

**Question for written answer E-003374/2023  
to the Commission**

Rule 138

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**Subject:** Action to end overfishing in the North-East Atlantic, the Mediterranean and the Black Sea

Under Article 2 of the common fisheries policy (CFP), the EU is required to ensure the sustainable exploitation of all fish stocks from 2020 onwards. However, approximately 26 % and 72 % of the assessed fish populations in the North-East Atlantic and the Mediterranean, respectively, remain overfished (based on data from 2021), with average fishing mortality rates in the Mediterranean still nearly twice the sustainable levels<sup>1</sup>. This is largely because many fishing opportunities continue to be set above the sustainable levels recommended by scientific advice.

1. Considering the legal obligations under the CFP, what are the primary justifications faced by the EU in not consistently setting fishing opportunities in accordance with sustainable exploitation levels recommended by scientific advice?
2. What additional measures and strategies to those implemented in previous years is the Commission considering to ensure the full implementation of Article 2(2) of the CFP?
3. Is the Commission considering further promoting transparency in the decision-making process to allow for greater public scrutiny and accountability by making all proposals and meeting minutes regarding the setting of fishing opportunities, both for EU-only and shared stocks, publicly available, in line with the Ombudsman's 2020 decision?

**Supporter<sup>2</sup>**

Submitted: 15.11.2023

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<sup>1</sup> European Commission, Joint Research Centre, Pierucci, A., Mannini, A., Gras, M. et al., *Scientific, Technical and Economic Committee for Fisheries (STECF) – Monitoring the performance of the Common Fisheries Policy (STECF Adhoc 23-01)*, Publications Office of the European Union, 2023.

<sup>2</sup> This question is supported by a Member other than the authors: Rosa D'Amato (Verts/ALE)