

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000723/26
to the Commission
Galato Alexandraki (ECR)
(20 February 2026)

Subject: Drastic limitation of fishing days in the Mediterranean resulting in the economic strangulation of small-scale fishers

Under the multiannual management plan for the Mediterranean, the EU has imposed successive reductions in the number of allowable fishing days, with the activities of trawlers and small professional vessels being limited to fewer than 130 days per year in some areas. In Greece and other Mediterranean Member States, professional fishers have reported hits to their incomes of up to 40-50%, in the absence of reliable scientific substantiation for each sea area or meaningful financial compensation. At the same time, the EU continues to allow imports of fish from non-EU countries in the Mediterranean and North Africa, where no corresponding restrictions are in place, creating a serious distortion of competition and undermining the sustainability of European fisheries.

Can the Commission answer the following:

1. What up-to-date and region-specific scientific data was the basis for imposing a precise maximum number of fishing days in the Mediterranean, and why is there no differentiation between Member States?
2. Does it intend to introduce a binding financial income compensation mechanism for fishers directly affected by these restrictions?
3. How does it intend to address the unequal treatment of European fishers and the imports of fish from non-EU countries that do not comply with equivalent environmental and social rules?

Submitted: 20.2.2026

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

In 2025, the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM) provided scientific advice for up to 120 stocks. Based on this, the GFCM adopted fishing days and catch limits -in line with the GFCM multiannual management plans (MAP) requirements- and established fishing days only for the demersal fisheries in the Adriatic Sea and the Strait of Sicily.

As regards the Western Mediterranean, the Commission proposed fishing opportunities (FO) based on the advice provided by the Scientific, Technical and Economic Committee for Fisheries. However, the Council adopted FO without consideration for this advice.

The Greek European Maritime, Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund (EMFAF) programme offers support ⁽¹⁾ for sector resilience and competitiveness through diverse income-supporting activities like fleet modernisation, climate change impact mitigation, and training to enhance skills and income. The Commission works with the Greek EMFAF Managing Authority to ensure the programme aligns with the sector needs.

The Commission deploys efforts to strengthen effectively the fisheries monitoring, control, and surveillance mechanisms of Regional Fisheries Management Organisations in the Mediterranean Sea and to improve the culture of compliance with the relevant regional rules, such as via International Joint Inspection Schemes.

EU Free Trade Agreements include sustainability provisions related to labour rights and environmental protection, which apply also to the fisheries sector.

Within the Pact for the Mediterranean ⁽²⁾, the Commission will work to increase the control and inspection capabilities of coastal states in order to enhance regional fisheries governance and combat illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing.

⁽¹⁾ Projects on small-scale fishing may receive up to 100% aid.

⁽²⁾ JOIN(2025) 26 final.