

Delineation of High-end Recreational Fishing Sites on Trout and Mahseer water in Bhutan



**Department of Forests and Park Services
Ministry of Energy and Natural Resources
2023**

I. High-end recreational fishing sites in Trout water

Bhutan's river system is classified into two types, Mahseer water and Trout water based on the presence and absence of Mahseer species in them. For the ease of delineation, Mahseer waters are delineated with clear description of the stretches, and all other stretches that are not delineated as Mahseer water falls under the category of Trout water. Further, the waters are classified into High-end recreational fishing sites and normal fishing sites, for the ease of regulating both normal fishing and recreational fishing.

Bhutan has a potential to become one of the high-end destinations for recreational fishing (catch and immediate release of fish caught), considering the number of rivers we have and the conservation efforts put in by the government. High-end recreational fishing can be one of the adventurous ecotourism products in Bhutan and a conservation by-product which can help generate national revenue. 'High-end recreational fishing sites' as defined in the FNCRR (Amendment) 2022 shall mean a stretch of Bhutan's major river or waterbody delineated exclusively for recreational fishing and they are being managed to produce and maintain robust populations of Mahseer and Trout species for providing excellent fishing opportunities.

While the initial delineation may be exclusively based on the wilderness of the sites for recreational fishing, additional infrastructure such as eco-lodges and camping sites with basic facilities required for anglers like drying rack and easy access to the fishing sites may be developed to make the fishing trip more comfortable. For international anglers, local fishing guides shall remain a requisite for fishing.

High-end recreational fishing sites were delineated on most of the Mahseer waters. It has become vital that potential stretches are classified as high-end recreational fishing sites on the Trout waters too. In view of this, a preliminary assessment was conducted to identify potential high-end trout fishing sites in central Bhutan in June 2022. Based on the recommendation of the assessment trips, the following stretches of rivers are delineated as High-end recreational fishing sites on Trout waters; Notwithstanding this delineation, fishing shall be strictly prohibited on the prohibited fishing sites as described under the FNCRR 2022 and mapped by the Department.

II. Classified High-end recreational fishing sites in Trout water

I. Kholong Chhu, Bumdeling, Trashiyangtse

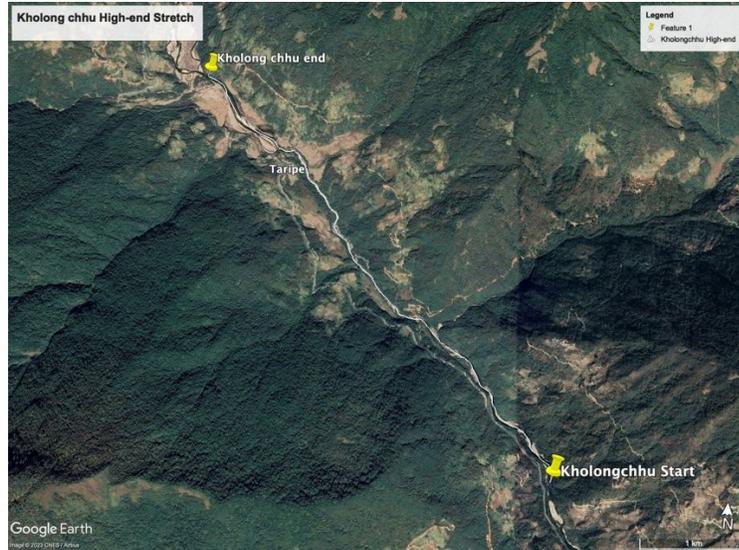
Start Point (Lower elevation): 27.627651°N, 91.487643°E

Below Kugtorgang.

Kholong chhu end: 27.667673°N, 91.444223°E

Lower part of the Bumdeling Ramsar Site (Bumdeling thang)

Total Stretch: ~ 6.69 Kms



2. Tangchhu, Tang, Bumthang

Starting point (lower elevation): 27.510284°N, 90.803722°E

Just below the confluence of Tangchhu and Chamkharchhu.

