



**WORLD FISH
MIGRATION DAY**

**Report
2018**



WFMD2018 Gabon © Marie-Claire Paiz, TNC

Partners



The biggest global initiative to focus on fish migration ever

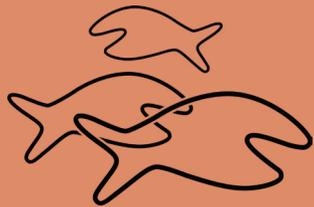


WORLD FISH
MIGRATION DAY

A special tribute

We would like to send out a Big Thank you to all WFMD2018 participants! With your inspiration, dedication and participation, WFMD2018 was a great success! Happy fish, Happy rivers and Happy people all connected together on one day.

On April 21st 2018 WFMD2018 officially began with several events in New Zealand, followed by hundreds of events around the world and finally ending the day at several events along the west coast of USA. Further in this report you will find some highlights, followed with details about events from each continent.



Happy FISH

Making Fish Happy

The theme of WFMD2018 was Happy Fish. This is a symbol to unite people, organizations and projects that aim to ensure free migration for fish populations.



Intro

World Fish Migration Day (WFMD) is the biggest global campaign to raise awareness about migratory fish. It is a one-day worldwide celebration hosted by thousands of organisations committed to conserving migratory fish and free-flowing rivers. The main goals of WFMD is to create global awareness, activate citizens and to create lasting commitments from governments, NGO's, industry and organisations on safeguarding free-flowing rivers and restoring swimways of migratory fish.

Since WFMD was started in 2014, the number of organisations, 'ambassadors' and committed individuals to get involved and share their story with the rest of the world has grown substantially. We are delighted by the number of people who are enthusiastic about WFMD and have used this global celebration to raise public awareness locally and globally. We are thrilled to have the inspirational focus that everyone can connect to, making more Happy Fish!

In this report we summarize the 3rd WFMD, held on April 21st, 2018 and how this initiative has brought thousands of people together with a single voice and a clear message for places they care about and depend upon. We provide results on numbers of events, countries, participants, as well as outcomes and what this means for improving the situation for migratory fishes and free flowing rivers.

For more feedback from the countries that joined, you can visit the [website](#).



WFMD is a great way to celebrate and recommit ourselves to working to restore rivers all over the globe.

- Bob Irvin

President of American Rivers conservation group in USA



“WFMD is a great initiative that works worldwide for a cause that every single human being should be interested in”

- Jasper Pääkkönen

Finnish film actor (Vikings series) and Flyfishing enthusiast



We rely on fish, but what we often forget is that they rely on us. The more people we can make aware of the problems faced by fish, the more chance we have to find solutions.

- Jeremy Wade

Presenter of River Monsters series and author

Making History

World Fish Migration Day is celebrated once every 2 years. The first World Fish Migration Day was celebrated on May 24th, 2014. On this day, there was support by over 1,000 organisations and celebrations were held at 270 events across 50 countries. The WFMD2014 Facebook page had reached over 36,000 people on the day through posts, page likes and mentions. We were amazed and inspired to continue with WFMD in 2016. The second WFMD soared to new heights. In only two years, the second WFMD almost doubled with 450 events in 63 different countries. There were no words to describe the wonderful enthusiasm of the thousands of organisations involved. The media campaign reached 70 million; the highest media reach related to fish migration ever.

This year the 3rd WFMD took place on 21 April 2018. There were 570 events worldwide, in 63 different countries. Over 3,000 organisations joined forces to create the biggest global event that brings attention to migratory fishes. Aquariums, zoos, museums, universities, research institutes, schools, angling associations, non-profit organizations, kayak clubs, water and river basin authorities, restoration projects (river restoration projects, dam removal projects, fishway inauguration projects, etc.), fishway visitor centres, private companies, national parks, nature reserves, town associations, working groups, and even individuals who wanted to organise something, all participated in making the success that it was.



“With the WFMD we created an umbrella for all people that care about migratory fish and healthy rivers. After this third WFMD we can truly say that the event creates celebrations, catalyses partnerships, creates positive impact on fish and rivers. It inspires people to become involved too. The WFMD is here to stay: 'from local to global'”

- Herman Wannigen
Founder World Fish Migration Foundation

The Numbers

World Fish Migration Day is growing each year. In 2018, there were 116 more events than in 2016. There was an increase in events on all continents. A number of new countries also joined WFMD this year including Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Mexico, Myanmar, Nepal, Egypt, Ghana, Morocco, Nigeria, Tunisia and Serbia. As we have seen in previous years, the majority of events were in Europe (276) and in North America (134).

