



## FINAL REPORT ON COMMON NASE REDUCTION



LIFE for LASCA Project  
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Picture on the cover: Adult Lasca specimen (*Protochondrostoma genei*). Author: Jurij Mikuletič.



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## **Preface**

This report is the Final report of LIFE for LASCA project on Common nase reduction. It presents objectives, methodology, activities and results achieved under project action C3: “Reduction of Common nase population”. Further activities regarding Common nase reductions are predicted in After Life plan and Action plan delivered by the project.

## Objectives and achievements of project action C3: “Reduction of Common nase population”

The main goal of C3 action was reduction of Common nase population in Vipava river basin (Natura 2000 site - SI3000226), since the species represents one of the major pressures and threats to Lasca. Common nase compete with Lasca for space and food. In combination with habitat destructions and habitat loss, Common nase even caused Lasca disappearance in Vipava river basin in the past. This alien species was introduced in Vipava valley in 1960s by anglers to stimulate angling experiences.

During the project, we have removed 11.191 Common nase specimens on 219 reduction sites as follows in Table 1. Removed specimens were transported to fish farm near Maribor or they were taken by the locals for culinary purposes.

**Table 1: Number of Common nase specimens removed during each year [No. of specimens]. For each year, also number of reduction sites are presented [No. of sites]. [No. of specimens FRIS] is number of reduction sites where only FRIS staff was present, while [No. of sites FRIS & AC] is number of sites where reduction was implemented with help of local angling clubs.**

Year	No. of sites	No. of sites FRIS	No. of sites FRIS & AC	No. of specimens
2017 and 2018	43	38	5	1.725
2019	43	26	17	2.905
2020	57	42	15	3.038
2021	48	35	13	2.980
2022	28	15	13	543
<b>SUM</b>	<b>219</b>	<b>156</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>11.191</b>

In the areas of intensive reduction procedures, we succeeded to decrease Common nase population for 88%. In Lasca release site (N=3), Common nase reduction efficiency was very important to us, since by reducing Common nase, the probability of survival of released Lasca specimens increased. In Lasca release sites, monitoring activities showed that the alien species decreased for:

- 66% in Jovšček stream (y. 2018: 143 spec., y. 2021: 48 spec.).
- 98% in Ozlenšček stream (y. 2018: 604 spec., y. 2021: 13 spec.).
- 72% in Močilnik stream (y. 2018: 11 spec., y. 2021: 3 spec.).

In the main Vipava River near town Prvačina (monitoring site), where large Common nase grouped, the number of specimens decreased for 65% (y. 2018: 94 spec., y. 2021: 33 spec.).

Based on field observations and monitoring surveys, it can be concluded that we succeeded to limit Common nase abundance and dispersal at crucial sections to give “space and food” to newly arrived Lasca. Reduction activities must and will be

continued also after the project ends. However, since the eradication of alien Common nase, without significantly influencing native species, is not possible, the only option is the coexistence of both species in the future. Consequently, our role for future is to monitor species and help Lasca to find its “food and space” and reach self-maintaining capabilities.

## Common nase reduction methodology

Common nase specimens were removed using the electrofishing method. Shallow sections were fished by wading, while sections deeper than 0.7 m were fished from a boat (photos below). Removed fish were stored alive in fish tanks for transportation. In case, the catch was not abundant, locals took fish for culinary purposes.



Common nase reduction activities were dispersed all over distribution range of the species (Figure 1). On the species distribution margins, we checked also upstream sections. However, during the action implementation, we focused the reduction efforts towards specific periods and strategic sites to achieve results that are even more efficient (Figure 2). We removed Common nase specimens more intensively during spring and autumn, when specimens group at larger numbers in shallows, in spawning and feeding grounds. Moreover, we repressed the Common nase population also at crucial areas preventing intrusion of large specimen numbers into Lasca release sites.



