

**Question for written answer E-001610/2023
to the Commission**
Rule 138
David McAllister (PPE)

Subject: Science-based maritime policy

On 27 April 2023, the Thünen Institute of Sea Fisheries presented the results of the CRANIMPACT research project. Over four years, the project studied the impact of shrimp fishing on the predominant habitat types in the Wadden Sea National Parks of the North German Länder. The study examined both short-term effects and chronic changes owing to sustained competitive pressure. One of the main findings of the project is that, in the Wadden Sea – a highly dynamic sea that is affected by strong natural fluctuations – crab fisheries have a lower impact on the seabed's biological communities compared to other factors, such as sediment composition. For those species on which the study was able to demonstrate that fisheries had an impact, short recovery times of no more than 20 days were calculated. When comparing an area in the Danish Wadden Sea, which has been subject to a fishing ban for more than 40 years, with areas of the German Wadden Sea with differing levels of fishing, scientists found that only 9% of differences could be attributed to the impact of fisheries.

1. Is the Commission aware of the results of the CRANIMPACT project?
2. What does the Commission have to say about the Danish fishing ban's marginal impact on the seabed compared to Germany?
3. Will it take these results into account in its 'Action Plan to protect and restore marine ecosystems for sustainable and resilient fisheries'?

Submitted: 22.5.2023