FISH FOR LIFE NEWSLETTER

No 1: April 2015

Welcome to FishforLife!

What is the FishforLife project?

The core of the FishforLife project is three citizen science projects through which anglers can actively contribute information to secure the future of marine recreational fishing, simply by going fishing and logging their information. The three ways anglers (or anyone) can contribute are:

1) Logging your catches and details of your fishing trips on CatchReport.
2) Uploading your historic photos of past catches to Fishtory.
3) Uploading photos of your fish to the Sea Fish Atlas.

To do this just visit www.fishfolife.co.za to register and start contributing, every bit of information helps and you can contribute to any or all of the sub-projects. For more details on each project please see the information boxes on the next page and please contact us should you have any queries (contact details below).

Although the FishforLife website and its associated platforms are a useful portal for collecting and storing recreational angling data, it is not envisaged to only be a one-way interaction. Throughout the project these newsletters will keep you up to date on how the project is progressing, highlight trends and examples of the data collected and how it is being put to use. You can also follow our Facebook and twitter pages (see details below) and visit the FishforLife website for on the go updates and information. Anglers logging their data through CatchReport also stand the chance to qualify for a free advanced personal angling catch data programme pre populated with authentic sea charts and tide data supplied by the SA Navy Hydrographer to enable them to record and submit data at higher level of detail. You can also win fantastic prizes for submitting your historical angling photographs to Fishtory.

Pic: Rose Palmer

www.fishforlife.co.za

FishforLifeSA

@FishforLife

r.thornycroft@sanbi.org.za

CATCHREPORT

Recreational angling catch data is the most useful source of information for managing recreational fishing and to ensure that we all have fish to catch in the future! Catch report is a portal to allow anglers to record this important data. What needs recording? The data fields that the anglers or competition organizers need record are remarkably simple and few: **date, catch position, hours spent fishing, species and weight and/or length of each fish**. Fish catch position will be defined grid system depending on your degree of confidence where a fish was caught. Precise locations are never revealed.

Individual anglers can lodge their social data directly into FishforLife by logging onto and registering with the CatchReport website. All one has to do is to fill in the necessary drop-down menus and click 'submit' and the job's done. It is important that users only report what they catch, release and **make note of a 'no catch' scenario** as even when no fish are caught this is important information. Apart from contributing to a national data base on the state of our fish resources, the angler will also have access to his/her own data. CatchReport therefore effectively serves as a personal fishing logbook. All data stored in the central database will be available to selective research institutes for analysis and research which will be reported on and made available directly back to the anglers and associations via the website and future newsletters.

Angling Clubs are especially invited to participate: competition records will be automatically captured via a standard Excel interface tailored for each angling discipline. Submitting of data will be done through the participating event organizers with no input from the individual competitor required. Data from competitions are the most valuable as these data are robust and verify-able. Associations who have collected competition data in the past are requested not to overlook or ignore the incredible value of their historical data which may be submitted by way of the competition spreadsheet which is available for download. Remember, the longer the time series in the dataset the more accurate a picture will emerge. **Join us in becoming responsible anglers who care about the future of your sport.**

FISHTORY

Pic: Eugene Beukes

Fishtory is an innovative research project that uses historical records to track the long-term state of marine fish stocks and to set baselines for current stock assessments. Within the fishing community, extensive catch records have been kept in the form of photos, angling journals and newspaper clippings. These can provide evidence of what fish stocks looked like in the past, such as the composition and size structures of populations and the historical distributions of popular species. Fishtory will harness these records to provide unique insights into the past that will help secure the future of our fish stocks.

To participate, please register on the FishforLife webpage and follow the instructions to upload your scans or digital copies of your photos. If you have large collections of photographs or are unable to upload your photos yourself please contact us and we will facilitate the upload process for you.

For more information on Fishtory visit our webpage and please contact us if you have any additional queries. You can also join the Fishtory specific online community on Facebook at Fishtory and Twitter @FishtorySA.

SeaFishAtlas

The Sea Fish Atlas is using photographs from fishermen, divers, ROV pilots, scientists and beachgoers to map marine fish distributions in South Africa. Knowing how fish distributions vary along our coast is essential in order to assess and manage fish stocks. Anyone can contribute by uploading photographs onto iSpot which is a fun interactive online database. The wider iSpot community will then help to identify the photo.

Pic: Rose Palmer