

Question for written answer E-002650/2023
to the Commission
Rule 138
Grace O'Sullivan (Verts/ALE)

Subject: Remedial action to recover severely overexploited fish stocks in the EU

Recent scientific advice highlights the severe overexploitation of over 25 north-east Atlantic and over 30 Mediterranean fish stocks, marked by impaired reproduction and the risk of collapse. Despite obligations under the common fisheries policy and multiannual plans, progress in adopting effective emergency and recovery measures has been limited. For the last 30 years, the levels of Irish Sea whiting and West of Scotland cod have remained below safe biological limits: these currently stand at just 7 % and 15 % respectively of the maximum sustainable yield biomass trigger (MSY Btrigger) abundance thresholds. Scientists urge strong reductions in fishing or even zero catches for stock recovery, yet this advice is often ignored, particularly when overexploited stocks are caught as by-catch in mixed fisheries.

1. Is the Commission considering adopting emergency and remedial measures to recover overexploited fish stocks in the north-east Atlantic and the Mediterranean, such as additional measures to reduce the by-catch of overexploited stocks in mixed fisheries?
2. Global sea temperatures have surged significantly in recent months, with particularly striking surface temperature increases being recorded in the north-east Atlantic. Will the Commission consider proposing additional precautionary measures when setting fishing opportunities for fish stocks, particularly for severely overexploited stocks, that take into account the potential risks that anomalous warmth poses for species' distribution, reproduction and food web dynamics?

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