

Inch Cape Offshore Wind Farm

New Energy for Scotland

Offshore Environmental Statement:

VOLUME 2G

**Appendix 18C: Salmon and Sea Trout
Baseline**



Inch Cape Offshore Wind Farm

Appendix 18C: Salmon and Sea Trout Fisheries Baseline

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Glossary of Terms

ASFB – Association of Salmon Fishery Boards

AST – Atlantic Salmon Trust

Cefas – Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science

CPA – Coast Protection Act

DECC – Department of Energy and Climate Change

DSFB – District Salmon Fishery Board

DTI – Department of Trade and Industry

EIA – Environmental Impact Assessment

ERFT – Esk River and Fisheries Trust

FEPA - Food and Environment Protection Act

FLOWW – Fisheries Liaison with Offshore Wind and Wet Renewables Group

MCEU – Marine Consents and Environment Unit

MSF – Multi Stock Fisheries

MSS – Marine Scotland Science

MSW – Multi-sea-winter Salmon

nm – Nautical Mile

RFFT -River Forth Fisheries Trust

SAC – Special Area of Conservation

SEA – Strategic Environmental Assessment

SNFAS – Salmon Net Fishing Association of Scotland

SPICe – Scottish Parliament Information Centre

S&TA – Salmon and Trout Association

1SW – One-sea-winter Salmon

18C.1 Introduction

Salmon (*Salmo salar*) and sea trout (*Salmo trutta*) are species of particular socio-economic and conservation importance in Scotland. The regional socio-economic importance of wild salmon and sea trout fisheries, combined with the potential significance of impact from the proposed development is such that they have been separately assessed and the findings covered in this report. The ecology, behaviour and conservation status of salmon and sea trout is considered in the Environmental Statement (ES), in Chapter 13: Natural Fish and Shellfish.

This document defines the socio-economic importance of salmon and sea trout fisheries in areas relevant to the Inch Cape Offshore Wind Farm and its export cable corridor, at a local, regional and national level.

For the purposes of this document, fisheries catch data, as provided by Marine Scotland Science (MSS), has been analysed to provide information about the following aspects of the fishery:

- Current trends in salmon, grilse and sea trout catches in Scotland with respect to historical levels (1952 to 2010);
- The relative importance of the fishery at a national, regional and local level, based on annual average catches (2001 to 2010) by species and method; and
- The seasonality and annual variation of average catches (2001 to 2010) by species and method at a regional and local level.

The analysis of fisheries catch data is not intended as an assessment of the abundance or state of the stocks, but as an indication of the underlying population trends and relative importance of the fisheries of salmon and sea trout by fishery region and district in Scotland. Peaks in fishery activity do not necessarily reflect critical times for salmon and sea trout movement and catch data is therefore of limited value in terms of presenting an accurate baseline of fish populations and fish migration outside of the time of fisheries. A description of the life history and the migration of salmon and sea trout in areas relevant to the development is provided separately in ES Chapter 13: Natural Fish and Shellfish.

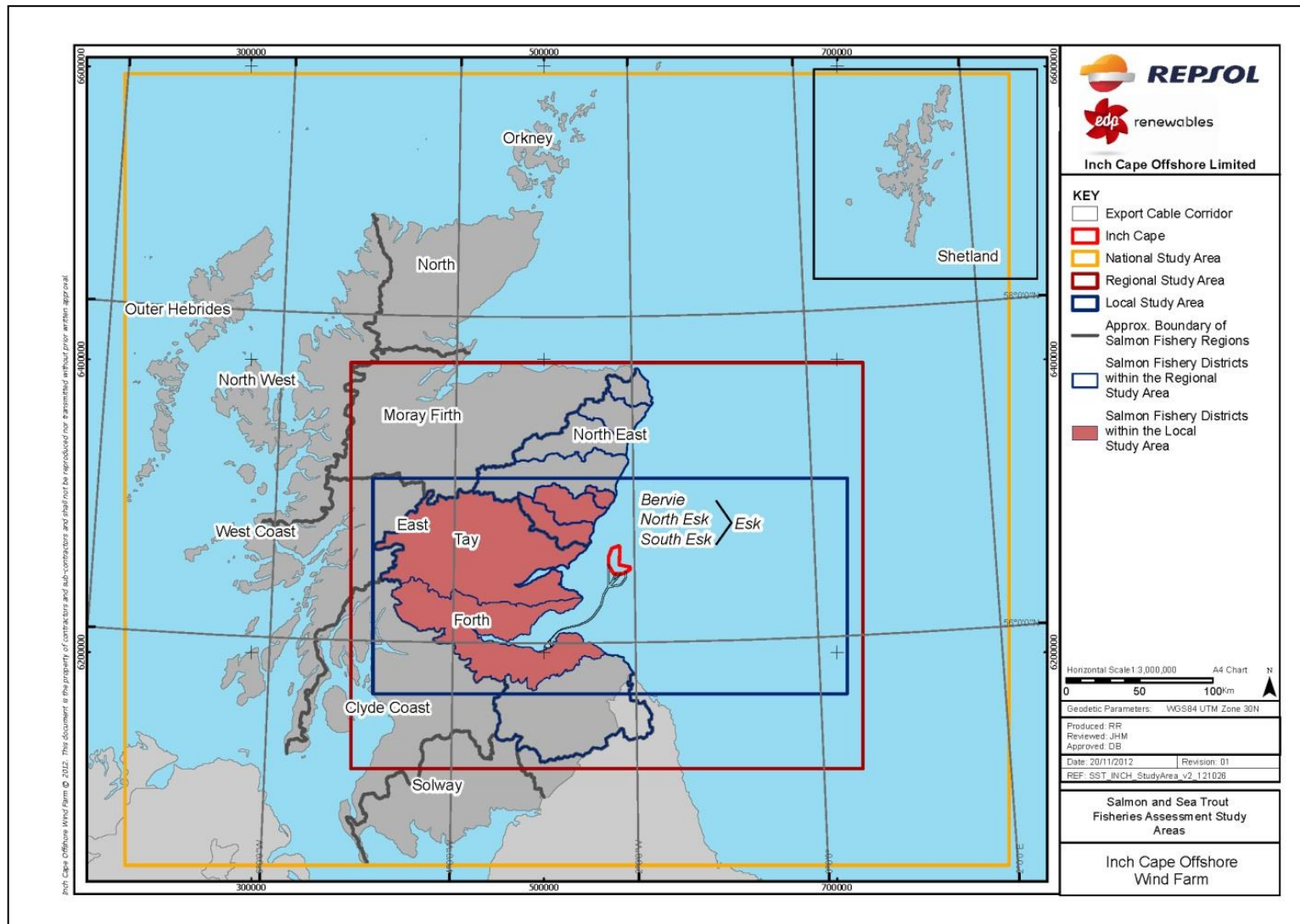
In addition to the above, information gathered through consultation with District Salmon Fishery Boards (DSFBs) and with representatives of the net fishery has been used to inform this document.

The information presented in this report will inform the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) of the effects of development on salmon and sea trout fisheries (see Chapter 18: Commercial Fisheries). As a result of the nature of their fisheries, a separate approach, significantly different to that taken for the assessment of marine commercial fishing activities, is required.

18C.2 Study Area

The area of study has been defined at a local, regional and national level (Figure 18C.1). The local study area focuses on the salmon fishery districts located in the nearest proximity to the proposed development: the Forth, the Tay and the Esk (including the Bervie, North Esk and South Esk). The broader regional study area takes account of all salmon fisheries regions located in the vicinity of the proposed development including the East and North East regions. In addition, given the migratory behaviour of salmon and sea trout and the importance of the fishery across Scotland, national data and information have also been briefly described.

Figure 18C.1 Salmon and Sea Trout Fisheries Assessment Study Areas



18C.3 Methodology

18C.3.1 Data and Information Sources, Sensitivities and Qualifications

The following guidance documents have been used for the undertaking of this technical report:

Figure 18C.1 Salmon and Sea Trout Fisheries Assessment Study Areas

- Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) of Draft Plan for Offshore Wind Energy in Scottish Territorial Waters: Volume 1: Environmental Report; Marine Scotland 2010;
- Offshore Wind Farms, Guidance Note for Environmental Impact Assessment in Respect of Food and Environment Protection Act (FEPA) and Coast Protection Act (CPA) Requirements - Version 2; Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science (Cefas), Marine Consents and Environment Unit (MCEU), Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), June 2004;
- UK Offshore Energy – SEA; Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC), January 2009; and
- Recommendations for Fisheries Liaison; Fisheries Liaison with Offshore Wind and Wet Renewables Group (FLOWW), May 2008.

There is no standard methodology for the establishment of salmon and sea trout fisheries baselines in relation to offshore wind farm developments. A range of different data and information sources have therefore been used to inform this assessment. These are as follows:

- MSS;
- Association of Salmon Fishery Boards (ASFB);
- Salmon Net Fishing Association of Scotland (SNFAS);
- Relevant DSFBs;
- Atlantic Salmon Trust (AST); and
- Scientific papers and other relevant publications.

18C.3.2 Data Gaps, Limitations and Sensitivities

18C.3.2.1 Marine Scotland Catch Statistics

MSS catch statistics divide salmon catches into “salmon” and “grilse”. In this context, the term salmon refers to multi-sea-winter salmon (MSW) whilst grilse refers to one-sea-winter salmon (1SW).

The catch data used for the purposes of this assessment are as reported by MSS. Where there are no records of reported catches, it has been assumed that no fish have been caught. It is recognised that there may be a degree of error within the catch dataset due to misclassification of fish between the grilse and salmon categories. In addition, further errors as a result of misreporting of catches may also exist.

The catch data used in this report are Crown copyright, used with the permission of Marine Scotland Science. Marine Scotland is not responsible for interpretation of these data by third parties.

Each fishery in Scotland is required to provide the number and total weight of salmon, grilse and sea trout caught and retained in each month of the fishing season. Rod and line fisheries are also required to provide the monthly numbers and total weight of those salmon, grilse and sea trout which were caught and released back into the river, this practice is known as “catch and release”. As a result, MSS catch data for the rod and line fishery is broken down into two categories, “rod and line” and “catch and release”. The total catch by the rod-and-line fishery is in effect the sum of the catches recorded in both categories. Data from both categories have been combined to give an indication of the total rod-and-line catch. Similarly, the catch by net-and-coble and fixed engines

(bag and stake nets) has been combined in some instances to provide an indication of the total catch by the net fishery.

18C.3.2.2 Salmon Fishery Regions and Districts

Each salmon fishery district applies its own voluntary or statutory conservation code, closure times, policies and regulations and has in place different management and conservation schemes (e.g. hatcheries, fish counters, water quality control and monitoring schemes). In addition, different districts include varying numbers of rivers and tributaries within their jurisdictions and have different catchment areas.

The areas and names of some districts have changed over time. In the regional study area, for example, catch statistics are collected for the South Esk, North Esk and Bervie districts separately. However, these districts were superseded by the Esk Salmon Fishery District and abolished in 1988 (SI 1988/994). For the purposes of this assessment the former, smaller districts, will be used as they provide a better spatial resolution for analysis of catch data.

The boundaries of the salmon fishery regions and districts could not be provided by MSS as GIS data layers, as a result of third party copyright ownership of these data. The district and region boundaries shown in the charts provided in this report were produced by geo-referencing a raster image. These should therefore be taken as approximate and for illustrative purposes only.

18C.3.2.3 Data Gaps

The distribution patterns, behaviour and migration routes of salmon and sea trout in the marine environment, particularly in waters off the east coast of Scotland are not fully understood. As a result, accurate estimates of the numbers, origin, and period of migration of the salmon and sea trout potentially using the development area or its vicinity cannot be made.

18C.3.3 Consultation

Consultation has been undertaken with representatives of relevant DSFBs and with representatives of the net fishery. These were as follows:

- Tweed DSFB;
- Forth DSFB;
- Tay DSFB;
- Esk DSFB; and
- Usan Salmon Fisheries Ltd (Montrose).

In addition to the above meetings, questionnaires were circulated to all the DSFBs in Scotland, through the ASFB, and to netsmen, through the SNFAS. This process was aimed at gathering fisheries information at a national level and to note the main concerns of the Boards and the netsmen with regards to offshore wind farm developments in Scotland. Examples of the questionnaire used and the information collected have been appended to this report (Section 18C.6: Appendix 01). At the time of writing, a sample of 17 Boards, netsmen and other organisations has completed and returned the questionnaires.

18C.4 Salmon and Sea Trout Fisheries

18C.4.1 Introduction

The definition of salmon under the Salmon Act 1986 includes both Atlantic salmon and sea trout. Both species form an important part of Scotland's natural heritage and support and maintain the existence of commercial and recreational fisheries which are of importance to the Scottish economy. A study undertaken by the Scottish Executive (Radford *et al.*, 2004) estimated that game and coarse anglers spent a total of £131 million in Scotland of which 65 per cent (£73 million) corresponded to salmon and sea trout fishing. In the Tweed, one of the most important salmon fishery districts in Scotland and in the regional study area, an economic survey carried out in 2007 (RTC, 2007) estimated that the economic impact, the output generated in the Scottish Borders and that could be attributed to fishing on the Tweed system, was just under £18 million and that this supported around 457 full time jobs.

18C.4.2 Salmon Fishing Rights, Administration and Regulations

18C.4.2.1 Fishing Rights

The right to fish for salmon in Scotland, whether in inland waters or at sea, is a heritable right¹. The taking of salmon without the right or written permission to do so is prohibited under the Salmon and Freshwater Fisheries (Protection) (Scotland) Act 1951.

The rights originally belonged to the Crown, however the Crown has made grants of salmon fishing to others and ownership is now widely distributed among private individuals, companies, local authorities and others. The rights can be bought, sold or leased independently of land except in Orkney and the Shetlands (Williamson, 1991).

The Crown still owns areas along the coast and in rivers. Since the late 1980s, however, the Crown Estate has supported a policy of conservation. There are therefore, no longer any coastal netting stations let by the Crown and none are actively fished (The Crown Estate, 2010); the existing working netting stations were therefore granted or sold the heritable title by the Crown Estate before the late 1980s (Crawley, 2010). Restrictions introduced to regulate fishing activities have resulted in salmon fishing in Scotland being limited to a short distance from the shore, further discussed in Section 18C.4.3.1.

18C.4.2.2 Fisheries Administration

Salmon fisheries in Scotland, both inland and at sea, are managed by their owner or leaseholder under a framework of regulations laid down by central government.

For the purposes of salmon fishery management Scotland is divided into 54 statutory Salmon Fishery Districts each with a catchment area including a river or group of rivers (ASFB, 2010). Today, almost without exception, every district has formed a DSFB made up of the owners or leaseholders of the fishing rights. These boards manage the rivers and coastal netting zones, being able to appoint bailiffs with the power to enforce regulations and restrictions, as well as establishing other practices for improving and maintaining fish stocks, and monitoring and controlling river conditions. Each salmon fishery in each district has a value, which is calculated by the district assessor. Individual boards are self-financing and generally raise money by taxing rights' owners within their district. This often works on a sliding scale, according to the number of fish caught. In 1999 the government made a revision to the constitution of the boards to allow for wider representation, by bodies such as the

¹ The right to fish for salmon is one of the *regalia minora* (proprietary rights of the Crown which can be alienated) and a legal separate tenement which the Crown may grant or lease to a party other than the owner of the (water-covered) land over which the right is held. The right is a type of incorporeal heritable property and as such an interest in land which can be registered in the Land Register.

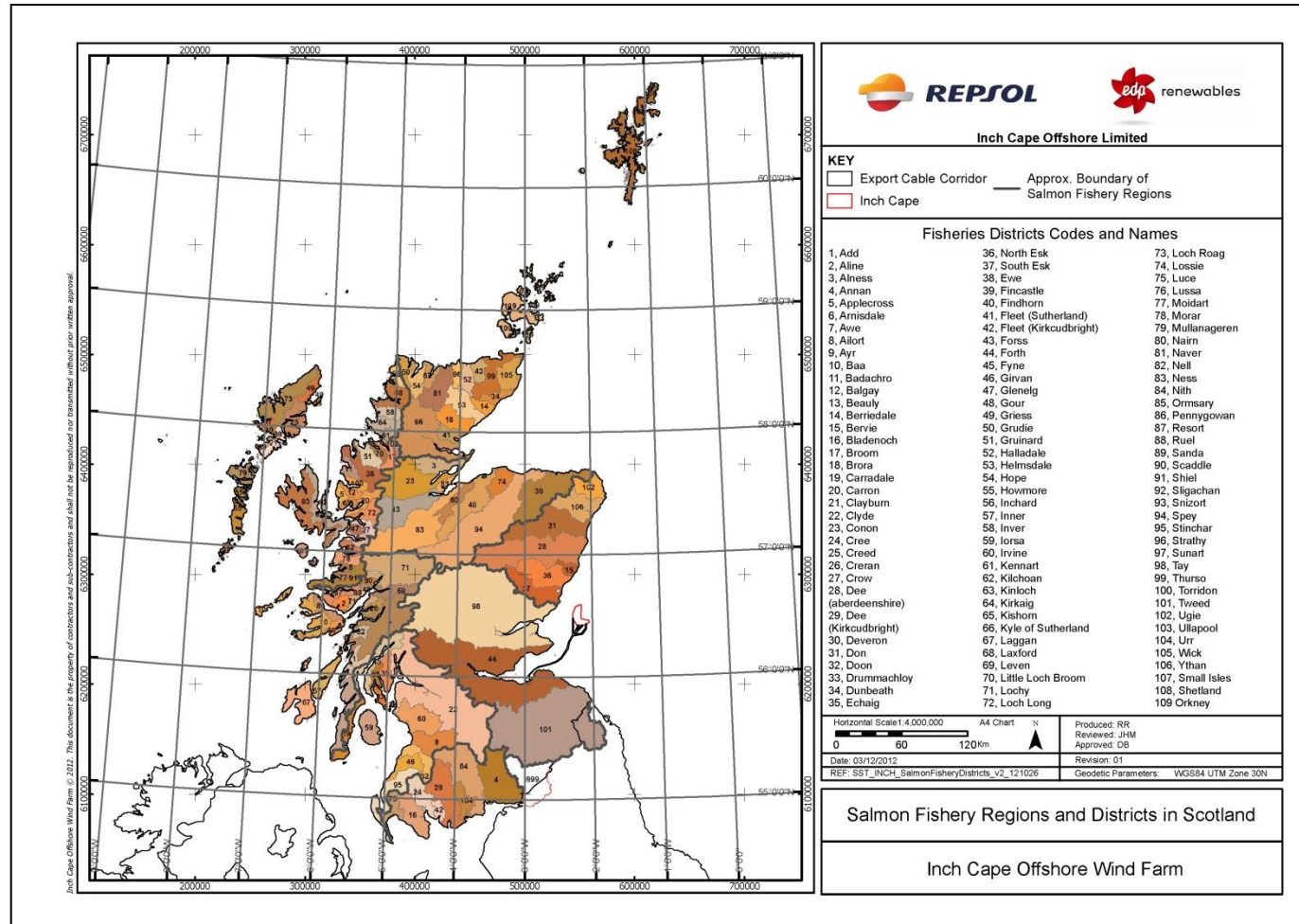
Scottish Environment Protection Agency, Scottish Natural Heritage or others such as local angling clubs and associations (ASFB, 2010).

Boards hold powers relating to the introduction of new regulations on the fishery, the purchase of property to acquire rod or net fisheries, the imposition of fishery assessments on the fishery proprietors, etc. (Scottish Parliament Information Centre - SPICe, 2000). Whilst the Boards themselves have no ability to make legal restrictions on fishing, applications are made to Scottish Ministers by the Boards for changes and new regulations to be introduced.

Salmon fishery districts, as formalised by the Salmon Fisheries (Scotland) Acts 1862-1868, are shown in Figure 18C.2. As explained in Section 18C.3.2.2 above, some districts have been joined together and superseded by larger districts, resulting in the current 54 districts.

In addition to the Boards, Marine Scotland (within the Scottish Executive Environment Directorate) oversees the fishery as a whole, promoting legislation and making regulations under the various Salmon and Fisheries Acts passed by the devolved government. The Inspector of Salmon and Freshwater Fisheries monitors the effects of legislation and the operation of the fisheries. Marine Scotland Compliance (formerly the Scottish Fisheries Protection Agency) enforces regulations at sea and helps the District Boards with local, coastal enforcement (Williamson, 1991); MSS's Freshwater Fisheries Laboratory provides scientific advice on salmon and their fisheries.

Figure 18C.2 Salmon Fishery Regions and Districts in Scotland



18C.4.2.3 Fisheries Regulations

18C.4.2.3.1 General

The annual close time for fishing salmon in Scotland (except in the Tweed district) is a continuous period of not less than 168 days. It applies to all methods of fishing, except to the extent that provision is made for periods during the annual close time during which it is permitted to fish for and take salmon by rod-and-line (Crawley, 2010). Actual dates may vary but are mostly from late August to mid-February, depending upon individual District Board policy. Rod-and-line may continue for a few weeks either side of this. Weekly close times are also nationally enforced, being 24 hours (Sunday) in the case of angling and 60 hours for all other methods.

In the Tweed, the annual close time is a continuous period of not less than 153 days from mid-September until mid-February in the following year. The periods during the annual close time when fishing by rod-and-line is permitted extend until 30 November, and from 1 February (Crawley, 2010).

It should be noted that these close periods may, in some cases, be extended through voluntary agreement or decreased after request to Marine Scotland by DSFBs (Crawley, 2010).

It is prohibited to take juvenile salmon (not including trout). There is a minimum mesh size of 90 mm for nets, to enable smolts to escape. In addition, since the introduction of the Conservation of Salmon (Prohibition of Sale) (Scotland) in 2002, it is prohibited to sell, offer or expose for sale any salmon that has been taken by rod-and-line.

There is no direct limitation on fishing effort within open fishing periods, although there are restrictions in place which act as indirect controls:

- Restrictions imposed on the various fishing methods;
- The exclusive right of the salmon fishermen through ownership or tenancy to decide fishing effort in their fishery; and
- Regulations established and enforced by individual District Boards.

Salmon fisheries are saleable and netsmen or companies may acquire fishing rights over relatively large areas. Other interested parties may also purchase rights. For example, the Atlantic Salmon Conservation Trust has historically bought coastal sites to close them down as a conservation measure in order to halt coastal netting activities. Similarly, rod-and-line interests may buy up river netting rights to close them down, often through the District Boards.

18C.4.2.3.2 Inland Waters

The only lawful fishing methods in inland waters are rod-and-line and net-and-coble. Fixed nets/engines are prohibited.

18C.4.2.3.3 At Sea

It is prohibited to catch fish by enmeshment. Troll or long-lining is also illegal. Effectively the only lawful methods are net-and-coble, fixed engines and rod-and-line.

18C.4.3 Fishing Methods

The principal methods for catching salmon in Scotland are as follows:

- Fixed Engines (Bag and Stake Nets);
- Net-and-coble; and
- Rod-and-line.