Our Global Reach

On WFMD2018 50 million people were engaged through (social) media and by visiting events. Some events included small focus groups of less than 10 (e.g. seven students were invited to learn about the Smelt Brook fish passage & salt marsh restoration, in the USA) while other events had over 1,500 visitors (e.g. there were approximately 1,500 visitors at a fishway in the Fyris river in Sweden). There were also various festivals and stands in the city centres, parks, reserves and aquariums which, drew the attention of thousands more spectators and passers-by. The Shedd Aquarium, in the USA combined Earth Day with WFMD and attracted over 9,000 visitors, with press articles such as [this](#).

Many organisations had press releases to attract media attention. 89% of the event hosts used social media or websites to spread the word, while 23% used radio and television. Others used newspapers, direct emails and printed materials. Museo Nacional de Historia Natural in Bolivia spread the message in public buses in La Paz.



[View map online](#)

WFMD2018 events



+50,000,000

People reached through media

570

Events

63

Countries

3,000 participating organisations

200,000

People joined local events

+10,000,000

people reached on social media

The media reach was estimated to be in the millions

A special dam removal news story on BBC radio '[Costing the Earth](#)' had an estimate of 3 million listeners. There were also articles in magazines including Sustainable Europe and in the international journal, Nature, which improved the global reach.

Our fish migration 'ambassadors', Jeremy Wade (River Monsters), Jasper Pääkkönen (Vikings' tv series), Zeb Hogan (Nat Geo WILD's Monster Fish) and Dutch model Sarah Warnaar, contributed significantly toward attracting more attention.

Various videos and interviews were made and shared on our ambassadors websites and social media. Jeremy Wade's WFMD promotional video was played on Animal Planet's social media and website, which resulted in an estimated reach of 5 million people.



Event Highlights

📍 New Zealand

The Minister of Conservation, Eugenie Sage, launched the New Zealand fish passage guidelines, an important best practice document for fish migration management.

📍 Cambodia

Celebrating Wonders of the Mekong for 1 month at 20 events. Most of the events were focused on students and young people. There were primary school visits, games, contests, meditation, film festivals, citizen science events and boat trips with fishermen.

📍 India

Events celebrating fishes took place across India at 21 locations. There were angling camps, fish awareness programmes, seminars and conferences about fishes as well as fishing competitions. The non-profit Masheer Trust hosted a series of 14 events.

📍 Europe

There was a total of 277 events across 27 countries. There were 3 main hubs, connecting continents and local events in Finland, Netherlands and Spain. During these events, the international From Sea to Source 2.0 book and website was launched. There was also the launch of the “barrier tracker” app by the AMBER project to map barriers in European rivers. [Read more here.](#)



The Swimway poster

📍 Nigeria

The University of Lagos hosted a symposium, river clean-up and TV and radio campaign that reached over 2 million people.

📍 USA

155 events – the highest number of events in one country. US Fish and Wildlife Service, The Nature Conservancy and National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration hosted many of the events including earth day festivals, seminars, school activities, river clean-ups, fishing events and fun days at the river. Hundreds of other organisations also hosted amazing events such as stands in city centers, exhibits, tours, river demonstrations and even launch of a great video.

The Swimway poster was launched on WFMD2016 to educate and spread awareness about fish migration routes. You can now download the poster for free in three languages from [this website.](#)

📍 Columbia

Change text for Colombia: Many organizations worked together to make WFMD possible in Colombia. Universidad Antioquia together with 11 partners hosted a two day event to meet fishermen and to provide a platform for these fishermen to share their knowledge. The outcomes will be documented and presented to policy makers. The campaign included radio broadcasts, news articles, and promotional videos. Between 500,000 and 1 million people are estimated to have been reached.

Event Highlights

Dam removals

Dam removal for river restoration has been a hot topic this WFMD. A BBC radio show and an [article in Nature](#) presented the current situation in Europe. The largest dam removal in Europe on the River Sélune in France was mentioned along with figures from the Dam Removal Europe project, which shows that there are over 5,000 small dams, weirs and culverts already removed in France, Sweden, Finland, Spain and UK.

During WFMD there were dam removals celebrated in France, Ireland, Spain, [Switzerland](#), South Africa and two in the USA. In South Africa, Kruger National Park is removing dams to improve connectivity in the rivers. The Park removed more than 23 dams and in the week before WFMD2018 removed the Kanniedood Dam.



UK © Sarah Nahabedian



Kanniedood Dam removal © SANParks

Fishway Visits

There were 60 events that celebrated fishways, including eight visitors' centres and a few fishway openings. Verbund AG (an Austrian company) combined the opening of a fish pass at Greifenstein Danube Power Plant in Austria with a massive press campaign. The message was broadcast via TV and radio, which was estimated to have received about 1 million views on TV and 2,2 million on radio.

Citizen Science

There were several events involving and inspiring volunteers within citizen science projects. In the USA there was a volunteer river herring count on the Shawsheen River (Massachusetts) a herring run festival, an alewife migration challenge and an eel volunteer programme on the Hudson River (New York). While in the Netherlands there were 36 events where volunteers counted glass eel migration.



