



Uppsala 2009-04-24

To:

Mr Ladislav Miko, Director DG Env, Protecting the Natural Environment

Cc Peter Gammeltoft, Director DG Env, Protection of Water and Marine Environment

Subject: Habitat directive and biodiversity goals for Baltic salmon and the EC Baltic Sea salmon management plan

CCB sent a letter to your colleagues Fotis Papoullias and Paulo Paixao on 26 November 2008 on important perspectives on Habitat directives and biodiversity goals connected to Atlantic salmon in the Baltic Sea, and the coming EC Baltic Salmon Management Plan (see attachment).

So far we have not received any answer and comments from your department.

We believe it is very important that you and your department get involved in Baltic Sea biodiversity issues, and especially on wild Baltic salmon biodiversity, the coming period.

The incoming EU Swedish presidency has priority for Baltic Sea region and its environment. Key issues under the Swedish presidency will e g be Baltic biodiversity, such as recovery of wild Baltic salmon, and related actions in the *HELCOM Baltic Sea Action Plan*.

Another key issue under the Swedish presidency is the coming *EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region* and its planned measures, which also has connections to support migrating fish species, e g salmon, in Baltic Sea rivers.

The new *EC Baltic Salmon Management Plan* is now under consultation and will be elaborated and presented in October 2009 by EC, according to the timetable by DG Mare.

So now there is a political opportunity and momentum to reach improvements on Baltic biodiversity. Pro-activeness and priority of EC on nature conservation for the Baltic Sea Region is needed the coming period and we would like to see a more deep involvement of your department in the actual issues, which would gain the biodiversity of northern Europe.

If not done we will mobilize ourself for a stronger protection and better management of species and biodiversity in the Baltic Sea Region.

Another entry point for safegaurding of Baltic biodiversity, including threatened migrating fish species, is the WFD and the River Basin Management Plans (RBMP) that is now under consultation within EU.

Important measures needed for protection of the Habitat species Atlantic salmon, in the Baltic Sea

Atlantic salmon shall according to the EC Habitats Directive have a "good favourable conservation status". Today Atlantic salmon has unfavourable conservation status in all biogeographic regions of the Baltic Sea.

EC, DG Environment is the only European international body that has the possibility to secure a "good favourable conservation status" for the Baltic salmon, by strictly applying the Habitats Directive to protect the approx. 26 threatened wild Baltic salmon populations. The Baltic Sea region has today approx. 40 wild salmon populations, which means that 2/3 of all populations are threatened. (The Baltic Sea region had about 100 wild salmon populations 100 years ago, but more than 50 % of these are extincted). So a very essential part of the wild Baltic salmon biodiversity can be lost, if not strong protection measures will be applied in the nearest future.

As a first step a very clear goal must be formulated that guarantees the safeguarding of all threatened wild Baltic Salmon populations.

We need support from DG Env, Department for Protecting the Natural Environment for the following actions:

Overall goal

All naturally spawning Baltic salmon populations, including the weakest, will be managed and protected within "safe biological limits" securing full reproductive possibilities and genetic variability of the species.

Detailed goals

-By 2012 there should annually¹ be a minimum of 200² (a number of 1000³ can be more relevant, especially for large rivers) spawners returning to and spawning at the spawning areas of each individual river, without support from released salmon.

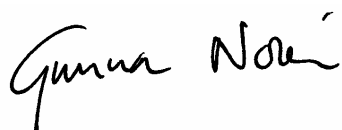
- The production of naturally spawning Baltic salmon shall gradually increase to attain by 2015 in each of the salmon rivers a production of wild Baltic salmon of at least 75 % of the estimated potential. The long term goal should be full production of the estimated potential.⁴

Actions

- Develop individual **high quality salmon river management plans (SRMP)** for each wild salmon river, by 2011, including the proposed components below. Priority should be given to rivers with weak populations of naturally spawning Baltic salmon.

DG Environment should guarantee that salmon conservation aspects will have equal importance as fisheries aspects in the coming EC Baltic Sea salmon management plan. DG Environment has now the possibility to influence a true precautionary and ecosystem based approach in Baltic Sea fisheries management via the Habitats Directive.

Best regards



¹ Three year average

² Individual river targets, for the number of returning spawners shall be refined no later than 2011, in order to fully utilise the potential spawning areas

³ Salmon river management goal as in the Danish National Salmon Management Plan, 2004 (Miljøministeriet, Skov- og Naturstyrelsen), for four small river systems with low-land wild salmon in south-west Jutland

⁴ It is important to realise that the potential production is not a static figure but has to be revised because of underestimations of the real potential and as habitat restoration measures are undertaken and the potential increases.

Gunnar Norén
Executive Secretary Coalition Clean Baltic

Annexes:

- Letter to DG Environment , 26 November 2008
- CCB Map of wild Baltic salmon rivers, and existing threats