

## **Recreational Sea Anglers Code of Conduct**

These voluntary measures have been developed as best practice for all anglers, it will help minimise mortality of caught fish, enhance fish welfare and will support a wider sustainable fishery.

### **Voluntary Code of Conduct**

Use circle, barbless or de-barbed hooks when fishing.

If practising catch and release, unhook fish in the water or use a suitable landing net. Handle fish as little as possible using wet gloves or cloth and quickly return fish to the water.

If retaining fish, dispatch fish quickly and cleanly.

During the black bream spawning season (April to June) consider practicing and promoting catch and release or adopt a four fish bag limit per person.

For all other species only take home what you need and consider returning trophy specimens. Use your camera to record your memorable catches.

When targeting sharks, skates and rays use the Sussex IFCA Elasmobranch Voluntary Code of Conduct and the Sharks Trust guide for handling these species. The Sussex IFCA Elasmobranch Voluntary Code of Conduct can be found here: <https://secure.toolkitfiles.co.uk/clients/34087/sitedata/files/Conservation-Research/Elasmobranch-Code-of-Conduct-WEB.pdf>

Return female fish in roe.

Use methods that minimise damage to sensitive areas, consider drifting where practicable or if necessary, use a lower impact anchor.

## **Legal Requirements**

### **Marine Protected Area Byelaw (MPA):**

Sussex IFCA has byelaws in place to protect vulnerable and important marine sites, such as Kingmere Marine Conservation Zone (MCZ), Beachy Head West MCZ and Chichester Bass Nursery Area. These sites have regulations applicable to the

recreational angler such as, bag limits and seasonal prohibited areas. Please see our website for more information: <http://www.sussex-ifca.gov.uk/regulations>

### **Minimum Size (Fish, Crustacea and Mollusc) Byelaw:**

Under this byelaw, the sustainability of fish and shellfish populations within the Sussex IFCA District will increase by reducing juvenile mortality and increasing the stock of sexually mature individuals available for reproduction. Application of minimum sizes for fish species is a widely accepted tool for the sustainable management of fisheries, and whilst some species are subject to existing Minimum Conservation Reference Size regulations, the new Byelaw will amalgamate these measures, extend it to species not already considered, and apply it to all fishers within the Sussex IFCA District and the commercial supply chain. The full byelaw, including minimum lengths, can be found here:

<https://secure.toolkitfiles.co.uk/clients/34087/sitedata/files/Byelaws/Minimum-Size-Byelaw-2021.pdf>

### **Powers:**

Fishery Officers have the legal powers to board and inspect any vessel and persons on board that are fishing, inspect anyone involved in angling from the shore or marine installation and any persons involved in harvesting marine organisms such as bait digging. Please cooperate and support fisheries officers if you are inspected. Failure to comply with a fisheries officer's reasonable request during an inspection is an offence.

### **Species specific legislation:**

Make sure you are aware of current legislation with regards to recreational sea angling, such regulations are not limited to, but include:

**Bass (*Dicentrarchus labrax*):** MCRS of 42cm with a catch and release period and a one fish bag limit, Chichester Harbour is a bass Nursery Area and has restrictions on angling for bass.

**Tope (*Galeorhinus galeus*):** Catch and release species only.

**Shad *sp*:** Catch and release species only.

**Sea Trout (*Salmo trutta*):** EA Salmon and Sea trout licence required. Rules apply.

**All species of Sturgeon:** Catch and release species only

**Eel (*Anguilla anguilla*):** Catch and release species only

For more information, please see the link below:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/protected-marine-species/fish-including-seahorses-sharks-and-skates>