HAPPY FISH JOURNEY

The Yecla de Yeltes dam in Spain was removed on WFMD. Several other dams were removed too and promoted by Dam Removal Europe. Inspired by WFMD and Dam Removal, Rik Bommer started The Happy Fish Journey across Europe.

[Follow the Happy Fish Journey](#)

[Read more about Dam Removal Europe](#)

Event Hubs

During this WFMD, we wanted to connect the continents with different coordinating hubs. The WFMD team travelled across the globe to join some of the festivities in the regions and connect these globally: From local to global. Let's hear what our participants had to say:

Asia Hub

The best way to educate the future generations is by showing them how the fishes migrate. Our event was set to highlight the rivers in India and what would happen to the habitat in and around when destroyed. We believe children should be educated about the ecosystem they live in so that they can take strict measures to reform it.

This year, more than 100 people joined their hands together in India to highlight and talk about rivers and the ecosystem around them. The event we held was a fishing camp for two days for children. The "EM river table" helped simulate an actual river and what happens to it and its fishes when it is misused. Organisers from the Mahseer Trust had a great time teaching the children about the river and the children themselves enjoyed looking at the river and playing with the river simulation. They were excited to learn about the different kinds of fishes and a how to save them. It was a grand success and we hope to see more children come forward to save migratory fishes with their enthusiasm.

- Derek Dsouza, Pelagic Tribe (India)

North America Hub

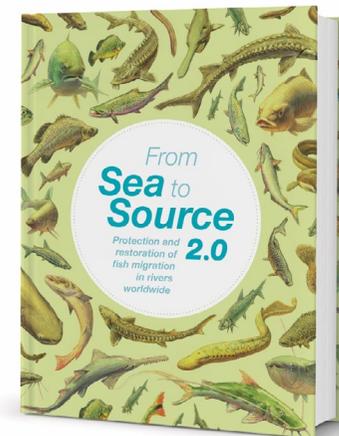
The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) was pleased to serve as the United States hub for WFMD2018. Service staff worked with the World Fish Migration Foundation (WFMF) to celebrate WFMD and elevate the agency's Fish Passage work through a communications campaign that highlighted the partnership and the importance of fish passage work around the globe. The multi-platform campaign promoted the agency's fish passage work through national, regional, and field station communication tools. This national outreach and marketing included social media, updated content for websites, and a press release to the national media. The Service also sponsored fish passage/fish migration events across the country and posted these on the WFMF calendar. In addition to the Service outreach, Service collaborated with over 60 non-government organizations celebrating the day and participated in the foundation video development. At the end of the day this was a great international partnership to highlight the importance of fish passage to healthy fisheries.

- US Fish and Wildlife Service



Europe Hubs

In Europe there were two hubs, a seminar in Finland called the "The Future of Rivers in Finland 2 -seminar" hosted by WWF Finland and the Happy Fish Tour in the Netherlands. During the Future of Rivers seminar, which was attended by 160 people, the From Sea to Source 2.0 book and the new website was officially launched.



[Download the FSTS book](#)

The launch was live on the [YouTube channel of WWF Finland](#). During the launch, the Asian hub from India, hosted by the Masheer Trust, called in to connect with Europe and to share their celebrations.

[The Happy Fish](#) Tour connected eight different events over three days. This event was particularly exciting because it connected so many different WFMD events in the Netherlands together.

The events differed enormously: a beach clean-up, where schoolkids removed plastic trash; a seminar on dam removal and fish migration; educational events; the launch of the From Sea to Source 2.0 book; a visit to the haringvlietsluis, hosted by Sportvisserij Nederlands; Connection with other Hubs worldwide, as well as, the Flyfair 2018 event, where the World Fish Migration Foundation received an award from the fly fishermen for their work.

The AMBER project also had a great launch of their own “Barrier Tracker” app that can be used by everybody to track barriers in European rivers. The app was launched all over Europe and has gathered hundreds of records so far. Curious about AMBER and the app? Watch the video.

South Africa Hub

In Kruger National Park, there was a four-day celebration with 25 national and international journalists, school field trips, a family day and the removal of a dam. A [4 part video series](#) was also launched. On WFMD the Director of the Kruger National Park, Glenn Phillips, received the From Sea to Source 2.0 book. Mr. Phillips highlighted in his acceptance speech that “if we don’t manage our river systems it doesn’t only affect our wildlife it also affects humans”. Kruger National Park is working hard to improve connectivity in the region by removing dams and sustainably managing the river systems together with partners beyond the park borders. They are committed to managing the river systems, particularly beyond the boundaries of the Kruger National Park, on a catchment level to ensure sustainable ecosystem for our future generations.

