



**ENVIRONMENT AGENCY  
SOUTH WEST REGION**

**SALMON AND SEA TROUT FISHING IN  
THE ESTUARY OF THE RIVER TAVY.  
A REVIEW.**

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## Summary

1. The level of exploitation by the Tavy estuary nets has increased since the late 1950's due to the construction and operation of the Lopwell Dam water resource scheme, due to the loss of the former "sanctuary area", reduction in the tidal flow in the netting zone, and the reduced residual freshwater flow. Improvements in netting materials and boat construction have also contributed. (Section 2)
2. Although there is no evidence that the overall level of fishing is having an adverse effect upon stock recruitment, the high net catches of salmon in July and August appear to depress rod catches at that time and are likely to be affecting the genetic balance of the population. (Section 3)
3. The level of net catch of large sea trout appears to be having an adverse effect upon recruitment of this species. (Section 3)
4. There appears to be a significant rod fishery for salmon at Lopwell Dam based on foul-hooking techniques and extending beyond the salmon season. This is illegal but is difficult to police. (Section 2.5)
5. The possibility of some private ownership of fishing rights in the estuary has been raised but requires clarification.
6. The following recommendations are made:-
  - That the legal status of ownership of fishing rights in the estuary is carefully examined and resolved.
  - That a long-term restriction in the catches by the nets is sought, to complement the existing short-term initiatives. This might be achieved by a restriction in the area where netting can take place, a reduction in the number of licensees from five to one, or closure of the fishery. A net limitation order of one net is proposed.
  - That the rod fishery at Lopwell Dam is restricted or closed. The available mechanisms for this will depend upon the outcome of the review of private fishing rights.





## **1. Introduction**

There is a perception that, since the construction of Lopwell Dam in the late 1950's, the pattern of movement of salmon and sea trout in the Tavy estuary has changed so that the nets are able to take a larger proportion of the run. Further, a rod fishery has developed in tidal water immediately seawards of the dam which frequently involves fish being foul-hooked. The aim of this report is to consider the extent to which the perception of increased netting efficiency is valid, the justification for reducing the levels of exploitation in the estuary, and ways in which this might be achieved. The Terms of Reference are:

1. To describe the fisheries for salmon and sea trout taking place in the Tavy estuary.
2. To review and set out the case for reducing the level of exploitation of salmon and sea trout in the estuary of the River Tavy.
3. To review the legal situation regarding private and public rights of fishing by net and rod between Lopwell Dam and the junction with the Tamar estuary.
4. To review the options for achieving any desired reduction including setting up a sanctuary area, reduction in season, increase in weekly/daily close time, reduction in number of licences, closure of the net fishery and restrictions on rod fishing in the area of Lopwell Dam.

## **2. Description of the Tavy fisheries and their catches**

### **2.1 The net fishery**

Before the construction of Lopwell Dam in connection with the Lopwell abstraction in the late 1950's, the Tavy was tidal to the area of Woodpecker Quay, about 2 km upstream of the dam (Fig 1).

The method of fishing was, as nowadays, by seine net shot from a boat and returned to the same shore. The nets were made of natural fibre and were very heavy to shoot, land and reload into the boat. A photograph in Jeffery Bluett's book "Sea trout and occasional salmon" shows netting on the Tavy estuary involving crews of four or five men!

It is understood that, even then, net fishing did not take place upstream of the tidal ford at Lopwell, close to where the dam now stands. The reason for this is not known. Possibilities include:

- the fishing rights landwards of the ford may have been private (see Section 2.3)
- a byelaw prevented it
- fishing there would have involved landing on private property (if the netsmen needed to work from above the HW mark)
- fishing there was difficult or unrewarding and the netsmen chose not to fish there.
- local agreement between netsmen, riparian owners and/or the River Board

