**Appendix 1: question and response form**

**Section 1: Your details**

We would like to find out about where you fish and/or the type of salmon fisheries you are engaged with or have an interest in. By giving us this information we will be able to better understand the answers you have provided to the consultation questions. This information will also help us to record accurately those who have responded to this consultation and ensure that we have received responses from all sectors which may be affected by any new salmon fisheries management approaches. Your details will only be kept for this consultation and any future work directly related to this.

**Q. 1a) - about yourself**

Please tell us which one of the following categories best describes your **primary** interest in salmon/sea trout.Please select one option.

 I am a licensed salmon/sea trout net fishermen or operate a fixed engine to catch them.

x I am a salmon/sea trout rod and line angler.

x I represent a group of individuals who fish for salmon/sea trout (please tell us the name of the group) Northern Farmers & Landowners Group

x I own or lease salmon/sea trout fishing

 I represent a salmon/sea trout conservation or environmental conservation organisation (please tell us the name of your organisation ……………………………………………………………………………………………………

 I am involved in the catering industry and buy/sell wild salmon/sea trout (fish retailer, fishmonger, restaurateur, etc.)

 I am involved in the tackle trade for salmon/sea trout angling

 Response from Defra family/Non-Governmental Organisation

 Other (please specify) ………………………………………………………………..

If more than one of these categories applies to you please tell us which of the others do. …………………………………………………………………………………………………………

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**Q. 1b) - What part of the country do you have an interest in?**

Please tell us where you **primarily** fish for salmon/sea trout or where the salmon/sea trout that support your business are from. You can select more than one option if you wish.

x The North East (Northumberland and Yorkshire)

 The East, Thames and South East

 The Southern Chalkstreams (Itchen, Test, Hampshire Avon, Dorset Stout, Dorset Frome and Piddle)

 The South West (Devon and Cornwall)

 The Severn

 The North West (Lancashire, Cumbria and Border Esk)

 National

 Other e.g. Ireland / Wales (please specify) …………………………………………

**If you are a member of a salmon and/or sea trout fishing club/organisation or an organisation that represents anglers, net and fixed engine fishermen or the interests of salmon/sea trout/wider conservation; then please tell us which organisation you are a member of**: Syndicate on the Coquet. Chillingham Anglers. Northern Farmer & Landowners Group. Northumberland Rivers Trust (Trustee). Tyne Rivers Trust (Catchment Partner).

**Please tell us if you would like to (tick all that apply):**

x Receive an email acknowledging your response

x Receive an email to let you know that the summary of responses has been published

**If you have ticked any of the boxes above, please provide us with your email address:**

Email: aecc@nrpg.co.uk

**Can we publish parts of your response that are not personally identifiable or contain financial information?**

Please select only one item

x Yes

 No

If no, please explain why.

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**Please tell us how you found out about this consultation:**

x From the Environment Agency

x From another organisation

x Through an organisation you’re a member of

 Press article

 Social media e.g. Facebook, Twitter

 Through a meeting you attended

x Other (please specify) Through correspondence with the Minister.

**How we will use your information**

* The Environment Agency will look to make all responses publicly available during and after the consultation, unless you have specifically requested that we keep your response confidential.
* We will not publish names of individuals who respond.
* We will not disclose financial or other individual specific information that could inadvertently identify an individual or his / her business.
* We will also publish a summary of responses on our website in which we will publish the name of the organisation for those responses made on behalf of organisations.
* In accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000, we may be required to publish your response to this consultation, but will not include any personal information. If you have requested your response to be kept confidential, we may still be required to provide a summary of it.

**Returning your response**

Your response to this consultation needs to be returned by Monday 9 October 2017**.**

We would like you to use this form if you are not submitting your response online. You can add extra documents supporting any responses that you make, but please make it very clear as to which question this additional information is for. You can return it by email to S5PA@environment-agency.gov.uk. Please use this email address if you have any questions regarding this consultation.

Or by post to:

FAO Salmon Consultation Team

Environment Agency

Rivers House

Sunrise Business Park

Higher Shaftesbury Road

Blandford Forum

DT11 8ST

**Section 2: introduction to the Salmon Five Point Approach**

**Q. 2.2a) - refers to our technical case that supports this consultation**

To what extent do you agree with the summary of the current state of salmon stocks and the supporting information provided in Appendix 2?

 Wholly

x Partially

 Not at all

Please give your reasons and any evidence you have to support your answer.

