

# FACT SHEET

TO BE HANDED OUT WITH THE “TOURIST FISHING LICENSE” AS PER

**LFISCHG-DVO SECTION 5(1)**

(Version: September 2021)



**THE BALTIC SEA NEAR DÄNISCH-NIENHOF (DISTRICT OF RENDSBURG-ECKERNFÖRDE) –  
A DREAM SPOT FOR CATCHING SEA TROUT IN SCHLESWIG-HOLSTEIN (FIG. 1)**

## ***Dear anglers,***

We are delighted that you plan to go fishing in our beautiful region and wish you a good catch! A particularly warm welcome goes to those of you who are visitors to Schleswig-Holstein!

By obtaining a temporary tourist fishing license, you have overcome an important obstacle in the way of you pursuing your hobby in compliance with our fisheries legislation and animal welfare law. You need *no other permits* if you wish to go fishing in coastal waters (except for the Schlei, the Bay of Lübeck and the Untereider/Eider estuary, where independent fishing rights exist).

A permit from the owner or holder of the fishing rights (usually professional anglers or angling associations) is *additionally* required when fishing in inland waters and the coastal regions mentioned above.

This fact sheet aims to inform you about basic **aspects of fishing legislation** and, still more importantly, about **animal welfare** and the **protection of fish species**. It cannot replace the in-depth study of fish, other water dwellers, water as a habitat and different methods of angling. For more information about these, please refer to the generally available literature on the subject or simply watch your more experienced fellow anglers.

Please note that the “tourist fishing license” is an exception exempting holders from the obligation to hold a fishing license that normally applies. The lawmaking bodies permitted this exception in order to facilitate short-term access for tourists in particular, who may also be fishing for the first time.

**The tourist fishing license cannot and is not intended to replace the regular fishing license!**

In Schleswig-Holstein as in all other German federal states, there are plenty of opportunities to acquire the necessary knowledge in specialized courses and then to obtain a fishing license. These are offered for example by the angling associations (in some federal states also by the fisheries administration). Use these opportunities if you intend to go angling regularly in future! In Schleswig-Holstein, fishing licenses are now also available for persons whose primary residence is located abroad.

### Note:

No fishing license is required in Schleswig-Holstein when fishing from a commercial fishing cutter or at a commercial fishing lake **under the operator’s supervision** (discretionary provision, please ask the operator!); this means you do not need a tourist fishing license in these situations either. Only the fisheries tax has to be paid.

**Please read this short fact sheet carefully  
before you start fishing.**

**Thank you for your attention. We hope you will have a lot of fun and success  
fishing in Schleswig-Holstein!**

## Animal welfare considerations

### General

When you catch fish or use fish for bait, you are dealing with living creatures. Great importance is attached to animal welfare in Germany. Animal welfare has been anchored in Article 20a of the Federal Republic of Germany's Basic Law since 2002!

**Please note: Nobody is permitted to injure an animal or cause it pain or suffering for no good reason (section 1 Animal Welfare Act).**

This means that you should in general only go fishing if you plan to eat the fish you catch – i.e. if you intend to use them appropriately. Only then is there good reason for catching the fish as specified in the Animal Welfare Act!

Moreover, you should be aware that the fish you catch must be killed humanely. If you have never done this before, prepare yourself before you go fishing; ask an experienced angler to explain and show you how to stun and kill a fish, and do it under supervision the first few times until you are sure that you can perform the procedure humanely without help.

**Animals are our fellow creatures,  
we are responsible for them!**

### **Step 1: Landing the fish and removing it from the hook**

The fish caught must be taken out of the water quickly and carefully. A landing net must be used if the size and weight of the fish make this necessary. This means that a sufficiently large catching net is an indispensable part of the equipment used by any humane, responsible angler!

If the fish has to be returned to the water (minimum size, prohibition period) or is to be kept live, the hook must be removed carefully, ideally with a special hook removal device (e.g. an artery forceps). In doing so, the fish must always be touched with wet hands so that its protective slime coating is not damaged unnecessarily.

If the fish is to be killed right away, it must first be stunned (see following section "Stunning your catch"). Only afterwards should the hook be removed. The fish must then be killed immediately.

### **Step 2 (optional): Retaining live fish**

In Schleswig-Holstein, fish may only be retained in keep nets to keep them fresh for food purposes and when the properties of the keep net and the conditions in which it is used permit (see the appendix for more details). However, please remember that fish also suffer stress and can injure themselves when kept in live storage; this method should therefore only be used in exceptional cases. It is therefore better to use standard cool boxes or bags to keep your fish fresh after they have been humanely killed (see step 3 for more details).

