

WRITTEN QUESTION P-0264/08
by Bogdan Golik (PSE)
to the Commission

Subject: Ban on salmon fishing using driftnets

Council Regulation (EC) 2187/2005¹ prohibits the use of driftnets for salmon fishing from 1 January 2008. This ban has been imposed on Polish fishermen with a view to protecting porpoises in the southern Baltic. Independent studies carried out by the Sea Fisheries Institute in Gdynia as part of the programme to monitor accidental catches of cetaceans found no sign of porpoises living in Baltic Sea subdivisions 25 and 26 and recorded no cases of such mammals becoming entangled in nets.

Why has the Commission made no effort to change the restrictions imposed on Polish fishermen by Council Regulation (EC) No 2187/2005, given in particular the findings of the above studies and the economic and social costs these measures entail for Poland? Only two fishing methods may be used to catch salmon in Polish coastal areas, namely driftnets and fishing by line, which is not very profitable. The ban imposed on Polish fishermen is having a major impact on the livelihoods of nearly 300 families.

Under Article 27 of the above regulation, the Commission must ensure that a scientific assessment of the effects of using in particular gillnets, trammel nets and entangling nets on cetaceans is conducted by 1 January 2008. Why did the Commission not submit the report's conclusions prior to the entry into force of the ban on the use of nets? When will the report's conclusions be made available to Parliament?

¹ OJ L 349, 31.12.2005, p. 1.