

**Question for written answer E-001198/2021/rev.1  
to the Commission**

Rule 138

**Izaskun Bilbao Barandica** (Renew)

Subject: DG MARE proposal to the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission (IOCT) to legalise driftnets and sanction purse seines

DG MARE has submitted a proposal to the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission (IOCT) under which fewer yellowfin tuna catches would be made using encircling gears than with driftnets. Driftnets have been banned by the UN since 31 December 1992. Driftnet fishing gear has been outlawed in the EU since 2002 under Regulation (EC) No 1239/98, and it has been banned on all EU vessels since 2015. In resolutions adopted in 2012 and 2017, the IOCT spelled out the end of large-scale driftnet fishing as of 1 January 2022. Despite that, however, driftnets are still being used to catch 17% of the yellowfin tuna caught in the Indian Ocean (70 000 tonnes per year), because countries with driftnet fisheries have not made any efforts to reduce the impact of drift netting, they do not contribute to the IOTC and they do not monitor compliance with its rules and regulations.

1. Why does the Commission consider drift netting to be legal when it has been banned by the UN, the EU and the IOTC?
2. What reports justify the proposal to cut the use of purse seines when their catch rate with regard to juveniles is lower than that of other gears, including driftnets?
3. Does it consider the proposal to be sustainable?