

Despite COVID19, thousands celebrate World Fish Migration Day to highlight the importance of urgently restoring declining migratory fish populations

Communities and citizens around the world are joining the global effort to save migratory fish in rivers on World Fish Migration Day, 24 October 2020.

October 22, 2020 – Joining the celebration of World Fish Migration Day (WFMD) are over 1500 organizations from 70 countries across six continents. Event organizers and participants include representatives from national governments, rural communities, First Nations, fishing clubs, aquariums, zoos, NGOs, policy making institutions and more. To celebrate WFMD, people are connecting (virtually or otherwise) with their local rivers and fish and educating their local community on how we can protect and conserve migratory fish.

This year, the [global celebrations](#) begin in New Zealand and continue around the world following the sun. There are over 300 events that range broadly in activities. This comes as quite a surprise considering we are in the midst of a global pandemic. Still, following COVID19 safety regulations, passionate people from around the world continue to advocate for and protect migratory fish. This continued work is essential given recent [research](#) has found monitored migratory freshwater fish populations have plummeted by an average of 76% since 1970.

“Migratory fish are reliant upon connected, flowing rivers to complete their migration routes throughout the different phases of their lives. More often than not, these migration routes cross country borders and connect one critical habitat to the next,” says Herman Wanningen, the Managing Director of the World Fish Migration Foundation. “It is important we work together as a global community to protect these underwater species and their migration swimways. Only through international cooperation and action can we restore these freshwater biodiversity hotspots for the protection of ecologically, economically, recreationally, and culturally important migratory fish.”

Hundreds of millions of people around the world rely on migratory fish as a vital source of protein and to sustain their livelihoods. However, migratory fish around the world are currently facing the urgent challenge of loss and alteration of their habitats. Raising awareness of this alarming trend and driving action and policy change towards solutions to bend the curve of declining populations are the goals of WFMD.

“Migratory fish are under threat around the world. Luckily, we have an opportunity to lessen our impact on these remarkable species,” says Will Millard, BBC TV Presenter and WFMD ambassador. “By working together on educating others, stopping our polluting practices, and removing old dams and weirs that block fish from migrating, we can start to bring populations back to healthy levels. World Fish Migration Day is a reminder to be more conscious of our actions as the lives of these fish depend on it.”

This World Fish Migration Foundation–led campaign is aimed at raising global awareness about migratory fish, their importance for nature and people and the challenges they face. It is coordinated to motivate citizens around the world to work together to protect and restore migratory fish populations. The day is organized with the support of World Wide Fund for Nature, The Nature Conservancy, Freshwater Fish Specialist Group, University of Nevada Reno, OAK Consultants, Sportvisserij Nederland, and Regional Water Authority AGV.



World Fish Migration Day events happening around the world.

Notes for Editors:

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About World Fish Migration Day

World Fish Migration Day is a global celebration focused on creating worldwide awareness about the importance of free-flowing rivers and migratory fish. It is the only global day dedicated to celebrating migratory fish; there is no other event in the world that focuses on this theme in conjunction with the necessity of free-flowing rivers. On this day, thousands of organizations, groups, and communities organize local events to educate and excite people about migratory fish species in their regions and our collective reliance on healthy, free-flowing rivers and migratory. These events create greater understanding and awareness worldwide of issues regarding migratory fish and open rivers.

It is the anticipation of the foundation, its partners and supporters that this day reconnects people back to their rivers and the fish that inhabit them as a means to protect these resources.

www.worldfishmigrationday.com

A selection of important activities happening on or around World Fish Migration Day:

- A [conference](#) in Myanmar raising awareness to local decision-makers about the importance of their last remaining large free-flowing rivers, including outlining new policy demands;
- local dam removals to restore migration routes in Sweden and Denmark;
- a [webinar](#) organized by the European parliament forum on the Biodiversity Strategy roll-out and action plan in relation to European rivers, the implementation and enforcement of the Water Framework Directive, the impact of hydropower, and the removal of dams;
- a [virtual conference](#) in Nigeria connecting academia with policy makers to recommend sustainable practices for future freshwater conservation policy;
- lectures and [discussions](#) for the conservation of local migratory fish in the Amazon Basin,
- [celebrations](#) of culturally important migratory species in Eastern Canada;

- A North American [webinar](#) highlighting the past, present and future of river restoration, and spotlighting the importance of migratory fish;
- A Love Flows [Global Celebration](#) event connecting event organizers from around the world;
- and the [Eurofishion](#) Fishy Finale winner announcement as a part of the closing event in Hawaii

World Fish Migration Foundation

Founded in 2014, the World Fish Migration Foundation (WFMF) is an international organization with a mission to save migratory fish in rivers. The Foundation harnesses global attention for the challenges migratory fish face through a multitude of international, collaborative projects aimed at advocating for obsolete dam removals, and supporting initiatives that open up important swimways. For more information, visit www.worldfishmigrationfoundation.com

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