



DG MARE current policy developments

HR EMFAF MC meeting
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Context

- **COM proposal for the next Multiannual Financial Framework 2028-2034**
- **Ongoing evaluation of the Common Fisheries Policy**
- **A number of ongoing MARE studies**
- **A number of ongoing policy initiatives**

Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF)

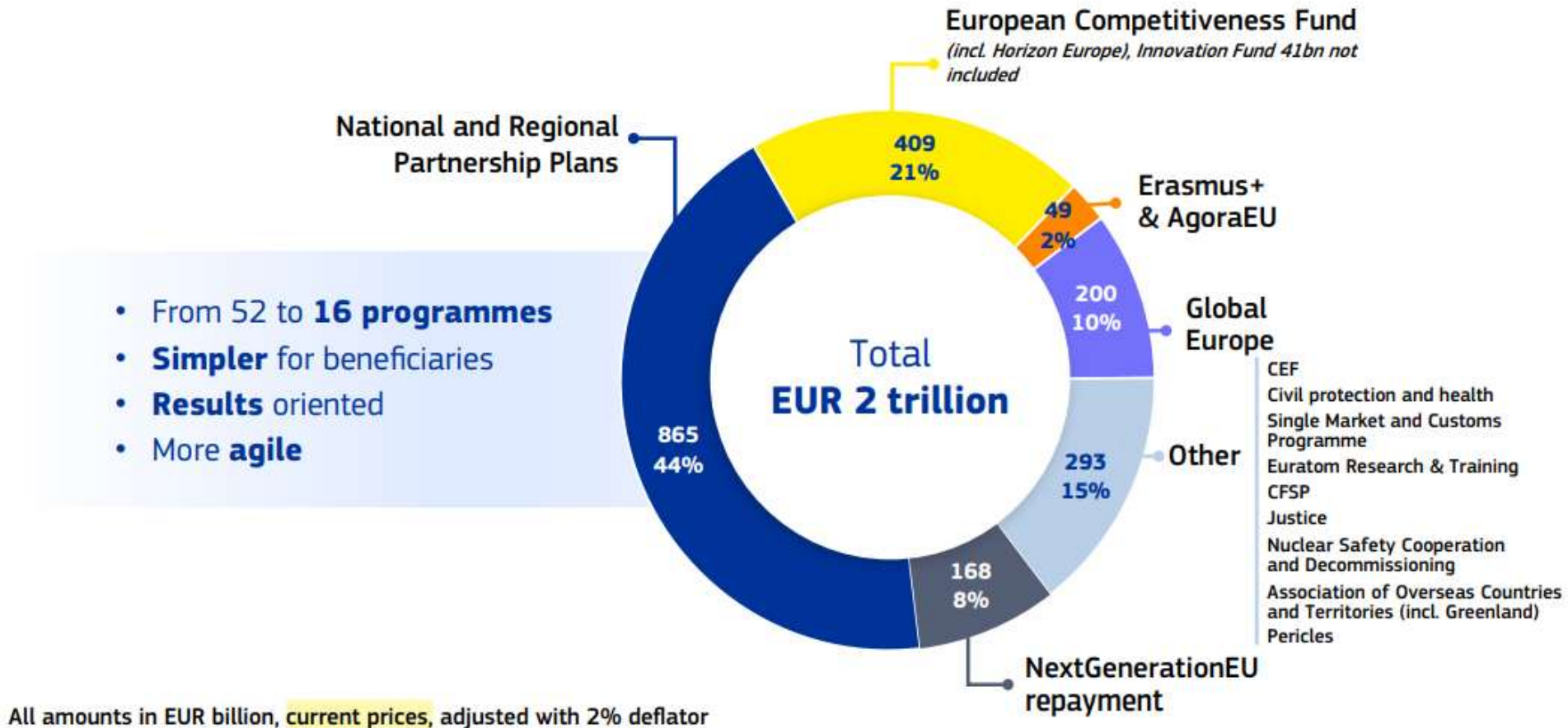
- **Commission proposal for 2028-2034 MFF adopted** on 16 July 2025.
- **A fundamental redesign** of the EU budget for a more **integrated, flexible and impactful** approach.
- Recognises the **vital role of fishery and aquaculture** producers in Europe's **coastal communities** and economies.
- Supports key EU priorities, including the **CFP, the European Ocean Pact, maritime and aquaculture policy**.

Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF)

1. European Fund for economic, social and territorial cohesion, agriculture and rural, fisheries and maritime, prosperity and security for period 2028-2034
 - ❖ National and Regional Partnership Plans (NRPP) for investments and reforms => *shared* (like under the current EMFAF National programmes)
 - ❖ EU Facility: *direct, shared and indirect*

➡ **Auxiliary legal proposals** Sectorial proposals for different policy areas supported under the NRP Fund, including **the proposal establishing the conditions for the implementation of the Union support to Common Fisheries Policy, to the European Ocean Pact and maritime and aquaculture**
2. European Competitiveness Fund and Horizon Europe – *direct*
 - ❖ Support for investments in fisheries, aquaculture and maritime sectors.
3. Global Europe Fund – *direct and indirect*
 - ❖ Support ocean diplomacy and international ocean governance and partnerships with non-EU countries.

Financial Framework



A faster, simpler and more impactful system

Ensuring better coherence between EU priorities and national and regional actions	Achieving simplification and better value for money	Addressing emerging policy priorities without putting at risk the fulfilment of long-term objectives	Fostering ownership at all levels
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Stronger synergies between policies ➤ A more integrated programming process, allowing a more differentiated and qualitative approach to deliver on EU priorities, tailored to each Member State's national and regional challenges ➤ Investments + reforms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ A single rulebook + a large eligibility scope and toolbox (e.g. guarantees) ➤ Payments based on achievement of objectives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Progressive allocation: a higher flexibility amount (25%) set aside and available for crisis situations and the mid-term review. ➤ A dedicated financial capacity, the EU Facility, to steer action at EU-level and provide additional room to help Member States respond to crises (<i>e.g. natural disasters, market disturbances on agricultural markets</i>) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Strong regional dimension and involvement of social partners ➤ Multi-level governance and partnership principle ➤ Continuity and predictability for managing authorities

Legal architecture of the fund

Laying down rules on:

tasks, priority objectives, organisation and grouping under the Fund

The Structural Funds and Cohesion Fund

Instruments for the CAP

Instruments for the CFP

SCF

support to security and defence capabilities

financial rules for Union support

NRPP

Interreg

EU Facility

financial resources for the period from 1 January 2028 to 31 December 2034.

Prevailing over the sectoral regulations



Sectoral regulations

setting out specific conditions to complement the Fund Regulation
'Union support will be provided under the NRPP'

Regulation on ERDF/CF incl. Interreg

Regulation on ESF

Regulations on CAP and CMO

Regulation on CFP, Aquaculture and Maritime Policies, Ocean Act

Regulations for migration, asylum, border management and internal security policy

Objectives of the fund

General objectives reflecting Treaty-based objectives and the NRP Plans' legal architecture to be pursued through more comprehensive **specific objectives** grouped around **5 pillars**:

General objectives (art.2)

Reduce regional imbalances, promote European territorial cooperation [ERDF/CF]

Support social policies [ESF] and a socially fair transition

Support the Implementation of the Common Agricultural Policy [CAP]

Support the implementation of the Common Fisheries Policy [CFP]

Protect and strengthen democracy, uphold Union values



Specific objectives (art.3)

(a) Support the Union's sustainable prosperity across all regions

(b) Support the Union's defence capabilities and security

(c) Strengthen social cohesion (people, societies, social model)

(d) Sustain the quality of life in the Union

(e) Protect and strengthen fundamental rights, democracy, the rule of law, Union values

