

**Question for written answer P-006515/2013  
to the Commission**

Rule 117

**Gabriel Mato Adrover (PPE)**

Subject: Regulating fishing for deep-sea stocks

The Commission has adopted a proposal for a regulation to regulate fishing for deep-sea stocks and protect vulnerable marine ecosystems. The main feature of this proposal is a ban on the use of bottom trawls and bottom-set gillnets.

The justification given for banning this gear is the need to protect vulnerable marine ecosystems. However, the proposal does not transpose UN resolutions and does not follow FAO guidelines on the regulation of fishing for deep-sea species, and these types of gear are not banned in other countries. Bottom trawls will continue to be used in international waters governed by NAFO and NEAFC and by countries such as Norway, Iceland, the Faroe Islands and Russia.

- Has the Commission looked into the possibility of taking alternative measures that will be less restrictive for the industry but still provide adequate protection for vulnerable marine ecosystems?
- Other fishing countries with deep-sea fishing interests have not banned either bottom trawls or bottom-set gillnets. Does the Commission believe that this ban will be effective if it is not applied across the board, by all fleets and in all areas where the deep-sea species to be protected are found?
- Does the Commission not believe that, rather than protecting vulnerable marine ecosystems, this regulation will merely cause unnecessary harm to the European industry, while these same species will continue to be consumed in the EU but will have to be imported from countries such as Russia, Iceland and the Faroe Islands?