

Evidence

A survey of freshwater angling in England Phase 2: non-market values associated with angling Project summary

The Environment Agency commissioned an economic valuation of freshwater angling to produce up-to-date, comprehensive and scale-flexible estimates of the economic value of freshwater angling in England. The project was split into 2 phases. The first estimated the impact of angling expenditure on the economy in terms of jobs supported and gross value added at local and national levels. The second estimated the values associated with changes in quality of a fishing site. This summary relates to the second phase of the project.

The Environment Agency needs these values in order to estimate the benefits to anglers from improvements to rivers and lakes in England made by the Agency and partner organisations. The Environment Agency's ambition is to provide as complete a picture as possible of the total value accruing from work to improve the natural environment, so that planning and investment decisions achieve the best outcomes for people and wildlife.

Approach

The project used an innovative approach that combines 2 different valuation methods. In summary, the approach asked anglers what characteristics or attributes of a fishing site they valued and hence their choice of fishing site (called stated preference), then adjusted the outcomes from these responses based on where they actually chose to fish (called revealed preference).

Over 3,000 anglers responded to the stated preference survey, which asked them to choose between different sets of attributes of fisheries. This survey used online and computer assisted telephone interview surveys involving choice cards that showed details of a variety of hypothetical fisheries with different characteristics, variable prices and varying distances from the respondent's home.

The data on where anglers actually fished (revealed preference) were taken from the first phase of the project, which involved an angling expenditure survey. Data on the attributes of the sites at which anglers fished were then combined with the preference and site choice data to produce estimates of the value of changes in the

quality of fisheries around the country.

The outputs from this method were used to develop an Excel spreadsheet tool that provides estimates of both the number of visits that would be switched between sites as a result of changes in the fishery attributes and the number of new visits, and from this the changes in value, that would be associated with changes to the fishery.

Results

Improving the quality of fishing sites as measured by 3 key attributes (fish abundance, fish size and fish diversity) is predicted to lead to an increase in the number of trips made to the site, both from anglers switching away from existing alternative sites and making new or additional visits.

Of these 3 attributes, moving from low to medium fish abundance is most highly valued by survey respondents.

In terms of fish size, increasing from small to medium is more highly valued than going from medium to large.

In terms of the quantity of fish present, anglers have a higher value for a change from low to medium abundance over a change from medium to high abundance.

The table below shows the results in angler values per fishing trip.

Change in fishery attribute	Value per trip
Coarse to game	£5.00
Coarse to mixed	£9.60
Small to medium size fish	£10.50
Medium to large size fish	£7.80
Low to medium quantity of fish	£22.30
Medium to high quantity of fish	£2.40

These values, however, are estimates and should be viewed as indicators of the strength of preference by anglers for various attributes rather than as potential revenue.

The survey also asked anglers about other attributes of a fishing site that were important to them. After having enough space to fish, a clean (no visible pollution) and beautiful environment were considered the most important. Many actually considered them more important than the size and numbers of fish.

This summary relates to information from the Value of freshwater angling in England reported in detail in the following output(s):

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