

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-002736/24
to the Commission
Ciaran Mullooly (Renew)
(3 December 2024)**

Subject: Irish fishing industry

The Irish fishing industry has faced significant economic losses due to the unilateral increases in mackerel quotas by Norway and the Faroe Islands. The EU has set a 22% reduction in total allowable catches, which will result in further cuts in the Irish mackerel quota for 2025. In combination with the transfer of 26% of the EU's mackerel quota to the UK under Brexit, this poses a serious risk to the future stability of the Irish fishing fleet.

With this in mind:

1. What measures will the Commission take to address unilateral mackerel quota increases by non-EU states in order to protect shared stocks?
2. Will the Commission address Ireland's post-Brexit quota disadvantages?
3. How will the Commission relieve the economic hardships faced by Irish fishers?

Submitted: 3.12.2024

**Answer given by Mr Kadis on behalf of the European Commission
(4 February 2025)**

The Commission represents the EU in coastal States consultations with Norway, the Faroe Islands, and others, in line with the EU position approved by the Council and in coordination with Member States. The focus is on sustainable, equitable mackerel stock management. The Commission urges collective quotas aligned with scientific advice, addressing the stock's critical state caused by excessive unilateral quotas.

The Commission is also exploring options to reinforce its sustainability tools, for instance, by clarifying the scope of application of Regulation 1026/2012 ⁽¹⁾ for the conservation of fish stocks in relation to countries allowing non-sustainable fishing, which is subject to an ongoing ordinary legislative procedure.

The total quota of Ireland for 2025 including transfers from the North Sea TAC (total allowable catches) amounts to 39 914 tonnes, agreed in line with the advice from the International Council for the Exploration of the Sea for a 22% decrease. Ireland's quota has decreased proportionately less than that of other Member States by virtue of the Council decision to grant Ireland a preferential treatment on mackerel (so-called Hague preferences) ⁽²⁾.

Ireland was a main beneficiary of the EU support through the Brexit Adjustment Reserve until the end of 2023. Currently, Ireland's fishers and coastal communities may benefit from the European Maritime, Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund (EMFAF) to modernise the fishing fleet, diversify income sources, and enable a sustainable blue economy in the affected communities.

⁽¹⁾ Commission proposal of 13 September 2024 to amend Regulation (EU) No 1026/2012 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 October 2012 on certain measures for the purpose of the conservation of fish stocks in relation to countries allowing non-sustainable fishing OJ L 316 COM(2024) 407 final.

⁽²⁾ Annex VII to Council Resolution of 3 November 1976 ('The Hague Resolution').