



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR MARITIME AFFAIRS AND FISHERIES

The Director-General

Brussels,
MARE/C1/UK/ms

Subject: Recommendation 35 Mayotte

Dear President,

Thank you very much for your recommendation 35 regarding Mayotte. Please accept my apology for answering your letter so late. We have tried to make up for this lack in timeliness of our answer by looking also at wider funding possibilities and getting in touch with our colleagues from DG REGIO so that we can provide you already with the necessary contact details. Please find these towards the end of this letter.

The Commission is very much aware about the special situation in outermost regions and I thank you for highlighting once more the difficulties for your fishers. I believe that my reply to recommendation 31 has already addressed some of your concerns.

Implementing the CFP is important in all EU regions, notwithstanding whether we talk about remote areas like the outermost regions or the EU mainland. Where you find issues in implementing the CFP, I would encourage you to address these specific issues as well with your Member State. We understand that Mayotte encounters many logistical challenges with regards to scientific data collection and analysis, especially with staffing, access to landings sites and sampling, but also data management and analysis. I will use this opportunity to transmit my reply to you as well to the French administration. Let me in this respect mention that the EMFAF has a substantial financial envelope for gathering scientific knowledge, creating partnerships between scientists and fishermen as well as for human resources to undertake the necessary scientific work in Mayotte.

Let me also inform you that Mayotte asked for additional fish quotas and we know that this is a matter that is sometimes brought up also by other Outermost Regions. This is indeed an important aspect, and it goes to the core of the economic viability of the fleets. I would like to invite you to address this matter with the administration in France. It also very much depends on the scientific advice for fish stocks, and the need to establish sustainable quotas that provide the sector with a long term viability and that keep stocks at a sustainable level. Let me here also mention that the EU continues its efforts to ensure that the future plan for tropical tunas contains a more balanced and effective set of measures, including improved management of fishing activities with drifting FADs in

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order to better regulate the industrial fleet to the advantage of the artisanal one, a TAC in line with scientific advice, and the allocation of quotas for bigeye tuna and yellowfin tuna. A good management of the fishery resources is of course essential.

We are aware that your fishing fleet is composed mostly of artisanal vessels and that many vessels are in poor shape. We understand that you see the need to replace these vessels. This is a question that France has repeatedly raised, and which is a strong priority for the Commission. However, it is of utmost importance to respect the core principles of the CFP, notably avoiding overfishing.

This being said, let me please call again your attention to the various diversification possibilities for which EMFAF money can be used as well.

The local fishing communities can receive long-term funding from the EMFAF, and can decide how it is spent through local partnerships, called Community led local development (CLLD). CLLD funding is delegated to local partnerships that bring together the private sector, local authorities and civil society organisations. Known as LAGs (Local Action Groups), these partnerships fund local projects within the framework of a strategy, developed in response to specific needs and opportunities identified locally. They can focus on traditional sectors (e.g. fisheries, aquaculture, tourism) and/or foster economic diversification through synergies with emerging maritime sectors (e.g. blue bioeconomy).

Like all other outermost regions, Mayotte has developed an EMFAF action plan, which is part of the French EMFAF programme and includes a dedicated budget allocation for Mayotte. The Mayotte action plan establishes a strategy for the inclusion of fishery and aquaculture into a sustainable blue economy policy. EMFAF support is foreseen to implement these action plans. We call on the Mayotte authorities to use the available financial means to implement their EMFAF action plan in support of the sector.

You highlight as well the problem of landings, lacking port structures and problems to control fishing. Finally, but not less important you inform us that it is difficult to organise training. EMFAF provides the means to support control measures as well as capacity building. In addition, the French Managing Authority is working with the regional authorities to develop capacity building, as well as ensure training. Indeed we have been informed that the French Managing Authority was in Mayotte at the end of 2022 to meet and train the local actors as part of the “tour de France” to support the EMFAF implementation in the French regions. We very much welcome this initiative, and we fully agree with you on the need for all outermost regions to have the capacity to manage their fisheries well so that the fishers in the outermost regions can rely on them for their livelihood today and in the future.

In this regard, and in order to increase the financial capacity of the projects in Mayotte, I recommend having a common approach with other EU funds (in particular the European Regional Development Funds - ERDF) and exploring the possibilities for additional financial support from such funds. In case you have any question in relation to the ERDF, please contact my colleagues from Directorate-General for Regional and Urban Policy: Mario GERHARTL (email: Mario.GERHARTL@ec.europa.eu) and Miriam BURAJOVA (email: Miriam.BURAJOVA@ec.europa.eu).

I hope that I was able to clarify these matters for you.

I was happy to discuss these and wider issues at the last Annual Assembly of CCRUP in La Reunion and am looking forward to our continued fruitful cooperation. Should you have any further questions on this reply, please contact Ms Julia Rubeck, our Advisory Councils coordinator, via the functional mailbox MARE-AC@ec.europa.eu.

Yours sincerely,

Charlina VITCHEVA

Cc: Mr. Eric Banel, Director General DGAMPA, République française