

Anglers should be aware that the country they visit may have a lower fish health status than the UK and should routinely disinfect their equipment before and after travelling, for example SVC is widespread throughout Europe.

In Norway there are disinfection stations on some rivers that will issue a certificate upon disinfection of equipment, which must be shown when requested. These measures resulted from the introduction of the parasite *Gyrodactylus salaris*, which led to catastrophic losses of Atlantic salmon in Norwegian rivers. *G.salaris* infects the skin and fins of Atlantic salmon and trout and has the potential to be introduced to the UK by fishermen.

Iceland has made it mandatory to disinfect angling equipment before fishing. If equipment is disinfected before travelling the angler must obtain a certificate of disinfection from an official veterinary authority. Alternatively, equipment can be disinfected on arrival at Keflavik airport.



*Gyrodactylus salaris* on the skin of Atlantic salmon

# A Guide To The Disinfection of Angling Equipment

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## Why Disinfect?

Anglers are fishing more waters and travelling further afield in search of their sport. This trend can only increase the risk of the inadvertent transfer of fish diseases through contamination of angling equipment.

Many modern fisheries contain a large stock of valuable fish. It is in the interest of fishery owners, with the assistance of the anglers to do as much as they can in order to preserve and maintain the health of their stock. The advent of diseases such as Koi Herpesvirus has made the routine disinfection of nets and equipment essential in order to safeguard the stock and reputation of many fisheries. The practice of disinfection will help prevent the spread of disease, caused by viral, parasitic, fungal and bacterial pathogens.

## What should I disinfect?

Equipment that comes in to contact with fish or water should be disinfected after use. In reality common sense should be applied to any situation. The items of tackle most likely to transmit disease include keep nets, landing nets, unhooking mats and stink bags. If items are to be used between waters then precautions should be taken in order to minimise the risk of disease transfer. Anglers fishing multiple waters in a short time should ensure they disinfect their equipment or ideally use separate equipment.



*Mirror carp showing clinical signs of Koi Herpesvirus*

## Disinfection of Equipment

Some fisheries insist upon anglers using a net bath before they fish and anglers should comply with the wishes of the fishery owners. If dips are used then they must be maintained in accordance with the manufacturers recommendations to ensure that the disinfectant is still active. Ideally they should be out of direct sunlight and protected from rainwater dilution with a cover. Care should be taken to avoid excess organic matter in the dip solution.

Anglers wishing to disinfect their equipment should ensure that a suitable disinfectant is in contact with the equipment for at least twenty minutes.

Immersion or spray methods can be employed, the longer the contact time the better. After this period they should be rinsed with fresh water. To improve the efficacy of any disinfectant any organic matter should be cleaned off before disinfection. Disinfectants suitable for use include FAM 30, Halamid®, Virkon® S and sodium hypochlorite at 1% solution. If disinfection by chemical means is not possible then the angler should thoroughly clean the equipment followed by drying at a minimum temperature of 20°C for at least two days.

These chemicals are available from agricultural chemical suppliers. The use of trade names is for illustrative purposes only and does not signify endorsement of any particular product.

**All products used for disinfection should be used in accordance with the manufacturers Health and Safety guidelines.**



*Examples of equipment that should be disinfected*



*Disinfectant being added to hand sprayer*



*Angler disinfecting equipment*