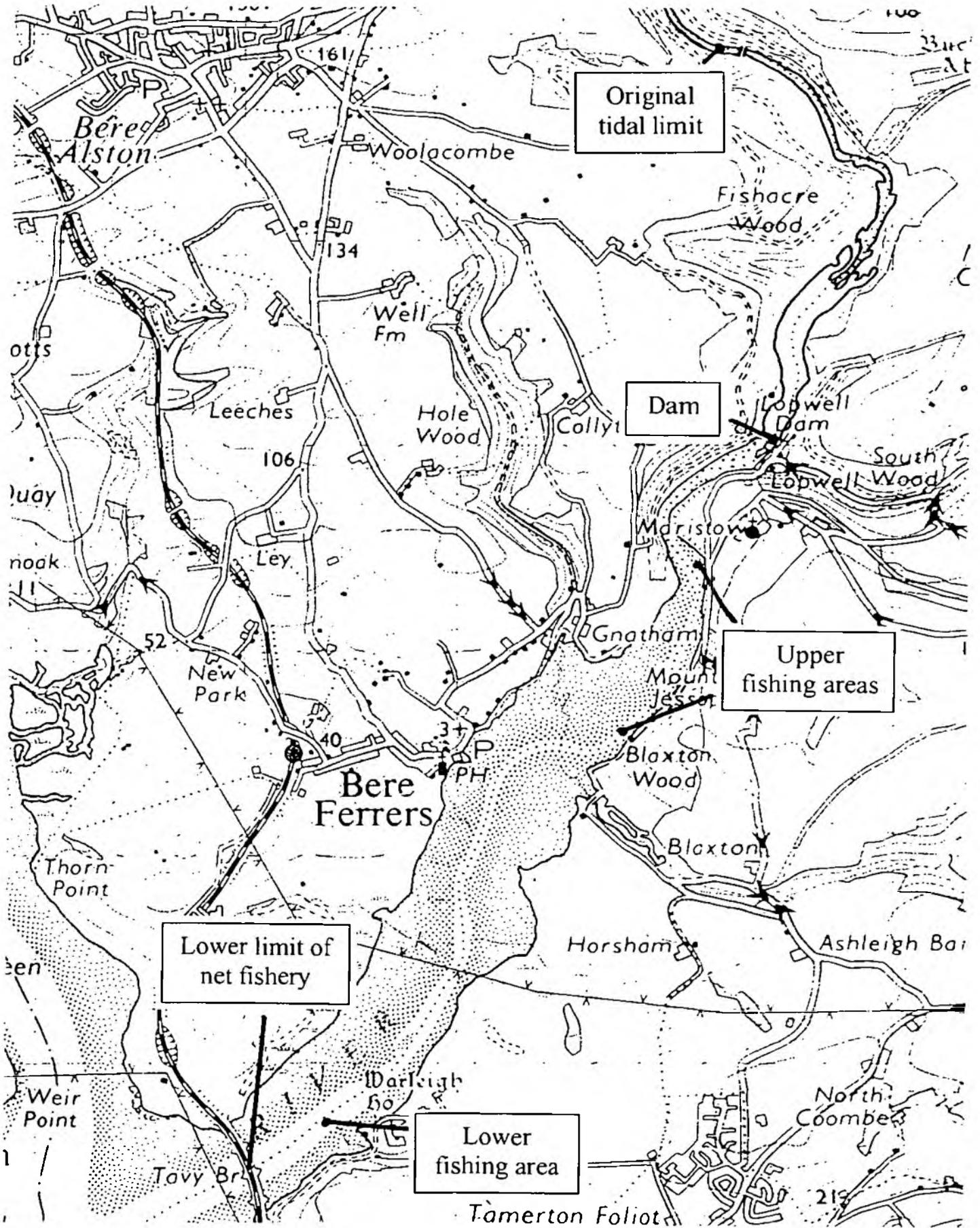


Figure 1. The estuary and lower reaches of the River Tavy. Scale 1:25,000.



For whatever reason, there was a zone of the upper estuary that was not netted, extending to about a 2 km length. This reach included a number of deep pools where fish could, and indeed did, remain at low tide. Experience with radio tracking elsewhere (e.g. Hampshire Avon and Exe) indicates that large numbers of fish may gather in such areas and remain there for weeks, until an increase in flow stimulates them to move further. This zone, where netting did not take place acted as a "sanctuary" for fish during periods of low flow even though it was not specifically managed or designated as such.

Since the construction of Lopwell Dam there have been a number of changes in the behaviour of both fish and fishermen even though the area covered by the fishery has not altered. The upper estuary "sanctuary" area was effectively lost, and was not recreated seawards of the dam. The topography of the channel below the new tidal limit is quite different to the lost "sanctuary" area, and it virtually dries at low tide. Fish cannot remain there for long periods, and any which approach this area on the flood tide will drop downstream again if they do not ascend the fish pass in the dam.

The current fishery comprises four nets licensed to operate only on the Tavy, and one licensed to operate on the Tavy and Tamar estuaries. The nets are allowed to operate anywhere between Lopwell Dam and the Tavy Railway Bridge, but they fish mainly at two sites, near Maristow Quay and seawards by the boathouse below Blaxton Woods (Figure 1). A third site used is near the Lime Kilns landwards of the Tavy Railway viaduct. The recorded catches of salmon and sea trout from 1952 to 1995 are shown in Figure 2.

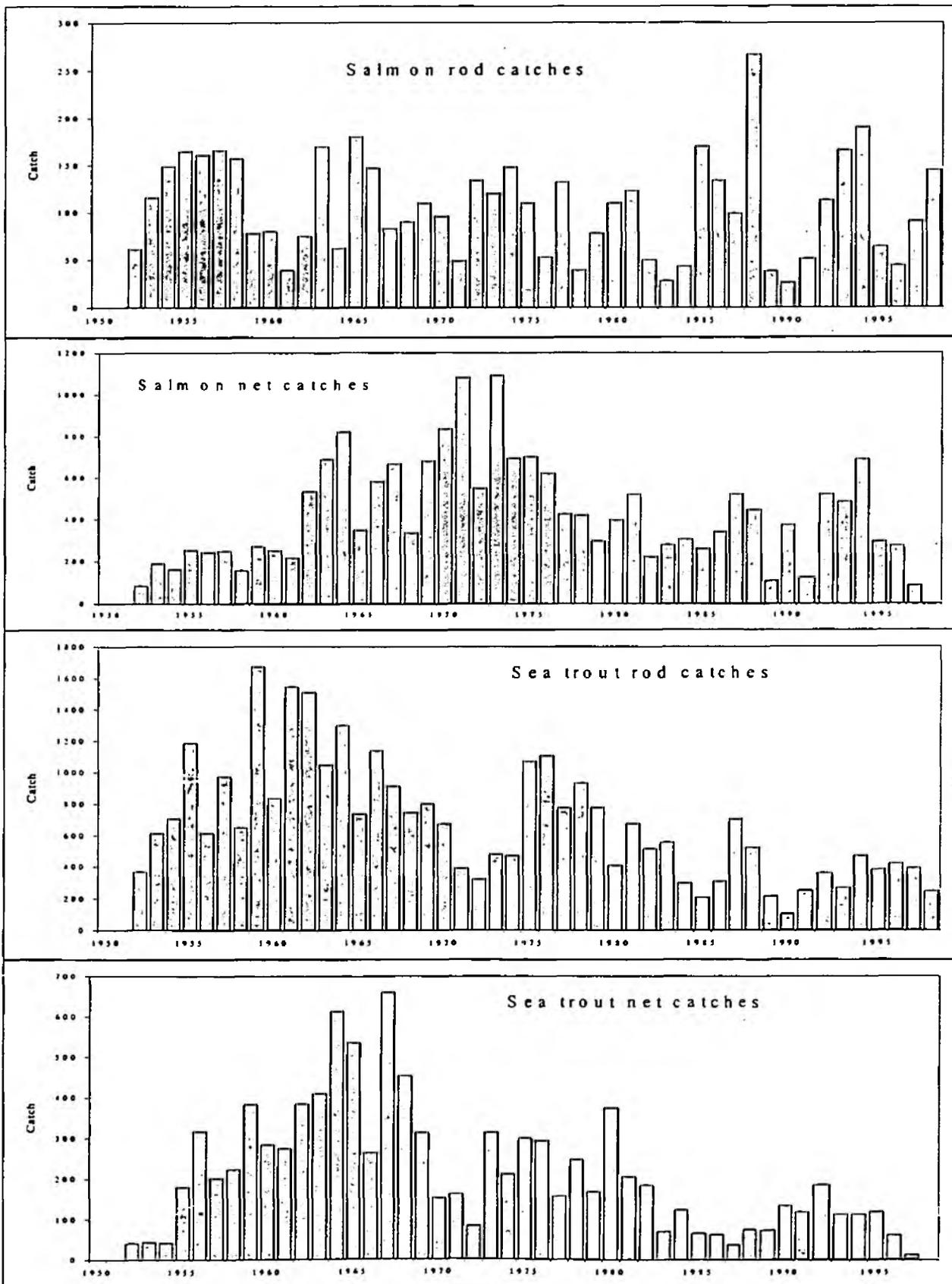
Because the presence of the dam has reduced the tidal area of the upper estuary, the volume of water passing specific points in the estuary with the flow and ebb of the tide has been reduced. The volume passing the netting site at Maristow Quay is likely to have been reduced by the order of a half or more, and at Blaxton Woods by a third. This has allowed the nets to be operated for a longer period of the tidal cycle. It is said that, pre-dam, netting could only take place on the flood tide but now much of the ebb can also be fished.

