

THE POWER OF A MOVEMENT

SCALING UP DAM REMOVAL IN EUROPE

Herman Wanningen, World Fish Migration Foundation

MAY 2023



2013 ELWHA RIVER, USA

© US NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

Dam fine work! Record number of barrier removals helps restore rivers across Europe

More than 300 barriers were taken down last year, boosting the health of waterways and the wildlife they support, say experts.



(c) Zuzana Matusova

BARRIERS IN RIVERS

DAMS

WEIRS

CULVERTS

SLUICES

RAMPS



**93%
DECREASE IN
EUROPEAN
MIGRATORY
FISH STOCKS**

THE PROBLEMS

1.100

**FRESHWATER MIGRATORY FISH SPECIES
GLOBALLY ARE BLOCKED BY BARRIERS**

>1,2 MILLION*

**BARRIERS FRAGMENT EUROPEAN
RIVERS**

>150.000*

**BARRIERS IN EUROPE LISTED AS
OBSOLETE**

***(HORIZON 2020 AMBER
EU COMMISSION FUNDED RESEARCH)**

PROBLEMS

SEDIMENT PROCESSES ALTERED

ACCUMULATION UPSTREAM

LACK OF SAND & GRAVEL DOWNSTREAM

TRAPPED ORGANIC MATERIAL & NUTRIENTS

WATER QUALITY ISSUES

ALGAE BLOOMS

CHANGE IN WATER VELOCITY

FLOOD RISKS

TEMPERATURE CHANGE

EU POLICIES

NATURA2000 & WFD

BIODIVERSITY STRATEGY 2030

EU NATURE RESTORATION LAW

RESTORING 25.000KM FREE FLOWING RIVERS



© Rudmer Zwerver

THE SOLUTION DAM REMOVAL

STARTING WITH >150.000
OBSOLETE & OLD BARRIERS
IN EUROPE

IN LINE WITH WFD &
EU BIODIVERSITY STRATEGY

(c) Rob Kleinjans / WFMF



OBSOLETE BARRIERS



European Commission's [Guidance on Barrier Removal](#) as:
'barriers that no longer fulfil their original purpose or that are no longer needed'.



DAM REMOVAL EUROPE

A MOVEMENT OF ORGANISATIONS AND
CITIZENS MAINSTREAMING DAM REMOVAL
AS RIVER RESTORATION TOOL.

FINANCIALLY SUPPORTED BY THE DUTCH
POSTCODE LOTTERY AND MANY MORE

INITIATED AND HOSTED BY WFMF



WORLD FISH MIGRATION
FOUNDATION



The
Rivers
Trust



The Nature
Conservancy



Wetlands
INTERNATIONAL

A wide-angle landscape photograph of a river valley. A large, rugged mountain peak dominates the background under a blue sky with scattered white clouds. The river in the foreground is a vibrant turquoise color, winding through a wide, sandy riverbed. The surrounding landscape is lush with green trees and fields, with some small settlements visible in the distance.

OUR MISSION

SAVE FREE-FLOWING RIVERS FULL OF FISH

OUR STRATEGY

ENABLE RIVER PRACTITIONERS TO
REMOVE DAMS AND CELEBRATE
SUCCESS STORIES

*"I really value your amazing events and work, and
the fantastic community you have established for
knowledge sharing and support".*

Tania White, Environment Agency (UK)

SHARE RESOURCES & TEMPLATE PROCEDURES

PROVIDE HELPDESK
SEMINARS/WORKSHOPS
BROAD CASTING LIVE REMOVALS
DAM REMOVAL AWARD
TAILOR MADE COURSES (2023)
FREE-FLOW CONFERENCE (2024)



