

**Question for oral answer O-000023/2014
to the Commission**

Rule 115

Alain Cadec, Gabriel Mato Adrover

on behalf of the Committee on Fisheries

Subject: Conservation of sea-bass at European level

In its answer to my question of 29 June 2011 on overfishing of sea-bass, the Commission stated that the commercial exploitation of sea-bass was under scrutiny at EU level and that the last available scientific assessment of stocks had been inconclusive.

Sea-bass is of great economic value in some regions to both the artisanal and recreational fishing sectors, and contributes to local economies. Recreational fishing for sea-bass is significant, and accounts for substantial catches in some areas.

Sea-bass is not a species subject to TACs (total allowable catches), so in order to protect it Member States have put in place technical measures applying both to professional and recreational fishers.

In spite of the management measures adopted by various Member States, stocks are worryingly low. An opinion issued in February 2011 by the French Research Institute for Exploitation of the Sea (Ifremer) states that if the species is to be exploited sustainably, real political choices need to be made, then scrutinised and discussed by all stakeholders when – as must happen – a long term management plan is put in place. Does the Commission envisage putting forward a multi-annual management plan for sea-bass at European level? Such a measure would permit fishing effort to be monitored at European level and enable sufficient financial, human, technical and administrative resources to be allocated for such monitoring to be carried out.

Ifremer recommends studying the biology and ecology of the species, where and when stocks are to be found, the level of stocks, the ways in which they are exploited and the share in this exploitation of the various trades involved, the consequences of management strategies for the ecosystem and the differing socio-economic impacts of the various fleets. Given that there is a real lack of reliable data concerning sea-bass, does the Commission propose to carry out a detailed scientific study to enable sea-bass stocks to be evaluated?

Tabled: 29.1.2014

Forwarded: 31.1.2014

Deadline for reply: 7.2.2014