

NRW B B 40.15 Annex 1: Catch-and-release options for salmon and sea trout

Options for salmon

The management of salmon stocks is well established through the Salmon Action Plan procedures, introduced under Ministerial Direction, that includes the setting of stock targets for principal salmon rivers and annual compliance monitoring. Linked to this is the DS that provides clear advice on management actions depending on the status of the stock. This now requires us to take urgent action to reduce the exploitation of stocks.

We have developed the following options, which are explained further in the technical report:

Option 1 Proceed with current principles of control.

This would trigger the immediate development of byelaws requiring full C&R fishing for 10 rivers:

Rivers 'AR':	Seiont, Rheidol, Tywi**, Tawe
Rivers 'PAR':	Usk*, Teifi*, Mawddach*, Dee*, Severn
Other N2K rivers:	Gwyrfai (not a principal salmon river),
	** N2K river (salmon not a feature)
	* N2K rivers (salmon as feature)

This option represents:

- the minimum that we need to do under the terms of our current management system, taking account of the NRW '3-year rule'.
- the level of intervention required to protect and restore N2K rivers.

Any proposed action on the cross-border rivers would require urgent liaison with the Environment Agency.

Option 2 Extend measures to all rivers currently 'AR' or 'PAR' and declining.

This would extend the number of rivers where C&R measures would be developed to include 7 more of the 23 principal salmon rivers:-

Rivers 'AR':	Ogwen, Dyfi,
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Rivers 'PAR': Ogmore, Taf, E&W Cleddau, Conwy, Clwyd.

This option would be fully compliant with the DS.

Option 3 Extend the C&R measures to all rivers in Wales.

This would extend the measures to the 5 principal rivers not included above:

Rivers 'PAR': Nevern, Dysinni, Dwyrd, Dwyfawr,

Rivers 'Probably Not at Risk': Glaslyn

This would:

- also extend the measures to all other rivers in Wales that have a salmon population.
- Represent an extraordinary option that goes beyond the current requirements of the DS. However it only brings in 5 more principal rivers, 3 of which are very small, whilst making the legal definition of geographical extent much simpler and avoiding angler confusion.
- This is the only option that fully recognises and addresses the global pressure on salmon stocks.

Summary of Options for Salmon

Option1 current approach based on: a) DS b) N2K requirements	Option 2 option 1 plus immediate response to AR and PAR (declining)	Option 3 byelaw for all rivers in Wales #
Wye (N2K) *	Wye (N2K) *	Wye (N2K) *
Taff / Ely *	Taff / Ely *	Taff / Ely *
Dee (N2K)***	Dee (N2K)	Dee (N2K)
Seiont **	Seiont **	Seiont **
Rheidol **	Rheidol **	Rheidol **
Tywi (N2K)	Tywi (N2K)	Tywi (N2K)
Tawe	Tawe	Tawe

Severn ***	Severn ***	Severn ***
	Gwyrfai (N2K)~	Gwyrfai (N2K)~
Gwyrfai (N2K) ~	Mawddach (N2K)	Mawddach (N2K)
Mawddach (N2K)	Usk (N2K)	Usk (N2K)
Usk (N2K)	Teifi (N2K)	Teifi (N2K)
Teifi (N2K)		
	Clwyd	Clwyd
	Ogwen	Ogwen
	Conwy	Conwy
	Dyfi	Dyfi
	E & W Cleddau	E & W Cleddau
	Taf	Taf
	Ogmore **	Ogmore **
		Glaslyn
		Dwyfawr +
		Dwyrdd +
		Dysinni ** +
		Nevern **
		All other non-principal salmon rivers

* full C&R byelaws already in place

** 90% C&R achieved by voluntary means in 2014

*** Dependent on liaison with Environment Agency

+ average (1994-2013) annual catch < 20 fish

~ non-principal salmon river

other non-principal rivers will be included, eg Rhymney

Options for sea trout

We propose to apply the principle of a decision structure to management of sea trout stocks. This would affect about 40% of the main sea trout rivers in Wales.

In response to the assessments we have prepared the following options:

Option 1 Proceed with current controls

Ongoing encouragement of voluntary C&R fishing.

Promotion largely focussed on those rivers assessed to be 'AR' and 'PAR'.

Option 2 Apply partial control measures to protect sea trout stocks in those rivers deemed to be 'AR' and 'PAR':-

There is greater flexibility required here because of the localised nature of concern. Details of controls would be informed by the consultation process, but would consider C&R fishing in the rod and net fisheries. These would potentially be early season measures alone.

This would require the preparation of byelaws for:

Rivers 'AR': rod fishing only - the rivers Usk and Loughor rod and net fishing
 - the rivers Tywi, Taf and Cleddau.

Rivers 'PAR': rod fishing only – the rivers Afan, Tawe, Gwendraeth Fawr and Fach, Aeron, and Seiont.

We wish to consult local interests on details around matters such as shortened net fishing seasons, consolidation of fishing season start and end, and concomitant rod restrictions.

Option 3 Apply C&R to the full season in all 'AR' and 'PAR' rivers:-

This would include all rivers in options 2 and 3 above.

Option 4 Extend full C&R fishing to the whole of Wales.

This is a significant step forward from other options and not one that is currently commended.