



**EUROPEAN  
RIVERS  
SUMMIT**

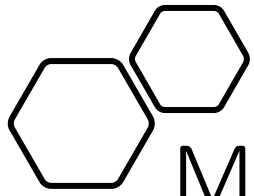
## **THE TRANS-EUROPEAN SWIMWAYS INITIATIVE**

Heather Bond,  
Wetlands International









# Migratory Freshwater Fish

- Salmon
- Sturgeon
- Eel
- Shad
- Houting
- Lamprey
- Smelt
- Roach
- Mullet



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# Background information

39% of freshwater fish species in the EU are threatened

(European Red List of Freshwater Fishes 2011)

90% of fish species listed in Annex 2 of EU Habitats Directive are in poor conservation status

(EEA's State of Nature in the EU 2020)

93% decline of migratory freshwater fish populations in Europe since 1970

(Living Planet Index report 2020)



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# Threats



- Fragmentation of rivers – barriers
- Abstraction of water
- Over-fishing
- Water pollution
- Climate change



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# Flyways -> Swimways



SINCE 1828

GAMES & QUIZZES | TH

flyway

[Dictionary](#)



SINCE 1828

GAMES & QUIZZES | THESAURUS | WORD OF THE DAY | FEATURES

swimway

[Dictionary](#)

[Thesaurus](#)

## flyway noun

Save Word

fly·way | \ 'flī-, wā

### Definition of *flyway*

: an established air route of migratory birds

### Examples of *flyway* in a Sentence

#### Recent Examples on the Web

// The African-Eurasian *flyway*, the flight corridor for birds that travel south through the Mediterranean Sea and Sahara Desert for the winter, harbors over 2,600 sites for migrating birds.

## “swimway”

The word you've entered isn't in the dictionary. Click on a spelling suggestion below or try again using the search bar above.

[swimmy](#)

[swimwear](#)

[someday](#)

[swimmily](#)

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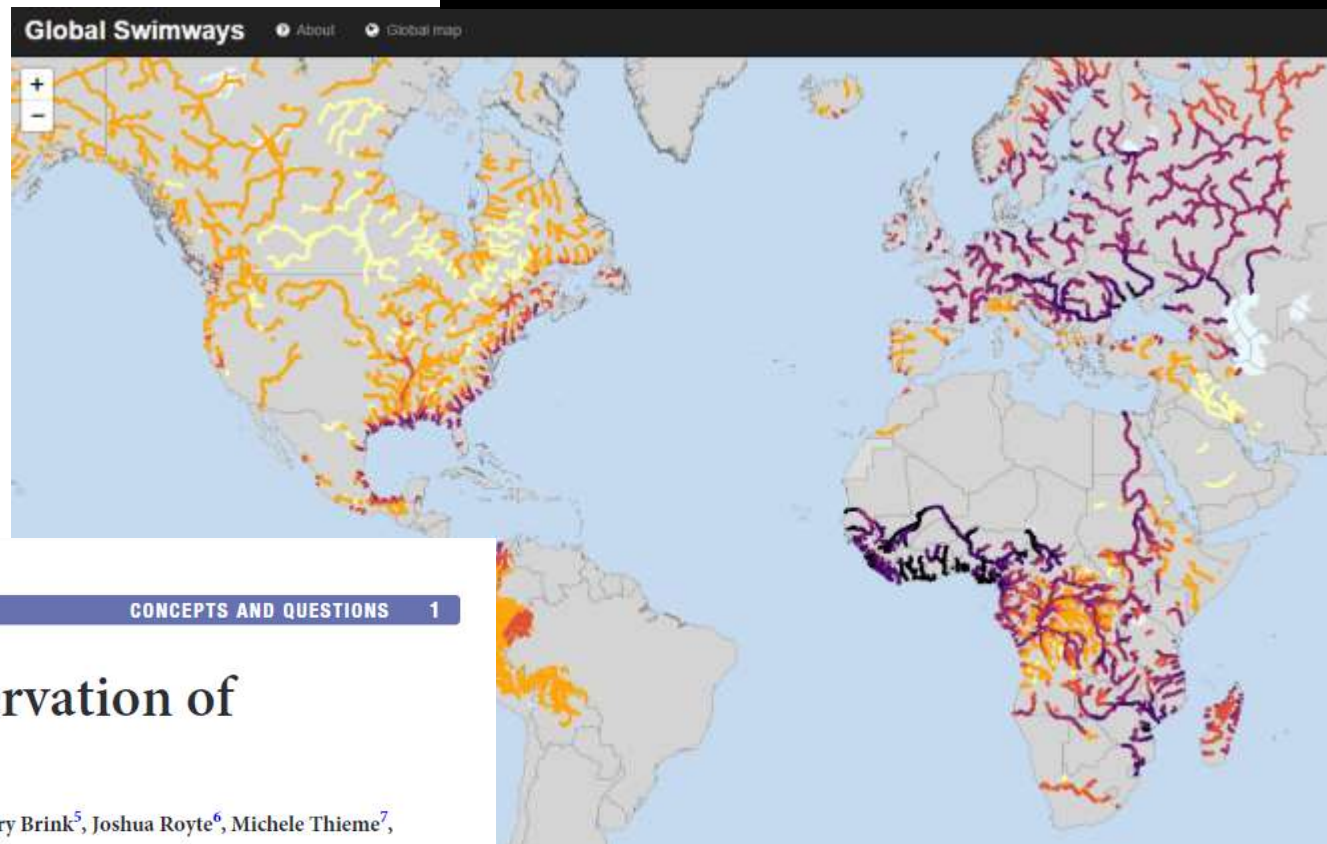
# Global Swimways Programme