The extended fishing period has also been made easier by developments in netting material. The original hemp nets were heavy and required a crew of several men to deploy. Developments of lightweight synthetic materials including nylon, terylene and courelene, of monofilament construction (banned by byelaw in 1977) and multi-monofilament (banned by byelaw about 1995) made handling nets in tidal flows much easier. Lightweight fibreglass boats that can be man-handled through shallow water or even over dried-out mudbanks also helped to make netting a more flexible and effective operation.

Finally, the timing of the runs of fish has changed since the dam was constructed. For fifty years from about 1920 to 1970 spring runs dominated throughout much of range of the Atlantic salmon; since then the dominance has switched to grilse, the runs of which peak in July. This is illustrated for the Tavy by the seasonal balance of rod catch. In the years 1969-73 (the earliest period for which a monthly breakdown is available) over 43% of the rod catch was reported before the end of June. For the period 1991-95 the population had fallen to 14.5%. From the radio tracking study and from general experience elsewhere it is clear that at higher flows fish enter the river without delay, whereas at lower flows they tend to remain in tidal water until flows increase. Fish returning in spring and early summer are likely to enter the river promptly on the high flows prevailing then; at present, the peak of the run to



Figure 2. Declared catches for the River Tavy.





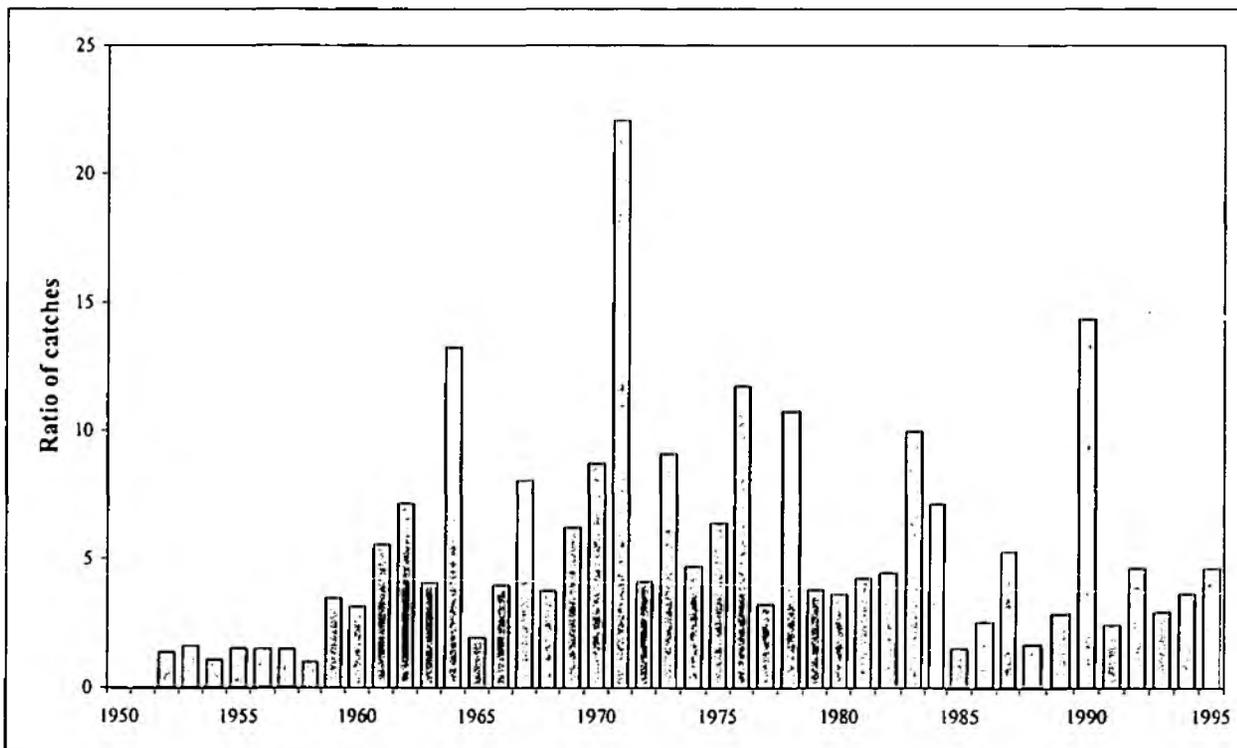
the estuary occurs at the period of lowest flows in July and August. The analysis of the radio tracking data suggested that migration past Lopwell Dam was under-represented at flows below about  $1.95 \text{ m}^3/\text{sec}$ . Flows are naturally low in July, and the Lopwell abstraction (which can take 50% of the flow above the pf of  $0.845 \text{ m}^3/\text{sec}$ , up to a maximum take of  $1.053 \text{ m}^3/\text{sec}$ ) increases the proportion of the time when residual flows are below this level.

## 2.2 Catches since 1952.

The declared rod and net catches of salmon and sea trout from 1952 to 1988 are shown in Figure 2.

The salmon rod catch has fluctuated considerably but without clear trend. The salmon net catch increased through much of the 1960's, but has fallen away somewhat since. Although the increase in the early 1960's does not appear to coincide exactly with the commissioning of Lopwell Dam in 1959, there is good evidence that the two are linked. The years 1960 and 1961 were poor years for salmon generally, possibly as a result of the 1959 drought. If we consider the ratio of net to rod-caught fish it is clear that 1959 represented a demarcation (Fig 3).

Figure 3. Ratio of net catch to rod catch of salmon in the Tavy.



The rod catch of sea trout peaked about 1960, and has fallen fairly steadily since. The net catch peaked later in the 1960's and again has declined steadily since. This is discussed further in Section 3.



### 2.3 Rod fishing in the estuary

Some legitimate rod fishing takes place in the estuary targeting flounders, mullet and bass. Unless a private right of fishing exists (see Section 2.5) rod and line fishing for salmon and sea trout in the estuary is also legal, subject to seasons and the same byelaws that cover fishing in the river itself. However, there is believed to be significant fishing for salmon based on foul-hooking in the close proximity to the dam and fish pass. This often occurs after the end of the salmon season, involving anglers claiming to be fishing for sea fish. Deliberate foul hooking of sea fish is not illegal, so the possession and deployment of tackle suitable for this purpose below the dam is not an offence. Deliberate foul-hooking of salmon is an offence, as is keeping any salmonids "accidentally" foul hooked. However, possession of salmon within season is not an offence if the fisherman has a salmon licence.

