

21.03.23

**20 Deputy M. Tadier of St. Brelade of the Minister for the Environment regarding pair trawlers fishing in Jersey waters (OQ.82/2021):**

Will the Minister take action to ban pair trawlers fishing in Jersey waters as a matter of urgency; and if not, why not?

**The following response was provided in writing in accordance with Standing Order 63(9) as the oral question was not asked before the end of the time allowed for Oral Questions:**

For those members who are not aware of this activity, pair trawling involves a net being towed between two vessels usually targeting pelagic species. I am aware that this activity does occur in our Waters and is a metier that has been employed by both Jersey and French vessels in the past. Officers do monitor this activity closely and those vessels using this metier are tracked using VMS. However, I accept that this activity can result in some large catches. I'm not in favour of simple banning of activities. I have been very clear, and this is supported by the requirements of the new TCA, that all the management measures put in place must be science and data led and I fully support that. Where measures are required to manage a particular stock or stocks or impacts on the wider marine environment, I will bring those measures forward either by license conditions or through legislation brought to this assembly. Few vessels pair trawl in Jersey Waters. It is mainly two vessels from Granville that fish in Jersey Water all year. They pair trawl generally in the winter months. The target species is predominantly bream but will obviously take other species.

We had agreed an increase in the minimum mesh size for this activity in the JAC meetings but unfortunately it has stalled given the end of the regular meeting with Jersey and French fishermen. It is a measure we would seek to consider.

For any supplementary would iterate the need for science in all management measures in any decision.

The issue of landing fish caught by French vessels may be raised (i.e. should Jersey not seek to benefit from economically those fish caught in our Waters). It is something under consideration but will need to come with the appropriate reception, market, processing, and storage facilities to benefit from any economic gains. I am committed to working with the MEDTSC to establish infrastructure that could accommodate such a situation.