



Agenda Item 6.1
For Information

Council

CNL(14)36

***Annual Progress Report
on Actions Taken Under Implementation Plans for the Calendar Year 2013***

EU – Ireland

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Annual Progress Report on Actions taken under Implementation Plans for the Calendar Year 2013

The primary purposes of the Annual Progress Reports are to provide details of:

- any changes to the management regime for salmon and consequent changes to the Implementation Plan;
- actions that have been taken under the Implementation Plan in the previous year;
- significant changes to the status of stocks, and a report on catches; and
- actions taken in accordance with the provisions of the Convention

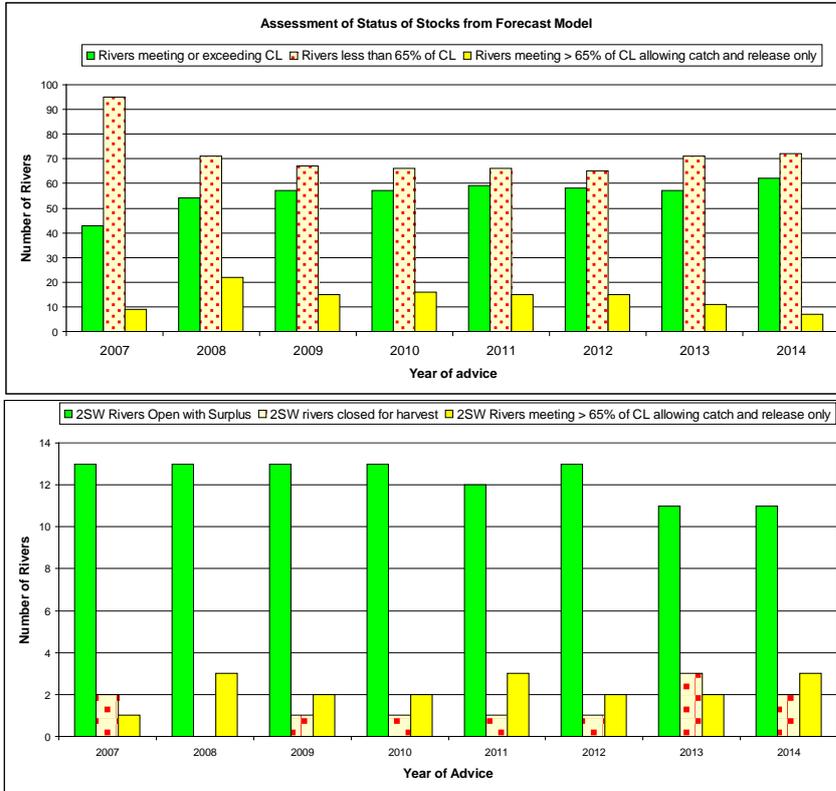
These reports will be reviewed by the Council. Please complete this form and return it to the Secretariat **by 1 April 2014**.

Party:	European Union
Jurisdiction/Region:	Ireland

1: Changes to the Implementation Plan
1.1 Describe any proposed revisions to the Implementation Plan and, where appropriate, provide a revised plan.
There have been no major revisions to the implementation plan
1.2 Describe any major new initiatives or achievements for salmon conservation and management that you wish to highlight.

2: Stock status and catches.
2.1 Provide a description of any significant changes in the status of stocks relative to the reference points described in the Implementation Plan and of any new factors which may significantly affect the abundance of salmon stocks.
See below

Summary of status of stocks and catch advice and forecast for 2014 fishery season



There has been little change in the overall status of salmon stocks relative to attainment of Conservation Limits described in the IP. The scientific advice for the 2014 fishery is that 62 rivers can open for harvest fisheries, 7 rivers open only for catch and release angling with 72 rivers closed for fishing entirely.

There are 16 rivers for which a separate assessment is made for MSW salmon where there are significant fisheries on these. Of these, 11 have an advised harvestable surplus, 3 are closed for harvest while 2 have met over 65% of their CL and can be opened for catch and release fishing.

