

# Fisheries Statistics 2000

## Salmonid and freshwater fisheries statistics for England and Wales



ENVIRONMENT  
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## **Salmonid and Freshwater Fisheries Statistics for England and Wales**

1. Fisheries Statistics 1989 (out of print)
2. Fisheries Statistics 1990 (out of print)
3. Fisheries Statistics 1991 (out of print)
4. Fisheries Statistics 1992 (out of print)
5. Fisheries Statistics 1993 (out of print)
6. Fisheries Statistics 1994
7. Fisheries Statistics 1995
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9. Fisheries Statistics 1997
10. Fisheries Statistics 1998
11. Fisheries Statistics 1999

## **Annual Assessment of Salmon Stocks and Fisheries in England and Wales**

(Produced jointly by the Environment Agency and CEFAS)

1. 1998
2. 1999
3. 2000

### **Leaflets**

1. Catch and Release - *a guide to careful salmon handling*
2. Buyer Beware - *your guide to stocking fish*
3. Salmon – *your part in their future*

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**ENVIRONMENT AGENCY**

**SALMONID AND FRESHWATER FISHERIES STATISTICS  
FOR ENGLAND AND WALES, 2000**

(Declared catches of salmon and migratory trout by rods, nets and other instruments)

This report has been prepared by the  
**National Salmon and Trout Fisheries Centre of the Environment Agency.**

## The principal aim of the Environment Agency in respect of fisheries is:

to maintain, improve and develop fish stocks, the basic fisheries resource, in order to optimise the social and economic benefits from their sustainable exploitation.

### To achieve this aim, we have set the following objectives:

- conserve and develop sustainable fisheries for salmon, trout, freshwater fish, eels and, where appropriate, sea fish;
- regulate fisheries through the enforcement of a consistent series of licences, orders, byelaws and consents;
- monitor the performance of fisheries in our rivers and inland waters, estuaries and, where appropriate coastal waters, including the status of fish stocks; their habitat; fishing effort and catches;
- communicate with our customers and understand their needs;
- produce clear strategies for the long-term management of each of the main types of fishery, i.e. for salmon, trout, coarse fish and eels;
- secure a fair and robust funding base for necessary fisheries work incorporating full recovery of costs from those who damage the environment or whose activities directly cause fisheries work to be undertaken;
- develop our scientific and technical understanding of fisheries including the application of best practice to fisheries management and investment in our staff's skills and professional development. Focused R&D will aid in achieving all of our objectives.

**This report, one of a long-term series, contributes to the objectives of communicating the Agency's fisheries monitoring programme.**

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

This report is the sixth collation of salmon and migratory trout catch statistics for England and Wales produced by the Environment Agency. For the years 1989-94 these statistics were published by the National Rivers Authority (NRA) and the years 1983-88 by the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, Directorate of Fisheries Research in its Data Report series.

This report is designed to be a reference document of declared salmonid catches in England and Wales. The 2000 report includes summary data from Agency fish counters and traps. Salmon stock assessment data including provisional catches, counter run estimates and some juvenile data are now published in an annual assessment for the International Council for the Exploration of the Seas (ICES). The fourth report in this series was published jointly by the Environment Agency and the Centre for Environment, Fisheries & Aquatic Science (CEFAS) in April 2001.

The catch data recorded in this document represent declared catches only and as such will not be an entirely accurate record of the total numbers of fish landed. Furthermore, the relationship between catch and stock size is not always straight forward, regardless of the accuracy of the catch data. Great care must be taken therefore in interpreting these data. In case of doubt please refer to the National Salmon and Trout Fisheries Centre.

## 2. THE ENVIRONMENT AGENCY AND ITS REGIONS

The Environment Agency is a non-departmental public body established by the Environment Act 1995. It has taken over the functions of its predecessors, the National Rivers Authority, Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Pollution, Waste Regulation Authorities and some parts of the Department of the Environment. The Agency came into effect on 1 April 1996.

There are 8 Agency Regions: North East, Anglian, Thames, Southern, South West, Midlands, Environment Agency Wales and North West.

## 3. ROD LICENCE CATCH RETURNS

In November 2000, for the sixth consecutive year, the Agency sent a national catch return reminder to holders of a salmon and sea trout licence. The timing of the reminder coincided with the end of the majority of the rod fishing seasons. As in 1994, 1995, 1996, 1997, 1998 and 1999 the effect of this reminder was very marked when compared with 1992 and 1993 returns (when no reminders were sent).

