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6<sup>th</sup> May 2009

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I am writing to express my objection to the proposed "bag limit" for anglers of five bass and five lobster in any one day. I am an angler, not an amateur fisherman, and there are a variety of reasons why I feel this proposal should not be introduced.

I do not believe that the limit is being imposed in an effort to conserve fish stocks, if this were the aim then a control of local commercial fisherman plundering the breeding bass stocks congregating off the west coast of Guernsey would be more appropriate. Furthermore, the impact of the average angler on bass stocks is at best minimal. The same logic applies to lobster stocks where it is undoubtedly the commercial fisherman who take significant numbers of lobster stock. There are already size limits in place relating to both species and surely if these were rigorously enforced the conservation impact would be significant.

Once again, on a conservation note, I regularly return any lobster that I catch which are carrying eggs. 4 years ago I returned the largest lobster I have ever caught as she was carrying eggs. The same day I saw cooked lobsters for sale from a commercial outlet, bearing eggs. If conservation is the issue keeping egg laden lobsters should be banned.

If a five fish limit is imposed then it will surely encourage the practice of continually returning the smallest fish caught to the sea, dead. There is no mention of this being an unwelcome practice in the proposal. I cannot believe that anglers, as prescribed by the law, throwing dead bass back into the sea has any credibility in the name of conservation.

I regularly fish over the low water period from a tidal mooring, an eight hour trip. Under this proposal I could quite conceivably catch my limit of bass within the first hour of the trip. I then have seven hours to wait until my mooring is accessible again. Am I supposed to stop fishing? Or do I continue fishing and continually return the smallest specimen?

It seems to me that the issue that this proposal attempts to deal with is the illegal sales of bass and lobster. In this case I find it offensive that a blanket restriction is being considered, with a fine of £20,000 being threatened to ordinary leisure anglers, rather than fining both those amateur fishermen who sell fish illegally **and** those that knowingly purchase fish from unlicensed fishermen in order to cut costs. This is where the real issue lies.

Yours,

Mark S Payn