South America Hub

In South America the National Museum of Natural History (MNHN) hosted the hub in La Paz, Bolivia. The theme was “connecting fish, rivers and people” and how this connectivity has changed throughout the ages. Through



a collaboration with two gastronomy associations, four anthropology and archaeology faculties and institutes, the Department of Cultural Affairs of the regional government, and the visit of native communities, the MNHN was able to bring the theme to a reality. MNHN also included WFMD2018 activities in the Ibero-American Culture program, as La Paz is Capital of this event on 2018, and created the symbol “World Fish Migration Day Latin America” to make the event bigger and stronger in this

continent. There was a migratory fishes exposition in the museum, especially made for WFMD2018. Gastronomy associations offered a special migratory fish menu with traditional and contemporary recipes (incredibly delicious) showing the huge diversity of cooking traditions. TV, radio and newspapers were present and even a special interview was organized for the day. You can [watch the interview](#) on the WFMD Youtube Channel.



The Fish 'n Go team released a huge Beluga Sturgeon in the Danube River in Hungary. [Watch the video](#)

Local Celebrations

Oceania

New Zealand started WFMD with a buzz of activities including the Mountains to Sea Wānanga conference, exhibitions at Hamilton Zoo, Nukuhou Stream restoration celebration and a family event in Christchurch. Sjaan Bowie from the NZ Department of Conservation, tells us how they collaborated with eight different organisations to tell people about the needs for fishes. In [this video](#) Bowie explains that there are 57 freshwater fish species that are indigenous to New Zealand, and many of them are threatened and need measures in place to ensure their continued survival.

In Australia, there were 10 events. There were fishway visits, launching of [best practice documents](#) in Victoria, paddling in the Macleay River, a family fun day with prizes hosted by HQ Dry Tropics, and SEQ Water had a television segment that was aired on Australian Fishing Network.



Asia

In Asia there were 12 countries and 76 events. Apart from the incredible events hosted by Mahseer Trust in India and Wonders of the Mekong in Cambodia, there were many other exciting events. In Bangladesh Jagannath University hosted a river visit called “Happy fish and Happy Life” where 200 people from local communities joined. In South Korea a [festival](#) was arranged with hundreds of school children. While in Japan the Salmonid Specialist Group of IUCN’s Species Survival Commission Group, hosted a Taimen (itou) Symposium. FishBIOS, who have participated in every WFMD celebration, again had a wonderful event with school chil-

dren in Laos. There were also countries such as Nepal and Myanmar that had celebrations for the first time. For future WFMD’s there are also possibilities to reach out to colleagues in Malaysia and other parts of countries across Asia.

Africa

In Africa there were 23 events around the continent. We celebrated fish migration in South Africa, Nigeria, Ethiopia, Uganda, Gabon, Egypt, Nigeria, Gabon, Morocco and Ghana. South Africa had the highest number of events including a launch of a [4 part video series](#), a

fish migration day at Walter Sisulu Botanical Gardens, a fun day in the [Mooi River](#), school events in Cape Town, public talks about behavior of estuarine fishes amongst others. Ethiopia celebrated with hundreds of students, farmers, teachers and officials celebrating yellowfish in Lake Tana. In Gabon there were childrens' activities, in Uganda a fish festival, and in Nigeria a radio broadcast and public awareness campaigns.

Europe

Europe was the continent with the most events, celebrating 276 events across 27 countries. Together these events managed to create awareness to millions across the continent. The family focused events included river clean ups, fishways visits, festivals through the city centres and family fun days at the rivers. Volunteers celebrated WFMD at several locations in Spain, Netherlands and Poland. Many school children across Europe also learnt about fish migration. In the UK, Severn Rivers Trust spent weeks of preparation with children to make the Wishing Fish festival a success. The Wishing Fish is inspired by stories from many indigenous populations in which fish are celebrated as spiritual creatures, able to grant wishes. On the day there was a procession, led by the Wishing Fish sculpture, through Worcester City Centre, finishing with a family picnic at the University's City Campus. Local artists worked together with children at three Worcester primary schools – Cranham, Northwick and St Clement's – to create artwork, dance pieces and stories, which formed part of the community event on April 21st.

There were many interesting events (e.g. wool trail, pub quiz, salmon dinner) and very important events focusing on restoration projects, fish monitoring and dam removals. For example Vandpleje Fyn and their volunteers, called "The Gravel gang", performed 10 river restoration projects in Denmark, for WFMD.



Peru © Hernan Ortega Torres

There were also numerous events where politician's, press and stakeholders were invited to seminars and workshops, where projects about fish migration were discussed. Delegates were also invited to official openings of fishways and restoration projects across Europe. In Austria, the World Sturgeon Conservation Society (WSCS) announced the Vienna Declaration on Global Sturgeon Conservation.

The Declaration calls on decision- and policy makers to take immediate action to limit the impacts on sturgeon populations and to support their natural reproduction. The sturgeons were also celebrated by Danube Sturgeon Task Force (DSTF) with a month long exhibit in the National Museum of Natural History "Grigore Antipa" in Romania.