**It is a great pity that the assessment cannot rely more on actual data from in-river fish counters. This is surely the only reliable data on which firm management decisions should be made but the information is very sparse. I would hope that there could be a drive to install many more fish counters where ever practically possible. The Rivers Trusts could lead on this work as well as collecting and collating the data.**

**I do think that it is a missed opportunity not to include the sea trout figures in the overall assessment. The fate of the two species are interlinked, particularly when looking at the catches of the North East T&J nets.**

**Section 3: deciding which salmon stocks need further protection**

**Q. 3.2a) - this question is asking for your views about taking salmon from rivers that are failing to produce enough salmon to maintain populations**

To what extent do you agree that a salmon stock should be subject to additional protection from net/fixed engine and rod exploitation if it is classified as either At Risk or Probably at Risk of failing to meet its Management Objective?

 Wholly

X Partially

 Not at all

Please give your reasons and any evidence you have to support your answer. If you would like to provide us with an alternative approach then please do so.

Given the MSF nature of the North East net fishery, I don’t see how additional limitations on nets can be targeted to just those rivers deemed At Risk/Probably at Risk in the region. Limitations must apply to the entire fishery. Worth noting that the Ouse system is also affected by this net fishery. How is it meant to recover if its stock is being netted at sea?

If the net exploitation was limited/terminated, it would hardly be a surprise if some rivers in the North East moved up a category. Therefore, I would support further restrictions on anglers on rivers deemed to be At Risk, but not on those deemed to be Probably at Risk. A further consideration is would further restrictions really make any meaningful difference given the level of catch & release currently being achieved by anglers?

**Section 4: review of existing National Salmon Byelaws**

This section looks at the existing National Salmon Byelaws which protect spring salmon stocks, these were first made in 1999 and renewed for a further 10-year period in December 2008. Government has asked us to review these every 10 years, so this is a good opportunity to ask for views on whether you feel that the current measures should continue, stop or be amended.

The measures to protect spring salmon were introduced in response to a widespread decline in stocks of large, early-running, multi-sea-winter salmon in the 1980s and 1990s. It was determined that exploitation needed to be significantly reduced in order to better protect this important stock component. In summary, the byelaws prevent netsmen from killing, and in most cases fishing for, salmon before June 1; derogations are applied to some fisheries where netting is predominantly for sea trout, on the basis that any salmon caught are returned alive. For rod fisheries, the measures require any fish caught by rod and line before 16 June to be returned, and also restrict the methods that anglers can use at this time to artificial flies or lures. These byelaws also set out the end of the close season for fishing for salmon and migratory trout other than with rod and line.

**Q. 4.2a) - this question is about the current (spring) salmon byelaws**

Do you agree with the proposal to renew without amendments the existing National Salmon Byelaws to protect spring salmon stocks?

 Wholly

 Partially

x Not at all

Please give your reasons and any evidence you have to support your answer.

The current Byelaws are environmentally incontinent and utterly illogical. Why is it that it is imperative that anglers return all of our precious spring salmon stock up until the 15th June but it is perfectly all right for netsmen to kill the same precious fish from the 1st June? Either they are precious enough to protect or they are not.

Given the previous section on stock assessment, it would seem proven that these fish certainly are precious and so the very minimum alteration of the Byelaws should see the start of ALL netting falling in line with anglers being permitted to kill a salmon ie 16th June. (This is assuming that some netting may continue post this consultation, which I hope is not the case.)

However, to make the situation even more ludicrous, the spring fish conservation measures on the Tweed recommend that all fish are returned up until the 1st July. So I could visit Alnmouth on the 1st June and watch the netsmen killing salmon while I return fish to the river Aln as they are so precious. On the 16th I could kill those fish, but if I fished 4 miles north in the Breamish I would be obliged to return any fish caught until the end of June. It really is idiotic.

A further consideration is that there is a thought that salmon runs are becoming earlier. Over the last 2 years there seems to have been a clear shift from fish running in the autumn to more of a summer run. For evidence, see the Tweed catches and the Tyne fish counts. If this trend becomes embedded, it means that a greater proportion of the diminishing over all total run of salmon will be susceptible to exploitation by the nets.

If netting is to continue, the Byelaws should be amended so that all parties operate to the same date and kill no salmon before 1st July. If netting is to cease, the 16th June date could remain as the vast majority of fish are returned after that date anyway.

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**Section 5: possible options for salmon net and fixed engine fisheries**

**Questions 5.2a – 5.2n** relate to net and fixed engine fisheries in England and on the Border Esk, except the North East Coast Net Fishery. These questions are directed at those who fish in, or whose business is supported by, these fisheries.

**Questions 5.3a – 5.3l** relate to the North East Coast Net Fishery. These questions are directed at those who fish in, or whose business is supported by, the North East Coast Net Fishery.