Fisheries, aquaculture and ocean-related activities under the NRPP

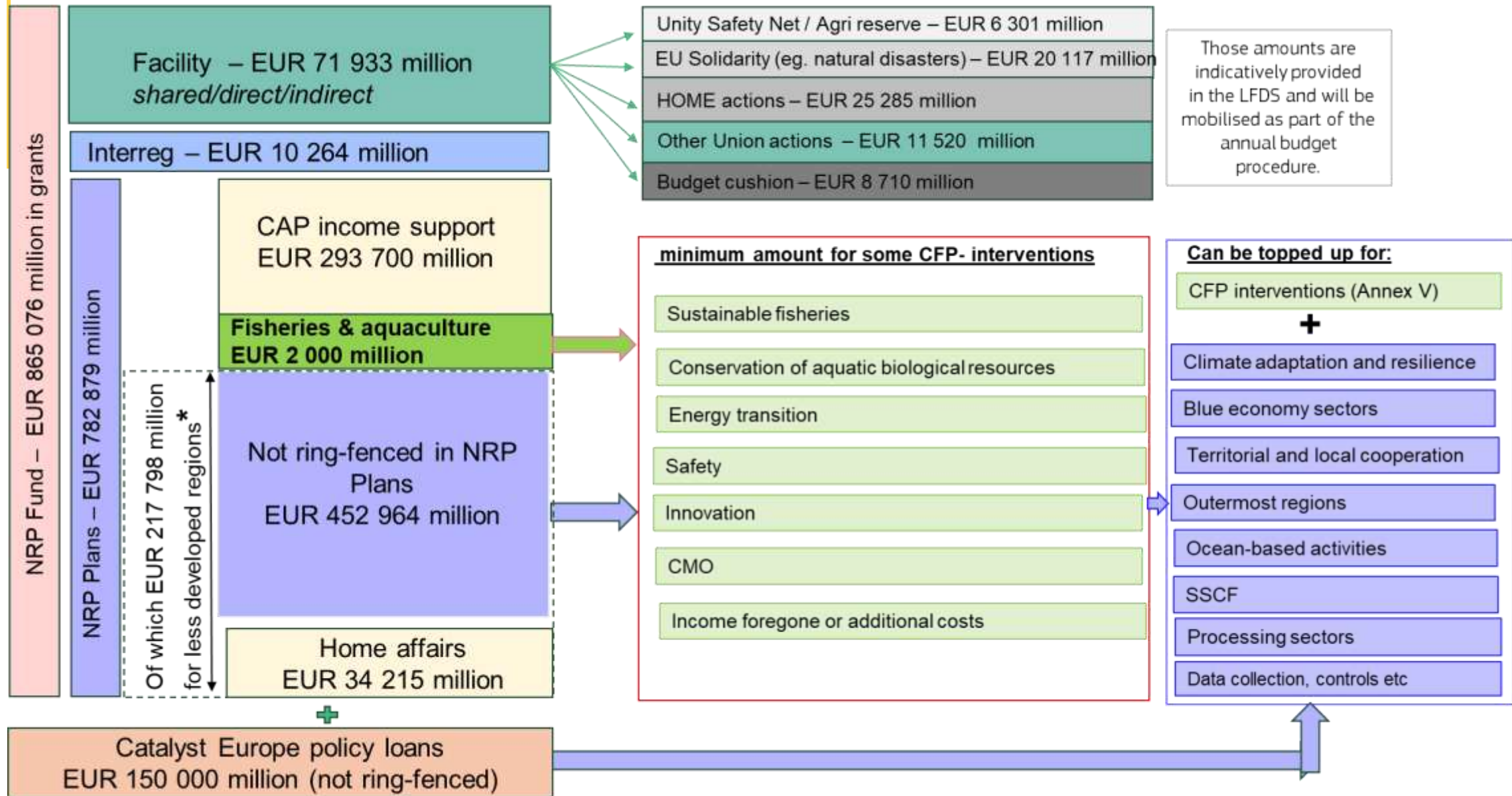
- **Minimum amount:**

- ❖ **Earmarked amount of EUR 2 billion euro for purely maritime and fisheries needs** to implement the core areas of the CFP and for compensation for crises and exceptional circumstances.
- ❖ MS can use the ring-fenced amount to support the restoration and conservation of aquatic biological resources, energy transition, innovation, producer organizations.

