



(Member of South West Rivers Association)

MAR 2019

CATCH AND RELEASE

In January 2019, after extensive consultations with the public and representations by RETA and other bodies such as the Angling Trust, the Government passed bye-laws aimed to slow the downturn in salmon populations throughout the country. The bye-laws include the end of all salmon netting on the Exe. There is a quid pro quo that the Exe, being classed as 'probably at risk' of not sustaining its regeneration levels, achieves a voluntary 90% catch and release rate. If we do not achieve this every season then we risk the requirement becoming mandatory 100% catch and release.

To achieve this RETA has adopted a voluntary code.

All anglers must:

- Release ALL salmon before the 16th June (mandatory).
- Release all MSW fish throughout the season (fish 7lbs or over).
- Not use treble hooks in any form of fishing.
- Ensure barbs are fully closed on double and single hooks.
- Only use single hooks when spinning.
- Play the fish as quickly as possible.
- Always carry an appropriate knotless net, never beach a fish.
- Always carry a Ketchum or forceps or similar appropriate hook remover.
- Before starting to fish look to ensure a suitable place to net it.
- Keep the fish in the net in the water whilst unhooking and photographing.
- Never pick the fish up by the wrist (tail).
- When releasing gently hold the fish with its head upstream and be patient, it will swim off when it is ready.
- Not fish during extended hot weather and low flows as salmon will be stressed anyway and we recommend not fishing in these conditions.

To guarantee 90% catch and release the best course of action is to release all salmon. We must treat every salmon as part of the future.