MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE, FISHERIES AND FOOD

WELSH OFFICE AGRICULTURE DEPARTMENT

BASS

NURSERY AREAS
AND OTHER
CONSERVATION MEASURES
FOREWORD

This leaflet on bass has been prepared by the Fisheries Departments of the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food and the Welsh Office to advise both commercial fishermen and anglers of the measures which have been taken to safeguard the bass fishery in the coastal waters of England and Wales. It includes information about the nursery areas in which fishing for bass is prohibited for all or part of the year, the minimum landing sizes for bass and other species and the restrictions on the use of gill and similar enmeshing nets.
CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT OF THE BASS FISHERY

1. The recent designation of nursery areas for bass completes the implementation of the strategy adopted by the Fisheries Departments for the long term conservation and management of the bass fishery in the coastal waters of England and Wales.

2. The strategy involves:
   - an increase in the minimum landing size from 32 to 36 cm;
   - restrictions on the use of gill and similar nets;
   - a prohibition on bass fishing in nursery areas for all or part of the year.

The aim is to move the focus of fishing effort away from juvenile bass to fish over 36 cm with the objective of improving recruitment to the spawning stock and maintaining and increasing yields to the fishery. The prospects for achieving these objectives have been enhanced by a succession of above average strengths of the year classes spawned in 1987, 1988 and 1989. These year classes should benefit from the measures now in place.

3. The measures adopted for the conservation and management of the fishery are based on:
   - the recommendations of the Ministry's Directorate of Fisheries Research following a detailed study of the fishery undertaken between 1981 and 1986. (Laboratory leaflet No. 59: The Bass and Management of its fishery in England and Wales; M. G. Pawson and G. D. Pickett);
   - further investigations and field work between 1986 and 1989;
   - extensive consultations with the fishing industry, anglers and other interests during 1988 and 1989.

The conservation strategy seeks to strike a fair and reasonable balance between the interests of both commercial fishermen and anglers and the need to protect juvenile stocks of bass.

MINIMUM LANDING SIZES

4. Any bass landed, stored, sold, displayed or offered for sale, and taken from the waters surrounding the United Kingdom, must be
at least 36 cm in length as measured from the tip of the snout to the end of the tail fin. Any bass retained on board a vessel or transhipped must also exceed 36 cm. These provisions apply to both commercial fishermen and anglers. Any bass below 36 cm must be returned immediately to the sea.

5. The minimum landing size of 36 cm applies to all bass taken from Regions 2 and 3 of Community waters, stretching from north of the Shetlands to Gibraltar. This requirement forms part of the European Community's technical measures for the conservation of fishery resources (Council Regulation (EEC) No.3094/86 as amended by Council Regulation (EEC) No. 4056/89).

6. The minimum landing sizes for other species taken from the waters surrounding the United Kingdom are listed at Appendix I.

**MESH SIZE CONTROLS**

7. The use of gill and similar enmeshing nets, with a mesh size between 65 and 89 mm, is prohibited within British fishery limits lying south of lines of latitude drawn through Haverigg Point in Cumbria on the West Coast and Donna Nook in Lincolnshire on the East Coast. Exemptions exist for:

- the carriage of any nets which are properly lashed and stowed;
- the carriage and use of attended drift nets, beach seines and ring nets within that part of the 3 mile limit stretching from Rame Head in Cornwall to Beachy Head in Sussex.

These mesh size controls apply to gill nets, beach seines, trammel nets, tangle nets, stake nets, drift nets, ring nets, T.nets, J.nets, hoop nets and any similar nets used for the enmeshing or entrapment of fish, but not to trawls, Danish seines or any similarly towed nets. The legislation is The Sea Fish (Specified Sea Area) (Regulation of Nets and Prohibition of Fishing Methods) Order 1989: SI 1989 No.1284.

8. The controls do not override any more restrictive measures such as the byelaws of local sea fisheries committees, (whose jurisdiction extends out to the 3 mile limit) or of the National Rivers Authority.
NURSERY AREAS

9. Fishing for bass from any vessel is prohibited in 34 separate areas for all or part of the year. These areas, their extent and the seasonal duration of the prohibition are set out in Appendix II. The legislation is The Bass (Specified Sea Areas) (Prohibition of Fishing) Order 1990: SI 1990 No. 1156.

