

Sturgeon 2020

a program for sturgeon revival in the Danube River Basin and Black Sea

- Dr. Cristina Sandu - Danube Sturgeon Task Force Coordinator
- Institute of Biology Bucharest, Romanian Academy;
 - International Association for Danube Research (IAD)

Danube Sturgeon Task Force and Sturgeon 2020

- **June 2011 - EUSDR / Pillar II target** “Secure viable populations of Danube sturgeon species and other indigenous fish species by 2020.”
- **January 2012 – DSTF established** with the support of EUSDR, ICPDR, IAD, WWF and other governmental and non-governmental organizations
- **June 2012, ICPDR 10th Standing Working Group Meeting (Innsbruck) – resolution of the Heads of Delegations:** *support towards coordinated action on conservation and improvement of native sturgeon species status in the Danube basin.*
- **November 2012, First Danube Stakeholders Forum Regensburg –** presentation of Sturgeon 2020 Program concept
- **June 2013, ICPDR 11th StWG Meeting (Sarajevo) – resolution of the Heads of Delegations:** *support towards project development and consideration of protective measures for the Danube River Basin Management Plan 2015.*

Support acquired in the frame of EUSDR and ICPDR

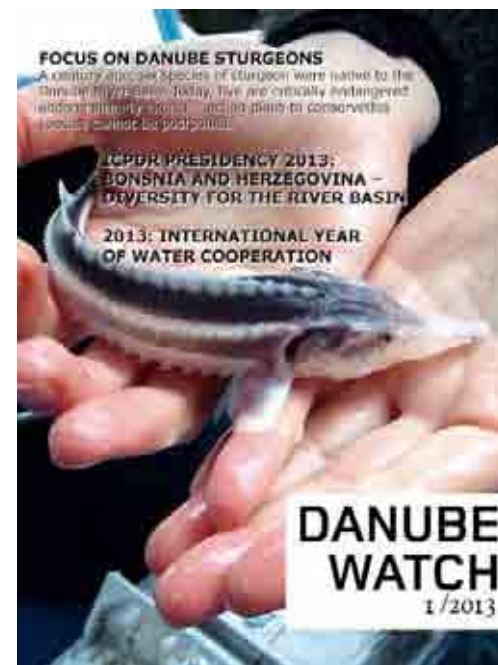
Interact Newsletter - Sturgeon 2020, a model of EUSDR for its integrative approach



DSTF and sturgeons mentioned in the COM report on EUSDR implementation



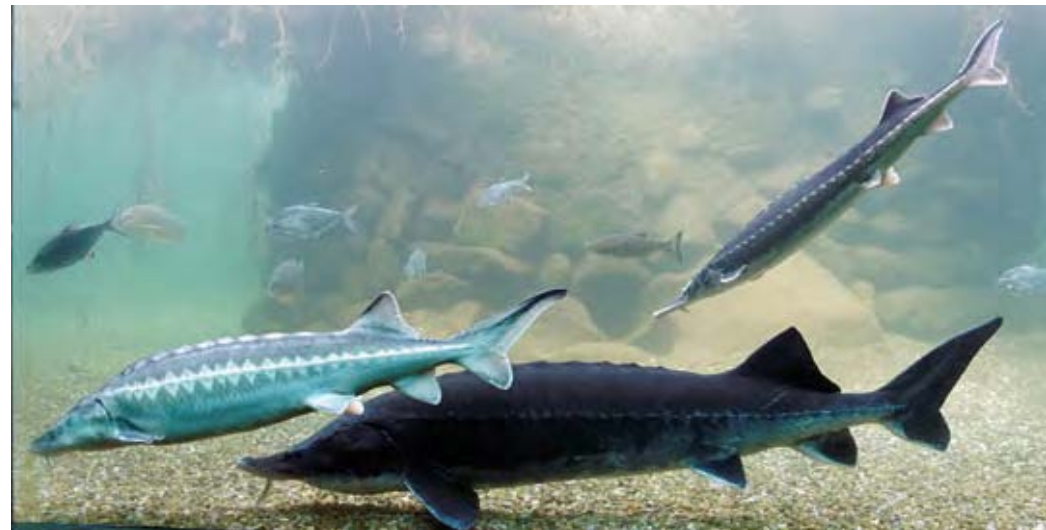
ICPDR devoted Danube Day 2013 to sturgeons



Why Sturgeon conservation in the Danube River Basin?

- Unique value for EU biodiversity - the only river basin still sheltering 5 sturgeon species
- High scientific value - “living fossils”, over 200 million years old
- Excellent indicators of habitat quality and connectivity
- Flagship species: ecologic, economic and social heritage of DRB
- Sturgeon Conservation explicitly mentioned as target in Pillar II of EUSDR!

