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Answer given by Mr Vella
on behalf of the European Commission
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The future regulation on the conservation of fishery resources and the protection of marine ecosystems through technical measures states that fishing with electric pulse shall be prohibited as of 1 July 2021. During the transitional period ending 30 June 2021 no more than 5% of the beam trawler fleet per Member State may use this gear under the specific conditions in the Technical Measures regulation.

Furthermore, the regulation establishes more stringent conditions for fishing operations conducted for the purpose of scientific investigations compared to those that are in place today. Those apply to all types of vessels/gear. Such operations must be limited in time and, if they involve more than 6 commercial vessels, the flag Member State shall inform the Commission at least three months in advance, which shall seek, where appropriate, the advice of the Scientific, Technical and Economic Committee for Fisheries (STECF) to confirm that this level of participation is justified on scientific grounds. In addition, in the case of electric pulse trawl, vessels conducting scientific research must follow a specific scientific protocol as part of a scientific research plan that has been reviewed or validated by the International Council for the Exploration of the Seas (ICES) or STECF, as well as a system for monitoring, control and evaluation.

It is for the Member States concerned to ensure that their vessels comply with these conditions.