10. The nursery areas comprise river estuaries, harbours and power station outfalls where juvenile bass usually predominate and are more easily caught, particularly during the summer months. In certain nursery areas, fishing may also be subject to other restrictions implemented by the local sea fisheries committee or the National Rivers Authority. Such restrictions may include prohibitions on the setting of fixed nets or restrictions on the use of mobile gear.

11. The prohibition on bass fishing in nursery areas does not apply to fishing from the shore. However it is expected that shore anglers and their associations will respect the need for this prohibition and return to the sea any bass caught within nursery areas.

FISHING FOR PROFIT

12. Any United Kingdom owned vessel fishing for profit, must be registered as a fishing vessel under Part II of the Merchant Shipping Act 1988. Applications for registration should be made to the Registrar General of Shipping and Seamen, PO Box 165, Cardiff CF4 4UX. Tel: (0222)-726222.

ENFORCEMENT

13. Responsibility for the enforcement of the measures outlined in paragraphs 4 to 11 rests with the Fisheries Departments and their Sea Fisheries Inspectorate. The Inspectorate is assisted by the officers of local Sea Fisheries Committees who are empowered to enforce both national and Community conservation measures. The addresses of the local offices of the Sea Fisheries Inspectorate and the Sea Fisheries Committees are listed at Appendix III.
APPENDIX I

OTHER MINIMUM LANDING SIZES FOR FISH TAKEN FROM THE WATERS SURROUNDING THE BRITISH ISLES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Species</th>
<th>MLS (cm)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Black Sea Bream</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blue Ling</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brill</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cod</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conger Ecl</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dab (North Sea)</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Elsewhere)</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flounder</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grey Mullet</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Haddock</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hake</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Herring</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lemon Sole</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mackerel (North Sea only)</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Megrim</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plaice (North Sea)</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Elsewhere)</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pollack</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Red Mullet</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Red Sea Bream</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saithe</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shad</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sole</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turbot</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whiting</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Witch</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This information is correct as at 1 May 1990 and is intended for guidance only. It is not a comprehensive statement of the law, which is subject to change. Full information and advice may be obtained from your local MAFF fisheries office.
APPENDIX 2

DESCRIPTIONS OF NURSERY AREAS SHOWING DURATION OF CLOSE SEASON

1. Bradwell Power Station Outfall 1 May – 31 October
The area between the Baffle Wall and the Bradwell foreshore enclosed by lines drawn perpendicular (145° true) from the NE and SW corners of the Baffle Wall to the shore.

2. Grain Power Station Outfall All year
The area enclosed by a line drawn 120° true through Grain Martello Tower and Grain Hard Buoy to Garrison Point, and a line drawn 114° true from the foreshore at Grain Power Station to the western extremity of the Ro Ro Terminal, and the Isle of Grain and Sheerness foreshores.

3. Kingsnorth Power Station Outfall All year
The area enclosed by Bee Ness Jetty and a line drawn 204° true to the tip of Oakham Ness Jetty, thence 260° true to the SE tip of Kingsnorth Jetty, the seaward arm of Kingsnorth Jetty and then 298° true to the Kingsnorth power station foreshore.

4. Chichester Harbour 1 May – 31 October
All tidal waters enclosed by a line drawn 192° true from Eastoke Point to Chichester Bar Beacon, then 078° true to Cakeham Tower.
5. Langstone Harbour 1 May – 31 October
All tidal waters enclosed by a line drawn 153° true from the Gunnery Range Light at Eastney Point to Langstone Fairway Buoy (50° 46.25’N, 01° 01.27’W), then 033° true to the foreshore east of Gunner Point.

6. Portsmouth Harbour 1 May – 31 October
All tidal waters enclosed by a line drawn from Gilkicker Point to Southsea Castle.

7. Southampton Water 1 May – 31 October
All tidal waters enclosed by a line drawn 090° true from the Cadland foreshore to the Warsash foreshore passing through the north-west extremity of the Esso tanker jetty, but excluding those waters above the Redbridge Causeway on the River Test.

8. Fawley Power Station Outfall – Stanswood Bay 1 May – 31 October
The area enclosed by a circle drawn with a radius of 3 cables around the outfall from Fawley Power Station.

9. Poole Harbour 1 May – 31 October
All tidal waters enclosed by a line drawn 011° true from Jerry’s Point, through Branksea Castle to Salterns Pier.
10. The Fleet  
All tidal waters of the Fleet inside Ferry Bridge.

11. River Exe  
1 May – 31 October  
All tidal waters enclosed by a line drawn 068° true from Langstone Point to Orcombe Point.

