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News | 09.12.2013

Deep sea fishing

Ending bottom trawling crucial for sustainable deep sea fisheries policy

New EU rules governing deep sea fishing will be voted by the European Parliament this week. The Greens believe a priority for these rules must be the phasing-out destructive bottom trawling and gillnets. This image shows the devastating consequences of bottom trawling on the North Atlantic seabed.

Overfishing has pushed fishers into ever deeper waters, causing damage to deep sea environments, which are ecologically fragile, with unique biodiversity and slower life cycles. The UN has recognised this and called for these fragile deep sea environments to be protected. The proposed new EU rules aim to protect deep sea species, with sustainable quotas and management plans. However, a small but loud lobby has raised considerable opposition to proposals to to phase-out destructive and indiscriminate bottom trawling and gillnets. The Greens believe these provisions are essential if the EU is serious about protecting deep sea environments and is trying to convince a majority of MEPs from other groups to support this.

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