Council

CNL(20)36

Annual Progress Report
on Actions Taken Under the Implementation Plan for the Calendar Year 2019

EU – Germany

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The Annual Progress Reports allow NASCO to evaluate progress on actions taken by Parties / jurisdictions to implement its internationally agreed Resolutions, Agreements and Guidelines and consequently the achievement of their objectives and actions taken in accordance with the Convention. The following information should be provided through the Annual Progress Reports:

- 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.

In completing this Annual Progress Report please refer to the ***Guidelines for the Preparation and Evaluation of NASCO Implementation Plans and for Reporting on Progress****, CNL(18)49.*

These reports will be reviewed by the Council. Please complete this form and return it to the Secretariat **no later than 1 April 2020**.

Party:	**European Union**
Jurisdiction / Region:	**Germany**

1: Changes to the Implementation Plan
1.1 Describe any proposed revisions to the Implementation Plan ***(Where changes are proposed, the revised Implementation Plans should be submitted to the Secretariat by 1 November).***
./.
1.2 Describe any major new initiatives or achievements for salmon conservation and management that you wish to highlight.
The 16th Conference of Rhine Ministers took place in Amsterdam in 2020. They mentioned that important progress has been made in restoring the ecological passability of the Rhine and its catchment area since 2013. In 2019, a new large Upper Rhine fish pass in Gerstheim 2019 was commissioned. Moreover, the new forward-looking "Rhine 2040 Programme" was adopted with ambitious goals. It is aiming among others at reaching ecological passability for migratory fish upstream and downstream in the Rhine main stream from the mouth to the Rhine Falls and within the programme waters of the master plan for migratory fish (ICPR Technical Report No. 247 (2018): Master Plan Migratory Fish Rhine 2018).

To restore ecological passability, the fish pass at Rhinau will be operational in 2024. The fish pass near Marckolsheim will be operational in 2026. The fish pass for the complex area Vogelgrün will be operational as soon as possible to ensure compliance with the relevant EU legislation, so that migratory fish can reach the Old(-Rest-)Rhine and Basel again.
The restoration of fish passability in the High Rhine up to the Rhine Falls and in the Swiss programme waters (Aare, Reuss, Limmat) will be implemented

Long-distance migratory fish resettlement programs have been running in tributaries of the River Elbe for many years. These programs are supported by regional fishing associations or the federal states themselves and are accompanied by the federal states fisheries research institutes. For the stakeholders on the Elbe was the "International Year of the salmon" an opportunity to move the whole Elbe river basin into focus. The efforts of all local stakeholders to protect long-distance migratory salmonids are to be coordinated under the umbrella brand “Salmo albis”. The kick-off event for the transnational program took place on June 6, 2019 in the Saxon Switzerland National Park Center in Bad Schandau. As part of the well-attended event, 1,000 salmon parr were symbolically released into the Elbe

2: Stock status and catches.

2.1 Provide a description of any new factors that 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.

As already in 2018, the registered numbers of returning adult salmon in 2019 was very low compared to the previous years. In total 213 salmon were registered in the Rhine catchment area in 2019 compared to more than twice as much (541) in 2017. 2018 had similarly low numbers of returning salmon with 229. Both 2019 and 2018 were years of severe low water situation in the Rhine lasting from early summer until autumn and probably hindering upstream migration of salmon into the tributaries. The number of registered adult salmon returning from the sea and observations of natural reproduction of salmon in the Rhine tributaries are documented and can be supplied if required
In 2019, 1.944.098 young salmon have been introduced in suitable tributaries by stocking measures in the whole catchment area of the Rhine. An important step for the ecological restoration of the Rhine is the completion of the fish pass at Gerstheim in the Upper Rhine in 2019 making a further section of the main stream of the Rhine accessible for migratory fish.
The first evidence of the non-native pink salmon (Oncorhynchus gorbuscha) in the Rhine catchment area was made in the Dhünn river where a single pink salmon was detected in an automatic fish counter in December 2019.

