

**Question for written answer E-000348/2024
to the Commission**
Rule 138
Aurélia Beigneux (ID)

Subject: Let's put a stop to coral trafficking

Protected by the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), corals are marine organisms mainly found in warm and shallow ocean waters.

Coral is symbolically, culturally and ecologically valuable. It is also threatened by numerous trafficking operations, despite the measures taken in the last few decades, particularly in the French overseas departments. Borders are still acting as sieves, allowing traffickers to help themselves to valuable coral ecosystems. Every year, hundreds of tonnes of coral are illegally exported – constituting a black market worth over USD 200 million.

The ecological consequences are catastrophic and these illegal activities are having irreversible repercussions for marine diversity and the resilience of coastal ecosystems.

In view of the above:

1. Is the Commission aware of this situation and will it take action to address it?
2. Does the Commission intend to encourage cooperation between Member States in order to tackle coral trafficking?
3. Is the Commission planning to step up EU border controls, this being the only measure that can limit cross-border crime?

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