

**Question for written answer E-006051/2013
to the Commission**

Rule 117

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Subject: Consequences for the Canary Islands of the EU-Mauritania Fisheries Protocol

The new Fisheries Protocol between the EU and Mauritania was signed by the Commission in July 2012. It has brought about a series of substantial changes to the operations and control of various fleets fishing out of the Canary Islands or operating in the port of Las Palmas.

The two fishing fleets that are most important to the islands' economy are the cephalopod fleet and the fleet of large pelagic trawlers. The former has stopped fishing since the signing of the new protocol while the latter has not taken advantage of the fishing opportunities under the new protocol owing to changes made to its technical and economic conditions. The same applies to the shellfish fleet, which also suffered changes to its conditions for fishing access.

Information obtained from various sources, including operators in the Canary Islands and the members of a delegation from Parliament's Committee on Fisheries who recently visited the area, all points to the protocol having a major impact on the Canary Islands, creating problems in terms of both onboard and fisheries-related jobs. The port of Las Palmas has seen its business decline and trade in fishing merchandise has fallen significantly.

Does the Commission have data on the socioeconomic impact of the new EU-Mauritania Fisheries Protocol for the port of Las Palmas and the Canary Islands in general, particularly in regard to employment? Were these circumstances taken into account during negotiations on the Protocol? Will the Commission take measures to rectify the anticipated effects and even undesirable consequences of this Protocol being implemented?