

# Recording the catches of fishing tourists



Photo: Ø. Paulsen

*Figures from the Institute of Marine Research show that fishing tourists using the organised tourism industry catch an estimated 3,300 tonnes each year. The estimate is based on advanced statistical methods, practical field work and self-reporting by fishing tourists at a number of fishing tourism companies.*

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The collective term marine recreational fisheries covers two main groups:

- Fishing tourists – recreational fishers staying somewhere other than at their own homes or holiday accommodation. This group can in turn be split into two sectors:
  - The organised sector (which has now been surveyed)
  - The informal sector, which covers privately rented accommodation, tents, camper vans, etc. (not surveyed)
- Recreational fishers – Norwegian citizens or residents staying at home or in their own holiday accommodation (not surveyed)

The catch figures for fishing tourism are dynamic, and vary from year to year. Both biological conditions, such as the populations of the various species, and economic conditions influence the number of tourists who come and the range of services offered. For

instance, the credit crisis struck during the project, which may have affected the number of companies in the fishing tourism sector.

## WHERE AND HOW MUCH?

In addition to calculating the total catch of the fishing tourists using the organised sector, we also have figures for the quantities of individual species landed by fishing tourists in the north and south of Norway. The most common species in the north was cod, whereas in the south it was saithe. Almost ten times as much fish is caught in northern Norway as in the rest of the country, with the total catch figure for the region being 2,958 tonnes.

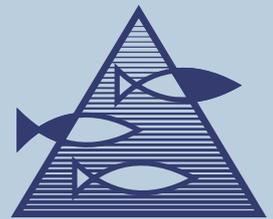
In parallel with The Institute of Marine Research's project, Norut (Northern Research Unit) looked at

## Fangstdata fra de marine fritidsfiskerier er med på å sikre:

- at bestandene ikke blir overfisket
- at vekstpotensialet per individ blir utnyttet
- at nok fisk overlever frem til gytemoden alder
- at turister kan fiske stor fisk – troféfisk



Photo: Lars Torbjørn Larsen



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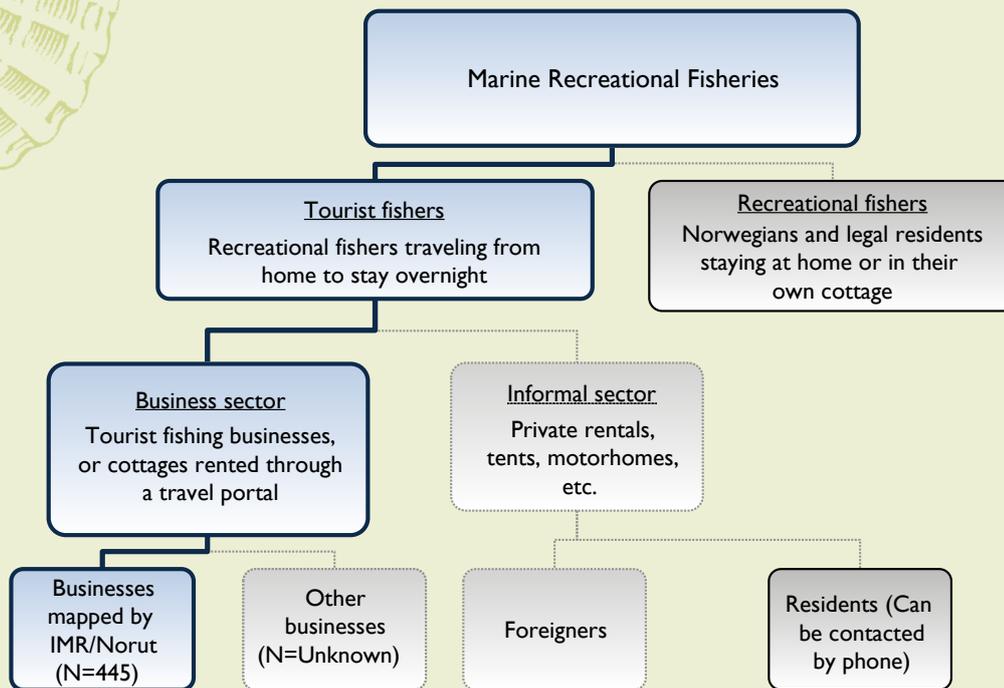


Diagram of the marine recreational fishery sectors in Norway. Fishers that rent accommodation at tourist fishing businesses in our database make is the focus of this study and the list of these 445 businesses formed the sampling frame.

how much value is added by fishing tourism, and amongst other things it found that fishing tourists (in the organised sector) spend NOK 430 million on accommodation and boat hire each year. Norut is now working on calculating the ripple effects of other spending by fishing tourists.

**METHODOLOGY**

Researchers at The Institute of Marine Research and Norut first had to map the organised sector themselves, as there was no up-to-date information on the industry.

Eventually they compiled a list of 445 enterprises (companies offering fishermen’s cottages, cabins, etc.). They then initiated a collaboration with a representative sample of these enterprises, which then reported catch figures to IMR every six weeks throughout 2009. The fishing tourists themselves completed catch forms, which were checked by the owner of the tourism company. Ahead of the project, a lot of time was spent visiting the companies in order to ensure good reporting procedures, and there was also support given during the project.

**THE OTHER MARINE RECREATIONAL FISHERIES**

There are reasonably good estimates available of the sizes of the most important fish populations in the sea. These are based on catch statistics from fishers and research expeditions, and they make it possible to manage the fisheries sustainably. However, there are no total catch figures for many of the populations along the coast. Commercial coastal fishermen must report their catches, but the total catch of the marine recreational fisheries is not known. As shown by the graph, the 3,300 tonnes caught by the fishing tourists using the organised sector only make up one part of the marine recreational fisheries.

The experiences of countries such as the US, Australia and New Zealand, which have done a lot of research into recreational fisheries, are that it is particularly difficult to survey the sector. In Norway, the existence of a long, relatively densely populated coastline with virtually unregulated recreational fishing makes it particularly challenging. A pilot project run by The Institute of Marine Research is now developing a methodology that will eventually help us to estimate catch figures for recreational fishing. IMR has also recently held an international workshop on recreational fishing. It would be desirable to do a survey of Norwegian recreational fishing, but there is currently no funding for any such project.

Foto: Harald Ness

