

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-000067/25
to the Commission
Afroditi Latinopoulou (Pfe)
(9 January 2025)**

Subject: Illegal fishing activity of Turkish vessels in Greek territorial waters near Alexandroupoli

In the Alexandroupoli area, about 300 Greek fishermen's families are faced with serious threats to their livelihood due to unfair competition by Turkish fishing vessels. According to the local fishermen's association, 70-80 Turkish vessels are operating illegally in Greek territorial waters, using prohibited fishing methods and systematically infringing Community fisheries law.

In view of this:

1. What immediate measures does the Commission intend to take to protect European fishermen and prevent illegal fishing by third-country vessels in EU waters?
2. Does the Commission intend to strengthen the control and supervision mechanisms in the area through the European Fisheries Control Agency (EFCA)?
3. Would the Commission consider imposing sanctions on Türkiye for systematic infringements of the EU's Common Fisheries Policy?

Submitted: 10.1.2025

**Answer given by Mr Kadis on behalf of the European Commission
(28 February 2025)**

1. The EU has a strategic interest in a stable and secure environment in the Eastern Mediterranean and in a cooperative and mutually beneficial relationship with Türkiye. Under the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean, the EU reporting mechanisms ensure structured communication between coastal and flag States, enabling action when vessels are suspected of engaging in Illegal Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) fishing. Also, in line with the relevant Council Regulation (EC) ⁽¹⁾, the Member State concerned has primary responsibility for control in its waters, including the adoption of enforcement measures and resource allocation.

2. The Commission supports Greece through the European Maritime, Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund and the European Fisheries Control Agency, which deploys the patrol vessel 'Ocean Sentinel', provides satellite imagery and aerial surveillance and coordinates inspection campaigns. The Commission intends to reinforce controls by improving synergies with the European Maritime Safety Agency and strengthening joint deployments in the Mediterranean.

3. Alleged IUU fishing by Turkish vessels is monitored by the Commission and the Member States concerned. In this context, unequivocal commitment to good neighbourly relations, to international agreements and to the principle of peaceful settlement of disputes in accordance with the United Nations' Charter, as well as abstaining from unilateral actions which run counter to EU interests, violate international law and the sovereign rights of EU Member States, remains an essential requirement ⁽²⁾. Türkiye's ratification of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (Unclos) would improve cooperation with the EU on fisheries and maritime policy ⁽³⁾.

⁽¹⁾ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/reg/2009/1224/oj/eng> as recently modified by Regulation (EU) 2023/2842 of 22 November 2023.

⁽²⁾ https://enlargement.ec.europa.eu/joint-communication-european-council-state-play-eu-turkiye-political-economic-and-trade-relations-0_en

⁽³⁾ https://enlargement.ec.europa.eu/document/download/8010c4db-6ef8-4c85-aa06-814408921c89_en?filename=T%C3%BCrkiye%20Report%202024.pdf