

**Question for written answer E-002762/2022  
to the Commission**

Rule 138

**Izaskun Bilbao Barandica** (Renew)

**Subject:** Repercussions for the fisheries sector of the latest demarcation of vulnerable marine ecosystems (VMEs) and their buffer zones

As part of the implementation of Regulation (EU) 2016/2336, the Commission has proposed an implementing act. Fisheries sector representatives have taken a strong stand against the total area and number of vulnerable marine ecosystem (VME) areas identified in Annex II to that act in which bottom fishing will be banned. Fishers expect massive economic losses because those VME areas have been demarcated at too great a geographical resolution and are amplified by significant buffer zones that fishers believe are totally disproportionate.

Against this backdrop:

1. Can the Commission provide details of the number of vessels affected by those closures, the extent of their dependency on these areas, and the total economic damage projected under scenario 2.1, which it chose?
2. How did the Commission limit the direct and indirect economic impact caused by the displacement of activities and how did it apply the principle of proportionality?
3. Can the Commission confirm that, in Annex II to its Implementing Act, it only included 'a list of areas where VMEs are known to occur or are likely to occur', as provided for in Article 9(6) of Regulation (EU) 2016/2336?