12. River Teign  
1 May – 31 October  
All tidal waters enclosed by a line drawn 000° true from the Ness to the southernmost leading light.

13. River Dart  
1 May – 31 December  
All tidal waters enclosed by a line drawn 064° true from Combe Point to Inner Froward Point.

14. Salcombe Harbour  
1 May – 31 December  
All tidal waters enclosed by a line drawn 090° true from Splat Point to Limebury Point.

15. River Avon  
1 May – 31 December  
All tidal waters enclosed by a line drawn 206° true from Warren Point at Bigbury-on-Sea to Burgh Island, and a line drawn 090° true from the southern tip of Burgh Island to the coast.
16. River Yealm 1 May – 31 December
All tidal waters enclosed by a line drawn 205° true from Season Point to Mouthstone Point.

17. Plymouth Rivers – Plym, Tamar, Tavy and Lynher All year
All tidal waters enclosed by a line drawn from the western end of Mountbatten Pier 268° true to the landing beacon at Wilderness Point in the River Tamar.

18. River Fowey 1 May – 31 December
All tidal waters enclosed by a line drawn 270° true from Penleath Point to the opposite shore.

19. Fal Estuary 1 May – 31 December
All tidal waters enclosed by a line drawn 045° true from Weir Point to Turnaware Point.

20. Percuil River 1 May – 31 December
All tidal waters enclosed by a line drawn 151° true from St. Mawes Castle to Carricknath Point.

21. Helford River 1 May – 31 December
All tidal waters enclosed by a line drawn 199° true from Rosemullion Head to Dennis Head.
22. River Camel 1 May – 30 November
All tidal waters enclosed by a line drawn 116° true from Stepper Point to Trebetherick Point.

23. River Torridge 1 May – 31 October
All tidal waters enclosed by a line drawn 290° true from Zeta Berth to the opposite shore.

24. River Taw 1 May – 31 October
All tidal waters enclosed by a line drawn 190° true from the western end of Braunton Pill to the site of the former power station at Yelland.

25. Aberthaw Power Station Outfall All year
All tidal waters enclosed by a line drawn at a radius of 1 nautical mile from Breaksea Point.

26. Burry Inlet 1 May – 31 October
All tidal waters enclosed by a line drawn 071° true from Whiteford Lighthouse to Llanelli Docks and a line drawn 180° true from Whiteford Lighthouse to the shore.
27. The Three Rivers – Taf, Tywi and Gwendraeth  
1 May – 31 October  
All tidal waters enclosed by a line drawn 119° true from Ginst Point to Pen Towyn Point.

28. Milford Haven  
1 May – 31 October  
All tidal waters enclosed by a line drawn from the shore along the eastern side of the Texaco Terminal approach jetty to the southernmost part of the T-jetty thence eastwards along the southern edge of the jetty to the extremity at No. 3 berth (51° 41.87’N, 04° 57.58’W) and then 098° true through the Pennar Beacon to the Llanreath foreshore (51° 41.55’N, 04° 57.58’W) and a line drawn 162° true along the seaward side of the Pembroke to Neyland road bridge.
29. River Dyfi 1 May – 31 October
All tidal waters enclosed by a line drawn 168° true from Trefedddian Hotel (52° 32.8'N, 04° 03.6'W) to the flag pole at Ynys Las (52° 31.4'N, 04°03.8'W).

30. River Mawddach 1 May – 31 October
All tidal waters enclosed by a line drawn 226° true from the flagpole at Barmouth (52° 43.1'N, 04° 03.1 W) to the perch at 52° 42.7'N, 04° 03.7'W, thence 155° true to the corner of the sea wall at Fairbourne (52°42.5'N, 04°03.6'W).

31. Dwyryd and Glaslyn Estuary 1 May – 31 October
All tidal waters enclosed by a line drawn 152° true from the White House (52° 54.4'N, 04° 09.1'W) to Harlech Point (52° 53.7'N, 04° 08.5'W).

32. River Conwy 1 May – 31 October
All tidal waters enclosed by a line drawn 254° true from the two flag staffs at Deganwy Yacht Club (53°17.9'N, 03°50.3'W) to Conwy Morfa (53°17.3'N, 03°50.9'W).
33. River Dee 1 June – 30 September
All tidal waters enclosed by a line drawn 213° true from Hilbre Point to Mostyn Quay.

