

Code: TCP/POL/3201 (D)

Title: RE-OPENING OF MIGRATION ROUTES FOR MIGRATORY FISH IN POLISH RIVERS - PHASE II OF TCP/POL/3003

Country: POLAND

Starting date: May 2008

Duration: 24 months

Contact: Regional Office for Europe

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PROJECT SUMMARY

At the request of the Government of Poland, the project TCP/POL/3003, titled “Re-opening of migration routes for migratory fish in Polish rivers”, was approved in June 2005 to provide technical assistance and advice on re-opening Polish rivers for migratory fish. The project should specifically: (i) assist in the planning and construction of two fish passes in two different rivers; (ii) help to demonstrate the success in recolonization of upstream river basins by migratory target species; (iii) train national officers/counterparts in the selection of appropriate fish pass design for various situations; and (iv) train national officers/counterparts in fish pass monitoring procedures.

The project, which was intended to start in June 2005 and run for 24 months, could only start in December 2005 due to difficulties in fielding and coordinate the international consultants and FAO expert for the joint inception mission. In November 2007, the project reached 24 months without having achieved all the planned objectives. This was caused mainly for three reasons, all of them, however, outside the control of FAO: (i) the Polish Senior Fisheries Officer of the Ministry of Agriculture, dealing with rehabilitation of Polish rivers for fish, was out of Poland for almost two years on EU training in Spain (this was not planned when the project was designed and he had left Poland just before the project started) and the Polish Ministry of Agriculture could not assign any other Senior Officer to the project due to lack of staff familiar with the specific aspects of river rehabilitation; (ii) due to the complex situation with regard to key stakeholders at the Wloclawek dam (i.e. dam structure owned by Water Management Authorities; Hydropower production by a “privatized” state company), the process of getting high-level persons of the key stakeholders involved was much slower than anticipated; (iii) the re-structuring of the Ministry of Agriculture, with the transfer of the Fisheries Department to the Ministry of Maritime Affairs added to the problems in the project implementation.

Despite the above, the project had a number of important accomplishments including: (i) a proposal for the most appropriate design of fish passes at two dams/weirs was made by the international group of experts on the basis of the study and evaluation of the different potential variants that might suit the purpose, taking into consideration the local conditions at the obstacles and the target species of the concerned rivers; (ii) two national experts (i.e. one biologist and one engineer) were trained in applying appropriate selection criteria for the selection of most appropriate fish pass designs and monitoring facilities relevant for different situations in Polish rivers in view of future restoration of different watercourses; (iii) eight national experts trained in the use of radio telemetry through a workshop on the application of telemetry in fish migration studies; (iv) telemetry and monitoring equipment was purchased.

Now that the Polish Senior Fisheries Officer is back in Poland and the Fisheries Department had been retransferred to the Ministry of Agriculture, the conditions have improved and stabilized, allowing to ensure a successful completion of the project.

National Counterparts

Ministry of Agriculture

Funding Source

FAO Technical Cooperation Programme

Budget

USD 160 000