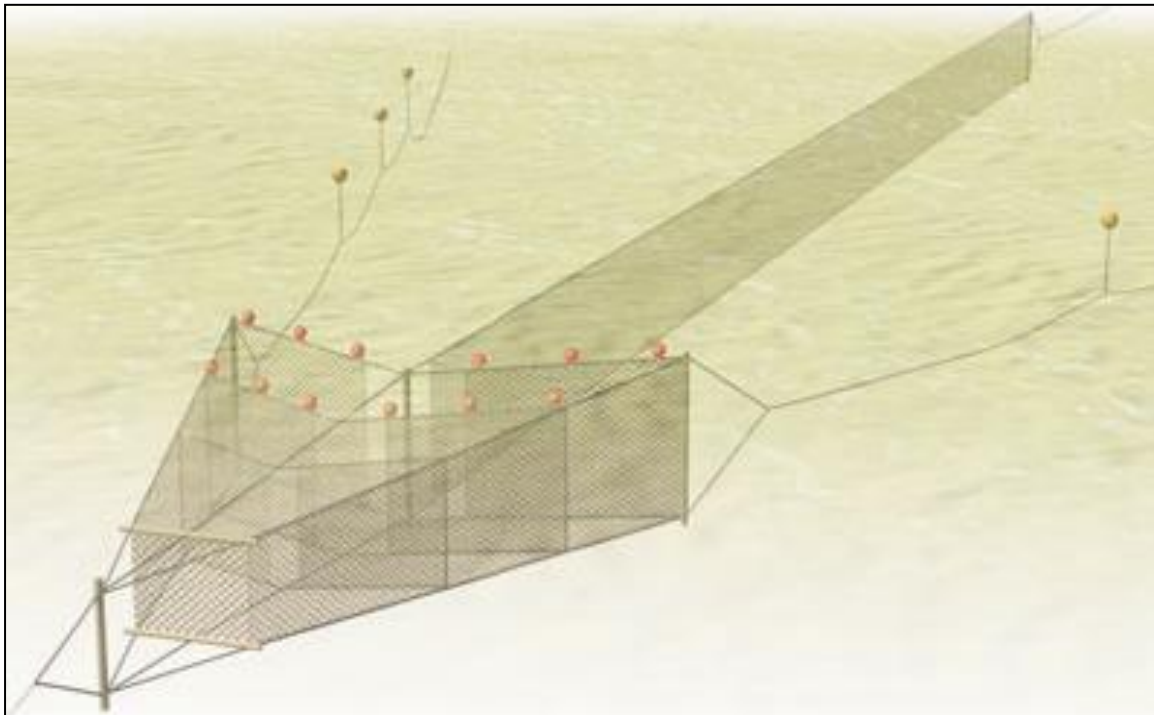
18C.4.3.1 Fixed Engines (Bag and Stake Nets)

Bag and stake nets are the most common types of gear used to catch salmon in Scottish coastal waters and are commonly referred to as fixed engines. Salmon fishing using this method is not permitted in inland waters (rivers above the estuary limits).

Bag nets are set to fish just below the surface in rocky coasts where they will not ebb dry at low tide. They may be set singly or in a line extending seawards from the shore. The entire net or line of nets is not permitted to extend more than 1,300 m from the mean low water mark, excluding mooring warps or anchors. The nets must not be operated between 6 pm Friday until 6 am Monday. Catches are generally removed from the nets at slack tide (Galbraith and Rice, 2004; SI 1992/1974).

No part of the nets may be set with the purpose of catching fish by entanglement. The minimum mesh net size is 90 mm. Nets are designed to target fish swimming close to the surface while following the coastline. The gear is made up of two principal elements, the trap and the leader. The trap is approximately 13.5 m wide and 4.5 m deep at the mouth, tapering to about 3 m in width and 2.5 m in depth at the head. The leader may not exceed 300 m in length. The configuration of a typical bag net is shown in Figure 18C.3 below.

Figure 18C.3 Bag Net showing the Trap, the Leader and Moorings



Stake nets are similar in design and operation to the bag nets except that they are set on sandy beaches, supported on stakes driven into the sand, where the receding tide exposes the nets. The maximum allowed leader length and total gear length are similar to those specified for bag nets.

18C.4.3.2 Net-and-Coble

Traditionally nets are operated from cobbles, small flat bottomed, open boats, with a shore party assisting in operations. A member of the shore party holds the upstream hauling rope and the net is paid out from the stern of the vessel, as shown in 18C.4. The net must not be stationary or allowed to drift at any time and must be constantly 'swept', surrounding the fish and drawing them towards the shore. No other objects or obstructions may be used to aid fishing and adjacent netting operations must be at least 50 m apart (Galbraith and Rice, 2004).

Net-and-cobles are generally operated in estuaries and the lower reaches of rivers, although small numbers are also used in coastal waters (Potter and Ó Maoiléidigh, 2006).

Figure 18C.4 Net and Coble Fishing



18C.4.3.3 Rod and Line

At present, recreational rod-and-line fishing is the most common method of fishing for salmon. The Salmon and Freshwater Fisheries (Consolidation) (Protection) (Scotland) Act 2003 defines rod and line as: *“a single rod and line (used otherwise than as a set line or by way of pointing, or by striking or dragging for fish) with such bait or lure as is not prohibited”*. DSFBs can apply to Scottish Ministers for regulations specifying baits and lures that may not be used for rod-and-line fishing in their district to be made whilst in some cases voluntary restrictions are set by the boards. Usually the restrictions prohibit the use of shrimps, prawns or worms as bait and the use of lures bearing multiple sets of hooks (SPICe, 2000). The use of fish roe, fire or light as bait or lure is also prohibited (Salmon and Freshwater Fisheries (Consolidation) (Protection) (Scotland) 2003).

Salmon and sea trout are generally not caught by rod-and-line at sea, but along river beats. Most DSFBs operate and police a catch and release policy. Due to its popularity, the sport makes a significant contribution to both local and regional economies.

18C.4.4 Fisheries Data

The information given in this section is principally based on reported catches of salmon, grilse and sea trout recorded from 1952 to 2010 by region and by salmon fishery district within the regional study area from 2001 to 2010. These were kindly provided by MSS. In addition, information gathered during the consultation process has also been included in this section where appropriate.

As previously mentioned in Section 18C.3.2, it should be noted that the analysis of fisheries statistics given below is not intended as an assessment of the abundance or state of the stocks, but as an indication of the underlying population trends and relative importance of the fisheries of salmon and sea trout by region and fishery district in Scotland. The critical time for fisheries does not necessarily

represent critical times for salmon and sea trout movement and catch data is limited in terms of presenting an accurate baseline of fish populations and fish migration outside of the time of fisheries. This also holds true for rod-and-line catches which do not account for the closed season and give no effort value.

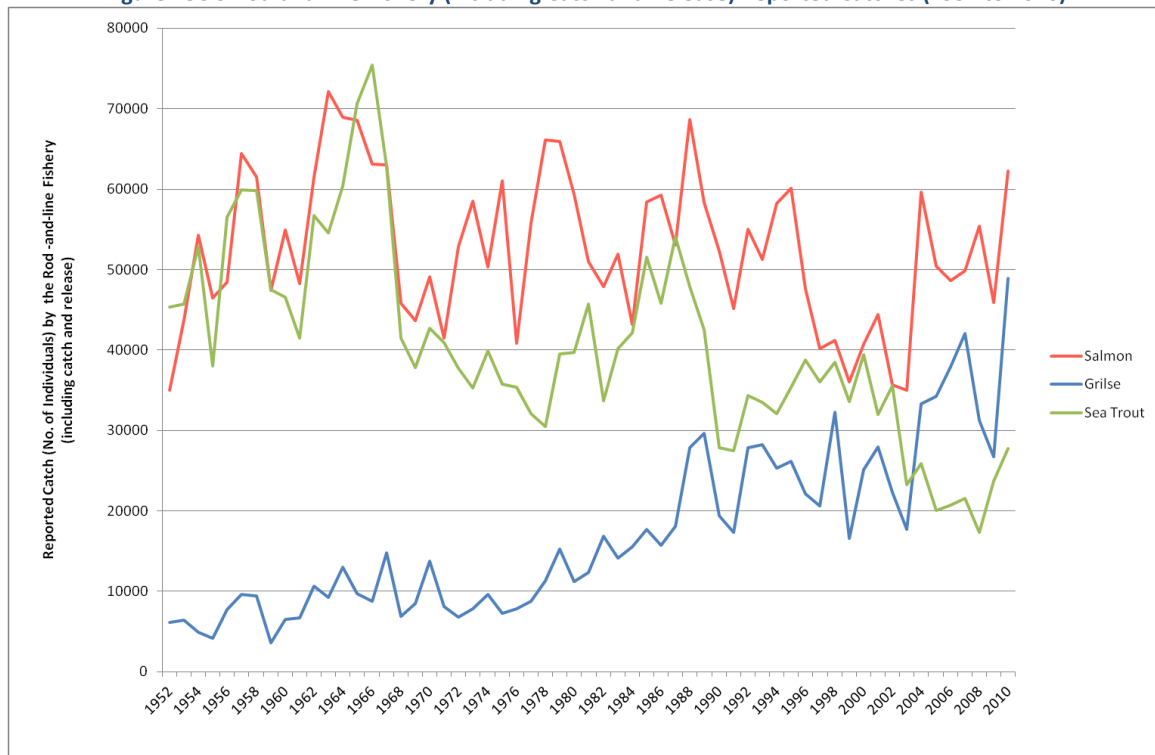
18C.4.4.1 National

18C.4.4.1.1 Historical Data

An indication of the current trends in salmon, grilse and sea trout catches in Scotland with respect to historical levels (1952 to 2010) is given below broken down for the rod-and-line (including catch and release) and the net (net-and-coble and fixed engines) fisheries respectively.

Current salmon catches by rod-and-line are in line with historical levels whilst there has been a slight increase in the total annual catch of grilse, particularly during the second half of the time series. The overall trend in the sea trout catch is one of a decline, with current catches being more than half from those recorded at the start of the series (Figure 18C.5).

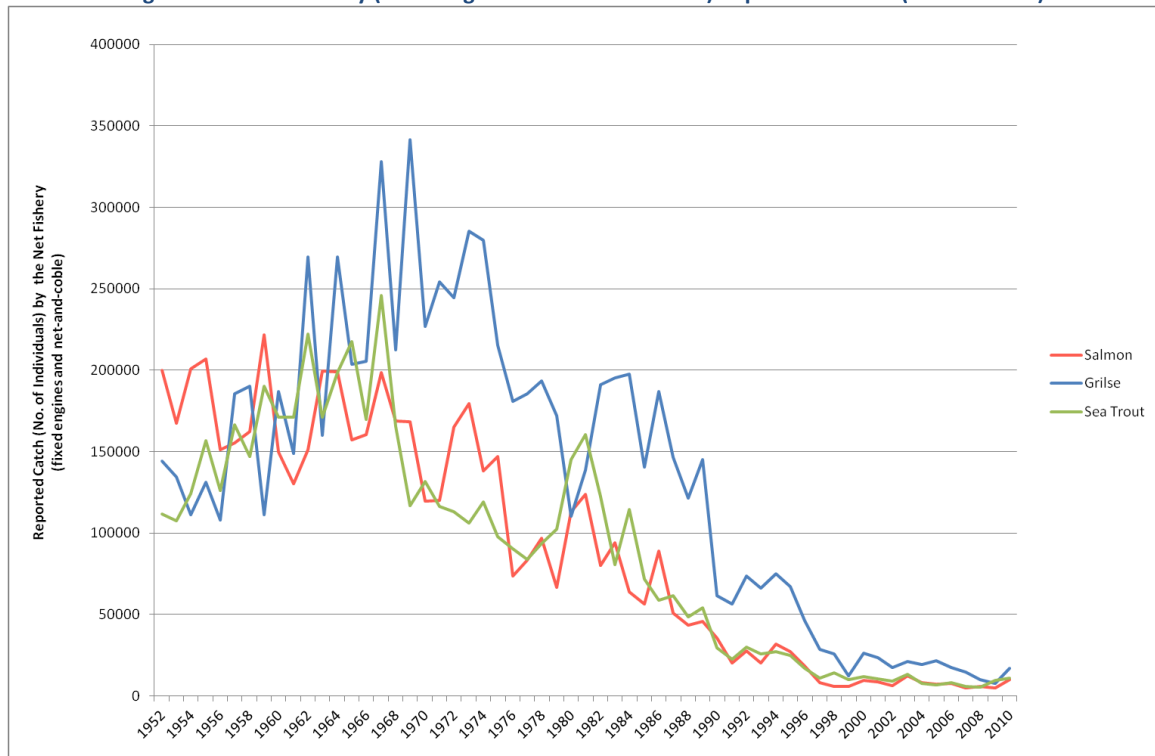
Figure 18C.5 Rod-and-line Fishery (including Catch and Release) Reported Catches (1952 to 2010)



It should be noted that the fisheries statistics do not take account of fishing effort. The popularity of rod-and-line fishing together with the improvement of the catch reporting system may have, to some extent, contributed to catch values for salmon and grilse remaining in line with historical levels.

Catches by the net fishery (net-and-coble and fixed engines) have shown a marked decline in the last decades with respect to historical levels (Figure 18C.6). This decline is associated with a decrease in fishing effort observed in recent years, principally resulting from the buyout and closure of coastal netting stations, changes in abundance of salmon and the fall in the market price of wild salmon caused by competition from the aquaculture industry (MSS, 2008). This may, to some extent, also be contributing to the current catch values recorded in rivers by the rod-and-line fishery.

Figure 18C.6 Net Fishery (Fixed Engines and Net-and-coble) Reported Catches (1952 to 2010)



18C.4.4.1.2 Current Trends

An indication of the relative importance of the fishery by region is given in Figure 18C.7 and Figure 18C.8, based on annual average catches (2001 to 2010) by species and method, respectively.

Overall, reported catches tend to be higher in the east coast, with the East and North East fishery regions recording the highest catches at the national level, followed by the Moray Firth and the North (Figure 18C.7 and Figure 18C.8).

In general terms salmon and grilse account for the majority of the catch, with the exception of the Outer Hebrides, where sea trout catches are comparatively higher than those for grilse and salmon combined (Figure 18C.7).

Rod-and-line (including catch and release) is the principal method used in most regions. Netting by fixed engines and net-and-coble is of relevance in some regions, principally in the North and North East (fixed engines) and in the East (net-and-coble) where the percentage of the catch by these methods is comparatively high. The netting component of the total catch is of special importance in the North East Region, where the combined catch by fixed engines and net-and-coble accounts for a similar percentage of the total catch (48.6 per cent) recorded by the rod-and-line fishery (including catch and release) (51.4 per cent). The net fishery is further discussed in Section 18.18C.4.4.2.1.

Figure 18C.7 Annual Reported Catch (No. of Individuals) by Species and Region (Average 2001 to 2010)

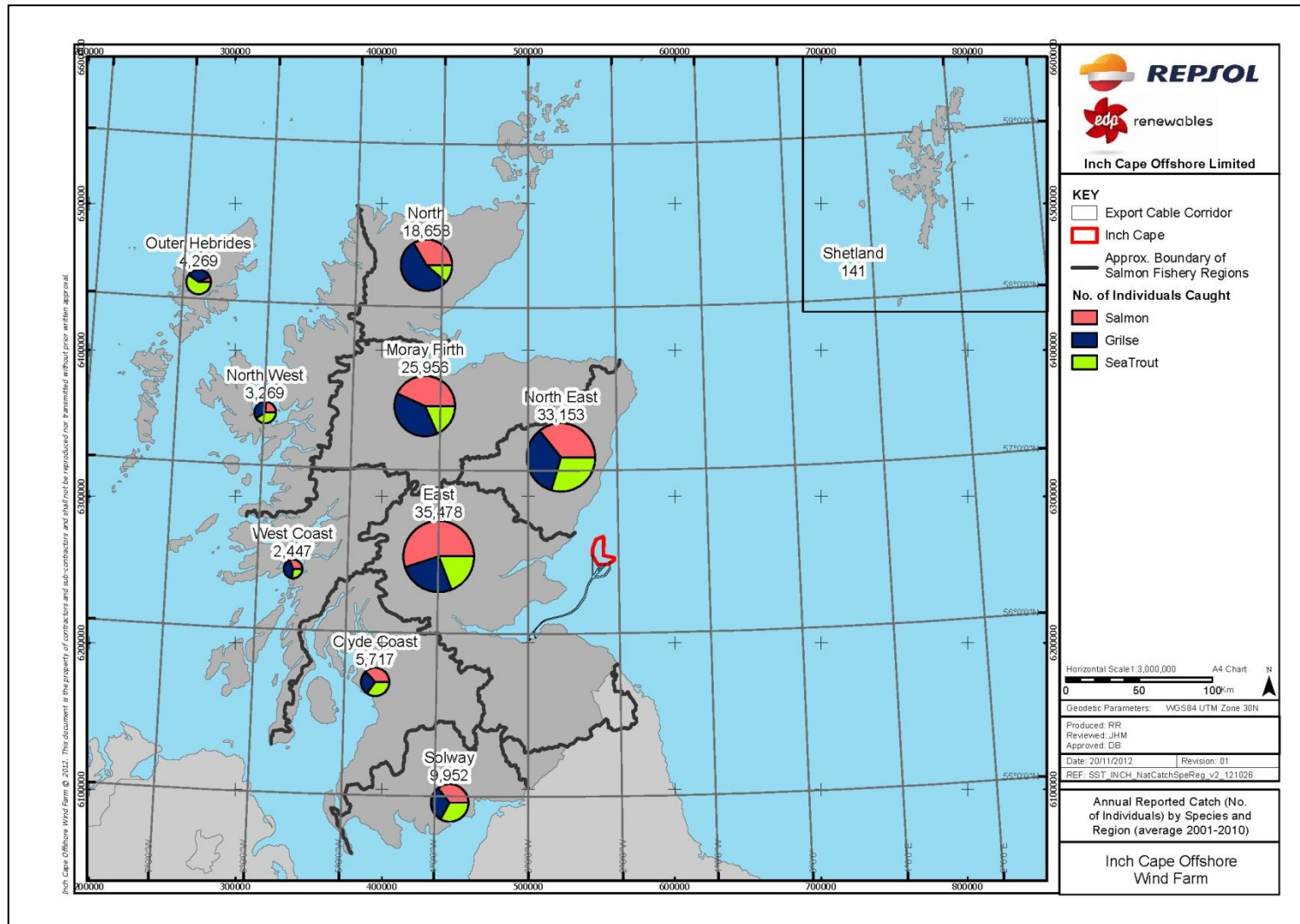
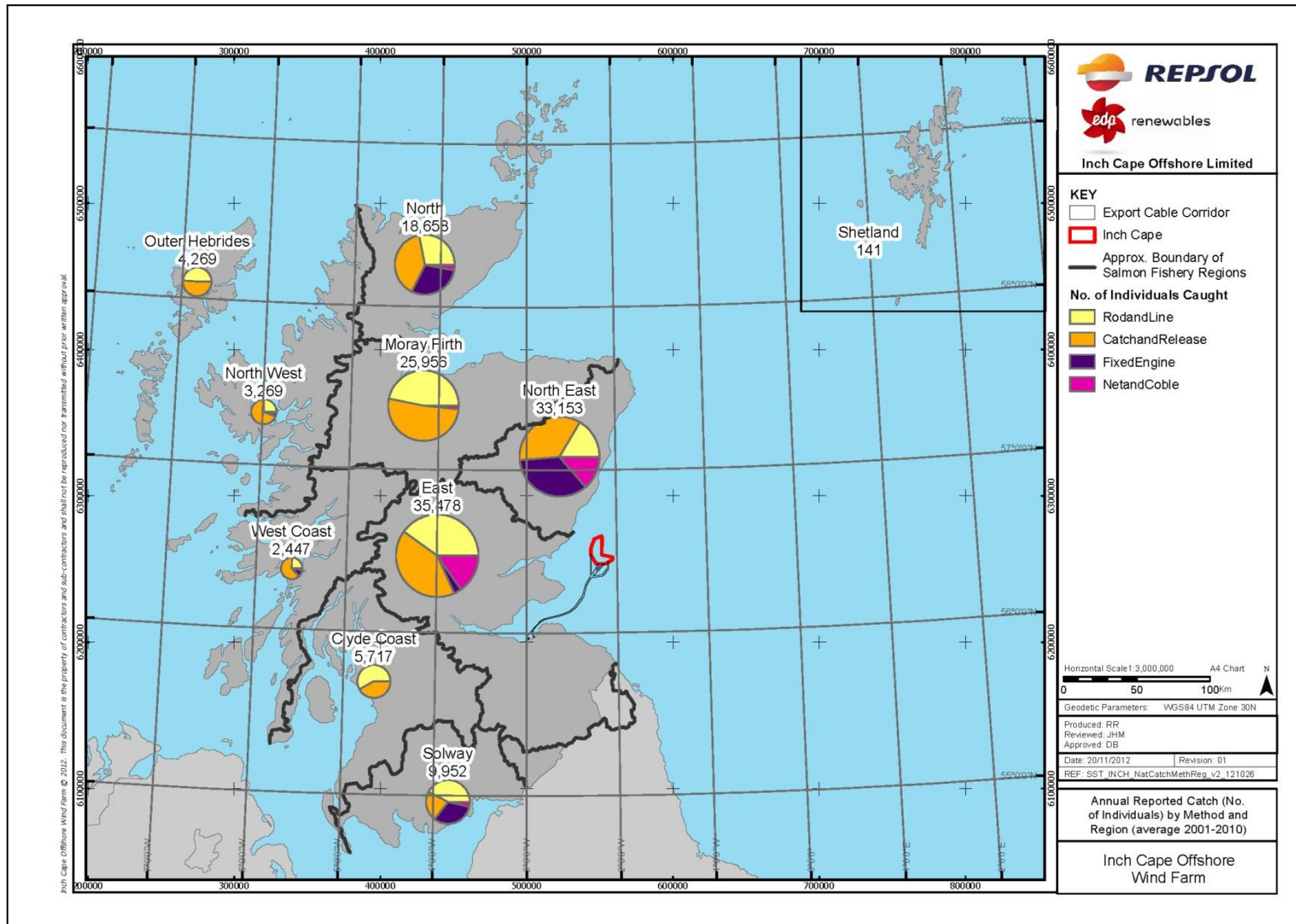


Figure 18C.8 Annual Reported Catch (No. of Individuals) by Method and Region (Average 2001 to 2010)



18C.4.4.2 Regional

This section provides an overview of the salmon and sea trout fishery in the districts within the regional study area, including the Ugie, Ythan, Dee, Don, Esk (North Esk, South Esk and Bervie), Tay, Forth and Tweed. Whilst the information provided below is principally based on MSS catch data for the period 2001-2010, data gathered through consultation with fisheries stakeholders has also been used.

The annual reported catch (average 2001 to 2010) for each salmon fishery district within the regional study area is shown in Figure 18C.9 and Figure 18C.10, by species and method respectively. Note that for the Esk district catch statistics are broken down by former districts (North Esk, South Esk and Bervie).

The Tweed and the Esk (North Esk, South Esk and Bervie combined) are the principal districts in terms of total catch with annual catches (average 2001 to 2010) of 21,622 and 19,913 fish respectively, followed by the Tay with 10,417 fish caught. Salmon is the principal species caught in the Don, Dee, Tay, Forth and Tweed, with grilse and sea trout making similar contributions to the remaining of the total catch in these districts. Grilse is the principal species caught in the North and South Esk, with salmon and sea trout accounting for similar percentages of the total catch in these districts.

