

**Question for written answer E-004170/2015  
to the Commission**

Rule 130

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Subject: Scientific research programme on pulse trawling

- Whereas, according to Council Regulation (EC) No 1626/94, the use of poisoning, explosives or electric shocks in fishing is prohibited in Europe;
- Whereas special conservation areas, such as Dogger Bank and the North Norfolk sandbanks, are areas protected against fishing and any other kind of activity;
- Whereas 97 vessels have been equipped with electric shock generators at £300 000 apiece, making it impossible to convert them to another fishing method;
- Given that, since 2010, these vessels have begun to use the pulse trawling technique to catch prawns in the North Sea, including in protected areas;
- Given that this technique has been banned in the East China Sea, after causing the sector to collapse;
- Whereas recent catches have shown permanent damage to other species and their eggs and embryos;
- Whereas the only explanation the Commission has so far given the media has been to justify this technique on the basis of scientific research;

We ask:

- For what purpose is research like this being conducted, with the North Sea or even two protected marine areas being used for the trials?
- What checks are being carried out during application of this technique, which has a heavy impact on the entire marine ecosystem, and how will the results be measured?