Given the complications and the remote nature of the site this fishery is very difficult to police. The catches, legal and illegal, are unknown but are believed to be significant.

### 2.4 The influence of river flow on net catches.

As the water resource scheme associated with Lopwell Dam modifies the residual flow regime to the estuary, the influence of flow on net catch success is of potential importance.

Daily declared net catches of salmon and data to calculate the daily mean residual flow to the estuary for the years 1977 to 1996 were made available by the Agency. The relationship between residual flow and net catch was examined separately for July and August, the two months of greatest catches (see Figure 6).

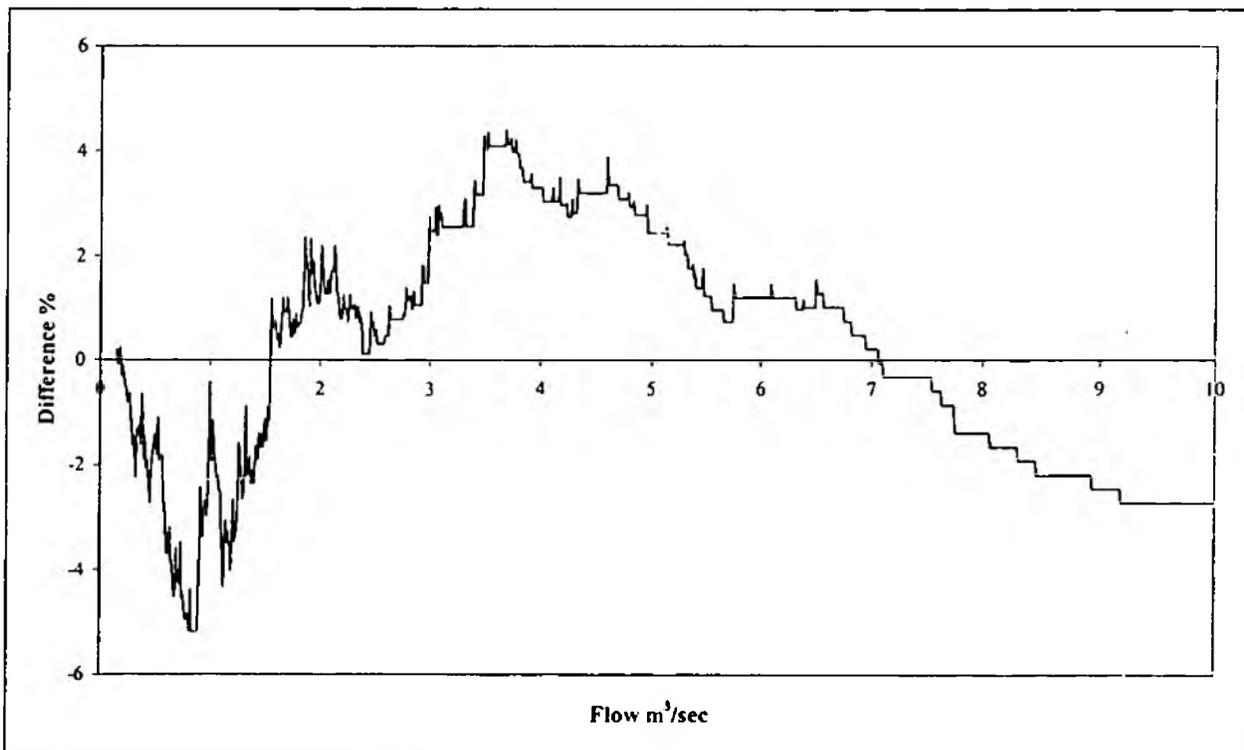
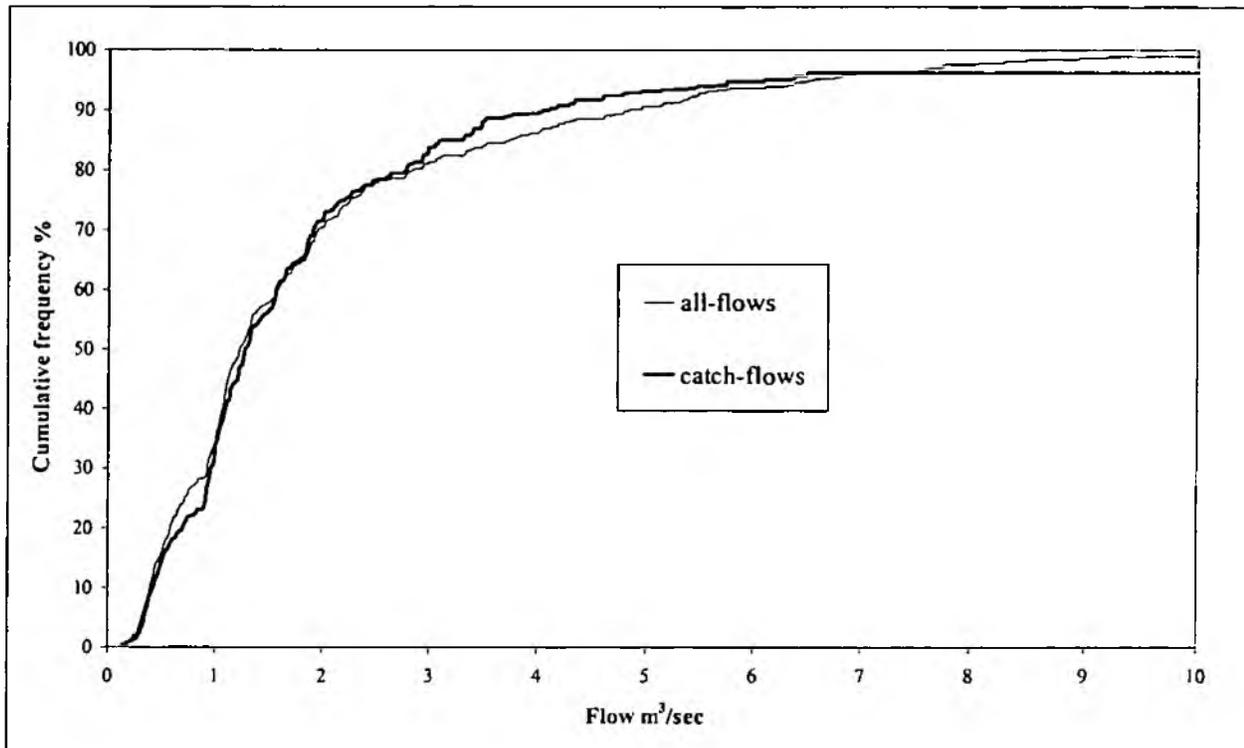
The relationships were examined using the cumulative flow frequency method developed for analysis of radio tracking results. This is fully described in the report of the Tavy tracking study (The impact of flow and abstraction on the migration of salmon in the River Tavy. Report prepared by Dr D Solomon for the EA SW Region, September 1997 and by Solomon et 1999). Briefly, it compares the cumulative frequency of flows when (in this case) fish are caught, with the overall pattern of available flows. Any significant difference between the two lines indicates an effect of flows on fish catch.