In the Ythan, Don, Forth and more significantly the Dee, Tay and Tweed, rod-and-line (including catch and release) fishery accounts for the majority of the catch, whilst in the North Esk, South Esk and Ugie, a greater percentage of the total catch comes from netting (net-and-coble and fixed engines). The net fishery in the Tweed, particularly by net-and-coble, is also of relative importance. The net fishery is further discussed in Section 18C.4.4.2.1.

Figure 18C.9 Annual Catch (No. of Individuals) by Species in Salmon Fishery Districts within the Regional Study Area (Average 2001 to 2010)

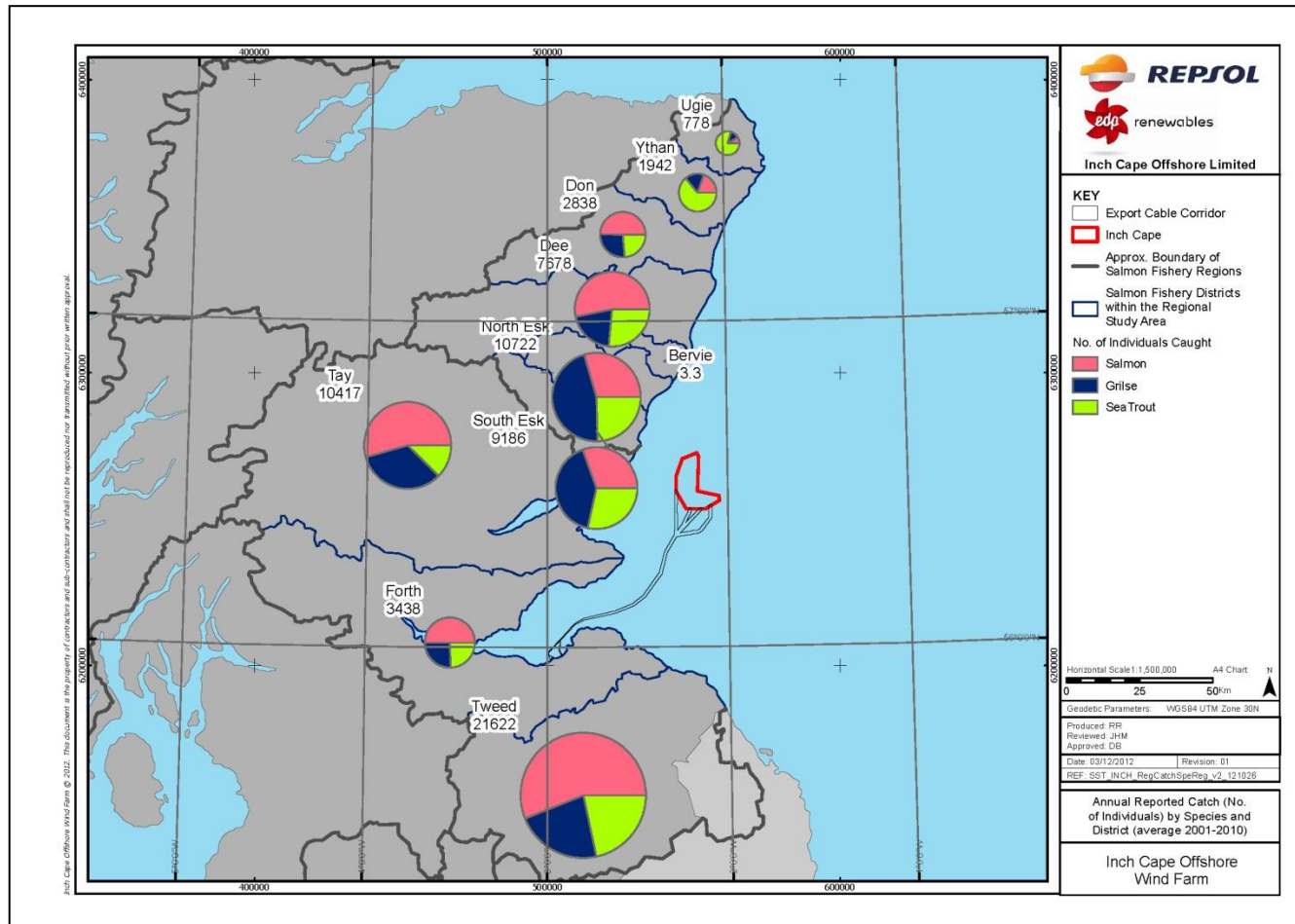
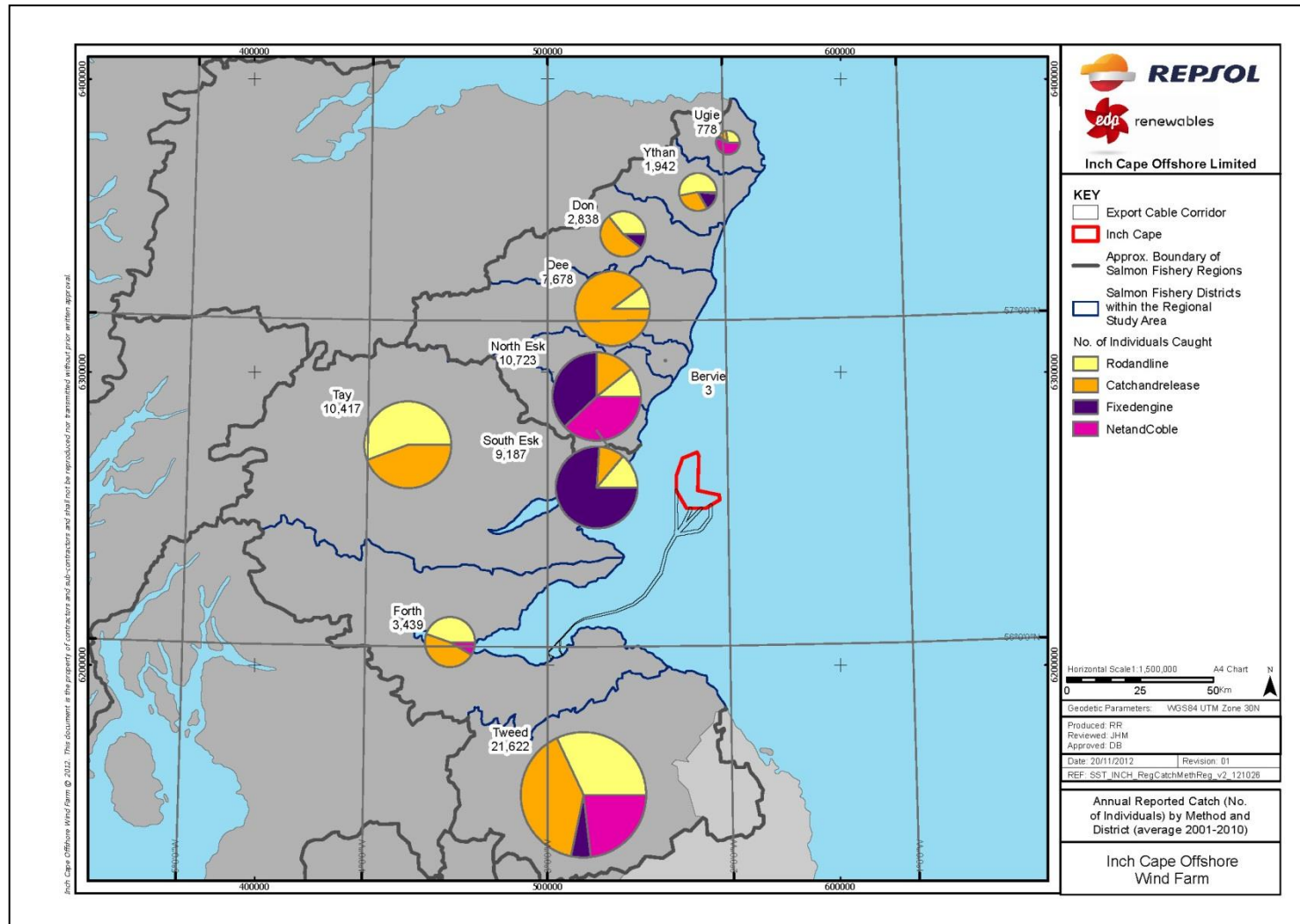


Figure 18C.10 Annual Reported Catch (No. of Individuals) by Method in Salmon Fishery Districts within the Regional Study Area (Average 2001 to 2010)



18C.4.4.2.1 The Net Fishery by Region

The annual reported catch of the net fishery (net-and-coble and fixed engines) by salmon fishery region is illustrated in Figure 18C.11 below. Catches in the regional study area, including the North East and East region, have been further broken down by individual district. In addition, the location of active net fisheries in 2009 (MSS, 2011) is also shown in the figure.

It should be noted that as illustrated in Figure 18C.6, the national trend in netting is one of a decline and it is likely that average values for the 2001-2010 period will, for the most part, overestimate the current levels of exploitation of the net-and-coble and fixed engine fisheries.

The North East is the principal region in terms of netting activity within a national context. The majority of the catches in this region concentrate in the Esk district (North and South Esk). The South Esk in particular, supports significant fixed engine fisheries. The principal fishery in that area is the Usan Salmon Fishery (Montrose) (see Section 18C.4.4.3.3).

The net fishery is also of relative importance in the East Region, especially in the Tweed district where it is predominantly undertaken using net-and-coble. There are five active netting stations in the Tweed, all of which operate at varying degrees on a part time basis (Consultation, 2011b²). In addition, there are five to six heritable rights along the Tweed's coastline, the majority of which are leased by the Tweed Trust from the heritable right holders (Consultation, 2011b¹⁹).

In the Forth there are over 60 netting stations, however, most of these are dormant and netting activity is limited. Six netting stations are currently active of which only two (at Follen and Alower) are fully operational. No coastal netting by fixed engines is currently taking place. As shown in Figure 18C.11, there are currently no active net fisheries in the area relevant to the export cable landfill options.

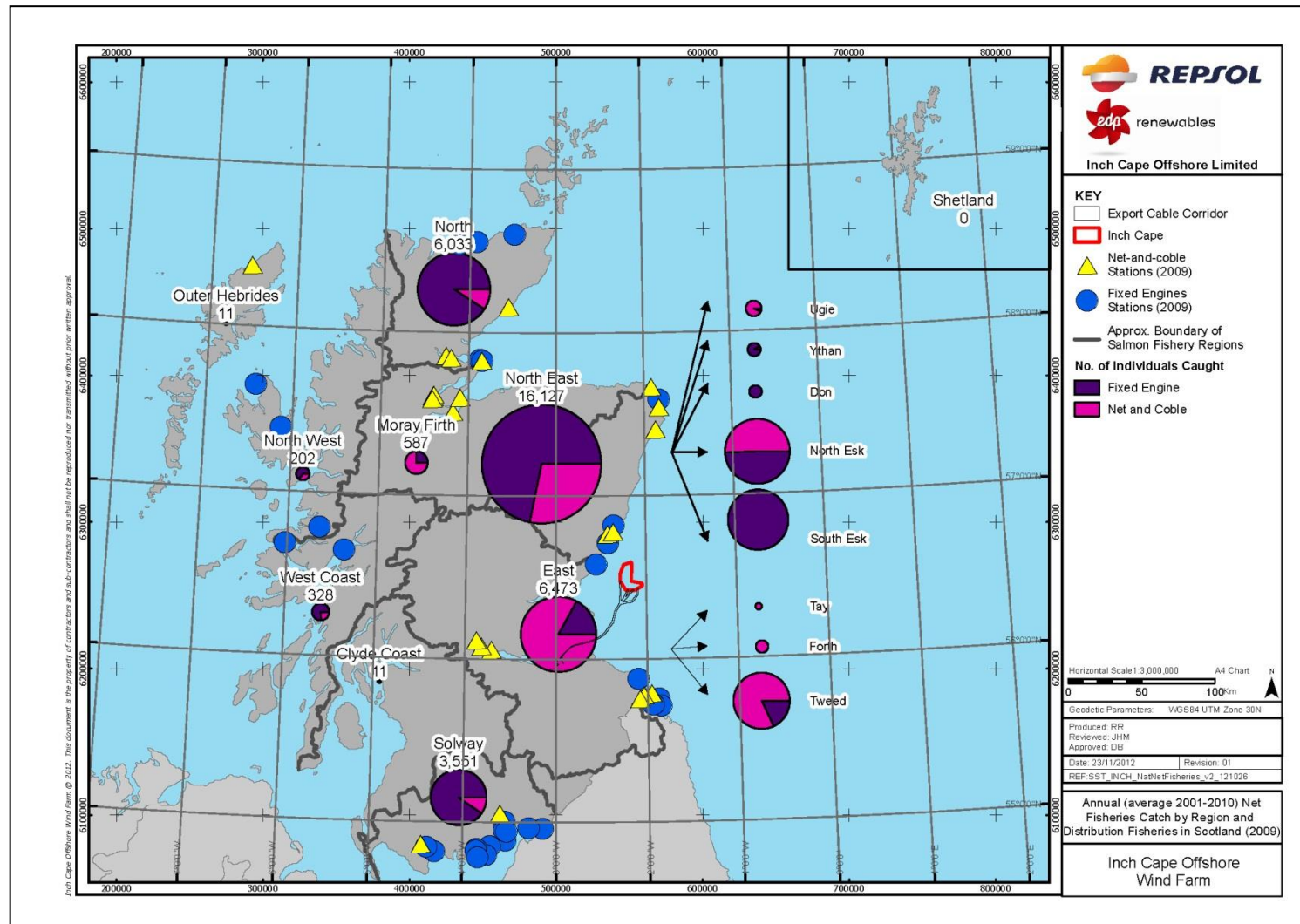
In the Tay, netting is limited to a few net-and-cobles which operate upstream of Dundee and to coastal nets in the northern reaches of the district, where the Usan Fishery also has rights (Consultation, 2011c³).

Net fisheries located within the local study area are discussed in more detail in Section 18C.4.4.3.

² Consultation, 2011b. Consultation Meeting. Tweed District Salmon Fishery Board. 17/02/2011.

³ Consultation, 2011c. Consultation Meeting. Tay District Salmon Fishery Board. 16/02/2011.

Figure 18C.11 Annual (Average 2001 to 2010) Net Fisheries Catch by Region and Distribution Fisheries in Scotland (2009)



18C.4.4.2.2 Seasonality and Annual Variation

An indication of the seasonality and annual variation in the rod-and-line (including catch and release) and the net fisheries (separated into net-and-coble and fixed engines) by species and district is illustrated in Figure 18C.12 to Figure 18C.14 and Figure 18C.15 to Figure 18C.17 respectively, based on average monthly reported catches and annual catches for the period 2001-2010.

It should be noted that the national trend in catches with respect to historic levels, as shown in Section 18C.4.4.1.1 above is one of a decline and that given the relatively shorter period of time considered in this section (2001 to 2010) the data given are only intended to provide an indication of recent changes in the fishery and current annual catches rather than an indication of trends in the state of the stocks. In addition, it is recognised that the seasonality of the fisheries will to some extent be influenced by the length of the open season in different districts and further seasonal voluntary or statutory restrictions in place for some methods (e.g. delays in the start of net fisheries to protect spring salmon). The lack of recorded or low catches in some months will to some extent be a result of this. Furthermore the assumption that the species are not present in this period should not be made.

Rod-and-line Fishery Seasonality

Rod-and-line salmon catches peak in September and October in most districts within the regional study area with the Tweed also recording high catches in November. Whilst relatively lower, salmon catches are also of importance from March to July, particularly in the Dee, Tay and Tweed, reflecting the diversity of salmon runs in the regional area.

Grilse are principally caught from July to October with peak catches recorded from August to October in most districts. In the Tweed, as for salmon, relatively high grilse catches are also recorded in November.

In the districts within the regional study area sea trout are principally caught from May to October, with highest catches being recorded in June, July and August.

Rod-and-line Fishery Annual Variation

In the Ythan, salmon catches have remained relatively stable, peaking in 2004, after a low recorded in 2003. Salmon and grilse catches in the Ugie have fluctuated over the years, remaining comparatively low.

In the Don, salmon catches have fluctuated over the period 2001-2010, with lows recorded in 2003 and from 2007 to 2009, followed by an increase in catches in 2010. Catches of grilse peaked in 2004 and 2010, remaining comparatively stable. Salmon and grilse catches in the Dee have shown a general increase from 2001 to 2010, with catches in 2010 representing almost double of the catches recorded at the beginning of the time series.

In the North Esk salmon catches have shown ups and downs over the years, whilst for grilse there has been a relative increase in the catch, with 412 grilse caught in 2001 compared to 1,471 in 2010. In the South Esk, salmon and grilse catches by the rod-and-line fishery remained comparatively low, with no clear trend apparent from 2001 to 2010.

In the Tay, salmon catches remained stable with the exception of the lows recorded in 2002 and 2003. Grilse catches peaked in 2006, decreased to a low in 2009 and duplicated again in 2010. In the Forth, salmon and grilse catches have fluctuated over the years, with salmon catches peaking in 2004 and grilse catches peaking in 2004 and 2010.

In the Tweed, rod-and-line salmon catches peaked in 2004, 2007 and 2010. From 2007 to 2009, there was a decrease in the catch, with 2009 having catches similar to those of 2001, the year recording the lowest catch within the ten year period under consideration. In 2010 salmon catches increased significantly, with 8,205 individuals caught in 2009 and 16,907 individuals caught in 2010. Grilse catches in the Tweed have shown a similar pattern, with an overall increase from 2002 to 2007, relatively lower catches in 2008 and 2009, and significantly higher catches in 2010.

Sea trout catches have shown a general decline during the first years of the time series, with a low being recorded in all districts in 2003, after which the general trend has been one of an overall increase. An exception to this is the South Esk and the Don where there has been a decline in the sea trout catch.

Figure 18C.12 Seasonality of the Salmon Catch (Average 2001 to 2010) by the Rod-and-Line Fishery (Including Catch and Release)

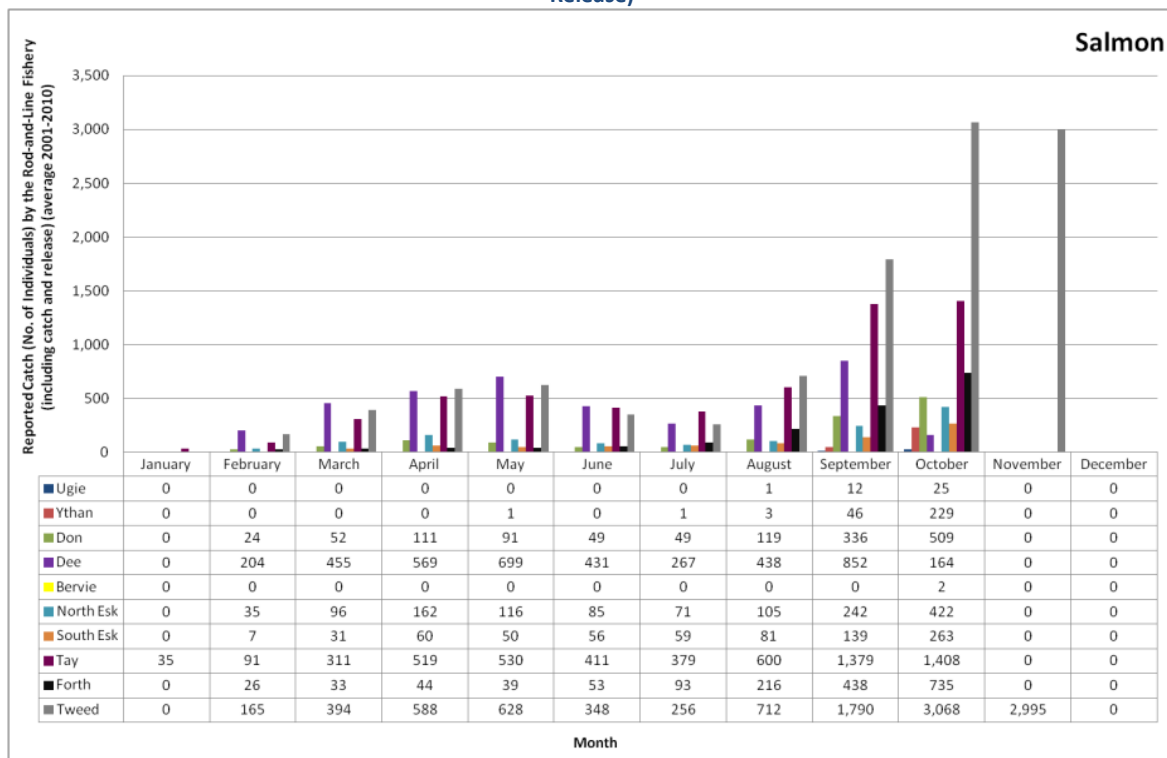


Figure 18C.13 Seasonality of the Grilse Catch (Average 2001 to 2010) by the Rod-and-Line Fishery (Including Catch and Release)

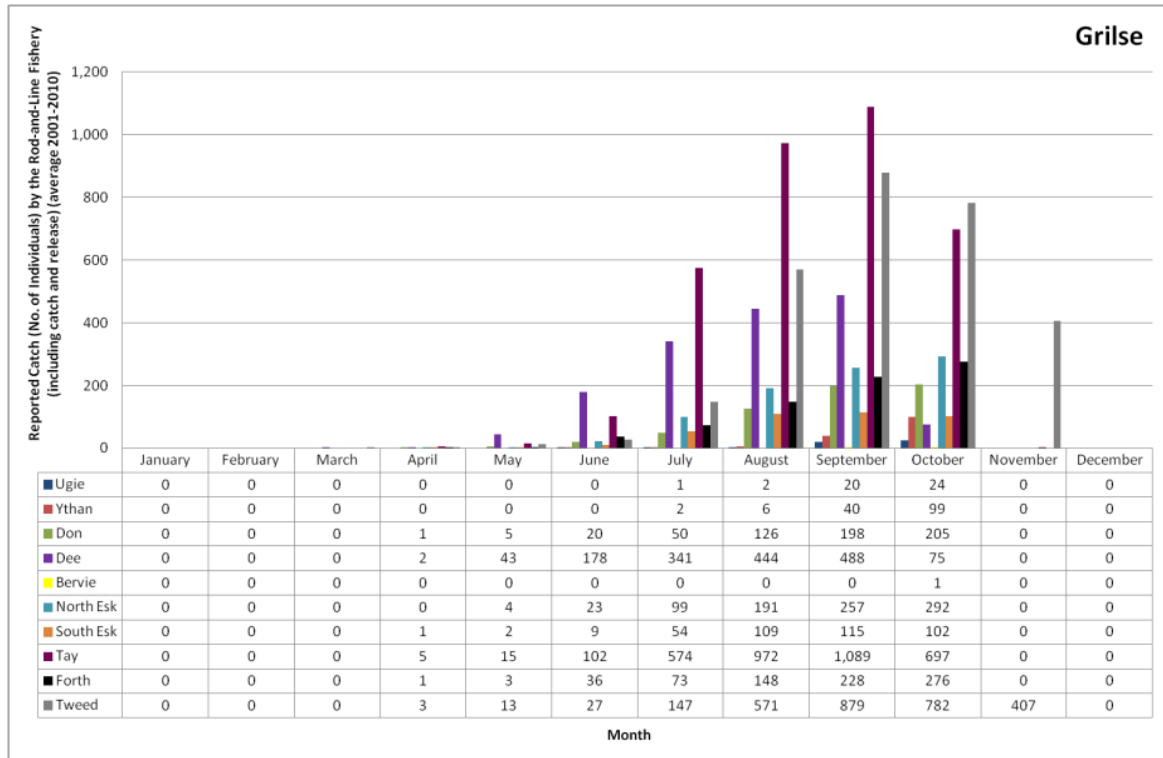


Figure 18C.14 Seasonality of the Sea Trout Catch (Average 2001 to 2010) by the Rod-and-Line Fishery (Including Catch and Release)

