

SALMON FISHERY STATISTICS - 2019 SEASON



Summary

- The total reported rod catch (retained and released) of wild salmon for 2019 is 47,515. Total reported rod catch is 97% of the previous 5-year average and is the fourth lowest since records began in 1952.
- The proportion of the rod catch accounted for by catch and release is among the highest recorded. In 2019, 98% of rod caught spring multi sea-winter fish (taken before 1 May) were released, as were 92% of the annual rod catch. 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.
- Trends in rod catch varied among individual stock components. Reported spring catches of multi sea-winter fish have generally declined since records began and, although there is some indication that catch has stabilised in recent years, it remains at a low level. Overall, rod catch in later months generally increased up to 2010. It fell sharply over the next 4 years, before recovering slightly in 2015 and 2016. It fell again in 2017 and 2018, but increased slightly in 2019.
- Reported catch and effort for the fixed engine and net & coble fisheries were among the lowest recorded by either fishery since records began in 1952.
- Fish reported as being of farmed origin represented 0.04% of the total Scottish catch in 2019. The distribution of farmed origin fish was highly uneven, with the North West region accounting for 70% of those reported.

This publication summarises the salmon 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>).

These regulations will have an impact on the catch and effort data reported by Scottish salmon fisheries.

CATCH AND EFFORT REPORTED BY SCOTTISH SALMON FISHERIES IN 2019

The rod and line fishery

A total of 3,786 wild fish were reported caught and retained in the rod and line fishery. A further 43,729 were reported caught and released. The combined retained and released rod catch for 2019 is 47,515, which is 97% of the previous 5 year average. We have no time series of fishing effort information associated with the rod and line fishery.

Annual rod catch generally increased over the period 1952-2010, but then fell to the lowest on record in 2018. There was a slight recovery in rod catch in 2019, which was the fourth lowest on record (Figure 1).

Trends in total rod catch varied among individual stock components (Figure 2). Spring multi sea-

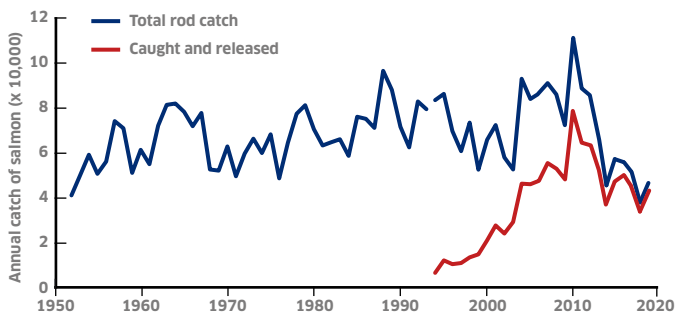


FIGURE 1
ROD AND LINE FISHERY

winter (MSW) fish (taken before 1 May) has generally declined since records began and although stabilising in recent years, catches remain at a low level. Overall, catch in later months (one sea-winter (1SW) and MSW caught in summer and autumn) generally increased up to 2010, after which it fell sharply. It recovered slightly in 2015 and 2016 before falling again in 2017 and 2018. The summer/autumn stock component showed a slight recovery in 2019.

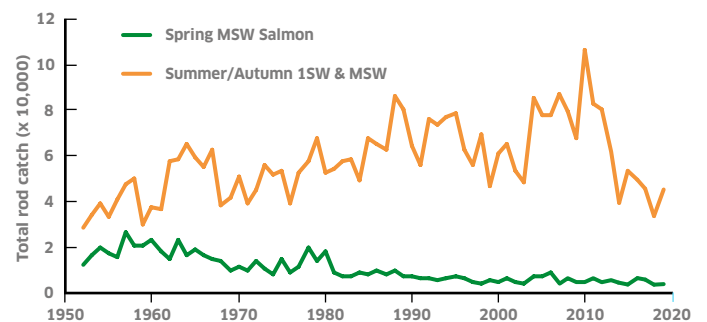


FIGURE 2
TRENDS IN STOCK COMPONENTS, ROD AND LINE FISHERY

Catch and release

The proportion of the rod catch accounted for by catch and release has generally increased since 1994, when such information was first recorded.





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In 2019, 92% of the annual rod catch was released compared to less than 8% in 1994. Similarly, less than 1% of rod caught spring fish were released in 1994 whereas 98% were released in 2019 (Figure 3). 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.

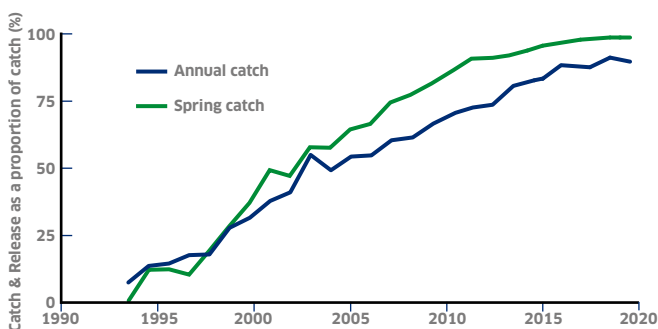


FIGURE 3
CATCH AND RELEASE, ROD AND LINE FISHERY

The net fisheries

As a result of the Salmon Conservation Regulations, retention of salmon caught in coastal waters has been prohibited since the 2015 season.

Reported catch and effort for the fixed engine and net & coble fisheries in 2019 remain among the

lowest recorded by either fishery since records began in 1952. In 2019, reported catches for net and coble fisheries were the lowest on record, whilst those for fixed engine fisheries were the fourth lowest. Reported effort for each fishery was the lowest in the respective time series.

Haaf nets in the Solway region, reported 164 fish caught and retained, from an effort of 8 net months.

A total of 465 wild fish were reported caught and retained in the net & coble fishery from a reported effort of 18 crew months.

The catch by fishing method

In 2019, approximately 99% of the total annual reported catch was accounted for by the rod fisheries. Net & coble fisheries comprised approximately 1% with fixed engine fisheries accounting for around 0.3%. Restricting the analysis to retained catch, rods accounted for approximately 86% of the catch compared to approximately 10% and 4% for the net & coble and fixed engine fisheries respectively.

In the spring, rod fisheries accounted for more than 99% of the total reported catch while net and coble catch comprised less than 0.5%. Of the retained spring catch, rod fisheries accounted for approximately 75% while net and coble, and fixed engine catches accounted for approximately 22% and 3% respectively.

Farmed salmon

A total of 20 fish of farmed origin was reported caught by all methods in 2019. Fish of farmed origin represented 0.04% of the total Scottish catch.

The distribution of farmed origin fish was highly uneven, with the North West region accounting for 70% of reports. Scottish regions are shown in MS Topic Sheet 67 <https://www.gov.scot/publications/marine-publications-information-on-scottish-salmon-and-sea-trout-statistics/>

Rod effort data

Marine Scotland has been compiling data regarding catches of salmon since 1952 but 2019 was the first time that national data has also been collected on rod effort. Information was provided on 84% of returned catch forms and represented a total effort of 194,050 rod days. The data will now be quality controlled and interrogated to determine the best way of including effort into methods used to estimate the conservation status of salmon stocks.

Catch statistics and the 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 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 visualise 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.

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. 69 summarises the sea trout 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.

Contact

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