

EN

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Answer given by Ms Roswall
on behalf of the European Commission
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Member States are required under the Marine Strategy Framework¹ and Habitats Directives² to monitor and protect habitats, including reefs, in the marine waters where they have jurisdiction. The Nature Restoration Regulation³ further introduces binding mapping and restoration targets for marine habitats. Member States' plans for mapping and restoration of habitats will be shared in their draft national restoration plans by 1 September 2026.

As regards fisheries measures, while the EU has exclusive competence to adopt acts on the conservation of marine biological resources under the common fisheries policy⁴, Member States are responsible for their implementation.

To support Member States, the Commission is promoting the use of monitoring, data and modelling tools through technical support and EU funding programmes⁵. The Copernicus Marine Service⁶ provides observations of parameters such as sea-surface temperature, ocean currents and acidification; EMODnet⁷ provides access to marine in-situ data on parameters, including the distribution of coralligenous structures; the future Digital Twin of the Ocean⁸ will have the capacity to simulate reef ecosystems to inform conservation strategies.

The new OceanEye initiative⁹ provides a strategic framework to reinforce these efforts by strengthening ocean observation capacities, improving access to marine data and intelligence, and fostering cooperation between Member States, research organisations and international partners.

The Commission is currently preparing a proposal to revise the Marine Strategy Framework Directive, with the aim to progress towards good environmental status of EU seas¹⁰.

¹ Directive 2008/56/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 June 2008 establishing a framework for community action in the field of marine environmental policy (Marine Strategy Framework Directive) (Text with EEA relevance). OJ L 164, 25.6.2008, pp. 19–40.

² Council Directive 92/43/EEC of 21 May 1992 on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora. OJ L 206, 22.7.1992, pp. 7–50.

³ Regulation (EU) 2024/1991 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 June 2024 on nature restoration and amending Regulation (EU) 2022/869, OJ L, 2024/1991, 29.7.2024.

⁴ https://oceans-and-fisheries.ec.europa.eu/common-fisheries-policy-cfp_en.

⁵ For example: <https://projects.research-and-innovation.ec.europa.eu/en/funding/funding-opportunities/funding-programmes-and-open-calls/horizon-europe/eu-missions-horizon-europe/restore-our-ocean-and-waters/horizon-miss-2026-03-ocean-01-large-scale-demonstration-mapping-distribution-and-condition-marine>.

⁶ <https://marine.copernicus.eu/>.

⁷ <https://emodnet.ec.europa.eu/en>.

⁸ https://research-and-innovation.ec.europa.eu/funding/funding-opportunities/funding-programmes-and-open-calls/horizon-europe/eu-missions-horizon-europe/restore-our-ocean-and-waters/european-digital-twin-ocean_en.

⁹ Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council. OceanEye: an EU ocean observation initiative. COM(2026) 268 final.

¹⁰ SWD(2025) 50 final.