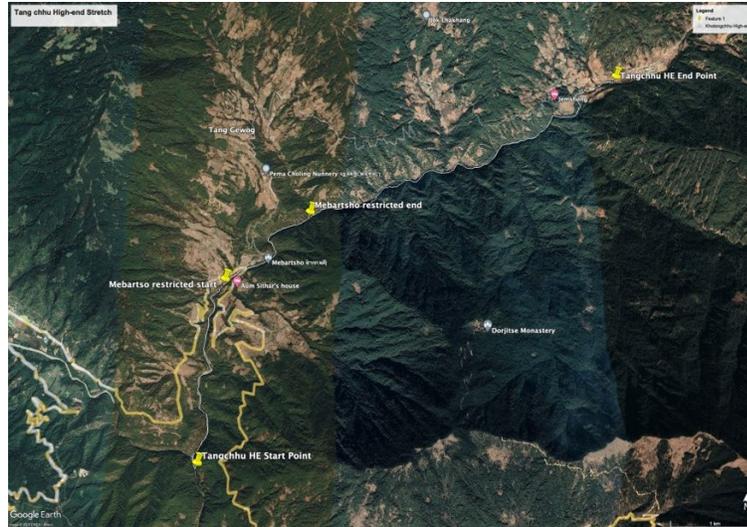
End point (higher elevation): 27.568664°N, 90.866888°E

Below the Chutoe village in Tang.

Total Stretch: ~9.5 Kms.

Prohibited fishing site along the stretch: Peripheral of Tang Mebartsho sacred site

27.535442°N, 90.805233°E; 27.545738°, 90.817941°E.

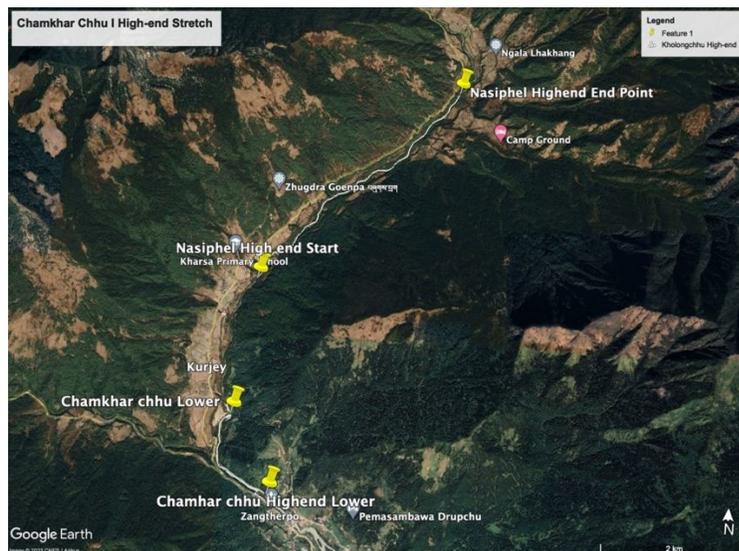


3. Chamkhar Chhu, Choekhor, Bumthang

The High-end Fishing site on Chamkhar is divided into two stretches, the lower and upper.

Lower stretch starting point: 27.597119°N, 90.722489°E
500 meters above the Bridge in Zangtherpo
Lower stretch end point: 27.607464°N, 90.715941°E
500 meters below the Thangbi Temple.
Total Stretch: ~1.7 Kms

Upper stretch starting point: 27.626431°N, 90.718251°E
From the suspension bridge below Kharsa school.
Upper stretch end point: 27.655660°N, 90.749348°E
500 meters below Thrigoen Temple.
Total Stretch: ~ 4.8 Kms



4. Chumey Chhu: Chumey, Bumthang

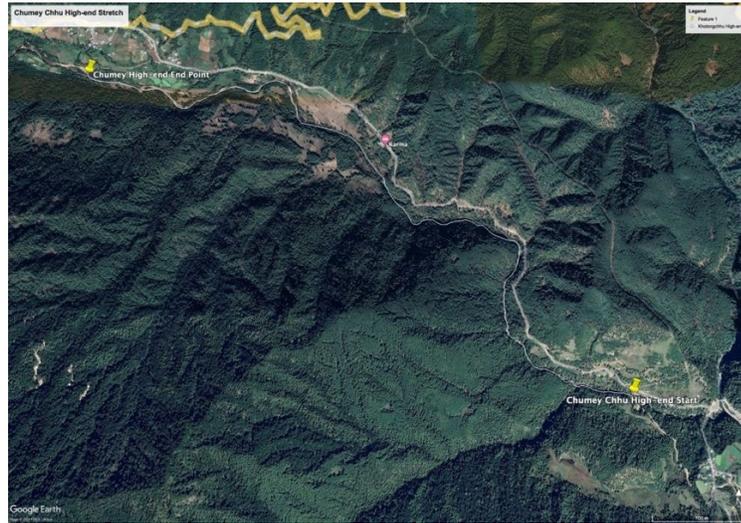
Starting point: 27.481055°N, 90.803082°E

