

EN

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Answer given by Executive Vice-President Ribera
on behalf of the European Commission
(27.5.2026)

The Commission is aware that the situation in the Middle East has direct consequences and dire economic and social implications for the EU, in particular for primary agricultural production and fisheries.

To face this crisis, the Commission acts in two directions, in close coordination with Member States to follow the most exposed sectors and assess further developments.

First course of action: more flexibility for Member States mobilizing national funds. On 29 April 2026, the Commission adopted¹ the Middle East crisis Temporary State aid Framework (METSAF)² which allows for temporary limited amounts of aid for the undertakings active in primary production of agricultural, or fishery and aquaculture, products. Member States may use the METSAF, in addition to the standard State aid rules applicable to the agricultural and fishery sectors, to alleviate the consequences of exceptionally severe increases in the price of fuel and fertilisers caused by the current crisis.

Second course of action: channelling existing EU funds towards affected undertakings. This is illustrated, regarding fisheries, by the activation of Article 26(2) of the European Maritime Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund (EMFAF) Regulation³. This crisis mechanism was previously activated to compensate for additional costs and income forgone arising from the disruption caused by the military aggression of Russia against Ukraine in 2022. On 16 April 2026, the Commission activated⁴ the compensation mechanism provided under the EMFAF Regulation.

¹ https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/ip_26_894.

² Communication from the Commission on the Middle East Crisis Temporary State Aid Framework (OJ C, C/2026/2593, 5.5.2026): <http://data.europa.eu/eli/C/2026/2593/oj>.

³ Regulation (EU) 2021/1139 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 7 July 2021 establishing the European Maritime, Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund and amending Regulation (EU) 2017/1004 (OJ L 247, 13.7.2021, p. 1).

⁴ https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/ip_26_824.