

LOUGH NEAGH SCALE FISHERY - TROUT DECEMBER 1990

Comments by the Ulster Angling Federation on FCBNI proposals for the regulation of the fishery, and counter proposals by The Lough Neagh Fishermans Co-operative Society Ltd.

Summary

Extensive scientific data identifies Lough Neagh trout as typical of lake trout populations. Detailed research demonstrates that the commercial trout fishery is cropping very large numbers of immature females before they have the opportunity to spawn. Department of Agriculture research identifies over fishing as the most likely cause of the disappearance of large trout. The angling input is shown to be economically very much more important than the lesser interest represented by the commercial game fishery. Proposals are made, based on sound scientific data, for the introduction of regulations to protect and conserve the game fishing resource, mainly by increased net mesh size and an increase in minimum takeable fish size from 300 mm to 400 mm. The contribution to protection and development by anglers is identified, and the lack of any such input by commercial fishermen highlighted. The close parallel with sea fish regulation is examined.