Photo: Clemens Ratschan

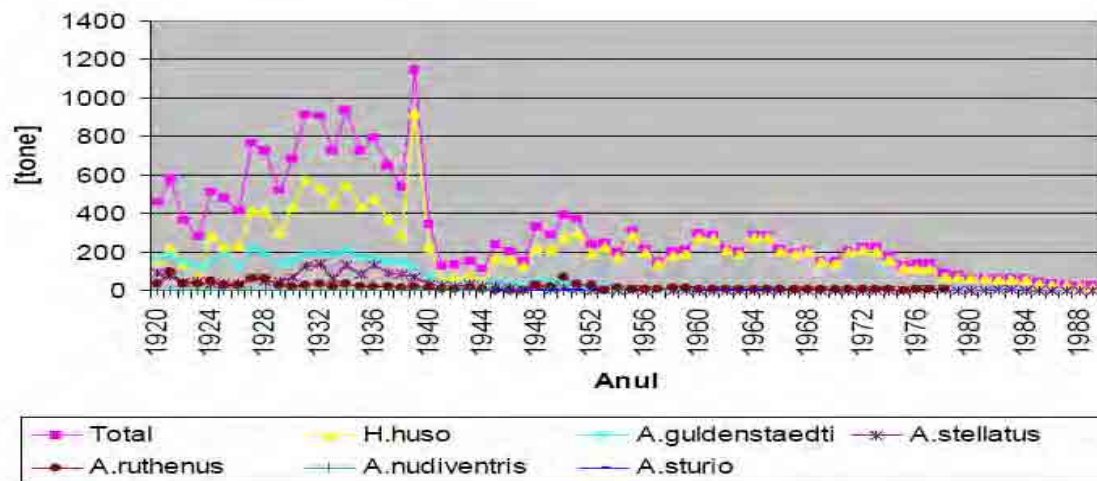


Danube Environment Forum, Tulcea, 27-29 June 2013

Dramatic decline

Major causes:

- Overfishing
- Habitat loss (pollution, constructions in the river bed)
- Continuity interruption – migration disruption



Source: Stoica, G., PhD thesis, 2011 - compilation of data provided by the Danube Delta National Institute, Tulcea



Current status

River and Habitat Continuity Interruption - Current Situation (2009)



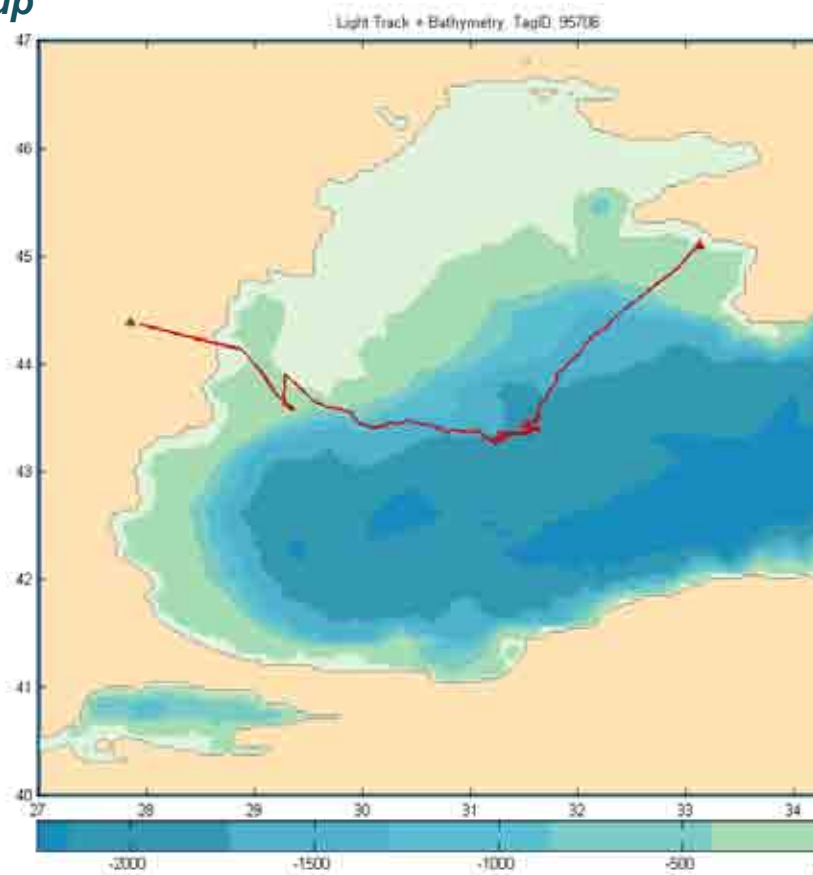
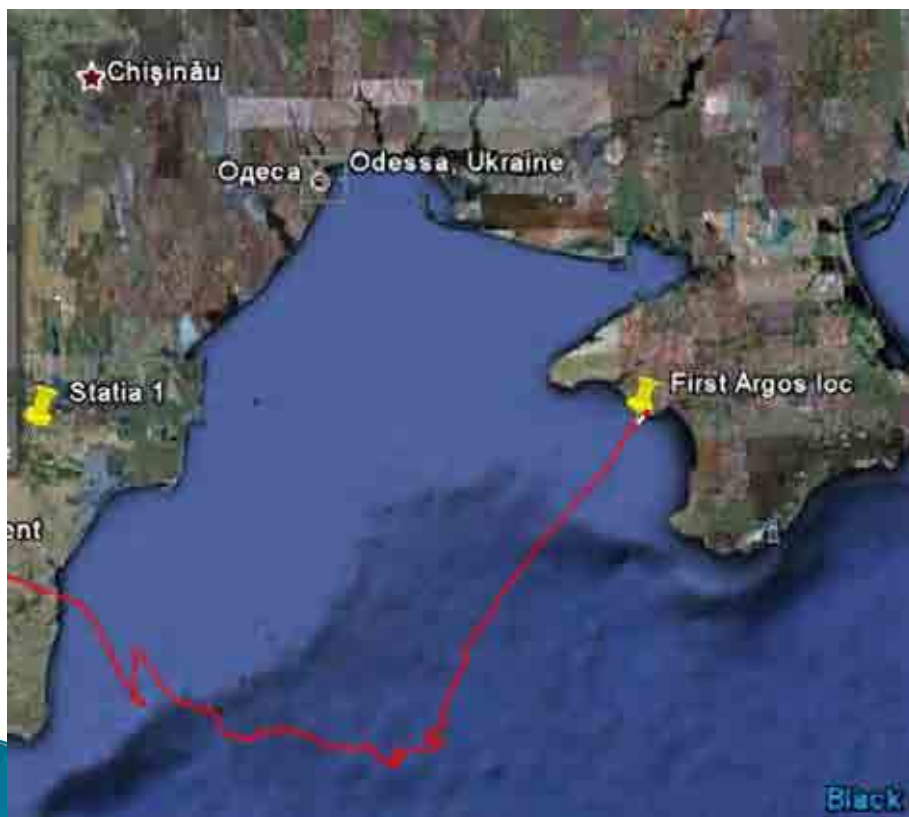
This ICPR product is based on information provided by the Contracting Parties to the ICPR (AT, BA, BG, CZ, DE, HR, HU, MD, RO, RS, SI, SK, UA) and CH, except for the following: Surveys carried out by 7 fish biologists were used for national borders of AT, CZ, DE, HR, HU, MD, RO, SI, SK and UA. ERM data was used for national borders of AL, ME, MK. Shuttle Radar Topography Mission (SRTM) from USGS (Source: Data Contribution System) was used as topographic layer data. Both the European Commission (Joint Research Centre) was used for the water bodies of the ICPR of AL, IT, ME and PL.

