

A Scoping study to establish the issues on coarse fish and fisheries in England and Wales

Multi-species coarse fish communities have a widespread geographic and habitat range and as such present difficulty in identifying the associated issues and problems. Previous R&D reports have identified some broad issues influencing coarse fish, but as an indicator to future R&D there has been no priority set as to which issues were the most significant and in which regions. Consequently, it is more difficult to highlight the most important areas and focus R&D on these to give the most useful benefit and best value for money.

The objectives of this R&D Project were:

- X To establish the format of available data on coarse fish stocks within catchments and collate, summarise and prioritise the general issues relating to fish and fisheries
- X To estimate the size of the aquatic resource and its use as a coarse fishery
- X To determine how resources are presently used and whether re-allocation was desirable.

Results are presented on the resource and its level of use as a fishery; the amount of effort spent on fisheries surveys; the information collected from the surveys; the nature and practice of reporting; the current issues affecting coarse fisheries and subject areas requiring investigation; how fisheries staff would like to allocate their resources and perception of the Agency's level of service to the angling public.

Recommendations are given to address the following:

- X To review current monitoring to produce best practice guidelines.
- X To standardise the format in which coarse fisheries reports are produced.
- X To investigate improvements to the dissemination of R&D information.
- X To undertake R&D or operational investigations are undertaken in the following areas; population dynamics; habitat improvements and the effect of water quantity on fish and fisheries.
- X To conduct market research in order to validate staff opinion on the level of service that the Agency provides.
- X To investigate the consequences of re-allocating resources to increase funding for habitat improvement works, promotion and advisory work and R&D.

The report highlights the most important issues relating to coarse fish and fisheries in order to direct future R&D, formulate best practice and raise awareness of local issues. These recommendations from this report together with the programme for future R&D will be lead by the National Coarse fisheries Centre.

This R&D Technical Summary relates to information from Project W2-015 contained in the following output:

R&D Technical Report W137 - A Scoping study to establish the issues on coarse fish and fisheries in England and Wales

Internal Status: Released to Regions and Areas

External Status: Restricted (*)

(*) Outputs include the personal opinion of managers to views held by the public and should remain restricted to internal use only.

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Copies of these documents are available internally from the Regional Information Libraries or the National Information Centre in Bristol, and externally from Environment Agency R&D Dissemination Centre at WRc (Tel: 01793 511711, Fax 01793 514 562).

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