SHARING EUROPEAN SHOWCASES



ESTONIA, PARNU RIVER: 3000KM RESTORED BY EU DEVELOPMENT FUNDING

SHARING EUROPEAN SHOWCASES



© Robert Epple, ERN

FRANCE, SELUNE RIVER: 80KM RIVER RESTORED, TOO EXPENSIVE HYDROPOWER DAMS

LA ROCHE QUI BOIT
SELUNE RIVER
FRANCE



VARDE A RIVER

DENMARK

REMEANDERING: YES

DAM REMOVAL: YES

FISHWAYS: NO

COMMUNICATION: NOT MUCH

OBSOLETE BARRIERS LATVIA 2022







LATVIA 2023

Beja dam Aluksne River



STAICELE PAPER FACTORY, LATVIA

LITHUANIA

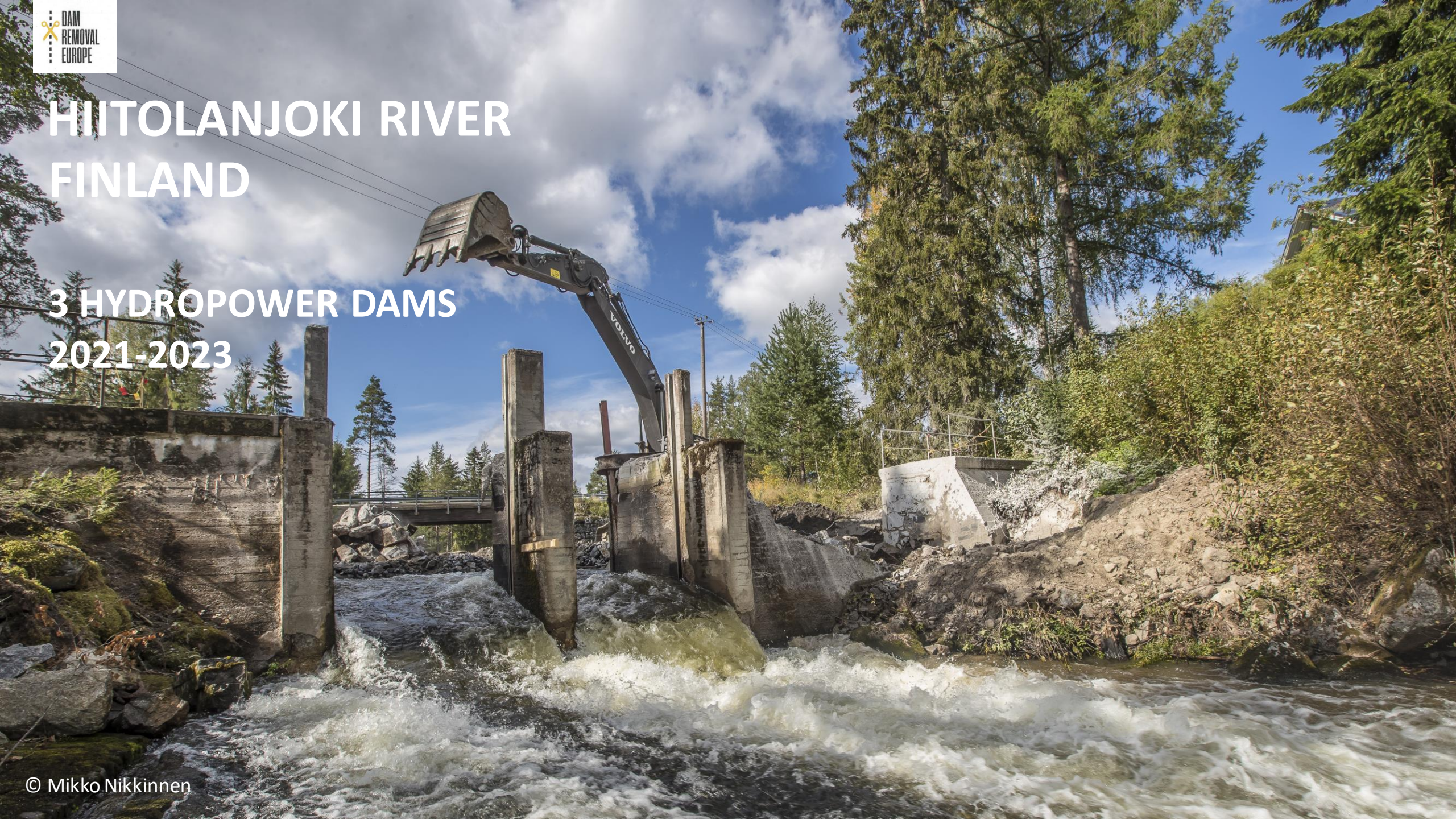
DEVELOPING DAM
REMOVAL POLICY
IN 3 YEARS