The situation for all years combined is indicated in Figures 4 (July) and 5 (August). In the lower part of each figure the difference between the catch-flows line and the all-flows line in the upper part is shown. A negative slope in this difference line indicates that, at that flow, catch is poorer than average; a positive slope indicates better than average catch, and a level section of the line indicates average catch.

Examination of the situation for July indicates that catches are lower than average at flows below about 0.9 m<sup>3</sup>/sec, above average between about 0.9 and 3.8 m<sup>3</sup>/sec, and below average again at higher flows. For August, catches again below average at flow below 0.9 m<sup>3</sup>/sec. However, they are about average from 3 to 6 m<sup>3</sup>/sec, and fall away somewhat at higher flows. These effects are not very marked however, compared to, for example, some impacts of flow upon migration and rod fishing success observed elsewhere. It is therefore concluded that net catch is largely independent of river flow, but tends to be a little below average at flows below 0.9 m<sup>3</sup>/sec and at high flows, and little above average at intermediate flows.



Figure 4. Residual flows prevailing when salmon were caught by Tavy nets, July 1977-96.

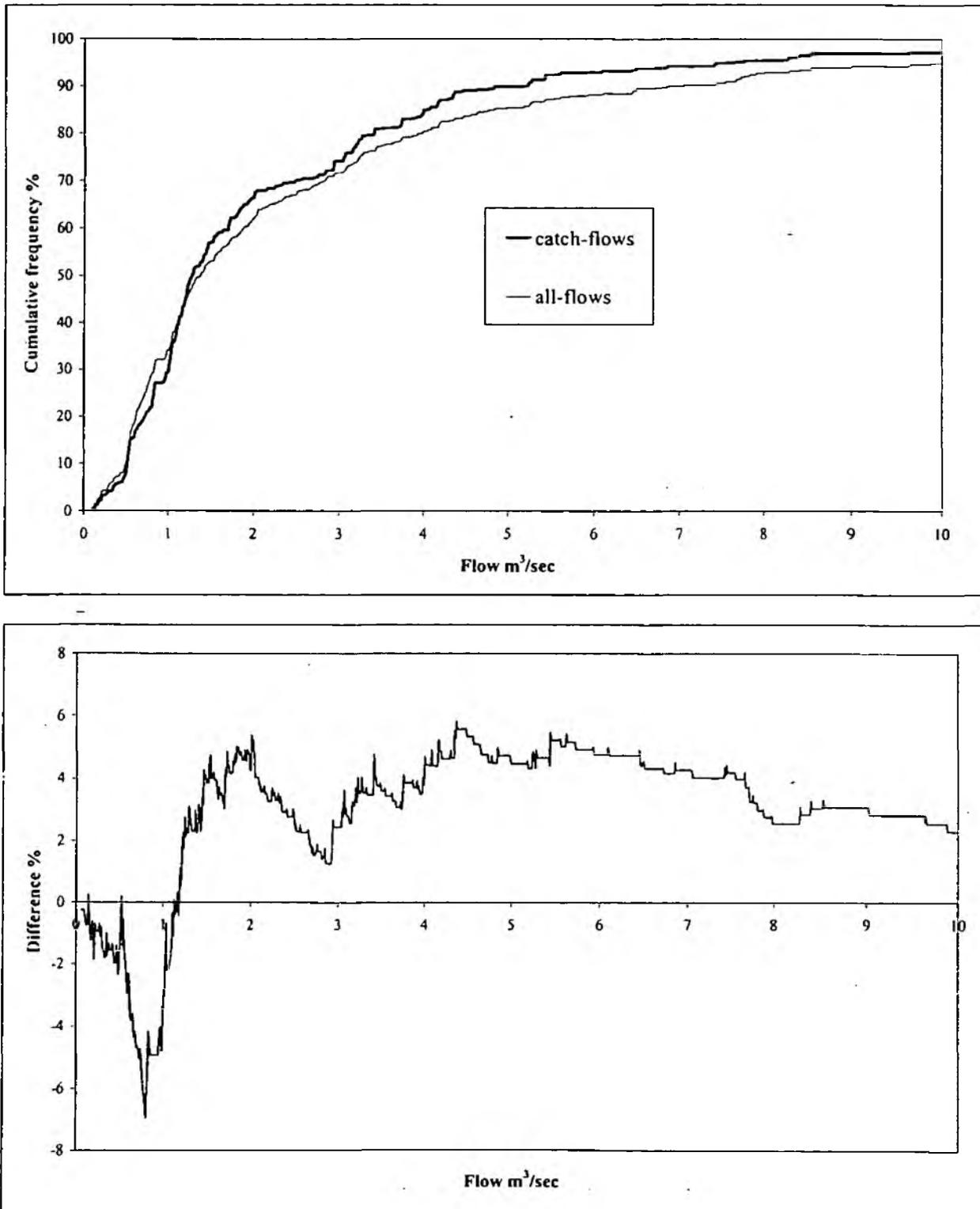


Above. Cumulative frequency of daily mean flows (all-flows) and of daily mean flows associated with each net capture of a salmon (catch-flows).

Below. Difference in cumulative frequency of all-flows and catch-flows.



Figure 5. Residual flows prevailing when salmon were caught by the Tavy nets, August 1977-96.



Above. Cumulative frequency of daily mean flows (all-flows) and of daily mean flows associated with each net capture of a salmon (catch-flows).  
Below. Difference in cumulative frequency of all-flows and catch-flows.



As the abstraction at Lopwell has a prescribed flow of 73 Ml/d (0.84 m<sup>3</sup>/sec) it does not affect very low flows and thus does not push the residual flow significantly into the "below average catch" zone. It does however increase somewhat the number of days when the residual flow is in the "above average catch" zone in both July and August.

