



Management Plan 2024

Directorate-General for
Maritime Affairs and Fisheries

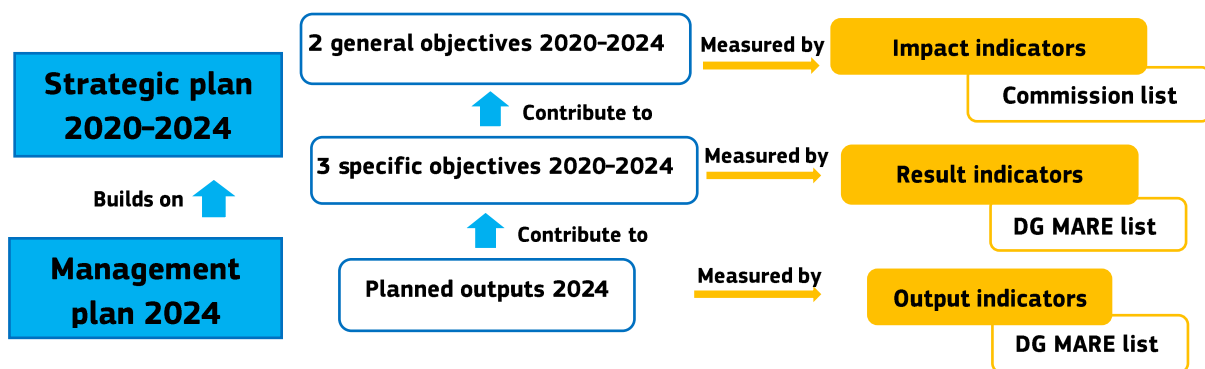
Contents

- Introduction..... 3
- PART 1. Delivering on the Commission’s priorities: main outputs for 2024..... 5
 - A. General objective 1: A European Green Deal 6
 - B. General objective 4: A Stronger Europe in the World.....17
- PART 2. Modernising the administration: main outputs for 2024.....22
 - A. Human resource management ().....22
 - B. Sound financial management ().....23
 - C. Fraud risk management ().....24
 - D. Digital transformation and information management ().....25
 - Digital transformation.....25
 - Information and IT security rules25
 - Data, information and knowledge management.....26
 - Data protection26
 - Records Management.....27
 - E. Sound environmental management ().....27
 - F. Initiatives to improve economy and efficiency of financial and non-financial activities27
- ANNEX: Performance tables - main outputs for 2024.....29

Introduction

The mission of the Directorate-General for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries (or "DG MARE") is: *"To strive for healthy seas and a sustainable use of the oceans and of marine resources in the EU and worldwide. This involves ensuring sustainable fisheries through the full implementation of the Common Fisheries Policy, promoting in the EU an integrated approach to all policies impacting the oceans and their good governance, including fostering a sustainable blue economy, thus providing jobs and prosperity to coastal communities and sustainable food, and contributing to a healthy environment for today's and future generations, as well as projecting these policies internationally."*

The diagram below illustrates the links between DG MARE's [strategic plan 2020-2024](#) ⁽¹⁾ and this [management plan 2024](#) (please also refer to PART 1, p. 5):



The [management plan 2024](#) reflects President von der Leyen's [State of the Union 2023](#) and her [Letter of Intent](#), as well as [Commissioner Sinkevičius' mission letter](#).

DG MARE's key priorities in 2024 will be:

- To ensure a sustainable exploitation of fisheries across diverse sea basins, and, together with the Member States, further develop a sustainable blue economy in the EU, while supporting it also worldwide.
- To help transition the fisheries and aquaculture sector, making it more sustainable and resilient for the future, in particular by supporting investment in their green and digital transition. These transitions have increased in importance following the impacts of the Russian war of aggression against Ukraine.
- To continue proposing and facilitating the adoption of fishing opportunities for the sector in line with the best available scientific advice and taking full account of socio-economic considerations, while reinforcing the external pillar of the Common Fisheries Policy (CFP), as more than 70% of EU total allowable catches are now negotiated with third countries.
- To continue leading the way on international ocean governance by playing a prominent role in all relevant international fora, taking a leading role in implementing the **High**

⁽¹⁾ [Strategic plan 2020-2024 – Maritime Affairs and Fisheries | European Commission \(europa.eu\)](#)

Seas Treaty on marine biodiversity (BBNJ) and supporting others to do so, as well as in establishing **new marine protected areas in Antarctica**.

Other important actions in 2024 will be:

- To continue prioritising the implementation and enforcement of the rules of the CFP and [Common Market Organisation](#), as well as to ensure a seamless and timely implementation of the [revised EU fisheries control system](#). To channel funding from the **European Maritime, Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund (EMFAF) 2021-2027** to support the implementation of the CFP, the Union's maritime policy, including [the EU Blue Economy Strategy](#) and the Union's international commitments in the field of ocean governance.
- Through research and innovation activities implemented under the **Mission Restore our Ocean and Waters**, which stands at the heart of the European Green Deal, enhance protection and restoration of our ocean and freshwaters and strengthen the implementation of the Sustainable Blue Economy approach in the EU and internationally.
- To implement the actions announced in the [Strategic Guidelines for Aquaculture](#) ⁽²⁾ (2021) and the [EU Algae initiative](#) ⁽³⁾ (2022), the [Marine Action Plan](#) ⁽⁴⁾, the [Communication on the functioning of the Common Fisheries Policy](#) ⁽⁵⁾, and the [Energy Transition of the Fisheries and Aquaculture sectors](#) ⁽⁶⁾, as set out in the **Fisheries and Oceans package** (2023).
- To implement the revised [EU Maritime Security Strategy](#) ⁽⁷⁾ and its [action plan](#) ⁽⁸⁾.
- To implement the actions announced in the updated [Offshore Renewable Energy Communication](#) ⁽⁹⁾ (Renewable Energy Package 2023).
- To continue active participation and engagement in the enlargement process for Georgia, Moldova, Türkiye, Ukraine and Western Balkans countries.
- To ensure a smooth institutional transition at the end of the current Commission's term of office running until 31 October 2024.

As an organisation, we will continue our work towards a **more modern, efficient and sustainable administration** in line with the corporate Human Resources strategy and the greening action plan.

⁽²⁾ [COM\(2021\)236 final of 12.05.2021](#)

⁽³⁾ [COM\(2022\)592 final of 15.11.2022](#)

⁽⁴⁾ [COM\(2023\)102 final of 21.02.2023](#)

⁽⁵⁾ [COM\(2023\)103 final of 21.02.2023](#)

⁽⁶⁾ [COM\(2023\)100 final of 21.02.2023](#)

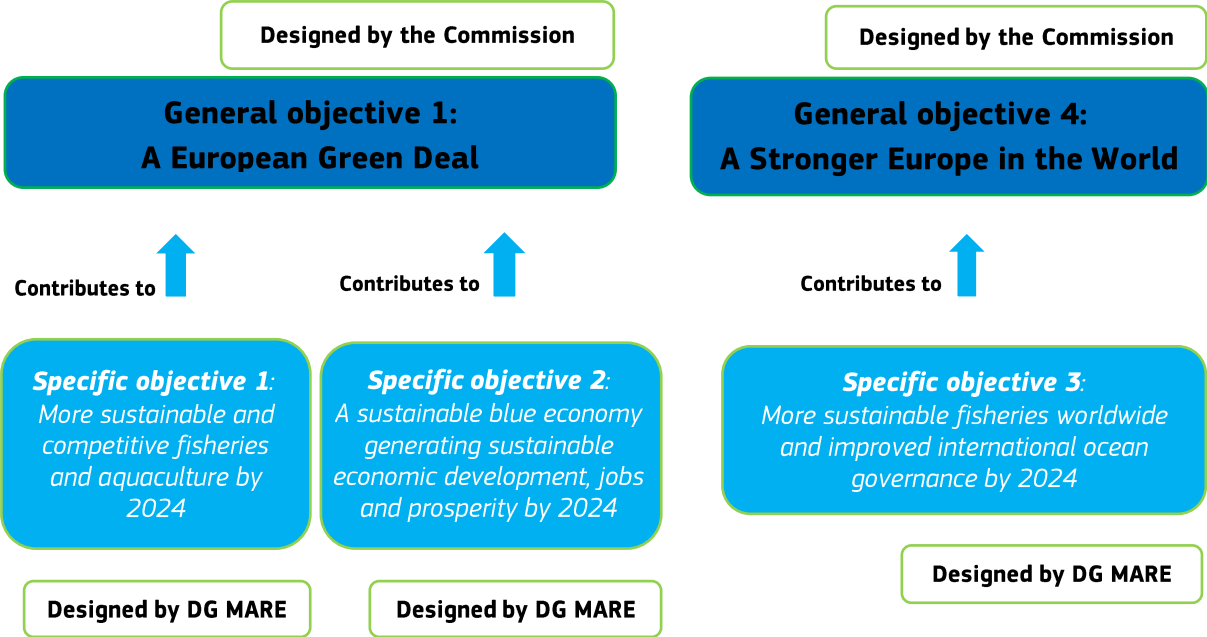
⁽⁷⁾ [JOIN\(2023\)8 final of 10.03.2023](#)

