

2008-04-30

Coalition Clean Baltic

To
HELCOM HABITAT meeting, 5- 9 May 2008, Warsaw, Poland

CCB proposals for implementation of Actions related to Baltic salmon in the BSAP

The action from BSAP – the active conservation of at least ten endangered/threatened wild salmon river populations in the Baltic Sea region as well as introduction of native Baltic Sea salmon in at least four salmon rivers, by 2009

The background for the decision above was a proposal submitted to the HELCOM informal meeting, 16-17 January 2007, to agree on a set of actions for the Biodiversity and Nature Conservation segment of the HELCOM Baltic Sea Action Plan

The proposals were as follows:

- to establish national programmes with the goal to safeguard at least 10, of the total 26 weak wild salmon river populations in the Baltic Sea region with salmon not in safe numbers or unknown numbers. For Sweden(2 in Sweden) , Russia(Luga river in Russia), Estonia(3 in Estonia), Latvia(3 in Latvia) and Lithuania(1 in Lithuania), via actions such as habitat restoration, nature protection actions and restrictions in fisheries and efficient control of poaching (where it is appropriate) until 2009. Second level target would be to establish national programmes with the goal to safeguard another 10 wild salmon river populations in the Baltic Sea region with salmon not in safe numbers or unknown numbers until 2010 (National actions)
- Establish programmes for reintroduction of salmon rivers, with extincted populations today, with the goal to reach successfully restored rivers, hosting a sustained naturally spawning salmon population. First level target is to establish such programmes for 2 rivers in Finland and 2 rivers in Poland by 2009. Second level target would be to introduce such programmes in another 2 rivers per country, in Sweden, Finland and Poland until 2010. (National actions)
- Develop individual salmon management plans for each salmon river, including measures concerning habitat restoration/ or improvement, guarantee effective fish-ways for returning spawners and out-migration of smolts, salmon monitoring, regulations of fishery activities etc, until 1 July 2009 for all salmon rivers.

HELCOM needs to decide on the distribution per country for threatened wild salmon rivers and for rivers where salmon shall be reintroduced in the Baltic Sea Region.

Proposal for HELCOM decision:

HELCOM HABITAT decides on the following distribution of threatened salmon rivers that shall have active protection in 2009

- at least 2 rivers in Sweden
- at least 1 river in Russia (Luga river)
- at least 3 rivers in Estonia
- at least 3 rivers in Latvia
- at least 1 river in Lithuania

Each country mentioned above have to identify rivers in accordance with national priorities.

HELCOM HABITAT should also decide on the following distribution for establishment of programmes for introduction of native Baltic Sea salmon in at least four salmon rivers, by 2009, with extincted populations today, and with the goal to reach successfully restored rivers, hosting a sustained naturally spawning salmon population

- at least 2 rivers in Finland
- at least 2 rivers in Poland

Quality of the active protection of the threatened salmon river populations by 2009

The quality and ambition level for the active protection of the threatened salmon river populations and for rivers for introduction of native salmon should be set up by development of Salmon river management plans.

Salmon river management plans for all the above-mentioned rivers should include the following components:

1. Set up a clear goal for the number of returning female spawners reaching and spawning at salmon spawning bottoms in the river, without support from released salmon.

An individual goal must be set for each river.

A suitable goals could be to adopt the same goal that have been adopted by Denmark for wild salmon rivers at the Danish North Sea coast. The goal in Denmark is that each wild salmon river shall guarantee in average 1000 returning spawners migrating into the river each year, without support of released salmon.

2. Mapping of all spawning- and breeding bottoms for wild salmon in the river, described on maps. Calculations of potential areas for salmon spawning to reach a maximum production capacity of natural spawning salmon in the river. A budget should be included to implement such activity.

3. A plan for protection of spawning- and breeding bottoms for wild salmon in each river and river-mouth area, proposed as Natura 2000-areas.

4. A plan for rehabilitation/restoration of habitat-bottoms for salmon, including priorities, in each salmon river, with subsequent budget.

5. Development of fisheries regulations in the river, river-mouth and the coastal area close to the river, to guarantee that the goal for the number of returning female spawners to the river will be fulfilled.

6. Monitoring of salmon in the river.

Develop and safeguard an annual monitoring of returning spawners, e.g. via automatic fish-counters, and of out-migrating salmon smolts, e.g. via smolt wheel-counters or smolt-monitoring fisheries in the river mouth-area. The ambition must be to guarantee yearly reliable information for returning spawners and for out-migrating smolt to the Baltic Sea. A clear budget for such monitoring should be guaranteed.

Proposal for decision:

HELCOM HABITAT decides on a quality for Salmon river management plans in accordance with what have been described above. Such plans shall be adopted at latest 1 July 2009 on the national level.

The action from BSAP – the further development and application in all cases of appropriate breeding and restocking practices for salmon and sea-trout to safeguard the genetic variability of native wild stocks, by 2012

First step for the implementation of this action is to gather information from all Baltic Sea region countries on releases of salmon within the Baltic catchment the last years.

Proposal for decision:

HELCOM HABITAT decides that all Baltic Sea region countries shall provide information on all releases of salmon (number of salmon smolt released or eggs incubated in rivers, the genetic origin of the releases and the sites for such activities described on maps) for 2003-2007 and 2008, to be provided to the Helcom secretariat at latest 15 October 2008.

Same information for releases of sea-trout shall be provided at latest 1 February 2009.

This HELCOM action is for EU member states, also related to the Council Regulation No 707/2007, of 11 June 2007, concerning use of alien and locally absent species in aquaculture. This EC-regulation requires an Ecological and Genetic Risk Assessment for all cases of aquaculture activities within EU.