34. Heysham Power Station Outfall 1 June – 30 September
All tidal waters enclosed by a line drawn 085° true from No. 7 buoy (54°01.22′N, 002°56.28′W) to the shore, a line drawn 020° true from No. 7 buoy towards the Dolphin (54°02.40′N, 02°55.52′W), and a line drawn 102° true through the leading lights to Heysham Harbour.
### APPENDIX 3

**Addresses and Telephone Numbers of MAFF District Fisheries Offices**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Office Name</th>
<th>Address</th>
<th>City, Region</th>
<th>Telephone Numbers</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>North Eastern</strong></td>
<td>District Fisheries Office</td>
<td>12–15A Union Quay</td>
<td>North Shields</td>
<td>Tel: (091) 2574520</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Tyne and Wear NE30 1HN</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>South Western</strong></td>
<td>District Fisheries Office</td>
<td></td>
<td>Plymouth, Devon</td>
<td>Tel: (0752) 228001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fish Market</td>
<td>Fish Market</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The Barbican</td>
<td>Plymouth, Devon PL1 2LU</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Humberside</strong></td>
<td>Fisheries Office</td>
<td>141 Cleethorpe Road</td>
<td>Grimsby</td>
<td>Tel: (0472) 355112 or (0472) 355113</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>South Humberside</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Western</strong></td>
<td>Fisheries Office</td>
<td>46 Fore Street, Newlyn</td>
<td>Penzance, Cornwall TR18 5JR</td>
<td>Tel: (0736) 62805</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>New Fish Market</td>
<td>The Quay, Brixham, Devon</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Eastern</strong></td>
<td>District Fisheries Office</td>
<td>'Sea View'</td>
<td>Lowestoft</td>
<td>Tel: (0502) 573149 or (0502) 572769</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Battery Green Road</td>
<td>Suffolk NR32 1DD</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>South Eastern</strong></td>
<td>Fisheries Office</td>
<td>5 Hamilton Terrace</td>
<td>Milford Haven</td>
<td>Tel: (0646) 693412</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Breeds Place</td>
<td>Dyfed SA73 2AL</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hastings</td>
<td>Crown Buildings, Room 220</td>
<td>Penrallt</td>
<td>Tel: (0286) 4144 ext. 492</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>East Sussex TN34 3AA</td>
<td>Caernarfon, Gwynedd</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Tel: (0202) 677539</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>North Western</strong></td>
<td>Fisheries Office</td>
<td>District Fisheries Office</td>
<td>Lancashire FY7 6J6</td>
<td>Tel: (03917) 3515/6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Old Harbour Office</td>
<td>26 London Street</td>
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<td></td>
<td>The Quay</td>
<td>Fleetwood</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Poole, Dorset BH15 1HP</td>
<td>Lancashire FY7 6J6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX 3 cont.

ADDRESSES AND TELEPHONE NUMBERS OF SEA FISHERIES COMMITTEE OFFICES

Northumberland SFC
Sun Alliance House
35 Mosley Street
Newcastle-Upon-Tyne
NE1 5JY
Tel: (091) 2611841

North Eastern SFC
County Hall
Beverley
North Humberside
HU17 9BA
Tel: (0482) 867131

Eastern SFC
10 Tuesday Market Place
Kings Lynn
Norfolk PE30 1LD
Tel: (0553) 775321

Kent and Essex SFC
County Hall
Maidstone
Kent ME14 1XQ
Tel: (0622) 69427

Sussex SFC
2 Sadler Way
Brighton
East Sussex BN2 5PL
Tel: (0273) 680210

Southern SFC
Fisheries Office
3 Park Road
Poole
Dorset BH15 2SH
Tel: (0202) 721373

Devon SFC
Fisheries Office
First Floor
Fish Market and Jetty
Brixham, Devon
Tel: (08045) 4648

Cornwall SFC
County Hall
Truro, Cornwall TR1 3AY
Tel: (0872) 74282

Isles of Scilly SFC
Town Hall
St. Mary's
Isles of Scilly TR21 0LW
Tel: (0720) 22537

South Wales SFC
Queens Building
Cambrian Place
Swansea
West Glamorgan SA1 1TW
Tel: (0792) 654466

North Western and North Wales SFC
Bailrigg
University of Lancaster
Lancaster
Lancashire LA1 4XY
Tel: (0524) 68745

Cumbria SFC
The Courts
Carlisle
Cumbria CA3 8LZ
Tel: (0228) 23456