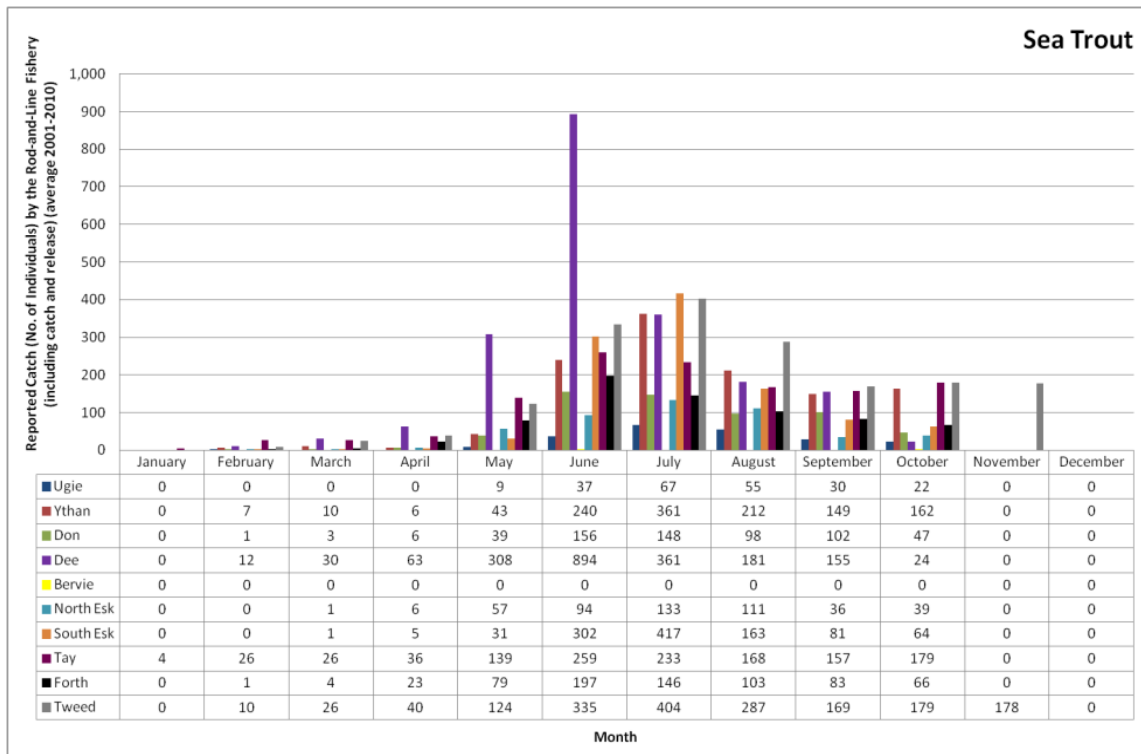


Figure 18C.15 Annual Variation (2001 to 2010) of Salmon Catches by the Rod-and-Line Fishery (Including Catch and Release)

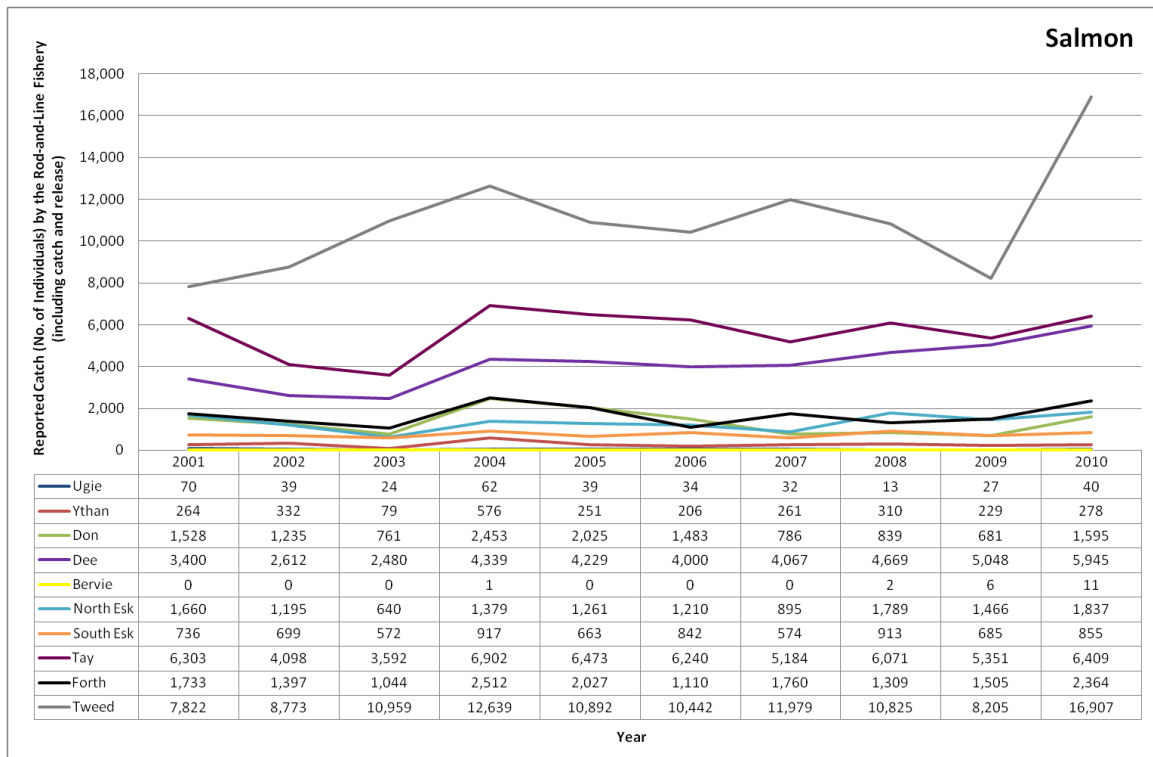


Figure 18C.16 Annual Variation (2001 to 2010) of Grilse Catches by the Rod-and-Line Fishery (Including Catch and Release)

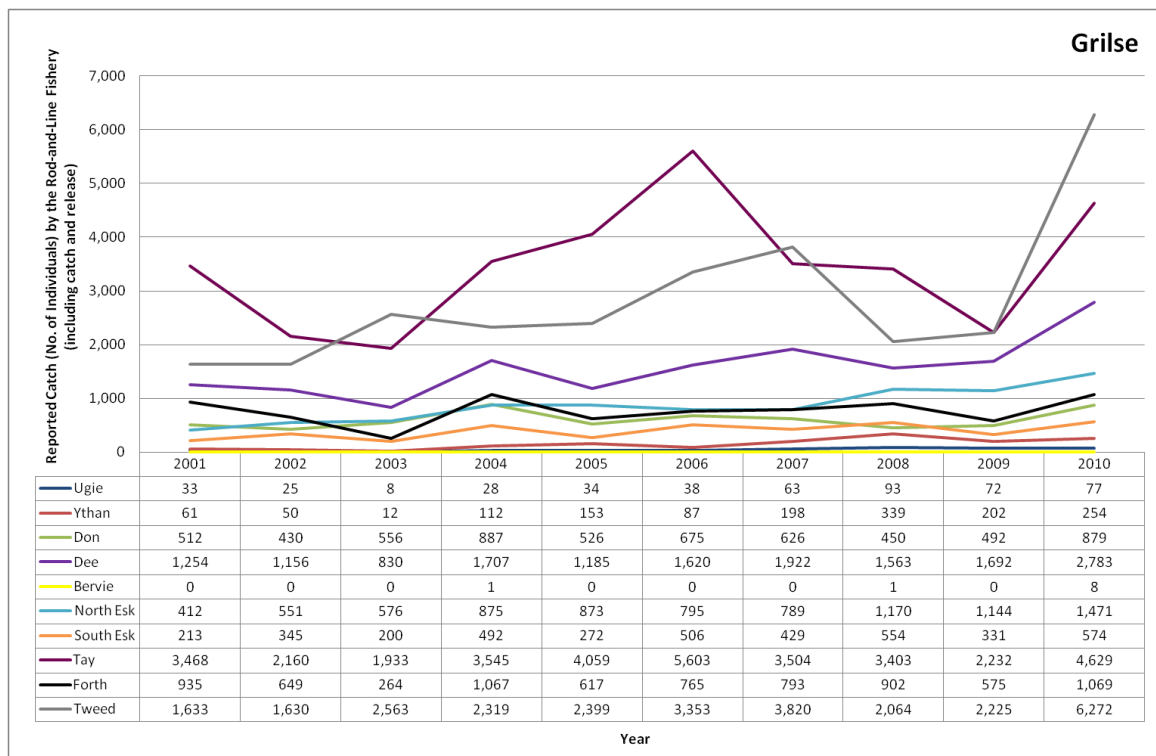
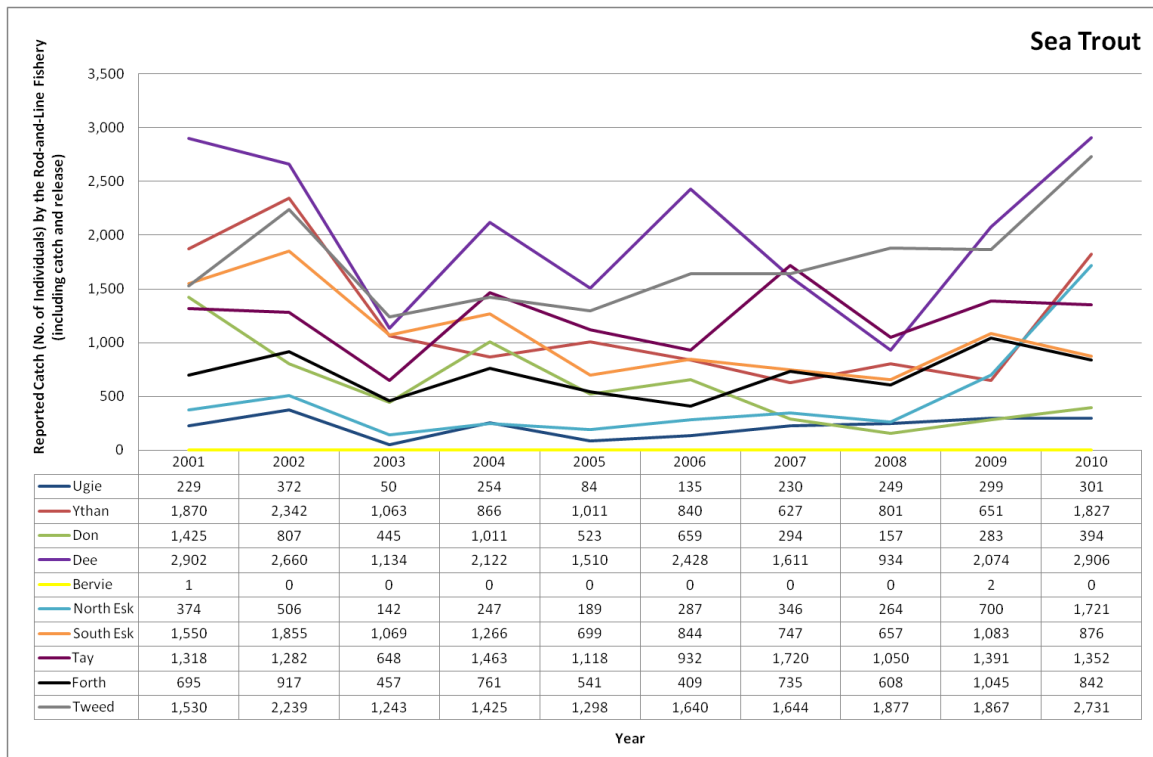


Figure 18C.17 Annual Variation (2001 to 2010) of Sea Trout Catches by the Rod-and-Line Fishery (Including Catch and Release)



Net-and-coble Fishery Seasonality

Figure 18C.18 to Figure 18C.20 show the seasonality of the net-and-coble fishery by species and district. Net-and coble principally takes place in the North Esk and the Tweed districts, and to a much lesser extent in the Forth, Ugie and Tay. In the Tweed, salmon are caught in highest numbers by net-and-coble from June to September. Similarly, for grilse the highest catch values are recorded from July to September. Sea trout is caught in relatively high numbers from June to September.

In the North Esk, salmon catches by net-and-coble are recorded from April to August, peaking in May. Peak grilse catches are reported in July and August with peak sea trout catches reported during May and June.

Net-and-coble Fishery Annual Variation

Figure 18C.21 to Figure 18C.23 illustrate the annual variations in catches of the net-and-coble fishery by species and district. In the North Esk, salmon catches by net-and-coble have fluctuated over the years (2001-2010), increasing after a low in 2007 to highest values in 2009-2010. The grilse catch has also been variable over the years, with lows in 2005 and 2007, followed by an increase of catches to highest values recorded in 2010. Sea trout catches in this district showed a marked decrease from a peak in 2001 through to 2005. The trend has been one of an increase since then, especially in the last three years (2008 to 2010) which record the highest catch for the 2001-2010 period.

In the Ugie catches of salmon and grilse by net-and-coble have remained low during the period 2001 to 2010. Whilst catches of sea trout are comparatively high, with a peak recorded in 2006 and an overall decrease of catches since then.

In the Tay the salmon catch by net-and-coble has been low throughout the period, with no catches being reported from 2004 to 2009. Similarly catches of grilse and sea trout remained low and were absent for several years during the period 2001-2010.

In the Forth the general trend for salmon, grilse and sea trout net-and-coble catches has been one of a decline. Salmon catches by net-and-coble in the Tweed remained relatively stable during the period 2001-2009, but showed a marked increase in 2010, with 362 salmon caught in 2009 and 3,592 caught in 2010. Grilse catches have fluctuated under consideration, dropping from a peak in 2007 (3,625 individuals) to a low in 2008 (518 individuals) and increasing again to high values in 2010 (2,849 individuals). Similarly the overall trend in sea trout catches has been one of an increase since 2008, with 2010 recording the highest catches for the 2001-2010 period.

Figure 18C.18 Seasonality of the Salmon Catch (Average 2001 to 2010) by the Net-and-coble Fishery

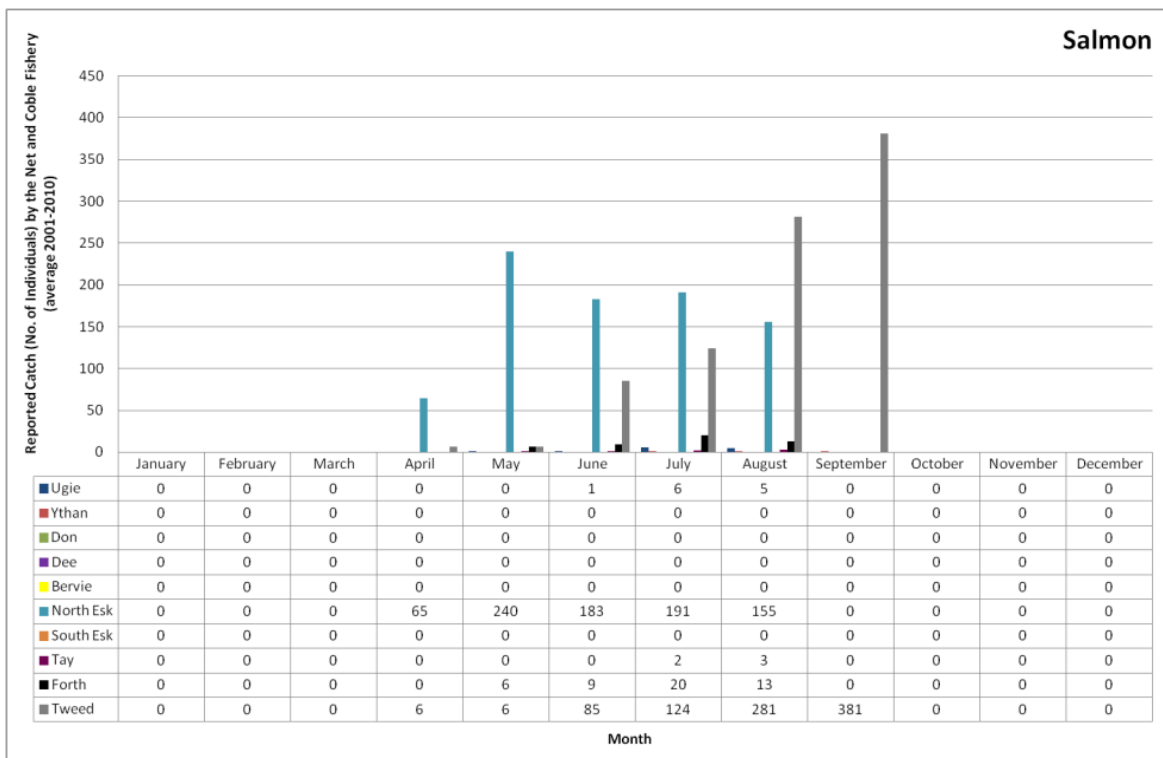


Figure 18C.19 Seasonality of the Grilse Catch (Average 2001 to 2010) by the Net-and-coble Fishery

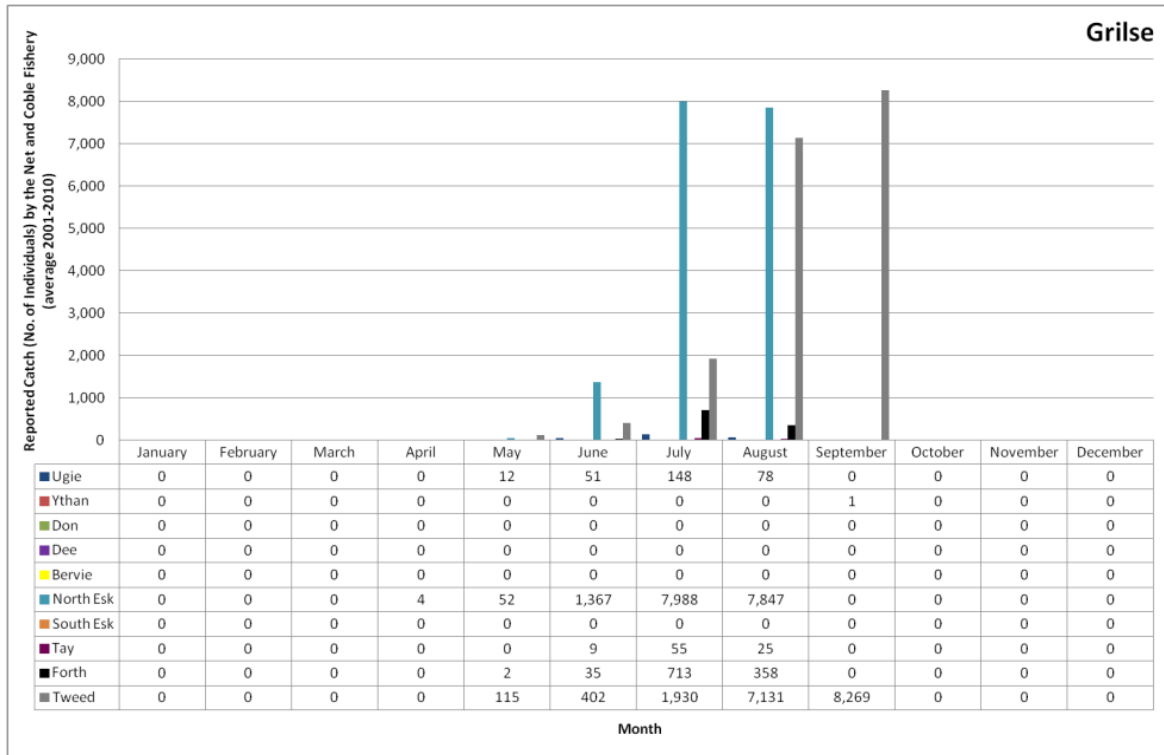


Figure 18C.20 Seasonality of the Sea Trout Catch (Average 2001 to 2010) by the Net-and-coble Fishery

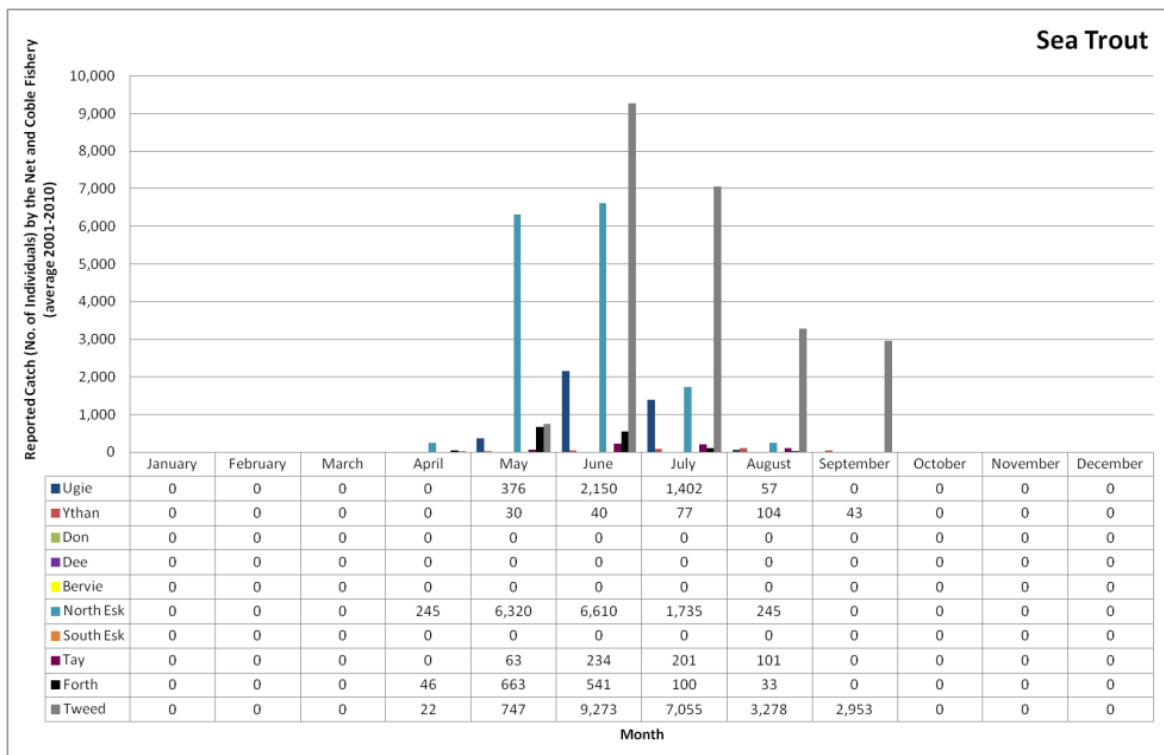


Figure 18C.21 Annual Variation in Salmon Catches by the Net-and-coble Fishery by Species and District