In addition, there are four assessments on rivers used for hydro power which have been assessed as being below their conservation limits i.e. Upper Liffey (Dublin), Upper Lee (Cork), Upper Shannon (Limerick) and the River Erne.

In applying the scientific advice to management it should be noted that where rivers are only marginally above their CL they may be restricted to C&R so that the actual number of rivers open under regulation will be less than the number of rivers actually achieving CL.

2.2 Provide the following information on catches:(nominal catch equals reported quantity of salmon caught and retained in tonnes ‘round fresh weight’ (i.e. weight of whole, ungutted, unfrozen fish) or ‘round fresh weight equivalent’).				
	In-river	Estuarine	Coastal	Total
(a) provisional nominal catch (which may be subject to revision) for 2013 (tonnes)	64t	39t		
(b) confirmed nominal catch of salmon for 2012 (tonnes)	60t	28t		
(c) estimated unreported catch for 2013 (tonnes)				10.3
(d) number and percentage of salmon caught and released in recreational fisheries in 2013.	6,993 (23% of total rod catch)			

3: Implementation Plan Actions.

3.1 Provide an update on progress against actions relating to the Management of Salmon Fisheries (section 2.8 of the Implementation Plan)

Action F1:	Description of Action:	Protection against illegal fishing is a high priority in Ireland and the state invests a considerable amount of resources on these activities (Fishery Inspectors, Navy, Garda etc). More outreach to local communities is planned to bring the problems of poaching as a major impediment to stock recovery into focus.
	Expected Outcome:	Buy-in by local communities in identifying active illegal practices
	Monitoring/Enforcement Results:	190,796 fishery staff man hours were spent on protecting Ireland’s Fishing Resource in 2013. Protection Patrols were carried out using different methods on lakes rivers, estuaries and at sea. This protection was largely related to salmon but fishery patrols were also targeted at other fish species. In total, 497 Nets were seized measuring 26,000 metres and 295 on the spot fines were issued for Fishery Offences in 2013. There were 112 prosecutions for illegal fishing in 2013.
	Ongoing/completed:	Ongoing annually
	Achieved objective?	Yes
Action F2:	Description of Action:	IFI is actively promoting the returns of accurate information from anglers through the national carcass tagging and logbook scheme. This scheme facilitates the identification of inaccurate information and allows some follow-up to redress the issue. Move towards electronic Salmon licences.

	Expected Outcome:	More awareness by stakeholders on the need for accurate statistics.
	Monitoring/Enforcement Results:	Return of logbooks by anglers was 73.5% in 2013 compared to 74.5% in 2012. All anglers who do not return logbooks are written to as a means of improving logbook returns and a proportion are taken to court annually and fined for non-return of logbooks. Return of commercial licences has been 100% in recent years. The electronic licence system is in place and can be accessed at www.salmonlicences.ie In 2013, approximately 33% of anglers purchased licences on line.
	Ongoing/completed:	Ongoing
	Achieved objective?	High compliance with logbook returns. Majority of non-returns are short term visitors. Electronic licences in place.
Action F3:	Description of Action:	IFI is developing a National Fish Counter Strategy to maintain, operate and enhance the current counter resources and to evaluate where extra counters might be required. This will be enacted in 2014.
	Expected Outcome:	A more robust and reliable counter assessment using the most up to date methods for validation of counts (video surveillance, tracking, tagging etc). New database for verification and data capture.
	Monitoring/Enforcement Results:	IFI have put a new national fish counter website and database in place in 2013 for the input and validation of resistivity counter data. In 2014, phase 2 will take place to facilitate VAKI counters. A national reporting mechanism for fish counter data and validation will then be in place. In total, counts from 29 fish counters were used in 2012 – 2013 salmon assessment, an increase of 8 counters on the 2011 – 2012 assessment.
	Ongoing/completed:	Ongoing
	Achieved objective?	Achieved

