

**Question for written answer E-015280/2015
to the Commission**

Rule 130

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Salvatore Cicu (PPE)**

Subject: The 'Fish War' in the Sicilian Channel

Difficulties relating to fishing in the Mediterranean, including the 'fish war' in the Sicilian Channel, has led to Sicilian vessels being seized in international waters (resulting in economic damage to the tune of over EUR 90 million in fines, ransoms, seizures of catches and equipment, with 130 fishing boats having been seized by military units from neighbouring Mediterranean countries, five of which have been permanently confiscated; with over 350 fishermen forcibly detained in Tunisian, Libyan, Egyptian, etc. prisons, and with three deaths and over 16 seafarers injured by soldiers and/or militiamen from North African countries).

There is a continuing legislative and regulatory imbalance between our fleets and those from other Mediterranean countries; even though European and North African vessels fish in the same waters, they have very different methods and production costs, which is to the detriment of Sicilian operators who have traditionally fished in the international waters near Libya, Tunisia, Algeria and Egypt.

Can the Commission clarify how it intends to:

- strengthen its cooperation with Mediterranean countries in the fisheries sector;
- develop the role of regional or sub-regional organisations, as observers, so that they can deal with technical, scientific and economic development cooperation in order to rectify the current distortions of Mediterranean fisheries in the Sicilian Channel?