⁽⁸⁾ [JOIN\(2023\)8 final – annex of 10.03.2023](#)

⁽⁹⁾ [COM\(2023\)668 final of 24.10.2023](#)

PART 1. Delivering on the Commission’s priorities: main outputs for 2024

Part 1 explains how our main outputs planned for 2024 contribute to achieving the objectives set in DG MARE’s [strategic plan 2020-2024](#)⁽¹⁰⁾. These contribute as follows to the [political priorities of the von der Leyen Commission](#)⁽¹¹⁾:



Our work will be a crucial contribution to the **European Green Deal**, and in particular to the [Farm to Fork Strategy](#) and the [EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030](#), including their external dimension, but also to the [EU Strategy for Adaptation to Climate Change](#). Our work on International Ocean Governance and sustainable fisheries worldwide provides an important contribution to making **Europe Stronger in the World**. Internationally, our actions contribute to the United Nations’ Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), notably SDG 14 dedicated to life below water, SDG 2 on food security and SDG 13 addressing climate change and its impacts.

DG MARE’s external communication actions and overall communication strategy will support DG MARE’s policy objectives. Several external communication campaigns support the objectives of the EU Green Deal: **#EUBeachCleanup** (fight against marine litter), **#TasteTheOcean** (sustainable fish consumption), and **a new campaign on sustainable EU aquaculture**. In addition, the key policy objectives listed below will be supported by a wide range of communication actions used in combination: infographics explaining each policy on social media, thematic episodes on Euronews, press releases, and articles in the [Maritime Affairs & Fisheries Newsletter](#) (targeted at a more specialised audience). The

⁽¹⁰⁾ [Strategic plan 2020-2024 – Maritime Affairs and Fisheries | European Commission \(europa.eu\)](#)
⁽¹¹⁾ [The European Commission’s priorities | European Commission \(europa.eu\)](#)

2024 **European Maritime Day** will be our main annual flagship event, together with the many “European Maritime Day in My Country” events.

DG MARE is preparing a plan to **simplify and rationalise the reporting requirements** and reduce related burden on businesses and / or national administrations, without undermining the policy objectives. This includes a list of concrete measures planned for 2024 and beyond to progress **towards the goal of 25% reduction** of such burden. Among others, DG MARE will start working in 2024 on the removal of paper catch registration documents according to the [revised fisheries control regulation](#) ⁽¹²⁾.

A. General objective 1: A European Green Deal

Specific objective 1: More sustainable and competitive fisheries and aquaculture by 2024 ⁽¹³⁾

Result indicator: Stocks fished at maximum sustainable yield (MSY) levels

The implementation of the Common Fisheries Policy (CFP) – including the landing obligation, multiannual management plans, and effective control and enforcement – remains a top priority in line with [Commissioner Sinkevičius’ mission letter](#). It is an important contribution to the European Green Deal, to the Farm to Fork Strategy and the EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030. DG MARE will continue to work towards the achievement of the **key objectives of the CFP**, in particular under the new impetus set by the [Communication on the functioning of the Common Fisheries Policy](#), [the EU Action Plan on protecting and restoring marine ecosystems for sustainable and resilient fisheries](#) and [the Energy Transition for the fisheries and aquaculture sectors](#):

- Bringing fish stocks to and maintaining them at healthy levels;
- Ending the wasteful practice of discards through full control and implementation of the landing obligation;
- Minimising the negative impact of fishing on the marine environment, including on sensitive species and habitats through appropriate technical measures.

Following up on the [Communication on the functioning of the Common Fisheries Policy](#), the Commission will undertake an evaluation of the landing obligation and launch a study on

⁽¹²⁾ [Regulation \(EU\) 2023/2842 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 22 November 2023 amending Council Regulation \(EC\) No 1224/2009, and amending Council Regulations \(EC\) No 1967/2006 and \(EC\) No 1005/2008 and Regulations \(EU\) 2016/1139, \(EU\) 2017/2403 and \(EU\) 2019/473 of the European Parliament and of the Council as regards fisheries control](#)

⁽¹³⁾ The performance tables for this specific objective can be found in the Annex (pages 29 to 35)

the ‘Fishers of the Future’ and will continue to work with the Member States on the allocation criteria for fishing opportunities under Article 17 of the CFP.

Implementing [the EU Action Plan on protecting and restoring marine ecosystems for sustainable and resilient fisheries](#) in 2024, the Commission will engage with the Member States via the newly created Joint Special Group, establish roadmaps at Member State level, and continue supporting Member State Regional Groups in the preparation of Joint Recommendations. The Member States will adapt their data collection work plans for 2025-2027 to address relevant data needs. Continuous engagement with stakeholders through the 11 Advisory Councils is also of key importance as well as through research and innovation projects funded under the Mission Ocean and Waters. The next [report on the implementation of the Technical Measures Regulation](#), which focuses on innovative fishing gear to reduce impacts on sensitive species and habitats as set out in the Action Plan will be delivered in 2024. This latter work will feed into the mid-term review of the EU Biodiversity Strategy, also due in 2024.

Mid-2024, we will present the **annual communication on the state of play of the CFP and orientations for 2025**, outlining our approach for setting the fishing opportunities for 2025 and reporting on the latest progress towards sustainable fishing, implementation of the fleet policy and the landing obligation. The stakeholders’ feedback and the best available scientific data and advice will underpin the Commission’s annual proposals setting the total allowable catches, fishing efforts and quotas for the EU sea basins (Atlantic, North Sea, Baltic Sea, Mediterranean and Black Seas) and beyond EU waters. The aim is to maintain, or reach maximum sustainable yield (MSY) for MSY-assessed stocks.

We will strive to ensure the availability of the best available scientific advice to support decision-making, through coordination with different scientific bodies (International Council for the Exploration of the Sea – ICES, Scientific, Technical and Economic Committee for Fisheries – STECF, Joint Research Centre – JRC) and we will contribute to the strengthening of the scientific knowledge in the EU with a second round of the Call for the Fisheries Scientific Advice to boost the science-basis of management decisions under the CFP.

We will continue working with the regional groups of Member States on the implementation of the **landing obligation** and will encourage a more frequent and effective use of regionalisation under the [Regulation on the Common Fisheries Policy](#) and the [Technical Measures Regulation](#) to establish regional technical measures for conservation purposes, including avoidance of unwanted catches and by-catch of sensitive species.

Significant improvements in lowering the fishing pressure in the **north-east Atlantic** were made over the past years and the biomass of many fish stocks continued to increase. Some challenges however remain, especially in the **Baltic Sea**. The Commission will continue to work with scientific bodies for better scientific advice and thus better stock management. For stocks shared with third countries, the Commission will, on behalf of the Union, continue to engage in consultations to set fishing opportunities in line with long-term management strategies or, in the absence of such strategies, the maximum sustainable yield advice.