There were 10 Europe funded projects that used WFMD to create awareness about the work being done for migratory fishes. Some included creating awareness about salmon migration (Life Miera), sturgeons in the Danube (LIFE-Sterlet Project), the counting of Shad in UK (EU Life

/ HLF funded Unlocking the Severn), a PIT-tag study and the delta work (LIFE IP Deltanatuur werkt samen) in the Netherlands. In Spain there was a project that developed a [childrens book](#) about an eel called Ann Guillidae.

South America

South America celebrated at 41 events in 11 countries. Bolivia and Brazil had the highest number of events in South America. In Bolivia there were 18 different events ranging from seminars to children activities. Bolivia was home to the international hub hosted by Museo Nacional de Historia Natural in La Paz. In the north, Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) Bolivia and their partners hosted scientific talks addressed to municipal authorities, representatives of the protected areas of Madidi and Pilón Lajas, fishermen, school units and the general public. While In the southeast, EPSA MANCHACO, FAU-TAPO and a local youth club of environmentalists organised a giant wall painting on the riverside defense walls, a workshop on migratory fish with local specialists and a media campaign with tv, internet, radio and newspaper. Other events included river visits, presentations, exhib-

its at museums and even a virtual event via a webpage to celebrate WFMD. In Brazil there were 10 events including a seminar hosted by WCS Brazil, a boat trip by Neotropical Environmental Consulting, rafting competitions by ITAIPU, a fun run by Federal University of Lavras and school activities in the Madeira River Basin by Universidade Federal de Rondônia.

Other countries that participated included Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Mexico, Paraguay, Uruguay and Peru. The Dominican republic hosted a visit to the Ozama river to show how beautiful the nature is. Chile hosted it's first event with an exhibition and Costa Rica Waterkeepers joined in with a river clean up. In Argentina, Wetlands International met with fishermen to discuss solutions and directions for improving fish conservation and in Paraguay, Uruguay and Peru there were mostly seminars discussing migratory fish and the issues in the region.

North America

In North America there were a total of 137 events. Canada celebrated with a launch of the "NSLC-Adopt A Stream Program's" ACAD Database, visits to three schools by the Southeast Environmental Association, a river clean up challenge by Toronto Zoo and an event with the Canadian music icon, Valdy, who lent a voice to protect the endangered wild Atlantic salmon of the Avon River.

Who lent a voice to protect the endangered wild Atlantic salmon of the Avon River. In the USA, there were many river demonstrations and visits to fishways such as the Pickpocket fishway (New Hampshire and three in Connecticut (Latimer Brook Fishway, Greeneville Fishlift, Rainbow Dam Fishway). There was alewife monitoring training in Lowell (Massachusetts), a fun day at the Garrison Dam Hatchery (North Dakota), a fishing event in North Attleboro (Massachusetts) and an electronic fish counter demonstration in Harwich (Massachusetts). TNC



USA © Jessica Quik

hosted 6 events in the US, celebrating the herring run in Middleborough (Massachusetts), shad on the Delaware River (New Jersey), dam removals and other restoration projects. Aquarias and zoos had exhibitions, students from NASPS (North American Sturgeon and Paddlefish Society) launched a video, Long Live the King's hosted a 2018 Spring Gala and Lake Sammamish Urban Wildlife Refuge Partnership had a real world treasure hunt for geocaches Washington. In the Northeast US, NOAA helped develop a large number of events. Among the events were a book reading (The Boatman: Henry David

Thoreu's river years), a river monitoring demonstration in Rockport's Mill Brook, an art contest for schools and a fishway visit.

On the west coast there was a tour the Pinole Creek Fish Ladder (California) by Contra Costa Resource Conservation District, a BioBliz community event in California by the Coastal Watershed Council and a community festival and 5K Migratory Run along the Rogue River in Oregon. Yakama Nation Fisheries released Pacific Lampreys, which was featured in two local newspapers.



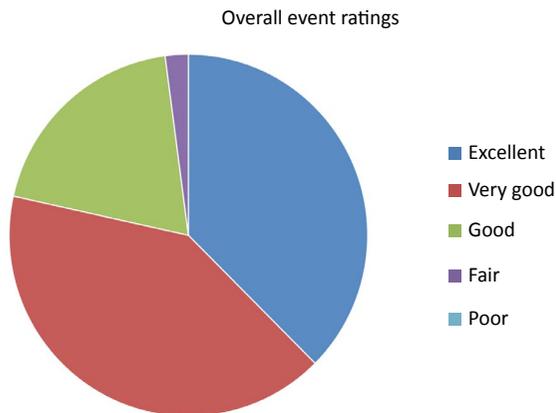
Citizens of Slonsk and birdwatchers from Poland and Germany took part in cleaning up the Kingfisher Trail in the Warthe Mouth, Western Poland

Photo : Ryszard Babiasz, Greenmind Foundation, Save the Rivers Coalition.