In 2000 30,139 migratory salmonid licences were sold. A total of 16,260 returns were made (54%). It is believed that these returns record approximately 90% of all migratory salmonids caught in England and Wales.

## 4. NATIONAL OVERVIEW AND SUMMARY OF MAIN FINDINGS, 2000

### Fishing effort

- England and Wales experienced substantially higher than average rainfall in 2000. River flows were low in August, but were at or above average in the rest of the year which generally provided good conditions for angling.
- National byelaws, introduced in April 1999 to protect spring salmon, resulted in the release of approximately 1,100 rod caught salmon before 16 June in 2000. Net fisheries exempted from the byelaws released a total of 19 salmon before 1 June. Additional statutory and voluntary regulatory measures implemented in 2000 included a buy-out of the Usk drift net fishery (in perpetuity), and the introduction of a byelaw limiting the number of salmon individual anglers on the River Lune (NW Region) can kill (max. 4) after 15 June in any one fishing season.
- A total of 30,139 annual and short-term migratory salmonid rod-fishing licences were issued in 2000. Sales of annual licences have fallen by 29% since 1994 whereas sales of short-term (1 and 8 day) licences have remained fairly consistent. The total number of licences issued has fallen by just over a fifth since 1994.

- In all regions the declared number of days fished in 2000 was well below the average of the previous five years, with a 25% reduction overall (177,458 days in 2000 compared with 243,288 in 1995). This is likely to reflect both the fall in the number of licences issued over recent years and the introduction of national byelaws in 1999.
- The number of net licences issued has continued to decline as a result of measures taken to reduce levels of exploitation and the declining commercial viability of some fisheries. The total number of licences issued in 2000 was 449. This compares with 498 in 1999 and 932 in 1990.

### Rod and net catches

- The declared rod catch of salmon for England and Wales in 2000 was 17,596 (67.5 t). This compares with 12,492 in 1999 and represents a 16% increase on the previous five-year mean (15,220 salmon). A total of 50,998 (183 t.) salmon were declared caught by the commercial net fisheries in 2000, an increase of 49% on the 1999 catch (34,167) and 33% on the previous five-year mean (38,229). North East netsmen caught 85% (43,354 fish) of the total salmon net catch in 2000.
- The declared catch of sea trout in 2000 was 41,322 (38.4 t.) by rods and 46,022 (83 t.) by nets. The rod catch fell by 12% compared with 1999 but increased by 13% when compared with previous five-year mean (36,454).

**Summary of declared salmon and sea trout rod catches, 2000**

	Salmon		Sea trout	
	Number	Weight (t.)	Number	Weight (t.)
<b>Total</b>				
<b>Caught</b>	17,596	67.5	41,322	38.4
<b>Retained</b>	10,126	36.8	20,628	24.4
<b>Released</b>	7,470	30.7	20,694	14.0

**Summary of declared salmon and sea trout net catches, 2000**

	Salmon		Sea trout	
	Number	Weight (t.)	Number	Weight (t.)
<b>Total</b>				
<b>Caught</b>	50,998	183.0	46,022	83.0
<b>Retained</b>	50,827	182.4	46,022	83.0
<b>Released</b>	171	0.6	0	0

- The river with the highest declared rod catch of salmon was the Tyne (2,297), followed by the Lune (1,440), the Derwent (1,328), the Eden (1,093) and the Usk (872). The river with the highest declared rod catch of sea trout was the Tywi (4,134), followed by the Teifi (3,235), the Lune (2,833), the Border Esk (2,174) and the Dyfi (2,032).

**Catch and Release**

- The total number of salmon released by anglers in 2000 was 7,471 (42%). The percentage of fish released was slightly down when compared with 1999, possibly as a result of a greater proportion of fresh grilse being killed in the summer months. Half of all sea trout caught by anglers in 2000 were released compared with 29% in 1993. In addition to the 19 salmon released before June 1 by the byelaw exempted net fisheries, a further 152 salmon were

released by the Avon/Stour (Mudeford) nets under a compensation agreement with the Wessex Salmon and Rivers Trust (WS&R).

**Grilse/Multi-sea-winter stocks**

- Rod catches of grilse in 2000 were higher than in 1999 in all regions, and 22% above the previous five-year mean overall. Rod catches of multi-sea-winter salmon in 2000 were better than those in 1999 in some regions, but were well below the five-year mean in most regions with the exception of North East and North West regions.

**Agency fish counters and traps**

- Data from Agency counters and traps in England and Wales in 2000 show that runs of salmon and sea trout into freshwater were generally similar to or above those in 1999. Values for the NW region, in particular, were well above the five-year mean.