3.2 Provide an update on progress against actions relating to Habitat Protection and Restoration (<i>section 3.4 of the Implementation Plan</i>)		
Action H1:	Description of Action:	Agricultural enrichment Following the implementation of the Water Framework Directive and the formation of River Basin District management structures, a collective approach to reducing all adverse impacts including agricultural enrichment and eutrophication on aquatic resources is now in place. Having characterised the risks posed to water-bodies nationally, Programmes of Measures are being developed to address habitat impacts / land use practices and to restore impaired water bodies to good status. The aim of

		<p>the Water Framework Directive is to prevent any deterioration in the existing status of our waters, including the protection of good and high status where it exists, and to ensure that all waters are restored to at least good status by 2015. As a consequence of the implementation of the WFD and the Nitrates Directive, the impact of agricultural enrichment on salmon rivers is expected to reduce considerably over the coming decades. The CAP reform due in 2013 also provides an important opportunity for aligning agriculture objectives with habitat protection.</p>
	<p>Expected Outcome:</p>	<p>Significant improvement in water quality due to improved agricultural practice</p>
	<p>Monitoring/Enforcement Results:</p>	<p>Ireland's Nitrates Action Programme (NAP) is designed to prevent pollution of surface waters and ground water from agricultural sources and to protect and improve water quality. In accordance with the Nitrates Directive, Ireland's NAP was reviewed for a second time during 2013. A public consultation on possible changes to the NAP during this review was conducted between 1 May and 12 June 2013. 30 Submissions were received and these were assessed by an Expert Review Group composed of representatives of DECLG, DAFM, EPA and Teagasc. On foot of this exercise and an extensive review of more up to date information which was not available in designing the second NAP, the Minister has revised the Programme. The proposed amendments to the NAP have been screened in accordance with the European Communities (Environmental Assessment of Certain Plans and Programmes) Regulations 2004 (SI435 of 2004). The new NAP is given effect by the European Union (Good Agricultural Practice for the Protection of Waters) Regulations 2014. This has been given further effect by a second Statutory Instrument (European Union (Good Agricultural Practice for Protection of Waters) Regulations 2014. It is envisaged that this will lead to an improvement in water quality.</p> <p>The latest Environmental Protection Agency water quality monitoring data indicates 71% of river channel is at high or good status while 46.6% of lakes monitored are also at high or good status (EPA 2012). The main success story over the past eight years has been the virtual elimination of seriously polluted (bad ecological status) river sites. The focus is now on the moderate- and poor-status sites and on the point and diffuse sources that cause the pollution. Irelands Environment 2012 - Environmental Protection Agency 2012.</p>

	Ongoing/completed:	Ongoing
	Achieved objective?	yes
Action H2:	Description of Action:	<p>Forestry Related Impacts</p> <p>Many Irish forests that are now mature, or approaching maturity, were planted in landscapes that were unsuited to economically viable forest production. The increasing recognition of the impacts from forestry on water resources has led to the development of a Code of Practice for forestry (Forest Service, 2000). Generally, forest management is based on the Code of Best Practice. The Forest Service has also produced a suite of six Environmental Guidelines; these are the mechanisms by which the Forest Service will ensure that the environmental aspects of sustainable forest management (SFM) are implemented, e.g. Forestry and Water Quality guidelines, etc. Adherence to the guidelines is a condition of grant aid and the issuing of a felling licence. The penalty for non-compliance is the withholding of approvals for grants and felling licences. A new Forestry Bill, which will replace the out of date Forestry Act 1946, has been drafted with the opportunity to ensure that forestry management is better able to protect sensitive habitats. The Bill has passed the 1st and 2nd stage of government and select Committee stage and it is envisaged that it will be published in early 2015. The aim of the new legislation is to introduce a regulatory framework that will support the development of a modern, multifunctional, sustainable and high quality forestry sector which enshrines the principles of SFM and protection of the environment.</p>
	Expected Outcome:	Improved water quality and protection of habitats
	Monitoring/Enforcement Results:	There was general compliance with the forestry codes of practice nationally. Many companies are also participating in additional independent forest certification schemes (e.g. FSC & PEFC). Many estates are being managed with biodiversity as the primary objective, e.g. when conifer trees are felled, there is now a greater percentage of broadleaved trees being planted in their place.
	Ongoing/completed:	Ongoing
	Achieved objective?	Yes
Action H3:	Description of Action:	<p>Poor water quality from Inadequate Sewage Treatment and Industrial Discharges</p> <p>In Ireland, there has been considerable investment in upgrading of treatment facilities, primarily in larger towns, and this process will continue with the Programme of Measures under the Water Framework Directive. The Department of the Environment have invested many</p>