If the retention of live fish is unavoidable, they must be stored in keep nets or suitable containers that provide them with oxygen-rich water and enough space to move.

Standard buckets are not usually suitable for this purpose. It is advisable to cover the containers so that the fish cannot jump out; they are also less prone to stress if kept in the dark. Fish that do not tolerate each other may not be kept together (e.g. pike and whiting).



**Fig. 2:** Example of a keep net used for the humane storage of live fish to keep them fresh for food purposes (length approx. 3.50 m, diameter approx. 0.50 m or more)

### **Step 3: Stunning your catch**

Before you kill the fish, you must stun it using a humane method. The aim is to render it unconscious.

**Fish are stunned by administering a quick, powerful blow to the head above the eyes using a heavy object (e.g. a mallet).**



**Fig. 3:** Stunning a living fish humanely (the example shows a cod)

This does not apply to eels and flatfish, which can and should be killed immediately (see below).

#### **Step 4: Killing your catch**

**The fish must be killed immediately after it is stunned, ideally by stabbing it through the heart or cutting through the gills.** If you intend to stab the fish, you must know exactly where the heart is located.



Fig. 4: Humane killing of a previously stunned fish (the example shows a cod)

**Eels** are killed without being stunned by cutting through the spine just below the head and immediately removing the internal organs (intestines); this means they are butchered practically immediately.



Fig. 5 and 6 Humane killing of an eel (I: cutting through the spine, II: removal of internal organs)

The so-called **eel killers** now commonly available from specialized retailers are mechanical pliers with a cutting spike.

Like killing an eel with a knife, as shown above, humane use of the eel killer requires precise knowledge of the eel's anatomy in order to ensure that the pliers are positioned in such a way that the animal's spine is severed with one blow.

If the eel killer is used in compliance with the regulation on the protection of animals at the time of killing [*“Tierschutzschlachtverordnung”*], i.e. positioned right behind the head to sever the spine with the heart and intestines being removed immediately

afterwards, this method is just as permissible as the knife method described above. However, this only applies if not more than 30 animals are caught and killed in this way on any given day (section 12(10) no. 2 “*Tierschutzschlachtverordnung*”).

Flatfish (e.g. flounder, dab, turbot) are killed by quickly cutting through the spine.



Fig. 7 and 8 Humane killing of a flatfish (the example shows a dab)

### **Using fish for bait**

In Schleswig-Holstein, it is forbidden to use live fish for bait.

If you wish to use fish as bait (due attention must be paid to minimum sizes if applicable!), these must be stunned and killing according to the instructions provided above. Preserved /frozen bait fish are also available from specialist retailers.

## Aspects of fisheries legislation

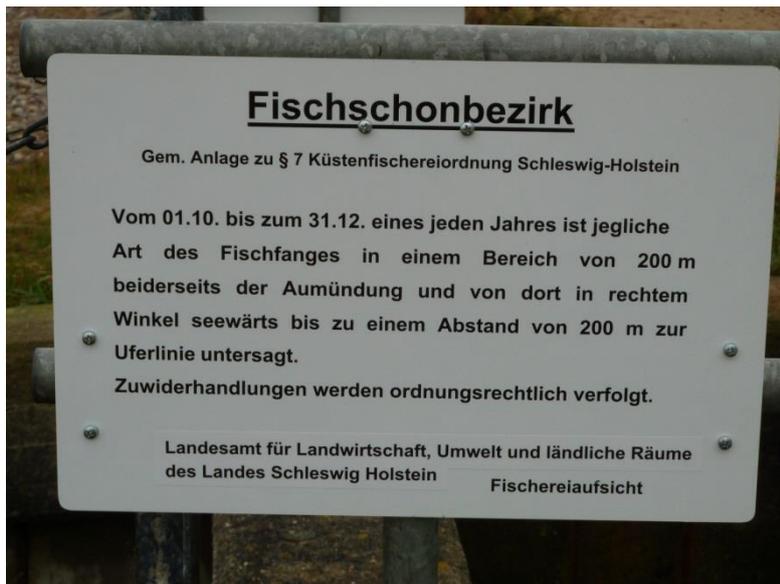
Fishing is regulated by the Fisheries Act for the State of Schleswig-Holstein (abbreviated to LFischG). All details are regulated in supplementary legislation – the Inland Fishing Regulation (BiFVO), the Coastal Fishing Regulation (KüFVO), the State Regulation on Eels (AalVO) and the regulation on implementing the Fisheries Act (LFischG-DVO).

You are **obliged** to obtain all the information relevant to you **before you start fishing**. This largely refers to prohibition periods and minimum fish sizes (please see the appendix to this Fact Sheet) along with permitted and forbidden fishing gear, fisheries supervision, the use of dead bait fish etc.

