

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-000481/25
to the Commission
Georgios Aftias (PPE)
(4 February 2025)**

Subject: Support for mastic producers

Mastic is a special product produced on the island of Chios, in Greece. The cultivation of this product is difficult and takes place from July to October. The total quantity produced extends to 200 tonnes, most of which is exported to 55 countries. Mastic producers are facing huge losses in their economic activity due to weather phenomena. It is noted that this sector is crucial for the island, since it employs more than 2 500 people, thus constituting the main economic pillar of the island.

On the basis of this data:

1. With what financial instruments can the Commission financially support mastic producers?
2. Can the damage be repaired through the European Solidarity Fund?
3. How can production of the product, which is declining due to climate change, be boosted?

Submitted: 4.2.2025

**Answer given by Mr Hansen on behalf of the European Commission
(18 March 2025)**

The Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), through the CAP Strategic Plans (CSPs) ⁽¹⁾, offers several interventions to help farmers to take preventive actions, in particular to prevent crises and to build medium and long-term resilience.

To mitigate short-term effects, the available tools include direct payments to support farmers' incomes, risk management tools to help farmers manage production risks due to adverse events, and sectoral interventions to support replanting or restocking, and investments to restore agricultural production potential.

In response to the severe weather events that hit the EU in 2024, exceptional measures have been introduced under the Rural Development Programmes to help farmers recover from the damages suffered ⁽²⁾.

The programme for the smaller Aegean islands ⁽³⁾ supports the production of mastic from Chios with EUR 1.12 million per year.

The CAP also supports the bottom-up development of innovative technologies and approaches and the dissemination and exchange of good practices through the EIP-AGRI Operational Groups ⁽⁴⁾.

The EU Solidarity Fund (EUSF) provides financial assistance to Member States and accession countries facing severe natural disasters according to the specific rules laid down in Regulation (EC) No 1012/2002 ⁽⁵⁾.

Changes in climate conditions cannot be considered natural disasters. In addition, business losses cannot be compensated by the EUSF ⁽⁶⁾.

The production of the product which is declining due to climate change can be boosted in various ways. European Regional Development Fund dedicated some EUR 1.5 million of public funding to the establishment of the Industrial Research and Development Center for Applications of Chios mastic to apply research and innovation to improve mastic production.

⁽¹⁾ https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?toc=OJ%3AL%3A2021%3A435%3ATOC&uri=uriserv%3AOJ.L_.2021.435.01.0001.01.ENG

⁽²⁾ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/reg/2024/3242/oj/eng>

⁽³⁾ https://agriculture.ec.europa.eu/common-agricultural-policy/market-measures/outermost-regions-and-small-aegean-islands/smaller-aegean-islands_en

⁽⁴⁾ https://eu-cap-network.ec.europa.eu/index_en

⁽⁵⁾ Council Regulation (EC) No 1012/2002 of 11 November 2002 establishing the European Union Solidarity Fund (OJ L 311, 14.11.2002, p. 3) as amended by Regulation (EU) No 661/2014 of the European Parliament and the Council of 15 May 2014 (OJ L 189, 27.6.2014, p. 143) and by Regulation (EU) 2020/461 of the European Parliament and the Council of 30 March 2020 (OJ L 99, 31.3.2020, p. 9). <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=celex:32002R2012>

⁽⁶⁾ The EUSF may cover essential emergency and recovery operations such as, for example, restoring essential infrastructure, providing temporary accommodation for the population, cleaning up and protecting cultural heritage.