Bridge across Chumey chhu

End point: 27.500868°N, 90.760135°E

Below the Nanggar village

Total Stretch: ~ 6 Kms



5. Nikachhu: Sephu, Wangdue

Starting point (lower elevation): 27.494698°N, 90.314036°E

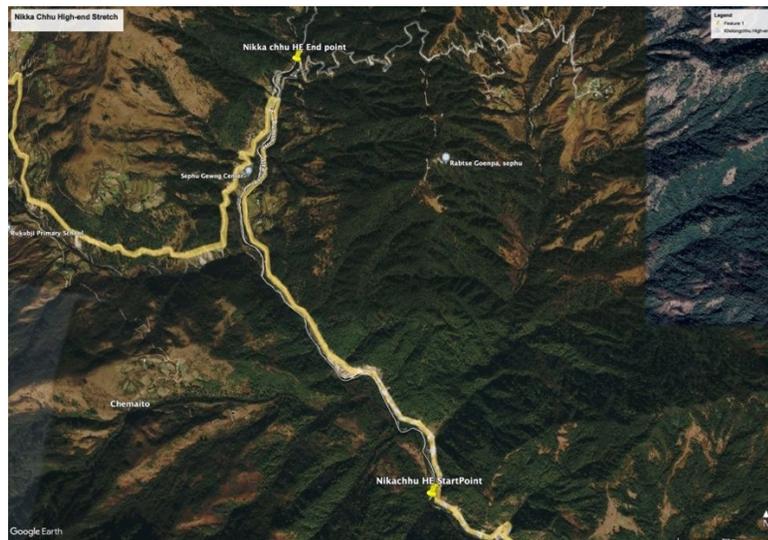
Just below Chuserbo under Trongsa Dzongkhag.

End point (higher elevation): 27.526718°N, 90.300209°E

About 500 meters above the Nikachhu bridge at Chazam.

Total Stretch: 4.8 Kms

Identifying camp sites is necessary along the stretch due to non-availability of hotels and homestays in the locality.



6. Beychhu: Phobjikha, Wangdue

Starting point (lower elevation): 27.413267°N, 90.202582°E

At Gangphey Zam.

End point (higher elevation): 27.446959°N, 90.188983°E

Below the Phobji Gewog centre, at the Dazijab Wogi Zam.

Total stretch: 7.12 Kms

There is no prohibited fishing site along the stretch. However, the upper stretch of the river starting from the end of the High-end fishing site is strictly prohibited for fishing.



7. Gogona Chhu

Starting point (Lower elevation): 27.413665°N, 90.105985°E

Below Zomdu Gaykha.

End point: 27.426248°N, 90.104301°E

At Dakyasa Bjuek.

Total Stretch: 1.5 Kms



8. Upper Phochu, Punakha

Starting point (Lower elevation): 27.601069°N, 89.872167°E

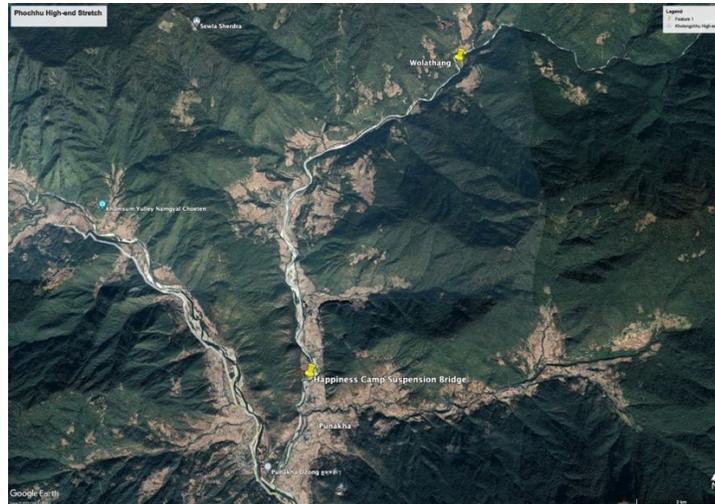
Below the Happiness Camp Suspension Bridge

End point: 27.675950°N, 89.906861°E

Bridge to Wolathang School

Total Stretch: ~ 11.7 Kms

The stretch of Phochhu river below the starting point of the High-end stretch is a site prohibited for fishing.



