

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.

Use the Minimum Conservation Reference Size (MCRS) in common with the commercial fishing sector. The MCRS for most species found off the Sussex coast can be found here <http://www.sussex-ifca.gov.uk/recreational-fishing>.

When fishing for black bream, support your fishery by adopting a Minimum and Maximum landing size (Minimum of 23 cm and Maximum of 40cm).

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 Sharks Trust guide to handling these species.

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>

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>