**Questions 5.4a - 5.4e** give the opportunity for all consultees to provide their views on the options for net and fixed engine fisheries.

**Section 5.2: possible options for salmon net and fixed engine fisheries in England and on the Border Esk, except the North East Coast Net Fishery**

**Questions 5.2a, 5.2b, 5.2e to 5.2k** are for net and fixed engine fishermen.

**Questions 5.2c and 5.2l** are for businesses that are supplied with wild salmon and sea trout from English and Border Esk fisheries.

**Questions 5.2d, 5.2m and 5.2n** are for net and fixed engine fishermen and the businesses that they supply to.

**Q. 5.2a) – this question is for net and fixed engine fishermen.**

If you were no longer able to fish for salmon or sea trout, what would be the consequences for you?

Please provide us with details of both financial and cultural (i.e. traditions within your community and/or how you spend time within your local environment). Ideally, please use the last 5 years of income to support your answer.

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**Q. 5.2b) – this question is for net and fixed engine fishermen, it relates to other fishing prospects**

What are the opportunities for you to fish for other species if you could no longer fish for salmon or sea trout (e.g. white fish or crustaceans)?

If there are any please provide us with an estimated breakdown of the costs you would incur to switch to a different target species. Please indicate whether you would need to purchase quotas/different equipment.

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**Q. 5.2c) – this is for businesses that are supplied with wild salmon and sea trout from English and Border Esk fisheries**

Please provide details of the impact of stopping the supply of salmon and sea trout from the English and Border Esk fisheries that you buy from.

These impacts could be either financial and/or social. Ideally, please use the last 5 years of income to support your answer.

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**Q. 5.2d) – this is for net and fixed engine fishermen and the businesses that they supply to**

Please provide any other options for reducing the exploitation of salmon by your fishery that you would like us to consider.

Please provide details of these and why you would find them preferable to the possible options set out in Section 5.2: Table 2.

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**These questions are exploring future sea trout fishery options for net or fixed engine fishermen (except the North East Coast Net Fishery).**

**Q. 5.2e) – this question is for net and fixed engine fishermen**

Do you consider that your fishing gear and how it is fished enables salmon to be released alive immediately after capture?

 Yes

 No

 I don’t know

If you wish, please provide us with your reasons for this answer.

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**Q. 5.2f) – this question is for net and fixed engine fishermen**

Do you fish in attendance with your nets or do you set them and return?

 Yes – in attendance

 No – set and return

**Q. 5.2g) – this question is for net and fixed engine fishermen**

Do you currently release salmon as a result of existing controls on your fishery?

 Yes

 No

If yes, please provide us with details of why this is.

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**Q. 5.2h) – this question is for net and fixed engine fishermen**

What type of gear do you use when fishing for salmon and/or sea trout? Please provide details.

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**Q. 5.2i) - this question is for net and fixed engine fishermen**

Do you consider that your fishing gear and how it is fished enables salmon to be released with minimal damage?

 Yes

 No

 I don’t know

Please provide us with information of the type of damage (e.g. scale loss or fin damage) that you see on the fish that you catch.

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**Q. 5.2j) - this question is for net and fixed engine fishermen**

Would altering your gear make it easier to release and/or cause less damage to salmon?

 Yes

 No

 I don’t know

Please provide details and an estimate of the cost if you consider this an option.

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**Q. 5.2k) - this question is for net and fixed engine fishermen**

If you could release salmon and continue to take the sea trout that you catch would you continue to fish for sea trout?

 Yes

 No

 I don’t know

If you wish, please provide us with your reasons for this answer.

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**Q. 5.2l) - this is for businesses that are supplied with wild salmon and sea trout from English and Border Esk fisheries**

Please provide details of the impact of stopping the supply of salmon only from the English and Border Esk fisheries that you buy from.

These impacts could be either financial and/or social/cultural. Ideally, please use the last 5 years of income to support your answer.

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**These questions relate to the impact of the proposed timescale of the measures for net and fixed engine salmon and sea trout fisheries in England and on the Border Esk (except the North East Coast Net Fishery).**

**Q. 5.2m) - this question is for net and fixed engine fishermen and the businesses that they supply to**

If fishing for salmon was required to cease, is there a date later than 2018 that would be economically easier to work towards?

 Yes Date? ………………..

 No

 I don’t know

Please provide details of why a later date would reduce the impact of closure. These impacts could be either financial and/or social/cultural.

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**Q. 5.2n) - this question is for net and fixed engine fishermen and the businesses that they supply to**

How long do you consider the measures covering a fishery should be in place for?

 5 Years

 10 Years

 Other – please give details …………….

Please provide details of why you have given this answer.