Conservation efforts need to be continued in the **Mediterranean and Black Seas** to achieve sustainable fisheries. 2024 will be the fourth year in which the [multiannual plan for demersal stock in the western Mediterranean](#) is fully implemented. The plan aims to achieve maximum sustainable yield at the latest by 2025. To this end, the annual effort reduction for the stocks covered by the multi-annual plans and other management decisions are to be included in the relevant fishing opportunities regulation, which will also implement measures adopted by the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM) in 2024 and, for the Black Sea, the catch limits and quotas for turbot and sprat.

We will undertake actions to deliver on the ambitious **GFCM 2030 Strategy**. Specific actions will address today's challenges and facilitate a green transition, support the coastal communities and preserve food security based on solidarity between all Mediterranean countries. The Commission will propose to transpose into EU law the recommendations adopted by the GFCM in 2021 and 2022.

Almost all of the key fish stocks in the North Sea and the north-east Atlantic are managed bilaterally between the EU and the **United Kingdom** and some trilaterally (EU, Norway and the UK) or multilaterally (EU and **other coastal States** in the north-east Atlantic). The sustainable exploitation of these stocks, proper control measures, promotion of a level playing field and implementation and monitoring of the **EU-UK Trade and Cooperation Agreement** will remain a key priority for DG MARE in 2024. The Commission will continue to cooperate with other coastal States in the region to conclude fair and equitable sharing arrangements on key shared pelagic stocks to improve sustainability for the fisheries and stability for our sector.



Source: European Commission

Promoting sustainable fish consumption will remain a top priority in our communication. Building on the three seasons of the **Taste the Ocean** campaign, DG MARE will involve influencers to show consumers that cooking fish can be simple and encourage them to choose sustainable fish, or seafood species.

Result indicator: Profitability of the EU fishing fleet

Our work in 2024 towards **sustainable fisheries** in the different EU sea basins also contributes to **boosting the economic performance** and energy efficiency of the EU fishing fleets. The [2023 Annual Economic Report on the EU fishing fleet](#) (re-)confirms a correlation between the sustainable exploitation and management of fisheries and the economic returns and overall profitability in fisheries. However, the difficult economic environment in recent years has hit the fishery sector hard, and its dependency on fossil fuels is compromising its resilience and profitability. The action plan for the [energy transition of the fisheries and aquaculture sector](#) puts in place the **Energy Transition Partnership in fisheries and aquaculture** to enhance cooperation between stakeholders

and help remove the current barriers to the uptake of energy-efficient technologies, including through EU funding opportunities at the various stages of research, innovation, deployment, and investment. The work of the Partnership will lead to the delivery of a roadmap for the energy transition towards 2050 by end 2024.

Result indicators on aquaculture

The [Strategic guidelines for a more sustainable and competitive EU aquaculture for 2021-2030](#) promote the growth of aquaculture in the EU as a sector that is more sustainable, competitive and resilient and contributes to the objectives of the European Green Deal. DG MARE will continue implementing the actions announced in the Strategic Guidelines, notably by adopting a number of Commission guidelines on environmental performance and climate change adaptation, good husbandry practices and access to space and water for inland aquaculture. The **EU Aquaculture online platform** will be further developed in 2024. This platform will provide a one-stop-shop on knowledge, good practices and tools to support the sustainable development of aquaculture in the EU. We will follow up on the recommendations from the European Court of Auditors' [Special Report 25/2023 "EU aquaculture policy: Stagnating production and unclear results despite increased EU funding"](#).



Source: European Commission

In 2024, DG MARE will continue implementing the [EU Algae initiative](#), one of the deliverables under the Farm to Fork Strategy, with the objective to increase sustainable algae production, ensure safe consumption and boost the innovative use of algae in the EU, notably by preparing an algae farmers' toolkit, working with Member States to facilitate the development of the sector, and through EU funding opportunities at the various stages of research, innovation, deployment, and investment.

Following preparatory work in 2022 and 2023, DG MARE will develop an EU-wide **communication campaign on aquaculture** to be launched in autumn 2024. The campaign will inform citizens about the benefits of EU aquaculture and will be implemented with the help of Member States.

Result indicator: Effectiveness of Member States' fisheries control systems measured by the number of control action plans implemented within the deadline set

An effective **fisheries control system in the Member States** is key to the success of the Common Fisheries Policy.

A [revised EU fisheries control system](#) will gradually apply from January 2024. As a priority, we will work to draft and adopt the secondary legislation required to ensure a harmonised application of the rules across the Union. We will also undertake the preparatory work to develop the necessary IT tools that will reduce the administrative burden for the Member States and operators. It will be crucial throughout the year to offer proper guidance to the Member States to address any implementation challenges and ensure an equal and correct application of the new rules. DG MARE will cooperate closely with the **European Fisheries Control Agency (EFCA)** for those projects and areas where the Agency is expected to contribute to the development of secondary legislation, such as weighing methodologies, fleet segments at risk of discard and technical specifications for remote electronic monitoring. DG MARE will also continue to engage actively in the implementation of the Specific Control and Inspections Programmes (SCIPs) through the EFCA's Joint deployment Plans, and will launch a revision of the SCIPs to align them to the Marine Action Plan and to make sure that they deliver properly under the revised EU fisheries control system.

In addition, we will promote the new rules at international level, striving to achieve a level playing field with other coastal States competing with the EU fleet.

We will continue to follow up on the recommendations from the European Court of Auditors' [Special Report 20/2022 "EU action to combat illegal fishing: Control systems in place but weakened by uneven checks and sanctions by Member States"](#). Among others, this requires an active monitoring of the implementation of the control action plans, as well as performing new audits and verifications of the Member States' fisheries control systems, particularly focussing on their systems for weighing and catch reporting. We will ensure that whenever detected, shortcomings are appropriately followed-up to secure the application of the rules and create an overall culture of compliance across the EU. Finally, we will also assess, facilitate and strengthen the implementation of, and compliance with, the obligations under the Union fisheries control system through the organisation of regular control and compliance expert groups with the Member States. This also includes a swift and consistent follow-up of open EU-Pilots and infringements regarding Member States' fisheries control systems and as necessary, the opening of new cases.

Result indicator: Contribution from the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF) for 2014-2020 and European Maritime Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund (EMFAF) for 2021-2027 to climate-related EU spending

The **European Maritime, Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund** (EMFAF) for 2021-2027 is the main financing instrument to support the full implementation of the CFP, the Union's maritime policy, the EU Blue Economy Strategy and the Union's international commitments in the field of ocean governance. Throughout 2024, we will assist Member States in the rollout, monitoring and reporting on implementation of the fund.

Financial support goes to fishers and aquaculture producers for the transition towards more sustainable fisheries and aquaculture, with a smaller carbon and environmental footprint,

and for building resilient coastal and rural communities. Member States benefit from financial aid for data collection and fisheries control, both essential to ensure sustainable fisheries. Member States have strongly committed to **climate and biodiversity** related actions in their programmes, to deliver the expected contribution of the EMFAF towards the 30% target of all expenditure under the Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) 2021-2027 budget for EU climate objectives, and 7.5% of annual expenditure under the MFF for biodiversity. As a fund concerned with the marine environment, the EMFAF has a strong climate and biodiversity focus. According to the allocations defined in the adopted Member State programmes, 55% of their combined EMFAF budget is allocated to climate related actions, and 28% to biodiversity related actions.

DG MARE will encourage Member States to advance the implementation of their EMFAF programmes and reinforce synergies and complementarities with Mission Ocean and Waters activities.

Meanwhile the eligibility for expenditure under the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF) from 2014-2020 ended on 31 December 2023. The final payment applications and last reporting under the programmes will be followed with the Member States. Parallel evaluation work for the EMFF (ex-post) and the EMFAF (mid-term) will be undertaken.

