

**Recreational Sea Angling – a European Perspective**

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**Abstract**

Recreational sea angling is a high-participation activity in Europe providing very large economic value and many social benefits including relaxation and engaging with nature. In many other countries (e.g. USA and Australia), the value of recreational angling is recognised and co-management of recreational and commercial species practiced. In Europe, lack of data has hampered the inclusion of recreational angling in stock assessment and the development of national and European policy. The reporting of recreational catches of some species has been a European legislative requirement since 2002, leading to the development of surveys. These surveys have shown that catches of recreational fish can be a significant share of the total landings for species like European seabass and cod. In this study, the numbers of anglers, days fished, catches, and economic value is synthesised to give an overall picture of recreational sea angling in Europe. Data from individual countries are collated and combined with extrapolations based on proportion of sea anglers and population size, where country data do not exist. Catches are compared with commercial landings to assess the relative importance of the recreational sector. The results are discussed in the context of inshore fisheries management of fish stocks and development of sea angling.

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