

**Question for written answer E-012362/2015
to the Commission**

Rule 130

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Subject: Sea bass management

Dicentrarchus labrax populations in the Mediterranean are considered to be outside safe biological limits. Furthermore, a MAFF study from 1995 entitled 'An appraisal of the UK bass fishery and its management' reported in its conclusions that 'The main problem facing the MLS [minimum landing size] is the presence in the UK of undersized fish from abroad, mainly farmed fish. It is suggested that this problem might be dealt with by requiring origin marking for farmed imports and by increasing the MLS in the Mediterranean'. Council Regulation (EC) No 1967/2006 states that the MLS for sea bass is 25 cm, but a Bangor University report indicates that female Mediterranean sea bass reach sexual maturity at the age of 3 (Kara 1997), which corresponds to 40 cm.

1. Does the Commission agree that it is necessary and urgent to raise the Mediterranean sea bass MLS in order to allow most of them to spawn at least once and to achieve greater equity in the European market?
2. What steps does the Commission intend to take to address this issue?