

ACTION NAME: C 11 Control of the American mink

Special Conservation Zone (SCZ) being acted upon:

SCZ River Bidasoa, SCZ River Baztan and Artesiaga stream, SCZ Señorío de Bertiz, SCZ Artikutza and SCZ Belate

LINK WITH NATURA 2000

The action is encompassed within the following SCZ Management Plan Operational Objectives:

2.1.2 Reduce the presence of invasive foreign species.

2.1.3 Improve the knowledge about and preservation of some fauna species of particular interest associated with river habitats.

Key Elements of the promoted SCZ -REASONS

The European mink (*Mustela lutreola*) is a species of community interest, in serious threat of extinction on a global level. The greatest threat faced by the European mink population is its shrinking population, displacement and elimination as a result of colonisation by the American mink (*Neovison vison*). Currently, in the area occupied by the European mink in the Cantabrian basins of Navarre, there are areas which make contact with that of the American mink.

PLACE OF ACTION AND MUNICIPALS:

The Cantabrian basin of Navarre, rivers shared with Gipuzkoa (All the municipals are in these basins)

Date

2016 to 2019 (Control of the American mink in four campaigns, in spring and autumn)

Budget

€100,350

Related project actions (follow-up)

Description of the action - OBJECTIVES

The aim of this project is to reduce the presence of the American mink (*Neovison vison*) in Navarre, with the aim of avoiding its negative impact on the species of community interest, the European mink (*Mustela lutreola*) in serious threat of extinction. Additionally, information will be obtained regarding the distribution and abundance of both species in the field of action.

Description of the action - BACKGROUND

In the basins of the Cantabrian rivers of Navarre, the American mink may appear from populations living in Gipuzkoa and south-west France (Atlantic Pyrenean region). In fact, sightings have been documented in river Bidasoa, in Aritzakun, Urritzate, Orabidea and in the Luzaide, as well as in other rivers on the Mediterranean side of Navarre.

Description of the action - INITIAL AND CURRENT CONDITION (C actions)

Platforms will be installed to detect the American mink, and later trapping will be carried out. The total length of all the river stretches to be explored, and if necessary, where the American mink needs to be eliminated, covers around 114 km, and a total of 114 platforms (1 platform/1 km) will be distributed as follows:

- River Bidesoa 33 km and tributaries 29 km
- River Baztan 22 km and Artesiaga stream 8 km
- River Urumea and tributaries 9 km
- River Leizaran 5 km
- River Araxes 8 km

The platforms will firstly be used to detect the specimen, then later, if necessary, used as a trap. The platform design allows the trap to be placed on top. Traps will be placed on the platforms where previously traces of the specimen have been recorded (follow-up period) and on adjacent platforms.

The American mink captured will be put down humanely. The rest of the species will be released in the same capture site. The action will produce a great amount of data that will be collected in a database, facilitating the later analysis of results.

Description of the action - ENVISAGED ACTIONS/DESCRIPTION OF FOLLOW UP

JUSTIFICATION What are the desired results? - ENVISAGED RESULTS

The expected quantitative results for this action are:

- Positioning of 114 fixed platforms

4 trapping campaigns performed over 2016, 2017, 2018 and 2019 (in spring or autumn)

- Obtaining information about the situation of the species of community interest, the European mink, and the invasive foreign species, the American mink.

