

WRITTEN QUESTION E-3447/00
by Carmen Fraga Estévez (PPE-DE)
to the Commission

Subject: Fourth fisheries protocol with Greenland and participation of vessel owners in its financing

Despite the fact that in all of the 'southern' fisheries agreements the Commission has progressively increased the financial participation of vessel owners in the costs of agreements, to a level currently varying between 17% and 25% of the total cost, it now appears that once again, in the new fisheries protocol signed with Greenland, vessel owners benefiting on an exclusive basis from the protocol are asked to pay nothing at all.

In view of this, can the Commission explain its reasons for consenting once again to a situation of discrimination of this nature as between vessel owners from the northern and southern Member States?

Is the Commission aware that it is encouraging a climate of opinion in which it can be said quite openly that the Commission is dividing the Community's vessel owners into first-class and second-class categories, thus giving certain fleets the sensation of being abandoned and producing a total credibility breakdown as regards the Commission's fisheries policies?

What, in the Commission's view, is the meaning of the comments in the joint statement of conclusions to the effect that Greenland is not willing to contemplate any new system in this connection?

It may be presumed that if a third country receives the financial compensation which it considers desirable it is not for that country to discuss the internal distribution of that compensation to be made by the EU. It follows that if, in the 'southern' agreements, vessel owners are obliged to bear part of the financial burden it is because the Commission has preferred that option. Can the Commission explain why this should be so in some cases and not others?