

By: Assistant Chief IFCO

To: Kent and Essex Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority –  
23<sup>rd</sup> January 2017

Subject: Bass legislation for 2017

Classification: **Unrestricted**

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### **Summary:**

To report on the new legislation introduced for 2017 regarding fishing for bass. There will also be a short presentation from Victoria Bendall from CEFAS updating the Authority as to the current understanding of bass research and possibilities of future collaborative projects.

### **Recommendation:**

The Authority is asked to **CONSIDER** the report and provide **COMMENTS**.

### **Introduction:**

Throughout 2015 and 2016 the European Commission has been working with member states and their scientific advisors on a range of measures to reduce bass fishing mortality. However, stocks are continuing to decline and further measures have been put in place to protect bass. In 2017 additional restrictions are to be implemented on both commercial and recreational fishermen, and those restrictions will be published in the new TACs and Quotas Regulation in mid-January 2017. Until the new regulation is published the existing measures for 2016 will continue to remain in force.

The measures pertinent to the main gear types in use in the KEIFCA district include the following:

### **For commercial fisheries:**

There is to be a complete prohibition on commercial fishing for bass, including commercial fishing from the shore, with three exemptions;

- Vessels are permitted to *target* bass with hook and line gear up to a maximum of 10 tonnes for the year, providing they have track record of catching bass with this gear type between 01/07/15 and 30/09/16.
- Vessels are permitted to land up to a maximum of 250kgs per month caught in fixed nets *as bycatch only*, providing that they have a track record of catching bass with this gear type between 01/07/15 and 30/09/16.
- Vessels using demersal trawls are permitted to land 3% bass, *as bycatch*, per day up to a maximum of 400kgs per month.

### **For recreational fisheries:**

The recreational measures in place for 2017 are the same as those in place for 2016;

- From 1st January to 30th June 2017 catch and release only permitted
- From 1st July to 31st December 2017 one bass per fisherman per day

It is recognised that these measures will create difficulties for fishermen within the district, especially given the non-quota position of bass which means it has in recent years made up a significant percentage of an inshore vessel's annual income. Bass is also a highly prized non-commercial species targeted by recreational fishermen and charter vessels throughout the district.

These measures have been put in place relatively quickly and officers will be working with MMO and other IFCA's to introduce these measures in a coordinated manner. These measures significantly alter the legislative landscape which fishermen are required to comply with and as such, work to achieve compliance, by both education and enforcement, with these measures is a significant priority within next year's Annual Plan.

### **Recommendation:**

The Authority is asked to **CONSIDER** the report and provide **COMMENTS**.