

Answer given by Mr Fischler on behalf of the Commission

(21 January 2004)

The regulation at Community level of the fishery for salmon in the Baltic Sea includes total allowable catches (TACs) and quotas as well as technical measures, with a view to ensuring a sustainable utilisation of the resources. As is general within the framework of the Common Fisheries Policy, the Commission bases its proposals concerning TACs and fishing quotas on scientific advice. By using these working methods, the Commission believes indeed that the existing regulation of fishery will allow us to preserve stocks.

As regards the allocation of quotas, the quotas for individual Member States are based on the concept of relative stability which is one of the important elements of the Common Fisheries Policy — see Article 20(1) of Council Regulation (EC) No 2371/2002 ⁽¹⁾. However, at the level of the International Baltic Sea Fisheries Commission (IBSFC) and within the framework of the Salmon Action Plan 1997-2010, Recommendation No XIX which was adopted in 2002 might lead to some changes in the future along the lines that the Honourable Member is suggesting. In the afore-mentioned Resolution, it is stated that IBSFC will decide on additional fishing possibilities on surplus reared salmon, which will be allocated to the Parties in relation to their release of smolt. It should also be noted that in order to utilise these additional fishing possibilities, the Party in question shall prove that it can target only reared salmon, by conducting fishery for the additional fishing possibilities in defined terminal fishery areas and by participating in a comprehensive adipose fin clipping programme which will allow for distinction between wild and reared salmon. The purpose of this new harvesting strategy is to shift fishery from the mixed wild and reared salmon fishery to a fishery that mainly targets reared salmon populations.

⁽¹⁾ Council Regulation (EC) No 2371/2002 of 20 December 2002 on the conservation and sustainable exploitation of fisheries resources under the Common Fisheries Policy, OJ L 358, 31.12.2002.

(2004/C 78 E/0890)

WRITTEN QUESTION E-3616/03

by Esko Seppänen (GUE/NGL) to the Commission

(5 December 2003)

Subject: Setting fishing quotas for the new Member States

How does the Commission intend to set appropriate fishing quotas in the Baltic when the new Member States join the Union, and will it be possible, for example, to include in them obligations on the new Member States with regard to salmon restocking?

Answer given by Mr Fischler on behalf of the Commission

(21 January 2004)

The relative stability keys for the first allocation of fishing quotas to the new Member States are laid down in the Treaty of Accession. For the Baltic Sea, the allocation keys are based on current practice in the International Baltic Sea Fisheries Commission (IBSFC). The total allowable catches (TACs) for the Baltic Sea in 2004 were agreed at the Annual Session of the IBSFC in September-October 2003 and the results are transposed into the Community legislation through the TAC and Quota Regulation for 2004.

As regards salmon restocking, there are currently no such obligations on the Member States in Community legislation and there will thus not be any for the new Member States either. However at IBSFC level, where the new Member States bordering the Baltic Sea are all involved, there is a series of Recommendations regarding the Salmon Action Plan 1997-2010, which includes that 'wild salmon populations shall be re-established in potential salmon rivers'.