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PECHE 39

NOTE

From: General Secretariat of the Council
To: Delegations

Subject: AOB for the meeting of the Agriculture and Fisheries Council of 26 January 2026:
Actions for the improvement of the WESTMEDMAP
- Information from Spain on behalf of France and Spain

AGRIFISH COUNCIL

26 January 2026

AOB

Actions for the improvement of the WESTMEDMAP.

(information from Spain and France)

The current legal framework for the WESTMED has shown some problems notably on the obligation to manage a mixed fisheries based on the species in the poorest conservation status. The council has raised several times the need to revise the article 4.3 of the WESTMEDMAP regulation in line with the three other MAPS in order to avoid the choke effect generated by the obligation to manage the fisheries based on the most vulnerable species.

Moreover, European Parliament has recently shown their willingness to tackle such revision through a letter from the president of the PECH Committee.

Additionally, the commissioner during the December council, announced orally the disposition to put forward a proposal revising the MAP.

The revised MAP should take into account the realities of mixed Mediterranean fisheries and ensure a more balanced approach regarding the socio-economic challenges faced by the fishing industry, both upstream and downstream, in line with the Common Fisheries Policy Basic Regulation.

Considering the willingness shown by the co-legislators to improve the legal framework, we urge the Commission to submit a legislative proposal to revise the WestMed MAP during the first quarter of 2026, so that the plan can be revised ahead of the Council meeting of December 2026, in which fishing opportunities for 2027 in the Mediterranean Sea will be decided.

Furthermore, the science in the Mediterranean, despite the excellent work done by scientists, needs a reinforcement to reduce the uncertainty of the advice. The experience of the model review for hake in EMU1, performed during 2025, has improved the advice and the certainty of the management decisions.

The Commission, in cooperation with Member States, shall work intensively on stock assessments review for the rest of the stocks included in the MAP to improve scientific advice.

Finally, in line with the petition to adopt multiannual decisions regarding the fishing opportunities, we consider necessary to adopt multiannual decisions regarding fishing effort, this will provide certainties to the fishing industry that will allow to better organise their business model and address their socioeconomic needs.
