

## SPECIES INFORMATION SHEET

*Alburnus alburnus*

English name: <b>Bleak</b>	Scientific name: <i>Alburnus alburnus</i>	
Taxonomical group: Class: Actinopterygii Order: Cypriniformes Family: Cyprinidae	Species authority: Linnaeus, 1758	
Subspecies, Variations, Synonyms: –	Generation length: 4.7 years	
Past and current threats (Habitats Directive article 17 codes): –	Future threats (Habitats Directive article 17 codes): –	
IUCN Criteria: –	<b>HELCOM Red List Category:</b>	<b>LC Least Concern</b>
Global / European IUCN Red List Category LC/LC	Habitats Directive: –	
Previous HELCOM Red List Category (2007): VU		
Protection and Red List status in HELCOM countries: Denmark –/LC, Estonia –/LC, Finland –/LC, Germany –/G (Endangered by unknown extent, Baltic Sea), Latvia –/–, Lithuania –/–, Poland –/–, Russia –/–, Sweden –/LC		

### Distribution and status in the Baltic Sea region

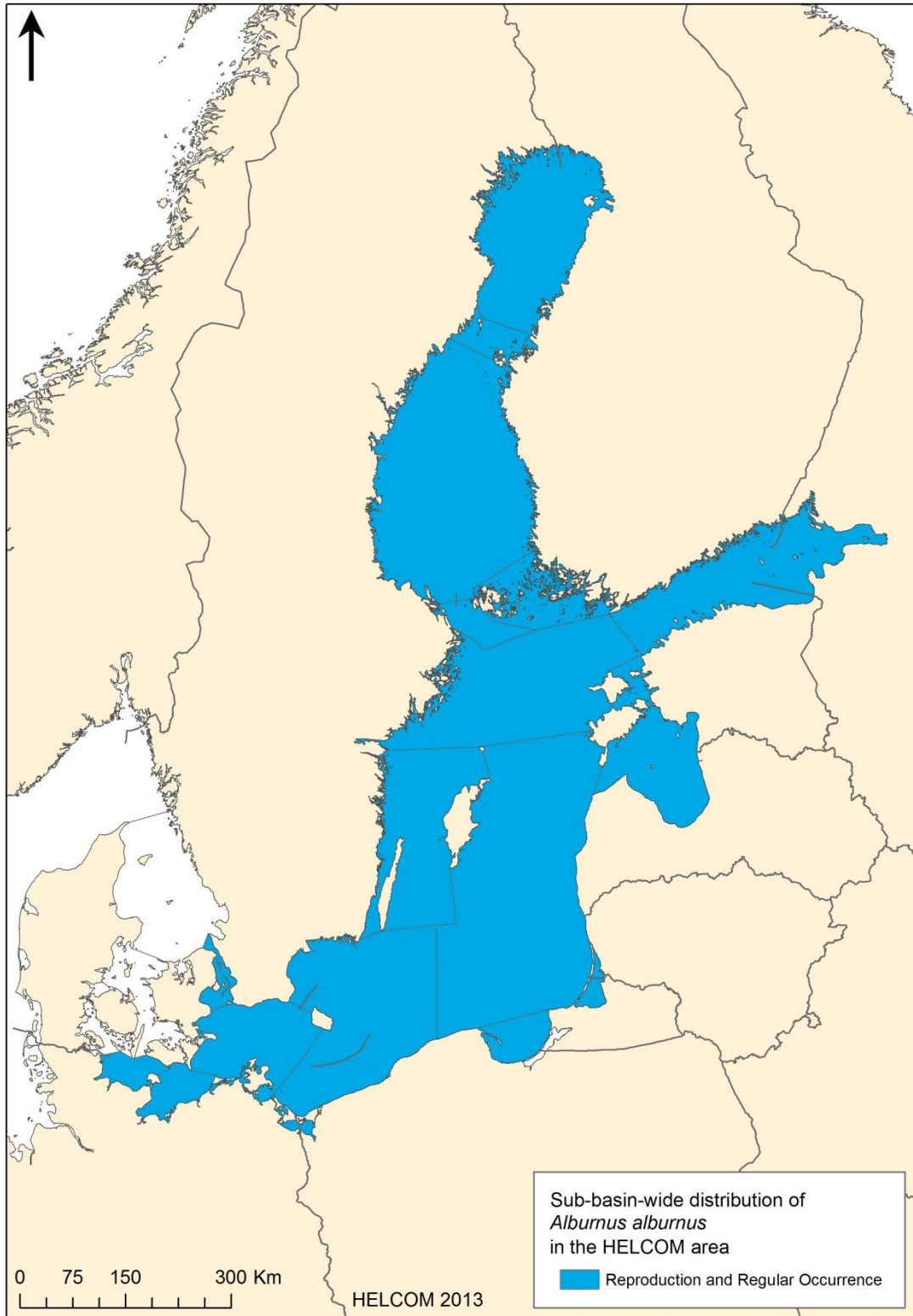
The bleak occurs in all coastal habitats of the Baltic proper. It is originally a freshwater species that cannot tolerate high salinity.



