

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-002353/25
to the Commission
Sandro Gozi (Renew)
(11 June 2025)**

Subject: Releasing state aid so fishing fleets can be renewed in La Réunion

In April 2025, during his visit to La Réunion, Commissioner Kadis took stock of the major challenges facing the fisheries sector in the outermost region (OR).

While solutions have been put in place to renew fleets in other ORs, such as French Guiana, there is still a hold up in the state aid system preventing this from happening for the sector in La Réunion, despite the endless efforts made over the last few years.

The main issue holding things up is the Commission's restrictive interpretation of the guidelines governing the balance between fishing capacity and the possibilities offered. However, during his mission to La Réunion in November 2023, Commissioner Kadis's predecessor, Mr Sinkevičius, said that he felt these guidelines should be relaxed.

Furthermore, La Réunion's fishing fleet, whose impact on local fish resources remains limited, is faced with unfair competition from industrial fleets from non-EU, Indo-Pacific countries, especially from China, which are not subject to the same sustainability requirements.

When does the Commission plan to unblock this file so that the fishing fleets in La Réunion can finally be renewed, while respecting the specific circumstances of the ORs and ensuring their equal treatment?

Submitted: 11.6.2025

**Answer given by Mr Kadis on behalf of the European Commission
(4 August 2025)**

The Commission recognises the importance of fisheries for the economies of the outermost regions, including La Réunion ⁽¹⁾. State aid is one potential tool to help renew and modernise the fleets in the outermost regions, a tool which is not available to other fleets in the Union, on condition that there is balance between the fishing capacity of the fleet and the available fishing opportunities ⁽²⁾.

In recognition of the unique circumstances of small vessels in the outermost regions, in 2024, the Commission adopted specific guidelines to assess the balance for the fleet segments in the outermost regions composed of vessels under 12 meters ⁽³⁾.

These guidelines introduce a number of temporary flexibilities in how these segments can demonstrate balance while still ensuring the sustainability of fishing activities. These temporary flexibilities apply in 2024 and 2025.

As announced in the Ocean Pact, the Commission is currently undertaking a review of these temporary guidelines on the basis of the best available science, in the summer of 2025, to deliver a longer-term solution.

These actions ensure that the maximum flexibility is provided to the relevant Member State authorities to draw on available data and demonstrate balance between fishing capacity and fishing opportunities to ensure sustainable fishing for the fleets concerned.

⁽¹⁾ In line with Article 349 TFEU.

⁽²⁾ See Guidelines for state aid in the fishery and aquaculture sector (OJ 23.3.2023, C 107/1) and Article 22(2) and (3) of Regulation (EU) No 1380/2013.

⁽³⁾ (COM(2024) 223 final).