

**Question for written answer E-006496/2014
to the Commission**

Rule 130

Fernando Maura Barandiarán (ALDE)

Subject: Protected species being fished in an SCI

In August, the Spanish Civil Guard intercepted a recreational craft fishing for red tuna in Spanish waters surrounding the Rock of Gibraltar. This area – the 'Estrecho Oriental' – is a special protection area and so they were fishing illegally.

The vessel took flight, however, and headed to the port of Gibraltar for refuge, where vessels of the Royal Gibraltar Police and Royal Navy proceeded to take the suspected offender under their protection and prevent the Spanish authorities from carrying out their duties.

1. Is the Commission aware of this incident in which British official vessels apparently assisted in the escape of a vessel illegally fishing a protected species in waters granted special protection by the EU?
2. What measures will the Commission take in this regard?
3. Does the Commission consider that in shielding illegal fishing in this way, the United Kingdom can be declared liable in the alternative for the liabilities incurred by the offender?