

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-000205/25
to the Commission
Ana Miranda Paz (Verts/ALE)
(17 January 2025)**

Subject: Veto on bottom trawling in 87 fishing areas in the Atlantic and consequences for Galicia

On 15 December 2022, the European Commission approved a veto on bottom trawling in 87 fishing areas in the Atlantic. This decision was taken without consideration for the serious impact the measure represents for hundreds of families who rely on this type of fishing to survive. What is more, this measure affected 200 Galician-owned boats, a further 900 indirectly and 4 000 crew members, while its economic impact is estimated to have been almost EUR 900 million. At the time, the Commission refused to discuss its decision, despite the significant consequences for the fleet.

In light of this situation:

Will the Commission consider the decision's social impact, review this measure and allow bottom trawling?

Submitted: 18.1.2025

**Answer given by Mr Kadis on behalf of the European Commission
(7 March 2025)**

The Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2022/1614 ⁽¹⁾ establishes the list of areas where vulnerable marine ecosystems (VMEs) occur or are likely to occur, which corresponds to 87 polygons in the European waters of the North-East Atlantic.

Pursuant to the Deep-sea Access Regulation (EU) 2016/2336 ⁽²⁾, the areas listed in Implementing Regulation (EU) 2022/1614 are closed to fishing below 400 metres depth using all bottom gears, which includes bottom trawls, dredges, bottom-set gill nets, bottom-set longlines, pots and traps.

Since 2023, the Commission has engaged in a review process with the Scientific, Technical and Economic Committee for Fisheries (STECF), including an analysis of the socioeconomic impacts of the VMEs closures.

In 2023, preliminary results showed that the closures represent less than 10% of the Gross Value Added for the fleet segments concerned.

The Commission has requested STECF to pursue the analysis at individual vessel level to have a better perception at regional and local level.

STECF is expected to deliver its final advice by March 2025 which will include a specific feedback from stakeholders via the Advisory Councils.

⁽¹⁾ https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/reg_impl/2022/1614/oj

⁽²⁾ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/reg/2016/2336/oj>