisheries: our strategy for 2008-2021” (Environment Agency 2008).</p>	

Section 5: Details of any proposed revisions to the Implementation Plan.

<p>ACTION 2(ii): Work on the Environment Agency’s Salmon Lifecycle Model is currently on hold because of other priorities, in particular relating to the application of the EU Water Framework Directive; this action is therefore being deferred indefinitely.</p>
--