REF.	ACTIONS	PARTNERS (lead partners in bold)
31.1	**Develop and promote best practice guidelines (to include legal regulations).**	**RDT / SNH / DDSFB**
31.1.1	For commercial ponds.	**RDT / SNH / DDSFB**
31.1.2	For garden/ornamental ponds.	**RDT / SNH / DDSFB**
31.2	**Existing ponds: identify and remediate problems; raise awareness of issues; promote best practice and legal compliance.**	**FRS / SGRPID** / SNH / AC / ACC / RDT / DDSFB / NESBReC / Schools
31.2.1	Identify locations of fish ponds (commercial and private) in the Dee catchment (ongoing). Feed this information back into the Ponds Trust Database.	RDT / DDSFB / NESBReC
31.2.2	Establish a pond register to be setup to store information on any existing or new ponds.	DDSFB / AC / ACC
31.2.3	Distribute and promote best practice guidelines to all pond owners/ managers.	DDSFB / AC / ACC
31.2.4	Undertake pond surveys to identify problems.	RDT
31.2.5	Encourage best management practice to solve problems identified.	RDT / DDSFB / SNH
31.2.6	Encourage pond owners/managers to seek advice from FRS	FRS
31.2.7	Address the control of ornamental fish in garden ponds through education of both pond owners and fish suppliers.	DDSFB / AC / ACC
31.2.8	Develop and promote a system for disposing of unwanted fish.	SNH / Schools
31.3	**New ponds: Investigate adequacy of Local Plan policy and planning protocol.**	**AC / ACC / SEPA** / RDT / DDSFB / DSFIA / FRS / CNPA / SNH / Pond Owners / SGRPID
31.3.1	Ensure requirements of all native fish species are considered when considering pond applications.	**AC / ACC / CNPA**
31.4	**Promote management of fish ponds for conservation.**	**DDSFB / AC / ACC / SNH / The Ponds Trust**
31.4.1	Develop and promote a 'ponds for wildlife information pack' – Could be included in relevant planning consultations.	**SNH / DDSFB / AC / ACC / The Ponds Trust**
31.4.2	Offer pond owners an advisory service	**SNH / DDSFB / The Ponds Trust**
31.5	**Encourage suppliers of fish to stock and promote best management practice documents; promote the advisory service.**	**Fish / pet shops / DDSFB** / Angling shops / Fishing proprietors / Ghillies
31.6	**Reduce/remove (escaped) non-native fish species from the river system.**	**RDT / DDSFB / CNPA / CLBAP** / Angling shops / DSFIA / Fishing proprietors / Ghillies
31.6.1	Produce leaflet which identifies non-native fish species and explains the need to remove them from the river.	RDT / DDSFB
31.6.2	Promote and distribute this leaflet to anglers.	Angling shops / DSFIA / Fishing proprietors / Ghillies
31.6.3	Continue with campaign to have 'live baiting' banned in the Dee catchment	DDSFB
31.7	**Lobby for improved legislation.**	**DDSFB**
31.7.1	Lobby to broaden the named regulations concerning the stocking of certain undesirable species into open waters to include ponds.	DDSFB
31.7.2	Regulate the movement of fish into the Dee Catchment.	DDSFB
31.8	**Implement a routine disease monitoring program to act as an early warning system.**	DDSFB / SNH / AC / ACC

Acronyms are listed in the centre of this Action Card

31.Fishing ponds.indd Spread 1 of 2 - Pages(4, 1)



fishing ponds 31 SPECIES

OBJECTIVE 31. Manage fishing ponds sustainably.

BACKGROUND

There are two main types of fish pond: **commercial put-and-take fisheries** and **private ponds** stocked with exotic ornamental fish. Commercial fisheries are becoming more widespread as people exploit the demand for inexpensive fishing and there are now at least ten such ponds in the catchment. Private ponds vary from small garden ponds stocked with a few goldfish to specialist hobby ponds containing rare and expensive breeds imported from all over the world; hundreds of new ornamental ponds have been constructed in the catchment and these are often stocked with fish.

