

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-003051/24
to the Commission**

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(19 December 2024)

Subject: Adapting the fishing sector to the fishing opportunities for 2025

On 10 December 2024, the EU Council of Ministers approved the fishing opportunities for 2025. Following tough negotiations, and in response to an initial proposal which called into question the very viability of the sector, the agreement recognises the great efforts made by the fisheries sector to protect the Mediterranean's resources, while ensuring the necessary protection of marine resources through the application of various management measures, such as mesh size, closures and fishing gear.

The European Maritime, Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund provides for the possibility of financing innovation measures — as these operations improve fishing gear's selectivity with regard to size or species — and aid for temporary or permanent cessation.

What measures is the Commission considering to help the fisheries sector to swiftly adapt to the measures provided for in the Mediterranean multiannual plan, and, in particular, to finance the measures to be taken by the Mediterranean fleet to maintain working days in 2025?

Submitted: 19.12.2024

Answer given by Mr Kadis on behalf of the European Commission

(14 February 2025)

The Western Mediterranean management plan⁽¹⁾ (MAP) aims to secure a sustainable and profitable future for the sector relying on healthy fish stocks. The Commission has worked with all stakeholders to implement gradually the MAP since its adoption by the co-legislators in 2019.

While the fishing opportunities regulations have gradually reduced trawling effort since 2020, numerous flexibilities alleviated the reduction, such as additional days granted by the compensation mechanism.

Compared to previous years, this compensation mechanism has been further expanded already in the Commission proposal for the 2025 fishing opportunities and has been endorsed by the Council. Moreover, European financial assistance can be available to those fishers who opt in.

Measures to help the fisheries sector transition swiftly to more sustainable practices can be co-financed through the European Maritime, Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund (EMFAF).

This includes innovation projects that improve the selectivity of fishing gears as well as temporary or permanent cessation of fishing activities.

While it is up to the concerned Member States to design the details of this financial support under their national EMFAF programmes, the Commission stands ready to support Member States in this process.

The Commission recognises the significant efforts made by the fisheries sector to protect marine resources and is committed to ensuring the sector's viability while maintaining sustainability. The Commission will continue to work closely with Member States and stakeholders to implement these measures effectively.

⁽¹⁾ Regulation (EU) 2019/1022 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 June 2019 establishing a multiannual plan for the fisheries exploiting demersal stocks in the western Mediterranean Sea and amending Regulation (EU) No 508/2014. OJ L 172, 26.6.2019, p. 1-17.