

**Question for written answer E-003430/2019  
to the Commission**

Rule 138

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Subject: Recovery of plastics at sea

It is an undeniable fact that, in a notoriously fragile ecosystem, Mediterranean fishermen can, in the course of their regular activities, play a strategic role in the recovery of plastics.

Indeed, the large quantities of plastics in the Mediterranean have prompted fishermen from mainland Italy and the islands to act on their own initiative and bring back enormous amounts of recovered plastics to shore for subsequent disposal.

However, the disposal of the plastics on land continues to pose a problem and it is the fishermen themselves who are being called on to meet the costs of what is regarded as special waste disposal.

In recovering plastics at sea, fishermen are making a valuable contribution to environmental protection and to implementation of the European Circular Economy Strategy.

In view of this:

1. What specific action will the Commission take to ensure that fishermen do not have to bear the direct and indirect costs of the disposal of plastics recovered at sea?
2. Will it consider granting EMFF assistance and other incentives for the recovery by fishermen of plastics and other refuse found at sea, given that they are providing an important service in decontaminating the marine environment?