

WRITTEN QUESTION P-3698/08  
by Jean-Claude Martinez (NI)  
to the Commission

Subject: Situation of fishermen in the European Union

The EU's fishermen are bearing the full brunt of the explosion in diesel prices, the drastic reductions in quotas (particularly for cod) and in the number of days spent at sea and competition from third-country fishing vessels.

The Commission's response is to plan to reduce 2009 quotas by over 25% for certain species and/or certain areas in which maximum catch levels are being exceeded.

Why has this extreme solution, which is tantamount to provocation, not been discussed with those working in the fishing industry?

What impact are rising diesel prices having on fishing companies' finances, and what measures does the Commission plan to take to offset the excessive burden represented by these higher prices?

With regard to fishing quotas, would a multiannual approach to quota management not provide the flexibility and effectiveness which are currently lacking?

According to the latest statistics what is the exact tonnage of fish, broken down by country, imported into the European Union?

Finally, what does the Commission intend to do to combat unfair competition from third-country vessels which come and fish in Community waters and are not subject to the same constraints as our vessels?