



Press release

Record-breaking year 2015: More than 150 upstream migrating salmon observed in Iffezheim - Upstream fish migration into Switzerland continues to be an important ICPR issue

The fish passage in Iffezheim which was reopened end 2013 clearly shows the encouraging development of migratory fish in the Rhine. Between January and the beginning of June 2015, more than 150 salmon, 30 allice shad and 120 sea lamprey were counted, which is considerably more than during the previous years! These results are encouraging and motivating at the same time and support the determination on the French side to restore river continuity of the entire Upper Rhine – at the Strasbourg barrage (fish passage will soon start operating) and at Gerstheim (start of fish passage construction is imminent) as well as at Rhinau, Marckolsheim and Vogelgrün. The ICPR will now create a project group on this issue.

Vienna, 2 and 3 July 2015

Among others, the following important issues were discussed during the ICPR Plenary Session: The river continuity of waters in the Rhine catchment, new findings of biological inventories, a new interactive Rhine Atlas 2015 concerning flood danger and flood risks including the orientation of future water body surveillance.

Following an expert meeting in Colmar in September 2014, river continuity of the Upper Rhine remains an important issue of ICPR work. A new project group will attend the implementation planning of an efficient system of fish passages at the barrages Rhinau, Marckolsheim and Vogelgrün on the Upper Rhine and serve as information and discussion platform with an advisory role for the Electricité de France (EDF) as master of the works. The stock of fish, invertebrate species (macrozoobenthos), water plants, diatoms and plankton has again been inventoried; the interesting and meaningful technical reports will shortly be published. Apart from salmon, further migratory fish species which had been considered as lost have returned. The houting is again reproducing in the lower section of the Rhine and the delta area, and the increasing number of allice shad seems to indicate that this species is also beginning to settle in the Rhine again. With 64 fish species, the fish fauna of the Rhine has again reached a considerable diversity, and apart from the Atlantic sturgeon, all species formerly living in the Rhine have returned to the river. Even though, according to the Master Plan Migratory Fish Rhine, river continuity is particularly focussed on salmon, the ICPR has been informed that juvenile sturgeon have been released into Dutch Rhine arms.

An interactive Rhine Atlas 2015 with maps representing flood danger and flood risk from the Alps to the outlet into the North Sea has recently been published on the ICPR website www.iksr.org. This atlas is a transboundary representation of flood areas along 1230 river kilometres during frequent, medium and rare flood events. From these maps, anybody may understand, whether his house or his plant is at risk of floods. These maps are part of an international plan on improving flood risk management in the entire Rhine catchment of some 200.000 km². According to binding European directives, this plan and the second management plan in order to achieve the good ecological and chemical state of water bodies in the Rhine catchment are to be drafted by the end of 2015.

A workshop staged in Bonn in March 2015 resulted in new findings for technical water body surveillance. In order to be able to cope with future challenges of water body surveillance, in particular concerning the immediate recording of (new) trace substances, the ICPR will from now on intensively work on these techniques.

For the first time, the ICPR has a targeted approach to children and youngsters: The prize money for the European Riverprize awarded to the ICPR in 2013 has been used to draft an ICPR website for children. <http://kids.iksr.org> is available in German, French, Dutch and English. It aims at sensitizing children and youngsters for the Rhine and its protection. Apart from information about the Rhine and international cooperation suitable for this age group, this website also contains many photos and a quiz.

The Thiess International Riverprize awarded to the ICPR in Australia in 2014 will equally be used for public relations, in particular for an improved spreading of the ICPR results to a wider public. Furthermore, within twinning projects, experience made along the Rhine is being passed on to other states and river commissions throughout the world.

Further information

International Commission for the Protection of the Rhine (ICPR)

Anne Schulte-Wülwer-Leidig

Mobile +49-151-17520589

<http://www.iksr.org>

Formatiert: Deutsch (Deutschland)

Short information

As Rhine bordering countries, Switzerland, France, Germany and the Netherlands as well as Luxemburg and the European Community co-operate within the International Commission for the Protection of the Rhine (ICPR) on the basis of a treaty under international law. The President (at the time being Mr. Gustaaf Borchardt from the Netherlands) and the different ICPR fora are supported by the international staff of the permanent secretariat in Koblenz (Germany). Furthermore, the secretariat gives support to the countries in the Rhine watershed when implementing the European Water Framework Directive (Directive 2000/60/EC) and the European Directive on the Assessment and Management of Flood Risks (Directive 2007/60/EC). To this end, cross-border co-operation was extended to Austria, Liechtenstein and the Belgian region Wallonia. The working languages of the ICPR are German, French and Dutch. For detailed information on the ICPR please browse to the ICPR website: www.iksr.org.