

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-001495/26
to the Commission
Sander Smit (ECR), Bert-Jan Ruissen (ECR), Ton Diepeveen (P/E)
(13 April 2026)**

Subject: Impact of rising fuel prices on the EU fisheries sector and the need for coordinated EU action

The ongoing conflict in the Middle East has triggered a sharp rise in global fuel prices, placing severe pressure on the EU fisheries sector, where fuel costs are critical for viability. Many vessels are operating at a loss or remain in port.

Commissioner Costas Kadis has acknowledged the severity of the situation and indicated that emergency support measures may be mobilised, including the European Maritime, Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund (EMFAF) and other instruments. At the same time, several Member States have taken immediate national action, including targeted fuel tax reductions and the provision of direct financial support.

The absence of comparable measures in some Member States, including under the minority government of the Netherlands, risks contributing to an uneven playing field within the internal market and underlines the need for more coordinated action at EU level.

1. Will the Commission encourage more coordinated action by Member States, including those that have not yet introduced emergency measures, on providing immediate support, such as fuel cost compensation, to ensure a level playing field?
2. When will the Commission ensure the rapid activation and flexible use of EMFAF and state aid rules to complement national efforts across the EU?
3. Beyond long-term decarbonisation, what immediate and technologically neutral measures does the Commission envisage to reduce fuel consumption and operational costs across the EU, including accelerating the approval of innovations such as pulse fishing and other fuel-saving technologies?

Submitted: 13.4.2026

**Answer given by Mr Kadis on behalf of the European Commission
(29 May 2026)**

The Commission is continuously monitoring and projecting impacts of the situation in the Middle East. While there are no immediate concerns for supply, prices for diesel face significant volatility. This has direct economic and social consequences for the sector.

The Commission has activated the crisis support mechanism of the European Maritime, Fisheries and Aquaculture (EMFAF), due to this exceptional situation and disruption of markets⁽¹⁾. The Commission encourages Member States to make this support available to the sectors under their national EMFAF programmes.

On 29 April 2026, the Commission adopted the Middle East Crisis Temporary State Aid Framework⁽²⁾, which allows state aid under certain conditions for the primary production of fishery and aquaculture products.

The new Temporary Crisis Framework can be used in addition to the standard state aid rules applicable to the fishery sector. The Commission has also put forward the AccelerateEU communication⁽³⁾ which sets out immediate, targeted and temporary actions to be implemented by Member States to protect households and industry from price shocks including price intervention, income support schemes and tax incentives.

The Commission emphasises the need for innovation and structural changes to reduce the sector's dependence on fossil fuel. Energy efficient fishing gear and techniques are fully aligned with the Commission's priorities. Finally, the co-legislators decided to prohibit pulse fishing under the Technical Measures Regulation⁽⁴⁾.

⁽¹⁾ Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2026/889 of 16 April 2026 establishing the situation in the Middle East as of 28 February 2026 as the occurrence of an exceptional event causing a significant disruption of markets: https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/dec_impl/2026/889/oj.

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

⁽³⁾ https://energy.ec.europa.eu/strategy/accelerateeu-strengthen-eu-energy-resilience_en.

⁽⁴⁾ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/reg/2019/1241/oj/eng>.