## 2.5 Ownership of fishing rights in the estuary

Generally, fishing rights in tidal waters, including those for salmon, are vested in the Crown. All citizens of the Crown have a public right to fish there. However, before Magna Carta (1225) the Crown could grant an exclusive private right to fishing in specified tidal waters to an individual or individuals, and the public right of fishing ceased. Magna Carta removed this system, but grants made during or pre-dating the reign of King Henry II (died 1189) remained valid and are conveyable property. Such several fisheries may include rights to all fish and shellfish species, or be specific to one or more species such as salmon or oysters. In order to claim a private exclusive right to fish in tidal waters it is necessary to demonstrate that such rights exist by express grant or charter pre-Magna Carta, or that such a right is deemed to exist by prescription. It is also necessary to show evidence of possession and enjoyment of this right. The ideal situation is to be able to demonstrate the existence of an express grant or charter, followed by continuity of title between the original beneficiaries of the grant or charter and the present owner. This ideal is not usually attainable for as Moore and Moore (1903) stated:-

"No record appears to exist to show us in what manner the King exercised his prerogative to exclude the right of public fishing in tidal waters..... as nearly all the record of the realm before the reign of John have been lost, no trace can be found of any such mandate."

However, Gregory (1974) states:-

"Evidence of exercise of the fishing rights in modern times coupled with ancient documents, will be sufficient if there is nothing to indicate the original grant was post Magna-Carta. Proof of use for one hundred and ten years was sufficient in *Duke of Northumberland v. Houghton* without ancient documents, and in other cases fifty years, and even twenty years sufficed"

It has been suggested that the estates bordering the Tavy estuary own some fishing rights in the tidal Tavy, including that of fishing for sea fish by rod and line in the vicinity of Lopwell Dam. This would suggest a wider private right which would include the netting right. Mr Craig Mooney states that the deeds of the Buckland Abbey Estate refer to ownership of the river bed down to the seaward end of Lopwell Quay. This would imply also a private right of fishing.

The Reports of the Salmon Fishery Commission in Victorian times can often provide useful information regarding private fishing rights in tidal water. In the "Minutes of evidence taken before the Commissioners Appointed to Inquire into Salmon Fisheries (England and Wales)" in 1860, a Mr J Benson, Steward to the Duke of Bedford was questioned:



“15391. Are you aware whether it was formerly fished by boats and seines to a considerable extent? I have heard that it was. I believe originally there were two fisheries, one upon the Tavy and the other upon the Tamar; that they both belonged to the Earl of Devon, who granted one to the Abbey of Tavistock and partly to the Abbey of Buckland, so far as the fishery was upon the Tavy.

15410. (Chairman.) Can you give the Commissioners any information with regard to the Tavy? There used to be a fishery on the Tavy at a weir, which has been washed down during the floods of this present year.

15411. Whereabouts is the weir from the tide-way? – A little above the tideway at Buckland Abbey.

15412. Is there any net fishing in the estuary of the Tavy? I have fished with nets below that weir in the tideway and in the river too.”

From these extracts it would appear that the private fishery referred to on the Tavy was at a weir above the tidal limit.

In the Minute of Evidence of the Report of the Commissioners of Salmon Fisheries (1900) a Mr Matthews, Clerk to the Tamar and Plym Fishery Board, was questioned regarding the limits of private waters in the Tamar estuary.

1947. “In the Tamar the private fishery extends as far down at a post opposite Cotehele, that is about a mile and a-half below Calstock. In the Tavy I think we have no private fishery beyond Buckland Abbey, which really hardly touches the tidal water. I think the private fishery in the Tavy extends about as far down as the tide usually reaches.”

This would appear to confirm that the private fishing rights on the Tavy were, at that time, considered not to extend to any extent into tidal waters in contrast to the situation on the Tamar. However, this is clearly at odds with the perception of private ownership of the bed of the tidal bed discussed above; resolution of this is clearly required.

In the absence of any confirmation of a private right of fishing, a public right exists. In the case of the net fishery this is regulated by the existing Net Limitation Order and various bye laws. In the case of rod fishing the public right exists to fish from boats or from the foreshore below the high tide mark. The right of fishing from above the HW mark generally belongs to the landowner. The situation regarding fishing from the tidal ford and other structures associated with the dam is uncertain.

The extent of any private ownership of fishing rights in the tidal Tavy is fundamental to proper management of the situation. It is understood that this is being researched by the estates involved and that appropriate legal opinion will be sought.



### 3. Is restriction of catch justified?

In Section 2 it was concluded that the proportion of the runs of salmon and sea trout taken by the nets (at least during the netting season) is likely to have increased since the construction of Lopwell Dam for the following reasons

- the behaviour of migratory fish in the estuary has changed with the truncation of the tidal area, so that they spend longer periods within the netting zone.
- the reduction in tidal flow at the upper netting stations now allows longer periods of netting
- modern net materials and lightweight boats allow longer fishing periods and greater flexibility of operation
- the shift in dominance of the run from spring to summer means that salmon are likely to spend longer periods in tidal water
- the abstraction regime at Lopwell increases the proportion of the time when fish are restricted in their passage out of the estuary into the river.

An examination of the monthly distribution of rod and net catches of salmon in recent years (Fig 6) strongly suggests that the level of net catch between June and August has a significant negative impact upon rod catch during those months, and thus by inference upon the numbers of fish entering the river. The fall in catches by both rods and nets is suggestive of a decline in the stock of both small fish (the mainstay of the rod catch) and large fish (the nets do not catch sea trout of less than about 1 kg). Although the rod catch is numerically higher than the net catch, the latter predominantly comprises the larger female fish. As sea trout may spawn each year for several years, the effects of exploitation are cumulative on the larger fish. There is thus evidence of a decline in recruitment since the construction of Lopwell Dam and it is likely to have been due to the level of exploitation in the net fishery.

why?

? sea trout

However, examination of the results of juvenile surveys of 1+ salmon throughout the catchment over the past 30 years (Fig 7) does not indicate any downward trend, though of course all this data set applied to the post-Lopwell-Dam period; we have no information on juvenile stock levels before this date. Generally, the overall levels recorded in recent years are indicative of a healthy stock. It is not possible to examine the situation regarding juvenile sea trout as, until they become smolts, they are indistinguishable from the non-migratory brown trout.

The main concerns regarding the high exploitation rate by nets during the summer are therefore:

- it is having a major influence on rod catches of salmon during June - August and to some extent later too;
- it appears to be limiting the level of recruitment of the sea trout stock;
- it is likely to be having a selective pressure favouring later running and is thus likely to be influencing the genetic balance of the salmon stock



*not average*

Figure 6. Total monthly salmon catches by rods and nets on the Tavy, 1991-95.

