

Project information

Keywords

Seal, salmon, Tana river

Project title

Impact of harbour seal predation on Tana salmon and Tana salmon fishery (SEALSAL)

Year

2015

Project leader

Marius Warg Næss

Participants

NIKU: Marius Warg Næss (leader), Einar Eythórsson; NINA: Martin-A. Svenning, Morten Falkegård; UiT SESAM: Camilla Brattland; and Tana River Fisheries Management (TRFM): Narve Johansen

Flagship

Fjord and Coast

Funding Source

Fram Centre

Summary of Results

The main outcome of this project is a manuscript aiming to generate management-relevant knowledge on the status and dynamics of seal interaction with salmon stocks and salmon fisheries in Tana river/estuary/fjord system, that can contribute to a common knowledge basis among local fishers and local to central governance bodies, and thus lay a foundation for adaptive co-governance of local seal populations in the Tana river and connected ecosystems.

Three methods for data collected from fishers were applied in the project; log data from fishers (n=8, in 2014), structured interviews (n=16, in 2014) and an online survey (n=10, in 2015).

Results from the interviews indicate that 38 % of salmon fishers interviewed reported that seals have been caught in their fishing gear. Fishers reported that harp, grey and harbor seal all got caught in the gear and 5 of the fishers reporting seals caught in fishing gear reported that the seal subsequently died (one fisher did not answer the question). Of the 6 fishers experiencing seal caught in the fishing gear, one fisher reported that it had happened 'once' during the last 10 years, while 5 answered 'no' to the question if it had happened several times during the last 10 years. 33% reported that the seal caused major damage on the fishing gear; while 33% reported no damage

at all (33% had no response).

81% of the interviewed salmon fishers reported that they had experienced seals eating salmon already caught in their fishing gear. 44% percent reported that it had happened 'many' times, 38% 'several times'; and 19% 'no' times during the last years.

A majority of the salmon fishers reported that seals as a problem has stayed the same during the last 10 years (Fig. 5). Salmon fishers in general do not think that seals scare the salmon from going upriver (44% responded 'no' to this question while 31% answered 'yes' and 25% did not know whether this was the case or not). Nevertheless, 38% responded in the positive when asked if they think that seals are a threat to the salmon population and 88% wants the seal population to be reduced. A common comment from the fishers was that the number of salmon fishers has declined in recent years and as a consequence the remaining fishers are more exposed to seal predation than before.

Published Results/Planned Publications

The manuscript "Interaction of harbour and grey seals with Atlantic salmon and the salmon fishery in the Tana River and the Tana Fjord" is in development and will be submitted to a suitable journal in 2016.

Communicated Results

Information about the project has been disseminated on meetings organized by TF as well as online (<http://tanafisk.no/bidra-til-innhenting-av-lokal-kunnskap/3635>).

Interdisciplinary Cooperation

The project consists of both social and natural scientists.

Budget in accordance to results

The budget follows the planned schedule

Could results from the project be subject for any commercial utilization

No

Conclusions

The projects is following the planned progress.