EVERY COUNTRY
NEEDS A
SUCCESS STORY



HIITOLANJOKI RIVER FINLAND

3 HYDROPOWER DAMS
2021-2023



HIITOLANJOKI RIVER FINLAND

3 HYDROPOWER DAMS
2021-2023



SPAIN

NATIONAL LAW TO TAKE OLD DAMS OUT



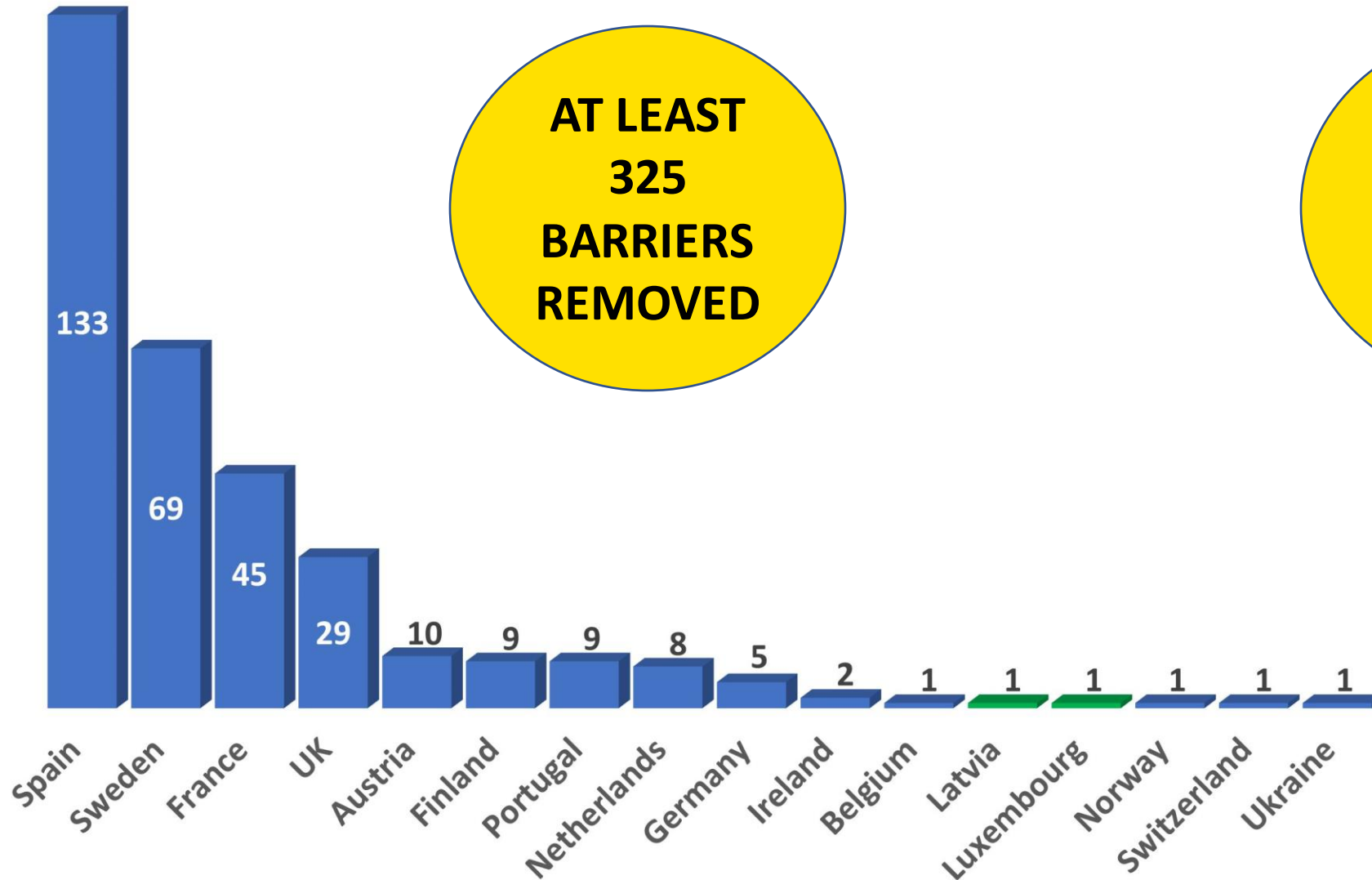
Weir today, gone tomorrow: work starts to free Cumbrian river



BEAUTIFUL MACHINERY (SLOVAKIA)



