

Snapshot

# Finland

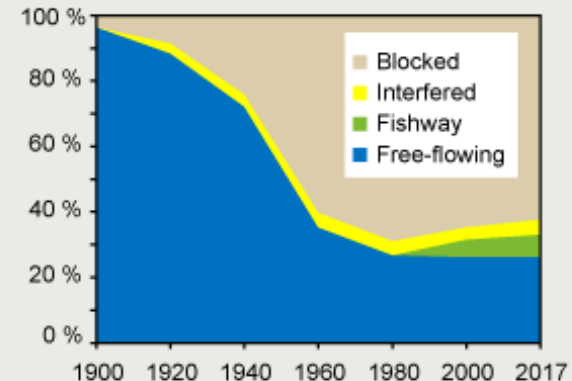
**You'd say our waters are clear and plentiful?**



# Environment, history and cultural aspects define our possibilities

- Yes, 64% of our rivers are in good or excellent status.
- Yes, we are water independent and have a high water resource per capita.
- But, there were major changes after the WW2 as the hydropower development raised the whole society.
  - We lost all major rivers totally
  - Our HP permits are all eternal...
  - But, only one planned new HPP in the country!
- We still tend to live from nature; fishing for recreation means food - and fishing is popular.

A) Riverbeds available for fish migration



# What should be done?

## Paradigm shifts in fish conservation: moving to the ecosystem services concept

Cowx & Portocarrero 2011

- more monitoring and research
- more environmentally friendly energy
- nature based solutions (e.g. flood protection)
- cost-benefit analysis, comparable measures
- value for nature
- ambition and political will



# A New Hope

## EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030

**Restoring at least 25 000 km  
of EU rivers to a free-flowing  
state**



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# About restoration of the most degraded banks of the Soča river between Kobarid and Tolmin

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Nova Gorica, 15<sup>th</sup> October, 2020.



## The Soča river

The Soča springs in the centre of Julian Alps and after 140 km long course flows into the northern Adriatic Sea. She is the most beautiful river on the Earth, due to the exceptional color of the water and other phenomena.

The upper and part of the middle course (together 35 km), was proclaimed a natural monument in 1992. The other part of the middle course is degraded with three artificial lakes in Slovenia and the lower one with four in Italy.

I will only touch the lower part of the natural monument between Kobarid and Tolmin, which is about 20 km long.

There, the water administration -

- allowed gravel and sand extraction in four places, before the proclamation of the monument;
- protected the banks a decade ago in two places with rocks and fastened them with wooden poles, which now look like a fence between water and land;
- built a 500 m long rock embankment and cut a meander from living water, three and a half decades ago.





gravel and  
sand extraction

degraded river banks

river meander without water















## About restoration

Protecting of the banks against erosion degrades the river and it is very expensive. **It would be significantly better to buy at least a 50 meters wide zone along the banks, and let the river run free.** It would also be cheaper.

The water administration could in a relatively short time -

- close three of four gravel and sand extraction places, which have gravel separations in the protected area of the Soča river;
- restore degraded river banks with more appropriate structures,
- allow flow through a "dead" meander.

**Thank you for your attention!**

