

**Priority question for written answer P-001298/2023
to the Commission**

Rule 138

Francisco José Millán Mon (PPE)

Subject: Opinion of the Scientific, Technical and Economic Committee for Fisheries on the review of the ban on bottom fishing

In reply to my question E-003720/2022¹, the Commission confirmed on 6 January that it had already asked the Scientific, Technical and Economic Committee for Fisheries (STECF) to examine Implementing Regulation (EU) 2022/1614² prohibiting bottom fishing in 87 areas of the Atlantic Ocean.

The Commission further stated that the Bureau of this Committee had agreed to put this item on its agenda for the March 2023 plenary session. However, to the best of my knowledge, STECF has not yet issued its opinion, which should take account of economic, social and employment considerations.

Following the publication yesterday, 18 April, by the International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES) of its revised advice on areas where Vulnerable Marine Ecosystems (VMEs) are known to occur or are likely to occur in Union waters, I should like to ask the following question:

When does the Commission expect the STECF opinion?

Submitted: 19.4.2023

¹ https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/E-9-2022-003720_EN.html

² Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2022/1614 of 15 September 2022 determining the existing deep-sea fishing areas and establishing a list of areas where vulnerable marine ecosystems are known to occur.