

**Question for written answer E-002536/2025
to the Commission**

Rule 144

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Subject: Compliance with quotas for mackerel and protection of small-scale fishing

Small-scale fishers who fish in the North-East Atlantic describe the mackerel fishing season as a failed one, in particular for the fleet using small-scale hook-and-line fishing methods, which depends on this kind of fishing for an essential part of their income.

Basque fishers report that overfishing by third countries like Norway and Iceland reduce the availability of mackerel in Basque waters. While the seine fleet is able to diversify its catches, the hook-and-line fleet has been severely affected.

Decline in mackerel biomass is a cause for great concern, since scientific studies warn of a possible zero quota in 2026 if the trend persists.

Pending the new report from the International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES), and in view of the above, the following questions thus arise:

1. What measures is the Commission adopting so that third countries respect scientific recommendations and quota agreements, and in this way ensure sustainable exploitation of mackerel stock?
2. What support mechanisms is the Commission considering for the fishers that depend on mackerel?
3. Considering the Union's commitment to small-scale fishing, which concrete actions does the Commission intend to promote in order to ensure the viability of small-scale fishing fleets facing competition from more industrialised fleets?

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