

WRITTEN QUESTION P-5219/08
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to the Commission

Subject: New management system for fisheries in the outermost regions

In 2006, after some years of reflection and discussion, the EU adopted Regulation (EC) No 1967/2006¹, which specifically concerns the sustainable management of fish stocks in the Mediterranean. A differentiated regulation for the management of Mediterranean resources was devised taking account of some of that sea's particularities, such as its geological configuration (zones of great depth), the presence of highly migratory species (tuna and similar), and the prevalence of coastal fishing using tackle of a traditional nature (this applies to some 80% of the Mediterranean fleet).

Following this example for the Mediterranean, it appears desirable that the approach to fisheries management and preservation of the marine environment should also take account of the specific characteristics of fishing and fisheries zones in the case of certain of the outlying regions (ORs), such as the Azores. The absence of a continental shelf (as in most of the Mediterranean), the heavily fisheries-dependent nature of the majority of local communities (the Azores are among the Union's 30 most fisheries-dependent regions), the presence in the fishing-grounds of highly migratory species, and the traditional character of the outermost regions' fisheries are characteristics which should in themselves justify the existence of an exceptional and specific regime for the practice of fishing in those regions.

In view of the above, is the Commission considering the possibility in the near future of ensuring a specific legislative framework for the ORs on lines similar to those adopted for management in the Mediterranean?

In addition, does the Commission believe that the following:

- abolition of the TAC/quota system for certain species, with stock regulation being carried out instead via management of the fishing effort (as in the Mediterranean);
- delineation of protected biogeographical areas within the ORs, with a view to limiting fishing in certain zones and ensuring positive discrimination in favour of the local fishing fleets; and
- the drawing-up of regional management plans with a view to a more flexible implementation of the general regulations

could form part of a new fisheries management system for the ORs?

¹ OJ L 36, 8.2.2007, p. 6.