

**Priority question for written answer P-002982/2025
to the Commission**
Rule 144
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Subject: Dropped landing obligation infringement procedures

In July 2024, The Financial Times¹ reported that the Commission had dropped infringement proceedings launched in 2021 against France, Spain, Ireland, the Netherlands and Belgium for failing to enforce the EU's ban on discarding unwanted fish at sea. These proceedings aimed to ensure compliance with the landing obligation, requiring catches, including by-catch, to be landed and counted against quotas. The Financial Times reported that the Commission 'quietly' dropped the cases without explanation, and that no evidence was seen that the breaches had been addressed.

Experts have long warned that undocumented discards undermine quota monitoring and the scientific data underpinning fishing limits. Commission staff working document SWD(2025)0149 of 6 June 2025 echoed these warnings, citing a 'lack of effective control measures adopted by Member States to date'², making such violations 'very difficult to detect and confirm'. The European Fisheries Control Agency's 2024 Annual Report³ also found 'low occurrence' of detecting landing obligation infringements, while a recent report by the European Climate, Infrastructure and Environment Executive Agency⁴ found 'ineffective monitoring and enforcement' of this rule at Member State level.

Considering the above:

1. Did the Commission receive any evidence that the identified non-compliance was corrected before closing the five cases?
2. Has it since verified that compliance has improved in the Member States concerned?

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¹ https://www.ft.com/content/92f54b80-24b7-4b57-80f6-a2eadd2a8211?accessToken=zwAGHiDi-6u4kdOS9UuAJLdLV9OA9qLq3SqCEQ.MEUCIBrgX1ar-IVixBkl3pH23gfixiYiS9Z15xqG6RGm62OmIAiEAoJ1fXbcn6CY7R9bUzWpzT_sZxJMVxmOSZSO4nhPbXT0&sharetype=gift&token=1ba2b62f-8594-41df-ba65-7d2607e2fdde.

² https://ec.europa.eu/info/law/better-regulation/have-your-say/initiatives/14725-Sustainable-fishing-in-the-EU-state-of-play-and-orientations-for-2026_en.

³ <https://www.efca.europa.eu/sites/default/files/2025-05/Annual%20Report%202024%20.pdf>.

⁴ https://cinea.ec.europa.eu/document/download/4a34e7aa-8548-4c4f-b8da-be8cdcf2681c_en?filename=Final%20report%20LO_en.pdf.