

Annual Report FOSAF, YWG Western Cape

2011

1. New direction

The Western Cape chapter has initiated a plan to construct a biodiversity management plan (BMP) for Clanwilliam yellowfish and sawfin. This direction was taken as it is in line with the draft policy on the utilization of indigenous fish in the Western Cape. We shall be creating the BMPs in conjunction with Cape Nature and SAIAB. Until the BMP is in place, the Western Cape YWG shall not be part of any stocking projects, unless it is critical, has scientific basis and has the approval from FOSAF national, SAIAB and Cape Nature.

2. Rondegat and Rotenone.

The Rondegat river is being used as a pilot project for the use of rotenone and is scheduled to be completed in early March 2012. YWG have helped to clear alien species in the river as well as save Clanwilliam yellowfish. The latter were placed in the Clanwilliam dam (2 km downstream). Numerous bass were killed and others used in a rotenone toxicology study.

We raised concerns regarding several criteria that were stated in the Rondegat EIA. We do not believe that these have all been met sufficiently. The weir at the end of the Rotenone section is not seen as a long or even medium term barrier against bass migration. The time to complete the weir is not known, although the EIA process has begun. Other concerns are that the river vegetation has not been cleared sufficiently and it does not appear that rotenone stations have been strategically identified. The latter is extremely important to counter the numerous braids and side channels present in the river. Some of these concerns have been met recently and we hope that it is a success.

3. Rehabilitation Projects

Whilst the BMPs are being created we intend to aid Cape Nature, e.g. Riaan vd Walt in removing alien species from specific tributaries using manual methods such as electroshocking, netting and fishing. If we find a suitable tributary which lends itself to such clearance methods, we may embark on a project of our own. The Krom river may be suitable for such an approach.

4. Membership

We would like to grow the membership of FOSAF in the Western Cape by making people aware of our active involvement in fish conservation and get volunteers involved. Currently, YWG volunteers do not have to be paid up members of FOSAF. We are debating whether or not this should change, as various projects could be partially funded with their subscriptions and we would grow dwindling Western Cape membership numbers.

Gerald Penkler