

General salmon (including sea trout) fishing legislation

It is illegal to:

fish without legal right or written permission from the beat owner or representative	to fish with prawns, shrimps or salmon roe throughout the catchment
kill unclean or unseasonable fish (baggots, gravid fish, kelts)	to use gaffs or tailers
to sell or buy wild salmon roe	to fish on a Sunday
to attempt to deliberately foul-hook fish	sell rod caught salmon or sea trout

Recommendations to ensure best possible fish welfare:

- Further advice is available on the Forth DSFB website - <http://forthdsfb.org/protecting-the-fish/catch-release/>
- Please use a knotless landing net to ensure best possible fish handling – [link to video](#) – and ‘keep ‘em wet.’
- In times of dry weather, low water and rising river temperatures salmon and trout are under increasing stress. The ForthDSFB recommends that fishing ceases when river water temperatures exceeds 18°C and anglers should consider lighter tackle and ceasing spinning when the river is in the low category on any SEPA gauge within the Forth. <https://www.fishforth.org/fishing-during-hot-weather/>
- The Board recommends any lure with a multi hook lure set up be taken down to single hook set up. i.e single, double or treble. The Board recommends anglers de-barb all hooks.

Restrictions on fishing:

Fishing above and below manmade structures can cause additional pressure on fish which are held up waiting to move upstream. The Forth DSFB recommends that an adequate exclusion zone is agreed with the DSFB at ALL manmade barriers whether they have a fish pass or not to prevent pressure on migrating fish.

In agreement with local owners/managers some areas are placed into conservation and fishing for migratory species is prohibited.

Fishing within these areas is without permission and therefore considered an offence under section 6 of the Salmon Act 2003.

All farmed salmon and pink salmon (*Oncorhynchus gorbuscha*) must be retained and notified to the ForthDSFB.

Scottish Government new guidance for categories:

Category	Probability of Meeting CL	Advice
1	At least 80%	Exploitation is sustainable therefore no additional management action is currently required. This recognises the effectiveness of existing non-statutory local management interventions.
2	60-80%	Management action is necessary to reduce exploitation: catch and release should be promoted strongly in the first instance. The need for mandatory catch and release will be reviewed annually.
3	Less than 60%	Exploitation is unsustainable therefore management actions required to reduce exploitation for 1 year i.e. mandatory catch and release (all methods).

Conservation Code for 2022 season

Under the Conservation of Salmon (Annual Close Time and Catch and Release) (Scotland) Regulations 2014 **no fish to be retained before 1st April.**

Under the Conservation of Salmon (Scotland) Amendment Regulations 2019, the below assessments have been given for each river for the 2022 season,

Forth District Season Rod & Line 1st February – 31st October Netting 1st April – 26th August

Baits and lures 1st June – 26th August

Scottish Government Rod & Line No retaining salmon before 1st April Netting No taking salmon in coastal areas (below Forth Railway Bridge)

Generally Salmon

Return all fish before 1st July

Return all hen fish

Return all cock fish over 10lbs (28")

Sea Trout

Return all fish before 1st July

Return all hen fish

Return all cock fish less than 3lbs

The Board is aiming to achieve 100% catch and release of spring salmon and sea trout across the District. For the latter part of the season the Board is promoting restraint and anglers are advised that the following guidelines outline the maximum number and type of fish that should be taken. It is hoped that many anglers will be satisfied with taking fewer fish than these guidelines permit.

For individual rivers:

River	Cat	Conservation Code Salmon	Catch & Release Target Salmon		Conservation Code Sea Trout	Catch & Release Target Sea Trout
Allan	2	1 fish per angler per season	90%		1 fish per angler per season	90%
Almond	3	0	100%		0	100%
Avon	3	0	100%		1 fish per angler per season	90%
Carron	3	0	100%		1 fish per angler per season	90%
Devon	3	0	100%		0	100%
Esk	3	0	100%		0	100%
Leven	3	0	100%		0	100%
Teith	2	1 fish per angler per season	90%		1 fish per angler per season	90%
Forth	2	1 fish per angler per season	90%		1 fish per angler per season	90%
Tyne & Biel	3	0	100%		0	100%
Water of Leith	3	0	100%		0	100%
Coastal Fishery	3	0	100%		0	100%

Crown Estates leases enforce the recommendations, some Local Authority leases enforce the recommendations. These recommendations are in addition to any other regulation or legislation currently in force.