

Example of good practice	Ban on fishing Sturgeon in Serbia
NP4 category	Wildlife
<b>Organization</b>	<b>WWF Adria</b>
Partners	United Anglers of Serbia and the Association of Commercial Fishermen of Serbia
<b>Location</b>	<b>Danube, Tisa, Sava and the Great Morava, as well as part of the West Morava</b>
Country	Serbia
Protection category (IUCN)	<i>Acipenser ruthenus</i> , Vulnerable
Scope of implementation (local, national)	National
<b>Implementation time</b>	<b>1 year</b>
Number of employees in the organization	Total - 30% conservation staff during 6 months and 50% communication staff during the media campaign, which lasted a month
<b>Budget</b>	<b>16,875 EUR</b>
Source of funding	WWF Netherlands. The project is funded under the WWF "Waters of the Danube River Basin" program
Project info (link)	<a href="http://www.wwf.rs/vesti/?uNewsID=340452">http://www.wwf.rs/vesti/?uNewsID=340452</a> <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DjR116Dby18">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DjR116Dby18</a>
Contact (e-mail)	<a href="mailto:serbia@wwfadria.org">serbia@wwfadria.org</a>
<b>Achievements</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Introduction of the ban on fishing</b></li> <li>• <b>Successful cooperation with anglers and fishermen: 50 people participated</b></li> <li>• <b>Raising public awareness on the sturgeon as an endangered species. 125 publications in the media</b></li> </ul>

<b>Problem/Opportunity</b>	
<b>Problem</b>	<p>According to the International Union for Conservation of Nature's (IUCN) Red List of Threatened Species, the sturgeon is marked as endangered species due to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Overfishing (not only during the permitted fishing season but also during the fishing closure periods when fishing was banned in order to provide unobstructed spawning). Sturgeon was unobstructedly sold under the legally allowed size</b></li> </ul>

	<p>of 40 cm in restaurants and markets throughout Serbia.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Destruction of natural habitats that occur as a result of the construction of dams and other water management facilities.</li> <li>• Invasive and other introduced species that lead to disease, as well as industrial pollution that leads to degradation of the habitat.</li> </ul>
<b>Opportunity</b>	<p>Characteristic fish of the Danube</p> <p>Protected in other countries of the Danube basin</p> <p>Vulnerable species according to IUCN Red List</p>
<b>Planning</b>	
<b>Prerequisites for success</b>	<p>The goal to be achieved is clearly defined. The organization has the support of experts who understand the issue, i.e. the environmental aspect, and who have extensive experience in working on policy improvement, advocacy, and lobbying. It is also necessary to ensure the capacity for communications or a partnership with a marketing and/or PR agency.</p>
<b>Related strategies</b>	<p>Biodiversity strategy of the Republic of Serbia for the period 2011-2018. Pan-European Action Plan for Sturgeons</p>
<b>Partner roles</b>	<p>The United Anglers of Serbia and the Association of Commercial Fishermen of Serbia expressed the support for the request sent to the Ministry.</p>
<b>Implementation</b>	
<b>Key stages of the project</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Preparation, planning, collection of documentation and literature, as well as establishing cooperation with partners</li> <li>2. The Assessment about the status of Sterlet sturgeon <i>Acipenser ruthenus</i> in Serbia was prepared by scientists.</li> <li>3. Surveys among anglers and fishermen</li> <li>4. Visiting markets and restaurants</li> <li>5. A spatial representation of important sturgeon habitats (information on habitats for spawning, migration, nutrition, hibernation, information on the factors that influence the endangerment of this species and the quantity of catch)</li> <li>6. Preparing and implementing the "Sturgeon should be in the river, not on your plate" media campaign</li> </ol>

Stakeholder involvement	A survey was conducted among commercial fishermen and fishing area management programs were analyzed Partner organizations helped establish a dialogue with the Ministry of Environmental Protection (hereinafter ministry) in order to initiate the ban on fishing strurgeon. Upon receiving the request for placing the ban on fishing sturgeon (submitted along with accompanying documentation: the analysis of the state of the sturgeon and the spatial representation of important sturgeon habitats), the Ministry forwarded the proposal to expert institutions: the Institute for Nature Conservation of Serbia and the Provincial Institute for Nature Conservation.
Shareholders' right to access information	Presentations were held for anglers and fishermen.
Used communication channels	Meetings, website, Facebook, press releases and participating in TV and radio shows
<b>Change</b>	
<b>Positive environmental changes</b>	<b>Introducing the ban on fishing sturgeon from January 1, 2019.</b>
Positive economic (E) and social (S) change	Public sector: S - The application of Article 9 of the Law on Environment Protection (Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia, no. 135/2004 and no. 36/2009) has enabled the preventive and precautionary principle and the principle of natural value preservation.
	Business sector: E - The introduction of a ban on fishing is expected to bring about a rise in demand for farmed sturgeon. S - Promoting sturgeon farming
	Local population: E -
	Protected Area Manager: S - As a protection measure, the introduction of the ban on fishing sturgeon will enable the restoration of its population
	Scientific community:

	<p>E - Funds have been allocated for scientific research related to sturgeons within the budget of the Ministry of Environmental Protection for 2019.</p> <p>S - Research dealing with the ecology of sturgeon in national waters has been renewed.</p>
Replication and recommendations	
Recommendations for replication	<p>Technical: GIS expertise, experts/scientists - ichthyologists</p> <p>Regarding stakeholders: There is a need for employing a person who has a broader knowledge of the issues, who is familiar with the legal and institutional mechanisms, and has good communication skills</p>
<b>Sustainability</b>	<b>Funds have been allocated for scientific research related to sturgeons within the budget of the Ministry of Environmental Protection for 2019.</b>
Recommendations for policy improvement	<p>As protection measures, IUCN proposes the following: management plans and establishing a legislative framework at the national level. Awareness raising activities, additional research on the species, the establishment of protected areas, and ex situ conservation are also recommended. At present, in addition to the existing legal measures, it is necessary for Serbia to begin enforcing the protection measures recommended by IUCN. Above all, this refers to the need to introduce a long-term (up to ten years) ban on fishing sturgeon. In order to effectively implement this protection measure, it is also necessary to extend the competence of the Ministry of Environmental Protection with regard to inspections of commercial and catering facilities. Also, it is necessary to restore and intensify the research related to the ecology of sturgeons in national waters and to promote sturgeon farming (commercial farming and farming for the purpose of fish stocking).</p>