

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-002012/24
to the Commission**

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(10 October 2024)

Subject: Sharp increase in illegal fishing in French Guiana

On 16 September 2024, the French Government published a report showing that illegal fishing has doubled in the waters of French Guiana.

According to the report, even though just 20 or so French vessels fish legally in those waters, there are sometimes 50 or even 100 foreign vessels sailing into our waters and fishing there illegally.

French fishers are subject to increasingly rigorous constraints, yet the EU's strategy to combat illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing is an utter failure in French Guiana.

What reforms will the Commission carry out to prevent the looting of our overseas waters? Will it provide monitoring personnel and resources to ensure that our fishers who respect the rules and their environment are no longer hounded, and focus instead on the maritime predators who undermine them through unfair competition?

Submitted: 10.10.2024

Answer given by Mr Kadis on behalf of the European Commission
(20 December 2024)

In the framework of the EU Illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing Regulation (EC) No 1005/2008, the Commission has sent formal communications to Suriname and Venezuela, whose vessels are involved in these IUU fishing activities in French Guiana.

Suriname provided some written elements to the Commission's formal communication and a meeting is scheduled in the coming weeks. Venezuela acknowledged receipt of the Commission's request.

The Commission is monitoring the situation very closely and remains prepared to take action if necessary against these countries involved in IUU fishing in the waters of French Guiana.

Member States are strongly encouraged to reinforce their controls of fishery products imported from this region to avoid the entry into the EU market of fishery products stemming from these IUU fishing activities.

According to the Fisheries Control Regulation ⁽¹⁾, Member States are primarily responsible for controlling the fishing activities within the waters under their sovereignty and for allocating accordingly adequate financial and human resources to ensure that control.

The 2023-2024 national French fishery control plan prioritises the control on illegal fishing by small scale fisheries of neighbouring third-country vessels operating in the French Guiana Exclusive Economic Zone.

French local control measures include monitoring landings of the Venezuelan fleet (according to the bilateral agreement, 75% of the catches must be landed in the port of Cayenne) and control of vessels fishing for shrimp in French Guiana waters.

⁽¹⁾ In particular Article 5 of Regulation (EC) No 1224/2009 as last amended by Regulation (EU) 2023/2842.