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**Section 5.3: this section is specifically for the North East Coast Net Fishery**

**Questions 5.3a and 5.3b** are for North East Coast drift net licence holders.

**Questions 5.3c to 5.3i** are for North East Coast beach net licence holders.

**Question 5.3j** is for businesses that are supplied with wild salmon and sea trout from the North East Coast Net Fishery.

**Questions 5.3k and 5.3l** are for North East Coast drift and beach net licence holders and the businesses that they supply to.

**Q. 5.3a) - this question is for North East Coast drift net licence holders**

What implications would the closure of the drift net fishery prior to the end of the 2022 season have for you?

Please provide details of the impact (whether this is financial and/or social) on an annual basis. Ideally, please use the last 5 years of income to support your answer.

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**Q. 5.3b) - this question is for North East Coast drift net licence holders**

Are there opportunities for you to fish for other species (e.g. white fish or crustaceans) if the drift net fishery closed prior to the end of the 2022 season?

 Yes

 No

 I don’t know

If there are please provide us with an estimate of the cost you would incur to switch to a different target species. Please indicate whether a change would require you to purchase quotas as well as any expenses around equipment.

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**Q. 5.3c) - this question is for North East Coast beach net licence holders**

Do you consider that your fishing gear and how it is fished enables salmon to be released alive immediately after capture?

 Yes

 No

 I don’t know

Please provide details of the gear that you use and whether you currently release salmon as a result of existing controls on your fishery.

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**Q. 5.3d) - this question is for North East Coast beach net licence holders**

Do you consider that your fishing gear and how it is fished enables salmon to be released with minimal damage?

 Yes

 No

 I don’t know

Please provide us with information of the type of damage (e.g. scale loss or fin damage) that you see on the fish that you catch.

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**Q. 5.3e) - this question is for North East Coast beach net licence holders**

With regard to the release of salmon and any damage that is caused, is there a difference in damage if it is grilse or multi sea winter salmon that are caught?

 Yes, there is a difference in damage

 No, there is not a difference in damage

 I don’t know

Please provide details if you have answered yes.

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**Q. 5.3f) - this question is for North East Coast beach net licence holders**

Would altering your gear or the way it is fished make it easier to release and/or cause less damage to salmon?

 Yes

 No

 I don’t know

Please provide details and an estimate of the cost if you consider this an option.

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**Q. 5.3g) - this question is for North East Coast beach net licence holders**

If you could release salmon and continue to take the sea trout that you catch would you continue to fish for sea trout?

 Yes

 No

 I don’t know

If you wish, please provide us with your reasons for this answer.

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**Q. 5.3h) - this question is for North East Coast beach net licence holders**

What implications would the closure of the beach net fishery have for you?

Please provide details of the impact (whether this is financial and/or social) on an annual basis. Ideally, please use the last 5 years of income to support your answer.

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**Q. 5.3i) This question is for North East Coast beach net licence holders**

Are there opportunities for you to fish for other species (e.g. white fish or crustaceans) if the beach net fishery were to close?

 Yes

 No

 I don’t know

If there are please provide us with an estimate of the cost you would incur to switch to a different target species. Please indicate whether a change would require you to purchase quotas as well as any expenses around equipment.

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**Q.5.3j) - this is for businesses that are supplied with wild salmon and sea trout from the North East Coast Net Fishery**

Please provide details of the impact of the stopping of supply of salmon only from the North East Coast fishery.

These impacts could be either financial and/or social/cultural. Ideally, please use the last 5 years of income to support your answer.

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**Q. 5.3k) - this question is for North East Coast drift and beach net fishermen and the businesses that they supply to**

If fishing was required to cease, is there a date later than 2018 that would be economically easier to work towards?

 Yes Date? …………..

 No

 I don’t know

Please provide details of why a later date would reduce the impact of closure. These impacts could be either financial and/or social/cultural.

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**Q. 5.3l) - this question is for North East Coast drift and beach net fishermen and the businesses that they supply to**

Are there other options for reducing the exploitation of salmon by your fishery that you would like us to consider?

 Yes

 No

 I don’t know

Please provide details of these and why you would find them preferable to the options that we have provided.

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**Section 5.4: seeking all consultees’ views on the options for net and fixed engine fisheries in England and on the Border Esk and the options set out for the North East Coast Net Fishery**

**Questions 5.4a, 5.4b and 5.4c** relate to all net and fixed engine fisheries in England and on the Border Esk, except the North East Coast Net Fishery.

