



Council

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NGO Statement

Federation of Irish Salmon and Sea Trout Anglers

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Never before was there more research on scientific, economic and political data to reverse the salmon population decline and to take remedial action. We now have more reports and research surveys on Salmon than any other fish in the world. Yet, successive Irish governments have failed in the past in their duty to secure the survival of the wild Atlantic salmon and sea trout. However, this present Government promised the most on being elected (returned) to office last June 2002 while NASCO was in progress in the Faeroe Islands. We awaited the implementation of that promise of "individual non transferable quotas on the commercial nets" but sadly this did not happen. Even worse followed, when a new policy to restrict the 5% angling catch was signed into law while netting (which takes 95% of the national catch) went relatively unhindered. The quotas and 73% license increase on anglers were imposed this January without any consultation and without any sense of responsibility to agreements already given in writing by the Minister for the Marine.

FISSTA welcomes the new INDECON report, by the Irish Central Fisheries Board on the social and economic value of wild salmon to the economy of recreational salmon angling by native and tourist anglers as opposed to the wasteful and damaging practice of mixed stock netting. Almost word for word the "INDECON" report vindicates FISSTA's unceasing campaign and policies on this matter, both in Ireland and internationally, such as at NASCO's Annual Meetings over the past 12 years. The ending of mixed stock netting, sooner the better, will greatly benefit Ireland, the EU and wider international salmonid community. The alternative is foolish and unfortunately the Irish National Salmon Commission, which is now in its fourth year and without any relevant representation from salmonid anglers, has embarked on an unwritten roadmap that takes no account of the salmon returning to the rivers of our UK or EU neighbours. FISSTA acknowledge our country has this huge responsibility to the other countries and seek your continued support in this fight. This is the second salmon season which Ministers John Brown and Dermot Ahern have broken their election promise to implement "individual non-transferable quotas". By authorising such a huge commercial catch Minister Browne has ensured that European rivers will continue to have no chance of making a recovery for many years to come. The following figures will prove that.

	Scientific	Quota	Amount	
Quotas	Advice	Granted	fished	Overall Fish killed
2002	117,000	220,000	206,000	350,000
2003	140,000	182,000	Season open now until July end	

Salmon farming continues to wreak havoc on sea trout and wild salmon stocks due to sea lice infested estuaries.

Irish anglers and the conservational minded are sad to state much more devious methods are being employed to delay any progress we may achieve in the near future. EU investment to quadruple the production is in full progress without any

consideration for our marine environment. The Government continues the collusion with commercial interests.

FISSTA as an NGO representing and expressing the experienced views of the ordinary "recreational angler on the river bank", have the best interests of the salmon and its environment as a priority hence the worrying trend in Ireland by governmental bodies to hold up renewals of club leases on fisheries and attempts to retake others – particularly in Kerry and Donegal, will be vigorously fought.

We respect the restraint of the Greenlanders and Faeroese and congratulate the North Atlantic Salmon Fund in their buyout achievements to date. We acknowledge their wide experience which can be put to excellent use in Ireland when our Government finally agrees with an immediate buyout policy.