

WRITTEN QUESTION E-0975/09

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to the Commission

Subject: Vessel decommissioning

Over the last year intensive vessel decommissioning has been taking place in the Elefsina Bay, the number of vessels being decommissioned having rapidly increased from four the previous year to 50. The port of Elefsina has a capacity of up to 250 decommissioned vessels. This trend is also causing concern regarding Maliako Bay, which has become a 'ship cemetery' following the crisis affecting local shipping, leading to discontent and protests on the part of local residents since, as well as creating an eyesore, it will have an incalculable effect on the environment. If vessel decommissioning continues at the same rate it will be necessary to seek fresh locations for this purpose.

In view of this can the Commission provide the following information:

1. What criteria are used to determine the number of vessels which can be decommissioned in any given location?
2. To what extent is it necessary to obtain the agreement of the local authorities and hold prior consultations with local residents before designating a location for vessel decommissioning and what measures are taken to ensure that local residents are kept effectively informed?
3. Does it consider that a time limit should be imposed on vessel decommissioning and what does it consider that this limit should be so as to ensure that the amount of time a vessel remains in the water does not result in marine pollution?
4. Does it consider that a decommissioned vessel should be taken out of the water after a reasonable period of time for hull maintenance work below the waterline, as is the case for vessels which are still in use?
5. Should vessels registered in third countries be admitted for decommissioning in Community ports?
6. In conclusion, does it consider it necessary to introduce Community legislation setting out terms and conditions for vessel decommissioning?