- **Beyond the required minimum:**

- ❖ MSs can allocate additional resources under the non-ringfenced amount of **453 billion euro** to address their priorities and needs to support the fisheries, aquaculture and maritime sectors, to implement the CFP and to support the implementation of the European Ocean Pact.
- ❖ Under the **EU Facility** (72 billion in total, out of which 11,5 billion available, among others, for CFP support), the Commission can support the implementation of specific areas under the CFP, such as scientific advice, data collection and control

Future framework provides further access to spend more on fisheries and ocean-based activities



* LDR earmarking can be used for any amount not ring-fenced for CAP and CFP amounts. CAP interventions above CAP ring-fenced amount can contribute to earmarking for LDR.

Conditions for implementation of the NRP Fund related to the CFP, the European Ocean Pact and to the maritime and aquaculture policies (1)

- **Single rulebook:** Programming and implementation rules are laid down in the NRP, whereas the policy maintains an independent legal basis with additional rules and conditions.
- **Articles 1&2:** Proposal makes it clear that the NRP Fund will contribute to the European Ocean Pact and the implementation of the environmental, economic, social and employment objectives of the CFP. See also recitals 1-4.
- **Article 3 - complements Art. 22 on the requirements of the NRP Plan:**
 - Requirement for MS to account for the needs of fisheries, aquaculture, coastal communities and SSCF;
 - Aid intensities are set by the MS; for SSCF it can go up to 100%;
 - Requirement for MS to take into account the fishing capacity and fishing opportunities;
 - Requirement for MS to assess and ensure admissibility of operations (current Art.11 of EMFAF Reg.). Empowerment for a DA.

Conditions for implementation of the NRP Fund related to the CFP, the European Ocean Pact and to the maritime and aquaculture policies (2)

From a cost-based to a performance based system: Proposal keeps only basic eligibility rules that have to be fulfilled. MS can design and implement their measures according to their needs and priorities.

- **Article 4 – Eligibility conditions for support:**

- Requirement for MS to ensure that support complies with the WTO, the objectives and Art. 2 of the CFP.
- Requirement for beneficiaries to comply with the CFP and not to commit infringements and offences within 5 years.
- Exclusion from support for the transfer or reflagging of fishing vessels to third countries. Exclusion from support for the transfer of ownership of a business and of deep sea mining.

- **Principle of the “do-no-significant-harm” laid down in the proposal for a Performance Regulation applies to the entire EU budget.** Sector-specific guidelines will be prepared in order to ensure that no activities that could cause considerable harm and hinder environmental objectives will be supported.

The European Ocean Pact

- **Sustaining the ocean that sustains us! #EUCOceanPact**
- The **Ocean Pact Communication** is the EU's **long-term vision for the ocean** and was presented at the UN Ocean Conference in Nice on 9 June 2025. It brings together EU ocean policies into a unified framework to better **protect the ocean, promote a thriving blue economy and support the well-being of people** living in coastal areas, islands and outermost regions.
- **European Ocean Act** to improve coherence and effective implementation – call for evidence closed on 9 February 2026.
- **European Ocean Board** to guide the Ocean Pact's implementation.