<http://www.explorer.globalswimways.org/>

<https://globalswimways.com/>

## Fish Migration Around The Globe

Global swimways are the main routes that migratory fish take across the world. Here we explain why this matters & what we want to do.



CONCEPTS AND QUESTIONS 1

## Global Swimways for the conservation of migratory freshwater fishes

Thomas A Worthington<sup>1†</sup>, Arnout van Soesbergen<sup>2,3†</sup>, Arjan Berkhuysen<sup>4</sup>, Kerry Brink<sup>5</sup>, Joshua Royte<sup>6</sup>, Michele Thieme<sup>7</sup>, Herman Wanningen<sup>5</sup>, and William Darwall<sup>8</sup>

Anthropogenic activities have severely degraded the ecological integrity of global freshwater systems. Migratory freshwater fishes are especially threatened by the cumulative effects of multiple stressors and fragmentation, particularly those that impede access to critical habitats. To stimulate the conservation and protection of these species, we propose a “Global Swimways” program to identify rivers that support the migration routes of biologically and/or socioeconomically important freshwater fishes. We test the utility of the International Union for Conservation of Nature Red List data to support the identification of Global Swimways and present case study regions containing rivers with either high species richness (west-central Africa and Southeast Asia), high numbers of threatened species (Eastern Europe and Central Asia), or multiple endemic species (the Rift Valley lakes in East Africa). We hope the Global Swimways program will provide metrics that can be used to identify rivers requiring increased protection or restoration, track trends, and stimulate the greater inclusion of migratory freshwater fishes in global policy mechanisms.

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# Trans-European Swimways Network

European implementation of the Global Swimways Initiative

Play on the Trans-European Transport Network (TEN-T)

Programme is led by Wetlands International Europe, with 3 collaborators



**Wetlands**  
INTERNATIONAL



WORLD FISH MIGRATION  
FOUNDATION



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# Objectives

- Raise awareness
- Improve quality of data
- Leverage EU legislation and other legal instruments



