

CHRIS HEATON-HARRIS MP



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

November 2016

*Dear Constituent,*

Thank you for contacting me about sea bass stocks.

Like you, I am concerned that the European sea bass is particularly vulnerable to overfishing, and I know that the Government shares this concern too. Most bass are taken by the French fishing fleet, so Ministers have focused on addressing this issue at the European level by playing an active role in EU discussions about sea bass stocks.

The UK has been a lone voice on this issue and has played a leading role on it in Europe. At the December meeting of the European Fisheries Council last year, the UK's main concern was to agree measures that will allow bass fishing to become sustainable by 2018. All members of the Common Fisheries Policy need to be fully signed up if we are to achieve stock recovery, but there is now a firm timetable to achieve this objective, and I believe it has to be the priority.

The UK has certainly played its part, reducing our estimated catch over the past year by 43 per cent compared with the average between 2011 and 2013. I will await the outcome of this December's meeting with interest.

With the decision to withdraw from the EU, the UK will ultimately no longer be part of the Common Fisheries Policy, but we remain part of Europe and I welcome that both the UK Government and EU leaders have announced that the UK and EU will continue to have a close relationship. We will continue to work with other European countries in this important area.

Once again, many thanks for taking the time to contact me.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Chris'.

**CHRIS HEATON-HARRIS MP**  
**MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT FOR DAVENTRY**