Bleak. Photo by Vivica von Vietinghoff, Deutsches Meeresmuseum.

**Distribution map**

The map shows the sub-basins in the HELCOM area where the species is known to occur regularly and to reproduce (HELCOM 2012).



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### Habitat and ecology

The bleak lives in shoals close to the surface in most freshwater environments, preferring slow flowing rivers. Sexual maturation is reached in 2 years in males, and in 3 years in females. Spawning usually takes place from April to July, sometimes even as late as August. The bleak spawns close to the shore, usually on gravel or rocky substrate, sometimes also among vegetation. It feeds on zooplankton, small invertebrates and fish larvae. Common standard length is from 12 to 15 cm, maximum up to 25 cm; maximum body weight 80 g. (Kottelat & Freyhof 2007, Lelek 1987)

### Description of major threats

No major threats known.

### Assessment justification

This species does not fulfil any of the criteria for being threatened according to the IUCN system. The population size, the distribution area and the area of occupancy are all well above the threshold values. There are no signs of decline and no perceived threats. Hence it is categorized as Least Concern.

### Recommendations for actions to conserve the species

No protection actions currently needed in HELCOM area.

### Common names

D - Ukelei, Laube; GB - Bleak; EST - Viidikas; DK - Løje; FIN - Salakka; LV - Vīķe; LT - Paprastoji aukšlė; PL - Ukleja; RUS - Ukleika; S - Löja

### References

- Estonian eBiodiversity. Red List 2008 results and species information available at <http://elurikkus.ut.ee/prmt.php?lang=eng>
- HELCOM (2007). HELCOM Red list of threatened and declining species of lampreys and fish of the Baltic Sea. Baltic Sea Environmental Proceedings No. 109. Helsinki Commission, Helsinki. 40 pp.
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- Kottelat, M., Freyhof, J. (2007). Handbook of European freshwater fishes. Publications Kottelat, Cornol / Switzerland. 646 pp.
- Lelek, A. (1987). The freshwater fishes of Europe. Vol. 9. Threatened fishes of Europe. Aula-Verlag, Wiesbaden / Germany. 343 pp.
- Thiel, R., Winkler, H., Böttcher, U., Dänhardt, A., Fricke, R., George, M., Kloppmann, M., Schaarschmidt, T., Ubl, C. & Vorberg, R. (2013). Rote Liste und Gesamtartenliste der etablierten Neunaugen und Fische (Petromyzontida, Elasmobranchii & Actinopterygii) der marinen Gewässer Deutschlands. 5. Fassung, Stand August 2013. Naturschutz und Biologische Vielfalt 70(2): 11–76.
- Wind, P. & Pihl, S. (eds.) (2004–2010). The Danish Red List. - The National Environmental Research Institute, Aarhus University [2004]-. <http://redlist.dmu.dk> (updated April 2010). Species information available at <http://bios.au.dk/videnudveksling/til-myndigheder-og-saerligt-interesserede/redlistframe/soegart/>