

Sturgeon Week

European Sturgeon –
French National Plan of Actions (NPA) and
involvement of French fishermen



Plan national d'actions
2020 - 2029
En faveur de l'esturgeon européen
Acipenser sturio



Target species & main conservation issues

- **European Sturgeon** : *Acipenser sturio*
- IUCN Status : **Critically Endangered Species**

Alarming situation of the wild population (a few hundred spawners) due to river artificialization, dam building, intensive fishing, aggregate extractions ...

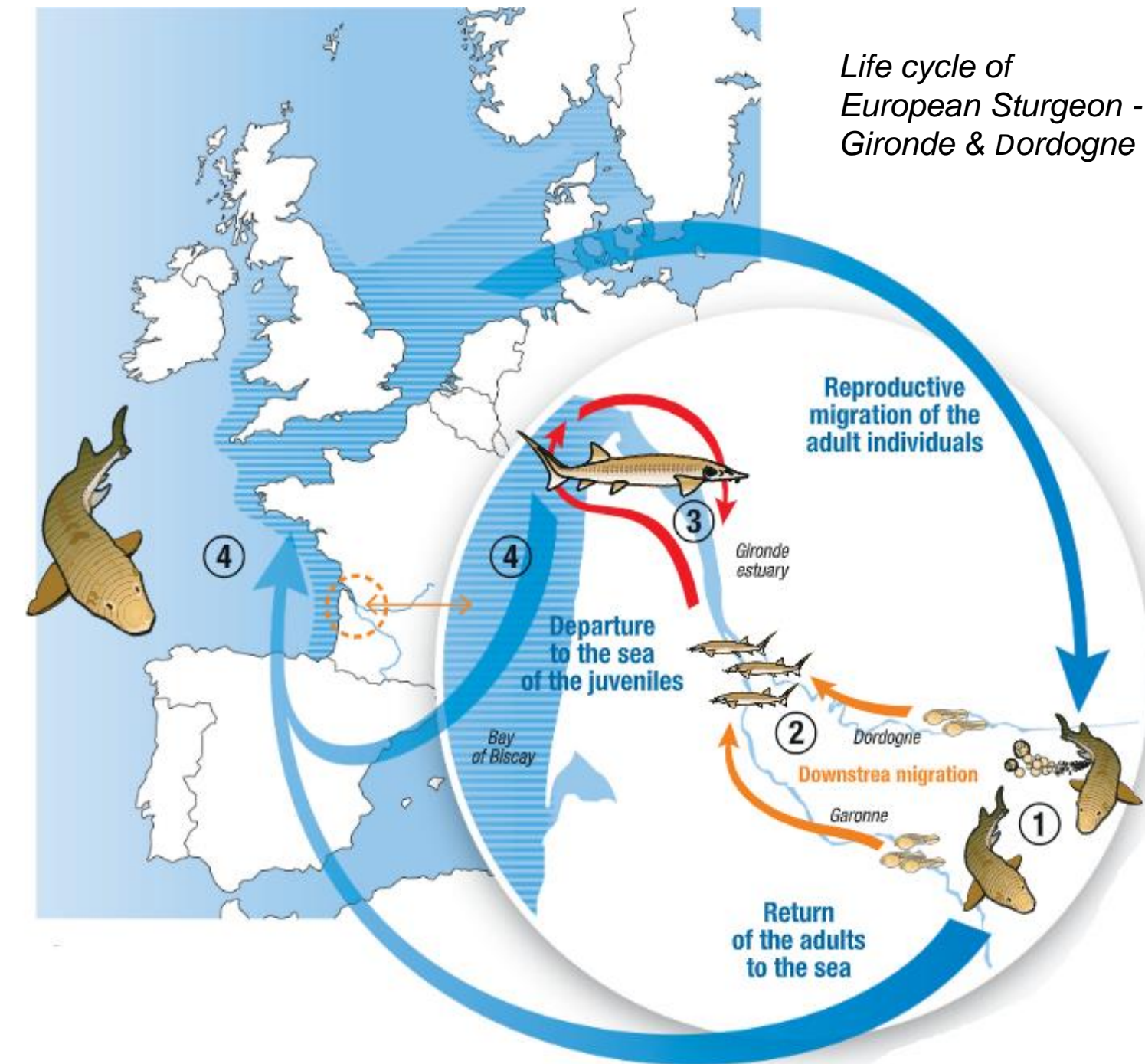
Remaining sites for reproduction : **Gironde-Garonne-Dordogne basin.**

Protected by French legislation since 1982 (ex : targeted fishing prohibited)

NPA for the European Sturgeon since 2011 (2nd phase for 2020-2029)

4 axes :

- Conservation in captivity,
- Restocking (since 2007),
- Sensitization,
- The collection of fishers' observations



Appreciation scheme for fishermen reporting bycatch

- **Why and how are fishermen part of the solution ?**

Very few sturgeon remaining → monitoring difficulties + each fish is important

Set up the best practices in sturgeon release to improve the survival of the individuals :
98,2 % of sturgeons are released alive by French fishermen

Fishermen = scientists essential partners thanks to bycatch data :

- Monitor the wild population
- Follow up on the restocking program

Fishermen = estuarine advocates and sentinels using Sturgeon as a control species to :

- Defend and protect estuarine environments, which shelter its essential habitats (nurseries),
- Defend and protect habitats of other exploited species against all physical damage: dredging, artificialization, etc.

