

**Question for written answer E-008674/2014
to the Commission**
Rule 130
José Blanco López (S&D)

Subject: Combating illegal fishing in Sri Lanka

The Commission has proposed banning imports of fish from Sri Lanka to offset the commercial benefits that are being derived from illegal fishing. According to the Commission's assessments, Sri Lanka has not rectified the fisheries control problems identified in 2012, including the failure to comply with international and regional fisheries regulations, a lack of dissuasive penalties for the deep-sea fleet and insufficient implementation of control measures.

So as not to affect existing commercial contracts, the measure would not enter into force until mid-January 2015, three months after publication of the decision in the *Official Journal of the European Union*.

Given that the three-month transition period may speed up the adverse impact of fishing activity on the country's resources:

1. Will the Commission check that there is no intensification in illegal commercial fishing by Sri Lanka before the decision actually enters into force?
2. Is there any way of shortening the three-month timeframe?
3. With a view to taking effective action against illegal fishing, and taking account of possible exceptions for existing commercial contracts, does the Commission not think that it would be better to impose penalties that take effect immediately or within a short space of time?