

**Question for written answer E-000853/2011
to the Commission**

Rule 117

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Subject: A single label for sustainable fisheries in Europe

The ocean ecosystem is fragile and its balance is increasingly being threatened by human activity. According to the FAO (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations), seven out of ten of the principal fish species are on the verge of total depletion. If nothing is done, in the short to medium term some fish could disappear from sale – for example Mediterranean bluefin tuna and red seabream from the Bay of Biscay – and at present rates it is feared that some species will die out in two to three years.

In recent months various studies on declining fish stocks have made European consumers aware of the negative impact that fisheries can have on marine ecosystems. Thus it seems that 'sustainable fisheries' certification is gradually becoming a factor in European consumer choice.

There are already several sustainable fisheries labels to be found across Europe, including 'Dolphin Safe', 'Marine Stewardship Council' (MSC), 'Friend of the Sea' (FOS), KRAV and the Icelandic responsible fishing label.

As the conservation of marine biological resources falls within the exclusive competence of the European Union and the European institutions also try to improve the quality of information for European consumers, the introduction of a label guaranteeing sustainable fishing would help both to protect the fish and improve clarity of information when fish is sold.

Does the Commission not think that such a label would be desirable?

If so, can it say what initiatives it intends to take?