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**COVENEY WELCOMES PROPOSED BAN ON FISHING FOR SEABASS IN WATERS AROUND  
IRELAND**

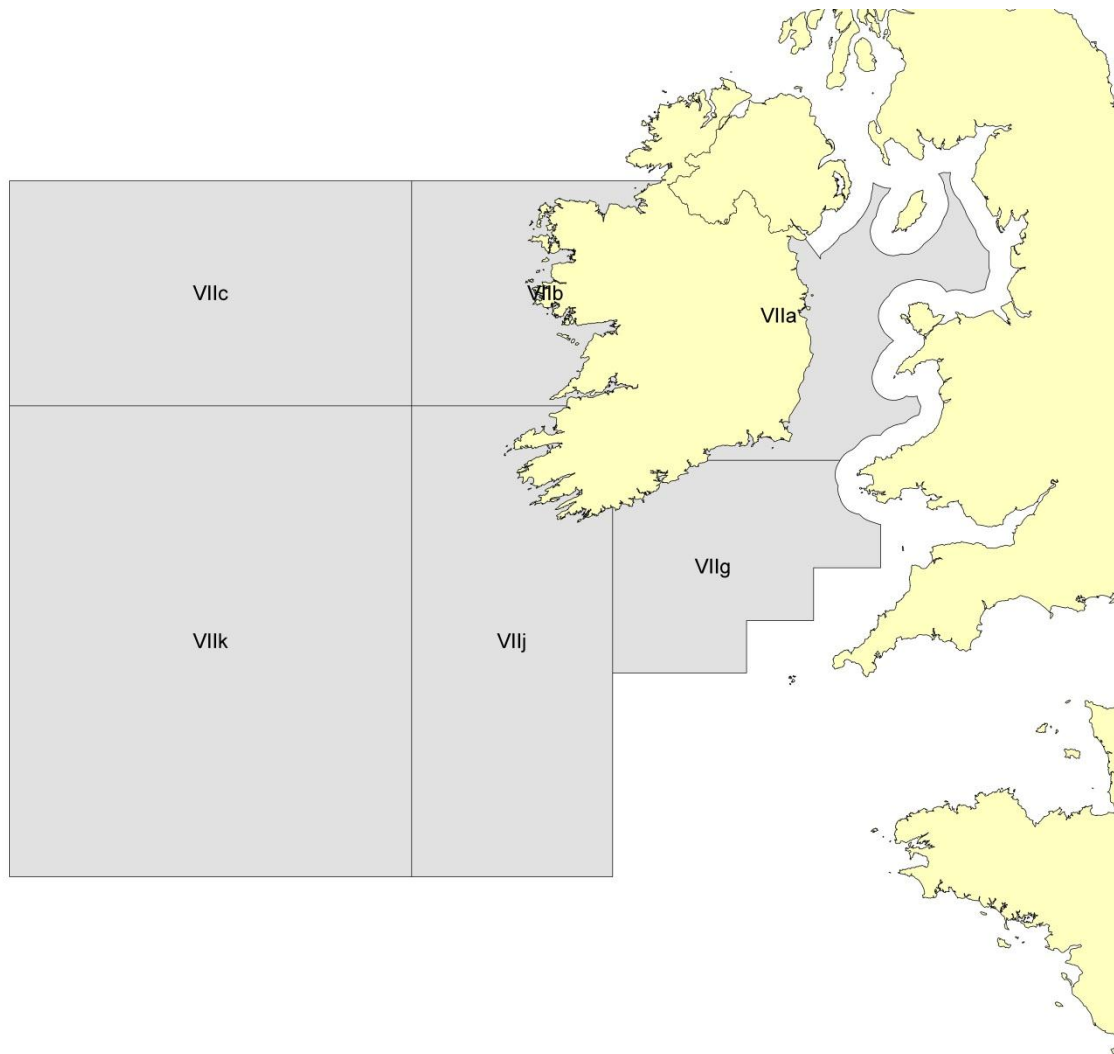
***The new regime will extend Ireland's ban on seabass fishing to all EU vessels***

Minister Simon Coveney TD, today strongly welcomed an EU Commission proposal for a comprehensive prohibition on commercial fishing for seabass in the Irish & Celtic Seas which underpins the conservation actions already taken by Ireland with regard to this vulnerable stock.

The Minister said *"Ireland has had stringent measures in place for the protection of seabass, a very important angling species, for a long number of years. However, those measures only applied to Irish vessels. I have been very active over the past six months, lobbying the EU Commission and relevant Member States, on this issue. I am delighted that the EU finally recognises the lead taken by Ireland by extending our ban on commercial fishing to all EU vessels operating in the waters around Ireland."*

Minister Coveney added *"The scientific advice for seabass is very worrying and we must all do our utmost to protect this stock. Ireland has been to the forefront in being the only EU Member State to afford maximum protection to this stock and today's proposal will enhance that protection by making the Irish model obligatory for all EU vessels in the Irish & Celtic Seas."*

Once the measures are approved by the Council of Ministers, all commercial fishing for seabass will be prohibited in the waters around Ireland.



**Figure 1 Shaded Area - proposed complete prohibition on commercial seabass fishing for all EU vessels**

**ENDS**