

SPECIES INFORMATION SHEET

Alosa alosa

English name: Allis shad	Scientific name: <i>Alosa alosa</i>	
Taxonomical group: Class: Actinopterygii Order: Clupeiformes Family: Clupeidae	Species authority: Linnaeus, 1758	
Subspecies, Variations, Synonyms: –	Generation length: 9.3 years	
Past and current threats (Habitats Directive article 17 codes): Migration barriers (J03.02.01), Contaminant pollution (H.01), Bycatch (F02), Eutrophication (H01.05)	Future threats (Habitats Directive article 17 codes): Migration barriers (J03.02.01), Contaminant pollution (H.01), Bycatch (F02) Eutrophication (H01.05)	
IUCN Criteria: –	HELCOM Red List Category:	NA Not Applicable
Global / European IUCN Red List Category: LC/LC	Habitats Directive: Listed as <i>Alosa</i> spp. in Annex II and V	
Previous HELCOM Red List Category (2007): CR		
Protection and Red List status in HELCOM countries: Denmark –/NA, Estonia –/–, Finland –/–, Germany <i>Protected by national and European law / R</i> (Extremely rare, Baltic Sea), Latvia –/–, Lithuania –/–, Poland <i>Prohibited to kill, capture or disturb this species under strict protection / –</i> , Russia –/–, Sweden: <i>Prohibited to fish for and land this species all year round, NA.</i>		

Distribution and status in the Baltic Sea region

The historical distribution range of this species includes an area from the Kattegat to the western and eastern Gotland Sea including adjacent rivers and streams. It has been rare since the 1800's in most parts of Baltic Sea, occurring occasionally as a vagrant (Fries et al. 1895, Thiel et al. 2007). In contemporary times it has only been recorded occasionally in the HELCOM area (HELCOM 2012).



Allis shad. Photo by Björn Fagerholm, Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences.

Habitat and ecology

The Allis shad is a species that spends most of its life in the open water of coastal oceans, and anadromously migrates into large rivers for spawning. When maturing, adults stop feeding, enter estuaries, and then from April to June they migrate as far upstream as possible, with the males first arriving to find spawning sites, and the females following 1–2 weeks later. They spawn repeatedly during several nights, from May to June, above clean gravel beds, and mostly die immediately after. A single female can spawn 50 000 to 600 000 eggs that float towards the bottom, mostly remaining close to the spawning site, but some drifting downstream for up to 30 km. After hatching, larvae and juveniles live in slow-flowing stretches along deeper parts of the river; after 3–4 months, they have reached a total length of 8–12 cm, and start their downstream migration towards the sea, where they remain and

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grow for 3–11 years until maturation (Fricke 2004).

Description of major threats

Main threat for the species has been and still is the blocking of migration routes with dam constructions for hydropower, pollution, bycatch and destroyed spawning habitats. Spawning habitats can be negatively affected by eutrophication and technical constructions like deepening rivers for shipping lanes. Allis shad is threatened by bycatch in pelagic fisheries especially during their spawning migrations and in the estuaries.

Assessment justification

This species is very rare in the HELCOM area and has probably been rare at least since the beginning of the period with data 1855 (Thiel et al. 2007). The species is not known to reproduce in the HELCOM area, and the Baltic Sea population does not exceed 2% of the European population. For these reasons the species is categorized Not Applicable in the HELCOM assessment.

Recommendations for actions to conserve the species

No protection actions are currently needed in HELCOM area.

Common names

D – Maifisch, Alse; GB – Allis shad; EST -Aloosa ; DK - Majsild; FIN – Pilkkusilli; LV - Aloza; LT - Alsė; PL - Aloza ; RUS - Alosa; S – Majfisk

References

- Fricke, R. (2004). Der Maifisch (*Alosa alosa*). Offenbach am Main (Verband Deutscher Sportfischer). 39 pp.
- Fries, B. Smitt, F. S. Von Wright, W. (1895). Skandinaviens fiskar. Norstedt, Stockholm.
- 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.
- HELCOM (2012). Checklist of Baltic Sea Macro-species. Baltic Sea Environment Proceedings No. 130. Helsinki Commission, Helsinki. 203 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.
- Thiel, R., Winkler, H.M., Neumann, R. (2007). Schlussbericht über das F+E-Vorhaben Erfassung von FFH-Anhang II-Fischarten in der deutschen AWZ von Nord- und Ostsee (ANFIOS) FKZ: 803 85 220 (unpublished scientific report to BfN). Available at: http://www.bfn.de/habitatmare/de/downloads/berichte/Erfassung_FFH_Fischarten_Nordsee-Ostsee_2007.pdf.
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