

2008-06-30

To the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Protection of the Republic of Belarus
Kollektornaja 10, Minsk, 220048, Belarus

Dear Minister,

Concerning Belarus governmental plan for hydropower dams in Neman river and the Salmon Action Plan in Belarus

CCB, a network of 25 Environmental NGOs in the Baltic Sea Region, will with this letter address you on proposals for successful protection of river ecosystems and wild salmon in Belarus.

Concerning Belarus governmental plan for hydropower dams in Neman river

Since the plans for construction of new hydro-power dams on the Neman river, close to Hrodna, was presented by the Belarus government many appeals have been made from numerous independent experts and environmental NGO in Belarus about the adverse environmental impact of the hydroelectric dam on the river Neman environment. The construction activities for a dam have now started upstreams Hrodna town.

As we understand the dam project does not contain any actions, such as fish-ways/fauna-passage, to mitigate the impact of the dam on the river biodiversity in Neman river in Belarus.

We would like to see a better balance between energy and environmental protection interests in this case, and raise your interests to make a more environmentally friendly dam construction.

CCB, representing 25 Environmental NGOs in 11 countries in the Baltic Sea drainage basin, are writing to you in order to again draw you attention to the following:

Neman river, one of the biggest river in the Baltic Sea catchment, hosts a rich biodiversity that has very high natural values for the Baltic Sea river ecosystems.

River Neman is a river with very high density of fish stocks, with importance for commercial and recreational fisheries.

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E-mail: secretariat@ccb.se / gunnar.noren@ccb.se **www.ccb.se** **Org. number:** 802015-1281 **CCB is a member of The World Conservation Union (IUCN)**

Coalition Clean Baltic is a network of environmental NGOs sponsored by:

- Danish Society for Nature Conservation • Estonian Society for Nature Conservation • Estonian Green Movement
- Finnish Association for Nature Conservation • Finnish Society for Nature & Environment • Bund für Umwelt und Naturschutz Deutschland, BUND
- InfoBalt, Germany • Environmental Protection Club of Latvia, VAK • Latvian Green Movement • Lithuanian Green Movement
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A dam in the Belarus part of Neman river will make a strong adverse effect of biodiversity and protected species listed in the Belarus Red Data Book – barbel (*Barbus barbus*), nase (*Hondrostoma*

nasus), Baltic vimba (*Vimba vimba*). The dam will block protected species migration to the spawning sites.

The design of the dam, which has been approved, does not provide for a fish way. A fish way could reduce the impact of the dam, but it has not, as we understand, been taken into consideration by the designers nor by those who approved the environmental impact assessment.

We have the following proposal for you and the Ministry of Natural Resources of Belarus.

We would like to come and visit the responsible decision-makers and administrators responsible for the project in Minsk and discuss possible measures to mitigate the environmental impact of the dam. We are ready to bring a Swedish expert on construction of effective fish-ways in river-dams and together with your responsible representatives visit the place for the dam, and have an open discussion of different alternatives for a possible solution for construction of a fish-way. The expert consultant can e.g. make drawings/sketches of a fish-way, at the visit, and the best potential solutions can hopefully be found. CCB is willing to pay the expenses for such fish-way expert to come to Belarus. Possible dates for a visit and meetings can be in late August or in September.

We hope you have a serious interest in such discussions for protection of the biodiversity of the Neman river ecosystem.

We appeal to the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Protection to take measures to mitigate the potential environmental impact of the construction of the Hrodno hydroelectric dam.

Concerning the Salmon Action Plan in Belarus

As we understand the Ministry of Natural Resources of Belarus is now developing an Action Plan to save the Atlantic salmon in Belorussian rivers for 2008-2009.

CCB is very satisfied of the interest and activities of the Ministry of Natural Resources on this matter. CCB has for more than 10 years been involved in activities for protection of the wild Baltic salmon, and we have a great interest for successful activities for protection of the salmon in Belarus rivers, especially in the Vilia river basin.

We have the following proposal for you and the Ministry of Natural Resources of Belarus.

We would like to come and visit the responsible decision-makers and administrators responsible for the protection of the wild Baltic salmon in Belarus to discuss the content of the Salmon Action Plan in Belarus, and a successful implementation of such plan.

Possible dates for a visit and meetings can be in late August or in September.

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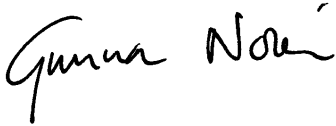
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Coalition Clean Baltic

FOR PROTECTION OF THE BALTIC SEA ENVIRONMENT

We hope you have a serious interest in such discussions for protection and management of wild Baltic salmon in Belarus.

Yours sincerely,



Gunnar Norén
Executive secretary to CCB

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