

(English version)

**Priority question for written answer P-004032/25
to the Commission
Gordan Bosanac (Verts/ALE)
(15 October 2025)**

Subject: Improving the safety and energy efficiency of fishing vessels

Under the measure '1.8.20 Health protection, safety and energy efficiency', part of the Fisheries and Aquaculture Programme of the Republic of Croatia for 2021-2027, applicants are invited to submit applications for improving fishing vessels, particularly with regard to their safety and energy efficiency. Following the inclusion of GPS plotters and radars in the 2021-2027 programme, an application was rejected on the basis that expenditure on these instruments improves fish-finding capabilities. However, unlike sonars that detect fish, the radars detect other vessels, buoys and coastlines, while the GPS plotters enable precise positioning and route planning. Both provide a crucial upgrade to vessels, helping fishers with orientation, improving safety and reducing the need for rescue missions for stranded boats, as well as optimising the vessels' movement and, hence, fuel consumption.

In this context:

1. Can the Commission outline its reasons for considering expenditure on these instruments as a means of improving fish-finding capabilities, not as a means improving safety and energy efficiency?
2. Does the Commission have examples from other national plans of similar and eligible expenditure that increases safety and energy efficiency for fishing vessels?
3. Will the Commission review its decision and look into the safety and energy efficiency aspect of such radars and GPS plotters, hence, rendering them justifiable?

Submitted: 15.10.2025

**Answer given by Mr Kadis on behalf of the European Commission
(21 November 2025)**

The Commission acknowledges the importance of improving safety and energy efficiency on fishing vessels and encourages the exchange of best practices on this matter between Member States' managing authorities.

While Global Positioning System (GPS) and radar technology are on the one hand navigation tools that improve safety and navigation at sea, on the other hand they serve to improve operational efficiency in fishing vessels by enhancing, among others, the ability to locate and exploit fishery resources.

These technologies can function as fishing effort-enhancing technologies, for example, by allowing the precise return to productive fishing grounds, detecting seabird aggregations linked to pelagic fisheries or allow to fish in adverse condition.

For this reason, investments in GPS and radar on fishing vessels are considered ineligible pursuant to Article 13(b) of the European Maritime, Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund (EMFAF) Regulation ⁽¹⁾, as it is equipment that increases the ability of a fishing vessel to find fish.

The EMFAF Regulation does not provide an exhaustive list of measures that can be supported. The type of actions that can be supported are described in the respective programmes available online ⁽²⁾.

Based on Article 63(1) of the Common Provisions Regulation ⁽³⁾, it is primarily the responsibility of the national Managing Authority to evaluate and establish which type of investments to improve safety and energy efficiency on board fishing vessels fulfils eligibility requirements.

The Commission remains at the disposal of the national managing authorities to provide further guidance and clarifications while ensuring a consistent and aligned approach to the interpretation of the EMFAF Regulation.

⁽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, OJ L 247, 13.7.2021, pp. 1-49.

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

⁽³⁾ Regulation (EU) 2021/1060 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 June 2021 laying down common provisions on the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund Plus, the Cohesion Fund, the Just Transition Fund and the European Maritime, Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund and financial rules for those and for the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund, the Internal Security Fund and the Instrument for Financial Support for Border Management and Visa Policy, OJ L 231, 30.6.2021, pp. 159-706.