

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-001760/24
to the Commission
Kostas Papadakis (NI)
(18 September 2024)**

Subject: Disasters in Chios and need for full compensation for mastic producers and all those affected

Serious problems have been caused in Chios by rainfall over the past few days. Houses and shops in the main town were flooded, as well as the restored wing of the airport building and a central road which had only just been surfaced. Immense damage was also done to the mastic-growing industry, according to the mastic producers' cooperative, with preliminary assessments of the destruction putting the figure at 70% of the crop, or 160 tonnes of mastic.

Mastic producers have taken an enormous hit, as it was the mastic gathering season, and only 20% of this year's production had been harvested.

The New Democracy (ND) government, the municipal administration and the Regional Authority bear a heavy responsibility. Flood-prevention planning is non-existent and, for many years, has been limited to a single project that was completed last year.

This policy is the outcome of applying EU Directive 2007/60/EC, under which flood-prevention works are designed not to reflect the needs of inhabitants but to ensure financial return and low costs.

In the light of this:

1. What view does the Commission take of the demand for immediate and unconditional 100% compensation for those affected, to include full reparation for the damage to the mastic crop as well?
2. What is the Commission's position as regards directly financing all the requisite flood-prevention works and infrastructure on the island that have been going nowhere for decades, so that its inhabitants are not in a state of constant anxiety for their lives and livelihoods in the face of any natural disaster?

Submitted: 18.9.2024

**Answer given by Mr Wojciechowski on behalf of the European Commission
(4 November 2024)**

Member States may provide support for restoration of agricultural potential damaged by natural disasters and for preventive actions in accordance with Regulation (EU) 2021/2115 ⁽¹⁾.

It is up to Member States to plan those interventions in their CAP Strategic Plan (CSP) and eventually support investments to restore agricultural production potential of mastic crops. Eligible investments may be funded entirely (up to 100%) by EU resources, under the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD).

The CSP may also offer financial support in form of loans, guarantees or working capital to help farmers restore agricultural potential after such events.

Member States may benefit from exceptional market measures including support packages to address economic difficulties of farmers financed from the agricultural reserve according to the regulation (EU) 1308/2013 ⁽²⁾.

In the case of adverse climatic events which can be assimilated to a natural disaster, national authorities may also grant support to farmers from their national budget in line with EU State aid rules ⁽³⁾.

⁽¹⁾ Article 73 of Regulation (EU) 2021/2115 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 2 December 2021 establishing rules on support for strategic plans to be drawn up by Member States under the common agricultural policy (CAP Strategic Plans) and financed by the European Agricultural Guarantee Fund (EAGF) and by the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) and repealing Regulations (EU) No 1305/2013 and (EU) No 1307/2013, OJ L 435/1, 6.12.2021.

⁽²⁾ Regulation (EU) 1308/2013 European Parliament and of the Council of 17 December 2013 establishing a common organisation of the markets in agricultural products and repealing Council Regulations (EEC) No 922/72, (EEC) No 234/79, (EC) No 1037/2001 and (EC) No 1234/2007, OJ L 347/671, 20.12.2013.

⁽³⁾ Guidelines for state aid in the agricultural and forestry sectors and in rural areas 2022/C 485/01, OJ C 485, 21.12.2022, p. 1; Commission Regulation (EU) 2022/2472 declaring certain categories of aid in the agricultural and forestry sectors and in rural areas compatible with the internal market in application of Articles 107 and 108 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, OJ L 327, 21.12.2022, p. 1; Commission Regulation (EU) No 1408/2013 of 18 December 2013 on the application of Articles 107 and 108 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union to *de minimis* aid in the agriculture sector, OJ L 352, 24.12.2013 p. 9.

According to the Floods Directive ⁽⁴⁾, the objectives for risk reduction are determined at national level by the Member States based on local and regional circumstances ⁽⁵⁾. The same applies to the selection and prioritisation of measures aiming to reduce the risk from flooding.

For the period 2021-2027, Cohesion Policy supports Greece with some EUR 379 million (public expenditure), to invest on risk prevention and management of floods through targeted measures under the sectoral programmes 'Environment and climate change' and 'Civil Protection'.

Under the regional programme 'Voreio Aigaio', EUR 13 million (public expenditure) are granted to flood protection actions.

⁽⁴⁾ Directive 2007/60/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 October 2007 on the assessment and management of flood risks, OJ L 288, 6.11.2007, p. 27-34.

⁽⁵⁾ https://environment.ec.europa.eu/topics/water/water-framework-directive/implementation-reports_en#ref-6th-implementation-report-2021