

Vendace (*Coregonus albula*)

The vendace is one of three whitefish species native to the British Isles. Its preferred habitat is deep cold lakes, where it feeds on planktonic crustaceans, such as copepods. It has a life span of approximately six years and it is non-migratory. The vendace is a declining species, considered to be the UK's rarest freshwater fish.

Current status

National status

Vendace are now only found in Bassenthwaite Lake and Derwentwater in Cumbria, both lakes containing populations of several tens of thousands of fish, although the population in Bassenthwaite is believed to be declining.

The vendace is listed on Appendix III of the Bern Convention and Annex V of the EC Habitats Directive, is protected under Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), and is a UKBAP Priority Species. Both Derwentwater and Bassenthwaite Lakes are candidate SAC sites.

Status on the network

The A66 lies in the catchment of both lakes and immediately alongside Bassenthwaite.

Current factors affecting the species

Pollution of habitat

Roads can cause point and/or diffuse pollution of waterbodies through run-off, spillages and atmospheric pollution resulting in nutrient enrichment and eutrophication.

Habitat modification/loss

New road developments and road improvement schemes in areas adjacent to the lakes may have indirect effects such as modifying local drainage.

Predation

Introduced species of fish in Bassenthwaite Lake are thought to constitute a threat to the population.

Current action

The Highways Agency has put in place a series of road drain traps to contain spillages where the A66 runs adjacent to Bassenthwaite Lake.

The Cumbria Biodiversity Action Plan – Consultation Draft (March, 2000) includes a Vendace Species Action Plan which provides details on issues and proposed actions.



Objectives

The aim of the Highways Agency Species Action Plan for the vendace is to avoid the impact of pollution from the A66, and to ensure that any

road improvement scheme avoids or adequately mitigates any potential impacts on the species.

	Objective	Proposed actions
A	To avoid impacts of any future improvements to the A66 on vendace populations.	2, 3, 4, 6
B	To safeguard and enhance the vendace populations close to the A66.	3, 4, 6
C	To raise the awareness of HA staff, Managing Agents and consultants regarding the significance of vendace populations adjacent to the network.	1, 7
D	To safeguard potentially suitable vendace habitat and liaise with the relevant authorities regarding the status of re-introduction plans in network area 19.	2, 4, 5

Proposed action

The following table lists the actions required to achieve the objectives set out in this Plan. For some of the actions, potential partners have

been assigned as likely sources of cooperation. Targets are provided to give an indication of the timescale for the proposed action.

	Action	Potential partners	Target
	<i>Policy, guidance and advice</i>		
1	Provide specific area advice to the local area manager of network area 19 on vendace and required pollution control measures.	EA	2003
	<i>Surveying</i>		
2	Confirm current status of the species with the relevant specialist and ensure updated records of vendace are maintained on the Environmental Database.	EN, EA	2002
	<i>Mitigation and Management</i>		
3	For road improvements in areas near to Bassenthwaite Lake and Derwent Water ensure plans will not result in local changes in water level.	EA	Ongoing
4	Ensure adequate pollution control is maintained along the A66 in Cumbria, with annual monitoring of these measures.	EA	Ongoing
5	Where new populations are confirmed, or re-introductions planned within any road catchment areas, ensure adequate pollution control.	EA	As schemes arise

	Action (continued)	Potential partners	Target
	<i>Mitigation and Management (continued)</i>		
6	Review and maintain vehicle safety measures on the A66 to prevent effects on aquatic habitats as a result of spillage from vehicles.	-	Ongoing
	<i>Communications and publicity</i>		
7	Information on vendace should be included in environmental training for HA staff and Managing Agents in network area 19.		2003

Links with other plans

This plan should be read in conjunction with the HAP for water features.

The vendace is listed as a Priority Species within the LBAP for Cumbria.

Lead partner

The lead partner for the vendace in the UKBAP is the Environment Agency.