9. Upper Mochhu, Punakha

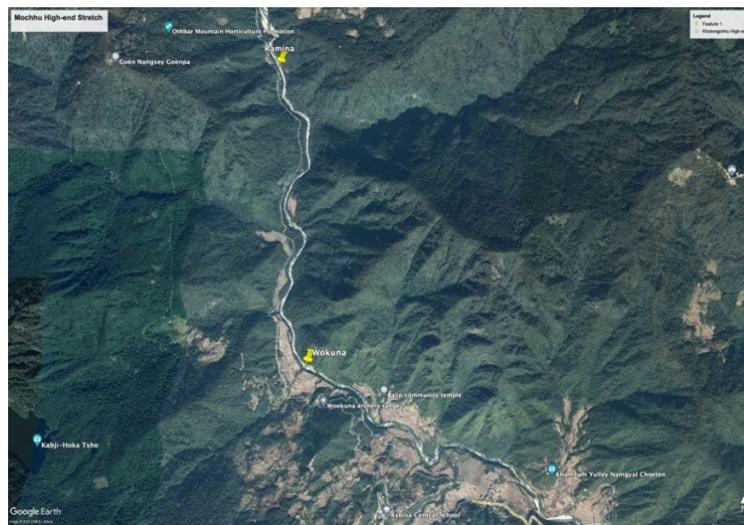
Starting point: 27.649889°N, 89.778522°E

Below Wokuna ECCD

End Point: 27.694139°N, 89.770761°E

Below Ramina Forest Range Office

The stretch of Mochhu below the starting point of the High-end Recreational fishing stretch is a site prohibited for fishing.



10. Lower Pachhu High-end, Paro

Starting Point (Lower elevation): 27.331797°N, 89.482728°E

Eusuna bridge

End point: 27.368762°N, 89.456826°E

Below Karma Academy and Sharpa Bridge

Total stretch: ~5.5 kms

11. Upper Pachhu High-end, Paro

Starting point (Lower elevation): 27.443544°N, 89.378692°E

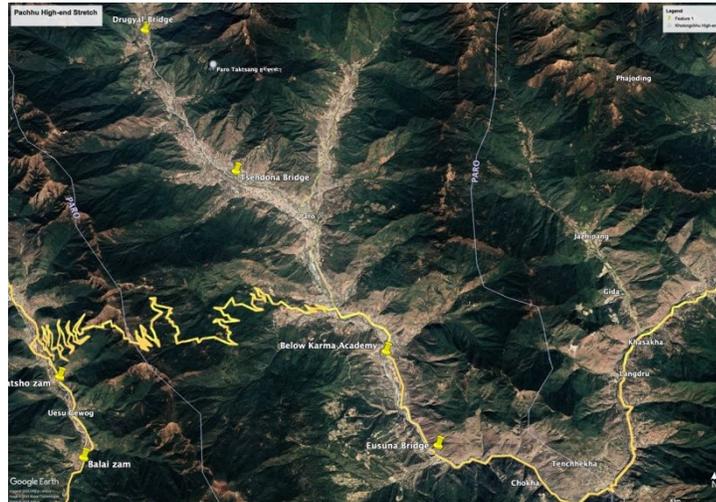
Tshendona Bridge

End point: 27.507319°N, 89.326061°E

Bridge behind Drugyal Dzong

Total stretch: ~ 10 Kms

The stretch of Pachhu between the two High-end stretches are sites prohibited for fishing.



12. Lower Haa Chhu, Haa

Starting point (Lower elevation): 27.320250°N, 89.321910°E

Balam Bridge

End point: 27.351636°N, 89.306564°E

Batsho Bridge

Total stretch: ~ 4.5 Kms

13. Upper Haa Chhu, Haa

Starting point (lower elevation): 27.412558°N, 89.248672°E

500 meters above Yathang temple.

End point: 27.429500°N, 89.207703°E

500 meters below Damthang Army camp

Total stretch: ~ 5.3 Kms

Delineation of High-end Recreational Fishing Sites in Trout and Mahseer water



In all the rivers except for Kholong chhu, the target fish is Brown trout *Salmo trutta*, with best fishing seasons in March, April, May and the first two weeks of June, and during September, October and November. In Kholong chhu, the target fish species is Snow trout (*Schizothorax richardsonii*).

III. High-end Recreational Fishing Sites on Mahseer Water (In addition to earlier endorsed sites)

I. Upper Nyera Amachhu, High-end Mahseer Zone 3, Samdrup Jongkhar

Starting point (Lower elevation): 26.964237°N, 91.594856°E

Below Goenpa Tingzin Drawa

End point: 26.988517°N, 91.552878°E

500 meters below Gomdhar School

Total Stretch: ~ 5.5 Kms

Identifying campsites are necessary in the locality as there are no hotels nearby.

