

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-004192/25
to the Commission
Oihane Agirregoitia Martínez (Renew)
(24 October 2025)**

Subject: Restrictions on fishing in Scotland's Marine Protected Areas

The Scottish Government's press release of 16 October 2025 on the entry into force of restrictions for a total of 42 marine areas — over 32 000 kilometres squared, located between 12 and 200 miles from the Scottish coast — threatens EU small-scale and distant-water fisheries as well as the EU-UK Trade and Cooperation Agreement.

The restrictions, which aim to protect and regenerate marine ecosystems, affect fishing grounds such as Rockall that have been part of the historic rights of access enjoyed by fishing fleets such as the Basque fishing fleet.

This measure constitutes a clear threat to the sector's economic and social stability. It is essential that a balance be struck between the economic, social and sustainable dimensions of this issue.

1. Is the Commission planning compensatory measures to protect fishers in the face of this roll-back of access to European waters?
2. If so, what would the timelines and conditions of these measures be?
3. Is the Commission working on assessing the economic impact of these restrictions?

Submitted: 24.10.2025

**Answer given by Mr Kadis on behalf of the European Commission
(16 December 2025)**

Both the European Union (EU) and the United Kingdom (UK) are bound by international commitments, including the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, which sets a target to protect at least 30% of coastal and marine areas by 2030.

Under the European Ocean Pact ⁽¹⁾, the Commission encourages Member States to implement actions to achieve these targets. While the Commission closely monitors UK measures to ensure compliance with the EU-UK Trade and Cooperation Agreement (TCA) and to assess their potential socioeconomic impacts on the EU fishing sector, the TCA does not prevent the UK from implementing conservation measures in its waters provided TCA obligations are respected.

The specific situation described does not appear to fall within the scope of support provided under the European Maritime, Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund (EMFAF), therefore no compensation can be provided in this context.

The Commission supports Member States in preparing evidence-based responses to consultations launched by the UK, including those concerning the designation and management of Scottish Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) and the assessment of potential economic impacts on fisheries.

It has also convened meetings between Member States and the Scottish Government to specifically discuss the proposed fisheries management measures within Scottish MPAs, both during the consultation phase and prior to their implementation.

The Commission maintains a regular dialogue with the UK authorities on measures that may affect EU vessels, in order to ensure transparency, predictability and consistency with the provisions of the TCA.

⁽¹⁾ The European Ocean Pact (COM/2025/281 final): https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=comnat:COM_2025_0281_FIN.