The escape or release of non-native species (e.g. American signal crayfish, Canadian pondweed) from these ponds can have serious long-term effects on the natural ecosystem in connected watercourses:

- Both commercial and private ponds may introduce non-native diseases and parasites, to which native species may have no defence e.g. Infectious Salmon Anaemia, the lethal parasite *Gyrodactylus salaris*. These can lead to significant declines in, or extinction of native species.
- Interbreeding of escaped fish with wild stocks has the potential to affect wild fish genetics.
- Even if infertile fish are used to stock ponds, they may compromise the spawning behaviour of wild fish.
- Successful breeding of non-native fish in the River Dee system could lead to a loss of salmonid habitat.
- The occurrence of disease is significantly higher in stocked populations than in the wild. The escape of these fish exposes wild populations to disease.
- Pike are pisciverous and can reduce trout numbers, reducing their impact on herbivorous zooplankton and thus favouring the growth if algae. This is an issue in lochs affected by nutrient enrichment where algal growth is already increased (e.g. Lochs Skene and Davan)

It is thought that the following non-native species may be present in the Dee system: Minnow, Pike, Perch, Rainbow trout, Brook trout, Bream, Ide, Tench, and Roach.

ISSUES

- There has been a significant increase in the number of fish ponds in the catchment in recent years.
- There are no comprehensive guidelines for fish pond owners/managers.
- There are no controls on garden ponds, unless they are diverting water from the nearest watercourse, as ponds within a domestic curtilage which are not fed by a watercourse do not require planning permission.
- The potential for the management of artificial ponds conservation is seldom realised.
- One of the factors contributing to the introduction of non-native species in the Dee is the practice of 'live-baiting' by some fishermen.
- No legislation exists to prevent introductions, or to prevent escapes of exotics from ponds.
- Commercial ponds buy their stocks from commercial fish farming operations but suppliers of exotic fish are not subject to compulsory veterinary inspections prior to movements of stocks.
- There is very little available information on ponds in the Dee catchment.

EXISTING / RECENT INITIATIVES

- Ongoing surveys by Dee District Salmon Fishery Board (DDSFB) (commercial ponds) and North East Scotland Biological Records Centre (NESBReC) (garden ponds).
- The Dee Salmon Action Plan contains actions for fish ponds.
- Scottish Natural Heritage and DDSFB provide advice to all developers intending to stock ponds detailing the risks and measures which should be employed to

WHO IS INVOLVED?

Aberdeenshire Council

Aberdeen City Council

Angling Shops

Cairngorms National Park Authority

Cairngorms Local Biodiversity Action Plan

Dee District Salmon Fishery Board

Dee Salmon Fishery Improvement Association

Fisheries Research Services

Fishing Proprietors

Ghillies

North East Scotland Biological Records Centre

Pet Shops

Pond Owners

The Ponds Trust

River Dee Trust

Schools

Scottish Environment Protection Agency

Scottish Government Rural Payments and Inspections Directorate

Scottish Natural Heritage

Further copies can be downloaded at www.theriverdee.org. For further information contact the Dee Catchment Officer c/o The Macaulay Institute, Craigiebuckler, Aberdeen AB15 8QH Telephone: 01224 498200 email: info@theriverdee.org

deecatchment partnership

manage them, *but only when planning permission is required*.

- Report from *Gyrodactylus* group due. Once available, a link will be put on www.theriverdee.org.
- Cairngorms LBAP non native fish project.