DG MARE will align with the Commission's **corporate communication**, by applying appropriate visual identity and engaging even more in the INFORM EU network of Member States' managing authorities. Showcasing successful EU-funded projects will remain a key priority of DG MARE's newsletter, social media, and televised magazine [OCEAN](#). Produced in cooperation with Euronews, the 12 new episodes of OCEAN in 2024 will explore the themes of pollution and marine life, including policies and projects designed to protect our seas, the blue economy, sustainable fishing, aquaculture, climate change, ocean energy and more. There will also be a new season of the OCEAN CALLS podcast dedicated to the future of the oceans (available on euronews.com and on all the main podcast platforms). Each of the 8 episodes features passionate scientists and other celebrities.

Specific objective 2: A sustainable blue economy generating sustainable economic development, jobs and prosperity by 2024 ⁽¹⁴⁾

Result indicator: Size of the EU blue economy

Contributing to the European Green Deal, the Commission Communication on a **new approach for a sustainable blue economy in the EU** focuses on the EU blue economy and economic recovery. Our priority in 2024 will be the continued implementation of this strategy. As part of this, we will keep working closely with DG REGIO for promoting the new **Smart Specialisation Platform for the Sustainable Blue Economy**, which offers structured support to EU blue economy stakeholders for the development of innovative interregional partnerships. DG MARE will also continue important work through the sea basin strategies

⁽¹⁴⁾ The relevant performance tables for this specific objective can be found in the Annex (pages 36 to 40)

and initiatives, including by supporting the process around a reinforced maritime cooperation among the North Sea countries and the launch of a North Sea Basin Strategy.

The joint work between DG MARE and JRC on the [EU Blue Economy Observatory](#) and the **Blue Economy report** will also support deepening the socio-economic analysis and knowledge on the EU Blue Economy. We will continue to work to increase the number and diversity of socio-economic analysis all year round.

DG MARE will carry on being actively involved in the governance structures of Horizon Europe, together with other relevant policy DGs. This entails full participation in the co-creation process leading to the preparation, decisions, monitoring of outputs in relation to EU's Horizon Europe research and innovation work programmes. In this context, DG MARE will more specifically continue to play a key role in the development and implementation of the Mission **[“Restore our Ocean and Waters by 2030”](#)** Work Programmes to ensure the demonstration of practical solutions for meeting the European Green Deal objectives of decarbonisation, biodiversity and pollution reduction. Activities also include promoting the Mission through the networks under the sea basin strategies and raising commitments of the regional stakeholders for the Mission lighthouses, as well as citizen engagement.

We will support citizens to make responsible choices through the **Choose your fish campaign** implemented under the Mission, in collaboration with the European Climate, Infrastructure and Environment Executive Agency (CINEA).



Source: European Union

To help smaller businesses, the Commission's **BlueInvest** platform will continue to provide customised investment readiness support, visibility and access to investors. As a novelty and in cooperation with the European Investment Fund, it will also provide strategic market intelligence and targeted capacity building support for asset managers that are keen to diversify portfolios in the sustainable blue economy. A budgetary guarantee under **InvestEU**, topped up through a share from the

EMFAF will support investments in a sustainable and innovative blue economy of small, medium-sized enterprises and start-ups.

The **BlueInvest Day** in March will be promoted with an attractive package of onsite and online communication products, disseminated via DG MARE's principal social media channels and be put in the wider context of the contribution of the blue economy to the EU green and digital transition.

We will support the implementation of the [Ministerial declaration of the Union for the Mediterranean on sustainable blue economy](#), including the new Blue Mediterranean Partnership and fund, as well as continuing the implementation of the [revised Atlantic Action Plan](#) on the basis of the [new Ministerial Declaration](#) (October 2023), the [WestMED Initiative](#) and its [new Ministerial Declaration](#) (June 2023) and the [Common Maritime Agenda for the Black Sea](#), through a dedicated Assistance Mechanism and by funding flagship calls promoting cooperation on sustainable blue economy topics at regional / sea

basin level. We will follow the work under the [Adriatic and Ionian \(EUSAIR\) macroregional strategy](#) and the revision of its Action Plan, as well as the [Baltic Macro-regional strategy \(EUSBSR\)](#), including the implementation of the [Our Baltic Declaration](#) and the Joint Statement on dumped munitions and we will support, in cooperation with DG REGIO, the work related to maritime affairs and blue economy. We will continue to support outermost regions to adopt and implement their blue economy strategies in the context of the implementation of the [new EU Strategy on Outermost Regions](#).

As the EU's sustainable blue economy expands, it is using its maritime space for more and more activities, notably offshore renewable energy. We will continue encouraging and coordinating a dialogue between different users of the sea in the [European Blue Forum](#) established in 2023. The forum aims to develop synergies between activities and reconcile competing uses of the sea.

The Commission will continue monitoring Member States' actions in the context of the ongoing infringements regarding their failure to timely adopt a maritime spatial plan under the [Maritime Spatial Planning Directive](#), and will take next steps in the procedure as appropriate. The Commission will further support Member States as they assess, monitor and review their maritime spatial plans and make maritime spatial planning more digital by uploading their plans in the European Marine Observation and Data network ([EMODnet](#)) and more pan-European through EMFAF cross-border projects.

In 2023, and coinciding with the advent of 2023 European Year of Skills, a third round of the Call for Blue Careers was launched to boost digital and green skills in various sectors of the blue economy. A joint kick-off meeting of the 8 projects selected was held in September 2023, so all the projects will be fully operational throughout 2024. We will take this opportunity to renew our blue skills / blue careers strategy, supported by a study on skills offer and needs in the EU and potentially using the expertise of the 8 projects.



Source: European Commission

The presence of **unexploded munitions** (UXO) in EU sea basins and the possible release of chemical agents they often contain is a significant risk to the environment and the development of the sustainable blue economy. Old munitions threaten the construction of offshore renewable energy sites, can put fishing vessels and their crew in danger, or accidentally released chemicals can contaminate aquaculture sites. Following the success of the second Our Baltic Conference in Palanga, Lithuania and the endorsement of the UXO commitments by EU Member States in the Baltic,

new, coordinated actions will be undertaken for the safe management and removal of unexploded munitions in the Baltic Sea. In 2024, DG MARE will start a pilot case for the Baltic Sea contributing to the clean-up efforts in this sea basin.

The [Black Sea Synergy Initiative](#) (BSS) is the EU's key regional policy framework for the Black Sea region and the basis for the EU's engagement in the region. Together with the

European External Action Service, DG MARE will prepare in 2024 a new BSS implementation report for the period 2019–2023, which should take into account the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and of Russia’s war against Ukraine, and also latest EU initiatives, including the [Strategic Compass](#), the revised [EU Maritime Security Strategy and its Action Plan](#), the [Global Gateway](#), as well as increased synergies with other frameworks.

Contributing to the Farm to Fork Strategy, we will continue to work on **fisheries-specific sustainability indicators** for more transparency of the environmental performance of fisheries products across the supply chain. Depending on policy developments, the criteria and indicators could be incorporated in an initiative on general food sustainability labelling, or operationalised through a fisheries-specific initiative. For that purpose, we are planning to develop a publicly accessible IT tool in 2024 that can be used by consumers, businesses and authorities to determine the score of a fisheries product in relation to the sustainability indicators mentioned above. Under this Strategy, we will also work on the actions set out in the Communication Towards a **Strong and Sustainable EU Algae sector**. In order to monitor the impacts of recent crisis on consumption patterns, we will launch in 2024 the third Eurobarometer on EU consumer habits regarding fishery and aquaculture products.

While a large majority of Recovery and Resilience Facility expenditure is dedicated to reforms and investments prioritised through the European Semester exercise (country-specific recommendations), many of the Recovery and Resilience Plans (RRPs) of coastal EU Member States include substantial investments linked to the sustainable blue economy and marine / freshwater ecosystems. In particular, the RRP of Belgium, Cyprus, Greece, France, Italy, Poland, Portugal and Spain include sizable blue economy investments. These blue economy investments amount to approximately €12.5 billion, or nearly 1.7% of the total Recovery and Resilience Facility budget (€738 billion), equivalent to the overall share of the blue economy. DG MARE continues to follow the implementation of the RRP of coastal Member States by participating (and providing input if needed) in inter service consultations on Member State’s payment requests related to milestone achievements and the REPowerEU-related modifications of the RRP.



