

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-001355/25
to the Commission
Sakis Arnaoutoglou (S&D)
(2 April 2025)**

Subject: Water infrastructure left inoperative due to delays in land consolidation and irrigation projects

In the Greek regions of Eastern Macedonia and Thrace (Rhodope) and Thessaly (Elassona) there are serious delays in the employment of integrated or fully developed water infrastructure. The absence of irrigation networks and land consolidation and the lack of administrative readiness results in the inertia of investments with a significant impact on development and the environment.

In the municipality of Rhodope, although work on the Iasio dam has been completed, it remains inoperative as the necessary irrigation network has not been built. Land consolidation in critical areas (Arriana, Likio, Evrinos) has been delayed by more than a decade, preventing water resources from being turned to account and rural development plans from leaving the drawing board. In the municipality of Elassona, the Agioneri dam project has been abandoned, despite comprehensive and approved studies existing since the 90s. The delay in completing/implementing such projects has a number of consequences: reduced agricultural productivity, loss of water resources and increased precariousness in the face of climate change.

In light of the above, can the Commission answer the following:

1. How does it monitor the progress and implementation of land improvement projects included in the CAP strategic plans for 2023-2027, especially in regions with delays and administrative difficulties?
2. Is it possible to provide technical assistance to Greece (through JASPERS, EIB Advisory) to boost administrative readiness and speed up the preparation of projects such as the Iasio dam and land consolidation in Rhodope and Thessaly?
3. Is it possible to enable flexibility or a targeted call under the Greek CAP strategic plan or other financial tools (RRF, Cohesion Fund), in order to integrate critical irrigation network and land consolidation infrastructure that remains inoperative, even though it is already partially completed?

Submitted: 2.4.2025

**Answer given by Mr Hansen on behalf of the European Commission
(20 May 2025)**

The Commission monitors the implementation of Greek Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) Strategic Plan (CSP) ⁽¹⁾, amongst others through the monitoring committee meetings, annual performance reports and the annual review meetings. However, based on the principles of shared management applicable to the CAP, the project implementation monitoring process falls under the responsibility of the Member States, and, hence, the Commission does not have information on individual submitted applications.

JASPERS cannot provide technical assistance relevant to the irrigation projects in question since JASPERS has been set up as a Cohesion Policy instrument and does not provide technical assistance in the field of agriculture. However, technical assistance support is available under the CSP. It is up to the Member States to make best use of the CSP resources allocated to technical assistance to boost the administrative readiness and speed-up the preparation of projects.

The CSPs offer possibilities for interventions for land development and irrigation projects through the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) ⁽²⁾. The Greek CSP contains relevant investment interventions, including projects in irrigation. It finances land projects aiming primarily at increasing the efficiency of water use in agriculture, through interventions, such as reservoirs, dams, ponds etc., and the modernisation of irrigation networks. The Commission services in charge of the Recovery and Resilience Facility (RRF) ⁽³⁾ are available to examine with the Greek RRF Agency whether the irrigation network in question could benefit under the 'Investments in the national irrigation network' measure.

⁽¹⁾ <http://www.agrotikianaptixi.gr/el/keimeno-synimmena-paa/egkrisi-tropopoiiseis>.

⁽²⁾ Regulation (EU) 2021/2115 of the European Parliament and of the Council (OJ L 435, 6.12.2021, pp. 1-186).

⁽³⁾ https://commission.europa.eu/business-economy-euro/economic-recovery/recovery-and-resilience-facility_en.