

Cut the carbon in fishing tournaments  
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I would like to respond to Byron Stout's Jan. 9th column regarding the world's first carbon neutral fishing tournament.

My involvement as founder of three South Florida billfish tournaments, Miami Billfish (26th Year), Florida Billfish Masters and The Sailfish Tournament, as well as being the fishing coordinator for 11 other fishing tournaments and with my longtime participation in Florida fisheries through involvements in fisheries management and conservation, environmental causes, the fishing industry both recreational and commercial and as proponent for the industry, has given me a substantial level of respect and values in the angling community.

This acknowledgment goes along way in turning the tide of skepticism about global warming, helping to motivate a powerful boating community into taking action on this critical issue.

Unfortunately, billfishing is inherently carbon intensive. For example, getting to a location off Fort Myers where a billfish might be caught entails a good 60-mile run. Fortunately off southeast Florida good sailfishing is a mere three miles offshore, and weekly tournaments during the sailfish season are a sound economic driver for our industry. Unlike many fisheries, sailfishing in South Florida is a robust conservation-oriented fishery. In the case of the Miami Billfish Tournament, more than \$1 million has been raised and distributed to conservation and the habitat.

Following these principles, for the first time ever, a fishing tournament is trying to operate on a carbon neutral or carbon negative basis. To accomplish this goal the Sailfish Tournament has calculated its CO<sub>2</sub> footprint and has purchased climate mitigation credits that will more than offset its greenhouse gas output for the weekend. Additionally, in conjunction with Environmental Defense I have developed a tournament greening program that will enable other tournaments, salt or freshwater, inshore or offshore, to protect and enhance the natural world.

Participating tournaments offer environmental sponsorships, raising cash to purchase climate mitigation credits. These credits will go directly to the capture and use of agricultural methane gas (23 times more powerful than CO<sub>2</sub> as a greenhouse gas) and its conversion into clean electricity.

Additionally, the participating tournaments will have a profound educational effect on the public due to their broad reach and popularity. The solution to the problems of catastrophic climate change lies with the people and the power of "ONE" combined over and over. What better way to reach a passionate angling public than through tournaments? I have encountered skepticism and ridicule many times in the past, and I

am sure it will continue into the future, but this only strengthens my resolve to continue with this critical message. I have found that many more people appreciate the message than those wishing to ridicule it. The resounding response of audiences at one of my "Global Warming — A Fishing Report" PowerPoint presentations is all I need to know that anglers and the public at large desire answers and when given, a direction to take.

To this end, anglers' and boaters' new and expanded awareness of the risks we face with our resources will shepherd in new awareness and sensibility, ushering in a more conservative and sustainable approach to the passions we share in our sport. The world will be a better place.

— Captain Dan Kipnis, who has held multiple fishing world records, serves as a director at large for the Florida Wildlife Federation and chairs the Economic, Social and Health Committee for the Miami-Dade County Global Warming Task Force.