**Questions 5.4d and 5.4e** relate to only the North East Coast Net Fishery.

**Q. 5.4a) - seeking all consultees’ views on the options for net and fixed engine fisheries in England and on the Border Esk (except North East Coast Net Fishery Options).**

Which is your preferred option for net and fixed engine fisheries as set out in Section 5.2: Table 2?

 Option 1

 Option 2

 Option 3

 Option 4

 I don’t have a preferred option

Please provide details of why you have given this answer.

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If you would like to suggest a different approach and your reasons for suggesting it, please do so here.

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**Q. 5.4b) – this question is for all consultees to answer and is in reference to the answer that you have given to Q. 5.4a**

What are the benefits, if there are any, which you would see from your preferred option for net and fixed engine fisheries? These could be economic as well as social/cultural, please provide details if you are able.

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**Q. 5.4c) - seeking all consultees’ views on the options for net and fixed engine fisheries in England and on the Border Esk (except North East Coast Net Fishery Options)**

How long do you consider the measures covering a net and/or fixed engine fishery should be in place for?

 5 Years

 10 Years

 Other – please give details …………….

Please provide details of why you have given this answer.

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**Q. 5.4d) - seeking all consultees’ views on the options for the North East Coast Net Fishery.**

Which is your preferred option for the North East Coast Net Fishery as set out in Section 5.3: Table 3?

x Option NE1

 Option NE2

 Option NE3

x I don’t have a preferred option

Please provide details of why you have given this answer.

As stated in the consultation, this is the only option that would permit the Government to meet its S5PA commitments. It has already been done in Scotland and the world has not come to an end so why cant it be done in the North East? The MSF net fishery in the North East is a national embarrassment. It is due to end in 2022, so bringing forward that closure date to 2018 should not come as a tragedy to those involved.

Where I strongly disagree with Option NE1, and the other options offered is over the treatment of the sea trout. The slaughter of the sea trout on the North East coast is a national disgrace. I note that the consultation document avoids mentioning the quantities of sea trout being killed by this fishery. There seems to be a reluctance to publicise the fact that 40-60,000 sea trout are being killed every year. I wonder why?

To even suggest that a sea trout fishery could continue along the North East coast by means of happily releasing netted salmon to continue their journey unharmed is an insult to the intelligence of the most half witted angler ever bred. Have you ever caught a salmon that has managed to escape the nets by its own good fortune? The mesh pattern is firmly imprinted upon its flanks through scale loss. This damage would be multiplied by many times if the fish was dragged aboard, allowed to flap around in the fresh air before being man-handled, identified then chucked over board, probably to die. Many would be gill caught and almost certainly die. And I hate to think how many salmon will be “mistaken” for sea trout in the poor conditions of the netting operation.

Should you doubt the detrimental effects of nets on salmon, may I direct you to Appendices 5 & 6 of this very consultation. How can you publicise these recommendations of who to release salmon to anglers, yet suggest that salmon will survive being hauled about in commercial nets in the very same document? It reflects very badly on the EA that it even attempts to take two such contrasting positions in the same document.

The sea trout kill along the North East coast is an appalling abuse of a valuable natural resource. The decline in rod caught sea trout in rivers such as the Till, Aln & Coquet has been very pronounced over the last 15 years ie the period when the T&J nets have been in operation. This has led to a reduction in visiting anglers with an impact on the rural economy of Northumberland. Hotels, such as the Percy Arms at Chatton and the Anglers Arms at Wheldon Bridge, are no longer viewed as fishermen’s hotels. Independent tackle retailers in Rothbury and Alnwick are no longer in existence.

The cessation of the T&J nets would allow this trade to flourish again. I suspect that the benefit to the rural economy would be far greater than the loss of the netting. But the real opportunity awaits……

Salt water fly fishing is the fastest growing sector of fly fishing. Note the increase in sea bass angling in other regions, such as the south west. Here in the North East, tens of thousands of sea trout are being killed in nets every year just yards from the shore. It does not take a genius to see the possibility of developing a world class salt water sport fishery in place of the netting. It happens in Denmark and other parts of Scandinavia, so why cant it happen here? The socio-economic value of such a fishery would dwarf the economic and social value of the netting operation. It would also provide an immediate replacement income for the netsmen as they have the best knowledge of when and where the fish are.

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If you would like to suggest a different approach and your reasons for suggesting it, please do so here.

See my answer to 4.2 a

If, for some reason, it is not decided to close the North East net fishery until 2022, then it is imperative that additional restrictions are put in place to limit the netting effort ie no netting or killing of any salmon by rod until1st July.

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**Q. 5.4e) – this question is for all consultees to answer and is in reference to the answer that you have given to Q. 5.4d**

What are the benefits, if there are any, which you would see from your preferred option for the North East Coast Net Fishery? These could be economic as well as social/cultural, please provide details if you are able.