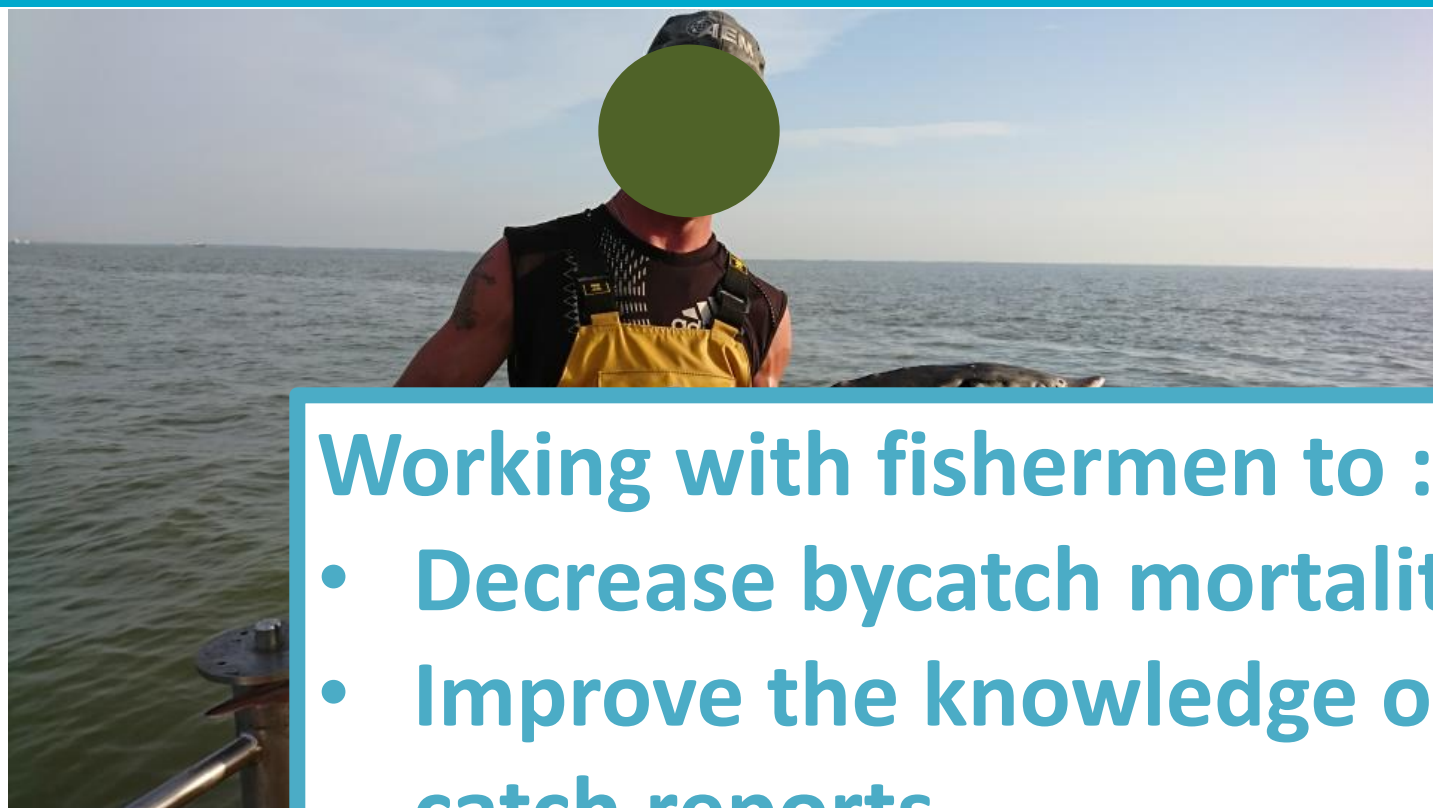


Eric, one of the most dedicated fishers of the estuary, releasing an European sturgeon



© Estuarine fisherman

Appreciation scheme for fishermen reporting bycatch



Involvement



Working with fishermen to :

- Decrease bycatch mortality
- Improve the knowledge on the species thanks to incidental catch reports

→ The restoration of the species cannot be done without them



Telenor DK 06.23

Jan Pedersen
8 t.

