

**Question for written answer E-003013/2024
to the Commission**
Rule 144
Pernando Barrena Arza (The Left)

Subject: Unfair competition from third-country fleets for EU mackerel catches

Basque Country fishing fleets catch mackerel within the EU quotas. Fleets from countries such as Norway, Iceland and the Faroe Islands, meanwhile, also fish for mackerel in their waters but are not subject to any restrictions on how much they catch. This situation is seriously affecting the Basque sector. First and foremost, overfishing of mackerel in the North Sea means that less and less mackerel reaches the Cantabrian Sea from the North Atlantic. Those mackerel catches also flood the EU market, as the countries of origin have preferential trade agreements with the EU.

In view of the above:

1. Is the Commission aware of the overfishing in the North Sea, the damage it causes to expected catches for the Basque fleet? Is it also aware that those catches are sold within the EU and pose unfair competition to EU catches?
2. Is the Commission planning to adopt any type of measure to mitigate the overfishing of mackerel and unfair competition in how the fish is distributed in the EU by Iceland, Norway and the Faroe Islands?

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