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# **EU to Ban Use of Electricity in Fishing**

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The [European Union](#) will impose a blanket ban on the use of electricity in fishing under a plan opposed by the Netherlands and championed by France and environmental groups.

Representatives of EU governments and the [European Parliament](#) agreed to prohibit all electric “pulse” fishing for commercial purposes as of July 2021, ending exemptions that have allowed 5 percent of Dutch trawlers to use the technique in the North Sea.

The practice, in which electrodes are used along the seabed to scoop fish into nets, may continue to be permitted for scientific research.

The deal reached on Wednesday in Strasbourg, France, highlights the political appeal of environmental initiatives in the run-up to [EU Parliament elections](#) in late May. The negotiators added the prohibition to a draft European law on technical measures for fleets.

Environmental groups say electric pulse fishing causes unacceptably high damage to marine habitats and life, depletes the oceans and undercuts small-scale operators. Most of the world’s fishing nations have banned the technique, according to an environmental organization called [Bloom](#).

The accord in Strasbourg will go to the full EU Parliament and to the bloc’s national governments for final approval. Those steps are usually formalities once negotiators for both sides have struck a deal.