You can obtain detailed, comprehensive and up-to-date information about fisheries legislation at any time from the state government's website: [https://www.schleswig-holstein.de/DE/Fachinhalte/F/fischerei/Startseite\\_Box\\_Recht\\_Infos.html](https://www.schleswig-holstein.de/DE/Fachinhalte/F/fischerei/Startseite_Box_Recht_Infos.html) ("click on "Legal basics" (only in German language available). Here you will find all rules of law available for free download along with explanatory notes especially for anglers.

It can also happen that the owner of the respective fishing rights imposes additional regulations for their waters (e.g. restrictions on the number of fishing rods, night-fishing ban, more stringent minimum sizes or removal regulations for fish on special propagation grounds etc.). These are usually printed on the permits. You should always find out about regional regulations **before you start fishing!**

**Moreover, please note:** Catching fish with no intention to use them, i.e. with the intention of returning the fish after they have been caught, is banned in Schleswig-Holstein and will be punished as an administrative offence (cf. section 39 LFischG). Depending on the facts of the case, violations of animal welfare legislation can result in criminal prosecution.



**Fig. 9:** The fish protection areas specified in the Coastal Fishing Regulation are also marked by corresponding signs at the respective location.

## Protecting fish species

Please note that numerous fish species in Schleswig-Holstein are protected all year round. In order to comply with these regulations, you must first be able to identify the protected species reliably. If you wish to fish in waters that contain species protected all year round, you are obliged to obtain sufficient information before you start fishing. Ideally, you should go fishing with a fishing license holder and have them advise you accordingly.

The illustration below shows the species you may encounter in Schleswig-Holstein's inland waters and that are protected all year round. If you (unintentionally) catch one of these fish, you must immediately return it to the water as gently as possible!

### Fish species protected all year round in Schleswig-Holstein's inland waters:

Note: The following proportions are not to scale!



Fig. 10: River lampreys (all species of lamprey are protected all year round, i.e. also brook and sea lampreys)



Fig. 11: Mullet



Fig. 12: Atlantic sturgeon



Fig. 13: Bitterling



Fig. 14: Shad



Fig. 15: Minnows

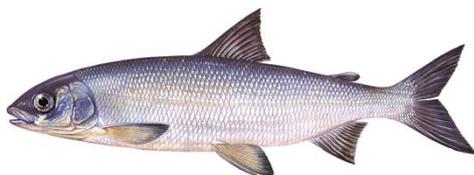


Fig. 16: North Sea vendace

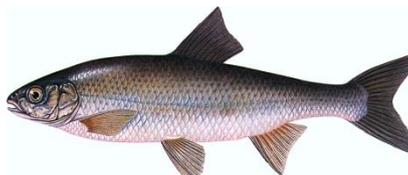


Fig. 17: Dace



Fig. 18: Sunbleak



Fig. 19: Brook loach



Fig. 20: Bleak



Fig. 21: Bullhead (the Alpine bullhead looks very similar and is also protected all year round)



Fig. 22: Vimba bream



Fig. 23: Weather loach

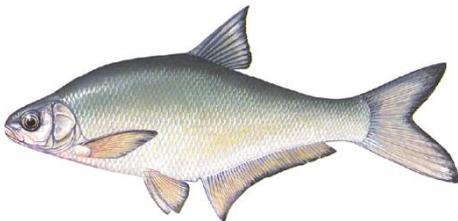


Fig. 24: Zope



Fig. 25: Catfish

The European crayfish (*Astacus astacus*; only in selected lakes; please check the Inland Fishing Regulation for details), the depressed river mussel (*Pseudanodonta complanata*), the thick-shelled river mussel (*Unio crassus*), the swan mussel (*Anodonta cygnea*), the swollen river mussel (*Unio tumidus*) and the painter's mussel (*Unio pictorum*) are also protected all year round in inland waters.

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Anglers in **coastal waters** are unlikely to come into contact with the rare species that are protected all year round. Nevertheless, please note that the following species are **protected all year round in coastal waters** (all these species are illustrated above):

- Sea lampreys
- River lampreys
- Vimba bream
- Sturgeon
- Shad
- North Sea vendace

## Make sense?

If you still have questions about fisheries legislation, you are welcome to contact the following organizations:

**External offices of the higher fisheries authority of the state of Schleswig-Holstein** (State Office for Agriculture, the Environment and Rural Spaces, Dept. 3: Fisheries; "LLUR"):