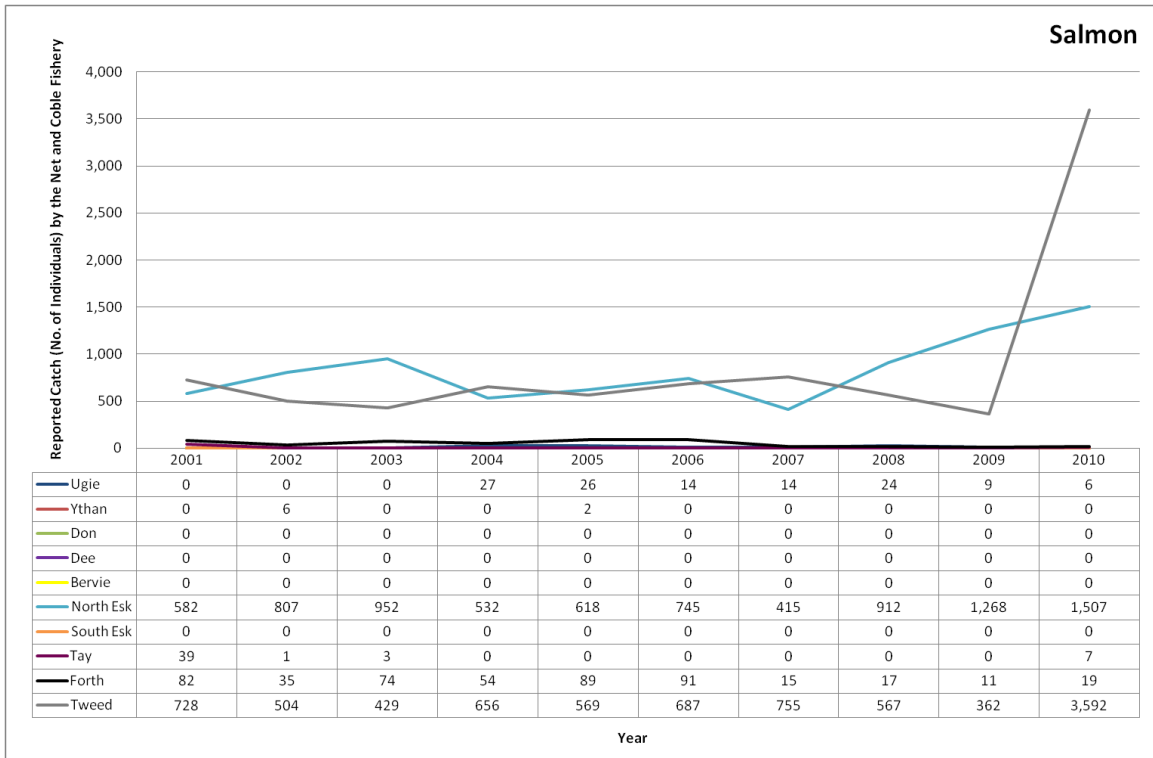


Figure 18C.22 Annual Variation in Grilse Catches by the Net-and-coble Fishery by Species and District

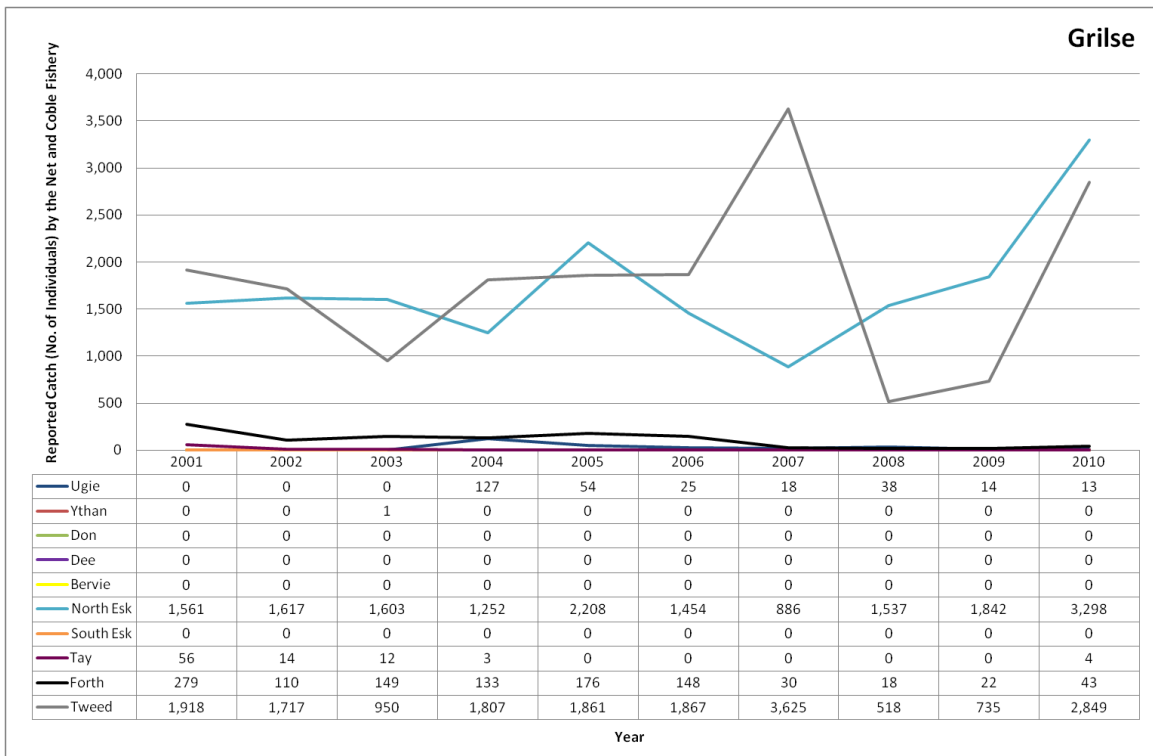
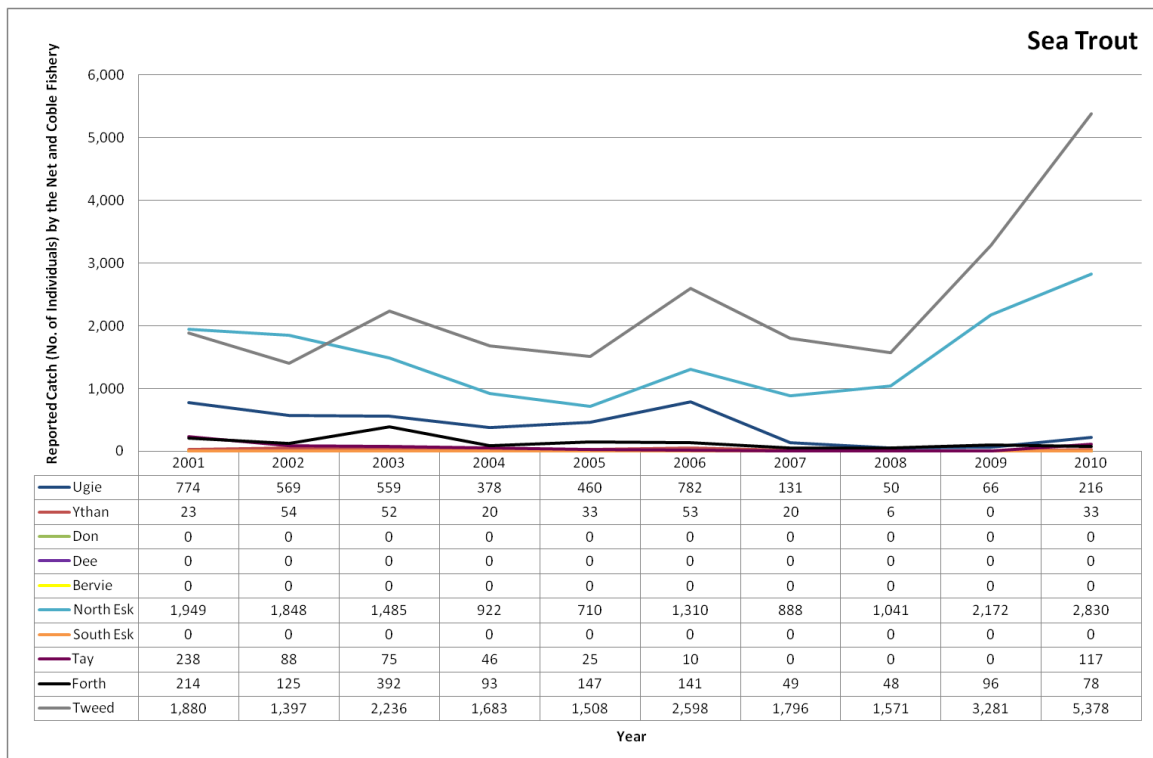


Figure 18C.23 Annual Variation in Sea Trout Catches by the Net-and-coble Fishery by Species and District



Fixed Engines Seasonality

Overall peak catches by this method are recorded from May to August for salmon, July and August for grilse and May and June for sea trout (Figure 18C.24 to Figure 18C.26).

As previously mentioned, the majority of the catch by this method within the regional study area comes from the Esk district (North and South Esk), and to a lesser extent the Tweed. The Don, Ythan and Ugie also record comparatively low catches by this method.

Fixed Engines Annual Variation

Figure 18C.27 to Figure 18C.29 show the annual variation in catches of the fixed engine fishery by species and district. In the Don, there has been a general decline of salmon, grilse and sea trout catches during the period 2001-2010, reaching zero catch values in recent years. Salmon catches in the Ythan varied during the period 2001 to 2010, peaking in 2003. Overall grilse catches decreased, with catches in 2010 representing half of the ones recorded at the beginning of the time series. Sea trout catches remained low fluctuating over the ten year period, with a peak shown in 2010.

In the North Esk there has been a decline in catches by fixed engines over the years, with no catches being recorded in 2010, principally as a result of the buyout of the North Esk’s coastal netting stations by the Esk DSFB (Consultation, 2010⁴). Despite the closure of the commercial coastal fishery in the North Esk, fixed engines are still commercially operational in the South Esk.

In the South Esk the salmon and grilse catch by fixed engines has fluctuated over the ten year period under consideration, whilst for both the overall trend has been one of an increase since 2009. Sea trout catches in the South Esk, have also varied during the ten year period under consideration, with

⁴ Consultation, 2010. Consultation Meeting. Esk District Salmon Fishery Board. 27/10/2010.

2003 recording the highest catch (3,143 individuals) and 2010 recording the lowest catch (510 individuals) within the ten year period.

In the Tweed the annual catch by fixed engines for salmon and grilse has been variable, with no clear trends being shown, whilst for sea trout, the total catch has shown an increase since 2005, peaking in 2009.

Figure 18C.24 Seasonality of the Salmon Catch (Average 2001 to 2010) by Fixed Engines

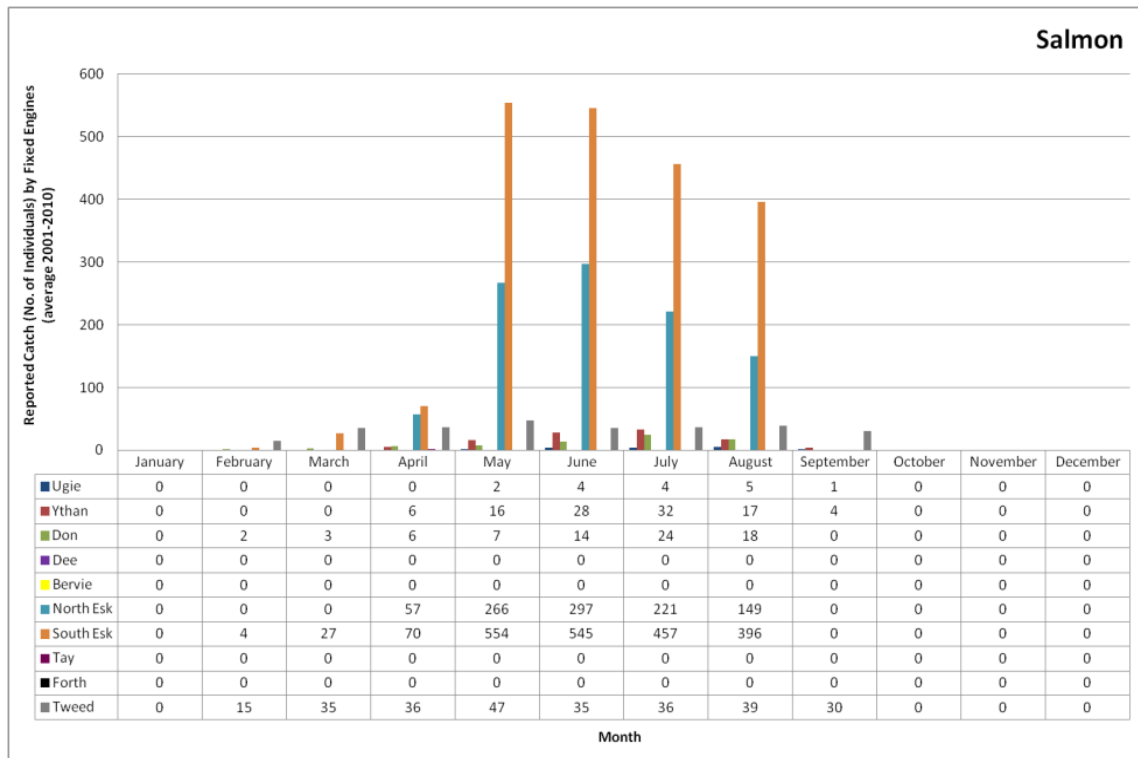


Figure 18C.25 Seasonality of the Grilse Catch (Average 2001 to 2010) by Fixed Engines

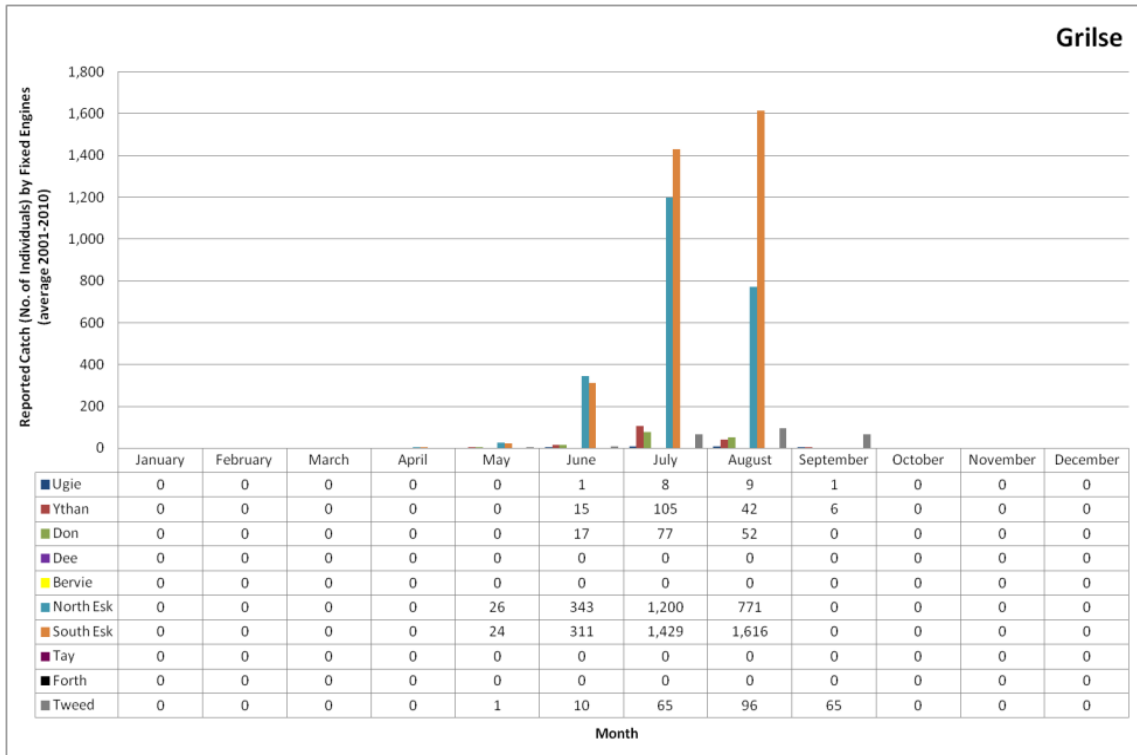


Figure 18C.26 Seasonality of the Sea Trout Catch (Average 2001 to 2010) by Fixed Engines

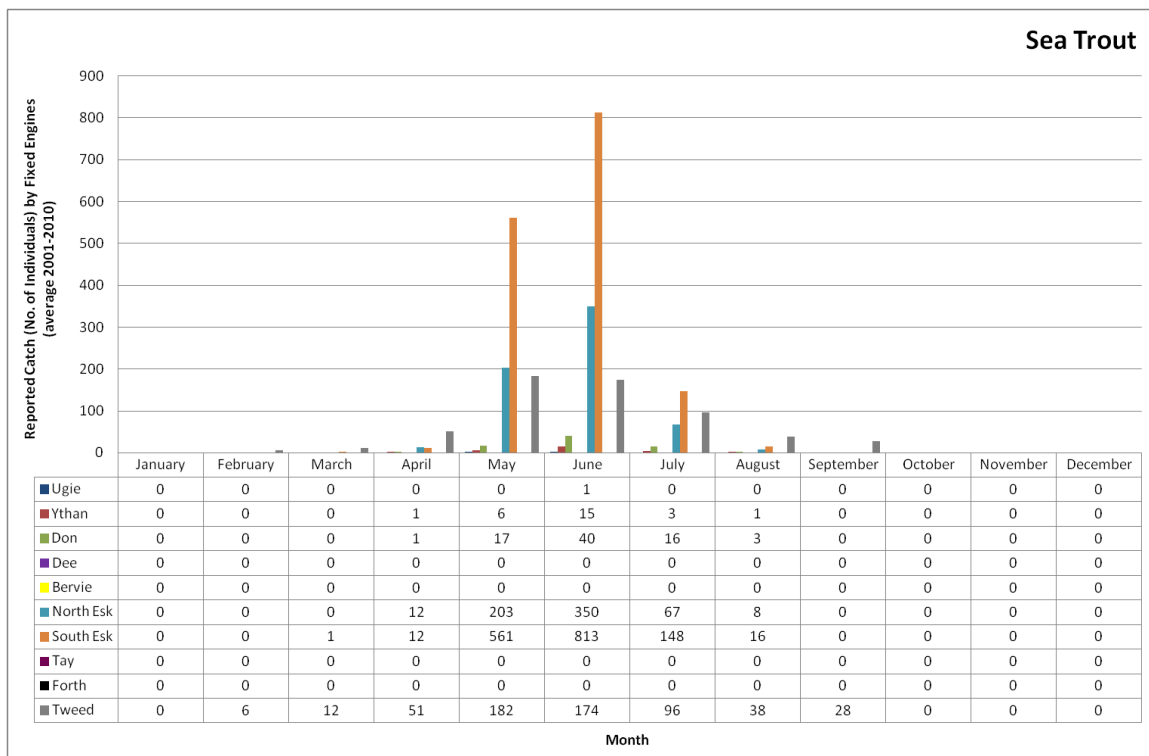


Figure 18C.27 Annual Variation in Salmon Catches by Fixed Engines by Species and District

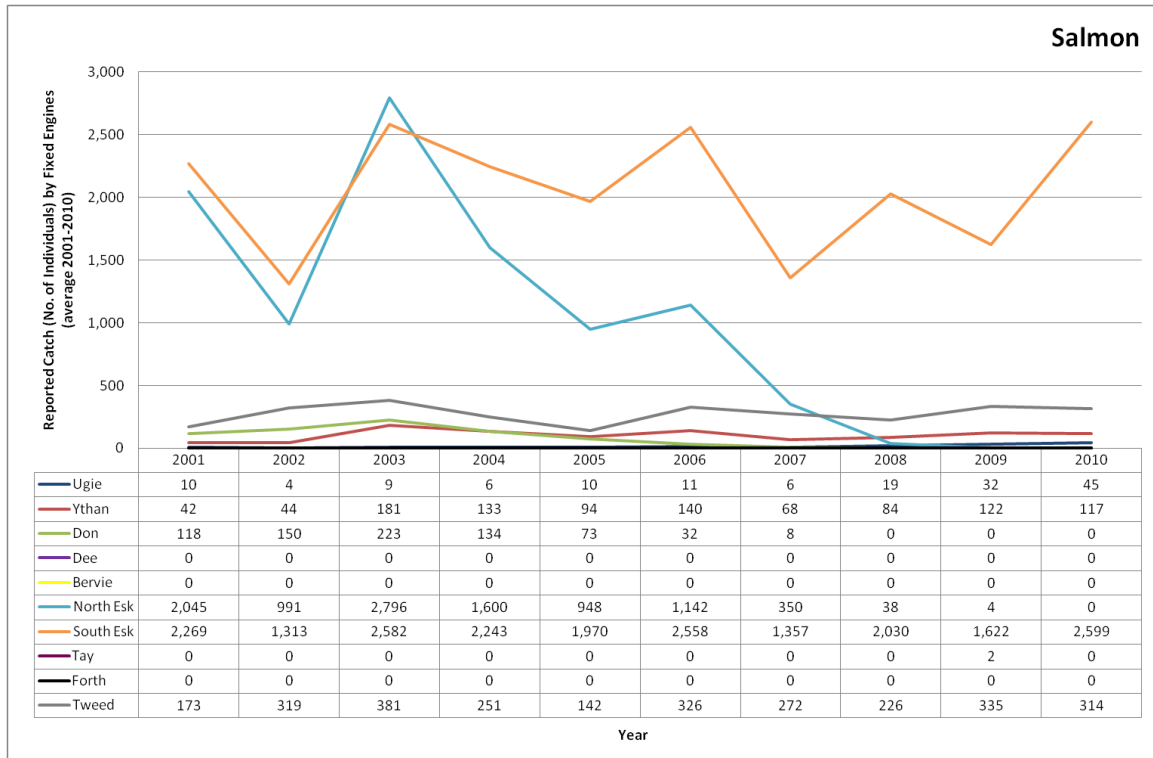


Figure 18C.28 Annual Variation in Grilse Catches by Fixed Engines by Species and District

