

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-003183/26
to the Commission
Anna Maria Cisint (PfE), Paolo Borchia (PfE)
(31 July 2026)**

Subject: Extraordinary measures needed to support the Italian shellfish farming industry

The mussels, clams and other bivalve molluscs that the Italian shellfish farming industry relies upon so heavily have been dying in droves due to the unusually high temperatures recorded over the summer. Heat waves in July caused sea temperatures to rise as high as 32 degrees Celsius, starving the shellfish of oxygen.

The death toll has been particularly high along the Upper Adriatic and Sardinian coasts. Shellfish farmers estimate that 100 tonnes of PDO mussels were lost in the Sacca degli Scardovari area (Province of Rovigo), and that only 10% of the Goro Lagoon's clam harvest has survived. Trieste, another area renowned for its mussels, has also been hit hard. According to trade association estimates, the Italian shellfish farming sector is looking at losses of EUR 200 million.

In the light of the above, we ask the Commission:

Will it take urgent and exceptional measures to support the Italian shellfish farming sector, which has been hit hard by this year's abnormal weather patterns?

Submitted: 31.7.2026

**Answer given by Mr Kadis on behalf of the European Commission
(7 September 2026)**

The Commission acknowledges the serious difficulties described for the Italian shellfish farming sector due to the severe weather conditions over the summer.

The European Maritime, Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund (EMFAF) ⁽¹⁾ provides support to strengthen the competitiveness of the aquaculture sector, while ensuring its long-term sustainability.

The implementation of the EMFAF Programme is primarily the responsibility of the Member State concerned under shared management.

The Italian EMFAF Programme ⁽²⁾ includes the possibility to support various measures aimed at improving the competitiveness, resilience and development of the aquaculture sector, including through diversification, innovative and experimental projects, and actions to increase the added value of aquaculture products.

In addition, the Italian EMFAF Programme may support measures to protect and stabilise the income of aquaculture operators, by means of compensations or insurance schemes.

In this respect, Italy may activate the Programme's measures to support the Italian shellfish farming sector. For example, in 2025 Italy activated EMFAF support for aquaculture companies to compensate for income loss and additional costs resulting from the temporary cessation of activities caused by exceptional climate events during 2024, such as the exceptional increase in sea temperature ⁽³⁾.

Beyond EMFAF, Member States may also consider other national support measures, subject to compliance with the applicable EU State aid rules for the fisheries and aquaculture sector.

⁽¹⁾ 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.

⁽²⁾ https://oceans-and-fisheries.ec.europa.eu/funding-and-investment/emfaf/emfaf-programmes-2021-2027_en.

⁽³⁾ <https://www.masaf.gov.it/flex/cm/pages/ServeBLOB.php/L/IT/IDPagina/23759>.