

Category 3 Conservation Policy 2018

Atlantic Salmon are classified as an endangered species - if they were mammals or birds they would be protected and fishing would be banned.

The Scottish Government review of the conservation status for the 2018 season has proposed a downgrading of some of the Cromarty Firth rivers, further restricting fishing for salmon, along with many other rivers throughout Scotland, with the Conon system remaining as Category 1. **The Scottish Government has categorised the rivers Alness, Allt Graad and Balnagown as category 3, which means full catch and release. This categorisation also extends to the estuary waters and netting stations within the designated area.**

ENFORCEMENT

- Proprietors and clubs are urged to make compliance with this policy a condition of their leases and permits

SALMON

- Due to the Scottish Governments categorisation there will be 100% catch and release.

SEA TROUT

- Sea Trout over 1½lbs are particularly valuable and should be released. A maximum of one sea trout over 1½lbs per angler per week may be killed but it would be preferable to kill only smaller fish, preferably Finnock.

GENERAL

- All coloured fish must be released
- Use barbless hooks
- Do not use treble hooks
- The board is concerned that fish caught by worming may be difficult to release unharmed. Where worming is permitted only circle hooks should be used.
- When releasing fish, try to keep the fish in the water at all times and use knotless mesh landing nets.

PINK SALMON

Subject to further Government advice any pink salmon caught should be killed and passed to Fishery Board staff for analysis. However, it is very important to identify that any fish are pink salmon as killing an Atlantic Salmon will be illegal.