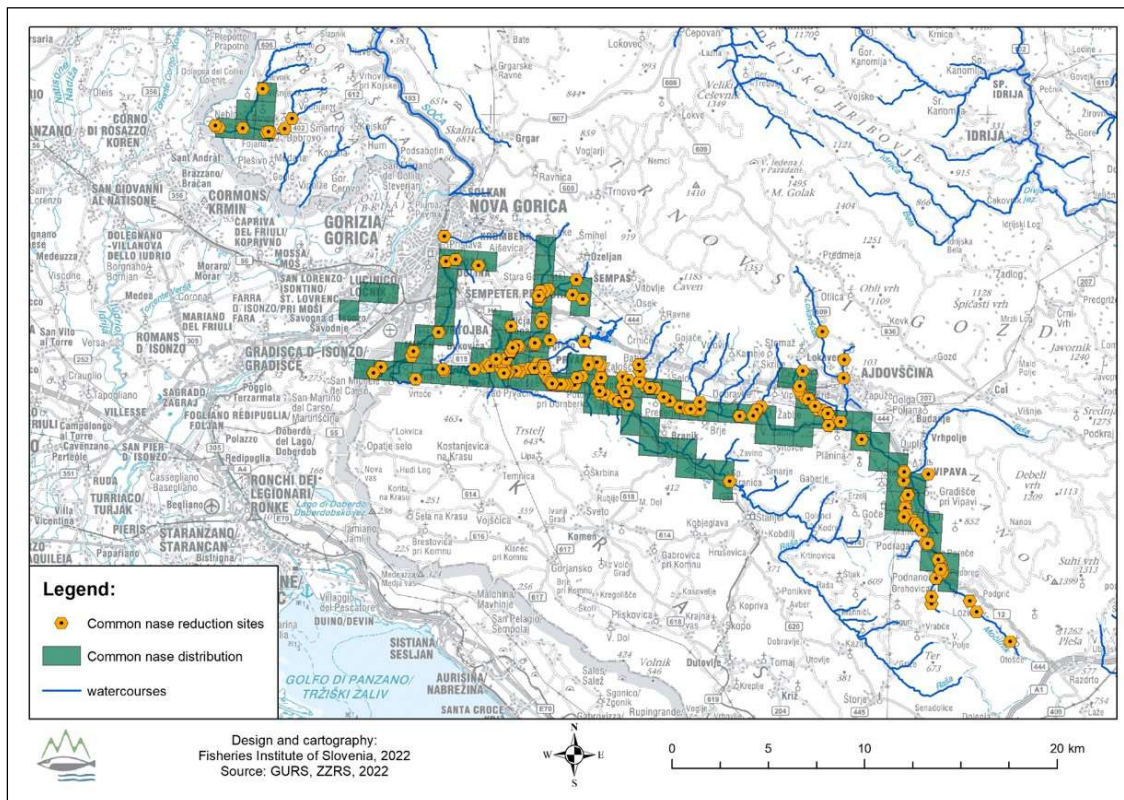


Figure 1: Common nose reduction sites (orange dots) within the project area. Green grids represents known Common nose range in the area.

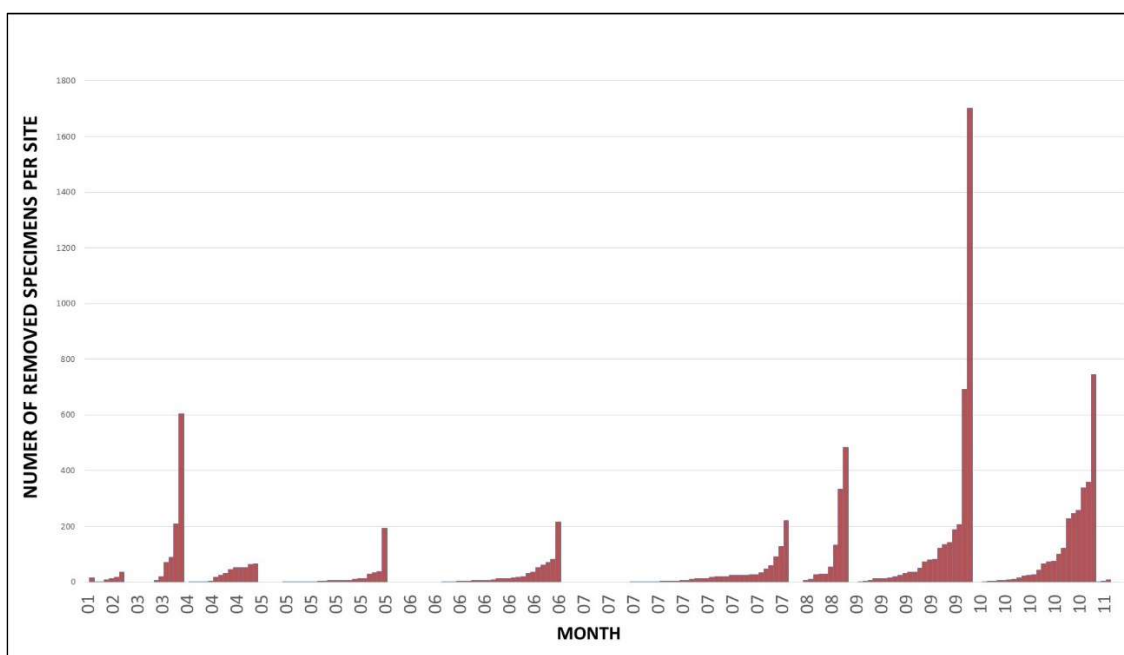


Figure 2: Absolute number of removed Common nose specimens per site in relation to months. Each column represents one catch per one site. From graph, it can be seen that number of specimens in catch highly depends on the season and place. More fish catch is in the spring and autumn at specific places where specimens group in large numbers.

In this action, local help especially by angling clubs, was crucial. They monitored Common nase behavioral patterns in the wild on daily bases and informed us regularly of their major movements. They supported also supported us in electrofishing activities. Their help was especially important when we were fishing wide sections of rivers like Vipava and tributary Lijak, where large teams were needed ( $N > 10$ ).



Figure 3: Life for Lasca team supported with crucial Angling club members. Left Angling club Renče members, right Angling Club Ajdovščina members.