

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-000583/26
to the Commission
Sakis Arnaoutoglou (S&D)
(11 February 2026)**

Subject: Fishing ban in new Greek marine parks and the impact on fishing tourism

According to information, the publication of a national bill for the creation of new marine parks in Greece is imminent, providing for blanket fishing bans for the period from 1 April to 31 October. These regulations also appear to affect fishing tourism, an activity that has been promoted at European level as a means of diversifying the income of coastal fishers and is characterised by low intensity and a limited environmental footprint, especially given that the planned bans coincide with the most crucial tourist season of the year. At the same time, professional bodies are denouncing a lack of substantive consultation and unequal treatment in relation to recreational fishing.

In view of the above:

1. How does the Commission assess the inclusion of fishing tourism in blanket fishing bans and what is the scientific and regulatory basis for such a choice, in light of the principle of proportionality and the diversification of low-intensity activities?
2. What is the Commission's position on allegations of insufficient consultation with the professionals directly involved and the use of informal or non-cross-referenced data to formulate measures with significant socioeconomic impacts?
3. What measures does the Commission consider necessary to ensure the viability of professional fishing tourism fishers and to prevent unequal treatment in relation to recreational fishing, including control mechanisms against illegal trade in catches?

Submitted: 11.2.2026

**Answer given by Mr Kadis on behalf of the European Commission
(23 April 2026)**

1. Under the Common Fisheries Policy, conservation measures must be based on the best available scientific advice and comply with the principle of proportionality. Where justified by conservation objectives, Member States may apply restrictions, including seasonal bans in marine protected areas (MPAs), even to low-intensity activities such as fishing tourism which may have cumulative impacts, particularly in sensitive areas or periods. Restrictions must be appropriate, non-discriminatory and proportionate, while taking into account relevant scientific evidence and socioeconomic considerations.
2. Union law requires that measures with socioeconomic implications be prepared in a transparent manner and, where appropriate, involve stakeholder consultation. The Commission supports the use of data collected under the Data Collection Framework and encourages Member States to ensure that decision-making is evidence-based and transparent.
3. Recreational fisheries play an important role from a biological, economic and social perspective. Considering the significant impacts of recreational fisheries on certain fish stocks, Member States shall exercise effective control of recreational fisheries, including an appropriate system of sanctions. EU legislation distinguishes between commercial and recreational fishing. The marketing or sale of catches from recreational fisheries is prohibited. Member States are responsible for ensuring effective control. The revised EU Fisheries Control Regulation⁽¹⁾ further strengthens monitoring through electronic catch reporting, improving transparency, and also supporting enforcement and helping prevent illegal practices.

⁽¹⁾ Regulation (EU) 2023/2842.