

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-004823/25
to the Commission**

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(4 December 2025)

Subject: New proposal on 2026 fishing opportunities in the western Mediterranean: one step closer to the possible collapse of Spain's Mediterranean fisheries sector

The new proposal on fishing opportunities in the western Mediterranean Sea for 2026 imposes disproportionate restrictions that disregard the available scientific evidence and that, if applied, would lead to the collapse of Spain's Mediterranean fleet, which is already depleted from years of aggressive cuts.

The 2025 reports are conclusive. The Scientific Technical and Economic Committee for Fisheries (STECF) ⁽¹⁾ confirms that demersal stocks in the western Mediterranean are recovering. The FAO's General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM) ⁽²⁾ notes historic progress: commercial biomass has increased by 25%, fishing pressure has dropped by 50% and there has been a clear reduction in the level of unsustainable stocks. This is the strongest evidence of the decade and it shows that the sector's sacrifices have yielded results. In spite of this, the Commission continues to take an approach that destroys jobs and penalises those who have acted responsibly.

The Commission's fisheries policy in the Mediterranean lacks support, is rejected by many in Parliament and is democratically unsustainable.

1. Why is the Commission ignoring the positive changes in stock levels when updating the fishing opportunities for 2026?
2. Does it believe that measures with such severe socioeconomic impacts comply with Article 2 of the common fisheries policy?
3. Does it intend to propose amendments to the regulation on the multiannual plan to bring it into line with the actual state of resources?

Submitted: 4.12.2025

Answer given by Mr Kadis on behalf of the European Commission
(11 February 2026)

The best available scientific advice shows that most stocks are far from maximum sustainable yield ⁽¹⁾, the legal objective ensuring long-term sustainability and profitability. The relevant Commission proposal recognised improvements in some stocks and proposed measures allowing fleets in the Mediterranean to remain active at 2024 levels and profitable.

The political agreement reached at the December Council maintains 2025 fishing efforts without adjustment for vulnerable stocks. The Commission could not support the agreement as it considers that it is not in line with the relevant provisions of the Western Mediterranean multiannual plan (WestMed MAP).

The Commission remains committed to work with the Member States to rebuild stock trajectories, which are crucial for sustainable fisheries and have no alternative in ensuring the profitability, resilience and attractiveness of the sector and local communities.

The Commission considered the socioeconomic impacts ⁽²⁾ and proposed a balanced set of measures, based on scientific advice, intended to benefit both fishers and the stocks. The Commission also supports the much-needed structural reform in the sector via the European Maritime, Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund, to ensure the sector's sound economic model, long-term future and generational renewal.

The Commission has initiated a reflection process to enhance the functioning of Western Mediterranean fisheries management. This includes the launch of the process for revising the WestMed MAP.

¹ STECF, https://stecf.jrc.ec.europa.eu/documents/d/stecf/stecf_25-09.

² FAO GFCM, <https://openknowledge.fao.org/items/09ce190a-c96b-47ad-a783-ab29f778d1bb>.

⁽¹⁾ Scientific, Technical and Economic Committee for Fisheries (STECF) — Stock assessments in the Western Mediterranean Sea (STECF 25-09), Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg, 2025; https://stecf.jrc.ec.europa.eu/documents/d/stecf/stecf_25-09 (Norway lobster in Geographical Sub-Area (GSA) 6, Norway lobster in GSA 11, Norway lobster in GSA 9, blue and red shrimp in GSA 6-7, striped red mullet in GSA 5, Hake in GSAs 1-2-5-6-7, blue and red shrimp in GSA 1-2, giant red shrimp in GSA 8-9-10-11, red mullet in GSA 1, hake in GSAs 8-9-10-11, red mullet in GSA 9).

⁽²⁾ As per Article 2 of the Common Fisheries Policy Regulation.