Evaluation of the Common Fisheries Policy (CFP) Regulation

- **Evaluation of the Common Fisheries Policy (CFP) Regulation** – announced in March 2024 following discussions on the Communication on the functioning of the common fisheries policy. Key deliverable of Commissioner Kadis' mission letter.
- **Objective:** to provide an evidence-based assessment of whether the CFP Regulation is still fit for purpose or where lessons can be learned for improving.
- **In line with Commission's Better Regulation Standards; assessment of the five key evaluation criteria:** efficiency, effectiveness, relevance, coherence, EU added value.
- **Public feedback** was collected through a call for evidence in 2024 (87 responses - [link](#)), an open public consultation with detailed questions in 2025 (362 replies & summary report - [link](#))
- **Final product is the evaluation report – a staff working document** drafted by the Commission to be published in spring 2026.

Vision 2040 for fisheries and aquaculture

- Commissioner Kadis' mission letter requires the preparation of a “*vision for the fisheries sector with a 2040 perspective*” that should “*tackle the issues that affect the fishing community, supports job creation in the sector and ensures its long-term competitiveness and sustainability*”.
 - It will make **strategic links with key Commission wide initiatives** and provide a coherent **framework and direction to key MARE initiatives**, including the energy transition roadmap, communication of on fisheries external action and conclusions from the CFP Regulation evaluation.
 - Some **key axes of reflection** will include:
 - Consumer demand for sustainably caught/farmed fish.
 - Supply of sustainably caught/farmed fish.
 - Labour force with adapted knowledge to catch (fishers), farm and process the fish.
 - Tools to catch/farm fish that optimise costs, infrastructure to land/farm, sell, process and transport fish.
- Call for evidence open until 24 March 2026 ([link](#))

Strengthening the social dimension of fisheries

DG MARE has been working on strengthening the social dimension of fisheries through:

- **The development of social data** to improve socio-economic assessments. This is done in close collaboration with the Scientific, Technical and Economic Committee on Fisheries (STECF). A social analysis toolbox has been developed including National Fisheries Profiles (16 published on the [OPOCE](#), more to come), Community Fisheries Profiles (to understand local realities) and social indicators.
- A first **dedicated social report** on fishing, aquaculture and processing will be published in April 2026 by STECF that will combine this qualitative and quantitative data.
- A **study on the level of training and certification** of fishers (2025 - [link](#)) as part of considerations to harmonize the level of safety training for fishers in the EU ([link](#))

Other recent/ongoing studies and consultations

- **EU coastal communities strategy:** public call for evidence open until 23 March 2026 ([link](#))
- **European Union's fishing fleet: evolution, challenges and future:** initiated in 2024, expected delivery early 2026
- **A new strategic approach to EU fisheries external action** (in preparation, public consultation closed in 15 September 2025)
- **Study supporting the evaluation of the Landing Obligation** ([link](#))
- Recent **high-level conference on Energy Transition** (February 2026, [link](#)); MS **Ambassadors** under the **ETP pilot programme** to be nominated soon.
- **Vademecum on criteria of allocation of fishing opportunities** (article 17 of the CFP Regulation): guidance to Member States in order to facilitate the application of article 17 of the CFP Regulation (published in November 2025 - [link](#))
- **Implementation dialogue** with Commissioner Kadis **on small-scale fisheries** (24 November 2025)
- Foresight study “**Fishers of the future**” (2025 – [link](#)): 4 scenarios, 8 profiles, 200 fishers interviewed across 22 coastal Member States.

EMFF and EMFAF evaluations

- **EMFF ex-post evaluation and EMFAF mid-term evaluation in parallel**
- Supported by **external studies** conducted **over the past years**
- Application of **various methodological tools and approaches**
- **Reach-out to the wider public** (call for evidence, public consultation, surveys, targeted interviews and consultations, validation workshops etc.)
- **Evaluation studies and Commission's Staff Working Documents expected to be completed early 2026**

Updates on Aquaculture Policy (1)

