

## Call for urgent action to save migratory freshwater fish to protect biodiversity, food sources, and livelihoods

This past July 2020 World Fish Migration Foundation released the first [Living Planet Index for Migratory Freshwater Fish](#) species. This report concluded that the migratory fish populations that support river and marine ecosystems have **declined on average by 76%** of their former diversity and abundance. **Hundreds of millions of people depend on these species** for their livelihoods, for food and economic stability.

One of the biggest impacts are countless infrastructure developments and activities that are currently exhausting the world's river resources, driving high levels of decline and extinction of freshwater species. There are millions of dams, weirs, sluices, and culverts fragmentating our waterways and blocking the migration routes.

Yet, there is still time to act to restore migratory freshwater fish populations. By removing in-stream barriers and restoring rivers to a free-flowing state, fish and many other species will flourish. In Europe alone, there are at least 100,000 obsolete barriers obstructing important migratory routes. It is time to remove these and the many others around the world for the benefit of nature and people.

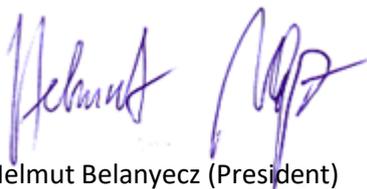
**Citizens around the world are taking action on this issue as shown on World Fish Migration Day. We expect action from governments and call on them to commit to protect communities, economies, and biodiversity by restoring migratory fish populations to healthy, sustainable levels.**

**Call to Action: We challenge the leaders of the world** to take swift political action to create and implement an emergency recovery plan to restore and protect our freshwater fish populations with the following two priority actions:

- 1. Permanently protect to all remaining free-flowing rivers**
2. Remove obsolete river barriers: prioritizing high impacting barriers to restore river connectivity

We, ÖKF FishLife Österreichisches Kuratorium für Fischerei und Gewässerschutz, sign this letter pledge to lead by example and act jointly to care for, restore, and fight to bring freshwater ecosystems back to life. We implore all global politicians and policy makers do the same and take action before it is too late.

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