



JOINT STATEMENT ON THE GENERAL LICENCE REVIEW

The Angling Trust and the Avon Roach Project have campaigned jointly for more than seven years to have the cormorant placed on the 'General Licence' enabling the legal right to better protect our vulnerable inland fish populations.

We have pushed for a review of the current woefully inadequate, restrictive and inflexible licensing regime, and now, finally, we have the opportunity to achieve the changes we seek and to better protect our fisheries. **The Wild Birds General Licence Survey runs until December 5th and we need as many folks as possible to take part in by following the link and guidance below.**

- The cormorant is an apex predator, unmatched in nature and is unquestionably one of the biggest threats to the health of our inland fish populations, with there being hardly a country in the world that accepts it as an acceptable ecological coexistent without robust management.
- Cormorant numbers in the UK have increased from 2000 in the 1980's to a current over-wintering population of more than 62,000, and with each bird requiring at least one pound of fish every day, the level of conflict is immense.
- This burgeoning population, now over-wintering here in the UK, is mainly made up of the European sub-species *Phalacrocorax Carbo-sinensis*, which prefer living and hunting inland in the fresh water of our rivers, streams and lakes.
- 86% of all rivers here in the UK are failing good ecological status according to the Water Framework Directive, which is partly assessed on general fish assemblage.
- The cormorant is widely recognised, even by the Government's own Moran Committee as causing an unsustainably high level of ecological conflict.

We are the current custodians and have a duty to leave our environment and our fisheries in as good, if not better ecological state than when we inherited them, and so strongly urge everyone to do their bit.

We have produced a concise set of guidance notes for completing the online survey in the Angling Trust guidance note – [download here](#)

Comprehensive overviews of the impact of cormorants on our fisheries have been produced in two reports from the Angling Trust and the Avon Roach Project and we strongly urge you to take the time to read them:

The Angling Trust 'Impact of Cormorants on Fish Populations of Economic Importance and Conservation Significance' – [download here](#)

The Avon Roach Project evidence-based Challenge to NE / Defra Review of Fish-Eating Birds Policy, including history, facts and a short film - [read here](#)

Wild Birds General Licence Survey – [find it here](#)

Please make sure that all anglers and angling clubs take part. This may be our only chance