Source: European Commission

The **European Maritime Day** (30–31 May 2024) will remain at the centre for stakeholder engagement and communication on sustainable blue economy and will be accompanied by an ambitious package of press and digital material, underscoring the contribution of sea borne activities – from energy production to aquaculture – to the EU’s green and digital recovery. The EU-wide campaign **European Maritime Day In My Country** will support

local events throughout the EU and beyond.

Result indicator: Improved marine knowledge measured by the degree of use of the European Marine Observation and Data Network (EMODnet) in terms of the quantity of downloaded data per month

Access to consistent, harmonised and credible marine knowledge is paramount for research, innovation, blue economy, policy and ocean literacy. This is the key function of the [EMODnet](#). The efficiency of the network to provide access to marine knowledge is evaluated through different indicators, including the quantity of downloaded data and the number of unique visitors per month. EMODnet is now a largely centralised facility under the Europa domain, which creates a new dynamic in the efficiency of the network to provide pan-European services. EMODnet is also one of the two main pillars of the **European Digital Twin Ocean**, the knowledge enabler of the **Mission Restore our Ocean and Waters**. In 2024, specific efforts will be made to reinforce the use of EMODnet data for policy making e.g. for the Maritime Spatial Planning Directive and the [Marine Strategy Framework Directive](#) and to improve access to data in the Mediterranean sea on some areas where data are lacking (e.g. biology), including with the support of studies.

The action on **ocean observation** brings together the different communities: fisheries, environment, navigation, research and licensing that are engaged to make available more reliable marine data to meet the challenges of the European Green Deal. The Digital Twin Ocean (DTO) will provide a way for authorities and businesses to test scenarios for achieving our goals on decarbonisation, biodiversity and the blue economy. But the scenarios it generates will lack credibility without a more structured approach to collecting the data needed to calibrate and validate the computational models that drive it. In this context, the Ocean Observation action is highly relevant to the DTO and to the EMODnet, which in the long term will also benefit the available open marine data in Europe. In 2024, the ocean observation work will continue on technical aspects such as standards and best practices and a prototype IT platform. These actions will be supported by ongoing studies and upcoming publication of tender(s).

Result indicator: Reduction of economic impact of marine litter in the EU measured in terms of median number of litter items per 100 metres of beach in the EU

The Commission has already taken unprecedented action to reduce the quantity of plastic reaching our seas and ocean, notably through [Directive \(EU\) 2019/904](#), which targets the 10 single-use plastic products most often found on Europe's beaches and seas, as well as **lost or abandoned fishing gear containing plastic**, and obliges the **producers** of fishing gear to ensure its safe disposal, collection and treatment. The European Committee for Standardisation should adopt a new standard on the circular design of fishing gear by the end of 2024. Research and innovation projects funded under Mission Ocean and Waters will also contribute to address marine and freshwater pollution.

We will continue to collect **data on marine litter on beaches** through EMODnet in order to meet the requirements of the Marine Strategy Framework Directive and [the Zero Pollution Action Plan](#). This plan includes 2030 targets to reduce plastic litter at sea (by 50%) and microplastics released into the environment (by 30%).

DG MARE has stepped up efforts in **ocean literacy**, and its [EU4Ocean coalition](#) will be sustained further for the next 2 years. It unites ocean literacy efforts in the EU for the youth to better understand how humankind and the ocean impact on each other. The [European Atlas of the Seas](#) is an important tool to enhance ocean literacy in schools.



Source: European Union and ACT NOW

DG MARE will organise another edition of the **#EUBeachCleanup** campaign, together with the European External Action Service and the United Nations, with the support of the Smurfs. The aim is to raise awareness about the problem of marine litter. We encourage everyone to organise or take part in a clean-up event, on the coastline, or mainland, as a very large quantity of marine litter originates from land sources. The campaign's main events will

take place on **World Coastal Clean-up Day** (20 September 2024).

Result indicator: Maritime security measured by the number of new CISE (Common Information Sharing Environment) connections / nodes

In 2024, DG MARE will kick-off the operational phase of the [Common Information Sharing Environment](#) (CISE). The Commission, together with the European Maritime Safety Agency, as implementing body of CISE for the operational phase will ensure evolutive maintenance of the tools developed in the transitional phase, such as: the CISE technical building blocks (e.g. node, adaptors, test suite, simulator), the Cooperation Agreement, the 'Responsibility to Share' methodology, and the initial set of operational capabilities (operational services, CISE's catalogue, Stakeholder Information Sharing Plan etc). Furthermore, the Commission will encourage / incentivise Member States' specific coast guard and military authorities to join the CISE community.

In 2024 DG MARE will put forward a proposal for a Council Recommendation on a Union-wide use of the CISE in maritime cross-border and cross-sectoral operational activities.

Result indicator: Installed capacity of offshore wind energy and ocean energy in the EU

In 2024, we will work further on the implementation of the [EU Strategy on Offshore Renewable Energy](#), [updated in October 2023](#), in particular in the areas of maritime spatial planning, regional cooperation, co-existence and multi-use of the marine space,

ocean energy and resilience of offshore renewable infrastructure and maritime security. Following the setting-up of a Community of Practice in the North Sea and the Baltic Sea in 2022, and in the Mediterranean in 2023, we will focus on expanding such practices to other sea basins. This will complement the [Blue Forum of users of the sea](#). New projects, including under EMFAF and Mission Ocean and Waters, facilitating the further implementation of **Maritime Spatial Planning** (MSP) in the EU will focus on its role for the European Green Deal, on nature and biodiversity protection, on the assessment of cumulative impacts at sea basin level and developing a sea basin approach to MSP (see also the section on the result indicator ‘Size of the EU blue economy’). We will also follow up on the recommendations from the European Court of Auditors’ [Special Report 22/2023 “Offshore renewable energy in the EU: Ambitious plans for growth but sustainability remains a challenge”](#).

B. General objective 4: A Stronger Europe in the World

Specific objective 3: More sustainable fisheries worldwide and improved international ocean governance by 2024 ⁽¹⁵⁾

The EU, represented by the Commission, is committed to leading the way on international ocean governance by playing a prominent role in all relevant fora. In 2024, our main deliverables will be the following:

- Implementing the 2022 Joint Communication on [International Ocean Governance](#) and confirm the EU as a driving force in the implementation of global commitments set out in the [2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development Goals](#). In 2024, the Commission and the High Representative will work with other EU and international institutions and EU Member States on actions for a clean, healthy, productive and resilient ocean that is used sustainably under safe and fair work conditions while ensuring stability and security at sea, notably work towards an Intergovernmental Panel on Ocean Sustainability.
- We will ensure that also in 2024 the EU takes a leading role in implementing the **High Seas Treaty on marine biodiversity (BBNJ)**, to work towards EU ratification, and to foster and support the ratification of others. We will start work to translate and implement the BBNJ in the EU, ahead of its entry into force.
- We will continue our efforts to reach an agreement at the Commission for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources to establish new large-scale **marine protected areas in the waters around Antarctica**.
- On 24 October 2023, the Council endorsed the revised **EU Maritime Security Strategy (EUMSS) and its Action Plan**, formulated on the basis of the [Joint](#)

⁽¹⁵⁾ The relevant performance tables for this specific objective can be found in the Annex (pages 40 to 46)

[Communication of the Commission and the EEAS of 10 March 2023](#). This is a key initiative, contributing to the implementation of the Strategic Compass, addressing specifically current and future maritime security challenges in a complex geopolitical context. The operational phase of the CISE will be launched in January 2024, and will contribute to the implementation of the revised EUMSS and the Strategic Compass.

