

SEA TROUT FISHERY STATISTICS - 2019 SEASON



Summary

- The total reported rod catch (retained and released) of sea trout for 2019 is 16,899. Catches have declined over much of the period since 1952, when our records began. Total reported rod catch in 2019 is the third lowest on record and 88% of the previous 5 year average.
- The proportion of the total rod catch accounted for by catch and release in 2019 is 87%. This is the second highest proportion since records began in 1994. A proportion of fish released from the rod fishery may be re-caught and hence inflate the catch statistics by appearing in the reported data more than once.
- Reported catch and effort for the fixed engine and net & coble fisheries were the lowest recorded since records began in 1952.

This publication summarises the sea trout fishery statistics, based on returns from proprietors, occupiers or agents of fisheries throughout Scotland, for the 2019 fishing season. These data are derived from 2,009 forms returned from 2,157 forms issued (93% return rate). Catches for the previous 10 years are based on return rates of between 93% and 94%.

These statistics are part of a time series which began in 1952 and are collected and collated by Marine Scotland Science.

Salmon Fishery Regulations

Statutory conservation measures are in place to regulate both the killing of salmon in the early months of the fishing season (<https://www2.gov.scot/Topics/marine/Salmon-Trout-Coarse/fishreform/licence/spring>), in coastal waters and on stocks with poor conservation status (<https://www2.gov.scot/Topics/marine/Salmon-Trout-Coarse/fishreform/licence/status>).

Although specifically related to the catches of salmon, these regulations may have an impact on the catch and effort data reported by Scottish sea trout fisheries as some target both species.

CATCH AND EFFORT REPORTED BY SCOTTISH SEA TROUT FISHERIES IN 2019

The rod and line fishery

A total of 2,159 sea trout were reported caught and retained in the rod and line fishery. A further 14,740 sea trout were reported caught and released. We have no comprehensive time series of fishing effort information associated with the rod and line fishery.

Total rod catches (retained and released) of sea trout for Scotland as a whole have declined over much of the period since 1952, when our records began. The combined retained and released rod catch of sea trout for 2019 is 16,899. This is 88% of the previous 5 year average, and third lowest since records began in 1952 (Figure 1).

Finnock are sea trout which have spent less than a year at sea and are making their first return to fresh water. They may also be known as whitling or herling. Finnock catches have been reported since 2004, and are not included in the sea trout data. A total of 348 finnock were reported caught and retained in the rod and line fishery. A further 7,255 finnock were reported as caught and released. The total combined retained and released rod catch of 7,603, is 82% of the previous 5 year average and fifth lowest since records began in 2004 (Figure 1).

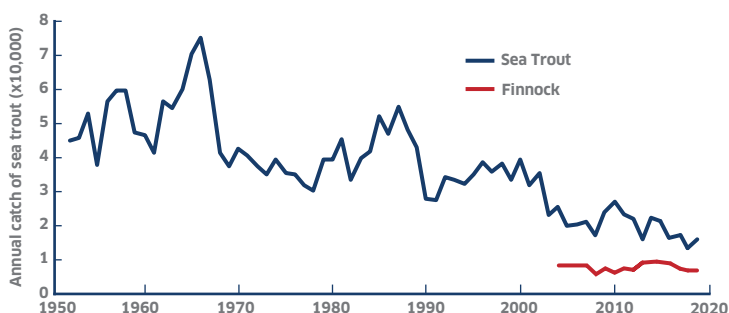


FIGURE 1
ROD AND LINE FISHERY.



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Catch and release

The proportion of the rod catch accounted for by catch and release has generally increased since 1994, when catch and release information was first recorded (Figure 2), but fell slightly in 2019. The proportion subsequently released was 87% of sea trout and 95% of finnock. A proportion of fish released from the rod fishery may be re-caught and hence inflate the catch statistics by appearing in the reported data more than once.

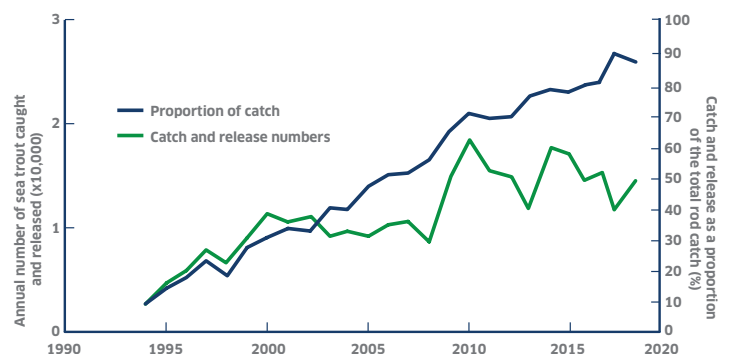


FIGURE 2
CATCH AND RELEASE, ROD AND LINE FISHERY.

