

**Question for written answer E-000473/2023**  
**to the Commission**  
Rule 138  
**Jens Gieseke (PPE)**

**Subject:** Fishing off the German North Sea Coast

The situation for fishermen working off the German North Sea Coast is a precarious for a number of reasons – fuel prices, shrinking fishing grounds (notably because of offshore wind farms) and increasing environmental constraints to name but a few. All fishermen in the EU face similar issues but not always on a level playing field. In the name of equality of competition, there are strict limits on offering support to companies in the Member States. From the perspective of Lower Saxony fishermen, the Dutch State, with its fishing licence acquisition programme, is failing to respect this EU principle. While the Dutch Government buys up individual licences to fish in the Wadden Sea for six figures (SA.60000 (2020/N)), the beneficiary Dutch fishermen and/or vessels can continue working off the German coast and use the funds collected to invest in their fleet.

1. Does the Commission recognise that this aid has an impact on competition in the EU?
2. Why did it not consider the impact on German fishermen in the notification procedure?
3. Will it take action to ensure that national measures to protect the environment do not have a direct negative impact on the internal market?

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