

# **Economic impact from Angling on the Tweed river system**

SQW Limited

Final report - Executive Summary



# Executive Summary

---

1. This study was undertaken for the River Tweed Commission (RTC) which has statutory responsibilities for the general preservation and increase of salmon, sea trout, trout and other freshwater fish in the Tweed District, and in particular with the regulation of fisheries, the removal of nuisances and obstructions and the prevention of illegal fishing. The quality of salmon and sea trout fishing has shown considerable improvement over recent years thanks to the cessation of netting and a range of environmental and habitat programmes within the catchment area. The economic impact from these improvements has been two-fold. First, a general increase in the rents paid for the fishing. Second, an increase in the number of weeks within the season when fishing offers reasonable prospects. Until recently the summer months attracted little interest. With improved numbers of fish and an effective on-line booking system, increasing summer lets are being achieved. It also seems likely that a generally more prosperous clientele is being attracted, at least in the prime months, as the Tweed's international standing has increased.
2. The report estimates that the economic impact, the output generated in the Scottish Borders and that can be attributed to fishing on the Tweed system is just under £18 million and that this supports around 487 full time jobs.

## Research

3. The results are based on data collected from two surveys which covered:
  - **owners of the beats** – the owners of all the beats were asked for information. On the main river responses for 76% of the beats were returned, which represents 86% of the value. This provided a very detailed assessment of the number of rod days that were let for each part of the river and during each season. There were fewer responses from beat owners on the tributaries and estimates have been developed from an analysis of their characteristics and our programme of consultations
  - **anglers** – there were 372 responses to this survey, of which 229 contained complete expenditure data. This allowed a detailed profiling of expenditure made according to the origin of visitors, the season and the part of the river they fished. It allowed a robust assessment of: the number and expenditure of non-fishing companions; the prevalence of anglers sharing of rods; and where they would be likely to go instead if Tweed fishing were to become inaccessible.

## Economic impact

4. In total, 35,876 rod days fishing are let on the main stem of the Tweed and the tributaries. To estimate the number of visitor days this represents, information from the angler survey was used to adjust for additional non-fishing days spent by anglers, shared rods and days that were not let but were made available for charity and for guests.

- Applying these factors gives a total number of days associated with fishing of 53,045. Non-fishing companions made up 25% of the parties visiting, which further increases the number of days to 65,409.

## Expenditure

- The average expenditure by anglers coming from outside Scotland, excluding fishing rent, was £189 per day. This reflects the very high expenditures of these visitors, considerably more than average tourists. Non-fishing companions spent a further £120 a day each. In total, the report estimates visitor expenditure of £8.8 million.
- Fishing rents accounted for a further £4.4 million and expenditure on other, non-salmon, fishing an additional £0.7 million. These expenditures total £13.9 million, a proportion of which would be made in the region anyway and is not attributable to the Tweed fishing (displacement). Three percent of anglers would have been in the Scottish Borders if there was no fishing and half would have gone elsewhere in Scotland. We argue that displacement at the level of Scotland as a whole would be more limited given the overall supply constraints on salmon fishing.

## Economic impact

- The results are also adjusted to take into account the multiplier, or knock-on effects of this expenditure. This has been done using standard tourism values for the tourist-related expenditure and a more detailed assessment of the pattern of expenditure associated with fishing rents.
- The results are shown in the form of the total output (the value of goods and services sold in the region), the gross value added (the amount of profits and wages that are generated) and the number of full time equivalent jobs that are supported by the economic activity attributable to fishing on the Tweed system. Table 1 presents these results at both a Scottish Borders and Scotland level.

**Table 1: Summary economic impact results**

	<b>Borders</b>	<b>Scotland</b>
Output	£17.9m	£18.2m <sup>1</sup>
GVA	£7.0m	£7.1m <sup>2</sup>
Employment	487	496 <sup>3</sup>

*Source: SQW estimate*

## Other economic benefits

- In addition to these economic benefits, fishing on the Tweed also contributes more widely to attracting people and businesses to the region. The report describes how important Tweed

<sup>1</sup> Uses STMS multipliers to calculate Scottish level output

<sup>2</sup> Uses 2004 Annual Business Inquiry data for Scottish economy which indicates that GVA is on average 39% of total turnover

<sup>3</sup> Assumes the same turnover per job ratio, but includes employment generated by the additional output (£300,000 at a Scottish level).

fishing was in attracting Prostrakan, Scotland's largest bio-tech business which provides 77 high income jobs in Galashiels. Among the Scottish Borders residents responding to the survey, 55 (73%) reported that the high quality fishing was an important factor in their decision to live in the region.

11. The income from fishing represents a good base for hotels near the river in particular and for other businesses. The income, coming as it does in the shoulder seasons, allows hotels and bed and breakfast operators to generate a reasonable annual turnover throughout the year and we would suspect that without it fewer accommodation providers would be able to survive or be tempted to start up. This would have a much wider detrimental effect on the Scottish Borders' tourism market, reducing the range of accommodation options for visitors.
12. There are other benefits that are harder to quantify. Amongst anglers, the Tweed is a world class river with a strong international reputation. Salmon fishing in particular is popular with higher earners and senior professionals and the Tweed and its reputation contribute to raising the profile of the region among this group.
13. More tangibly, the combined efforts of fishery owners to improve the river environment and habitats has been made possible by the income potential from angling. Such environmental improvement has wide spillover benefits for other species and for the general amenity enjoyed by all who appreciate the countryside.
14. This study builds on work done previously to assess economic impact. A report by Deloitte & Touche in 1996 estimated an impact of £13.1 million. In 2004, the Scottish Borders was also part of a wider study carried out by Glasgow Caledonian University, which estimated regional output at around £8 million. This study differs in that it has been able to generate a very high response from the fishery owners and from anglers which, for the first time, has allowed the analysis to differentiate between seasons and parts of the river.