ACTIONS REQUIRED

- Develop, distribute and promote legal guidelines for put-and-take fisheries and for stocking and running garden ponds.
- Address control of ornamental fish in garden ponds through education of both pond owners and fish suppliers. Establish a system for disposing of unwanted fish.
- Planners should work closely with fishery and wildlife agencies to minimise the likelihood of escapes of exotic species from new commercial fishing ponds.
- Promote wildlife-friendly pond management.
- Promote best practice guidelines and other guidance e.g. wildlife friendly pond management, through suppliers.
- Control non-native fish stocks in the Dee system. Continue DDSFB campaign to have live-baiting banned in the catchment.
- Lobby to broaden the named regulations concerning the stocking of certain undesirable species into open waters to include ponds. Greater control and inspection of fish health should occur, both before movements and while present in the pond. DDSFB to implement a routine disease monitoring program which will act as an early warning system.
- Establish database to collate all existing and future data.

LEGISLATION

See Action Pack Annex for information sources

- Controlled Activities Regulations (CAR) - Requires abstractors to take certain actions depending on the volume of abstraction. Any pond with an off take greater than 10m^3/day must be registered. This will allow agencies to develop a register of ponds in the Dee catchment.
- The creation of new commercial fishing ponds is controlled by the planning authority. The Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act (1997) requires all new ponds which draw water from a watercourse to receive planning permission. This will allow agencies to ensure developers have been informed of relevant, will provide an opportunity to promote best practice, and will also help develop a pond register.
- Suppliers of exotic fish must adhere to the Animal Health Act 1981which requires any person having in their possession or under their charge an animal affected or suspected of having one of the diseases listed under Section 88 of the Act, must, with all practicable speed, notify that fact to the police.
- Salmon and Freshwater Fisheries (Consolidation) (Scotland) Act 2003. The District Salmon Fishery Board has statutory powers to ensure access for wild salmon to spawning grounds and to ensure that screens preventing fish entering a water intake are satisfactory.
- Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. It is an offence to introduce any species into the wild that is not ordinarily resident in Britain. To do so can lead to prosecution.
- Conservation Regulations 1994. The River Dee Special Area of Conservation (SAC) was designated as a result of the Habitats Directive which was transposed into UK law by the Conservation Regulations 1994. These regulations require competent authorities to consider planning permissions affecting a European site and restrict or revoke permission where the integrity of the site be adversely affected.
- Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004. This act introduced a biodiversity duty for all public bodies which requires these bodies to further the conservation of biodiversity during the exercise of their functions. In this case, the promotion of best practice and wildlife friendly guidance would represent the furthering of the conservation of biodiversity.
- The Aquaculture and Fisheries Act (2007) has introduced regulation of the transfer and release of fish. The Act provide the regulatory body (DDSFB) with an element of control over the entry of particular species into the Dee system.

INFORMATION AND GUIDANCE

See Action Pack Annex for information sources

- **Ponds, pools and lochans** - Guidance on good practice in the management and creation of small waterbodies in Scotland (SEPA).
- **The Pond Book** – a guide to the management and creation of ponds (Pond Conservation).
- **Works to Watercourses and their banks** (Aberdeenshire Council)
- **Dee Salmon Action Plan**
- **The Ponds Trust**

BENEFITS TO PROTECTED SPECIES

The following specially protected species will benefit from the Actions:

- Freshwater pearl mussel *Margaritifera margaritifera*
- Atlantic salmon *Salmo salar*



RELATED ACTION CARDS

26. Atlantic salmon

27. Freshwater pearl mussel

32. Fish data

AC Aberdeenshire Council **ACC** Aberdeen City Council **CLBAP** Cairngorms Local Biodiversity Action Plan **CNPA** Cairngorms National Park Authority **DDSFB** Dee District Salmon Fishery Board **DSFIA** Dee Salmon Fishery Improvement Association **FRS** Fisheries Research Services **NESBReC** North East Scotland Biological Records Centre **RDT** River Dee Trust **SEPA** Scottish Environment Protection Agency **SGRPID** Scottish Government Rural Payments & Inspections Directorate **SNH** Scottish Natural Heritage

deecatchment partnership

31 Fishing ponds.indd Spread 2 of 2 - Pages(2, 3)
28/05/2009 09:24:51