



Mandate

Implementation Dialogue on Small-Scale and Coastal Fisheries (24 November 2025)

Brussels, 17 November 2025

1. Background

In 2025, the Commission launched the Implementation Dialogues¹. The main aim is to strengthen and boost European competitiveness by seeking feedback from stakeholders to facilitate the implementation of EU policies and the simplification of EU rules and spending programs.

On 24 November 2025, Commissioner Kadis will be holding an Implementation Dialogue on Small-Scale and Coastal Fisheries. The MAC will be one of the four Advisory Councils participating, together with the BSAC, the CCRUP, and the MEDAC. The MAC will be represented by Julien Lamothe, Vice-Chair. To collect input, an exchange of views on the competitiveness in the market of the small-scale fisheries took place at the 17 September 2025 meeting of Working Group 1.

According to the letter of invitation, each invited participant will have approximately three minutes to make an opening statement, which will be followed by a structured discussion with the other participants and the Commission. The invitation includes a series of guiding questions:

- a) In terms of policy implementation, what are the key elements to ensure the long-term environmental, economic and social sustainability, resilience and generational renewal of the SSF sector? What is the role of the energy transition in that regard?

¹ https://commission.europa.eu/law/law-making-process/better-regulation/simplification-and-implementation/implementation-dialogues-0_en

- b) Where are the practical barriers for accessing EU and private financial support? Where do the administrative burden and implementation difficulties lie and how can it be reduced?
- c) Are there ways to reduce the complexity of regulatory and administrative requirements for SSCF, especially regarding compliance and access to EU support?
- d) Are there other data beyond what is already being reported that SSCF and Member States could provide to paint a clearer picture of SSCF and how they operate? What is needed to facilitate this?
- e) Within the current legislative framework, what good practices or innovations (e.g. collective marketing, labelling or traceability, strengthening the role of SSCF in the seafood supply chain, co-management) can be brought forward, and what support is needed to succeed?
- f) What are the training and upskilling needs of SSCF fishers to improve their resilience and to enable their effective participation in sustainable fisheries management and the seafood value chain, as a means to strengthening relevant policy implementation? What kind of support or initiatives are needed to address these needs?

2. Intervention on behalf of the MAC

On behalf of the Market Advisory Council, I would like to thank Commissioner Kadis and DG MARE for inviting us to this dialogue. The EU market of fishery and aquaculture products must benefit all parties, including the small-scale and coastal fleet of the EU.

Like all producers, small operators face challenges linked to climate change, change in the available species, and the presence of invasive species, which impact the supply available on the market. These challenges are compounded by limited technical and financial support, as well as growing operational restrictions due to marine spatial planning.

Ensuring environmental, social, and economic sustainability, requires maintaining the fight against IUU fishing and taking action against illegal activities by recreational fishers. Examples of these challenges can be found in various regions of key importance for the EU small-scale fleet, such as the Mediterranean Sea and the Outermost Regions.

Under the next Multiannual Financial Framework, it is essential to maintain a dedicated fund for fisheries, aquaculture, and maritime affairs. The current EMFAF and its predecessors have been decisive for structuring and supporting the sector, contributing to the transition to sustainability, resilience, continued viability of the sector, and the health of our oceans. Future funding should also address generational renewal, training, and food security.

As part of the Common Market Organisation, recognised Producer Organisations play a key role in the implementation of the CFP by managing fishing activities, market access, resources distribution, and supporting consumers. Other professional organisations can also take up these tasks. Efforts should be made to raise awareness about the advantages of the activities of the recognised Producer Organisations. In this respect, it is important to take measures to reduce administrative burdens and to simplify the funding and advance payments procedures.

Whilst specifically for small-scale producers a direct line to consumers is a valuable alternative, fish auctions contribute to transparency in the market as well as access to fishery products for all operators, including small fishmongers. Yet, maintaining coastal infrastructure remains fragile and a level playing field is lacking in respect of access to ports and to processing facilities across EU regions.

New market segments and opportunities should be explored. The EU market can accommodate a wide variety of healthy and sustainable products. The local consumption of fresh products should be encouraged, while also facilitating processing activities to develop products for other market segments, especially as consumers increasingly look for convenient food products. Both

public authorities and private stakeholders should continue to undertake campaigns to increase awareness among citizens on the nutrition and environmental aspects of aquatic products.

Also in the EU market and trade, a level-playing-field with fair conditions should continuously be promoted, including through the application of equivalent production and sustainability standards to products imported from third countries. Trade relationships should contribute to economic development for both parties via responsible sourcing.

The MAC welcomes the ongoing efforts for simplification of rules, especially for small operators and microenterprises. The organisation of missions by the relevant Commission representatives and consultants will be essential to meet local stakeholders and better understand local realities. The ongoing simplification proposals for other food sectors should also be kept in mind.

Most of the points mentioned above apply broadly to all stakeholders, regardless of the segment or size of the company, and must therefore be treated fairly. Any action for the small-scale and coastal fisheries, should take into account the connection with other horizontal policies affecting our supply chain, such as the Regulation on Forced Labour, the Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence Directive, trade policy, food safety, and consumer information rules. Therefore, coordination across the various Commission services, particularly on food policy aspects, remains essential.

Annex

Potential references of interest

- [Advice on “Trade Policy Instruments and Impact on the EU Market for Fishery and Aquaculture Products – Improvement of Data” \(30 March 2022\)](#)
- [Advice on “European Year of Skills” \(30 March 2023\)](#)
- [Advice on “Energy Transition in EU Fisheries and Aquaculture” \(29 April 2024\)](#)
- [Advice on “Consumer information on fishery and aquaculture products, particularly in the context of the HORECA Sector” \(23 October 2024\)](#)
- [Advice on “STECF’s Annual Economic Report on the EU Fishing Fleet \(2025\)” \(27 March 2025\)](#)
- [Letter on the future of the Multiannual Financial Framework \(15 April 2025\)](#)
- [Advice on “Producer Organisations under the Common Market Organisation in Fishery and Aquaculture products” \(7 May 2025\)](#)
- [Advice on “Vision for Fisheries, Aquaculture and their Market in 2040” \(15 July 2025\)](#)
- [Letter on “Comments on the Proposal for a New Advisory Council Dedicated to Small-Scale Fisheries, as Referred to in the Communication on the European Ocean Pact” \(10 September 2025\)](#)