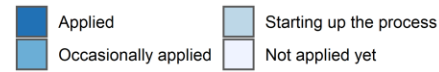
RECORD YEAR OF DAM REMOVALS IN 2022



**AT LEAST
325
BARRIERS
REMOVED**

**>150.000
OBSOLETE
BARRIERS
TO GO**

**12
BILLION
EURO
VALUE**



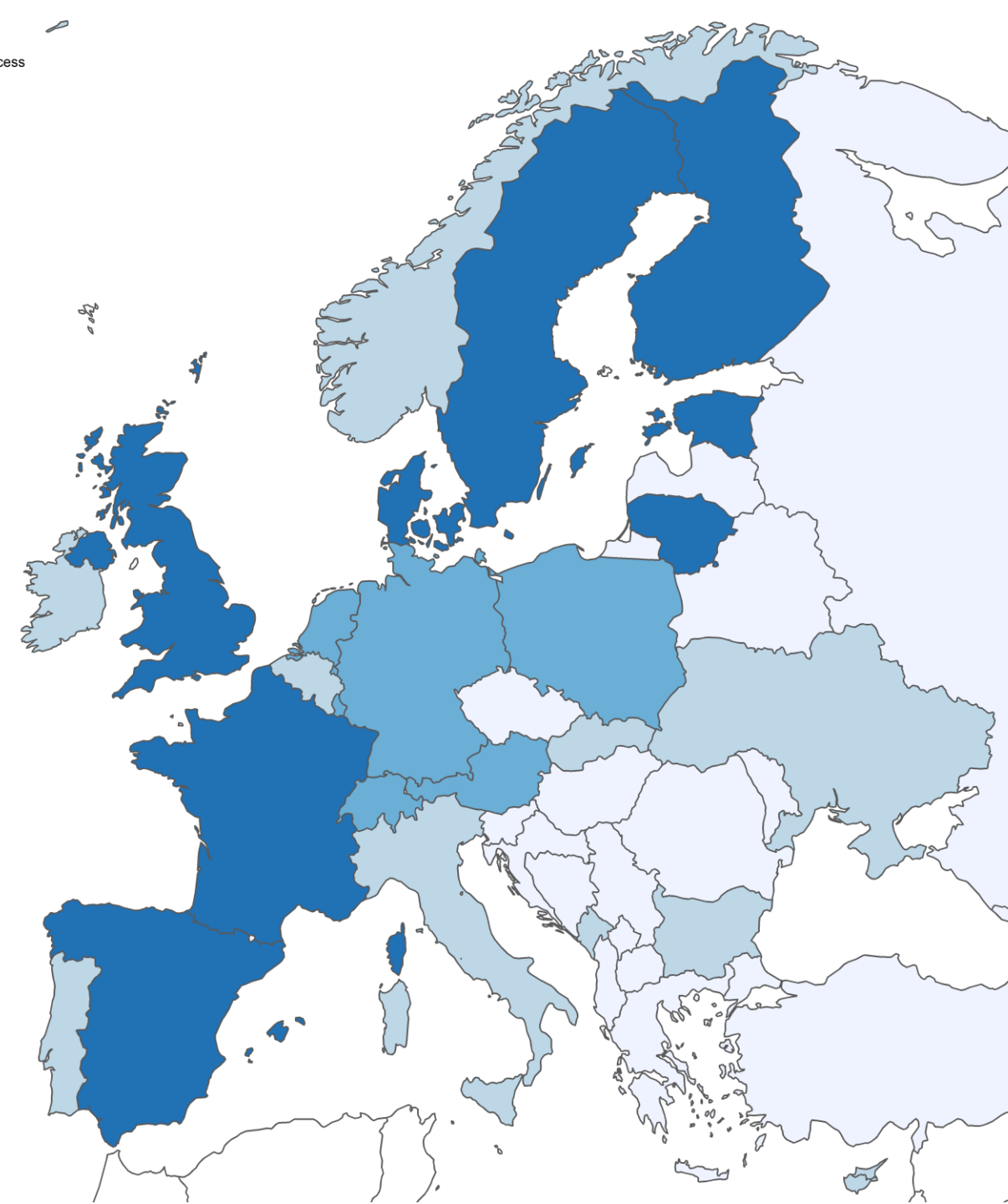
STATUS IMPLEMENTATION DAM REMOVAL

7 COUNTRIES

**IMPLEMENTED DAM REMOVAL AS A RIVER
RESTORATION TOOL**

CONTROVERSIAL TOPIC

**RAISE AWARENESS
MAKING PEOPLE PROUD
HELP EACH OTHER
GROWING MOVEMENT**



DAM REMOVAL AWARD 2022

Nominate your project
for a chance to win 10.000 €.

