

Scottish Sea Angling Conservation Network

Sea Angling Communities

The Forgotten Communities



November 2007

Open your Eyes

EU, British and Scottish Governments focus a lot of time, effort and financial resource supporting catching sector "fishing communities".

In discussions with these fisheries people it is apparent that they fail to understand that there are also many "Sea Angling Communities" which support the fragile economies of many coastal communities.

Sea angling spend supports :

- Hotels and B&B's
- Caravan & camping parks
- Public Houses, Cafes and shops
- Charter boat / boat hire
- Tackle shops, bait suppliers
- Boat sales and chandlers

A fishing community study



SSACN have produced a video to demonstrate just how important sea angling is to a small community.

Drummore in the parish of Kirkmaiden, is Scotland's southern most village and has a population of just 420 people.

Sea angling provides over 20 full time jobs and many seasonal part time ones.

This is not a special area of sea angling activity, the video could have been shot in many other locations in Scotland, or indeed throughout the UK.

In our film we interviewed a sample of these businesses and the following are some of the comments made by the interviewees in the film.



Mariners Cafe

Proprietor – Sandra Birkenhead

- Opened her business 7 years ago.
- Most of her customers are anglers of all ages who come throughout the year not just school holidays.
- Sandra's breakfasts are renowned throughout the sea angling world.
- Business would close without anglers.
- If fish stocks improved so would the business
- Many other businesses affected eg egg and wild boar meat suppliers
- Angling has an effect on all the peripheral businesses and the community.

Regarding the impact of sea anglers, Sandra said " This is a place of natural beauty as well as peace and quiet, but this alone is not enough to bring people here".

" In my opinion, 75% of the tourists that come to this area come here for sea angling "

" If the fishing made its' way back to how it was when I was a kid, I'm sure the numbers of anglers, tourists and visitors would go back up accordingly. "

Westfield B&B

Proprietor – Christine Hose

- Bought property to run as a B&B.
- Customers are predominantly fishermen.
- Anglers initially come just for the fishing but often return for their family holidays.
- Sea angling extends the season beyond traditional holiday periods.
- Would have to shut the door if the fish stocks decline any further.
- Anglers complain there's not as many fish as there used to be.

"My business relies heavily on the anglers, as do most of the other businesses in Drummore - camp sites, shops, pubs etc. "

Port Logan Inn

Proprietor - Richard Blakemore

- Sea anglers are an integral part of his business accounting for around 25% of it.
- Anglers arrive in groups of 3-10 people just for the fishing.
- 20 boats and trailers often launch opposite his pub.
- Sea Anglers extend his season.
- Sea Angling affects all the businesses in the area.
- If Stocks continue to decline then all the businesses will suffer and obviously an improvement in them would have a positive effect.

Though 2000 acres of Sky was shot in the village its effect was transitory, sea anglers provide a long term contribution and deserve far better support.

Clashwhannon Caravan Park and Public House

Proprietor - Martin Appleton

- Bought business three years ago and is building it up.
- Sea Anglers are crucial to his business as they are there year round not just in holiday periods.
- Anglers come for the fishing and nothing else.
- Without improvement in fish stocks his business will suffer.
- More fish will attract more anglers and therefore more customers
- 99 per cent of letting vans and over 60 per cent of private vans are let to, or owned by anglers.

Martin was very clear that without anglers the loss of trade would require a radical change to his business model.

“... preserve fish stocks otherwise the area will need massive investment to attract tourists here, or the community will go into terminal decline.”

Onyermarks Sea Fishing Charters

Proprietor – Ian Burrett

- Each day Ian’s boats are fishing brings £720 into the region.
- With accommodation that’s £1500 per day or £150,000 per year.
- Plus additional spend on petrol, packed lunches, evening meals or a few beers on an evening.
- Environmental impact is minimal as Ian operates solely on a catch and release basis.
- Tagging helps the scientists gather data to establish migratory routes.

Ian also points out there are hundreds of shore anglers and self drive boat anglers in the region throughout the year.

“ to get cold and wet catching fish is far better than to get cold and wet not catching anything at all. “



The Sports Shop, Stranraer

Proprietor - Eric McLean

- Has run the shop for twenty years.
- Seen a drastic decline in stocks over the last thirty years with a corresponding decline in business.
- Many species including Spurdog are a thing of the past.
- Used to have morning queues of 20-30 anglers at the door buying fishing tackle
- Angling is by far the biggest participation sport in the area
- Family holidays can provide new customers.
- Lack of fish is causing a decline to many businesses in the area.

THANKS TO ALL CONCERNED

Our video is an amateur creation, those taking part worked without rehearsal and to no script; the contributions were freely given and are the individuals heartfelt thoughts – they should be listened to !!

To get your copy of the video please send a sae (plus a small contribution) to The Secretary (SSACN) 62 Lounsdale Drive, Paisley Renfrewshire, PA2 9ED

For more information or to join us at SSACN, visit www.ssacn.org

The Government needs to act

A recent SNH study showed sea angling to be the #1 coastal recreational activity with over 250,000 domestic and visiting sea anglers taking part annually.

The economic benefit of sea angling is spread throughout many fragile coastal economies like Drummore.

No Scottish Government so far has been willing to make any investment to ensure the stocks, facilities for, or development of sea angling - millions are spent every year to support commercial communities.

The basis for the lack of interest in the past has been that they just didn't know if sea angling contributed enough to be worth supporting.

We have undertaken a desk study which shows it is in excess of £150 million/yr, a figure that easily stands comparison with any commercial sector.

How much is enough for sea angling to become of interest ???

Best Value

Coastal communities could be better supported if the use of marine resources were targeted at ensuring the best socio-economic value for all communities - commercial, recreational or whatever.

SSACN would like to see the creation of a network of Protected Areas which balance the needs of those who depend on the sea for their livelihoods or leisure.

In these areas, all damaging activities would be restricted to allow wildlife and habitats to recover and be protected.



Within these Areas we would like to see 'Angling Centres' introduced where only sustainable fishing practices, recreational or commercial, would be allowed.

To protect our marine environment, get 'Best Value' and allow our fragile coastal communities to survive and grow

Doing nothing is not an option