



Agenda item C5

Sea Angling Report July - September 2013

Kent and Essex Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority

Summary : To report on the Recreational Sea Angling Sector activity in the KEIFCA District

KEIFCA Progress

This period saw KEIFCA heavily involved with the ongoing issues concerning bass both in the district and on a national level. Officers have attended meetings to discuss these issues with other regulators and relevant stakeholders and work streams have been put in place to begin to develop appropriate management to ensure the sustainable future of bass in the district.

Essex Angling Summary

The thick and prolonged presence of green weed seen around the Essex coast has caused problems for anglers fishing from piers for mackerel during July and August. Fishing for smoothhound was reported as being difficult at times during August due to this heavy weed and it was noticed that there were low numbers of adult females entering the river to pup. Anglers reported that juvenile and small adult bass were being seen for a second consecutive year in lower than expected numbers in the Essex rivers, with catches of bass being equally poor from boats during the first two months of the period. Thornback rays however were consistently present for boat anglers fishing up river and along the Essex coast giving them something to target when a lack of bass was experienced.

When water temperature resembled Mediterranean conditions in July there were some unexpected reports of anchovies being caught around Walton in the north of the district. Catches elsewhere along the Essex coast in late July and August also included ballan wrasse, flounders and dabs with mullets being found around low water in Southend and Chalkwell. Catches of sole from the shore in the Thames were also reported to be considerably lower than in previous years for July and August. In contrast however, the number of European eels seen by anglers in the Thames and surrounding rivers have shown promising increases

compared to previous years. Reports for tope fishing varied from fair to good for private and charter boats fishing the sandbanks of Essex, the North Kent Coast and further offshore with boats specialising in tope fishing seeing large specimen fish at times.

September gave anglers fishing from Southend Pier slightly more to catch with small numbers of mackerel being seen, varying in size from small to in excess of 45cm in length. A good show of bass came for anglers fishing from Walton and Clacton piers and from boats late in the month. Fish between 2.5 and 4lb inshore and up to 8lb+ from the outer sand banks were caught. There were also reports of more large female smoothhounds in late September although this was noted to be late in the year. Finally, the end of the period brought the first of the codling for pier and boat anglers as well as plenty of small whiting along the Essex Coast.

Kent Angling Summary

This period saw a north south divide along the Kent coast with more fish being reported in the south than the north. Catches of bass from the southern beaches around Dungeness up the coast to Deal were reported as good with fish mostly in the region of 2-5lb in weight with the occasional fish of 7-9lb and up to 12lb 6oz seen in July and August. Catches of sole were also recorded as fair to good when fishing at night from the same beaches with catches continuing into early September.

Reports of good catches of whiting were seen across Kent along the coast with most sessions resulting in at least a few fish being caught while others reported in excess of 40 in a session from the shore and more from boats.

Fishing from Deal Pier has produced good fishing for some anglers with catches including bass up to 9lb 4oz, garfish, mackerel, thornback rays, smoothhounds, pouting, pollack, dogfish, wrasse and the odd black bream and Allis shad in July and into the very early part of August. Catch rates then slowed down after this but by late August reports of small codling began to emerge along the Kent coast down to Dungeness. Numbers of codling caught increased through September, with night fishing producing the best catches. Also present in large quantities at the start and end of September were small mackerel from Dungeness while they continued to be seen intermittently throughout the period in other known marks such as the Deal, Admiralty and Folkestone piers.

A Senechal

Angling Officer/IFC Officer