More information:
www.damremoval.eu/events



European
Investment Bank



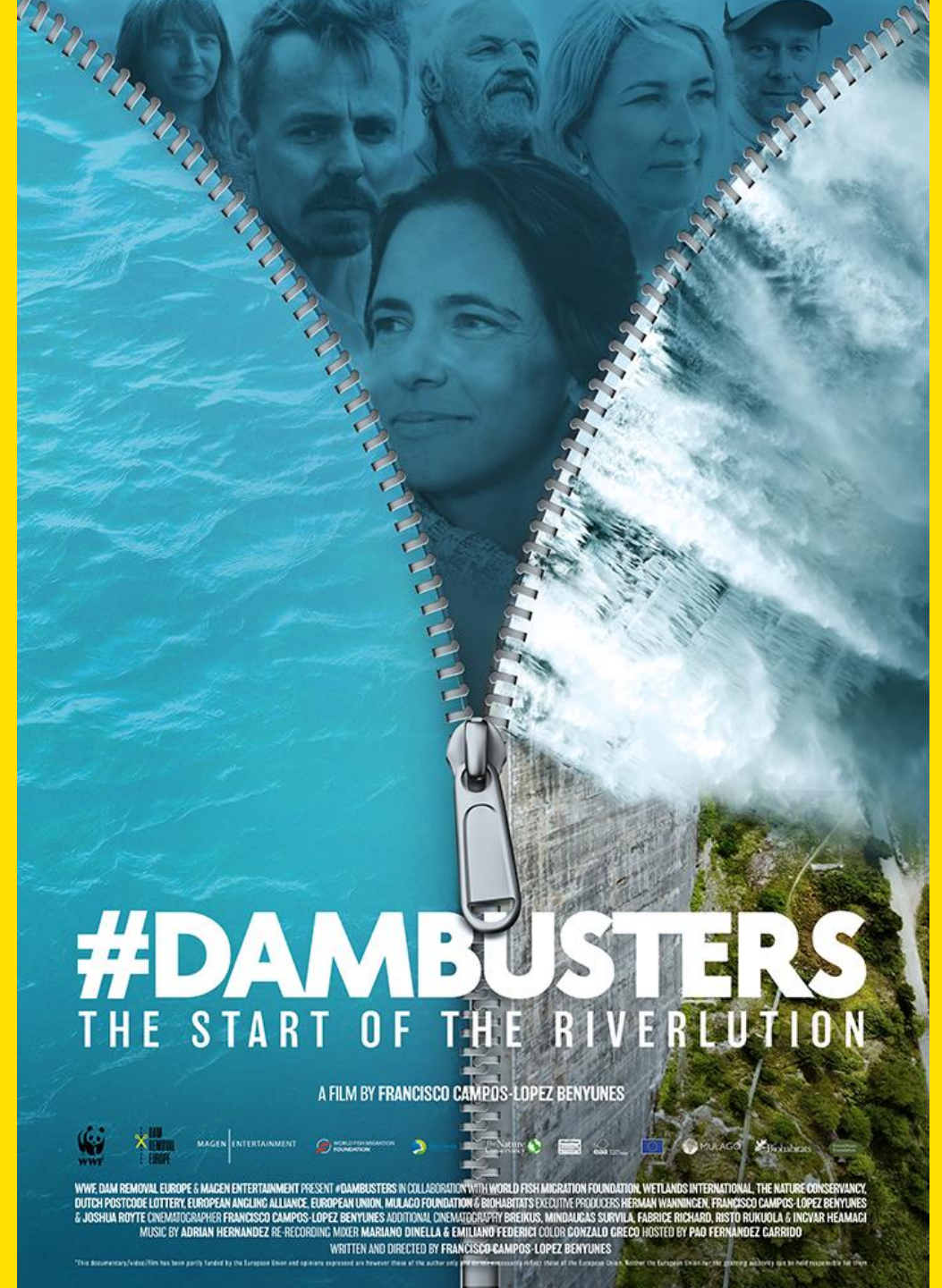
DONALD DUCK LOVES TO TAKE DAMS OUT TOO



MEET THE RIVER HEROES

#DAMBUSTERS ON TOUR
OCTOBER 2022- DECEMBER 2023

NATIONAL PREMIERES
TV SCREENINGS - FILM FESTIVALS



Norway blows up hydro dam to restore river health and fish stocks

January, 2022

Meet
Tore Solbakken







I'M DONE HERE!
I RETIRE!

FREE
AT LAST!

DAMSTERDAM

DAM
REMOVAL
EUROPE

Seppo Leimonen 2021
seppo.net

OUR GOALS

WHAT WE WANT TO ACCOMPLISH BY 2025

Removal of at least
50 strategic dams in
more than 10
European countries
and let at least 5,000
km of river flow
freely again

Change policies and
regulations in at
least 12 European
countries in favour
of free-flowing rivers
and dam removal

Scaling up the dam
removal movement
to 100 supporting
organisations and
grow the movement
from 5,000 to 10,000
involved
professionals

Develop at least 3
scalable financial
models for dam
removal and create
an operational
revolving fund for
dam removal.