

**Question for written answer E-000153/2024
to the Commission**
Rule 138
Izaskun Bilbao Barandica (Renew)

Subject: Illegal sturgeon and caviar trade in the Lower Danube

A study recently published by the journal *Current Biology* revealed serious irregularities in the trade of caviar and sturgeon in the Lower Danube countries. An analysis of approximately 150 samples revealed that 21 % were illegal catches, 30 % violated CITES rules and 32 % had labels with false information on the sturgeon species or the country where they were caught. The samples of sturgeon and caviar meat were purchased in restaurants, fish markets and bars. Although strict labelling rules were introduced in 2000 to protect those species from illegal trade, the practices uncovered by this analysis warn of the need to improve the existing controls. These illegal activities, which are not sustainable, are having an impact on the critical situation of this species in the Danube and urgent action is needed.

1. Does the Commission have any information to back up the Current Biology report?
2. What influence are these practices having on the critical situation of this species in the Danube?
3. Does the Commission intend to take any specific steps to address this situation?

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