Please see my answer above. While there will be socio-economic benefits for the wider rural economy created by the non-killing of 15,000 salmon, this will be spread over a wide area due to the MSF nature of the fishery. The real benefit to the North East would arise if the nets were prevented from killing 40-60,000 sea trout every year. This would allow the development of a world class salt water sport fishery, along with seeing an increased number of visiting river anglers as our in-river sea trout fishing would be amongst the best in Europe.

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**Section 6: our rod and line fisheries**

This section explores the possible options to increase the levels of catch and release of rod caught salmon and whether further mandatory controls (i.e. byelaws) should be made to require or prohibit some fishing equipment. We are also seeking your views on best practice techniques that we might seek to promote in partnership with others including Angling Trust, landowners, river trusts and angling clubs.

**Section 6.2: catch and release of salmon**

**Questions 6.2a to 6.2f** are for all consultees.

**Questions 6.2g and 6.2h** are for salmon anglers.

**Question 6.2i** is for owners/lessees of salmon rod fisheries.

**Q. 6.2a) - this question is for all consultees to answer and we are seeking your views on the possible options that have been developed**

Which is your preferred option for the catch and release of salmon by rod fisheries from those that are set out in Section 6.2: Table 6?

 Option 1

 Option 2

 Option 3

 Option 4

x I don’t have a preferred option

Please provide details of why you have given this answer.

I am rather perturbed that Section 6 appears to approach the options for anglers in the current circumstances rather than in circumstances created by the suspension of netting.

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If you don’t have a preferred option, please tell us if there is another approach that you consider that we should be taking and why.

As mentioned previously, I am not in favour of a range of different dates being used for the protection of spring salmon. England should fall in line with the Tweed and use 1st July as the date when compulsory catch & release ends AND any remaining netting should begin. This should apply to all netting and there should be no earlier netting pretending to target just sea trout.

If this were the case, or preferably all netting suspended, then Option 3 would be the preferred option as stocks in those rivers “probably at risk” would be improved. It makes no sense to kill fish in a river deemed to be “at risk”. The Byelaws should be reviewed on a 5 year basis and stock assessments should be supported with an increased use of fish counters where ever possible.

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**Q. 6.2b) – this question is for all consultees to answer and is in reference to the answer that you have given to Q. 6.2a**

What are the benefits, if there are any, which you would see from your preferred option for the catch and release of salmon by rod fisheries? These could be economic as well as social/cultural, please provide details if you are able.

The socio-economic benefits of rod caught salmon are well documented, so any increase in stock will be welcomed and have associated benefits. However, with C&R already running at around 80% additional benefits will be minimal. Any gain in stock needs to be off-set by a possible decline in angling effort as there is evidence of an increased effort post 16th June.

There may be the odd angler who will only fish when a fish can be killed, but there are many who like to have the option even if it is not exercised. Perhaps it brings out the hunter/gatherer in us, but I for one appreciate having the option to take a nice fish for the table if the opportunity arises and I so desire. As things stand I kill about 10% of what I catch, when permitted. Given the amount paid in licence fees, this does not seem unreasonable. Don’t forget that anglers are just about as important as fish in the equation of long term sustainability.

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**Q. 6.2c) - we would like to seek all consultees’ views on the use of a voluntary (as opposed to mandatory) approach to deliver increased levels of catch and release**

Do you agree with using a voluntary approach to deliver improved catch and release of salmon by rod fisheries?

x Yes

x No

 I don’t know

If no or don’t know, please explain your answer and include any dis-benefits that you consider the use of voluntary catch and release would bring.

I have ticked both boxes as I see the way forward as a mixture of voluntary and mandatory. The latter can apply with a later start date to voluntary, on rivers “at risk” and by limits on methods and tackle used. Voluntary can apply elsewhere.

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**Q. 6.2d) - if you answered yes to Q. 6.2c please answer these questions**

Do you support the proposed levels of voluntary catch and release for rivers whose salmon populations are either At Risk, Probably at Risk or Probably Not at Risk (see Section 6.2: Table 6: Option 4)?

 Yes

X No

 I don’t know

If no, do you think these levels should be higher or lower?

 Higher

 Lower

If you wish, please provide us with what you think the levels of voluntary catch and release should be and the reasons for your answers.

But see previous answers regarding the start date for voluntary C&R. On rivers deemed to be At Risk, there should be 100% C&R.

**Q. 6.2e) – if you answered yes to Q. 6.2c please also answer this question**

What are the benefits that you would see in voluntary catch and release? These could be economic as well as social/cultural, please provide details if you are able.

