

**Question for written answer E-005532/2021
to the Commission**

Rule 138

Lefteris Nikolaou-Alavanos (NI)

Subject: Authorisation of winch trawl fishing operations currently being blocked by the Government, which is invoking EU regulations

The ND Government has submitted a management plan to regulate traditional seine fishing, accompanied by a request for derogations under Article 13 of Regulation (EC) No 1967/2006.

The European Commission's Directorate-General for Maritime Policy and Fisheries is urging the Greek Government to 'complete as soon as possible the internal procedures for adoption of the national management plan for seine fishing'. Since then, proceedings have ground to a halt, effectively preventing winch trawling operations.

The ND Government is deliberately treating fishing activities unequally in a bid to create the impression that winch trawling alone is responsible for damage to fish stocks, while allowing large-scale fishing operations to continue unmolested.

Serious issues are also arising regarding the legality of operations by Turkish fishers in the Greek territorial waters of the Eastern Aegean and with Italian fishers.

In the light of the above:

What view does the Commission take of the urgent need to authorise winch trawling operations currently being blocked by the Greek Government, which is invoking EU regulations?

What is its response to the urgent request from fishers to step up and complete the proceedings for the adoption of an implementing regulation establishing a derogation regarding the minimum distance from the coast and the minimum sea depth to be respected by seine fishers on the basis of the management plan submitted by the Greek Government on 17 January 2021?