Event Evaluation

During and after WFMD an immense amount of positive feedback was shared on social media and sent to the WFMD team. This was followed up by a survey to evaluate the highs and lows of the local events. This is what they had to say:

Overall, 97% of participants regarded their events as being a great success, with event ratings mostly between good to excellent. Many had a good number of visitors, good involvement from the guests and countrywide impact. A few events did have disappointing turnouts due to the weather and often hosts needed to improvise. For the Flying Fish event in Brazil a local bar owner lent some tents so that visitors could still enjoy the fun and take shelter from the heavy rains. All in all, it was still a great event with 300 visitors.



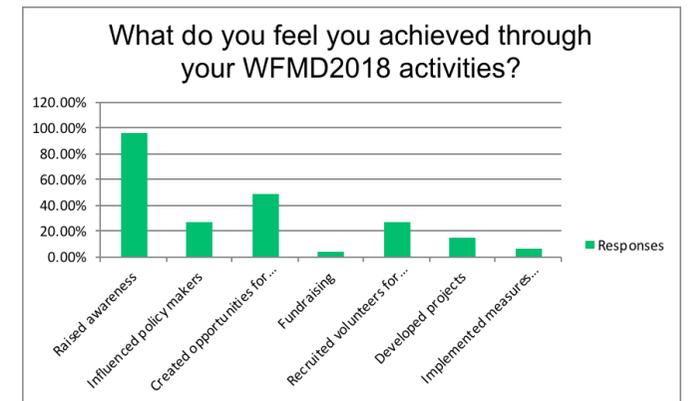
Key Outcomes

Public Awareness

As one can expect, most of the WFMD events raised public awareness with the focus on local communities and families. Fun activities, public talks, festivals and demonstrations were all used to get the public involved. In addition to engaging with local communities, there was also a good percentage of schools, colleagues and stakeholders, press, recreational clubs, policy makers, governmental representatives and university students that all learned more about how we can do more to protect fishes. Specialists, passionate about fish migration, spoke out about why migratory fishes need to migrate and why we need to protect these fishes and the rivers they live in. In a radio interview in Ireland, Garry Kendellen, from Galway Atlantaquaria, also brought attention to the reality that people also depend on fish and in Ireland the loss of salmon would be a huge blow to the tourism industry. Recreational fishing clubs and associations from Europe, Asia, USA and Australia were also very much involved in WFMD.

Hundreds of schools participated to educate the children of the needs of fish. In Russia all 12 events were focused on educating children about the rivers and migratory fishes in the region. There were many schools involved

with interactive games and dancing. In Gabon 88 primary students from 13 different after-school nature clubs, researched and presented on topics involving the ecosystem and the importance of keeping rivers and oceans clean.



Created opportunities for collaboration

At almost 40% of events, WFMD created opportunities to meet colleagues and start collaborations. According to Dagner Salvatierra from MNHN, WFMD is a “good conductive thread for ichthyology researchers”. Researchers, colleagues and policy makers were the target group of many seminars, workshops and conferences during WFMD. FITFISH, international research network, used this opportunity to have their annual meeting and stakeholder workshop to discuss biological fish migration solutions in Portugal. In

Estonia there was a picnic seminar to discuss fish migration and in Mongolia there were two seminars to discuss the taimen, a threatened salmon species. During some of the events, there were also projects that were developed. In South Africa, colleagues met to discuss the development of a project to improve connectivity in the Sabie River.

WFMD provided a platform to recruit volunteers.

Many people who attended and participated in events were inspired and wanted to get involved. At about 27% of the events, participants were able to recruit volunteers for future projects. Many were young adults and students, who were engaged with at about 41% of the events. During the Mexican event hosted by Amigos de Sian Ka'an A.C, an NGO, the children of the community showed great interest in participating and during the event they recruited volunteers.



WFMD influenced policy makers.

Policy makers and governmental representatives were engaged with at 39% of the events. In Australia North Central Catchment Management Authority found that WFMD was a great opportunity to engage policy makers and project investors, and to educate the community and recreational fishers about the needs for open rivers for migratory fishes. In Spain, C.P.I.F.P. Marítimo Zaporito, a research organisation, invited policy makers to join in the release of eels together. While, in Colombia, TNC met with local fishermen to create a document for policy makers. In 2020, TNC plan to meet with the fishermen again to show them the advance in policy that



Karen Chetty, Banglador - India



Claudia Fürbeck - Germany



Anton papadopolous - Germany



Group who attended the festivity in Cardiff, Great Britain



resulted from the WFMD2018. In the Netherlands, the From Sea to Source 2.0 book was launched at an annual trilateral ministerial meeting. During this meeting, ministers from Netherlands, Germany and Denmark approved the inclusion of Swimway Wadden Sea vision in the governmental declaration of the Wadden Sea plan.