The net fisheries

A total of 204 sea trout were reported caught and retained in the Solway haaf net fishery from a reported effort of 8 net months. These fisheries do not yield data that can be easily



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The catch by fishing method

In 2019, almost 96% of the total annual reported sea trout catch was accounted for by the rod fisheries. Net and coble fisheries comprised 3.2% and fixed engine fisheries accounted for 1.2%. Restricting the analysis to retained catch, rods accounted for 74% of the catch compared to 7% and 19% for fixed engine and net & coble fisheries respectively.

Catch statistics and GDPR

In May 2018, the EU General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) and the UK Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA) came into force, repealing the old Data Protection Act 1998.

Marine Scotland understands that our processing of salmon and sea trout catch data can be subject to this legislation. Personal data can include data relating to individuals, small partnerships and sole traders, but not to data relating to angling clubs, public companies, charities or public bodies.

How and why we handle your fishery-related data, your rights in relation to our processing of it and what to do if you have any questions about this, are detailed in our Privacy Notice, available on the Scottish government website (at <https://www.gov.scot/publications/marine-publications-collecting-salmon-and-sea-trout-fishery-data/>).

Annual salmon and sea trout catch statistics, and any updates of earlier seasons' reports, are published in compliance with the Code of Practice for Statistics. Annual data (1952 to 2019) can be

combined with returns from gear types in the rest of Scotland and data from this region are generally omitted when calculating a national index for fixed engine fishing effort.

A total of 565 sea trout were reported caught and retained in the net & coble fishery, from a reported effort of 18 crew months.

Reported catch and effort in both net fisheries have declined over much of the period covered by our records and remain at low levels (Figures 3 & 4). In 2019, reported catch and effort for both the fixed engine and net & coble fisheries were the lowest recorded by either fishery since records began in 1952.

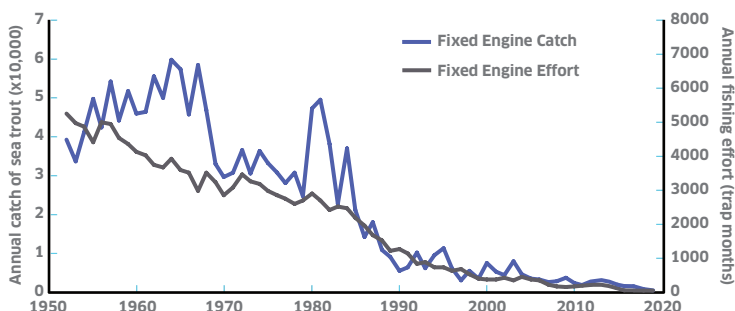


FIGURE 3
FIXED ENGINE FISHERY.

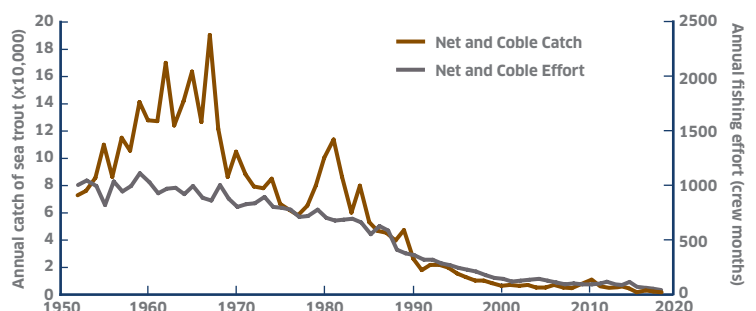


FIGURE 4
NET AND COBLE FISHERY.



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accessed via the Marine Scotland Data Portal (at <https://data.marine.gov.scot/dataset/>) whilst our data visualisation application (<https://scotland.shinyapps.io/sg-salmon-sea-trout-catch/>) allows the user to graph and download the annual data.

Prior to the 2009 season, aggregated catch data were reported for 62 Scottish Salmon Fishery Districts or Combined Districts; for the 2009 to 2018 seasons, the aggregated data were reported for each of the 109 Salmon Fishery Districts.

In order to comply with data protection legislation and the Code of Practice for Statistics, we now report data from net fisheries at Regional level. Rod catches continue to be available at District level, where possible. Where there are few active rod fisheries, the data are aggregated into geographically-coherent groupings of Districts.

Contact

If you have a specific request for Scottish salmon and sea trout fishery information, not available at the links provided on this page, please contact us directly at ms.catchform@gov.scot

Downloads

Topic sheet no. 67 (Collecting the Marine Scotland Salmon and Sea Trout Fishery Statistics) explains how we collect the catch statistics.

Topic sheet no. 68 (Salmon Fishery Statistics) summarises the salmon fishery statistics for the 2019 fishing season.

Both topic sheets are available for download at <https://www.gov.scot/publications/marine-publications-information-on-scottish-salmon-and-sea-trout-statistics/>

Summary data for fishing seasons 1952 to 2019 are available from our data visualisation application (<https://scotland.shinyapps.io/sg-salmon-sea-trout-catch/>), whilst more detailed data can be obtained from the Marine Scotland Data Portal (<https://data.marine.gov.scot/search/type/dataset>).

These data are provided as the most complete at the time of publication. Our records are amended when further information becomes available and updated annually in April when the statistics for the most recent fishing season are published.