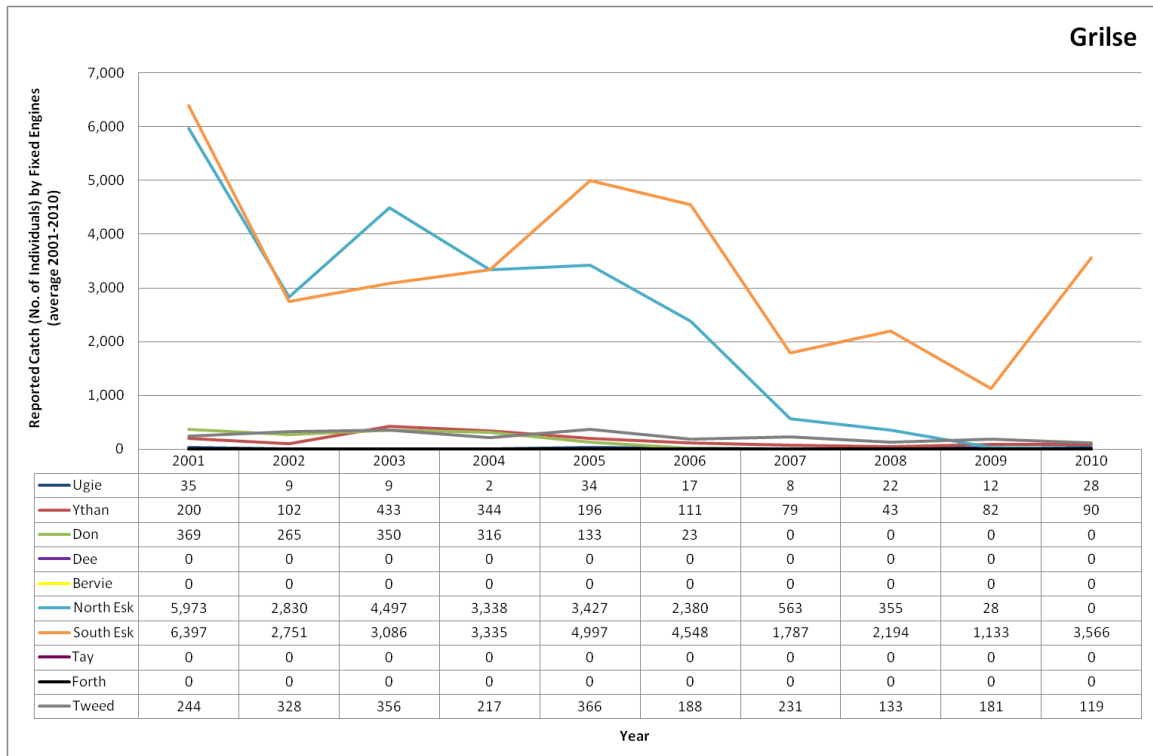
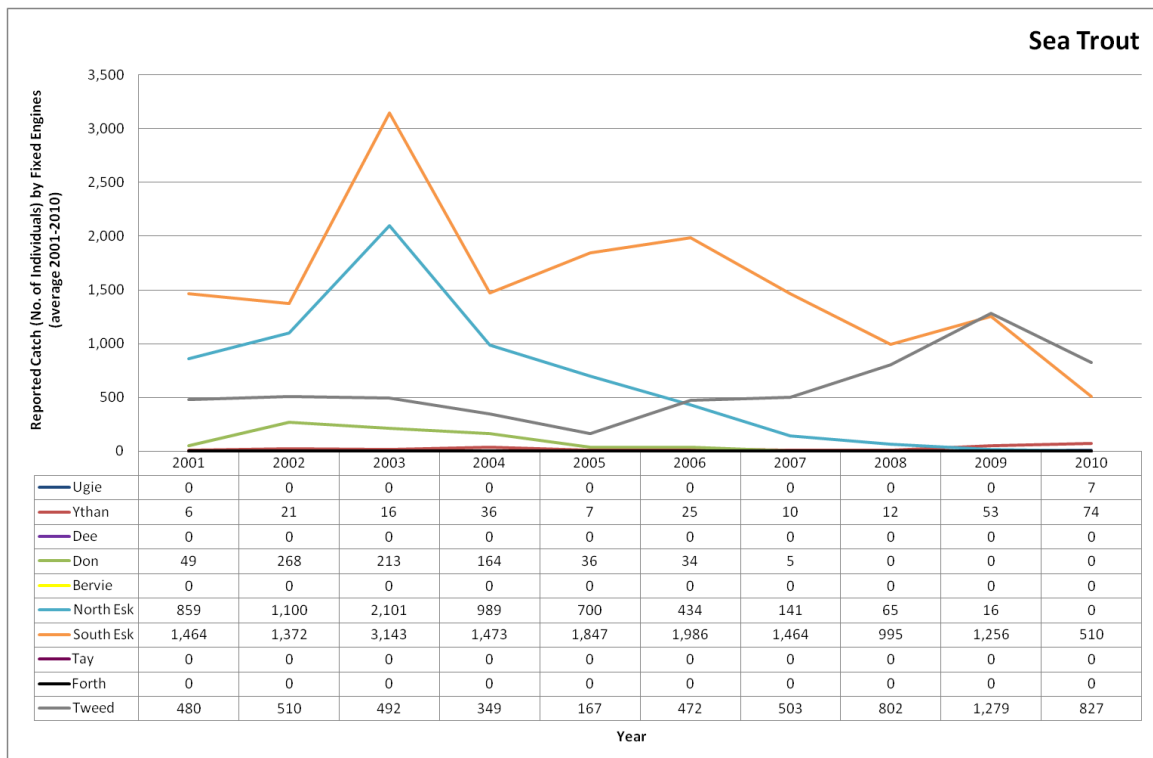


Figure 18C.29 Annual Variation in Sea Trout Catches by Fixed Engines by Species and District



18C.4.4.3 Local (Forth, Tay and Esk Districts)

The approach has been to define a local study area including all districts located in the immediate vicinity of the development and its export cable route. The location of the development and its export cable landfall options are shown in Figure 18C.30 below. All landfall options are located within the Forth district.

It should be noted that salmon has been a primary feature for Special Area of Conservation (SAC) site selection of the river Tay and South Esk. In addition, the River Teith, a tributary of the Forth is also a SAC, with salmon being a qualifying reason for selection of the site.

The following sections provide an indication of the principal fishing methods, seasonality and annual variation of the Forth, Tay and Esk District salmon and sea trout fisheries.

It should be noted that whilst both salmon and sea trout make an important contribution to the fishery in these districts, the relative importance of each species may vary depending on the river under consideration. The Tay for example is primarily a salmon river, but the River Earn, located within the Tay District, has a significant sea trout run (Consultation, 2011c⁵). In addition, the times and relative importance of different runs may also vary between different rivers within the districts.

18C.4.4.3.1 The Forth District

The Forth District Salmon Fishery Board

The Forth DSFB is responsible for the protection, enhancement and conservation of salmon and sea trout stocks and their fisheries within the Forth district. The district includes more than 3,600 km² of water, including the River Forth and its tributaries, the estuary and the coast (Figure 18C.31).

⁵ Consultation, 2011c. Consultation Meeting. Tay District Salmon Fishery Board. 16/02/2011.

The Forth DSFB works closely alongside the River Forth Fisheries Trust (RFFT), which recently introduced a Fisheries Management Plan for the district (Forth DSFB & RFFT, 2009). The Board is currently in the process of establishing Area Management Groups for each of the principal rivers within the district, which will produce sub-management plans for each river. Those plans are aimed at identifying projects for habitat improvement, barrier removal and stock restoration.

The Board operates a team of Water Bailiffs whose primary duty is to enforce the Salmon and Freshwater Fisheries Act (Consolidation) (Scotland) 2003. They work in partnership with Wildlife Liaison Officers from a number of Police Forces across the District, targeting areas where illegal fishing is or has taken place.

Figure 18C.30 Salmon and Sea Trout Fisheries Local Study Area

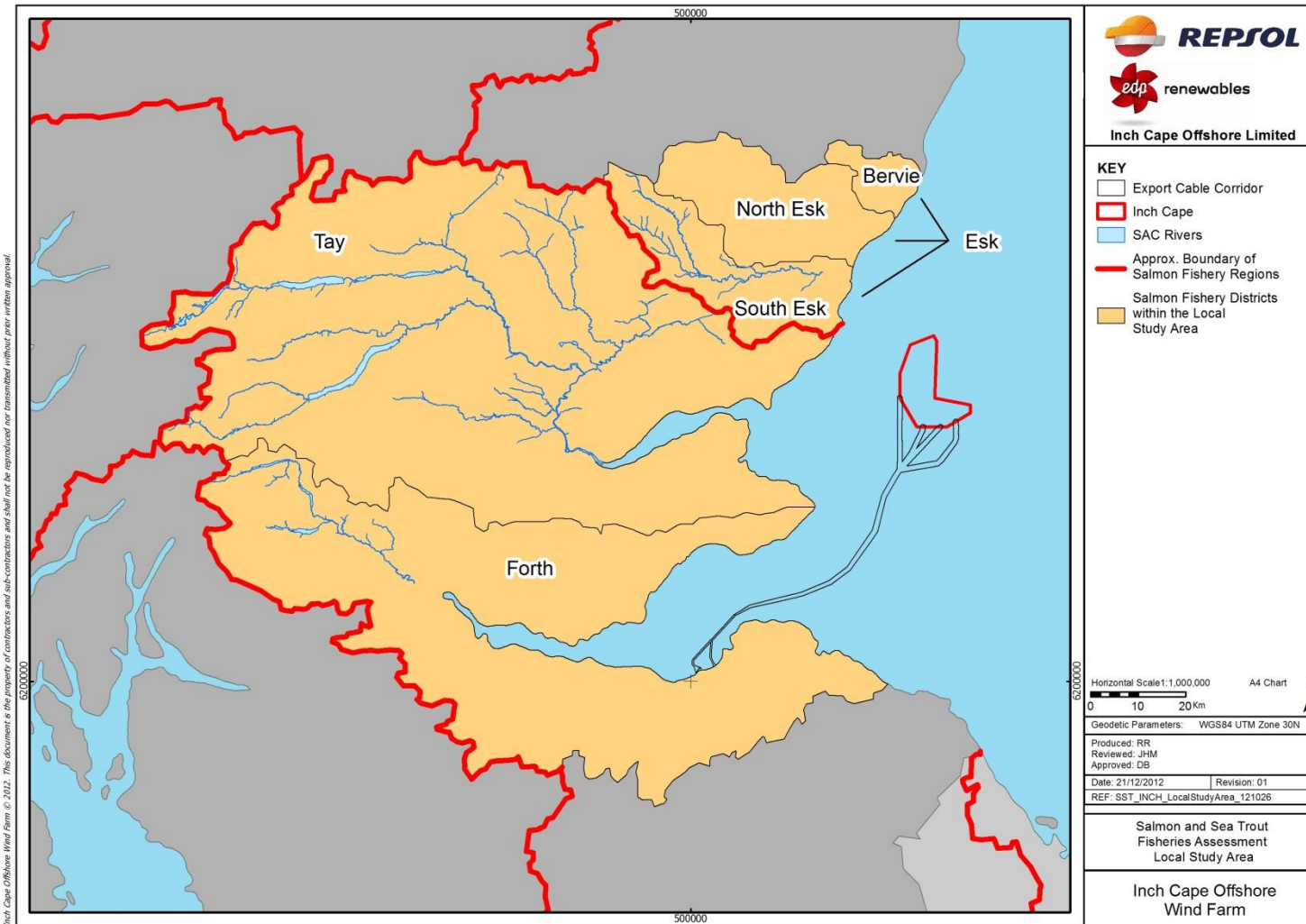
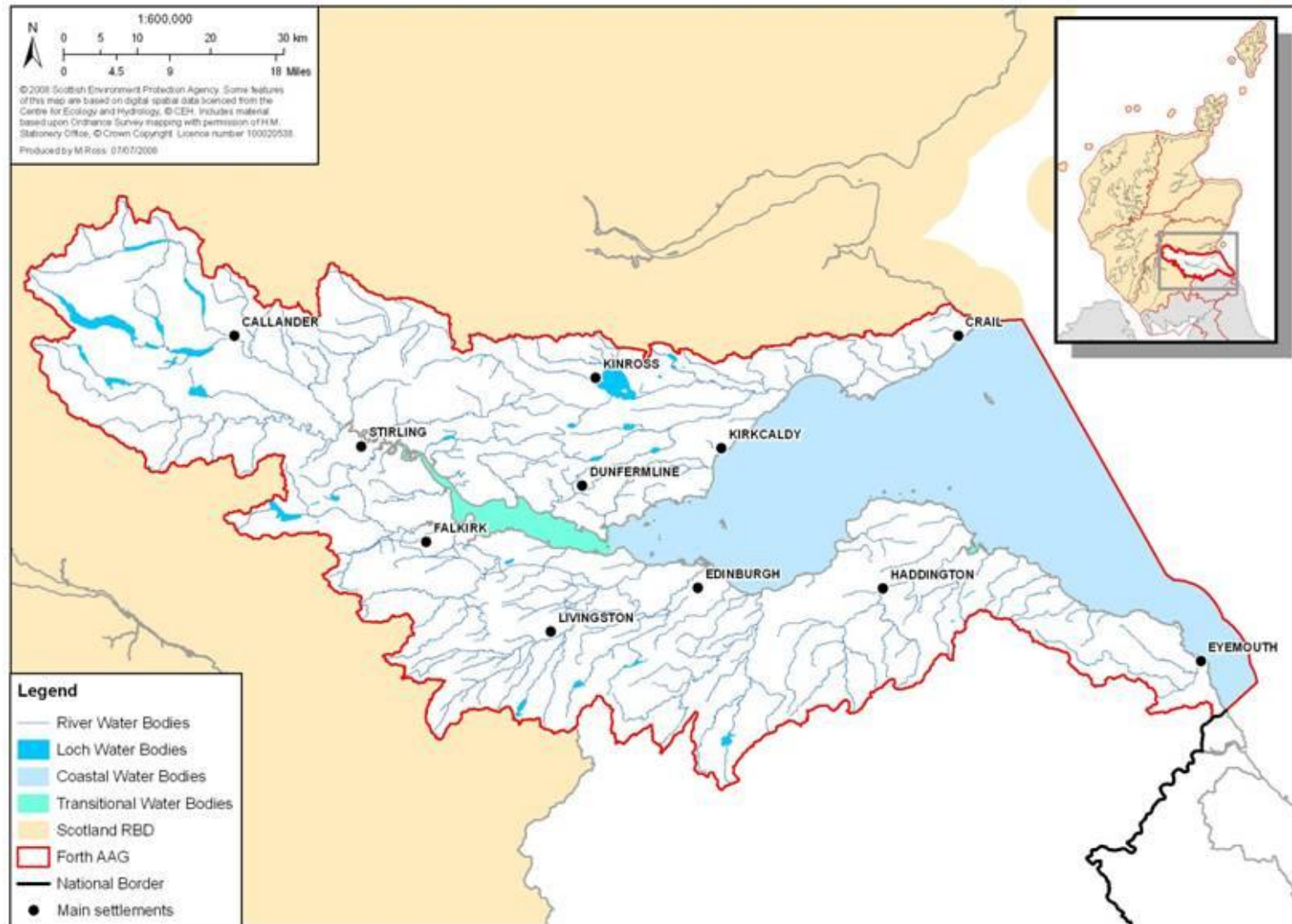


Figure 18C.31 Forth Salmon Fishery Board Area of Responsibility (Source: Forth DSFB, 2012)



The Fishery in the Forth District

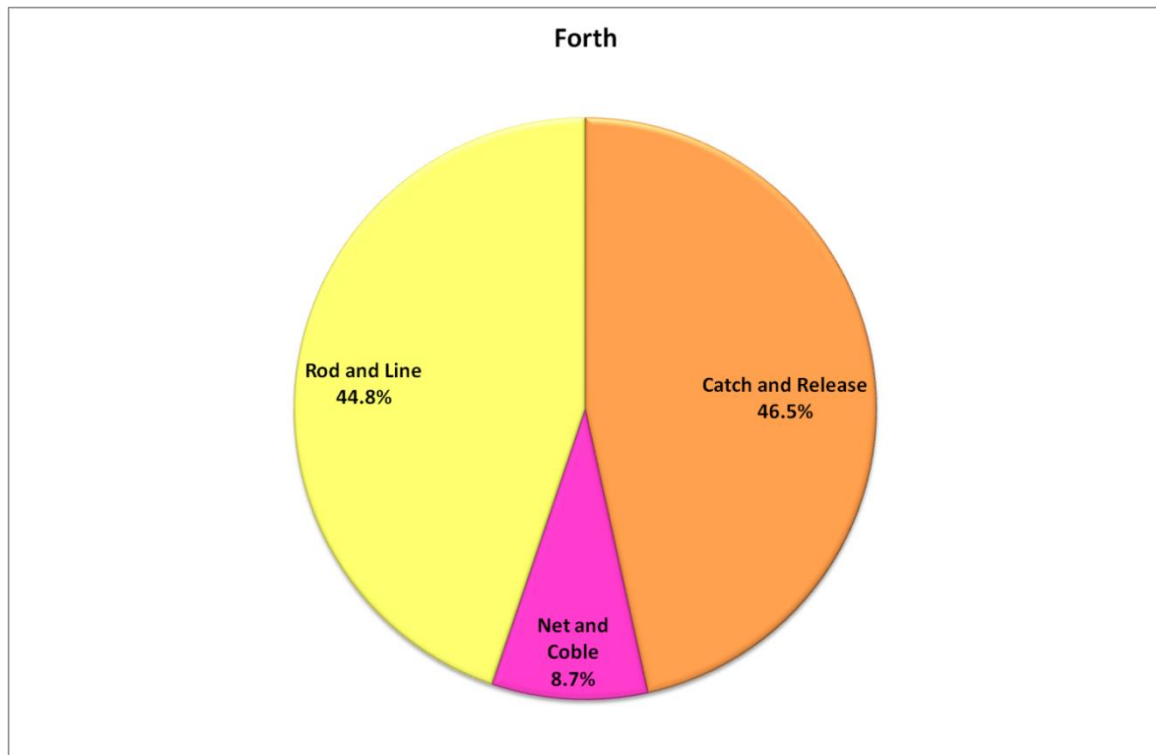
The River Forth is principally a salmon river, however, other rivers within the district (e.g. Tyne and Allen) are predominantly sea trout rivers (Forth DSFB consultation questionnaire).

Principal Fishing Methods in the Forth District

Salmon and sea trout fishing in the Forth District is principally undertaken by rod-and-line. The Forth DSFB and the RFFT promote a total catch and release policy, which has been taking up at different rates in different areas within the District (Consultation, 2011d⁶). The distribution of the catch by method is shown in Figure 18C.32 (2001-2010).

As mentioned in Section 18C.4.4.2.1 above netting activity within the district is limited at present, with only two net-and-coble stations being currently fully operational. In addition, fixed engines are not used and no net fisheries in areas relevant to the export cable landfall options are operational at present.

Figure 18C.32 Distribution of the Catch by Method in the Forth District (Average 2001-2010)

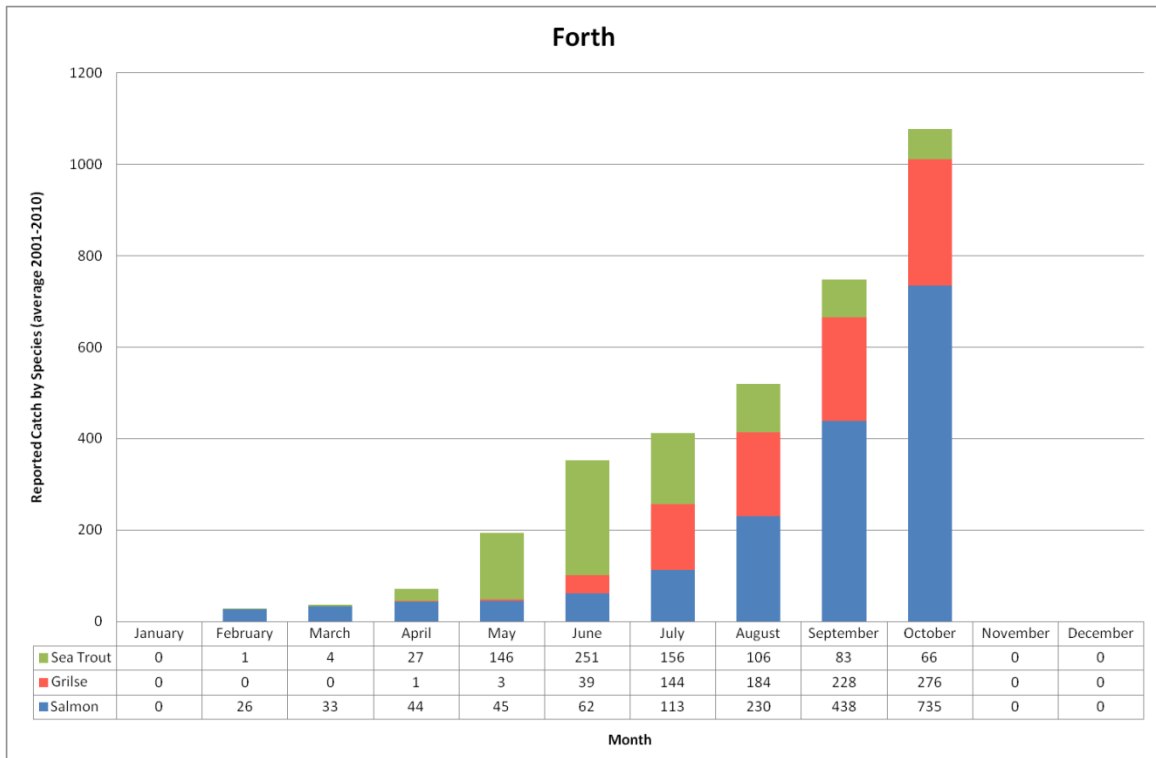


Seasonality of the Fishery and Annual Variation

During the 2001-2010 period the highest grilse and salmon catches have been recorded in autumn (July to October) with peak catches in September and October. Sea trout catches have been highest from May to August, peaking in May and June (see Figure 18C.33).

⁶ Consultation, 2011d. Consultation Meeting. Forth District Salmon Fishery Board. 17/03/2011.

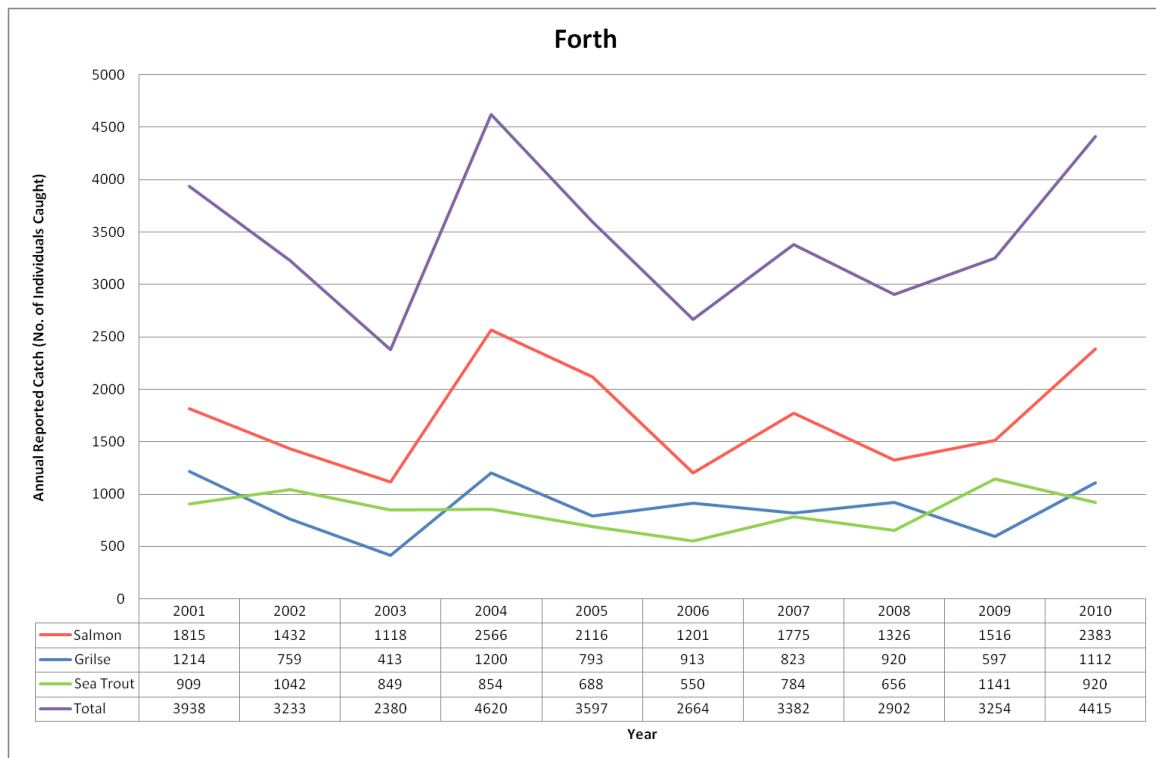
Figure 18C.33 Seasonality of the Salmon and Sea Trout Fishery in the Forth District (Average 2001-2010)



The fishery is closed annually between 1 November and 31 January and as a result no catches are recorded during this period.