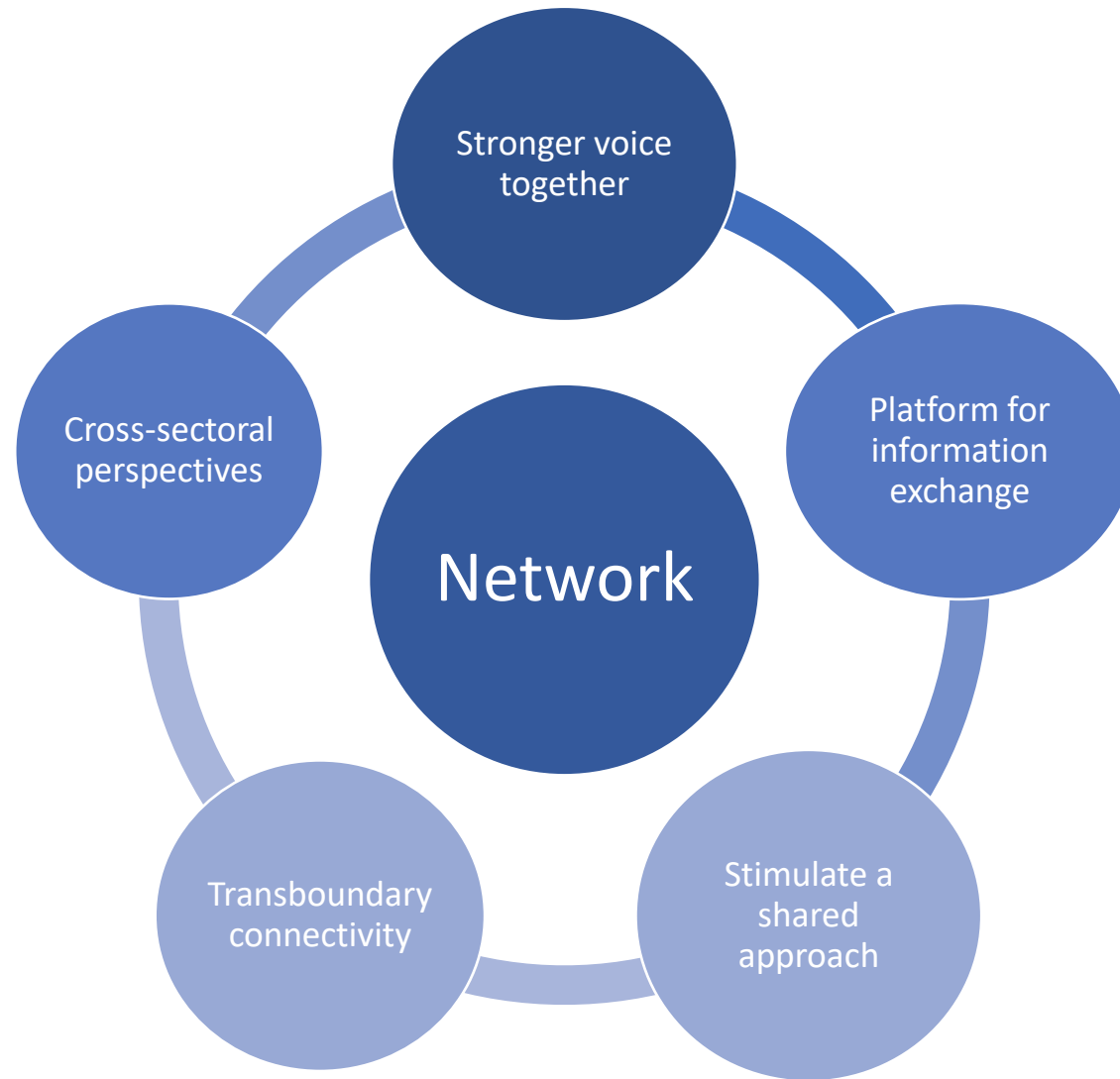
# Opportunities through EU Legislation

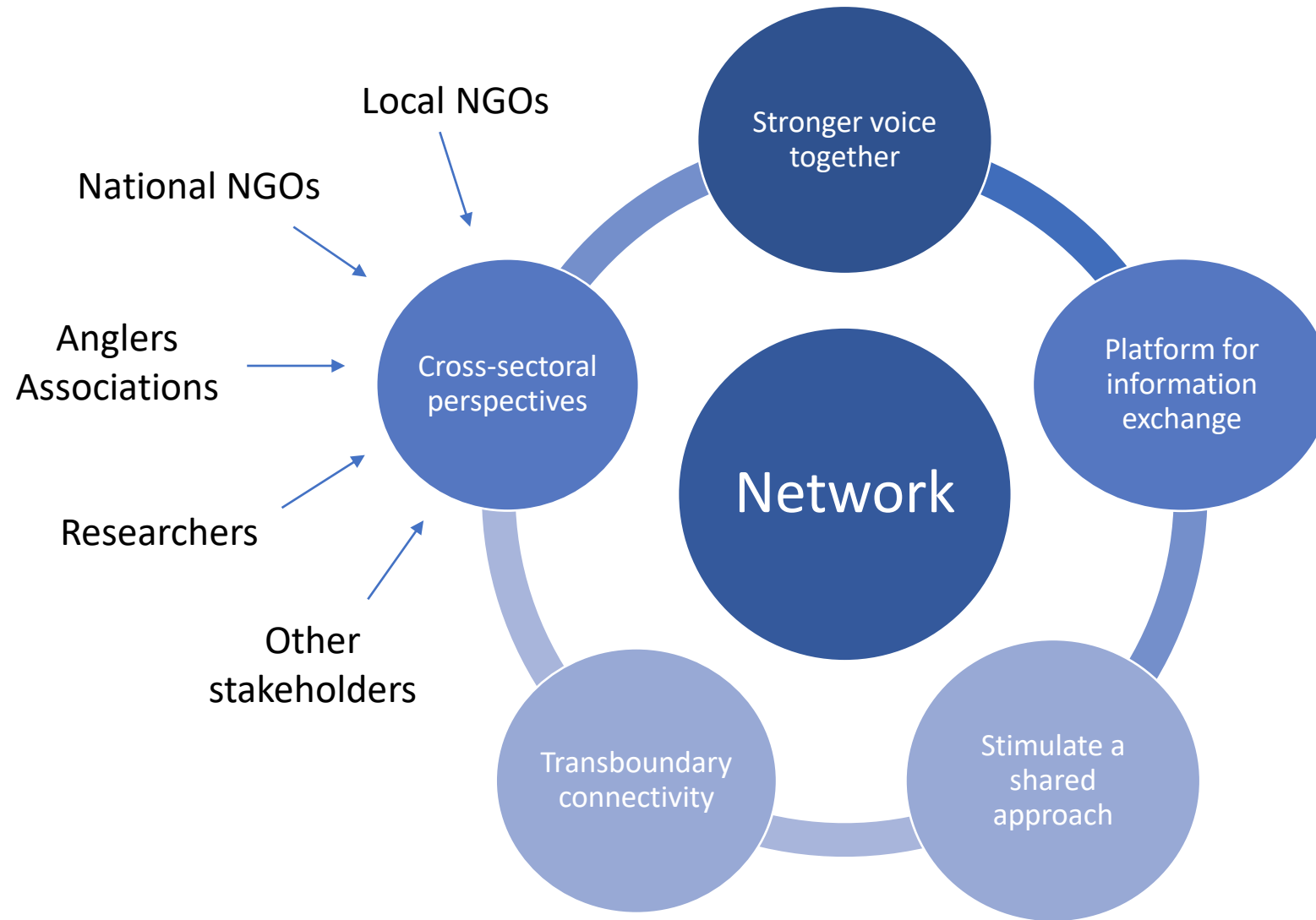


- Habitats Directive
- Eel Regulation
- Water Framework Directive
- Biodiversity Strategy
  
- Proposed Nature Restoration Law











# European Swimways Programme

- Define key concepts
- Draft regional criteria
- Information on migratory fish
  - Biological information
  - Threats
  - Current conservation efforts
- Framework for action



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# European Swimways Workshop

## Programme

- Define key concepts
- Draft regional criteria
- Background information on migratory fish
- Framework for action



October 25-26 2022  
European Swimways  
**Workshop**  
(online)





# Join the Trans-European Swimways Network

<https://europe.wetlands.org/our-approach/swimways>



Heather Bond, Swimways Coordinator  
Wetlands International – Europe  
Heather.bond@wetlands.org

A colorful illustration of a river scene. In the foreground, a person in a green shirt and orange pants is standing on a rocky bank, holding a rope. In the middle ground, a person is kayaking on the river. The background shows a lush green landscape with trees and a large rock formation.

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