

Question for written answer E-001867/2021
to the Commission
Rule 138
Frédérique Ries (Renew)

Subject: Introduction of a European sustainable fisheries label independent of the fishing industry

If consumers are to have the power to make fishing more respectful of nature and the environment, they need to know the reality behind 'sustainable fisheries' labels, so that they can make ethical purchases in protest against the scourge of overfishing. Doubt is often cast on the reliability of these labels. Many studies have emphasised that the majority of certified 'sustainable fisheries' products do not come from small-scale coastal fishing. This is true, for example, of the MSC label, created in 1997 as a private initiative. It now covers 15% of world fish catches.

In the light of the above, can the Commission answer the following questions:

1. What means of control does it have to ensure that fish certified by a label have been caught in authorised areas, and will it consider setting up an independent certification system?
2. Given that the idea of European rules on fishery ecolabels is not new (the last stakeholder consultation took place in July 2015), is it not time to introduce an EU label which can be used as a reliable indicator of progress on marine biodiversity?