

**Question for written answer E-000617/2024
to the Commission**
Rule 138
Izaskun Bilbao Barandica (Renew)

Subject: Closures to avoid dolphin by-catches

In February 2024, the Commission's Directorate-General for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries argued for new, longer closures, like the closure introduced by the French authorities following a court ruling, to avoid incidental catches of dolphins in the Bay of Biscay. The announcement ignores the sector's criticisms about how the measure has been adopted: with no impact studies, failing to meet the obligation to consult the regional councils and no immediate compensation mechanisms for ceasing activity. The sector also criticises the decision as it ignores scientific reports funded by the Commission itself showing that the ultrasound devices tested avoid 90 % of incidents or imposes a general restriction regardless of the affected vessels' history with this issue.

In view of the above:

1. What dialogue has the Commission established with the sector to respond to these criticisms?
2. Does the Commission consider it reasonable to introduce longer closures without trying other solutions devised together with the sector?
3. Does the Commission believe this action is in line with the common fisheries policy's triple sustainability principle?

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