

Write a short report on freshwater angling in your region. Include, amongst others, the following aspects in your report: • important fish species (indigenous and exotic); • preferred habitat of these species and where they occur in your region; • angling methods; • possible threats to these species; • the role of individuals and clubs in conservation; • the role of legislation and authorities in conservation.

Fresh water angling is a very lucrative business in the Cape South Coast, most specifically in the Groenvlei area near wilderness. Many angling competitions are held there every year for large amounts of prize money. Along with the professional anglers, the recreational freshwater angling is also very popular and a large number of people go fishing either to have an enjoyable pastime, to have an adventure, for stress release, pleasure in capturing food, enjoy the sport, enjoying nature and fellowship and finally for competition. Most anglers preferred to catch indigenous species such as yellowfish and tilapia with bass being one of the more popular introduced species.

The industry of freshwater fishing is of great importance as fishing is not limited only to the act of fishing. In many cases there are many support businesses to fishing such as transportation, fuel, lodging, food, fishing supplies etc.

There are many fishes that are considered endemic fresh water angling species in the south cape coast area and they include:

1. yellowfish species (Barbus) - there are 5 more common species of which two (largemouth and smallmouth) are of a riverine origin and grow larger than those that are found in a lentic system. Weights range between 4-5 kg for the small mouth and up to 21 kg for the largemouth. They are a popular angling species that can be caught with bait or artificial lures like spinners. Larger species will also take crabs or fish on the hook. They give a powerful fight until exhausted.
2. Labeo species - occur in rivers. There are four species ranging in size from 900g to 3.4 kg. They are typically found near the bottom which makes them difficult to catch but are sometimes caught by using dough or earthworms. They are not popular due to their flesh having numerous bones.
3. Telapia species – there are two species of tilapia that grow to between 2-3.2kg. They are indigenous to south east Africa generally occur in rivers and dams. They are caught using worms or insects and are a popular angling fish due to their excellent flesh.

The Groenvlei area has had many alien fish introduced to the area and these species have created a very lucrative angling industry in the area and this area also hosts many angling competitions. These species include:

1. Trout family (Salonidae) – including the rainbow and brown trout. They range in size from 5.5 to 7kg respectively. They prefer colder inland waters. They are caught on artificial lures and worms.
2. Bass family (Micropterus) – the largemouth and smallmouth bass have been widely introduced in the cool water area of the Cape. They can reach sizes of 3.5 and 2 kg respectively. Both bass take artificial lures but may not be caught with natural bait. They are popular fish to catch and have good fighting abilities.

Some studies have indicated that most anglers do not belong to a club. Mainly because they are not interested in competitions, never thought of joining a club or find no purpose to joining a club. There are many angling unions and clubs throughout South Africa and they all fall under the South African Angling Union. In fresh water angling falls under three different associations, each with their own method of angling and they are listed below. These clubs include a commitment to conservation as part of their constitution. Some of the other policies include liaison between the angling community and the official bodies responsible for freshwater fisheries.

1. South African fresh water angling association only catches fish from shore and both natural and artificial bate may be used
2. South African light tackle boat angling association only catches fish from boats and no artificial bate is allowed.
3. South African artificial lure angling association where the fishermen fish from both shore and a boat but only artificial lures are allowed.

The role that the various authorities should play in the development of shore fishing includes:

1. Maintaining and improving the habitat for the benefit of all fish populations
2. Take measures to enhance fish production and apply stocking programs.
3. To promote research, management and law enforcement.
4. To invent information programs to describe angling opportunities and encourage use of abundant species.
5. Provide easy access and improve infrastructure to fishing waters

There are many threats to the survival of indigenous species including habitat destruction, over-exploitation, impact of introduced or exotic plants and fish species, loss or contamination of food supply, killing to protect crops or prey, and the incidental capture or destruction of animals. Many indigenous fishes are used as indicator species because they are sensitive to environmental degradation. It is generally recommended that in order to conserve a species the entire environment must be protected. Conservation of riverine species includes sound land management throughout the catchment area. In order to increase the population of indigenous species, captive breeding programs will be required to restock natural populations.

Conservation in these areas is required in order to understand the impact of alien species, various agriculture and urban activities. Knowing the reproductive biology, life history and habitat requirements of the endangered species and regular monitoring of the status of species their populations and habitat and distribution will be required on a continuous basis.