



LIFE-Project Allis shad

The re-introduction of allis shad (*Alosa alosa*) in the Rhine System

Applicant:

Bezirksregierung Arnsberg, Dez. 51 Fischerei und Gewässerökologie NRW

Duration: January 2007 - December 2010

Projektbudget: 956.348 €

Partner:

Centre National du Machinisme Agricole, du Génie Rural, des Eaux et des Forêts (CEMAGREF)

Association Migrateurs Garonne Dordogne (MIGADO)

Co-Financing:

Ministry of Environment, Federal State Hesse

HIT Umwelt- und Naturschutzstiftungs GmbH (Environment Fund)

Rheinfischereigenossenschaft NRW (Rhine Fisheries Association, Federal State North Rhine Westphalia)

Sportvisserij Nederland (Dutch Sportfishing Association)

Project management: Dr. Peter Beeck, Stiftung Wasserlauf



SUMMARY OF THE PROJECT (Maximum 1 page)

Project title : The re-introduction of allis shad (*Alosa alosa*) in the Rhine System

Objectives

The overall objective of the project is the conservation and protection of allis shad in Europe. The distribution range of the species has decreased dramatically and as a consequence allis shad is listed as priority species in Annex II and V of the Habitats Directive. In this unique European project with financial and practical support of three Rhine bordering countries (Netherlands, Germany, France) the project objective is the re-introduction of allis shad in the Rhine System. Only 150 years ago several hundred thousand allis shads have been caught annually in the Rhine System and they were an important economic factor for the local population. With the stocking of allis shad larvae it shall be achieved that mature allis shad will migrate into the river again and build a healthy population which will not need accompanying stocking activities in the future.

Actions and means involved

Extensive preliminary studies have been carried out which allowed a characterisation of the necessary actions to implement the project objectives. With the help of techniques developed for the successful re-introduction of the closely related American shad (*Alosa sapidissima*) in many rivers along the North-American East Coast it is planned to produce 5 million allis shad larvae which will be stocked in the Rhine system. All larvae will be marked before stocking to determine the success of the re-introduction project. The practicability of these techniques has been tested successfully in the preliminary studies.

Additional actions such as mapping of spawning and stocking habitats, assessment of the influence of shipping for the life cycle of allis shad, a diversified public awareness campaign and the integration of the existing knowledge about this species in the project will accompany stocking activities and ensure an optimisation of the actions within the duration of the project.

Expected results

One of the main results of the project will be the development of mass production techniques for allis shad breeding and the transfer in praxis. With the help of these techniques 5 million allis shad larvae will be produced for the re-introduction of allis shad in the Rhine system. If an existing allis shad population in Europe will suffer from extinction in the future, these techniques can be used to support and protect the population.

With respect to the experience from American restoration programmes it is expected that 20.000 mature allis shad will return to the Rhine system due to the stocking activities and maturing allis shad are expected to be found in the Rhine estuary and the North Sea.