- Likewise, we will promote EU positions and policies, such as the [revised EU control rules](#), in relevant **bilateral and multilateral fora** ⁽¹⁶⁾. In the United Nations' Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), we will focus on fighting illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing and will support the implementation of the [Port State Measures Agreement](#), notably at the 36th FAO Fisheries Committee, where we expect the adoption of new **Guidelines for Sustainable Aquaculture**. We aim to mainstream biodiversity and climate change towards sustainable fisheries and aquaculture. We will ensure participation and EU contributions in other **UN processes and agencies**, in particular: the UN General Assembly resolutions on Oceans and the Law of the Sea and on Sustainable Fisheries, and the UN Fish Stocks Agreement Review Conference.
- The **Our Ocean Conference** (Greece, 15-17 April 2024) and the pre-UNOC conference in Costa Rica will be important opportunities to make commitments and showcase the EU's engagement in delivering the SDG 14 on Life below Water.
- Delivering on the **EU Arctic Policy** as set out in the Joint Communication [A stronger EU engagement for a greener, peaceful and prosperous Arctic](#) (2021). The EU will continue to develop sustainable relationships with its partners in the region (such as Iceland, Norway, the United Kingdom, Greenland and the Faroe Islands), including on fisheries, to organise the EU Arctic Forum and Indigenous People's Dialogue, and to support the implementation of the [Agreement to Prevent Unregulated High Seas Fisheries in the Central Arctic Ocean](#).
- We will carry on promoting the Commission's policy on deep sea mining, based on the precautionary principle, as per the Joint Communication on International Ocean Governance, notably in the Council.
- Enhancing cooperation with **African partners** to encourage better ocean governance, sustainable fisheries and a sustainable blue economy. DG MARE will continue its work through an EU-Africa Ocean strategic group and prepare a second edition of **Blueinvest outside the EU**.

⁽¹⁶⁾ Such as the United Nations, The Food and Agriculture Organization, Regional Fisheries Bodies, Coastal States of the North Atlantic, Trilateral EU-UK-Norway, the G7 and the G20.

Result indicator: Sustainable management of the main regulated tuna and tuna-like species fished by the EU fleet under the purview of Regional Fisheries Management Organisations of which the EU is a Member

Regional Fisheries Management Organisations (RFMOs) and Arrangements continue to be the key vectors for the joint management of straddling and highly migratory fish stocks under the United Nations Law of the Sea. Their good performance is essential to ensure sustainable fisheries worldwide by:

- promoting science and science-based conservation and sustainable management of the stocks and the ecosystems under their purview;
- better compliance with rules and regular performance reviews;
- a stronger fight against illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing;
- promoting a level playing field;
- addressing the challenges posed by climate change and supporting the resilience of the stocks and their ecosystems, and
- a better performance of these organisations in line with the external objectives of the Common Fisheries Policy, the International Ocean Governance Communication, and the EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030.

Result indicator: Conservation measures based on scientific advice adopted for the main regulated species fished by the EU fleet under the purview of Regional Fisheries Management Organisations of which the EU is a Member

The EU, represented by the Commission, plays an active role in 16 Regional Fisheries Management Organisations (RFMOs), one Arrangement, and two Regional Fisheries Bodies without decision making power. The **transposition of binding conservation and control measures** adopted by these organisations into EU law ensures legal certainty and compliance within the EU.

In 2024, we expect the co-legislators to adopt the amendments to the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tuna (ICCAT) Regulation 2017/2107 and the bluefin tuna proposal (COM(2022)171 final) and to work on the amendment to Regulation (EU) 2023/2124 on certain provisions for fishing in the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM) Agreement area, transposing the GFCM Recommendations of 2021 and 2022.

In addition to that, in 2024 we expect the Commission to adopt two proposals for regulations to transpose into Union law the conservation measures adopted by RFMOs (South East Atlantic Fisheries Organisation and the North Pacific Fisheries Commission) and to amend its [proposal laying down conservation and management measures applicable in the Area covered under the Southern Indian Ocean Fisheries Agreement](#)

Strategic compliance and enforcement action in RFMOs will tackle overfishing, illegal trade and the efficiency of the systems put in place by Member States to control the activities of their fishing fleet in non-EU waters and of their farms for bluefin tuna.

Result indicator: Fighting illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing measured by the number of non-EU Member States that the Commission has engaged in a dialogue with and the number of countries having addressed their deficiencies

The EU has a zero-tolerance policy towards illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing, which has strong detrimental effects on stocks, profitability of law-abiding operators, viability of coastal communities, and undermines conservation efforts.

The **carding system** – established by the [IUU Regulation](#) – can promote necessary reforms in third countries to ensure that adequate fisheries control legislation and tools are developed at national level, and fishers are incentivised not to engage in IUU fishing activities. Using a system of yellow and red cards, the EU warns third countries that they could be listed as a non-cooperating country in the fight against IUU fishing, if they do not comply with their obligations as flag, coastal, port and market state under international law. Since November 2012, the Commission entered into formal dialogues with 27 third countries, which were officially warned of the need to take action against IUU fishing (yellow card; two countries have been warned twice). Only a few countries have not carried out the necessary reforms. As a result, fishery products caught by the vessels of these countries cannot be imported into the EU (red card and listing). DG MARE will pursue close cooperation and dialogue to foster the necessary reforms in all third countries that are currently subject to the carding system.

Result indicator: Control of imports of fisheries products in the EU measured by the number of catch certificates import refusals by Member States

One of the key elements of the [IUU Regulation](#) is the **catch certification scheme**. The scheme requires that almost all imports into the EU of wild-caught marine fishery products are accompanied by a catch certificate that is validated by the flag State of the catching vessels. Member States must apply the scheme by ensuring controls and verifications on imports of fishery products. Up to now, the competent authorities of 93 third countries have been notified to the EU for the validation of catch certificates.

The European Court of Auditors' [Special Report 20/2022 "EU action to combat illegal fishing: Control systems in place but weakened by uneven checks and sanctions by Member States"](#) concluded that control systems in place to combat illegal fishing are partially effective. The catch certification scheme improved traceability and reinforced the control of imports but shows significant differences in the scope and quality of checks and

verifications by Member States which undermine the effectiveness of the system and lead to a risk of operators exploiting the weakest link to import illegally caught fish into the EU.

One of the causes is that the control system is paper based. An IT system **CATCH** is being developed to digitalise the submission and treatment of the catch certificates. The use of CATCH by importers, together with some changes to the content of the scheme strengthening traceability will become mandatory two years from entry into force of the new regulation on the revised fisheries control system i.e. at the beginning of 2026. The Commission will need to ensure timely CATCH developments in line with the legal obligations, preparation and adoption of implementing and delegated acts, provide adequate information to stakeholders, in particular third countries, on the changes to the catch certificates, trainings to competent authorities and promote the direct use of CATCH among all stakeholders involved.

As a priority, we will work to draft and adopt the secondary legislation required to ensure the correct functioning of CATCH. It will be crucial throughout the year to offer proper guidance to the Member States, third countries' authorities and economic operators (EU importers, exporters to the EU) to address any implementation challenge and lead to correct and timely application of CATCH and the new rules. We will also undertake the promotion of the direct use of CATCH by third countries to reduce the administrative burden for the EU operators and Member States' authorities.

Result indicator: Number of sustainable fisheries partnership agreements (SFPAs) in force

Sustainable fisheries partnership agreements (SFPAs) give access for the EU long distance fleet to fishing zones in third country waters. They provide support to those third countries for better fisheries governance and ensure a sustainable development of their local fishing sector. Currently, 14 protocols to SFPAs ⁽¹⁷⁾ with third countries are in force:

- 11 tuna agreements with: Cabo Verde, Côte d'Ivoire, Sao Tomé e Príncipe, Gabon, Cook Islands, Kiribati, Seychelles, Mauritius, Madagascar, Senegal and The Gambia (with a hake component for the last two), and
- 3 mixed agreements with: Greenland, Mauritania and Guinea-Bissau.

