

Due to the overall decline in catches in the Ness district, it is essential that the exploitation of all salmon is limited to protect the future of the fishery. Consequently, the Ness District Salmon Fishery Board’s Conservation Policy for the 2022 season is outlined below. These are the minimum expectations, please try to return all salmon carefully in order that they may go on to spawn.



Until the 30th June, all salmon should be released. From 1st July until the season end all hen salmon should be released. Only one cock salmon, of less than 8lb, may be retained per angler per week (even if fishing multiple beats), with a maximum of two per season.



Throughout the season all stale or unseasonable fish must be released e.g. coloured & gravid. fish.



All kelts must be released.



Escaped farm salmon should be killed and retained.

Conservation status

For the 2022 season the Ness is a category 2 river under the Scottish Conservation Regulations. Exploitation must be reduced, as the need for mandatory C&R will be reviewed annually.

Angling Season

Upstream of the Dochfour Weir—15th Jan to 30th Sept.

Downstream of Dochfour Weir—1st Feb to 15th Oct.

These agreed amendments to the official season are to protect the spring fish in the upper catchment and to protect the late spawning fish in the lower river.

Angling methods

Fly fishing is encouraged and spinning is permitted at the beats discretion. When spinning, lures should have no more than one set of hooks, preferably single hooks.

The use of prawns or shrimps is prohibited throughout the catchment, as is the use of worms as bait (when fishing for salmon or sea trout) upstream of Dochfour Weir.

During the months of July and August worming is permitted below Dochfour Weir. Care should be taken when worm fishing to avoid deep-hooking as this can reduce the survival rate of released fish.

Scottish legislation requires that all salmon caught before the 1st April must be returned.