

Kingmere Marine Conservation Zone: Angling Code of Conduct

Legal Requirements

The Sussex IFCA Marine Protected Area Byelaw, Minimum Size (Fish Crustacea, and Molluscs) Byelaw and associated Kingmere MCZ Schedule puts in place a statutory management regime in which any person is prohibited to:

- Fish in Zone 1 within the north east of the Marine Conservation Zone between 1st April and 30th June;
- Retain more than 4 bream during any one day in all other zones year round, and in zone 1 outside of the season;
- Retain on board, tranship, land, transport, store, sell, display, or offer for sale any bream under 23cm (230 millimetres)
- Possess any parts of bream other than whole or gutted fish;
- Retain any live bream in any container, keep net or receptacle;
- Transfer any bream, dead or alive between vessels;
- Return any dead bream to the fishery;
- Use any bream as bait; and
- For the vessel master to retain on a vessel a number of bream which is more than 4 times the number of persons fishing on the vessel.

For the full byelaw and Kingmere MCZ Schedule text see www.sussex-ifca.gov.uk.

Voluntary Code of Conduct

The following Angling Code of Conduct for Kingmere MCZ is supported by The Angling Trust. These voluntary measures have been developed to support the site's regulatory regime and help achieve the best conservation outcomes for the site, assisting with successful recruitment of juvenile black seabream. It will be subject to regular review.

- During the black seabream spawning season (April to June), consider practicing and promoting catch and release, or retaining less than the 4 bream per person bag limit

Purpose: To minimise black bream mortality during this important stage in their life cycle

- If retaining fish during the black seabream spawning season (April to June), consider releasing all males

Purpose: Male fish have an observed vital role in protecting nests from predators, their release helps ensure eggs survive to hatch and contribute to the next population

- Where retaining fish below the bag limit, select those showing signs of damage (e.g. if bleeding from gills)

Purpose: For individuals to retain as part of their bag limit, those fish unlikely to survive if released

- Adopt a maximum landing size of 40 cm, and take photographs rather than retain trophy fish

Purpose: To protect the larger, more fecund fish

- Use barbless or de-barbed hooks when fishing for black bream

Purpose: To minimise fish damage and enable easy unhooking, to reduce bream mortality post catch and release

- Use landing nets to lift fish into boats; wet hands before handling fish carefully; unhook fish while in the landing net; if a photo is desired, support the fish while taking a photo and unhooking; if practicing catch and release, quickly return fish to the water

Purpose: To promote good handling and unhooking practice to minimise damage and increase potential survivability of those fish returned

- If retaining fish dispatch fish quickly and cleanly

Purpose: For fish welfare

- Return females in roe

Purpose: To allow eggs to hatch and contribute to the next population

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

Purpose: To minimise rocky reef and bream nest damage, and spawning fish disturbance

- Maintain a log of black seabream captures and vessel observations – submit log to Sussex IFCA

Purpose: To provide important information to inform management and its success

- Encourage other fishers to understand and support the voluntary code
- Contact the IFCA if you have information on any boat or person not complying with the statutory management regime for Kingmere MCZ
- Record and report any information on tagged fish and return them alive (entry into annual prize draw)