In 2024, the Commission will give priority to the implementation of the in force protocols to fisheries agreements, to monitoring the fisheries activities of the EU vessels, to an adequate programming and application of the sectoral support under the agreements. We will also prepare negotiation mandates for those protocols that will expire in 2024 (Côte d'Ivoire, Senegal, Cook Islands, Cabo Verde, or Guinea Bissau). In the case of Morocco, for which the Protocol elapsed in July 2023, the Commission will continue cooperation at technical and scientific level, awaiting the European Court of Justice decision expected in 2024.

⁽¹⁷⁾ [Sustainable fisheries partnership agreements \(SFPAs\) \(europa.eu\)](https://european-council.europa.eu/media/e3000000/1/press/1622222/1622222_en.pdf)

PART 2. Modernising the administration: main outputs for 2024

The internal control framework ⁽¹⁸⁾ supports sound management and decision-making. It notably ensures that risks to the achievement of objectives are taken into account and reduced to acceptable levels through cost-effective controls.

DG MARE has established an internal control system tailored to its particular characteristics and circumstances. The effective functioning of the **DG MARE's** internal control system will be assessed on an ongoing basis throughout the year and be subject to a specific annual assessment covering all internal control principles.

A. Human resource management ⁽¹⁹⁾

In 2024, we will take stock of the implementation of the local HR Strategy and will update the action plan following the results of the staff survey 2023 ⁽²⁰⁾. The outcome of the staff survey will be published on the local intranet, presented and discussed at Management and Townhall meetings, leading to a follow-up action plan.

Our main focus will be on more flexible resources allocation at all levels (AD and AST) and on career development of our staff. An away day for administrative support staff will be organised. To strengthen the specialist skills, we will organise specific DG MARE trainings, study visits and will fund participation in external trainings.

To provide more opportunities for colleagues to grow in management function, we will conclude the DGs AGRI-ENV-MARE talent management programme launched in 2023 and will launch a new edition in 2024. Individual coaching sessions and co-development sessions will be offered to managers.

We will follow up on the results of the local staff equality and diversity survey, informing staff and management on the outcome, identifying and proposing measures to improve the situation and updating the Equality Workplan if needed.

DG MARE has reached its revised target for first female appointments to middle management functions ⁽²¹⁾ and will continue balanced first appointments at middle management level. To improve the geographical representation, we will focus on the management pipeline and will support women from the under-represented nationalities through the Female Talent Development Programme. To improve the representation of under-represented Member States in our broader AD population, for any procedure leading

⁽¹⁸⁾ [Communication C\(2017\)2373 - Revision of the Internal Control Framework](#)

⁽¹⁹⁾ The relevant performance table can be found in Annex (page 47)

⁽²⁰⁾ A specific question on the extent to which the work-life balance policy is being implemented in DG MARE was included in the staff survey just for DG MARE staff

⁽²¹⁾ which is 1 (reference period from 1 January 2023 until the end of the mandate)

to offer of a contract, at least one candidate holding the nationality of the under-represented Member States will be interviewed.

We will continue to regularly facilitate internal communication and feedback including through the DG MARE Staff Engagement Diversity and Inclusion group, and the Greening DG MARE team.

B. Sound financial management ⁽²²⁾

Shared management

For both programming periods 2014-2020 and 2021-2027, DGs MARE, REGIO, EMPL and HOME (2021-2027 only) have developed Single Audit Strategies. These strategies provide for compliance audits to assess the effectiveness of the management and control systems in the Member States and to verify the legality and regularity of expenditure. In addition, they provide for other audits focussing on horizontal themes, or specific risks identified.

In February 2024, DG MARE expects to receive substantial assurance packages relating to the 27 EMFF operational programmes and one assurance package relating to the EMFAF. These packages will be the subject of thorough desk reviews and will be complemented by 27 targeted risk-based audits in relation to the EMFF.

The risk related to the expenditure declared to DG MARE in the accounting year 2022-2023 is considered limited, since DG MARE has reached an adequate level of assurance through its own audits in the past years. For the programming period 2014-2020, up to end-2023, DG MARE has carried out 143 audits covering all Member States and will, in 2024, continue increasing the overall coverage and address open issues and specific risks with a view to the upcoming closure exercise (2025).

DG MARE therefore has reasonable assurance on the related EU payments. Pre-financing bears no risk and for the interim payments, adequate mechanisms are in place to ensure that only legal and regular expenditure is certified in the annual accounts. In addition, the retention of 10% from all the interim payments further protects the EU budget.

Direct and indirect management

DG MARE delegates around 40% of its directly managed budget to the Climate, Infrastructure and Environment Executive Agency (CINEA). In 2024, this will include the implementation of two pilot projects proposed by the European Parliament under the draft budget 2024. CINEA applies its own control systems and assurance mechanisms on the reliability and accuracy of the recorded expenditures. For the non-delegated part, DG MARE verifies ex-ante all payments above €5,000 and a sample of payments below €5,000. All

⁽²²⁾ The relevant performance table can be found in Annex (page 47)

the grants, procurement procedures, and contribution agreements are also verified by DG MARE before the award decisions.

In 2024 DG MARE will continue to use simplified cost options for the grants provided to the Advisory Councils, which significantly reduces the cost of control. Following the increased usage of the eProcurement, most of the specific contracts signed on framework contracts are expected to benefit from a fully automated environment. The further optimisation of the process in the Public Procurement Management Tool offer substantial benefits, for example automatic notifications in the Funding and Tenders portal, replacing the manual eNotices and eTED. With SUMMA becoming the Commission's corporate financial system as of 1 January 2025, significant resources in 2024 will be devoted to training and technical preparation for SUMMA's go-live.

C. Fraud risk management ⁽²³⁾

The Joint Anti-Fraud Strategy of DGs REGIO, EMPL and MARE was updated in December 2019. It covers the whole anti-fraud cycle: prevention, detection, investigation and corrective measures. It seeks to reinforce measures in place to protect the financial interests of the EU, by providing support to Member States in their anti-fraud efforts and strengthening the capacity of DGs to deal with fraud, as well as intensifying cooperation with OLAF. The main actions for 2024 will continue focussing on further developing cooperation with key partners such as OLAF and the European Public Prosecutor's Office (EPPO).

The joint action plan of the updated Joint Anti-Fraud Strategy included several actions for the three DGs: for one of these, DG MARE was in the lead – development of a new checklist for Key Requirement 7 agreed by the three DGs. This checklist was drafted by DG MARE and used during 10 related thematic audits carried out until October 2023 and for additional 5 that are planned until end-2024.

DG MARE will also continue implementing the relevant actions of the recently updated action plan of the Commission's Anti Fraud Strategy. Together with the other shared management DGs, DG MARE is in the lead for four actions mainly relating to encouraging Member States to put in place effective and proportional anti-fraud measures, to raising awareness and sharing best practice examples, to verifying, as relevant, the procedures in place in the Member States for the reporting, handling and follow-up of detected irregularities, and to reminding Member States of their obligation to report irregularities to OLAF.

⁽²³⁾ The relevant performance table can be found in the Annex (page 48)

D. Digital transformation and information management ⁽²⁴⁾

Digital transformation

The main initiatives for digital transformation, in line with the Commission Digital Strategy will include:

- Progressing with the Ocean Store project as a key action to migrate our portfolio of systems to the Cloud.
- Implementing the [revised fisheries control regulation](#) with IT and business working together to adapt our digital solutions to the revised regulation.
- Contributing to the Commission's Artificial Intelligence (AI) action plan (AI@EC) and continuing the exploration of potential AI cases in DG MARE such as the advanced analysis of fishing and scientific data.
- Launching the Data Collection Framework (DCF) – the system aims at improving efficiency of exchanges with Member States on reporting obligations. Applying the Dual Pillar approach.
- Moving the platform for EMFAF indicators to the Cloud.
- Fostering a digital culture by providing training on digital innovation / AI and digital transformation.

