

From: Michael Brazendale
Sent: Tuesday, August 21, 2018 9:32 PM
To: MARE CONSULTATION FISHING OPPORTUNITIES <MARE-CONSULTATION-FISHING-OPPORTUNITIES@ec.europa.eu>
Subject: Bass conservation

Sirs

I would be grateful if you would take my concerns into account within the Fishing Opportunities for 2019 Consultation.

I have followed the increasing commercial pressure on this vulnerable stock and the corresponding downwards trends in bass biomass for the past 40 years.

I have fished for bass for 40 years and during that time have killed only 1 or 2 fish per year for family or friends consumption, and have seen the unacceptable decline in stocks.

Recreational exploitation is not the main cause of the depleted bass stock - Commercial over fishing and repeated political inaction are!

The concept of marine resources being commonly owned is well established and yet we are now faced with the effective privatisation of bass stocks, in favour of the commercial sector, when 'The Commons' are being criminalised if they take a bass for personal consumption.

It is totally unjust to allow continued commercial exploitation for bass of any kind yet prohibit the common man, woman and child from taking what rightfully belongs to them.

Access to publicly owned resources should be a given ahead of commercial access, especially as the public enjoyment provides greater socio-economic benefits and long-term sustainability.

What is even more unjust in this prohibition of recreational retention is that the mortality rates attributed by ICES and which were used as justification by the Commission for this prohibition have proven to be erroneous and not by a minor factor.

It transpires that the ICES estimates for recreational mortality were approximately **800% MORE** than than the recent (July 2018) review revealed.

How can it then be justifiable to maintain a total ban on recreational retention, when such flawed data was used for the basis of the 2018 bass measures and whilst allowing commercial retention in its many forms?

It is quite simple - If the stock is so fragile that a recreational fisher is banned from taking **A SINGLE** bass throughout the year, then **NO** commercial retention should also prevail - this includes the '*unavoidable bycatch allowance*' which is being widely abused by commercial fishers and the 5,000 kilos per year catch limit on Hook and Line commercials.

Why should a commercial hook and line fisher be allowed to retain between 2,500 to

3,500 bass **FOR PROFIT** when I am not allowed to retain even one fish to feed my family - where is the proportionality and fairness in this measure?

I would urge you to re-think this prejudiced decision and re-instate the right of The Commons to retain a bass in line with the previous 'daily bag limit' which was widely supported by the recreational sector.

Thank you for considering my comments
Yours sincerely

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