

**Question for written answer E-003633/2019
to the Commission**

Rule 138

Izaskun Bilbao Barandica (Renew)

Subject: Possible Commission proposal on albacore at the forthcoming ICCAT plenary meeting

In July 2019, the South-West Waters Advisory Council (SWWAC) forwarded its opinion No 130 to the Commission, calling for a revision of the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas' (ICCAT) albacore tuna management framework so that the total allowable catch (TAC) for 2020 can be increased slightly. A recent report by ICCAT's Standing Committee on Research and Statistics stated that the Commission can adopt alternative rules in order to maximise long-term catches without jeopardising the achievement of the sustainable management objectives laid down in ICCAT Resolution 16-06. According to the report, as long as stocks remain above the biomass limit, the Commission is free to reduce the TAC by no more than 20%, or to increase it by a maximum of 25%.

Owing to the importance of albacore fishing in ensuring the economic viability of a large number of Spanish, French, Portuguese and Irish vessels, the SWWAC is calling for ICCAT's recommendation to be followed and for the TAC to be set near the maximum sustainable level of 37 082 tonnes.

Does the Commission consider this to be an EU priority, and that the EU should therefore submit a corresponding draft recommendation at the forthcoming ICCAT plenary meeting?