As stated previously, the continuation of voluntary C&R on rivers other than those “at risk” would be for the encouragement of anglers and angling. It is psychologically important for anglers to have the option to take a fish if desired. The importance of encouraging anglers, particularly new anglers, should not be understated. This is particularly important when some stocks are low and anglers are becoming disheartened. ………………………………………………………………………………………………….

**Q.6.2f) – this question is for all consultees**

Would you support the voluntary catch and release of all salmon caught (100%) on rivers whose salmon populations are either?

x At Risk

 At Risk and Probably at Risk

 At Risk, Probably at Risk and Probably Not at Risk

 I would not support the voluntary catch and release of all salmon caught

If you wish, please provide us with the reason for your answer.

As answered above.

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**Q. 6.2g) - this question is for salmon anglers**

Would you stop fishing for salmon if the proposed levels of catch and release were implemented (see Section 6.2: Table 6)? Please tick all that apply.

x No, I wouldn’t stop fishing whichever option was implemented

 Yes, if Option 1 was implemented

 Yes, if Option 2 was implemented

 Yes, if Option 3 was implemented

 Yes, if Option 4 was implemented

Please tell us which river(s) you fish for salmon on.

Coquet & Tyne I don’t think that I would stop, but my enthusiasm would be dimmed so I may not fish as much nor be willing to pay so much to fish. I would be more likely to stop through boredom if stocks continue to decline. ………………………………………………………………………………………………….

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**Q. 6.2h) – this question is for salmon anglers**

Would you consider moving to a river where lower levels of catch and release were required?

x Yes

 No

 I don’t know

If you wish, please provide us with your reasons for your answer.

I am in the fortunate position of being able to choose between several decent rivers. I do now have to decide between visiting the Coquet and the Tyne. If I could only keep a fish on the latter, it would probably influence my decision making process and I would find myself fishing more on the Tyne. ………………………………………………………………………………………………….

**Q. 6.2i) - this question is for owners/lessees of salmon rod fisheries**

What would the impact of these catch and release options be on your fishery (see Section 6.2: Table 6)?

 No impact as a result of any of the options

 A significant impact as a result of one or more of the options

 I don’t know

Please provide us with details of which of the possible option(s) would result in a significant difference to your fishery. Please provide us with details of financial and social impacts.

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**Section 6.3: questions relating to the best practice catch and release recommendations**

**Questions 6.3a and 6.3c** are for all consultees.

**Question 6.3b** is for angling club and fishery owners.

**Q. 6.3a) - this question is for all consultees to answer and is about the best practice recommendations for catch and release**

Do you agree with the catch and release best practice recommendations?

x Yes, all of them

 Some of them

 None of them

 I don’t know

If you would wish, please tell us which of them you agree/disagree with and provide us with further information to support your answer.

Cant disagree with any of the recommendations. However, the best method of all is not even included! It is often possible to release fish by simply grabbing the leader and giving it a shake. This avoids the need to handle the fish at all and the need to net it. It is particularly effective with grilse and ideal for old fish which can suffer disproportionally during the landing process. It should be encouraged.

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**Q. 6.3b) - this question is for angling club and fishery owners**

With reference to the catch and release best practice recommendations in Section 6.3 of the consultation document, which, if any, of these would you have difficulty applying to the waters under your control? Please tick as many that apply.

 Stopping angling at high water temperatures (where they exceed 18 °C in the mid-morning).

 Only allowing the use of single or double barbless hooks to minimise risk of injury.

 Stopping the use of large treble hooks, particularly on Flying ‘C’ spinners.

 Only allowing the use of the least harmful bait/lure type (e.g. artificial flies with minimal, appropriately sized, barbless hooks fished actively).

 Identifying safe landing areas and promoting their use to anglers before commencing fishing.

 Minimising air exposure, by promoting that fish are not removed from the water during landing, unhooking and photographing.

 Stopping fish being taken out of the river and onto the bank prior to release.

 Only allowing the use of fish-friendly landing nets.

 Stopping the practice of holding fish up clear of the water by the tail only.

Please provides us with the details of your reasons why.

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**Q. 6.3c) - this question is for all consultees to answer and is about other ways that you might improve salmon surviving capture**

Are there any other catch and release best practice recommendations that you feel should be included?

x Yes

 No

 I don’t know

If yes, please provide us with the details of these and your reasons why.

See my answer to 6.3a.

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**Section 6.4: questions relating to whether specific types of tackle and fishing equipment should be banned or made compulsory**

**Questions 6.4a to 6.4g** are for all consultees.

**Q. 6.4a) - this question is for all consultees**

Do you consider that having a landing net available to use should be required by byelaw whilst fishing for salmon or sea trout in England and on the Border Esk?