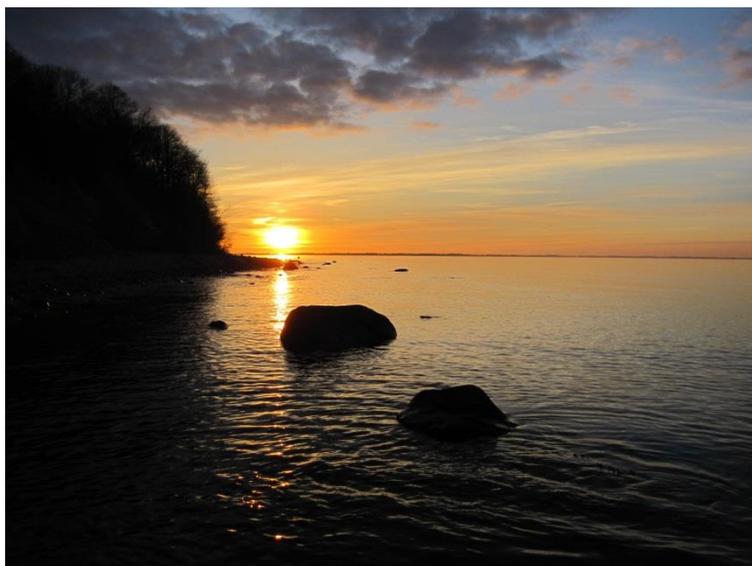
<b>Kiel</b>	Tel. 0431 / 720800
<b>Kappeln</b>	Tel. 04642 / 927960
<b>Travemünde</b>	Tel. 04502 / 787910
<b>Heiligenhafen</b>	Tel. 04362 / 514970
<b>Büsum</b>	Tel. 04834 / 755960
<b>Husum</b>	Tel. 04841 / 975870

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If you have questions relating to animal welfare, please contact the **Animal Welfare Department** at the Ministry of Energy, Agriculture, the Environment and Rural Spaces (phone 0431 988-0) or the competent district veterinary authority (addresses and telephone numbers are provided on the website of the respective district administration).

You should also use the opportunity to go fishing with experienced anglers or visit one of the many professional anglers on the coast or inland. They will give you a lot of useful information about fish, fishing and our waters.

## We wish you a good catch!



**Help preserve the beauty of our local countryside! (Fig. 26)**

## Appendix

### Important minimum dimensions and prohibition periods

#### Attention: not complete!

#### Coastal Fishing Regulation (KüFVO)

<u>Fish species</u>	<u>Minimum size</u>	<u>Prohibition period</u>
Sea trout	40 cm	1 October to 31 December for spawning fish, silver fish excluded
Salmon	60 cm	
Brook trout	40 cm	
Eel	45 cm	
Eelpout	23 cm	15 September to 31 January
Herring	North Sea 20 cm	
Turbot	30 cm	Baltic Sea: 1 June – 31 July
Cod	North Sea 35 cm	
	Baltic Sea 38 cm	
Mackerel	North Sea 30 cm	

#### Inland Fishing Regulation (BiFVO)

<u>Fish species</u>	<u>Minimum size</u>	<u>Prohibition period</u>
Sea trout	40 cm	1 October to 28 February
Salmon	60 cm	1 October to 28 February
Brook trout	30 cm	1 October to 28 February
Whitefish	30 cm	
Eel	50 cm	
Pike	45 cm	15 February to 15 April
Carp	35 cm	
Pike perch	45 cm	15 March to 15 May
Tench	25 cm	
Burbot	35 cm	1 January to 28 February

#### Using keep nets (excerpt from LFischG-DVO, section 11):

- (1) Keep nets may only be used to preserve the freshness of fish that are to be used for food. Fish caught and kept for stocking at events such as those specified in section 10(1) can also be stored in keep nets.
- (2) A keep net must be made of knotless textile material, be at least 3.50 m long and have a minimum ring diameter of 0.50 m. Keep nets must have suitable fittings attached along their whole length to prevent them from collapsing and should largely be kept under water and parallel to the surface so that the fish kept in them can swim around freely.
- (3) In order to protect the fish from being injured or otherwise affected, keep nets may not be used in the presence of strong wave impact, in waters with considerable swells caused by shipping or motor boats, and from vessels that are not at anchor.
- (4) Fish may not be kept for longer than absolutely necessary, the longest period permissible being until the end of the fishing day. Only uninjured fish may be kept. If the fish display unnatural behaviour or marked signs of stress, the live storage must end immediately. Fish kept in live storage may not be returned to the water.

List of illustrations:

Fig. 1, fig. 26: private (photos: R. Lemcke)

Fig. 2: with kind permission of Mosella Angelgeräte GmbH Laufeld

Fig. 3 – 9: Photos: LLUR, Fisheries Department (O. Hoyer, H. Franke, R. Mörs)

Fig. 10 – 25: taken with kind permission from Hartmann: Süßwasserfische  
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