

**Question for written answer E-003272/2021  
to the Commission**  
Rule 138  
**Clara Aguilera (S&D)**

**Subject:** By-catches of dolphins in the Northeast Atlantic

The Northeast Atlantic's stock of common dolphins is in the region of 634 000, according to the ICES<sup>1</sup>. Fishers in the Bay of Biscay have informed me that they are detecting increasing numbers of common dolphins in the area, and the ICES has stated that there are no clear signs of population decline in the management unit, according to the WKEMBYC 2020 report<sup>2</sup>. Active fishers in the Bay of Biscay have undertaken numerous initiatives and projects to improve understanding of the problem and limit dolphin by-catch.

1. On what scientific reports or data will the Commission base its assessment of the decisions taken in relation to dolphin by-catches in the Bay of Biscay?
2. How can the Commission best support and assist the various projects in this area, the results of which are so promising?
3. How does the Commission explain the sudden increase and consequent variability in the estimated number of cases of stranding and by-catches of common dolphins over the last five years, given that the amount of fishing by the Union's fleets in the Bay of Biscay has remained generally stable?

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.ices.dk>

<sup>2</sup> [https://www.ices.dk/sites/pub/Publication%20Reports/Expert%20Group%20Report/HAPISG/2020/WKEMBYC\\_2020.pdf](https://www.ices.dk/sites/pub/Publication%20Reports/Expert%20Group%20Report/HAPISG/2020/WKEMBYC_2020.pdf)