

EN

E-001788/2025

Answer given by Mr Kadis
on behalf of the European Commission
(23.7.2025)

1. The European Maritime, Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund (EMFAF)¹ supports the fisheries sector, notably by fostering sustainable fishing in the long term, enhancing the sector's competitiveness and supporting diversification initiatives to further strengthen the sector's resilience. In specific cases, EMFAF can also compensate fishers for the temporary cessation of fishing activities. The Italian authorities can consider mobilising resources from the Italian EMFAF Programme to support the fisheries sector.

2. The General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM) provides scientific advice for shared stocks in the Strait of Sicily. Its latest evaluations, including data up to 2023, note the improved status of the European hake and deep water rose shrimp stocks², both sustainably exploited with increasing biomass. The improved status of the giant red shrimp in the Strait of Sicily³ was also noted, although its fishing mortality remains above the target value despite increased biomass. On the other hand, the small pelagic stocks in the Strait of Sicily lack recent evaluations and are unlikely at Maximum Sustainable Yield (MSY). The Commission recalls that the Fisheries Restricted Areas (FRA) in the North of Strait of Sicily, in place since 2019 and established in the nursery areas, contribute to the sustainable exploitation of the deep water rose shrimp and of the Mediterranean hake stock⁴. The monitoring of the FRAs falls also under the Joint Inspection Scheme in the Strait of Sicily, supported by the European Fisheries Control Agency⁵. Further benefits to the demersal stocks could derive from the establishment of FRAs in the Southern part of the Strait of Sicily in line with Resolution⁶ GFCM/47/2024/1.

¹ Regulation (EU) 2021/1139 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 7 July 2021 establishing the European Maritime, Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund and amending Regulation (EU) 2017/1004.

² Geographical Subareas (GSAs) 12-16.

³ Geographical Subareas (GSAs) 12-16, 21w.

⁴ This is the only hake stock having reached MSY in the Mediterranean.

⁵ Recommendation GFCM/45/2022/15 on an international joint inspection and surveillance scheme outside the waters under national jurisdiction in the Strait of Sicily (geographical subareas 12 to 16), amending Recommendation GFCM/41/2017/8 and repealing Recommendation GFCM/42/2018/6.

⁶ Resolution GFCM/47/2024/1 on a roadmap for a joint project to collect all required and identified scientific evidence to provide a basis for the discussion of potential additional measures for the long-term portion of the management plan for demersal fisheries in the Strait of Sicily, in response to Recommendation GFCM/45/2022/4.