

Question for written answer E-001815/2018
to the Commission
Rule 130
Alex Mayer (S&D)

Subject: Overfishing of Antarctic krill

Over the last 50 years, the Antarctic marine ecosystem has been exposed to warming waters and declines in sea ice as a result of climate change, which, in conjunction with overfishing in Antarctic waters, has brought about great changes to the ecosystem. The consequences of such changes are highly complex, with declines in krill stocks and phytoplankton, plus subsequent knock-on effects on the rest of the ecosystem. Given the fundamental role that krill play in supporting the Antarctic ecosystem, many other species are being negatively affected by the overharvesting of krill, as Antarctic whales, seals, penguins, seabirds and fish rely on krill as their primary food source.

From the inception of the Commission for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources (CCAMLR), conservation measures have been adopted to manage Antarctic fisheries and by-catch, which predominantly concern Antarctic krill. However, the increased in unregulated fishing has had an impact on krill, since their numbers have dwindled drastically.

As a member of the CCAMLR, what efforts are being undertaken by the EU to ensure that krill and phytoplankton stocks are stabilised and protected, so that the marine ecosystem is safeguarded, protecting in turn the animals that rely on krill for food?