

National Coarse Fishing Federation of Ireland

Draft 1

Recreational Angling Contribution Fund

An opportunity for improving all recreational angling on the Island of Ireland.
Angler's contributions are invested in developing and protecting recreational fisheries infrastructure
to improve angling opportunities for all.

Recreational Angling Contribution Fund

The executive committee of NCFFI presents the following draft proposals on setting up an angler contributions fund. When agreed by an AGM, the Executive will work to develop a partnership with other angling federations to bring forward an agreed proposal.

It is proposed that fund will be designed and managed by ACI executive members in partnership with relevant statutory bodies.

The RAC will apply to the island of Ireland and will replace all state licences, conservation stamps and permits currently payable by the angler in either jurisdiction.

In essence, it will comprise of an investment fund contributed to by all anglers including tourist anglers and will be used for the development of angling facilities to improve angling opportunities for all. It may however provide certain exemptions or concessions for children, disabled anglers, old aged pensioners and those on illness benefit and long-term unemployed.

What will this mean for angling on the Island of Ireland?

It will provide much needed capital to progress many angling facility development projects throughout the country. This will be achieved by providing developing groups (Contributors) the necessary funding, to plan develop and complete projects with the assistance of the ACI, IFI and DCAL and the other state agencies.

Angling fund contributions received from this fund may be used as seed capital and may attract other support funding e.g. Leader Funding. This would provide an excellent opportunity to advance angling facility development to a level not experienced in Ireland before.

- Anglers will have a direct input in to how the fund is managed
- Anglers will have meaningful participation in the assessment and allocation of funding processes for all projects
- Anglers contributions can attract partnership funding opportunities
- Anglers can plan, develop and complete angling facility projects in their own areas.

What is this about and how will it work?

Anglers only pay an investment contribution for improving angling fisheries infrastructure for the purpose of improving angling opportunities that will benefit them and other tourist anglers.

Improving all recreational angling opportunities in Ireland

Improvement works will include;

- Angling Safety Training
- Angling safety equipment
- Building of styles and open access gates with wheelchair access
- Safe Angling platforms including adaptations suitable for disabled anglers, elderly and children
- Riparian zone works to improve access to fisheries, river lake and shoreline
- Provision of toilet facilities
- Fishing huts
- Club storage facilities (Containers Etc).
- Drying rooms
- Provision of slipways for launch and recovery of small angling boats.
- Certified Angling Coaching & Technical Skills courses
- Provision of safe car parking for anglers
- Angling boats and stands for the inclusion of children and disabled adults
- Marina developments for small boats
- Upkeep and maintenance of facilities
- Restocking projects
- Development of both salt and fresh water nature reserves
- Catch & Release for coarse fish
- Provide additional insurance cover for projects
- Provide for professional fees if required for projects

The proposed fund is not to be used to undertake work which does not benefit catching fish such as saving the pollen, restoring eels, protecting pearl mussels, etc. These are functions provided by IFI, DCAL and others.

A portion of the angler's contribution fund will be given the Angling Council of Ireland on an annual basis, replacing the capitation fee anglers currently pay. This is for use in the general administration of the organisation.

The proposed new system must be based in law and enforced by IFI and DCAL.

Aims of the Fund

- To improve fisheries, (facilitating angling through infrastructure development) as well as implement a CATCH & RELEASE for Coarse fish.

- To provide funding for partnership opportunities such as Leader Ireland, IFI, DCAL, Failte Ireland Waterways Ireland, Loughs Agency etc.
- To develop systems to utilise the funds in a cost effective way based on anglers needs.
- To be inclusive and open to all anglers in its operations,

How is the proposed contribution to be collected?

This proposed scheme includes the introduction of a computerised card that must be purchased by all persons using a rod to catch fish. (Similar to bank card)

A structured payment system will be introduced.

Period	In State		Out of State	
	Adult(over 18)	Youth	Adult (over 18)	Youth
3 week	€15/£12	€5/ £4	€15/£12	€5/£4
1 year	€30/£24	€10/£8	€30/£24	€10/£8

Period	Old Age Pensioners			
	over 65		Disabled Anglers	
			Adult (over 18)	Youth
3 week	€8/£6		€8/£6	€5/£4
1 year	€20/£15		€20/£15	€10/£8

Provisions could be made to allow payment at selected outlets and online.

Fisheries Officers shall have powers to inspect the angler's contributions card.

Management of Funds

Recreational Angling Contribution Fund will be collected by statutory agencies and managed by the Recreational Angling Contribution Fund Partnership in each jurisdiction. All funds collected through the fund shall by law be expended on the improvement of fisheries angling infrastructure to improve angling opportunities for all in the jurisdiction in which it is collected.

Recreational Angling Contribution Fund Partnership (RACFP) shall be made up of one angling representative from each of the five federations, Coarse, Sea, Salmon, Pike and Trout, three representatives of the relevant statutory agencies and two independent (perhaps an Accountant and Project manager) and an Independent Chair, 11 in all. This partnership would arrive at decisions on a consensus basis, based on mutual respect and in a business like fashion.

Information will be made available to all via web site.

The RACFP would include projects in the following areas;

- In stream fisheries enhancement and stocking programmes
- Bank-side improvements
- Angler access and facilities
- Recreational and Sport angling education, awareness, coaching and training
- Research on recreational angling
- Enforcement of compulsory contributions
- Administration of RACFP programme

A system will be developed to ensure that no one angling sector will receive excessive percentages of the funds and that an even spread of all angling categories will be maintained. Each angling sector will set out its objectives, proposed projects and achievements in an annual report.

RACFP and Investment accountability

- Five Year strategy
- Annual Investment Plans
- Review, monitoring and Annual Reporting

Applications may be made by public and private angling groups,(IFI, State bodies working in partnership with RACFP) for use of the funds. RACFP can only allocate or spend the funds available to it from angler's contributions

Annual Contribution Investment Plans

A system will be developed for an annual application and grant scheme which will be agreed prior to the scheme in general being passed into law. The scheme will provide for the grant aiding of projects on an annual or multi year basis. All applications for funding will be assessed on an agreed and published system.

State leased Fisheries

To assist angling clubs and long-term angling development there is a requirement to take on 10 year leases with clear agreed management conditions. Such leases need to be reviewed annually, and will only be renewed if no serious concerns are raised during reviews.

Should concerns be raised an appeals process will be put in place for speedy resolution of the concerns.

Project assessment criteria

When assessing applications, RACFP will use a number of criteria, some of which are more important than others. Each application will be scored on how well it meets these criteria and then ranked within its own river basin district and within its own angling discipline. RACFP makes the final decision on each application. Applications will be assessed and scored on the following criteria:

- Whether the applicant is a not for profit community based group
- Whether the applicant complies with Children First Guidelines as developed by the National Governing Body.
- Whether the application increases angling participation and /or angling performance. In particular priority will be given to applications in disadvantaged areas and areas where the relevant angling discipline is poorly developed. In assessing projects a guiding principle will be that projects close to actual angling participation and programmes of training and coaching will have high priority. Landscaping social facilities and car parks will in general have a lower priority.
- Whether the application targets Women in Sport initiatives.
- Whether the application has shown that it meets the angling needs of the locality.
- Whether the application shows how the project will be managed and maintained after completion.
- Whether the application has shown that it fulfils the priorities of the angling discipline as identified by the National Governing Body.
- Whether the applicant can prove that local schools and youth groups have access to the facility.

It is envisaged that this will be a competitive process. Applications just ticking boxes in relation to each scoring criteria will not be guaranteed funding for a project. RACFP may consult with NGB's and local schools and groups during the scoring process