

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002993/24
to the Commission
Giuseppe Antoci (The Left)
(17 December 2024)

Subject: Flood and landslide risk assessment in Sicily: a decade of inertia and consequences for public safety

A serious situation has arisen in Sicily, where funds earmarked for mapping flood risks in 70 municipalities have not been used for more than a decade, despite the increasing incidence of flood events and the related human and material tragedies ⁽¹⁾.

Directive 2007/60/EC ⁽²⁾ aims to mitigate the risks and consequences of floods by encouraging Member States to take effective prevention and management measures ⁽³⁾.

The recent interruption to funding for updating the flood hazard map in Sicily raises significant concerns about the region's commitment to flood and landslide risk management.

Despite the importance of flood hazard maps for flood planning and intervention, Sicily is facing stagnation in the process of updating and implementing these critical instruments.

In light of the above:

¹ https://qds.it/stop-appalto-studio-rischi-idraulici-70-comuni-regione-fondi/?refresh_ce

² Transposed in Italy by Legislative Decree No 49/2010.

³ Article 6 requires Member States to prepare flood hazard and flood risk maps at the level of the river basin district or unit of management for areas of potential significant flood risk identified in accordance with Article 5.

1. Is the Commission aware of this situation and what action could it take to ensure compliance with the Floods Directive in Sicily?
2. What financial measures could it take to support the updating of the flood hazard maps?
3. Does it think it would be worthwhile setting up an EU database to record and assess landslides and their causes using a uniform criterion ⁽⁴⁾?

Submitted: 17.12.2024

Answer given by Ms Roswall on behalf of the European Commission
(21 February 2025)

1. Sicily's second Flood Risk Management Plan ⁽¹⁾ plans the updating of flood hazard and risk maps ⁽²⁾. The Italian authorities informed the Commission that, although the updating of such maps was suspended for administrative reasons, the Regional Council gave a mandate to the Regional Department for Financial Planning and Programming to avail itself of the funding available for updating the maps by 31 December 2026.
2. Cohesion policy ⁽³⁾ supports climate change adaptation, disaster risk prevention, and resilience. Under the European Regional Development Fund ⁽⁴⁾, EUR 103 million are indicatively allocated for floods and landslides, with the possibility for prevention measures ⁽⁵⁾. Still, under shared management, in line with the applicable regulations, responsibility to select measures lies with the Managing Authority based on a programme approved by the Commission. While the Recovery and Resilience Facility ⁽⁶⁾ supports Italy in hydrogeological risk reduction and the development of a monitoring system to predict and mitigate climate change risks with a focus on Southern Italy, the Council Implementing Decision Annex ⁽⁷⁾ does not require resource allocation specifically to Sicily. Any allocation to this region is a decision of the Italian authorities ⁽⁸⁾.
3. Existing measures to assess landslides include the European landslide susceptibility map ⁽⁹⁾ and the European Ground Motion Service ⁽¹⁰⁾. Strengthening the knowledge base and promoting soil health can mitigate floods and droughts whilst making the environment more resilient to landslides and soil erosion thanks to improved water retention ⁽¹¹⁾.

⁴ <https://publications.jrc.ec.europa.eu/repository/handle/JRC66707>

⁽¹⁾ Covering 2022-2027, https://environment.ec.europa.eu/topics/water/floods_en

⁽²⁾ Page 55
https://pti.regione.sicilia.it/portal/page/portal/PIR_PORTALE/PIR_LaStrutturaRegionale/PIR_Presidenza della Regione/PIR_Autorita Bacino/PIR_Areemematiche/PIR_Pianificazione/PIR_PianoGestioneDirettiva200760CE/PIR_PianoGestioneRischioAlluvioni2021/PIR_PGRAIICiclo/PIR_RelazioneMedotologicaPGRAllCiclo/Relazione%20metodologica%20PGRA%20II%20ciclo%20di%20gestione.pdf

⁽³⁾ https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/policy/what/investment-policy_en

⁽⁴⁾ 2021-2027 Regional Programme for Sicily, https://commission.europa.eu/funding-tenders/find-funding/eu-funding-programmes/european-regional-development-fund-erdf_en

⁽⁵⁾ Such measures could include the implementation of databases, the development of forecasting models and territorial analyses for risk studies and mitigation models.

⁽⁶⁾ https://commission.europa.eu/business-economy-euro/economic-recovery/recovery-and-resilience-facility_en#national-recovery-and-resilience-plans

⁽⁷⁾ Annex to the Council Implementing Decision amending Implementing Decision of 13 July 2021 on the approval of the assessment of the recovery and resilience plan for Italy: <https://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-15114-2024-ADD-1-REV-1/en/pdf>

⁽⁸⁾ For example: <https://pnrr.protezionecivile.gov.it/it/il-pnrr-il-dipartimento-della-protezione-civile/>. Projects in Sicily are relevant for reporting under the RRF if they contribute to the milestones and targets of the investments mentioned above, as set out in the annex of the Council Implementing Decision.

⁽⁹⁾ <https://esdac.jrc.ec.europa.eu/content/european-landslide-susceptibility-map-elsus-v2>

⁽¹⁰⁾ <https://land.copernicus.eu/en/products/european-ground-motion-service>

⁽¹¹⁾ https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/qanda_23_3637