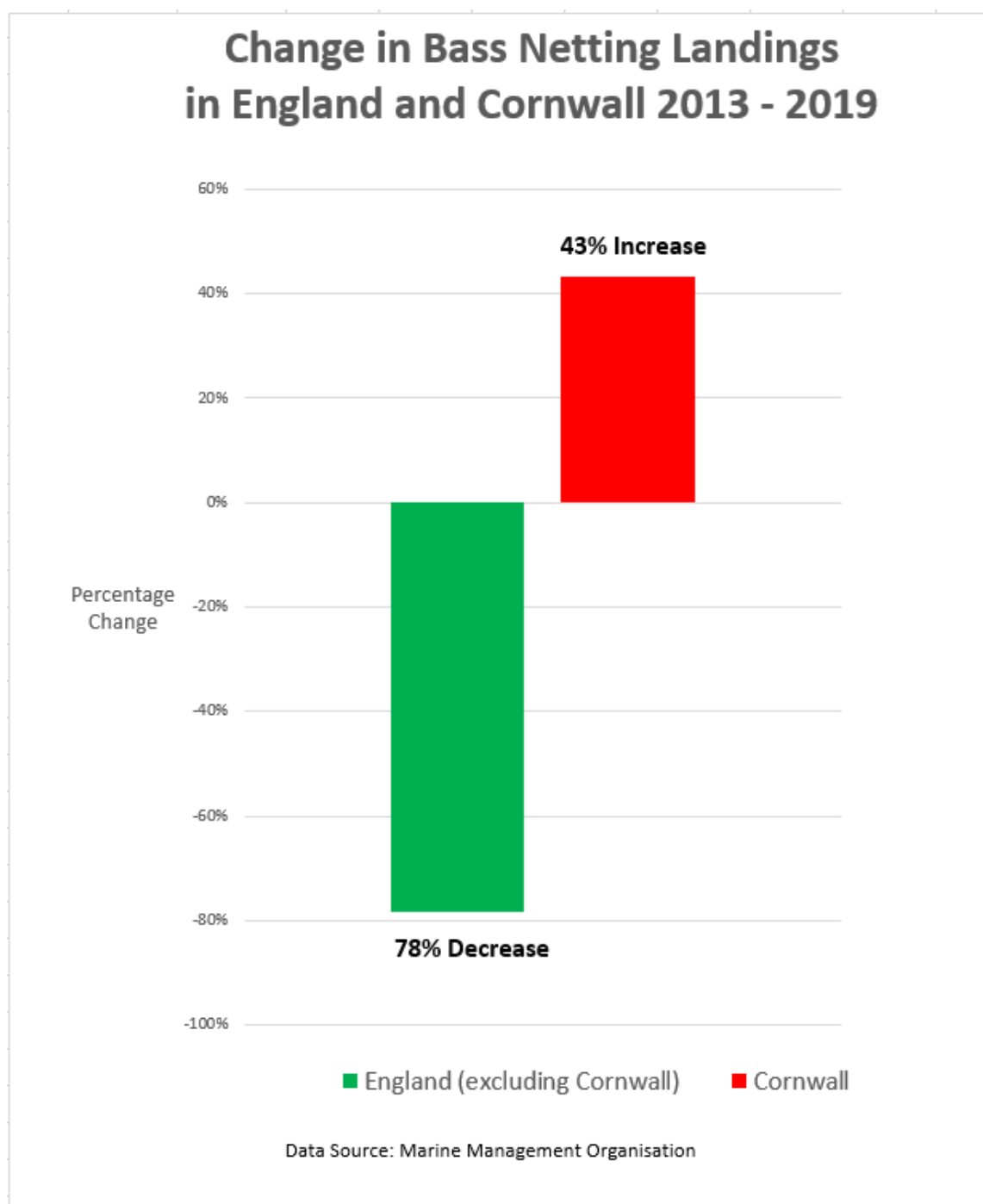




Cornish Sea Anglers tell Fishery Mangers: Stop monkeying around!



Shocking new landing data from the Marine Management Organisation (MMO) shows that landings of sea bass by Cornish netting vessels have increased massively, despite fishing restrictions intended to reduce landings and allow the threatened bass stock to recover.



Since 2015, in response to a crash in the bass stock, the EU has introduced drastic fishing restrictions to protect bass and allow the stock to recover. These restrictions include making it illegal for netters to target bass; allowing fixed netters to land just 1.4 tonnes of bass bycatch a year; a closed season in February and March; and increasing the minimum landing size from 36cm to 42cm.

However, new MMO data reveals that whilst these measures have been extremely successful across most of England, reducing netting landings of bass by 78% since 2013, Cornwall bass landings by netters have increased by an astonishing 43%.

A spokesperson for the Cornish Federation of Sea Anglers, said “Cornwall IFCA is supposed to be protecting our valuable bass stock, but this data shows it has allowed netters to increase their bass landings despite the stock being at a dangerously low level.

For most of 2018, Cornish sea anglers were not even allowed to take 1 bass for the table, but it seems that restriction was pointless, because at the same time Cornish netters were busy scooping up as many bass as they could find – whilst Cornwall IFCA has stood by doing nothing, and ignored repeated calls for an emergency byelaw to protect juvenile bass and for proper enforcement of the bass laws.”

David Curtis, Director of Save Our Sea Bass, commented “Bass angling and commercial hook and lining for bass contribute millions of pounds to Cornwall’s economy and support thousands of local, sustainable jobs. But Cornwall IFCA is putting all that at risk by allowing Cornish netters to increase bass fishing pressure while the rest of England and the EU have cut bass landings in order to save the stock.

Cornwall IFCA has repeatedly refused to take action to protect bass or to make protecting bass a high priority and this is the sad, but entirely predictable result.”

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