Salmon and grilse catches have fluctuated during the ten year period under consideration. High catches have been recorded in 2001, 2004, 2007 and 2010 with no clear trends being apparent. In the case of sea trout, after an overall decline from 2002 to 2006, there has been a relative increase in the catch with 2009 recording the highest catch for this species (18C.34).

Figure 18C.34 Annual Variation in the Reported Catch by Species in the Forth District (2001-2010)



Seasonality of Salmon, Grilse and Sea Trout Runs

The principal runs in the Forth District take place in June and July for grilse and in August and September for salmon. In addition, there is an improving spring salmon run in the District (Forth DSFB consultation questionnaire).

The times and relative importance of different runs may, however, vary between different rivers within the district. A summary of the salmon and sea trout stock structure in the district, based on information provided in “The Forth Fishery Management Plan 2009” is given in Table 18C.1 below.

Table 18C.1 Forth District Salmon and Sea Trout Stock Structure (Source: Forth DSFB & RFFT, 2009)

River	Salmon	Sea Trout
River Teith	Discrete, spring, summer and autumn runs	From March onwards, peaking in late May
River Old Forth		
River Allan		
Rest of rivers within the District		

18C.4.4.3.2 The Tay District

The Tay District Salmon Fishery Board

The Tay DSFB is the statutory organisation for the Tay Catchment responsible for the management of Atlantic salmon and sea trout. The Board is made up of riparian owners elected to represent the upper and lower parts of the catchment and coopted members who represent the interests of anglers, the Ghillies Association and the Tay Foundation. Together they look after over 5,000 miles of rivers, burns and lochs. Their work includes river management, conservation, scientific research and bailiffing (Tay DSFB, 2012).

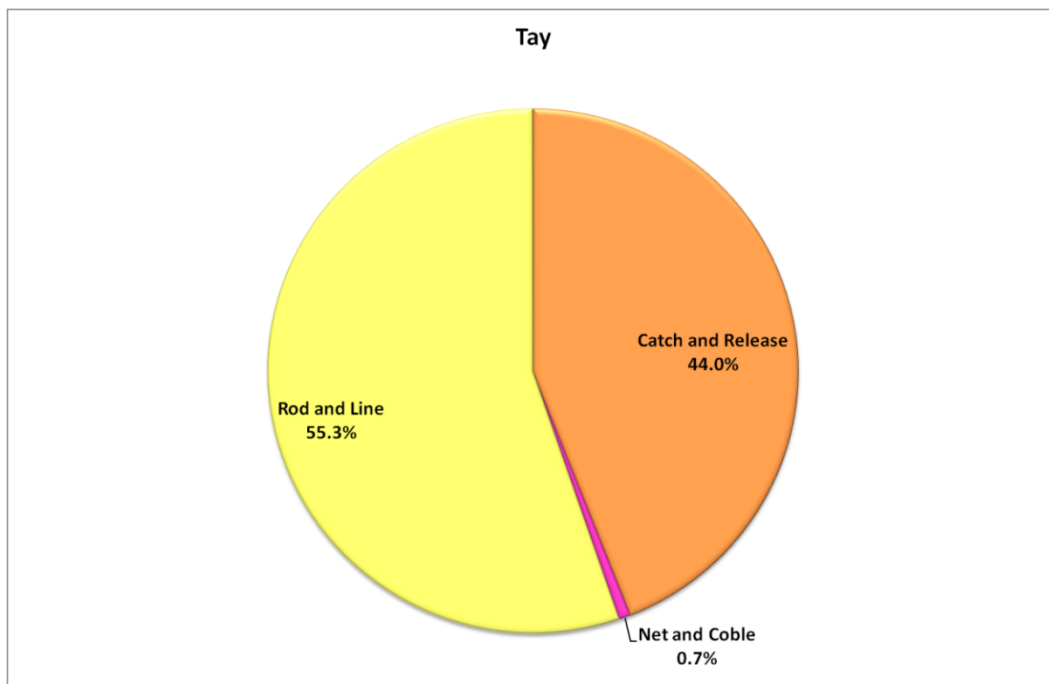
The Fishery in the Tay District

Salmon fishing is the most important fishery on the River Tay and its tributaries. Compared to some other rivers sea trout fishing in the Tay is of much lesser importance to salmon. The Tay itself has only a modest sea trout run. The best tributary for sea trout is the River Earn, which historically has been an excellent sea trout river (Tay DSFB, 2012).

Principal Fishing Methods in the Tay District

Salmon and sea trout fishing in the Tay District is principally undertaken by rod-and-line (including catch and release). The distribution of the catch by method is shown in Figure 18C.35 below (2001-2010).

Figure 18C.35 Distribution of the Catch by Method in the Tay District (2001-2010)



As mentioned in Section 18C.4.4.2.1, netting in this district is limited to a few hobby net-and-cobles which operate upstream of Dundee and to coastal nets in the northern reaches of the district, where the Usan Salmon Ltd. has rights (Consultation, 2011c⁷; see Figure 18C.39).

Seasonality of the Fishery and Annual Variation

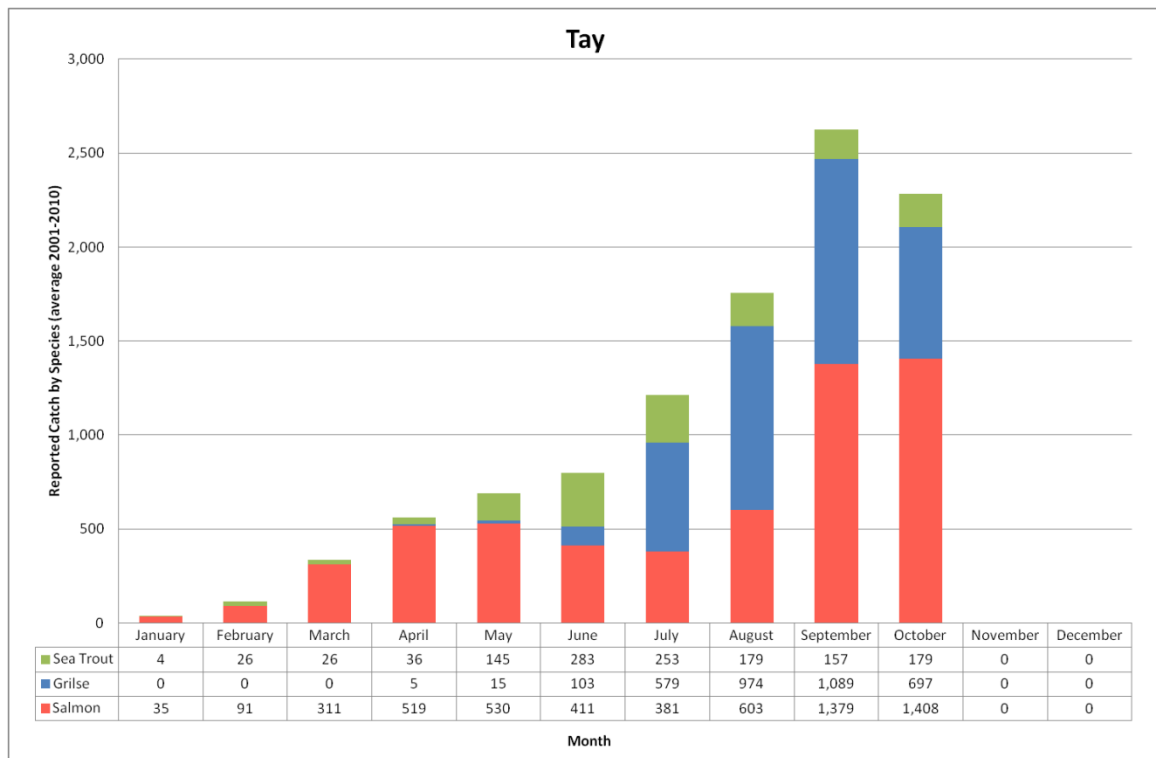
The salmon and sea trout fishery runs from 15 January to 15 October and extends to 31 October in the Earn (Consultation, 2011c²⁷).

During the 2001-2010 period the highest grilse catches have been recorded from July to October. Peak salmon catches have been recorded in autumn in September and October. Sea trout catches have been highest from May to October, peaking in June and July (Figure 18C.36).

As indicated by the catch distribution in Figure 18C.36, the autumn run is the mainstay of the Tay salmon fishery. It provides the largest catches, the biggest rents and ultimately provides most of the revenue for the Board to conduct its activities throughout the entire district (Tay DSFB, 2012).

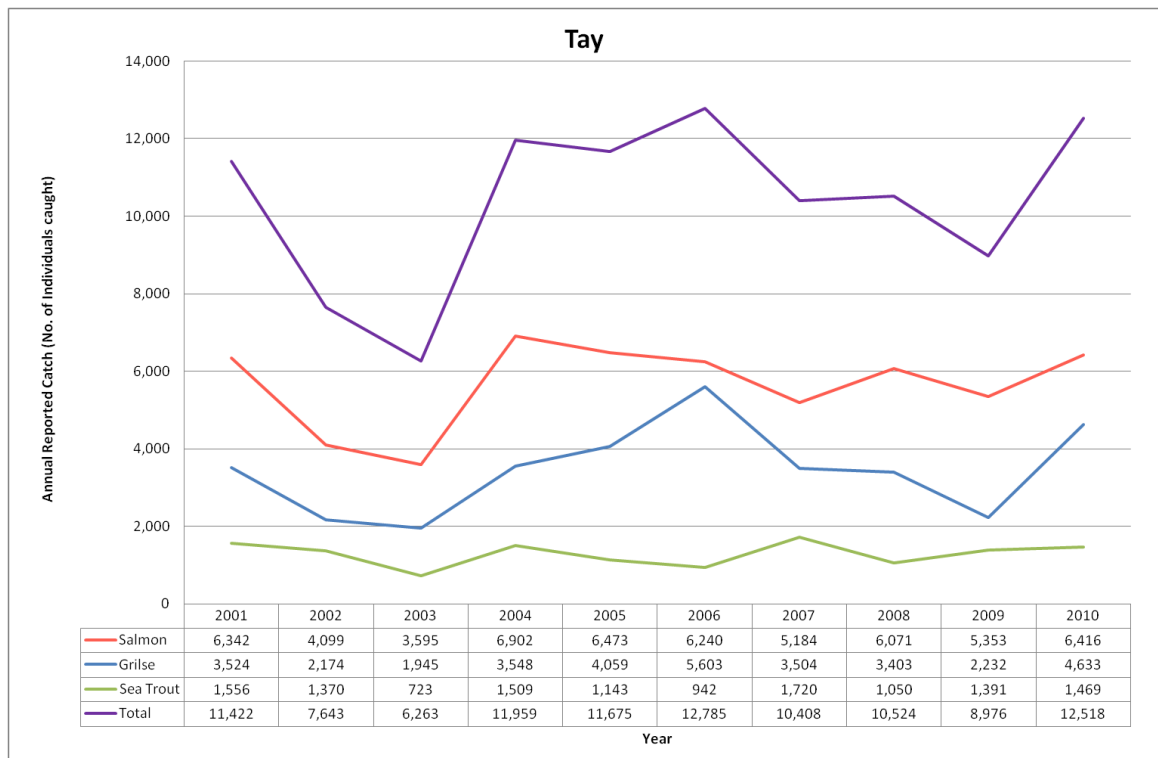
⁷ Consultation, 2011c. Consultation Meeting. Tay District Salmon Fishery Board. 16/02/2011.

Figure 18C.36 Seasonality of the Salmon and Sea Trout Fishery in the Tay District (average 2001-2010)



The annual variation of catches in the Tay District is shown in Figure 18C.37. Salmon, grilse and sea trout catches have fluctuated during the ten year period, with lowest catches being recorded in 2003. Overall catch values of salmon, grilse and sea trout remained relatively stable, with catches in 2010 representing similar catch values like those recorded at the beginning of the time series.

Figure 18C.37 Annual Variation in the Reported Catch by Species in the Tay District (2001-2010)



Seasonality of Salmon, Grilse and Sea Trout Runs

Salmon enter the River Tay all year round. The main first significant runs of “spring salmon” into the River Tay take place from late February/March and continue through April and May. Autumn salmon start to appear around August and fresh run fish can continue to enter the river right to the end of the season and beyond (Tay DSFB, 2012).

Summer grilse begin to arrive in May, with grilse numbers building up in June and usually reaching a peak in July. Autumn grilse appear from August onwards through to October and beyond (Tay DSFB, 2012).

Sea trout enter the river Earn throughout the year with main runs occurring in late summer and autumn.

18C.4.4.3.3 The Esk District

The Esk District Salmon Fishery Board

The Esk DSFB is the statutory body with responsibility for the management of salmon and sea trout stocks in the Rivers North and South Esk. The Duties of the board include the protection or improvement of the fisheries within the district, the enhancement of salmon stocks and the stocking of the waters of the district with salmon.

In addition, the Esk DSFB works closely alongside the Esk Rivers and Fisheries Trust (ERFT), which aims amongst others to advance environmental protection and improvement by conserving and enhancing all species of freshwater fish and their environments primarily but not limited to the inland and coastal waters of the rivers and their tributaries. The Trust is made up of biologists, conservationists, farmers, fishermen and proprietors (ERFT & Esk DSFB, 2012).

The Fishery in the Esk District

As mentioned in Section 18C.4.4.2.1, the North East is the principal region in terms of netting activity within a national context. The majority of the catches in this region concentrate in the Esk district (North and South Esk). The Esk Rivers were originally sea trout rivers, but numbers have declined, and the rivers are now both salmon and sea trout rivers (Consultation, 2011a⁸).

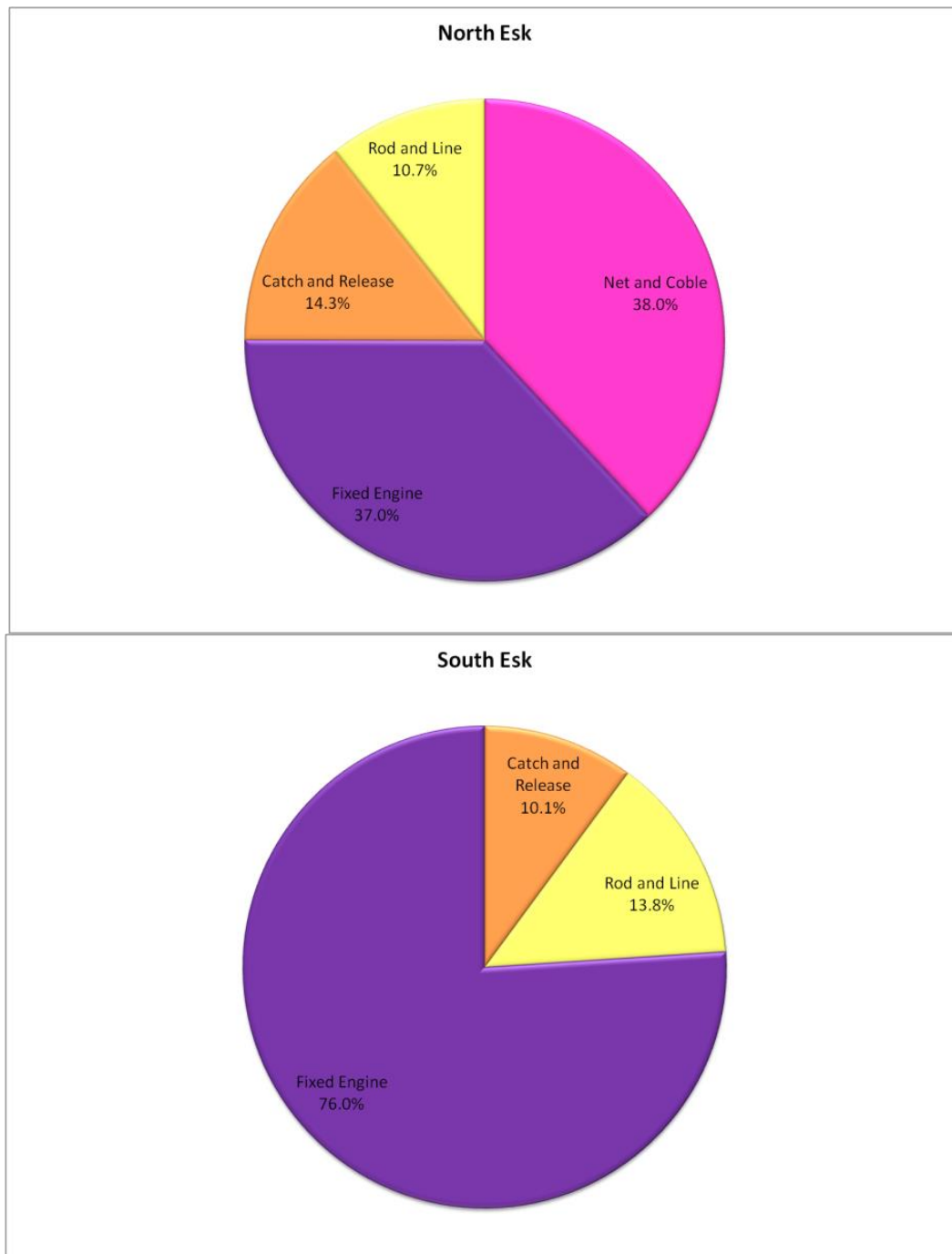
Principal Fishing Methods in the Esk District

The distribution of the catch by method in the North and South Esk is shown in Figure 18C.38 (2001-2010). Salmon and sea trout fishing in the Esk District is principally undertaken by fixed engines. Catches by net and coble also constitute a relatively high percentage of the catch within the North Esk District (38.0%).

However, as previously mentioned, the North Esk's coastal netting stations have been bought out by the Esk DSFB in 2007. Fixed engines are still commercially operational in the South Esk, with Usan Salmon Fishery (Montrose) constituting the principal fishery there.

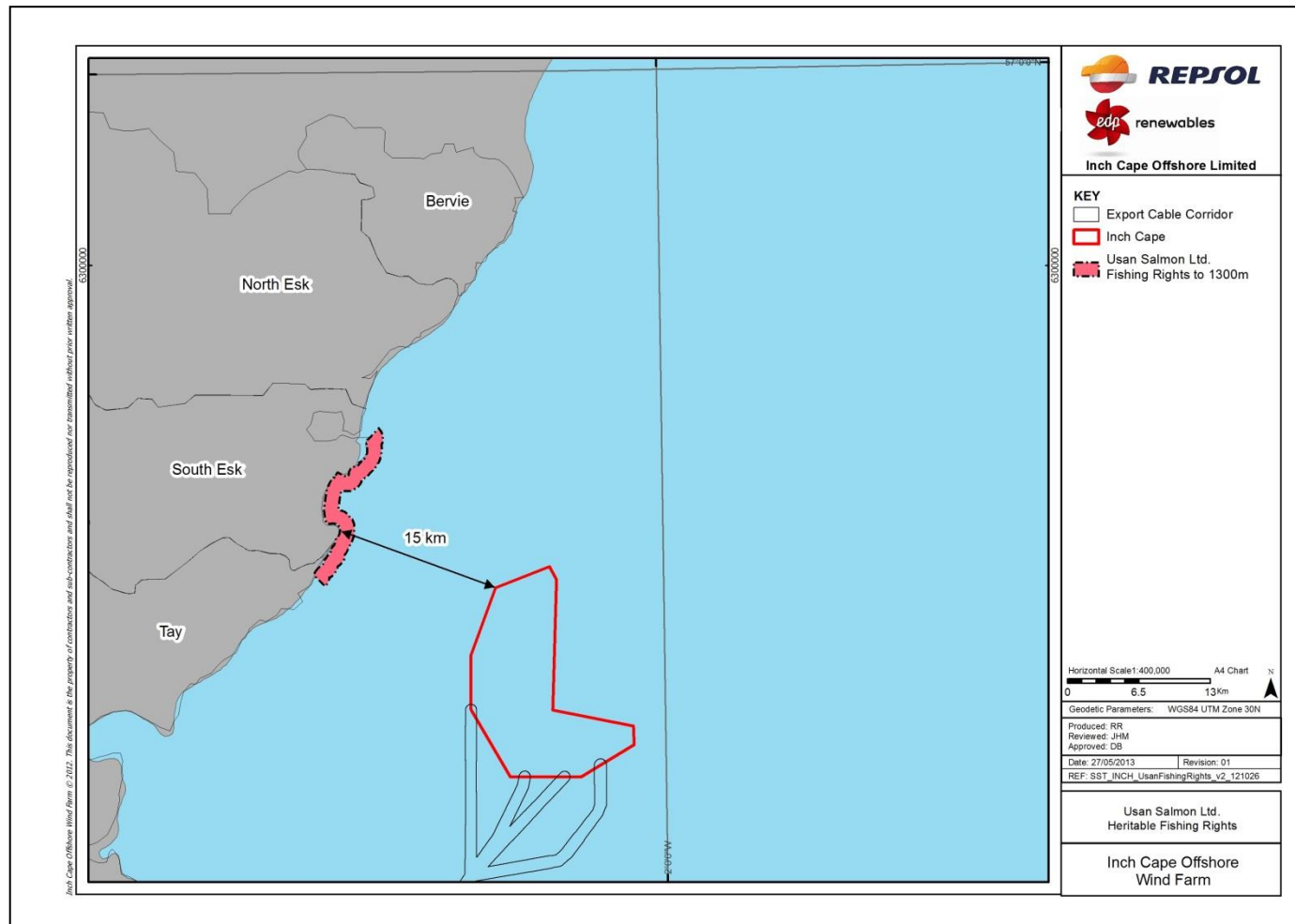
⁸ Consultation, 2011a. Consultation Meeting. Usan Fisheries. Montrose. 17/02/2011.

Figure 18C.38 Distribution of the Catch by Method in the North and South Esk District (2001-2010)



Usan Salmon Ltd. is one of the largest independent salmon netting companies in Scotland. The fishery has been operational since the 1960's but didn't move to Usan until 1983. The location of the Usan fishing rights relative to the development and its export cable route options is shown in Figure 18C.39. Usan's fishing rights extend between Scurdie Ness lighthouse to the north and Auchmithie harbour in the south, extending into coastal waters of both districts; the South Esk and the Tay. They operate eight netting stations in total. Bag nets are predominantly set, although jumper nets (a type of stake nets) are used in Lunan Bay. A total of 18 fixed engines were employed in 2010. Nets are set up to 1,300 m from the shore, in lines. Between 10 and 12 fixed engines can be set per line.