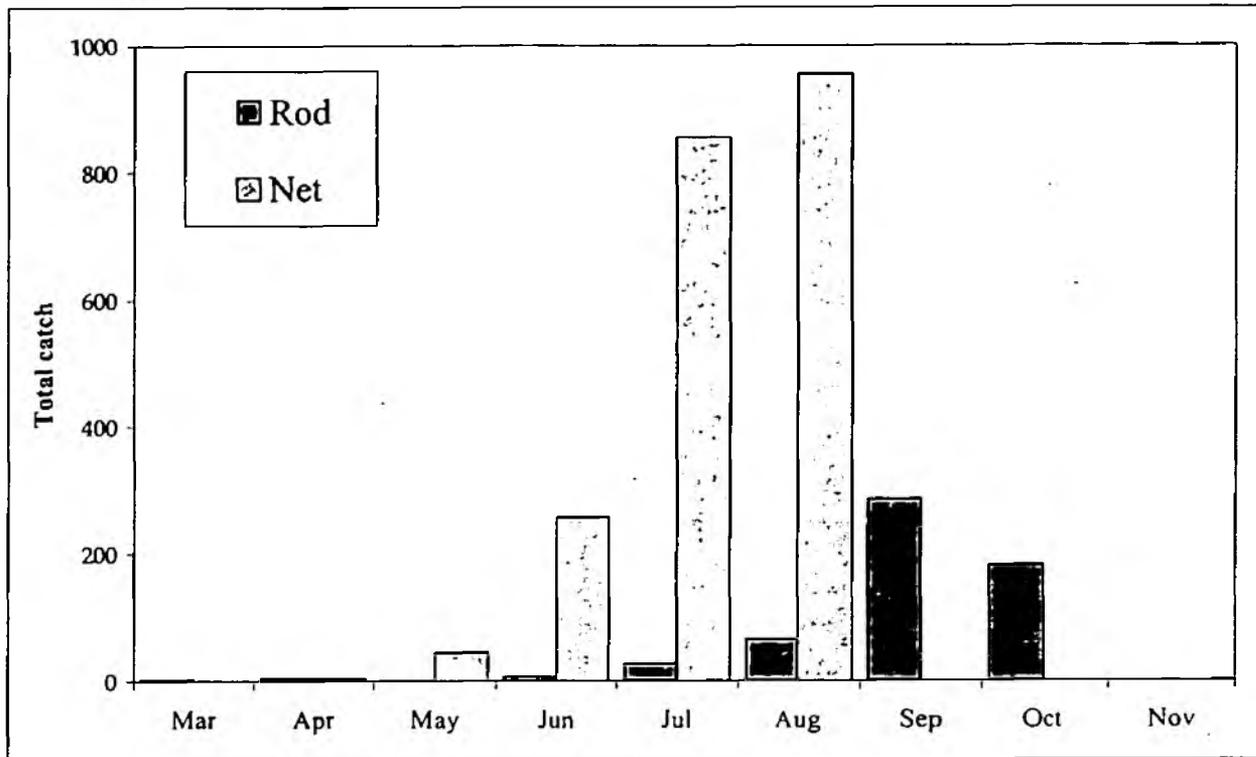
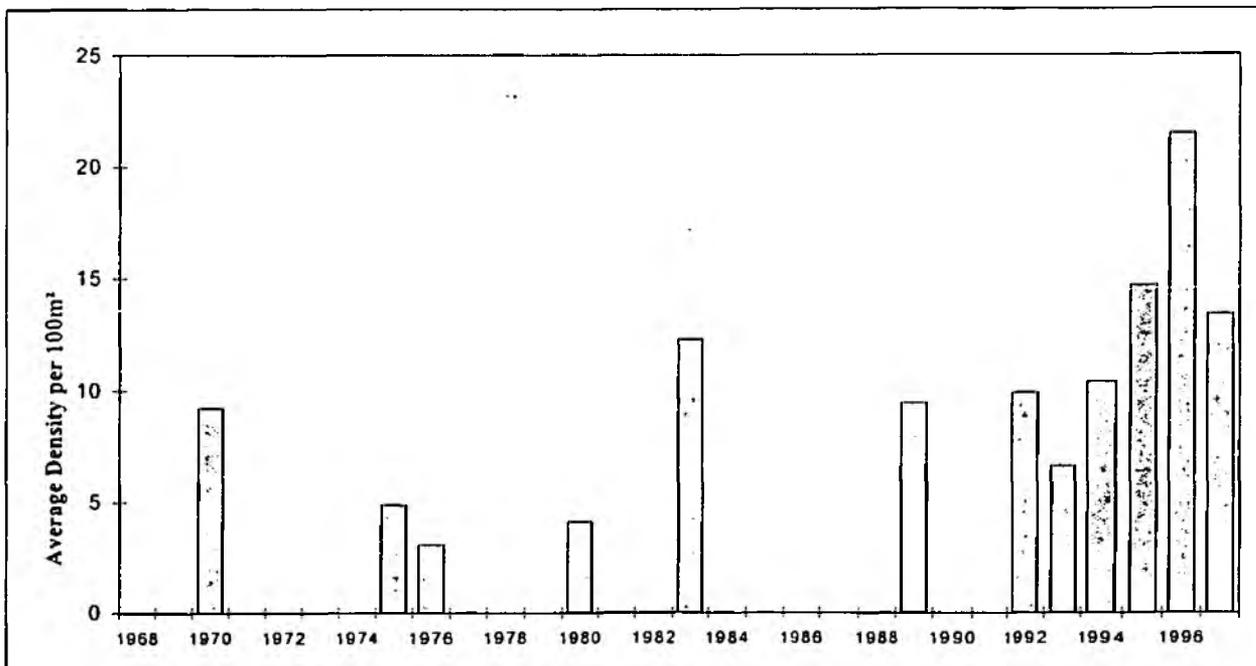


Figure 7. Mean density of 1+ salmon juveniles recorded in electric fishing surveys of the Tavy catchment.





The first concern, while a valid fishery management issue, may not be sufficient justification for action by NLO or byelaw. The last two, it is suggested, certainly justify such action.

~~It is well established that run-timing of salmon is to a large extent under genetic control and the differences between the timing of runs of grilse on the Tavy and the Fowey, for example, are likely to be entirely genetically based. Any excessive, maintained exploitation of a particular fraction of the run (the first half of the grilse run in this case) will almost inevitably have an impact on the balance of run timing in the future. For whatever reasons it would appear that natural conditions in the Tavy favour a grilse run during July-September. Heavy selective exploitation of the earlier part of the run is likely to lead to later running which would appear to be less appropriate for conditions in the Tavy as a whole.~~  
*steer phoss? - voluntary?*

In the 1960 annual report of the Avon and Dorset River Board, the Fisheries Officer John Brayshaw noted a trend towards excessive exploitation of spring salmon on the Hampshire Avon, which he suggested was beyond the "catchable surplus" of this fraction of the run. He wrote:

"..... it must be remarked that the time to adopt conservancy measures is when the danger signals are apparent and not when the damage is done".

