



## Urgent actions for the endangered Houting "Coregonus oxyrhynchus"



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### Beneficiary:

Danish Forest and Nature Agency - Lindet State Forest District  
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### Project Manager:

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### Type of Organisation:

National authority

### Description:

The Danish Forest and Nature Agency (DFNA) is an agency within the Danish Ministry of Environment. The DFNA is responsible for the administration of national policies and legislation concerning protection, management and restoration of nature, open-air recreational activities, hunting and forestry. The agency manages the state forest areas and other publicly owned nature and agricultural areas, in total around 190,000 ha.

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### Project Background

The houting (*Coregonus oxyrhynchus*), a fish species from the white fish family, has a complex ecology making it vulnerable to relatively small disturbances in its range. It was previously distributed throughout the Wadden Sea (the Netherlands, Germany and Denmark) but it has declined severely and its occurrence is now restricted to Denmark, where it reproduces in six river systems. The presence of even small obstacles during spawning migration in rivers is one of the main impediments to successful reproduction, as the houting is unable to pass weirs and fish ladders. Silting of spawning grounds is also a severe problem. Furthermore, juvenile houting require large areas of reed beds or flooded meadows, where they forage for several months prior to migration to the sea. Previous restocking attempts in Denmark have not been successful because they were not followed up by habitat restoration.

**Keywords:** migratory species  
protected area

river  
emergency plan

restoration measure  
endangered species

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### Project Objectives

The overall project objective is to restore and maintain a favourable conservation status for the houting (*Coregonus oxyrhynchus*) in four Danish river systems. The project is in accordance with national recommendations. It will explore possibilities and develop recommendations for reintroduction into other parts of the houting's previous distribution range within the EU.

The project will have a profound positive effect on all other components of the river ecosystems including the conservation status of the habitat type 'Water courses characterised by *Ranunculus fluitantis* and *Callitriche-Batrachion* communities'. It will result in improved access to areas of spawning habitats for other anadromous fish species, such as indigenous populations of Atlantic salmon (*Salmo salar*), species of lamprey (*Lampetra* sp.) and the only population of weather fish/pond loach (*Misgurnis fossilis*) in Denmark, and it will improve habitat conditions for the otter (*Lutra lutra*).

Weirs and dams in the four river systems will be removed and riffles or meanders constructed in order to facilitate upstream migration. Two hydroelectric power plants and three fish farms will be decommissioned. River sections will be restored with gravel and stone, creating new spawning grounds, and a combination of changes to hydrology and construction works will create new flooded areas adjacent to the river. The project will be implemented in broad cooperation between a number of stakeholders including local and regional authorities, land and fish farm owners, a regional angling society, and owners of hydrological installations.

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### Project Partners

Ribe County, Denmark

[Top](#)**Benefiting Countries and Regions****Danmark**

Sønderjyllands amt      Ribe amt

**Natura 200 Sites**

Nørholm Hede, Nørholm Skov og Varde Å øst for Vard	Sneum Å og Holsted Å	Vadehavet med Ribe Å, Tved Å og Vidå, Rudbøl Sø og Varde Å vest for V	Magisterkogen
Sneum Å og Holsted Å	Vadehavet med Ribe Å, Tved Å og Varde Å vest for V	Vidå, Rudbøl Sø og Magisterkogen	

[Top](#)**Target Community Legislative Reference****Nature protection and Biodiversity**

- Directive 92/43/EEC - "Conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora" (21.05.92)

[Top](#)**Name of Target Species**

Coregonus oxyrhynchus

[Top](#)**Name of Target Habitat Types**

- Natural eutrophic lakes with Magnopotamion or Hydrocharition - type vegetation
- Water courses of plain to montane levels with the Ranunculion fluitantis and Callitriche-Batrachion vegetation

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<b>Total Budget:</b>	13,385,913.00 €
<b>Life Contribution:</b>	8,031,548.00 €
<b>Year of Finance:</b>	2005
<b>Duration:</b>	01-FEB-2005 to 31-JUL -2009
<b>Commission Reference:</b>	LIFE05 NAT/DK/000153

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