- Continued implementation of the “Strategic Guidelines for EU aquaculture” and EU Algae Initiative
- Key documents published on the EU aquaculture website:
 - ✓ Regulatory and administrative framework (incl. e-learning module)
 - ✓ Planning of space and access to water for marine aquaculture (incl. e-learning module)
 - ✓ Access to space and water for freshwater and land-based aquaculture
 - ✓ Adaptation to climate change (incl. e-learning)
 - ✓ Energy transition
 - ✓ NEW: Good husbandry practices in aquaculture (updated)
 - ✓ NEW: Code on fish welfare good practices and indicators
 - ✓ NEW: Mid-term assessment on implementation Strategic guidelines and MNSPAs

Updates on Aquaculture Policy (2)

- **Documents in progress:**
 - ✓ Managing the impacts of predators
 - ✓ Bivalve mollusc farming: challenges and how to address them
 - ✓ Circular economy
 - ✓ Reporting obligations
 - ✓ Environmental performance
 - ✓ Environmental benefits of aquaculture
- **Publications on the EU webpage [Media | EU Aquaculture Assistance Mechanism \(europa.eu\)](#):**
 - ✓ Infographics on shellfish, algae and finfish farming, EMODNet and aquaculture
 - ✓ Video on the “Open Method of Coordination and EU aquaculture policy”
 - ✓ New infographics and a video are under preparation

EU campaign on aquaculture: working with passion

- EU-wide campaign on aquaculture:
 - **To raise awareness, understanding and acceptance of aquaculture** among citizens and those who have a say at local level on the development of the sector
 - Commission prepared **tools that can be used by Member States** to disseminate and amplify the campaign
 - Commission launched the campaign in March 2025 – Member States still can implement it by using the tools.

Video: EU Aquaculture: we work for you with passion

Nature Restoration Regulation

- **The Nature Restoration Regulation (NRR) entered into force on 18 August 2024.** It requires Member States to put in place effective restoration measures to cover at least 20% of the EU's land and sea areas by 2030, and for all ecosystems in need of restoration by 2050.
- **NRR is directly applicable in the Member States and requires them to put restoration measures in place to achieve the objectives and specific targets within the interim deadlines, including in coastal and marine habitats.**
- Each Member State must develop and submit to the Commission a draft **National Restoration Plan within two years from the entry into force of the Regulation** (18 August 2026), setting out milestones for 2030, 2040 and 2050 – process ongoing.
- **Close collaboration within (and between) the national, regional and local administrations and relevant stakeholders (and with other MSs for transboundary areas)** is required for the preparation and implementation of the Nature Restoration Plans.

The European Marine Observation and Data network – EMODnet & the Digital Twin Ocean (EU DTO) (1)



- EU marine environmental data, brought together, made available, made accessible – contributing to **marine knowledge**.
- Hundreds of organisations in Europe are collecting data on the marine environment.
- **EMODnet** aims to bring data together, harmonise them and make them available for every use, for every user, for better understanding and better management, for fair and knowledge-based decisions.
- Based on the Copernicus Marine Service & EMODnet, **the EU Digital Twin Ocean (DTO)** = a digital system to bring together data and advanced tools, to support policy and management decisions at all levels, through forecasting and scenarios.

The European Marine Observation and Data network – EMODnet & the Digital Twin Ocean (EU DTO) (2)

- EMFAF funds can and should be used to strengthen marine knowledge initiatives across national marine waters.
- The European Commission encourages any action **to increase the availability of marine data and support the flow of collected data in EMODnet**. These actions can include the collection of new data where is needed or help direct data already collected in EMODnet.
- Ocean observation and data **are crucial to develop a strong EU Digital Twin Ocean**. This includes data from the marine environment and data from the Blue Economy business sectors, socio-ecological data etc., available at the level of the Member States. **Actions supporting the development of the EU DTO through EMFAF are also encouraged.**
- Actions to mobilise and engage relevant stakeholders and to ensure access to all data can have a lot of added value.



emodnet.ec.europa.eu

Thank you!

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