

	<p><b>North-East Atlantic Commission</b></p> <p><i>Gyrodactylus salaris in Norwegian Rivers (Tabled by Norway)</i></p>	<p><b>NEA(22)09</b></p> <p><b>Agenda item: 8</b></p>
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## *Gyrodactylus salaris in Norwegian Rivers*

No spread of the parasite to new regions has occurred since 1997 thanks to strict rules, effective preventative measures, and successful combatting. In 2019, however, *G. salaris* was detected in a new river, Selvikelva, in the Drammen region. This is a small river nearby an already infected river.

By May 2022, *G. salaris* has been detected on Atlantic salmon in 51 rivers. 39 of these rivers are treated and the parasite is successfully eradicated. In another 4 rivers, the eradication programs are completed but the results are still not confirmed. Presently, if all the eradication measures implemented are successful, the number of infected rivers is reduced to 8.

These infected rivers are located into two regions, the Driva region (4 rivers) and the Drammen region (4 rivers).

Driva region: A fish barrier was built in the river Driva in 2017. Barrier construction reduces the size and complexity of the treatments and the amount of chemical and other resources needed while increasing the chance of success. This fish barrier reduces the salmon migration distance from 100 km to 20 km. The parasite will disappear upstream the barrier if migrants are excluded for 5 to 6 years and there are no non-migratory hosts. An eradication of the parasite downstream the fish barrier and in the other tree infected rivers in this region is planned in 2022 and 2023.

After several years of testing, a new method for combating *G. salaris* is now ready for use. The use of monochloramine at very low concentrations can remove *G. salaris* from salmon fry within a few days without having visible negative effects on the fish. A large-scale experiment was carried out in the river Driva in 2021. The result was very promising, and this method will be used for combatting of *G. salaris* in two of the four infected rivers in the Driva region in 2022 and 2023.

Drammen region: In 2016 an expert group was established to assess whether it is possible to eradicate *G. salaris* from this region. The expert group gave its recommendation in the spring of 2018. The working group believes it is possible to eradicate *G. salaris* from the Drammen region with known methodology, given that new knowledge is accumulated prior to chemical treatment so that the challenges that have been identified by the expert group can be handled in a secure way.

The first step in the efforts to combat the parasite in this region was to close the fish ladder in Hellefossen in the river Drammenselva. This measure reduces the salmon migration distance, which is considered important as the river Drammenselva is one of Norway's largest rivers. Decisions to close the fish ladder were made in 2019.

In the coming years, research will be carried out to find good solutions to the challenges identified. Mapping and planning for the combatting of *G. salaris* in the last infected region has started and the first opportunity for treatment in this region is 2025 and 2026.