Joint conservation measures required also in the Black Sea



Satellite telemetry proved the long distance migration of sturgeons
Beluga male - 164 days - 11Km of the coast of Crimea

Info provided by DDNI Tulcea – Danube Sturgeon Group



Sturgeon 2020 program



1. *Acquire political support*

- **Political agreement on sturgeon protection with key stakeholders (navigation, hydropower, agriculture)**
- **Revision of fishery policy**
- **Green label licensing**
- **Promote measures for habitat protection**
- **Supportive funding programs**



Photo: Roxana Mazilu

2. Law enforcement & capacity building

- Implement EU legislation & international agreements
- Enhance administrative cooperation
- Training & knowledge exchange
- Enhance control capacity
- Enforce the control of sturgeon products origin/source



Photo: Roxana Mazilu

3. In situ conservation

- **Identification/restoration key habitats**
- **Evaluation of health status of habitats and biota**
- **Population analysis**
- **Stock & by-catch assessment**
- **Develop identification system for sturgeon products origin**
- **Estimate impact of climate change and invasive species – consider preventive measures**
- **Guidelines for population management – use research results**



4. Ex situ conservation

- **Inventory of sturgeon hatcheries and broodstock; green labeling system for companies**
- **Live gene banks**
- **Knowledge exchange on best practice management in hatcheries; common protocols**
- **Hatcheries for ecological purpose
→ supportive stocking programs**
- **Draft hatcheries management guidelines**



5. Socio-economic measures

- Create alternative income sources for local communities (ecotourism, handicrafts, local markets, small business development)
- Rewarding incentives for fishery policy implementation
- Licensing system for legal fishery
- Hatcheries - commercial purpose
- Introduce eco-labeling to prove legal sources
- Introduce “community control” against poaching



6. *Public awareness*

- Targeted awareness raising campaigns in Danube River Basin and Black Sea area
- Knowledge exchange between Danube sturgeon stakeholders
- Involve fishery community in sturgeon management
- Shift consumers option towards farmed caviar to release pressure on wild populations



Photo: Roxana Mazilu

Thank you for your attention



Photo: Radu Suciu, IAD Romania

*Danube Sturgeon Task Force – www.dstf.eu
Contact: sanducricri@yahoo.com*