Ja så fangede vi lige sådan en fætter..



Kommenter Send Del

Mest relevante

Lasse Vendelin Brun
Hvor i alverden fisker i henne af
8 t. Synes godt om Svar

Kommenter som Hen... GIF

Appreciation scheme for fishermen reporting bycatch

- Why is running an 'appreciation scheme for fishermen reporting bycatch' a successful approach ?

Since 2006, b
most of the f

Several tools

- landline
- number
- local fis
- produce
- online c

Success factors/keys :

- Empower the fisher with regard conservation of the species and contribution,
- Work in confidence, trust and in
- Feedbacks : fishermen appreciat being used, having information o sturgeon they accidentally catch

For every bycatch declaration :

- Fishers are contacted by phone to be thanked,
- A token gift is sent to the fisher with a formal letter from Nation
- A post with the National Fishery Committee account to show th
- A press release is made in the local newspaper (when possible)



ermen

Oldest ▾

Elevages ...

partenaires du Plan
tribuez à la
ant le rôle essentiel
oin de supports de
e programme
ant directement sur

Create a Page

A Facebook post from the CNPMEEM account showing a sturgeon release

Appreciation scheme for fishermen reporting bycatch

- Technical resources used to communicate



Release the sturgeon whatever its condition

Measure the length

Note the day of the capture



Note the weight if possible

Note GPS coordinates

Report the capture to CAPENA → the data is stored in a database



Presentation brochure of the National Actions Plan and of our work that we share to all the stakeholders

Appreciation scheme for fishermen reporting bycatch



- **What are your achievements so far ? How do you measure them ?**

Hope for a potential reproduction in the coming years : **more fishes are observed in fresh waters since 2020 (Libourne – Dordogne).**

Since 2006 a strong network of fishers was built in the Gironde-Dordogne basin as an example of successful collaboration :

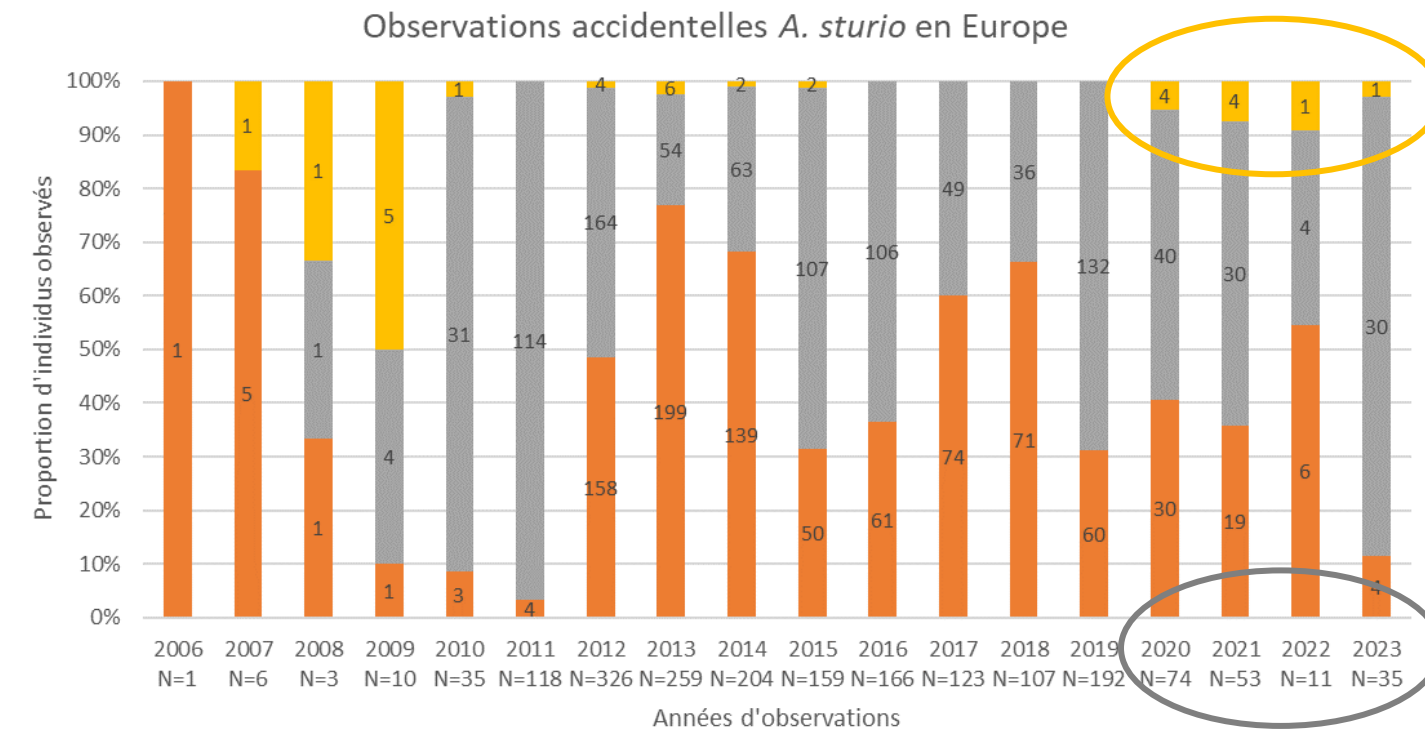
- A very high level of accidental catch reports : **1883 accidental catch declarations from 2006 to 2023 including 1843 in France only,**
- A very low bycatch mortality rate : **1,8 % including some drifting dead fishes.**

