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## **EU raises minimum size of northern sea bass**

(02/07/2015) The EU has today taken another step to protect sea bass stocks in Europe. The 28 EU member states agreed to the Commission's proposal to increase the minimum size for northern sea bass from 36 to 42 cm. The new rule applies to both commercial and recreational fishermen. This will further improve the protection of this valuable stock and give it more chances to reproduce young fish before it is caught. The Commission will now proceed with the adoption of the agreed measures.

The Commission had also proposed to increase the minimum size for the two southern stocks of sea bass in Iberian waters and the Bay of Biscay. Member states however pointed to the less robust data available on these stocks.

The Commission will therefore ask for renewed scientific advice on the southern stocks, which will feed into new proposals on sea bass from 2016 onwards.

Sea bass is a high value, iconic species for recreational and commercial fishermen alike. But stocks in the EU are seriously under threat. Scientists agree that catches of this species must be drastically reduced, as a result of greater fishing pressure and lower reproduction.

Today's decision is the latest step in a package of measures the Commission has proposed for 2015 to halt the decline of this stock and prepare the way forward for further management measures in 2016.

Previous steps include a [short-term ban on pelagic trawling](#), a [3-fish bag limit for recreational fishermen](#) and, for the remainder of 2015, [a monthly catch limit and an area closure](#) around Ireland for commercial fishing.

### **What have the 28 Member States decided on 2 July?**

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Today's decision will take effect on 1 September 2015. It is the latest step in a package of measures the Commission has proposed for 2015 to halt the decline of this stock and prepare the way forward for further management measures in 2016.

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