

Information sheet:

The salmon and freshwater fishing sector in the UK

Fish are an essential part of the freshwater aquatic environment; healthy fish stocks are an indicator of environmental quality. Successful inland fisheries are a source of employment and help sustain communities.

The following are some of the key facts on salmon and freshwater fisheries in England and Wales:

- Responsibility for policy on salmon and freshwater fisheries in England rests with the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
- Responsibility for policy on salmon and freshwater fisheries in Wales rests with the Minister for Environment, Planning and Countryside
- Within the policy framework set by Ministers, the day to day management and regulatory responsibility for salmon and freshwater fisheries rests with the Environment Agency (EA) and Environment Agency Wales (EAW)
- The Environment Agency and The Environment Agency Wales have a statutory duty to maintain, improve and develop salmon, trout, freshwater and eel fisheries. The Environment Agency's fisheries work is funded by rod and net licence duties and Government grant-in-aid (currently £5.8 million for 2008/09)
- The number of coarse fish in our rivers is increasing with the most recent survey revealing that coarse fish were present at 98% of sites, with 50% containing over 8 species
- Salmon stocks are becoming depleted with 35 of the 64 England and Wales' main salmon rivers either 'probably at risk' or 'at risk' and the Annual Assessment of Salmon Stocks and Fisheries in England and Wales 2007 by the Environment Agency and Cefas suggested that 'The majority of salmon stocks in England and Wales ... remain in a depleted state'.
- The Environment Agency can introduce Byelaws to protect fish stocks by restricting the methods and baits that are used by anglers and netsmen
- The Environment Agency has various powers to protect fish stocks and reduce exploitation through the Salmon and Freshwater Fisheries Act 1975 (as amended)
- The Environment Agency draft Byelaws and Net Limitation Orders (a method that the Environment Agency may apply to limit the number of nets fishing in a public fishery) which they submit to Defra as part of a consultation process. If there are objections then they must be submitted to Ministers for Confirmation
- Through Cefas and the Agency, Defra licence the keeping and/or release of species of fish and crayfish likely to constitute a threat to species native to the UK

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Declared catch of salmon for England and Wales for 1998-2007

Year	Nets & fixed engines		Rods (inc. released fish)		Total caught		Total retained	
	No.	Wt (t)	No.	Wt (t)	No.	Wt (t)	No.	Wt (t)
1998	25,179	84.7	17,109	59.1	42,288	143.9	36,917	122.9
1999	34,167	124.4	12,492	49.8	46,659	174.2	41,094	150.0
2000	50,998	182.7	17,596	67.5	68,594	250.2	60,953	218.8
2001	43,243	153.3	14,383	56.8	57,626	210.1	51,307	184.2
2002	38,279	133.2	15,282	60.4	53,561	193.6	45,669	161.0
2003	17,219	69.2	11,519	48.5	28,738	117.7	22,206	89.0
2004	16,581	59.1	27,332	104.5	43,913	163.6	30,559	111.4
2005	16,811	60.9	21,418	85.8	38,229	146.7	26,162	36.5
2006	13,578	50.5	19,509	72.1	33,087	122.6	22,056	79.8
2007*	10,928	37.9	18,117	67.2	29,045	105.1	19,173	76.3

Mean

(2002-2006)	20,494	74.6	19,012	74.3	39,506	148.8	29,330	107.5
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* Provisional

Source: Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science and the Environment Agency