		<p>millions of Euro nationally over the recent years in new treatment facilities, and many of the smaller town and village schemes have been upgraded in this process. It is therefore anticipated that the impact on productive capacity of salmon rivers from inadequate sewage treatment will decrease considerably over the coming years with the requirements of the WFD being achieved. Significant upgrading of wastewater treatment plants has occurred in recent years to assist local authorities in complying with the Urban Wastewater Treatment Directive. The EPA regulates major industrial activities through the Integrated Pollution Prevention and Control (IIPC) regulations while the local authorities license small-scale industrial discharges to waters under the Water Pollution Acts. The Work of the EPA in enforcing the regulations and the implementation of the EU Water Framework Directive are likely to ensure that industrial discharges are adequately regulated to prevent impact on rivers nationally.</p>
	Expected Outcome:	Improved waste water treatment targeting upgrading of the most urgent facilities
	Monitoring/Enforcement Results:	<p>The upgrading of inadequate sewage treatment facilities continued in 2013. Irish Water, a State company was created in 2013 and is taking over the water investment and maintenance programme with the key aim of supervising and accelerating the significant investment needed to upgrade the State's water and sewerage infrastructure.</p> <p>Improvement in water quality has been recorded by the Environmental Protection Agency.</p> <p>There are almost 500,000 septic tanks nationally and the Water Services (Amendment) Act 2012 provides for the introduction of a registration and inspection system for domestic wastewater treatment systems, including septic tanks and similar systems. Owners of domestic wastewater treatment systems are now (2013) required to register their systems in accordance with these regulations to ensure protection of water quality. The EPA have developed a National Inspection Plan, all areas of the country are liable to inspection but priority is given to areas where water quality is most at risk from pollution from on-site waste water treatment systems.</p>
	Ongoing/completed:	Ongoing
	Achieved objective?	yes
Action H4:	Description of Action:	<p>Salmon Farms in Estuaries</p> <p>Both existing and proposed salmon farms in estuaries may pose a threat to wild salmon populations and a number of publications have raised concerns regarding</p>

		<p>lice induced mortalities of salmon. In Ireland protocols are in place with regard to permitted sea lice thresholds on salmon farms and measures can be taken for farms in breach of protocols. In 2011, this led to stringent action taken by the Irish authorities in removing farmed salmon from an area. The challenge for management is to develop strategies including effective lice treatments to ensure low lice levels on farmed salmon in spring prior to and during wild salmon migration. In fact the thresholds are treatment triggers and when they are reached a treatment must be carried out to reduce lice infestation levels. This is clearly set out in protocols.</p> <p>Annual fallowing of sites, use of single generation sites, avoidance of partial lice treatments and harvesting carried out remote from grower sites are planned to reduce the potential impact of sea lice infestation. Availability of new sea lice treatments are also being pursued to increase effectiveness of sea lice control.</p>
	Expected Outcome:	Improved compliance with sea lice protocols and lower sea lice levels in spring
	Monitoring/Enforcement Results:	<p>Lice levels reported on farmed smolts during the spring period in 2013 were generally within stated levels:</p> <p>Reports of annual sea lice monitoring are provided by the Marine Institute below while a summary is given in A2 below: http://www.marine.ie/home/services/operational/sealice/</p>
	Ongoing/completed:	Ongoing
	Achieved objective?	Yes for infestations on farmed smolts – while compliance with Treatment Target Levels for all salmon age groups, areas and months is not 100%, there were improvements noted in 2013 compared to 2012 and 2011.