Just like in the Rhine catchment area, the salmon return rates in the Weser and Elbe were very low due to the extreme low water levels during the salmon run period.
The closure of the fishway situated at the southern riverside of the Elbe weir in Geesthacht caused a severe impairment in fish migration in the main stem of the Elbe river. It can be assumed that the considerably impaired passability of the Geesthacht weir will continue to have a negative impact on the further development of salmon projects in the Elbe for the next two years. (More on this topic under H1).
Further local impacts, among others due to sediment loads, pollutant discharges and beaver lodges, were reported from the catchment area of the middle Elbe. At the same time, however,

there have been many positive activities in this area, such as weir dismantling and habitat improvement measures.				
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').***				
(a) provisional nominal catch (which may be subject to revision) for 2019 (tonnes)	In-river	Estuarine	Coastal	Total
	0,15t by recreational fisheries in Lower Saxony			
(b) confirmed nominal catch of salmon for 2018 (tonnes)	0,15t by recreational fisheries in Lower Saxony			
(c) estimated unreported catch for 2019 (tonnes)	0,1t by recreational fisheries in Baden-Wuerttemberg			
(d) number and percentage of salmon caught and released in recreational fisheries in 2019	A targeted catch and release in recreational fisheries on salmon does not exist in Germany.			

3: Implementation Plan Actions.

3.1 Provide an update on progress on actions relating to the Management of Salmon Fisheries *(section 2.9 of the Implementation Plan).* ***Note:*** *the reports under 'Progress on action to date' should provide a brief overview of each action. For all actions, provide clear and concise quantitative information to demonstrate progress. In circumstances where quantitative information cannot be provided for a particular action because of its nature, a clear rationale must be given for not providing quantitative information and other information should be provided to enable progress with that action to be evaluated. 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 F1:	Description of action (*as submitted in the IP*):	A targeted and monitored attempt to build up a self-sustaining salmon stock is under implementation in the Agger river system. River Agger is a tributary of the river Sieg in the Rhine catchment area. The productive capacity of the Agger river system is sufficient to carry a vital salmon population. The aim of the project is to examine whether it is possible to develop a self-sustaining salmon stock under the current framework conditions in a tributary of the Rhine.
	Expected outcome (*as submitted in the IP*):	Development and verification of a vital salmon population in the Agger river system. The objective is to generate an average fry density of one individual/m² in early summer, and an average output of 9.000 downstream migrating smolts.
	Progress on action to date	Electro fishing campaigns resulted in an average fry density (born 2018/2019) far below the target. The results

	(Provide a brief overview with a quantitative measure, or other justified evaluation, of progress. Other material (e.g. website links) will not be evaluated):	reflect the drought-related low in returner season 2018 with eleven adult salmon detections in the Agger system. It was decided to replace the lacking natural brood in the Agger river through a restocking measure (100,000 summer parrs, descendants of genetically known parent fish from the Salmon Program NRW). No restocking in the tributaries. Monitoring of downstream migrating smolts (born 2017/2018) leaving the Agger system allowed an estimate of 3,000 to 9,000 individuals. These smolts represent the third generation from pure natural reproduction.
	Current status of action:	Ongoing
	If 'Completed', has the action achieved its objective?	
Action F2:	Description of action (*as submitted in the IP*):	The Nahe river is the last major salmon project river in the middle section of the Rhine, where no fishing ban zone has yet been established at his mouth into the Rhine. There is a great need for action to designate a fishing ban zone in this sensitive area to protect migrating salmon during the salmon run.
	Expected outcome (*as submitted in the IP*):	Avoidance of illegal catches at the Nahe river mouth.
	Progress on action to date *(Provide a brief overview with a quantitative measure, or other justified evaluation, of progress. Other material (e.g. website links) will not be evaluated):*	From 2021 onwards, no more angling licences will be issued for the lower Nahe river section and his mouth area into the Rhine. Fishing is then, no longer permitted in this area. At the same time, fisheries controls are to be increased in this area of the Nahe river and the Rhine. It is assumed that the action is completed next year.
	Current status of action:	Ongoing
	If 'Completed', has the action achieved its objective?	
Action F3:	Description of action (*as submitted in the IP*):	
	Expected outcome (*as submitted in the IP*):	
	Progress on action to date *(Provide a brief overview with a quantitative measure, or other justified evaluation, of progress. Other material (e.g. website links) will not be evaluated):*	
	Current status of action:	Choose an item.

	If 'Completed', has the action achieved its objective?	

