

**Question for written answer P-003346/2019
to the Commission**
Rule 138
Catherine Bearder (Renew)

Subject: Impact of lobster fishing on right whales

According to the International Fund for Animal Welfare, only around 400 North Atlantic right whales remain in the world. Their migratory routes run along the North American coastline, an industrialised area of ocean where there is great danger of becoming entangled in commercial fishing gear. Entanglement causes a slow death that can take months or longer. According to the US Marine Mammal Commission, entanglement violates the 1972 US Marine Mammal Protection Act, which requires commercial fisheries to 'reduce incidental mortality and serious injury of marine mammals to insignificant levels approaching a zero mortality and serious injury rate'¹.

Lobstering accounts for much of the abovementioned commercial fishing activity, with USD 81.3 million worth of lobster being exported to the EU Member States each year.

Will the Commission consider a ban on the import of lobster from the east coast of the United States of America until such time as right whales are better protected?

¹ Source of US legislation: <https://www.fws.gov/international/pdf/legislation-marine-mammal-protection-act.pdf>