A wide and efficient communication awareness campaign :

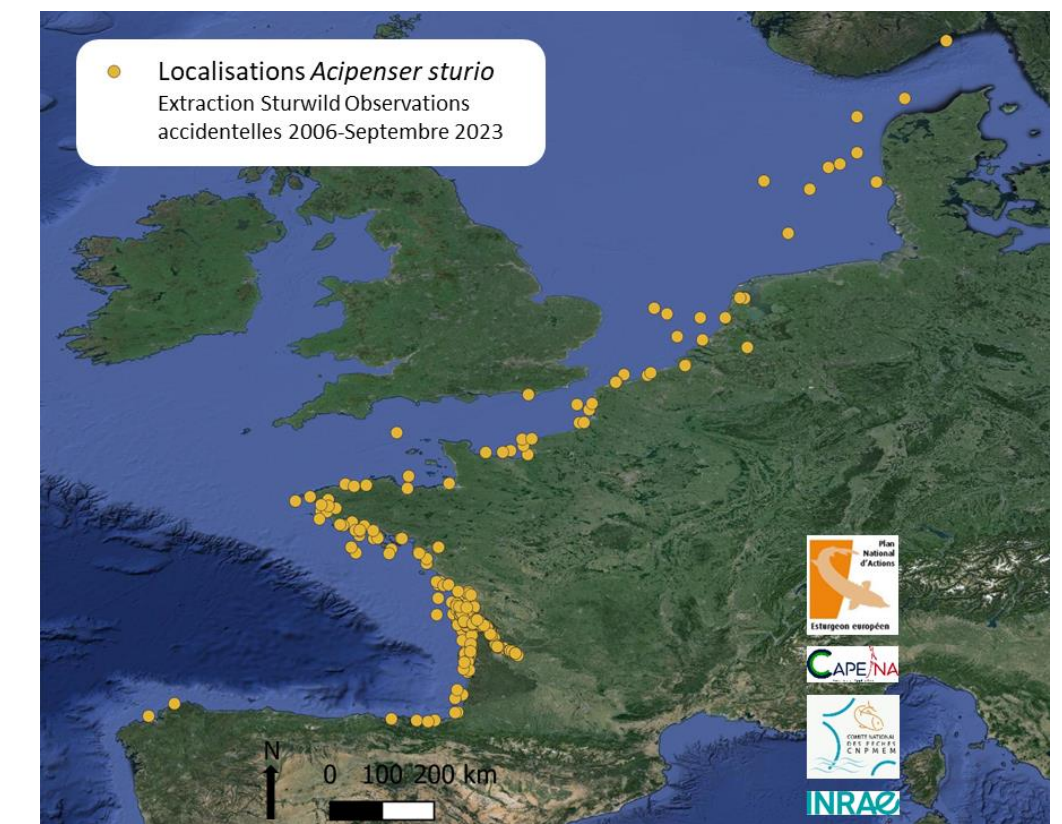
- From the Gironde-Dordogne to Britany and the Channel,
- International communication from Portugal to Norway.

→ **Promote the dissemination of messages.**

→ **Mobilization of national structures to relay the information to the fishers.**



Review at 18 september 2023



More implication of fishermen for the sturgeon conservation

- **Impact of the catfish (*Silurus glanis*) on sturgeon juveniles**

Catfish = invasive species in France who is known to be one of the threat for the conservation of diadromous species (ex : GLANISPOMI, 2023)

October 2023 : 2000 sturgeons 3 months old are released in historic spawning grounds on the Dordogne river and the Garonne river

03/10/2023 : 2 Garonne fishermen doing their activity fished 3 catfishes → catfishes regurgitated 17 bodies of juveniles sturgeon released in the morning

→ Fishermen suggested to initiate some regulation actions on spawning grounds to avoid that kind of predation

→ A working group of NAP stakeholders decide to think about
→ In september 2024 some regulations actions will take place for the forthcoming sturgeon releases with the fishermen help.



Observation of bodies of near 20 juveniles of *Acipenser sturio* eaten by catfishes (October 2023)



Thank you !



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