3.2 Provide an update on progress on actions relating to Habitat Protection and Restoration *(section 3.5 of the Implementation Plan).* ***Note:*** *the reports under 'Progress on action to date' should provide a brief overview of each action. For all actions, provide clear and concise quantitative information to demonstrate progress. In circumstances where quantitative information cannot be provided for a particular action because of its nature, a clear rationale must be given for not providing quantitative information and other information should be provided to enable progress with that action to be evaluated. 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 H1:	Description of action (*as submitted in the IP*):	The German Federal Ministry of Transport, Building and Urban Development launched the program "Ecological Connectivity in Federal Waterways" in 2012. It`s objective is to preserve and restore the ecological connectivity at about 250 barrages in German federal waterways to improve fish migration. Many of the proposed measures in the catchments of Rhine, Ems, Weser and Elbe are located in the migration routes to current or potential salmon reintroduction rivers. Hence, these activities have a high priority for reintroduction of salmon in Germany.
	Expected outcome (*as submitted in the IP*):	Increased accessibility of spawning and juvenile habitats.
	Progress on action to date *(Provide a brief overview with a quantitative measure, or other justified evaluation, of progress. Other material (e.g. website links) will not be evaluated):*	In 2019, the measures which had been prioritized for the second implementation phase (starting from end 2015) were still in the planning phase. Besides eight measures, which started in 2018 as part of new weir restoration and replacement projects, no further measures have been initiated. In fall 2018, the German Parliament approved a total of 25 additional positions for engineers (for the reestablishment of river connectivity for migrating aquatic animals). During 2019, most of these positions have been filled. As soon as all the vacancies are filled, a faster progress is expected. The on-site monitoring for one measure at the Müritz-Elde Waterway has been successfully completed in 2019. Further on-site monitoring is planned for a measure at the river Main. Within the last year, the plan approval procedures of two measures were completed and building constructions for both measures started. The preliminary and strategic planning phase has been continued for more than 20 measures. The barrage in Geesthacht (Elbe) has been affected by a case of average in September 2019, which resulted in the closure of the fishway situated at the southern riverside of the barrage. It is the first barrage towards the open sea and the biggest weir within the Elbe River System. It is equipped with two fishways, each on one side of the barrage. While the southern fishway is closed, the northern fishway is still open. It is the biggest fishway in Europe and its design allows the passage of the European Sturgeon.

		During the weir restoration process, the Water and Shipping Administration plans to restore the southern fishway as soon as possible but it will likely take more than 2 years. Therefore, the Federal Institute of Hydrology (BfG) has been asked by the Water and Shipping Administration to develop immediate measures to reduce negative effects wherever possible. First measures will be realised in spring 2020.
	Current status of action:	Ongoing
	If 'Completed', has the action achieved its objective?	
Action H2:	Description of action (*as submitted in the IP*):	Restoring of up- and downstream river connectivity and habitat quality is highly relevant for a succesful salmon reintroduction in the German Rhine catchment area. In this context, many efforts are needed to reopen parts of the former salmon distribution area in order to establish stable salmon stocks on it.
	Expected outcome (*as submitted in the IP*):	Increased accessibility of spawning and juvenile habitats, increased habitat quality and decreased mortality due to barrages and hydropower plants.
	Progress on action to date *(Provide a brief overview with a quantitative measure, or other justified evaluation, of progress. Other material (e.g. website links) will not be evaluated):*	A new fish pass at the barrage in Gerstheim (including a video monitoring station) was opened in 2019. In October 2019, a first salmon was detected at the barrage in Kembs on its ascent to Basel. The construction work for a second fish pass at the hydropower plant in Kostheim on the River Main started in October 2019; the upstream fish numbers of the first fish pass were too low. The construction of an upstream fish passage at the hydropower plant in Rosport will start in spring 2020. On the River Lahn working on five barrages will start in 2020 for a better upstream fish. Starting to work on the River Main barrages for better fish passage.
	Current status of action:	Ongoing
	If 'Completed', has the action achieved its objective?	
Action H3:	Description of action (*as submitted in the IP*):	One of the central tasks in the implementation of the EU Water Framework Directive in the Elbe catchment area is to establish river connectivity for fish. The coordination of this important water management issue takes place in the so-called supra-regional priority water network. The fulfilment of these tasks is of paramount importance for the reintroduction of salmon in the Elbe and its tributaries.
	Expected outcome (*as submitted in the IP*):	Improved access to spawning grounds and decreased mortality due to barrages and hydropower plants.
	Progress on action to date	In the current second management period (2016-2022), it is intended to design 172 transverse-structure sites in a

