

Dear Commissioner,

RE: Shrimp Fisheries

I am writing to express my concern about the detrimental impacts of shrimp production on both local communities and marine/coastal environments.

The current practice of trawling is still a very unselective, ineffective fishing method, despite recent reforms; populations of some bycatch species, notably endangered species, have declined rapidly as a consequence. The Bycatch Reduction Devices made mandatory for shrimp trawlers operating in the EU may help to reduce the impact of these fisheries on commercial stocks but they are yet much less effective at excluding the juveniles of these commercial species.

Environmentally, the impact of shrimp trawl nets being dragged over the seabed is extensively damaging, causing destruction to a great variety of marine habitats in the EU and abroad. In a global context, 70% of the world's fish stocks are already overfished or fully exploited; wasteful and damaging shrimp fisheries only exacerbate this scenario. In a developmental context, shrimp fisheries feature prominently in fishing agreements which the EU has with third countries - agreements which are both exploitative and which seriously undermine the provisions of UNCLS with regard to the protection of the marine environment. These countries being some of the poorest in the world, they can ill-afford further loss of their natural resources.

Evidently, greater transparency is needed in how the EU conducts its fishing agreements with third countries. It is also clear that there is need for immediate research and monitoring of the impacts of EU shrimp fisheries, addressing the impacts on both commercial stocks and marine ecosystems - within the EU and in developing nations. Marine ecosystems especially need to figure more prominently in shrimp fishery management, notably greater emphasis being placed on the enforcement of current EU environmental and fisheries legislation.

I look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely

Dr. Caroline Lucas MEP