

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001507/25
to the Commission
Konstantinos Arvanitis (The Left), Nikolas Farantouris (The Left)
(11 April 2025)

Subject: Ensuring the sustainability of small-scale coastal fishing in the South-Eastern Mediterranean

Small-scale coastal fishing makes up the core of fishing activity in the South-Eastern Mediterranean and Greece and makes a definitive contribution to the local economy, food self-sufficiency, social cohesion, environmental protection and sustainable tourism. However, local fishers are increasingly facing problems of survival, exacerbated by the implementation of European regulations designed primarily to meet the needs of the industrial fleet in the North of the EU.

Certain provisions of Regulation (EC) No 1005/2008, Regulation (EC) No 1224/2009, Regulation (EU) No 404/2011 and Regulation (EU) No 1380/2013 on the control and oversight of fishing impose a framework that does not take into account the specific characteristics of Greek coastal fishing: a) climate change, which is leading to a significant reduction in the catch available, b) the spread of invasive alien species attacking catches, which disrupts the ecological balance, c) the increase in the cost of fuel and materials required for daily activity, d) the use of small traditional boats without advanced technological means and energy-intensive engines, e) the frequent lack of intermediary traders, f) the low technological training of fishers and the inability to comply with digital requirements.

In view of this:

1. Does the Commission intend to safeguard the viability of small-scale coastal fishing in the South-Eastern Mediterranean by introducing an income restoration system (zero deficit clause) for fishers who have suffered a significant reduction in catches?
2. Is the Commission considering adapting the regulatory framework to incorporate the potential and specificities of small traditional fishing fleets in southern Europe?

Submitted: 11.4.2025

Answer given by Mr Kadis on behalf of the European Commission
(20 June 2025)

1. The European Maritime, Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund (EMFAF) supports the small-scale fleet by offering support at up to 100% of their investment costs. This includes diversifying activities to support income, like fishing tourism, modernising vessels, mitigating impacts from climate change, invasive species and costs due to exceptional events, or enhancing fishers' skills and income possibilities through training. The Commission works with Greece to ensure the Greek EMFAF programme meets sector-specific needs, with the Greek Managing Authority being responsible for allocating funding to projects that align with national priorities, including those in the context of the question.

2. The Common Fisheries Policy (CFP) allows measures to be adapted to regional needs with the involvement of stakeholders within Advisory Councils such as the Mediterranean Advisory Council. Multiannual Plans adopted through the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM) provide targeted measures to fisheries in the region and the Mediterranean Regulation ⁽¹⁾ addresses the unique characteristics and requirements of the small traditional fishing fleets. The Commission works at GFCM level to ensure that the specificities of small-scale fisheries, as outlined in the Regional Plan of Action for Small-Scale Fisheries in the Mediterranean and the Black Sea, are taken into consideration. The Commission is currently evaluating the CFP Regulation ⁽²⁾. The results, expected in early 2026, will be instrumental in the future development of the policy and regulatory framework, including of small-scale fisheries. In this context, the Commission plans organising an implementation dialogue on small-scale coastal fisheries in November.

⁽¹⁾ Council Regulation (EC) No 1967/2006 of 21 December 2006 concerning management measures for the sustainable exploitation of fishery resources in the Mediterranean Sea, amending Regulation (EEC) No 2847/93 and repealing Regulation (EC) No 1626/94.

⁽²⁾ Regulation (EU) No 1380/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 December 2013 on the Common Fisheries Policy, amending Council Regulations (EC) No 1954/2003 and (EC) No 1224/2009 and repealing Council Regulations (EC) No 2371/2002 and (EC) No 639/2004 and Council Decision 2004/585/EC.