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Answer given by Mr Kadis
on behalf of the European Commission
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The Western Mediterranean management plan¹ (MAP) aims to secure a sustainable and profitable future for the sector relying on healthy fish stocks. The Commission recognises the significant efforts made by the fishers and has worked with all stakeholders to implement the MAP since its adoption by the co-legislators.

While the annual fishing opportunities have gradually reduced trawling effort since 2020, numerous flexibilities alleviated the reduction, such as additional days granted by the compensation mechanism. Under the MAP, all demersal fisheries have remained open, profitable and can benefit from European financial assistance, such as the European Maritime, Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund, when opting for sustainable practices.

As regards the future of this MAP, the Commission would not outrightly exclude a possible amendment. Any possible amendment would have to be considered in the context of the Common Fisheries Policy evaluation, to ensure coherence in terms of principles and objectives, as well as respect the level playing field with other EU sea basins.

In the meantime, the implementation of the current legal framework will have to continue to facilitate stock recovery and the sustainability of the sector, taking advantage of the expanded compensation mechanism unanimously agreed by the Fisheries Ministers last December, which creates a win-win situation: recovered fishing days and more sustainable fishing.

The difficulties faced by Mediterranean fishers will not disappear if the stocks they rely on do not recover. It is therefore crucial to implement the MAP to secure stock recovery and the sector's profitability.

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.