Implemented measures

At key WFMD events there were also measures implemented and funds raised for projects. There were about 15 dam removals and fishway openings as well as several interesting restoration project inaugurations. This includes a funding announcement for Brunswick barrier remediation in Australia, an event for the restoration project of the Wamp River in Belgium, and a Fair a Far weir

fish pass opening in Scotland, which aims to work at a catchment scale to improve both the River Almond & Avon for the benefit of wildlife and the communities along them.

On WFMD we all had FUN! The videos and pictures speak for themselves. WFMD was an amazing day full of smiles and bringing people together: a Happy Day celebrating Happy Fish! This year WFMD had a competition to get creative about drawing a happy fish to win prizes from Patagonia and there was a [great video](#) made together with the Dutch model Sarah Warnaar. There were hundreds of applications from children and adults. There was even a Salmon tattoo from Iceland. The winners are featured above.

Achievements & long term impacts

A Growing interest

WFMD is the biggest global initiative to focus on fish migration and is growing bigger each year. The increasing number of enthusiastic and committed people joining WFMD each year, highlights a growing interest from organisations, NGO's, river managers, experts, volunteers and individuals around the world.

We are seeing more people:

- recognizing the importance of engaging and communicating with society to create awareness and improve perceptions about migratory fishes;
- recognizing the importance of educating future generation, by reaching out to schools and focusing on creating awareness for children;
- sharing their projects, knowledge and challenges with others;
- brainstorming, cooperating internationally and developing innovative projects for sustainable management;
- recognizing that many instream barriers can be removed and that there are alternatives measures that can be put in place;
- inspired and want to make a difference. People are showing their commitment by working hard and wanting to make a difference. From working with their community to clean rivers to voicing their concerns with local governments to influence change in policy.
- who are standing up to join us in speaking out about the needs of fish migration. Including more famous people famous people such as Jeremy Wade and Jasper Pääkkönen.



From local to global

WFMD connects all the hard work that people are doing around the world and boosts this from local scales to the global stage. We can make a much bigger impact by working together on globally! This is what we have achieved in the past few years on an international level:

New cooperations by connecting people

One of the biggest successes is that WFMD has given local organisations working on fish migration a voice. Jeremy Shelton from Freshwater Research Centre SA tells us that his organisation joined WFMD to be part

of the “global connection” and Heather Andrews, from Downeast Salmon Federation, in USA, says that WFMD “is a fantastic tool for organisations to band together and raise awareness about our sea-run fish and fish migration.” They are just two of hundreds of organisations who have used WFMD as a platform to share their work and celebrate with the rest of the world. This global network of people working on fish migration has resulted in stimulating new cooperations from local to global. For instance, many contributors of the new From Sea to Source book were approached because of their involvement in previous WFMD’s.

More knowledge sharing by starting conversations

Fish migration and dam removals have become a popular topic on every continent. There are notably more international conferences, workshops and seminars focused on fish migration in recent years. The Fish Passage conference has grown from a local conference in the USA to an international conference, which will be held in Australia in 2018. At the conference there will also be the 1st International symposium on hydropower and fish management. This growth is also seen locally during WFMD events. For WFMD2018 there were 97 workshops, seminars and conferences, compared to 27 in WFMD2016.

New cooperations lead to more project proposals

In recent years, there has been an increasing number of new international cooperations focused toward improving management and implementation, and toward promoting the communication of projects. There are for instance international programmes being

developed such as Dam Removal Europe and Swimway programmes. There are new plans to use concepts from the Dutch Water Authority Hunze en Aa’s in the Mekong Basin and there are project proposals between Swedish and South African researchers to exchange knowledge and improve connectivity.

More effective by sharing materials

For WFMD, materials have been developed to share on a global scale. Since the launch of the Swimway Poster during WFMD2016 there has been approximately 15,000 copies spread in the WFMD network. There has been such a positive reaction to the posters that that for WFMD2018, the poster was translated into Spanish, Turkish, German and Chinese. 600 of these have been downloaded since April 2018 and more requests are coming in to translate the poster to new languages. This also highlights that there is a need for promotional material for people working on a local level.

Another significant product that was developed to be launched on WFMD, was the [The From Sea to Source 2.0 book](#). It was presented in several countries and shared throughout the WFMD network. Are you interested in a presentation on the outcomes of the From Sea To Source book? Get in contact via: herman@fishmigration.org.

We have a greater voice

Since the start of WFMD, we are gaining the attention of more and more famous people, press and politicians. Many are now joining us in speaking out and spreading the word about the needs of fish migration. During WFMD2018, we have reached over 50 million people because of the help of our ambassadors.