Figure 18C.39 Usan Salmon Ltd. Fishing Rights



As mentioned in Section 18C.4.3.1, fixed engines are not permitted to extend more than 1,300 m from the mean low water mark. As it can be seen from Figure 18C.39, the area covered up to the 1,300 m limit by the Usan Salmon fishing rights does not extend into the area of the development and its export cable.

The netting fishing season extends from 16 February to 30 of August. Although there are no legal restrictions preventing netting from beginning from 16 February, because of perceived concerns expressed by anglers over the numbers of spring salmon, Usan Fisheries gave a voluntary undertaking to Scotland's Fisheries minister, to delay starting to fish until 1 May. Recently, Usan Salmon Fisheries proposed an alternative solution for future years, which involves a seasonal swap, under which refraining from netting for six weeks from 16 February until 31 March in exchange for the entitlement to fish during the first two weeks in September (Fishing News, 2011a).

Usan manufacture their own nets using purpose built onsite facilities. In 2010 Usan Salmon was awarded a grant, in excess of £100,000, under the auspices of the European Fisheries Fund for both the construction of a net and boat manufacturing and repair facility and three new power net washing beds (Consultation, 2011a⁹).

Seasonality of the Fishery and Annual Variation

In the Esk District, rod and lining runs from the 16 February to 31 October and netting runs from the 16 February to the 30 of August. However, as mentioned above Usan Salmon Fisheries do not commence fishing until 1 May.

During the 2001-2010 period, grilse have been caught from May to October, with highest catches recorded in July and August. Salmon catches are recorded from February to October and peak in May and June. Sea trout catches have been highest from May to August, peaking in May and June (Figure 18C.40 and Figure 18C.41). As it can be seen from Figure 18C.40 and Figure 18C.41 overall combined salmon and sea trout catches are highest from May to August, indicating the importance of late spring and summer runs to the Esk fishery.

No catches are recorded from November to mid-February as a result of the annual fishing closure which extends in the Esk District from 1 November to 15 February (Figure 18C.40 and Figure 18C.41).

⁹ Consultation, 2011a. Consultation Meeting. Usan Fisheries. Montrose. 17/02/2011.

Figure 18C.40 Seasonality of the Salmon and Sea Trout Fishery in the North Esk District (average 2001-2010)

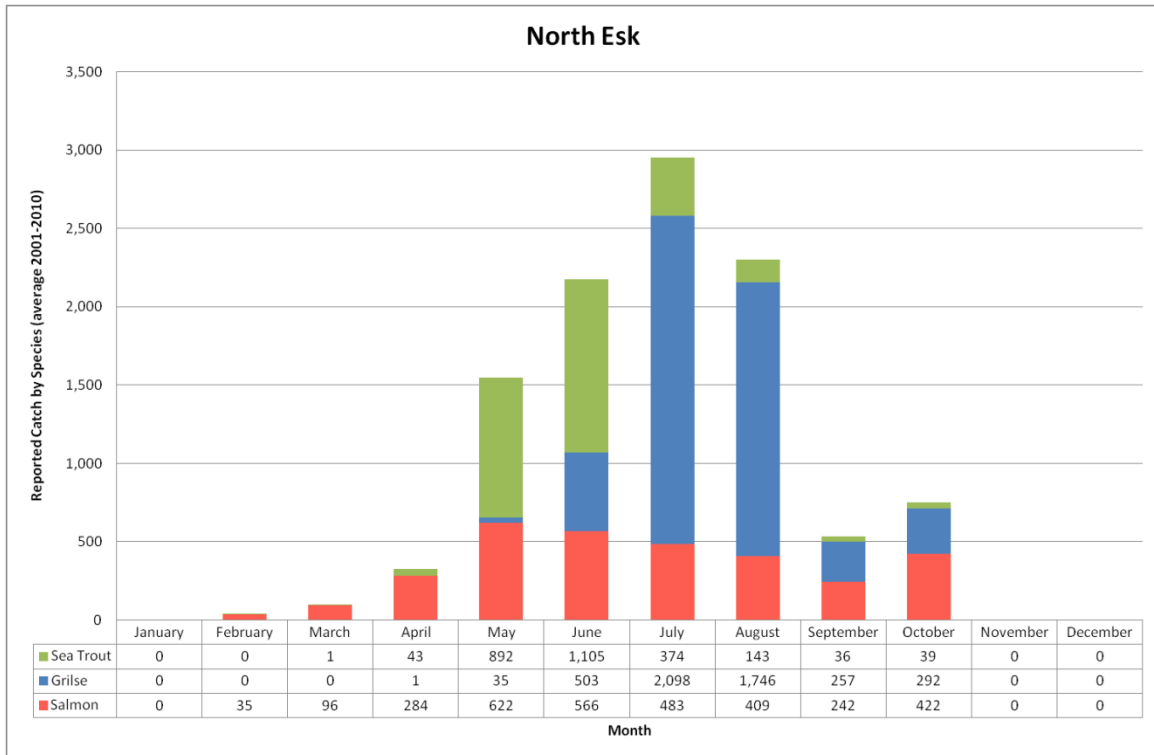
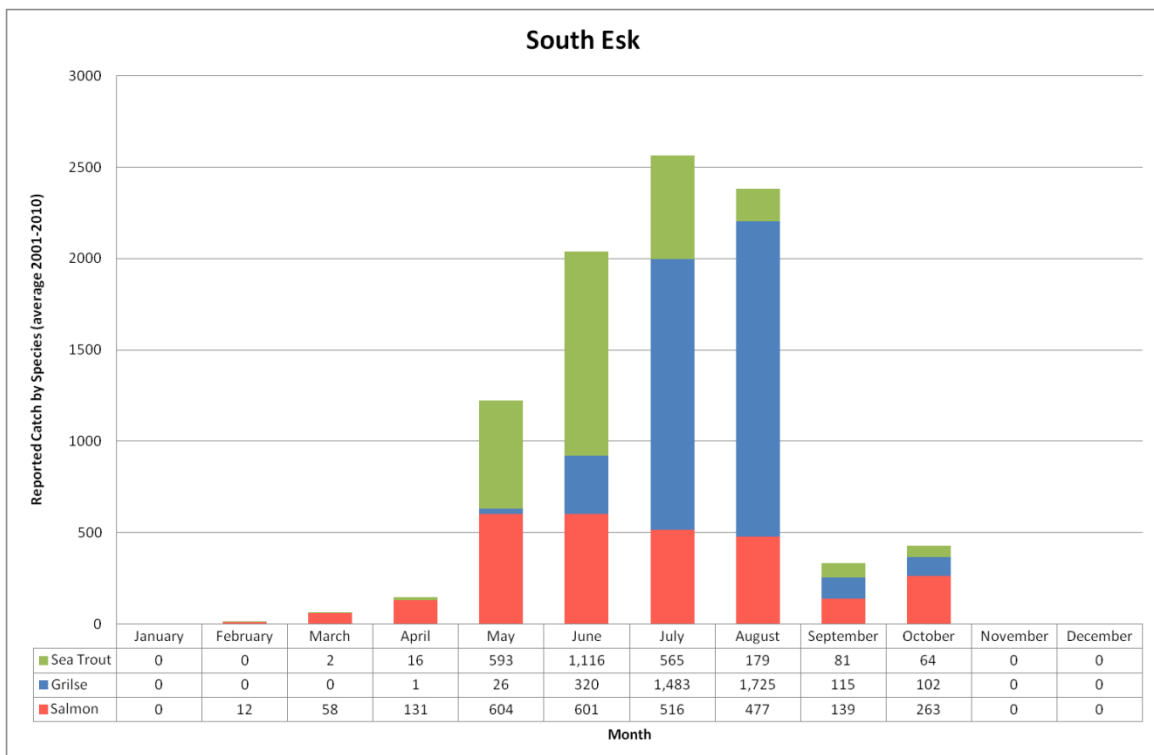


Figure 18C.41 Seasonality of the Salmon and Sea Trout Fishery in the South Esk District (average 2001-2010)



Salmon and grilse catches have fluctuated during the ten year period in the North and South Esk. The annual variation of salmon, grilse and sea trout catches in the North and South Esk District is shown in Figure 18C.42 and Figure 18C.43 respectively. As seen in Figure 18C.42, overall catches in

the North Esk decreased to a low in 2007, when coastal netting stations were bought out by the Board.

Figure 18C.42 Annual Variation in the Reported Catch by Species in the North Esk District (2001-2010)

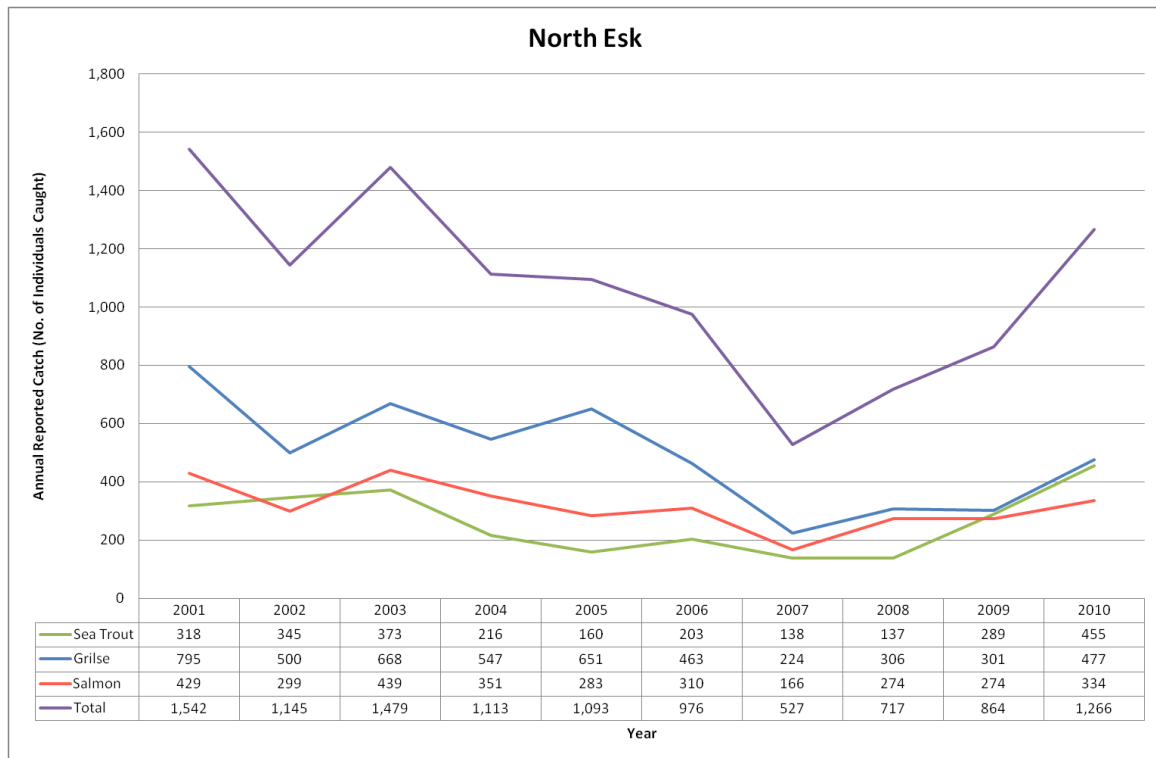
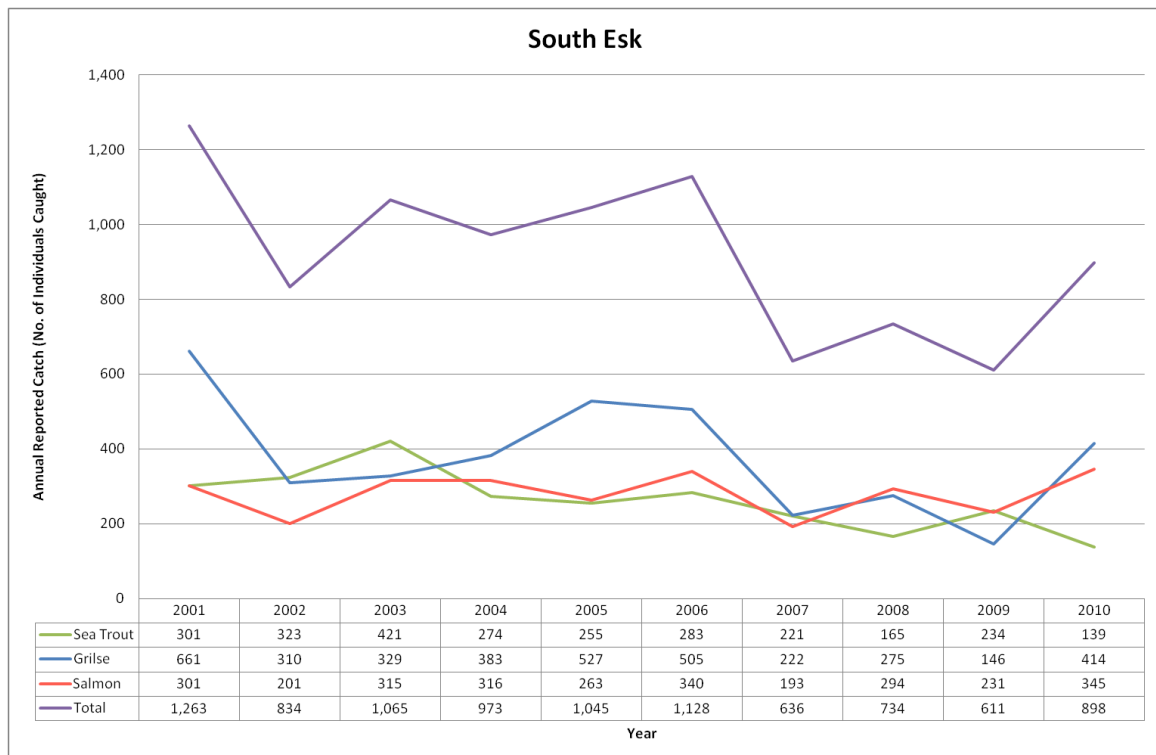


Figure 18C.43 Annual Variation in the Reported Catch by Species in the South Esk District (2001-2010)



Seasonality of Salmon, Grilse and Sea Trout Runs

Salmon enter the rivers of the Esk District throughout the year, with the principal run of salmon occurring from May to October. Grilse arrive in rivers at the end of May, with the main run of grilse taking place from July to October. Whilst the principal runs of sea trout extend from April to June (Esk DSFB, 2012).

18C.5 The Future of the Salmon and Sea Trout Fisheries

DSFBs throughout Scotland, generally in conjunction with Trusts and conservation groups, are making significant efforts to ensure the future of the industry and specifically the rod-and-line fishery, implementing programmes to maintain and improve upon the number and quality of salmon and sea trout in their rivers. Catch and release policies are also increasingly closely monitored.

A priority for the majority of Boards is the maintenance and development of rod-and-line fishing. It is expected that this trend will continue in the future, in line with the joint aims of the ASFB and other organisations. Parallel to the maintenance and development of the rod-and-line fisheries, a decrease in coastal netting activity has been the trend in the last decade. This is likely to continue to be the case, with river and conservation interests buying up coastal stations, as well as increasing statutory and voluntary restrictions and policies being implemented, all of which are considered effective stock management measures.

Scotland, together with England, Norway and Northern Ireland has come under increasing international pressure to establish a policy for managing Multi Stock Fisheries (MSFs), such as coastal netting. This is of particular sensitivity in Scotland, as fishing is prosecuted under heritable property rights, rather than as an activity licensed by Government, as in most salmon producing countries (Crawley, 2010). International advice is that there should be a presumption against operating MSF unless they can be shown not to contravene basic conservation policies (ASFB, AST and Salmon and Sea Trout Association (S&TA), 2009).

It should be noted that there are numerous constraints placed upon the degree to which potential impacts on salmon and sea trout and their significance to their fisheries can be assessed over the life of the Inch Cape Offshore Wind Farm. As is the case with other commercial fishing activities, unpredictable and unrelated influencing variables such as natural fluctuations in stock levels or changes in legislation could significantly alter the patterns and trends detailed in this report.

18C.6 References

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18C.7 Annex 18C.1

Table1 and Table2 below are examples of the questionnaires used to obtain information from salmon and sea trout interests. Table was distributed to DSFBs and trusts, while Table was circulated to the proprietors of coastal netting stations.

Table 18C.1.1 Scottish East Coast Proposed Offshore Wind Farm Development: Salmon and Sea Trout Baseline Information Gathering

General	
Name of District Salmon Fisheries Board/ Trust	
River(s) within jurisdiction	
Is the river(s) considered primarily salmon or sea trout river(s), or a combination of both? Has this changed over the years?	
Have any additional Trusts or Associations been set up to help with the management of the river? If yes, please give details.	
Please note the current condition of the river, i.e. water quality, fish etc.)	
Current Activities	

<p>What are the principal fishing methods for salmon and sea trout in the district?</p>	
<p>What is the current state of salmon and sea trout stocks by river? (e.g. good, improving, declining etc.)</p>	
<p>What do you consider to be the main factors that contribute to current river stock status?</p>	
<p>What are the current statutory and/or voluntary regulations in place?</p>	
<p>When are the open seasons of the salmon and sea trout fisheries within your district? (i.e. when does the rod and line fishery open and close, when does the netting fishery open and close)</p>	
<p>What is the Boards catch and release policy for salmon and sea trout?</p>	

<p>What are the most important runs for salmon (by river)? Please state the approximate timing of these runs.</p>	
<p>What are the most important runs for grilse (by river)? Please state the approximate timing of these runs.</p>	
<p>What are the most important runs for sea trout (by river)? Please state the approximate timing of these runs.</p>	
<p>At what time of year do the smolts leave the river?</p>	
<p>Please note any observations regarding smolt habits when leaving river(s) for the marine environment.</p>	

<p>Please note the habits of returning salmon and sea trout (i.e. time spent at river mouth, etc).</p>	
<p>Are there any obstacles to salmonid navigation up river? If yes, please give details.</p>	
<p>Historic Practices</p>	
<p>Please describe the historic condition of the river, compared with its status today.</p>	
<p>Have you noticed any changes in salmon and sea trout catches over the years and what would you attribute these to? Please give details where possible.</p>	
<p>Have you noticed any changes in salmon and/or sea trout runs over the years? (e.g. runs now occurring in spring or autumn that haven't previously)</p>	

<p>What were the principal historic fishing methods within your district?</p>	
<p>Conservation</p>	
<p>What do you identify as the principal threats to salmon and sea trout within the district?</p>	
<p>What do you consider to be the most vulnerable stage for returning fish? Please give reasons.</p>	
<p>What do you consider to be the most vulnerable stage for smolts? Please give reasons.</p>	
<p>What do you consider to be the primary factors contributing the high marine mortality rates of salmon and sea trout?</p>	

<p>Are there any monitoring programmes or management schemes currently taking place or have taken place in the past? (e.g. electrofishing, hatcheries etc.) Please give details and include what you think the outcome of these schemes will be or was.</p>	
<p>Coastal Rights</p>	
<p>Please could you provide identification of the rights holders of the coastal salmon netting stations in your district, rights holders, and their locations.</p>	
<p>Are any coastal netting stations currently in operation within your jurisdiction? If yes, please state which.</p>	
<p>Concerns</p>	

<p>Please list the principal concerns for salmon and sea trout with regards to the proposed offshore wind farm developments.</p>	
<p>Please state any concerns specific to the Moray Firth proposed wind farm developments?</p>	
<p>Please state any concerns specific to the proposed Aberdeen Offshore Wind Farm development?</p>	
<p>Please state any concerns specific to the proposed Firth of Forth Offshore Wind Farm developments?</p>	
<p>Additional Information</p>	

<p>Do you have or are you aware of any existing research or publications concerning salmon and sea trout behaviour within your district? If yes, please give details.</p>	
<p>Are there any other points you would like to note down? (Please continue onto the next sheet, if required).</p>	

Table 18C.1.2 Scottish East Coast Proposed Offshore Wind Farm Developments: Salmon and Sea Trout Baseline Information Gathering

General	
Name of Salmon Fishery District	
Name of Coastal Netting Right Holder	
Name of Coastal Netting Station/s (please provide map or indicate location of the station)	
Is the station/s currently fished?	
Fishing Gear	
What are the principal species caught? (salmon, sea trout, both)	
What's the fishing gear used in the station/s (bag nets, stake nets, other)?	
What are the specifications of the fishing gear used?	
Where from and how is the fishing gear operated? (from the beach, rocky shores , lines of nets, etc)	
What's the maximum distance from shore that the gear can legally be set?	
What's the maximum distance from shore that the gear is normally set?	
What other salmon and sea trout fishing methods are used in the vicinity of the station/s (eg. net-and-coble, rod-and-line)	
Catches and Effort	
What is the current state of the catch of salmon and sea trout from the station/s? (increasing, decreasing, in line with historical levels, etc..) Please specify by species	

What do you consider to be the main factors that contribute to the numbers of salmon and sea trout being currently caught?	
Has the fishing effort at the station/s been modified in recent years?	
Do the majority of salmon and sea trout individuals caught at the station/s belong to the populations of the rivers within the District?	
Are salmon or sea trout from other Districts being caught at the station ?(Please specify from which districts if known)	
Seasonality	
When are the open seasons of the salmon and sea trout netting fishery in the District?	
What months record the highest catches? (Please specify for MSW salmon, grilse and sea trout)	
Have you noticed any variations in the timing of MSW salmon, grilse or sea trout runs in recent years? If so, what do you think is the cause of these changes?	
Salmonids Migratory Patterns	
Please note any observations regarding salmon and sea trout smolt habits in coastal waters when leaving rivers	
Please note any observations on the habits of returning salmon and sea trout (i.e. time spent at estuary or river mouth, etc).	
Please note any observation regarding the distance from the coast of salmon and sea trout migrations	

<p>Please provide any further observations regarding the migration patterns of salmon and sea trout that you feel are relevant</p>	
<p>Historic Practices</p>	
<p>Have you noticed any changes in salmon and sea trout catches over the years and what would you attribute these to? Please give details where possible.</p>	
<p>Have you noticed any changes in salmon and/or sea trout runs over the years? (e.g. runs now occurring in spring or autumn that haven't previously)</p>	
<p>What were the principal historic fishing methods within your district? Have they changed over the years? If so, please specify the reasons why</p>	
<p>Conservation</p>	
<p>What do you identify as the principal threats to salmon and sea trout?</p>	
<p>What do you consider to be the most vulnerable stage for returning fish? Please give reasons.</p>	
<p>What do you consider to be the most vulnerable stage for smolts? Please give reasons.</p>	

<p>What do you consider to be the primary factors contributing the high marine mortality rates of salmon and sea trout?</p>	
<p>Have you noticed any changes in the quality of the fish been caught over the years? (weight of fish, parasites, etc..)</p>	
Concerns	
<p>Please list the principal concerns for salmon and sea trout with regards to the proposed offshore wind farm developments.</p>	
<p>Please state any concerns specific to the Moray Firth proposed wind farm developments?</p>	
<p>Please state any concerns specific to the proposed Aberdeen Offshore Wind Farm development?</p>	
<p>Please state any concerns specific to the proposed Firth of Forth Offshore Wind Farm developments?</p>	
Additional Information	
<p>Are there any other points you would like to note down? (Please continue onto the next sheet, if required).</p>	