

SUSTAINABILITY And The Tackle Trade

BAIT AND SUSTAINABILITY SURVEYS

fish21's Director of Sustainable Angling, Stuart McLanaghan explains the background to several new surveys on fishing baits and sustainability. The findings will be reported in the main feature in **TTW's** November edition.



Stuart McLanaghan

In what is believed to be a first, fish21 is conducting three surveys on recreational fishing baits and sustainability. Each survey is aimed at a different recreational fishing audience, from the perspective of anglers; bait manufacturers; and owners / managers of freshwater fisheries. Groundbaits are also considered, but not hard and soft plastic lures.

THE CURRENT BAIT SITUATION

It is increasingly recognised that businesses have a critical role to play in delivering more environmentally-friendly production and consumption, otherwise society will not be able to contain climate change; resources will become increasingly scarce; and ecosystems further damaged. For all manufacturing businesses, including those that produce angling baits, this means making products which minimise negative environmental impacts during production and their subsequent use.

Sustainable target fish populations, for both today as well as future generations, remain the lifeblood of the angling trades. But, fish can only thrive in an environment with good water

quality and healthy aquatic habitats. Therefore one of the first things to think about is bait ingredients. For example, how digestible are baits (particularly nutrient digestibility) by fish and other aquatic life, or do they leave undigested remains which beyond a certain amount could negatively affect water quality and fish health? Alternatively, baits could be formulated not just to attract fish, but to additionally supplement their natural diet, contributing to healthy weight gains which will increase a fishery's asset value, as well as benefit other aquatic life. At first glance, this certainly sounds like a win-win situation.

Another question to ask is whether or not the ingredients themselves are responsibly sourced. For example, whether seafood and fish are supplied from a certified sustainable fishery. It is also important to consider whether the production, packaging and distribution processes can be rethought to minimise environmental impacts (e.g. designing out waste or making use of more easily recyclable packaging materials).

Many of the issues outlined haven't as yet been widely considered, publicly at least, by either bait manufacturers, or the angling community. TTW's readers are likely to find the bait manufacturers survey of most relevance - please do take the time to complete this. The surveys are designed

to be thought-provoking and findings are intended to provide a useful starting point, to further discussion on the current situation with regard to recreational fishing bait manufacture and use. The surveys can be accessed using the following links:

- **Bait manufacturers survey:**
www.bit.ly/2LkbVJD
- **Anglers survey:**
www.bit.ly/2JWKgyY
- **Fishery managers survey:**
www.bit.ly/2mLC98U

All comments will be treated in the strictest confidence. Bait manufacturers wishing to comment in greater depth can contact us on the email below.

The closing date for the surveys is 25th September 2018. In the Autumn, an executive summary report will be published and outline the main findings.

Editor's note: TTW readers are encouraged to complete the bait manufacturer survey and share the above weblinks across their social networks - thank you

You can contact Stuart on all sustainability topics by e-mail: stuart@fish21.co.uk www.fish21.co.uk **TTW**

