

**Question for written answer E-002571/2021  
to the Commission**  
Rule 138  
**Daniel Buda (PPE)**

**Subject:** Sturgeons, an endangered species while poaching is on the increase.

World Wildlife Fund Romania has, over the last four years, conducted a market study on the trafficking of sturgeon products. The study found that over this period, in the Lower Danube Basin area, nearly a third of the sturgeon product samples (caviar, sturgeon flesh) were illegal, and the authorities reported 214 cases of poaching.

The WWF market study is the first to provide evidence of an increase in poaching and illegal trade in wild sturgeon flesh and caviar in the Lower Danube region, particularly in Bulgaria, Serbia and Ukraine. The Lower Danube Basin is one of the last places in the world where sturgeon species, classified by the IUCN as the most endangered group of animals on the planet, still survive and reproduce. Illegal sturgeon fishing and trade in products derived from sturgeon are often cited as significant threats to the species.

The Black Sea region is crucial for the survival of this species in Europe. The Danube and the Rioni in Georgia are the only two rivers in Europe where sturgeon migrate and reproduce naturally.

What instruments does the Commission have for the protection of sturgeon species?