3.3 Provide an update on progress against actions relating to Aquaculture, Introductions and Transfers and Transgenics (section 4.8 of the Implementation Plan)		
Action A1:	Description of Action:	<p>Escapes of farmed fish</p> <p>The industry comply with the codes of practice regarding husbandry and good engineering practices.</p> <p>In the event of an escape, the farm operator will make an emergency application to the Department of Agriculture for a special licence under Section 14 of the Fisheries Act 1959 to deploy nets to recapture the escaped fish. Inland Fisheries Ireland may take such action as it considers necessary to recapture stock which has escaped from a</p>

		facility operated under a licence. Under 77(2), the Minister (DCENR), may authorise a licensee or other person or body to take such action as is specified in the authorisation to recapture stock which has escaped from a facility.
	Expected Outcome:	Prevention of escapes generally. In the event of escapes, prompt recapture of a significant proportion of the stock.
	Monitoring/Enforcement Results:	No reports of escapes have been received in 2013. However, an escape was reported in early 2014 due to extreme weather conditions. Approx. 230,000 salmon escaped.
	Ongoing/completed:	Ongoing
	Achieved objective?	The objective of maintaining farmed salmon in cages is generally met as there have been no reported escapes of farmed fish in 2013. However, the escape event in 2014 is being reviewed in relation to the efficacy of containment practices in extreme weather conditions.
Action A2:	Description of Action:	<p>Sea lice Infestation</p> <p>During the spring period Sea lice protocols are in place which set out ovigerous lice thresholds (0.3-0.5 ovigerous lice per fish March –May and 2.0 ovigerous lice per fish outside this period). When the threshold is breached a notice to treat is issued to the salmon farm to bring lice levels under control.</p> <p>In 2008, a new pest Management Strategy was developed that introduced detailed fallowing requirements and a new approach to monitoring to deal with situations where target lice levels were not being achieved. This approach will identify ‘breakout’ site options for sites with persistent sea lice problems</p> <p>While some farms do exceed these thresholds annually, in spring 2012, non-compliance with lice thresholds at two salmon farms resulted in the Minister giving an order to harvest fish early, prior to wild smolt migration.</p>
	Expected Outcome:	Reduced sea lice levels on farmed salmon
	Monitoring/Enforcement Results:	<p>Reports of annual sea lice monitoring are provided by the Marine Institute below:</p> <p>http://www.marine.ie/home/services/operational/sealice/</p> <p>While details are to be found in these reports, the following is the discussion from the 2013 Annual report in full:</p> <p>Sea lice levels on smolts in 2013 continue to show low levels of infestation as has been the case in previous years. One hundred percent of sea lice inspections on</p>