This prophetic vision has particular poignancy for those who are involved in or affected by the subsequent inexorable decline of the Avon Spring run. It is suggested that the situation on the Tavy should be sending out danger signals of equal urgency to those sensed by John Brayshaw.

It is therefore recommended that steps are taken to reduce substantially and permanently the level of exploitation by the nets on the Tavy.

As it is believed that a high proportion of the salmon caught by rod at Lopwell are foul-hooked and thus taken illegally, it is clearly desirable that this fishery is curtailed. Approaches are discussed in Section 4.8.

#### **4. Options for restriction of catch**

##### **4.1 The basic options.**

There would appear to be six fundamental approaches to reducing the catch of salmon by the nets on the Tavy. These are:

- reduce the number of nets allowed to fish
- reduce the time when they can fish
- reduce the area where they can fish
- restrict the gear used in some way
- restriction by catch quota
- close the fishery



These are now considered in turn

#### **4.2 Reduction in the number of nets fishing**

While this could doubtless be effective, the reduction may have to be disproportionately large to have any particular level of effect. When fish are abundant, the approach used by the fishermen is that a net is shot as soon as the preceding one is closed. All five licensees may be fishing at one site waiting their turn to shoot, but virtually the same catch could be taken by just two nets. Further, any fish spared by a reduction in effort are likely to contribute to larger catches on subsequent tides. To have a significant effect it is suggested that the number of licences to fish with nets on the Tavy would have to be reduced from five to one or zero.

#### **4.3 Reduce the time when the nets can fish.**

Reduction in the season, particularly an earlier closure, is an effective management tool and there are currently two initiatives in this area. This is discussed below in Section 5.

Increase in the weekly close time or daily close time is likely to be less effective, as fish are likely to spend several days at least in the estuary and fish spared would be vulnerable to recapture when fishing recommenced. In recent years there has been a buy-out of night fishing but this does not appear to have led to a significant reduction in overall catch.

#### **4.4 Restriction in area where the nets can fish**

Replacement of the "sanctuary area" lost when the dam was constructed is an attractive concept, but is unlikely to be realistic. As discussed in Section 2 the present upper tidal area, immediately seawards of the dam, does not have deep holding pools and it is unlikely that fish remain in this area for significant periods. Indeed it is likely that they oscillate throughout the length of the Tavy estuary as far as the railway bridge and beyond, which covers the whole of the existing permitted area for netting.

Restricting netting to the lower part of the present area could be effective however if fishing there would be, as is believed, less effective than further upstream. The larger tidal flow and the fact that the channel is not conveniently close to the shoreline are likely to mean that effective fishing is limited to a smaller part of the tidal cycle. However, this option would be difficult to evaluate as it is not possible to estimate reliably how effective it would be; it could reduce catches by only a little, or it could render the fishery non-viable. Promotion of this option would almost certainly cause objections and trigger a Public Inquiry.

#### **4.5 Restriction on gear to be used.**

Although this is a theoretical possibility, no practical options are immediately apparent.

#### **4.6 Restriction by quota**

This could be effective but has severe limitations, including a failure to protect stocks in poor years (a high exploitation rate on a small run still might not reach the quota) and incomplete



reporting of catches would be encouraged. This option would be almost impossible to police and is not recommended.

#### **4.7 Closure of the fishery**

A full closure of the fishery would of course be effective at reducing exploitation. Although not likely to be feasible in the short term it could be a long-term aim; many fishery managers consider a commercial net fishery on such a small river system to be an anachronism, and a mis-use of a small, fragile but valuable resource. An NLO of zero with reduction in numbers of nets by "natural wastage" (i.e. retirement or financial inducement) would eventually result in the closure of the fishery and should be acceptable to most of the fishermen. However, it is understood that MAFF considers NLO's of zero unacceptable.

#### **4.8 Restricting the rod fishery at Lopwell**

If the fishing rights are deemed to be private, either by a pre Magna Carta grant or because fishing is undertaken from private property, the owner can restrict fishing and should be requested to do so. Alternatively a bye-law to prevent fishing within a certain distance of the weir and fish pass could be sought, though the marine fish issue may present a difficulty.

### **5. Current restrictions on the net fishery**

The situation is complicated by several separate initiatives all aimed at reducing exploitation by the nets.

In April 1997, South West Water plc reached a ten-year agreement with the Tavy netsmen not to fish before June 8 each year as a mitigation move for the impact of the Roadford conjunction use water resource scheme. However, from 1999 new byelaws to protect spring runs of salmon were introduced which prohibited netting before June 1. The SWW mitigation package was therefore switched to "buy back" the last three weeks of the netting season, between August 8 and August 31. Thus the effective season has been reduced to June 1 to August 7, compared to March 2 to August 31 a few years ago.

In addition, angling interests on the Tavy reached financial agreement with the netsmen not fish at all during the periods June 8 to August 31 1998, and July 1 to August 7 1999.

Finally, the Agency and its predecessors have bought-back netting rights as a conservation measure at times in the past, including much of 1989 and August 2-31 1997.

Thus these initiatives combined to limit netting to March 2 - April 20 and June 8 - August 1 in 1997, close the fishery during 1998, and again limit it to June 1-30 in 1999. However, these initiatives have specific aims and are all more or less temporary in nature. A longer-term restriction is justified on conservation grounds.



## **6. Recommendations**

### **6.1 Net fishery**

Based upon the discussion in Section 4 the suggested option is seeking an NLO of one net. This has several beneficial aspects:

- It is an appropriate long-term strategy in conservation terms.
- As a long-term measure it complements well the short to medium-term effectiveness of the SWW buy-back, the anglers buy-back, and the natural spring salmon byelaws.
- It does not compulsorily restrict the activities of any of the existing licensees, and it is believed that they would not object to such a move.
- It is amenable to year-by-year or permanent buy-back arrangements by angling interests.
- It is believed that angling interests, who have long been demanding action to restrict netting, would support such a move.

### **6.2 Rod fishery**

It is recommended that a restriction on rod fishing close to dam is sought. If the review of ownership of rights indicates that private rights exist then the owners of those rights can close or control the fishery. If it is concluded that no such private rights exist then a byelaw preventing fishing within 100 m upstream or downstream of the dam crest should be sought.