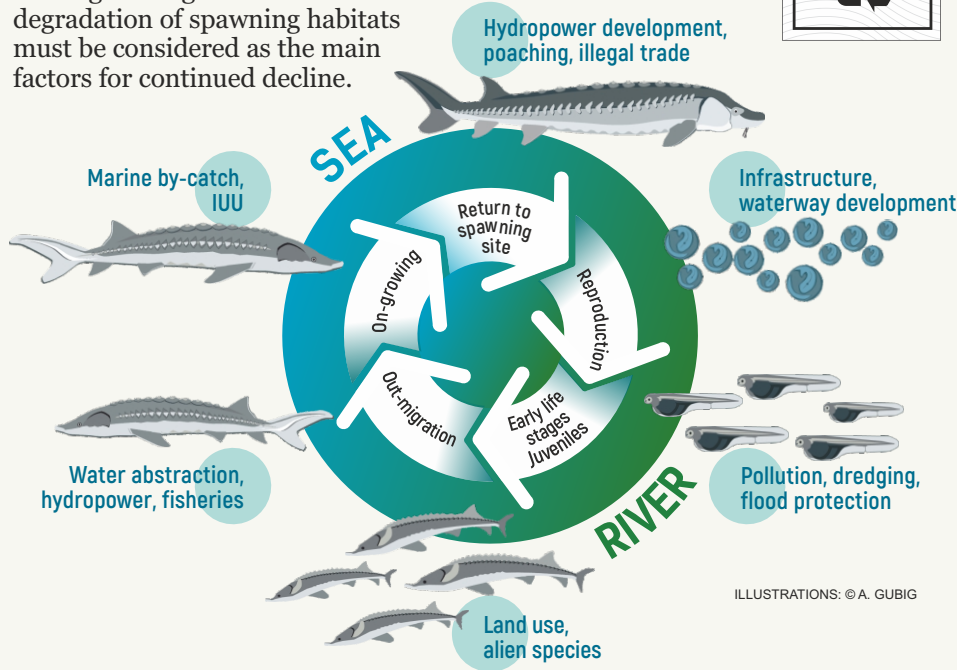


Sturgeon Life Cycle

A typical life cycle of migrating sturgeons showing adverse impacts on the various life cycle phases. Today illegal fishing, blockage of migration routes and degradation of spawning habitats must be considered as the main factors for continued decline.



ILLUSTRATIONS: © A. GUBIG

Successful implementation of this Action Plan will not only save the eight species from extinction in Europe, but especially the habitat-related measures will help to safeguard other aquatic life too. Thus the Plan contributes to the implementation of international conventions such as the Convention on Biological Diversity, Bern, Bonn or Ramsar Convention and EU Directives such as the Habitats Directive, Water Framework Directive or Marine Framework Directive.



A matter of urgency: eight species of sturgeon are found in Europe, of these 7 are currently considered as critically endangered by IUCN, representing the highest threat category before a species is considered as extinct in the wild. The clock is ticking!



Working to sustain the natural world for people and wildlife

together possible panda.org

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STURGEONS



A matter of
URGENCY

Saving Europe's Sturgeons

Due to overharvest and habitat loss sturgeons are considered the most endangered group of species on earth! Today eight species of sturgeon still exist on the European continent while their status is highly critical. The Pan-European Sturgeon Action Plan* provides a framework for urgently needed recovery measures. Sturgeons need to migrate between rivers and seas and are crossing many national borders during their lives, therefore they represent a flagship species for free flowing rivers and healthy, well managed marine ecosystems. Sturgeon recovery cannot be achieved by single countries, but it is a true European responsibility.



It is time for action! Otherwise Europe will lose these species forever

WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE according to the Action Plan until 2029

- 1 Urgently stop the decline** of remaining populations!
 - By prohibiting sturgeon fishing and stopping poaching
 - By reducing bycatch in marine and freshwater
- 2 Actively safeguard and support** populations through **ex situ programmes!**
 - By establishing captive *ex situ* stocks to secure genetic diversity
 - By implementing scientifically monitored reproduction and release programmes
 - By ensuring regional coherence of these programmes across river and marine basins
- 3 Identify, protect and restore sturgeon habitats!**
 - By identifying existing critical habitats and ensuring legal protection
 - By assessing habitat restoration options and implementing pilot actions
- 4 Secure or facilitate sturgeon migration!**
 - By avoiding the building of further migration obstacles in key rivers
 - By identifying existing obstacles and establish passage solutions
- 5 Ensure monitoring** of sturgeon populations through scientifically designed programmes!
- 6 Eliminate illegal trade** of all sturgeon products!
 - By increasing enforcement of existing regulations and stronger prosecutions
 - By raising awareness of all actors along the trade chain
- 7 Secure adequate funding and regulations** to enable implementation of Action Plan!
- 8 Increase support from actors and stakeholders!**
- 9 Monitor and evaluate the implementation of the Action Plan!**

* <https://rm.coe.int/pan-european-action-plan-for-sturgeons/16808e84f3>

Numerous research and pilot activities in many countries have prepared the ground for stepping up effective common action.

Examples of sturgeon recovery measures in Europe

GERMANY

European Sturgeon

Reintroduction ongoing in River Elbe based upon National Action Plan and for **Baltic Sturgeon** in Oder River

NETHERLANDS

European Sturgeon

Reintroduction planned, National Action Plan in preparation, habitat restoration in the delta ongoing

FRANCE

European Sturgeon

National Action Plan in place; Recovery ongoing in the Gironde and tributaries; *Ex situ* programme established; Monitoring in place

ITALY

Adriatic Sturgeon

National Action Plan in place; Recovery ongoing, but uncoordinated; Reintroduction of **Beluga** planned

BALTIC SEA



Baltic Sturgeon

Regional Action Plan adopted in 2019 focusing on joint habitat, bycatch, *ex situ* and release measures

AUSTRIA

Sterlet

National Action Plan planned; Stocking and monitoring ongoing

RUSSIA

Russian Sturgeon, Stellate, Beluga, Sterlet

Stocking ongoing in the tributaries to the Sea of Azov

GEORGIA

Russian Sturgeon, Stellate, Beluga

Monitoring ongoing and creation of a protected area in Rioni River

Only the Lower Danube and the Rioni River in Georgia still host self-sustaining populations today.

LOWER DANUBE

Russian Sturgeon, Stellate, Beluga, Sterlet

Danube-wide Action Plan in place; Habitat identification ongoing; Monitoring and stocking uncoordinated; Project against illegal fishing and trade; Feasibility study for fish passage at Iron Gate; *Ex situ* planned