 Yes

x No

 I don’t know

If you wish, please provide us with your reasons for this answer.

Having one available and actually using it are two very different things, so what is the point?

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**Q. 6.4b) - this question is for all consultees**

Do you consider that a landing net used when fishing for salmon and sea trout should be required by byelaw to have a maximum mesh size of 20mm (as measured across the widest point of the stretched mesh)?

 Yes

x No

 I don’t know

Please tell us if you think this mesh size should be different from this and why.

Such a small net size could cause a danger for a fisherman wading in a large river in heavy water. The welfare of people should also be considered!

**.4c) - this question is for all consultees**

Do you consider that the use of barbed hooks should be prohibited by byelaw when fishing for salmon or sea trout with flies, lures or bait?

 Yes

x No

 I don’t know

If you wish, please provide us with your reasons for this answer.

While we all appreciate the need to look after the welfare of the fish, this would be a step too far. Salmon are more than hard enough to hook in England, so if we regulate to ensure that we lose more fish, the whole operation is fast approaching being pointless! Last month, I was fishing with a fellow who had fished for salmon for 8 years with no success. He did catch one and was delighted. How do you think he would have felt if the fish had fallen off due to a barbless hook?

A further consideration is what impact such a measure would have. Would it really improve C&R survival by any meaningful amount? I doubt it very much. A deep hooked fish would still be a deep hooked fish, killed by the hook not the barb. I cant think of a single occasion where I have felt that the fish has been badly damaged due to the barb.

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What would the impact, if any, be for you or your business of prohibiting the use of barbed hooks when fishing for salmon or sea trout with flies, lures or bait?

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**Q. 6.4d) - this question is for all consultees**

Do you consider that the use of treble hooks should be prohibited by byelaw when fishing for salmon or sea trout with flies, lures or bait?

 Yes, all should be banned

 Yes, but only large treble hooks greater than size 8 should be banned

x No, these should not be banned

 I don’t know

If you wish, please provide us with your reasons for this view and if you think that large treble hooks of a different size than greater than size 8 should be banned.

Treble hooks are unneccessary and can impact fish welfare. There would be little downside to their prohibition but there would be a slight improvement in fish welfare. However, it would be preferable if a voluntary approach was adopted, as already happens on some rivers, such as the Spey.

My worry over banning them is how would it be policed? Would the Fisheries Officers, who are very few and far between, spend their time counting hooks? This would not seem a productive use of their limited time.

It has long been a mystery to me why so many spinning lures are equipped with such big trebles. A normal sized double would be just as effective. ………………………………………………………………………………………………….

What would the impact be, if any, for you or your business of prohibiting the use of treble hooks (either completely or only large treble hooks) when fishing for salmon or sea trout with flies, lures or bait?

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**Q. 6.4e) - this question is for all consultees**

Do you consider that the use of circle hooks should be mandatory by byelaw when using worm as bait when fishing for salmon or sea trout?

x Yes

x No

 I don’t know

If you wish, please provide us with your reasons for this answer.

Worm fishing for migratory fish is incompatible with C&R and should be banned full stop. ………………………………………………………………………………………………….

What would the impact be, if any, for you or your business of only allowing the use of circle hooks when using worm as bait when fishing for salmon or sea trout?

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**Q. 6.4f) - this question is for all consultees**

Should there be restriction on the use of Flying ‘Cs’ when fishing for salmon or sea trout?

 Yes, Flying ‘Cs’ should be banned

x Yes, Flying ‘Cs’ should only be allowed with single hooks

 No, restrictions should not apply to the use of Flying ‘Cs’

 I don’t know

If you wish, please provide us with your reasons for this answer.

An outright ban, if indeed desirable, would cause problems of definition. There are plenty of lures that look like Flying Cs but are called something else. A restriction on hook size and number (single or double) may have a better effect. ………………………………………………………………………………………………….

What would the impact be, if any, for you or your business of prohibiting the use of Flying ‘Cs’ or only allowing their use with single hooks when fishing for salmon or sea trout?

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**Q. 6.4g) - this question is for all consultees**

In your opinion, are there other types of equipment that should be prohibited by byelaw when fishing for salmon and sea trout?

x Yes

 No

 I don’t know

Please provide details of what these could be and why you think they should be prohibited or altered.

Multi-hooked lures.

The use of lures with more than one set of hooks (ie Rapalas) is not compatible with C&R and should be prohibited. ………………………………………………………………………………………………….

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**Additional views**

**Q. 7) - this question is for all consultees**

Please tell us if you have any further comments that you would like to provide on this consultation.

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