



SOS! Wild Baltic Salmon can disappear in the Baltic Sea in the nearest future

Russian environmental NGOs - members and partners of Coalition Clean Baltic Network (CCB) are very anxious of this problem and therefore prepared Proposals for the Luga River Salmon management plan for the Russian National program for Implementation of HELCOM Baltic Sea Action Plan (BSAP). We consider that Russia, that now has taken responsibilities on implementation BSAP, must do something concrete for the region and not only declare her readiness.

Every year the magnitude of the salmon population decreases considerably, first of all because of poaching, deterioration of the spawning and breeding areas and ecological situation on the whole in Luga Bay and mouth of the river in view of construction and exploitation of Ust-Luga harbor and absence of any actions from government agencies directed to nature protection. Moreover there is very low public awareness about natural values of area where they live. To the extent that Luga River has Federal significance, actions on Wild Baltic salmon protection must be taken on the State level. It must be done as soon as possible.

CCB with Russian partners sent their proposals to Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment of the Russian Federation with proposals to include to the Russian National program following actions for implementation in 2010-2011:

- Create effective system of control for poaching including improvement of legislation, creation of a public control system, increasing of fines, calling to protective actions of local policy;
- Restoration of existing salmon spawning and breeding areas and creation of some artificial spawning areas;
- Develop regular monitoring and research for condition of Luga Salmon population with aim of safeguarding of the Genetic Variability of Luga salmon;
- Accomplish a reconstruction and constantly support activity of the Luzhskiy production-experimental salmon factory (only one fish farm in Leningrad Region which is engaged in Wild Baltic salmon reproduction activity).

Creation of Luga River Salmon Management Plan and including it to the National program is only plans for start of work. It is absolutely necessary to realize such plans without delay, including evaluation of its effectiveness. One of the effective forms of work is where all stakeholders can be in a Council of River Basin management with experts-specialists, representatives of State institutions, local Municipalities and NGOs. It will give possibility to observe the problem from different point of view and find optimal ways for decisions.

Because of special importance of Luga River basin for preservation of gene pool of native endangered species of salmon in Baltic Sea, inclusion of Luga River Salmon Management plan to the National program and speedy realization will be a good Russian contribution to implementation of BSAP.

Vera Ovcharenko, expert of "Green World" NGO

Tel.: +7 921 921 79 25

E-mail: vera-ovcharenko@mail.ru