



RECREATIONAL ANGLING - DEFINITION

A definition on Recreational Angling agreed by the European Anglers Alliance
at the General Assembly 2004 in Dinant, Belgium

Introduction

This paper is the European Anglers Alliance's attempt to develop a common language for our activity, *the Recreational Angling*.

What are the differences and similarities between an angler and a recreational angler, a fisherman and a sport fisherman, commercial fishing with line and leisure fishing, part-time fishing and pastime fishing? Not easy as the terminology used on angling and recreational angling is a mess. Some terms have more than one meaning. Some terms in use have different names but same meaning. We anglers, managers, politicians, scientists etc., need a proper definition on angling simply to use a common language to understand each other and

- to direct research
- to guide lobbying
- to be used for local management purposes
- for legal uses

Definitions

RECREATIONAL FISHING

Def.: *Recreational fishing is fishing, which is not deemed to be commercial fishing*

ANGLING

Def. a: *Angling is line fishing using the hooking method.*

Def. b: *Angling is the activity of catching or attempting to catch fish, principally by rod and line, pole or hand-held line for non-commercial purposes.*

RECREATIONAL ANGLING

Def.: *Recreational angling is the activity of catching or attempting to catch fish, principally by rod and line, pole or hand-held line for non-commercial purposes; recreational anglers do not sell the fish they catch.*

RECREATIONAL ANGLING SECTOR

Def.: *The Recreational Angling Sector (RAS) means anglers, tackle shops and tackle manufacturers, bait suppliers, charter-boating, recreational boat builders and handlery suppliers, marina operators and specialised angling media, angling tourism and other related business and organisations as well as the whole management environment (e.g. public agencies) to varying degrees dependant on or directed at recreational angling.*

Explanations

RECREATIONAL FISHING

- Angling, recreational angling, small boats equipped with nets or longlines, hand-held lines or nets, gill nets, stationary nets on the seabed, freedivers and sportdivers with spearguns, are various forms of fishing included in the definition of *recreational fishing* as long no sale of fish is involved.
- *Recreational fishing is fishing, which is not deemed to be commercial fishing*

RECREATIONAL ANGLING

- *Angling* can be both commercial and non-commercial.
- *Recreational angling* can only be non-commercial, as *recreational anglers* do not sell their catch.
- Recreational anglers may return or retain the catch, or consume it within the family unit (all according to local regulations).
- Recreational angling can be pursued for many purposes and a multitude of highly diverse motivations. These include challenge, sport, recreation, achievement, relaxation, etc.
- Some countries or organisations prefer the term *sport fishing* for *recreational angling*. Dependent on the context in which the two terms are used the meaning behind them will often be the same.

RECREATIONAL ANGLING versus other RECREATIONAL FISHING

- Recreational angling is one form of *recreational fishing*.
- Far the most of the socio-economic value of recreational fishing comes from recreational angling.
- Compared by their impact on fish stocks and the environment *recreational angling* is by far the most sustainable of all the types of fishing -commercial and non-commercial- with highly selective catching gear and a low mortality rate from release of fish not to be retained.

'Recreational Fishing' / non-commercial fishing		Commercial Fishing
Recreational Angling/sport fishing	Other Recreational Fishing (nets, long lines etc.)	All kinds (including commercial angling)

RECREATIONAL ANGLING SECTOR

- Some businesses are totally dependent on recreational anglers' spending; others are dependent to varying degrees. Those are tackle shops and tackle manufacturers, bait suppliers, charter-boating, recreational boat builders and chandlery suppliers, marina operators and specialised angling media, angling tourism and other related business and organisations.
- The sector has a substantial socio-economic value, minimum 25 billion Euros of which five billion is from tackle sales alone. The RAS benefits rural and remote areas in particular and the dependence of rural areas on recreational angling is increasing.
- The whole management environment benefits and depends on angler expenditure. In many countries there are taxes that flow to the public bodies charged with the management of freshwater.
- There is no proper data of this sector at the Pan-European level. In Europe there are only few studies available for a few countries and regions. A pan-European socio-economic survey is urgently needed. The EAA has asked for such a study to be funded under the 6th (research) framework program but without any success so far (our 'Expression of Interest' is named 'RECFISH').
- More about RECFISH and some recent European studies on the Socio-economic value of angling can be found on the EAA website here: www.eaa-europe.org/2003/PFRecfish/RECFISH.htm