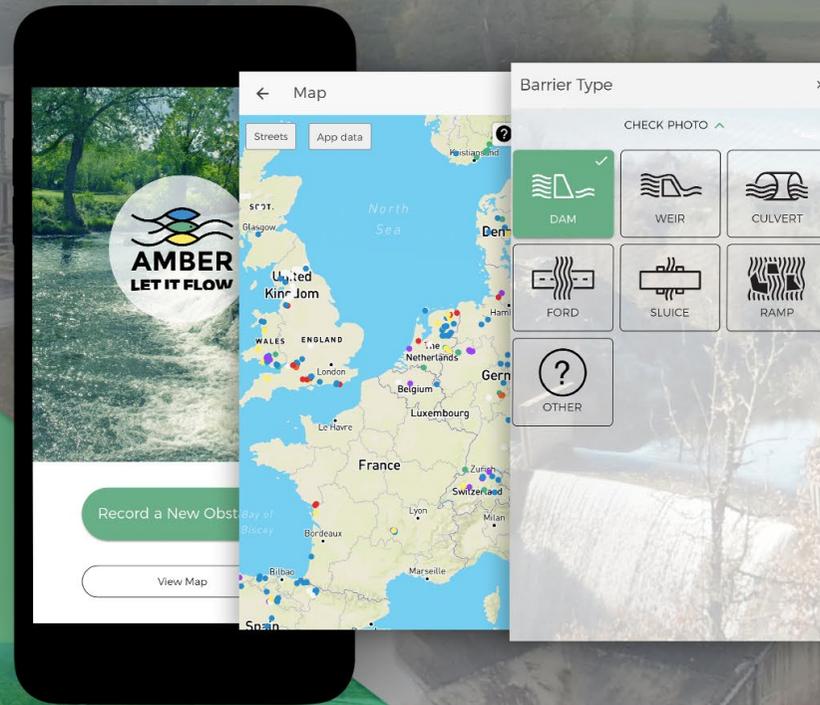
Local organisations also used WFMD to make it easier to connect with high level delegates. Ministers, mayors, representatives from governmental departments, directors of NGO’s and other leaders were invited to join. This is especially important as meeting and creating awareness with policy makers and leaders can help us obtain long term commitment for fish migration.

Our ambition

To reach more than 1000 events, involve more organisations, collaborate with ‘change makers’, celebrate more dam removals and fishways to help us achieve our goal of a planet with more free-flowing rivers and “happy fish”. This is just the beginning! We have only just started the revolution of change for migratory fish.



South Africa Hub © Wilco de Bruijne



The AMBER project launched the first ever “Barrier Tracker” smartphone application as part of their Let it Flow citizen science program to map barriers in European rivers.

Download the app

Words from our Participants



“We used WFMD to measure impact of awareness raised and ensure action is taken to the point of influencing decisions”

- **Wonne Afronelly** from
MyEnvironment MyWealth, Nigeria

“Because it matters! We need to get more of the public involved and understanding the needs of wild fish.”

- **Eric Hutchins**
NOAA, USA

“Excellent event! Fish passage is a core part of my role at work and it is very important for the commercial fishers”

- **Patrick Dwyer**
Australia

“I plan to meet the fishermen to show them the advance in policy that resulted from the WFMD2018”

- **Silvia López Casas**
Colombia

“From Sea to Source 2.0 book is particularly useful in the dialogue with policy makers to plea for river connectivity restoration. We hope that in few years we will see more concrete results.”

- **Cristina Sandu**
Danube Sturgeon Task Force, Europe

“This event is a way for us to communicate about the needs to find solution to restore migration connectivity (including downstream migration) as our long-term eel survey demonstrate that silver eel in the Fremur River has low probability to reach estuary and marine waters as they start their downstream migration”

- **Cristina Sandu**
Danube Sturgeon Task Force, Europe

Thank you!

And see you again on May 16, 2020

Thank to the team, sponsors, partners, supporters and organizers. We could not have done this without you. World Fish Migration Day is also made possible with the help of hundreds of supporters worldwide! Check them all on our website.

Visit our website



One more thing

Thanks the team of fish heads who worked very hard to make WFMD2018 possible!



Herman Wanningen
Project manager

[Read more](#)



Lissie de Groot
Event Manager

[Read more](#)



Kerry Brink
Event Manager

[Read more](#)



Tania Imaña Loza
Volunteer

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Rosa Olivo del Amo
Event Manager

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Rik Bomer
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[Read more](#)



Ninostka Burgoa Arnez
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Event Manager

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Maarten Flikweert
Volunteer

[Read more](#)

Follow World Fish Migration Day to stay up to date on fish migration updates, videos, photos and breaking news. Or if you wish to participate in the next WFMD on May 16, 2020.

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Contact us

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WFMD2018 Short documentary

There is an official short documentary coming that showcases the amazing events of WFMD2018 and how it feels to be a part of the celebration.

If you wish to stay up to date on when this video is launched you can register for the newsletter by clicking the button below.

[Register for the newsletter](#)