

**Question for written answer E-001041/2024
to the Commission**
Rule 138
Izaskun Bilbao Barandica (Renew)

Subject: Review of implementing acts concerning the closure of vulnerable marine ecosystems

Regulation (EU) 2016/2336 requires the Commission to adopt – on the basis of the best scientific information available – implementing acts to determine the list of areas where vulnerable marine ecosystems are likely to occur. ICES scientists warned that a large scale was used for the mapping – designed to cover the entire Northeast Atlantic but not coastal areas – and for possible closures. This initial approach alone hinders application of the best science in this process, disregarding better data from EU-funded projects (LIFE+, INDEMARES and INTEMARES).

In view of this:

1. Do the terms of reference drawn up by the Commission to seek ICES's opinion allow higher-resolution contributions from the Member States to be taken into account?
2. Is ICES the only source of the science and knowledge underpinning the Commission's implementing acts, thereby excluding evidence and data published by other recognised scientific bodies?
3. Taking into account the best data available and the serious socioeconomic impact of these closures on the longline fleet, why has the Commission not amended its 2022 decision, given that it is obliged to review annually the impact of its implementing acts?

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