

MINIMUM CONSERVATION REFERENCE SIZES (MCRS)



This is the angling community's opportunity to ensure that there are more and bigger fish for future generations and to protect the success of the sport we enjoy.



ANGLING TRUST
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Background

Prior to the United Kingdom's departure from the European Union, minimum legal fish sizes, referred to as Minimum Conservation Reference Sizes (MCRS) were set by the EU. Since January 2021, the UK is no longer subject to this legislation.

Within the UK some Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authorities (IFCAs), which manage fish stocks out to six miles around England, have their own bylaws which set minimum sizes, and which apply to recreational angling. Others do not and continue to assess whether there is a risk to fish stocks from recreational angling before setting any legal-size limit.

Why it matters

Minimum Conservation Reference Sizes (MCRS) are a commonsense approach to conservation, an easy concept to understand (protecting immature fish) and to apply when fishing. As a result, they have become particularly recognised by recreational anglers as an important conservation method for fisheries management. This is the angling community's opportunity to ensure that there are more and bigger fish for future generations and to protect the success of the sport we enjoy.



What is the Angling Trust doing?

The Angling Trust believes in allowing all species of fish the chance to have spawned at least once before being taken. On this basis, our website contains a table of the approximate size of sexual maturity for females of all species using the best available evidence to support this. Anglers retaining fish above these sizes can be reasonably confident that these fish will have had the chance to have bred at least once.

[Table and recommendations available here](#)

(Sizes of sexual maturity displayed in the table have been gathered from the best available evidence at the time).

How can you help?

Join the Angling Trust to support our work to protect fish stocks for future generations.

Adhere to the recommended MCRS as closely as possible, releasing fish that do not meet the minimum size guideline.

Keep up to date with the MCRS recommendations, particularly within your own IFCA district.

Where appropriate, respond to IFCA consultations on MCRS and support Angling Trust related campaigns.

Thank You!

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ASSOCIATE PARTNERS
FOR SUPPORTING THE
WORK OF THE
ANGLING TRUST



IF YOU ARE A MEMBER OF THE ANGLING TRADE AND WOULD LIKE TO SUPPORT OUR WORK, FIND OUT HOW YOU CAN GET INVOLVED BY EMAILING JOHN.CHEYNE@ANGLINGTRUST.NET



ANGLING TRUST

We are a not-for-profit organisation representing anglers, fighting for fish, fishing and the environment. We are recognised by the Government as the National Governing Body for angling in England and partner with Visit Wales and Natural Resources Wales to promote Fishing in Wales. We are a member-based organisation made up of anglers of all disciplines providing a united front to represent, grow and protect our sport. By becoming a member of the Angling Trust you are helping to protect the waterways you fish in and the fish which live within them, ensuring their health and protection for future generations.

[Click here for more information about how to join the Angling Trust](#)

Angling Trust Limited is a company limited by guarantee, company number 05320350.

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