		<p>smolts were below the Trigger Treatment Level (TTL), this compares with 98% in 2012 and 97% in 2011.</p> <p>On one-sea- winter fish, 82% of inspections were below TTL compared to 74% I 2012 and 80% in 2011. Sea lice levels on one-sea-winter salmon during the critical spring period were below TTL for 78% of inspections in the west, 95% in the Northwest and 100% in the Southwest. This is an improvement in the West from 72% below TTL in 2012 and in the Northwest a significant improvement from 58%. The Southwest continues to have no breaches of protocol levels in 2013 continuing this trend since 2010.</p> <p>The levels of one-sea-winter salmon outside the spring period show that 53% of the inspections were below the TTL in the West, 67% were below in the Northwest and 100% in the Southwest. These compare to 58% in the West, 56% in the Northwest and 100% in the Southwest during 2012.</p> <p>Se lice levels in excess of the 10 L. salmonis mobiles per fish on one-sea-winter fish nationally were recorded on 13 occasions compared to 17 occasions in 2012 and 21 in 2011. 8 of these inspections had means of greater than 20 mobile L. salmonis per fish. Five of these inspections had had levels greater than 40 l. salmonis per fish. The highest mean sea lice level recorded for one-sea-winter salmon was 84.02 mobile L. salmonis per fish, this compares to 71.72 mobile L. salmonis per fish in 2012 and 43.36 mobile L. salmonis per fish in 2011. One inspection of two-sea-winter salmon was carried out, this exceeded treatment trigger levels. These fish were subsequently harvested out prior to the next scheduled inspection.</p> <p>The May mean annual trends of L. salmonis ovigerous sea lice levels for one –sea-winter remains within the TTL set out in the Monitoring protocol and is the lowest level recorded since the Sea Lice Monitoring Programme began in 1991.</p> <p>The regional sea lice levels in 2013 show good control in the first half of the year, with numbers increasing on some sites in late summer and autumn. This is a similar trend to 2012.</p> <p>Caligus elongates levels reached unusually high numbers</p>
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		<p>on some sites in 2013, mainly in the Southwest and Donegal Bay. The maximum number recorded was 51 individuals per fish in 2011. Peaks occurred mainly in May and June. Caligus numbers are often associated with an influx of other pelagic fish in a bay such as mackerel or herring.</p> <p>Factors that contributed to difficulties in controlling sea lice levels in 2013 included fish health problems, jellyfish blooms and high water temperatures in late summer and early autumn. Higher water temperatures result in shorter generation times for sea lice and also make treating the fish for sea lice more difficult.</p> <p>Most farms have an on-farm sea lice monitoring programme and this combined with a proactive treatment regime has proven to be an essential tool to prevent the increase of sea lice populations. Having the foresight and capacity to treat fish early in the sea lice population development is critical to managing sea lice numbers, especially when temperatures are high. Alternating the use of treatments and targeting treatments effectively on developing sea lice infestations is vital to achieving a successful result and in the prolonging the effective life of treatments. Co-operation between farms via the Single Bay Management Process is crucial to achieving successful sea lice control as synchronous bay-wide treatments are key for maximum effectiveness. Following, separation of generations and the early harvest of two-sea-winter fish have also proven to be key elements approach to sea lice control.</p>
	Ongoing/completed:	Ongoing
	Achieved objective?	Yes for infestations on farmed smolts – while compliance with Treatment Target Levels for all salmon age groups, areas and months is not 100%, there were improvements noted in 2013 compared to 2012 and 2011.
Action A3:	Description of Action:	Transfer and increases in incidence of diseases Early harvesting of farmed salmon where gill damage has been recorded is effective in preventing further outbreaks. See section 4.7 – improved treatments and investment in R&D will result in greater control of gill related disorders in 2013.
	Expected Outcome:	Reduced incidence of disease outbreaks in aquaculture facilities.
	Monitoring/Enforcement Results:	No significant outbreaks of disease were noted in 2013
	Ongoing/completed:	Ongoing
	Achieved objective?	Yes

4: Additional information required under the Convention
4.1 Details of any laws, regulations and programmes that have been adopted or repealed since the last notification.
No new legislation has been adopted. Fisheries by-laws have been updated for the 2013 and 2014 seasons
4.2 Details of any new commitments concerning the adoption or maintenance in force for specified periods of time of conservation, restoration and other management measures.
No new commitments since last reported
4.3 Details of any new actions to prohibit fishing for salmon beyond 12 nautical miles.
No new actions
4.4 Details of any new actions to invite the attention of States not Party to the Convention to matters relating to the activities of its vessels which could adversely affect salmon stocks subject to the Convention.
No new actions
4.5 Details of any actions taken to implement regulatory measures under Article 13 of the Convention including imposition of adequate penalties for violations.
No new actions