	(Provide a brief overview with a quantitative measure, or other justified evaluation, of progress. Other material (e.g. website links) will not be evaluated):	continuous manner in the German Elbe catchment area. So far, only part of the measures on the water bodies have been completed. Reasons for the delays are time-consuming approval procedures, the coupling to further hydraulic engineering measures, e.g. renewal measures on the transverse structure itself, or the integration into extensive watercourse development planning and watercourse structural measures. However, the aim is to implement the planned measures by the end of 2021. Planning for the third management period (2022-2027) will take into account the implementation status expected at the end of 2021.
	Current status of action:	Ongoing
	If 'Completed', has the action achieved its objective?	
Action H4:	Description of action (*as submitted in the IP*):	The German Ministry for Food and agriculture is funding a project, which is dealing with food web manipulation as a tool for the restoration of the hyporheic zone in eutrophicated rivers. Inter alia, this project is addressing the regulation of avi predation, as a central issue. The spatial transferability and thus the potential nationwide applicability of the project results is to be achieved by an experiment in 5 sections of two rivers (one of them is a salmon project river), in which an increased fish stock is created by a combination of stocking and cormorant deterrence. Cormorant predation will be quantified and the direct top-down effects is going to predicted using a model. A user's guide will be drawn up which presents the measure, describes its possible implementation and presents the effects and limits of the measure. This will be accompanied by intensive public relations work (press, scientific publications, training events, public lectures), which will mainly focus on the applicability and potential impacts of food web manipulation as an innovative measure to protect biodiversity.
	Expected outcome (*as submitted in the IP*):	For the first time, this project generates scientifically reliable data relating to a sustainable cormorant management in Germany. Therefore, the project is among others also relevant for the reintroduction of Atlantic salmon.
	Progress on action to date *(Provide a brief overview with a quantitative measure, or other justified evaluation, of progress. Other material (e.g. website links) will not be evaluated):*	In the initial phase of the project, four experimental sites were selected depending on natural conditions, fish stock before cormorant predation, potential of cormorant deterrence and existence of relict fish populations. To ensure transferability 4 different streams/rivers are used. According to the time schedule, telemetry equipment has been prepared and fish tagging was performed at the first river, where deterrence measures are already performed. In addition, help from recreational hunters for cormorant deterrence has been secured for all sites.
	Current status of action:	Ongoing

	If 'Completed', has the action achieved its objective?	

3.3 Provide an update on progress on actions relating to Aquaculture, Introductions and Transfers and Transgenics *(section 4.11 of the Implementation Plan). **Note**: the reports under 'Progress on action to date' should provide a brief overview of each action. For all actions, provide clear and concise quantitative information to demonstrate progress. In circumstances where quantitative information cannot be provided for a particular action because of its nature, a clear rationale must be given for not providing quantitative information and other information should be provided to enable progress with that action to be evaluated. 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*):	Undertake a coordinated genetic monitoring in the entire Rhine catchment area.
	Expected outcome (*as submitted in the IP*):	Find out the most successful genetic management and stocking strategies for a successful reintroduction of salmon in the Rhine catchment area. Genetic monitoring will allow assessing 1. the efficiency of • stocking measures performed; • different strains that are stocked; • different stocking strategies (age, parents used, the origin of broodstock etc.) the relative importance for stocking of the different streams of the Rhine catchment.
	Progress on action to date *(Provide a brief overview with a quantitative measure, or other justified evaluation, of progress. Other material (e.g. website links) will not be evaluated):*	In three winter seasons, (2017-2019) parent salmon in all hatcheries (Switzerland, Germany, France) were sampled genetically according to a uniform protocol. In Switzerland and France smolts have been genetically sampled in 2018 and 2019, first results are available for France and Germany. The most important results are expected with returning salmon, which should start to in 2020. The German Ministry for Food and Agriculture approved a project for the genetic monitoring in the German Rhine catchment in January. This secures the financing of the German monitoring in the next few years.
	Current status of action:	Ongoing
	If 'Completed', has the action achieved its objective?	
Action A2:	Description of action (*as submitted in the IP*):	
	Expected outcome (*as submitted in the IP*):	
	Progress on action to date *(Provide a brief overview with a quantitative measure, or other justified*	

	evaluation, of progress. Other material (e.g. website links) will not be evaluated):	
	Current status of action:	Choose an item.
	If 'Completed', has the action achieved its objective?	

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.
./.
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.
./.
North American Commission Members only:
4.6 Details of any new measures to minimise by-catches of salmon originating in the rivers of the other member.
./.
4.7 Details of any alteration to fishing patterns that result in the initiation of fishing or increase in catches of salmon originating in the rivers of another Party except with the consent of the latter.
./.