Information and IT security rules

IT Security remains a priority and DG MARE will continue re-enforcing security aspects. Key actions planned for 2024 are in line with the Corporate IT security strategy and corresponding action plan:

- Objective #1 UPDATED IT SECURITY PLANS
 - Systems will have an updated plan, reflecting risks, mitigations in place and a plan for the residual risks.
- Objective #2 COMPLIANCE WITH PRIORITY CONTROLS
 - This includes defining an improvement process, considering lessons learned from incidents.
- Objective #3 COMPLIANCE OF EU LOGIN / MFA
 - Adoption of EU Login (and Multi-Factor Authentication for systems holding SNC data) ensures that controls related to authentication are in place.
- Objective #4 UPDATED CORPORATE REPOSITORIES
 - In line with corporate requirement, DG MARE will ensure GovIS2 data required for the IT Security Reporting and the Governance Risk and Compliance (GRC) tool is up to date.
- Objective #5 IT SECURITY TRAINING
 - In collaboration with the Cyberaware team, we plan to deliver a refresher for system owners and improve Cybersecurity training for the IT team.

⁽²⁴⁾ The relevant performance table can be found in the Annex (page 48)

- Objective #6 SECURE CLOUD WORKLOADS
 - Continue secure deployments in the Cloud following Cloud Council recommendations and using the Managed Landing Zone.

Data, information and knowledge management

Since 2022, DG MARE has a Data Management Strategy, based on four main pillars: data governance, data management, data quality and data roles. The purpose of the strategy is to **ensure the availability and accessibility of data** to support evidence based, informed policy, management and control measures, and to keep, collect and use data securely, efficiently, and cost-effectively. Data-driven decision-making is key for DG MARE and for the correct implementation of its policies. In order to take informed decisions efficiently, it is useful to have a strong data management.

In 2024, DG MARE will continue implementing the Integrated Fisheries Data Management (IFDM) programme, supporting the implementation of the Common Fisheries Policy and the EU fisheries control, both within the EU as with third parties, by:

- Rolling out the UN FLUX standard for all EU Member States and relevant third parties and, where relevant, enforce the legal obligations accordingly;
- Further integration of relevant data domains in the Ocean Store;
- Together with the Member States, revisit the VALID guidelines and business rules, thereby ensuring that fisheries control data is properly validated and cross-checked in accordance with the Control Regulation and Control Implementing Regulation. At the beginning of 2024, DG MARE will present them to ERS and Control Working Group;
- Enhancing partnership with the European Fisheries Control Agency, notably on data sharing;
- Pursue providing relevant data visualisation services and analytics, notably in fisheries, in DG MARE;
- Further improve awareness for data users in DG MARE.

Data protection

DG MARE remains committed to implementing the Commissions Data Protection Action Plan (C(2018)7432 final) and ensuring full compliance with Regulation (EU) 2018/1725 (IDPR), as a continuous effort to achieve the highest level of protection for the rights and freedoms of the data subjects. The DG Data Protection Coordinator (DPC) advises and assists colleagues within the DG in all aspects related to data protection. To achieve the ambitious goal of 100% of staff having received a training by 2024, data protection trainings will continue to be provided by the DPC to all newcomers to the DG. Training needs of the existing staff will be evaluated to promote corporate training opportunities, or organise tailored in-house trainings.

Processing operations are evaluated continuously, and records reviewed where necessary, in line with the guidance issued by the Commission Data Protection Office. DG MARE has implemented administrative procedures for the handling of data subject requests and the management of data breaches and will continue its efforts to provide high quality and easily accessible information to data subjects on the processing of their data, especially through privacy statements. Where joint processing operations take place, internal arrangements, clarifying the roles and obligations of the respective departments are put in place.

Records Management

For 2024 DG MARE will continue to implement the record management policy of the Commission. Our priorities in 2024 will be:

- To make the filing plan of the DG more dynamic, by closing old files and adjusting active files when necessary, so that each unit's filing plan only has the files that are currently relevant for the work of the unit.
- In close cooperation with the units, to reduce the size of the physical archives of the DG, by first eliminating any documents that are not useful for the archives, and then by sending any eligible files to the historical archives.
- To develop trainings for specific procedures (i.e. the use of Qualified Electronic Signature, or the correct filing), open to all colleagues.

E. Sound environmental management ⁽²⁵⁾

Based on the results of the EMAS survey, the focus in 2024 will be on raising greater awareness around the following areas: reducing the impact of our public procurement, digital footprint and reducing our energy use. Efforts will continue to reduce missions and move more of our events and conferences online, without reducing our impact and outreach. Aligned with corporate actions and through DG MARE engagement in Velomai, colleagues will be further incentivised to switch to a more sustainable way of commuting. DG MARE will aim at reaching the targets and outputs adopted in our Strategy to reduce DG MARE's carbon footprint.

F. Initiatives to improve economy and efficiency of financial and non-financial activities

- DG MARE will continue using bi-annual financing decisions to cover its work programmes on direct and indirect management, in order to significantly save on administrative effort and offer stability and predictability in the funded operations.

⁽²⁵⁾ The relevant performance table can be found in the Annex (page 49)

- As of August 2023, DG MARE is using MAPAR (Management of Audit Processes, Activities and Resources), a dedicated audit IT application that guides the auditors through all phases of the audits, including the approval and quality review processes, provides relevant templates and interconnects with other administrative and financial systems of the Commission. This will further standardise the audit work and increase the efficiency of the assurance building procedures.
- DG MARE will continue exploring flexible working arrangements / project teams across-DG to address new emerging political priorities.
- To reflect the changes in the tasks performed by staff providing administrative support and to reduce workload, we will engage in a dialogue with staff and managers.
- DG MARE will continue with the successful online debriefings from the senior management meetings, which serve for more efficient and timely internal communication and bring senior managers closer to staff.
- DG MARE will continue to promote the use of TEAMS to facilitate collaboration across the DG.

ANNEX: Performance tables - main outputs for 2024

Part 1 - Delivering on the Commission's priorities

General objective 1: A European Green Deal		
Specific Objective 1: More sustainable and competitive fisheries and aquaculture by 2024		
<i>Related to spending programme(s): European Maritime and Fisheries Fund for 2014-2020 and European Maritime Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund for 2021-2027</i>		
Result indicator: Stocks fished at maximum sustainable yield (MSY) levels		
Main outputs in 2024:		
New policy initiatives		
Output	Indicator	Target
Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council "Towards more sustainable fishing in the EU: state of play and orientations for 2025 "	Adoption by the Commission	Q2 2024
Proposals for Council Regulations fixing for 2025 the fishing opportunities in:	Adoption by the Commission	
○ the Baltic Sea		August 2024
○ the Mediterranean and Black Seas		Q3 2024
○ Union waters and, for Union fishing vessels, in certain non-Union waters		Q4 2024
Proposals for Council Regulations amending Regulation (EU) XX/XX as regards certain fishing opportunities for 2024 :	Adoption by the Commission	
○ 1st amendment		Q1 2024
○ 2nd amendment		Q2 2024
○ 3rd amendment		Q3 2024
Commission Delegated Regulations establishing new discard plans for:	Adoption by the Commission	
○ the North Sea		Q3 2024
○ North Western and South Western Waters		Q3 2024
Commission Delegated Regulations amending discard plans for:	Adoption by the Commission	
○ Western Mediterranean		Q3 2024
○ North Sea		Q1 2024
Commission Delegated Regulation establishing technical measures for:	Adoption by the Commission	
○ directed fisheries in the North Sea		Q2 2024
○ directed fisheries in the South Western Waters		Q2 2024

Output	Indicator	Target
○ directed fisheries in the North Western Waters		Q2 2024
○ directed fisheries for squid		Q1 2024
Commission Delegated Regulation amending technical measures for protecting harbour porpoise	Adoption by the Commission	Q1 2024
Commission Delegated Regulation amending technical measures for squid in the North Sea and North Western Waters	Adoption by the Commission	Q1 2024
Commission Implementing Regulation laying down the detail rules and the specifications provided by Article 24 of Regulation (EU) No 2019/1241 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 June 2019 on the conservation of fisheries resources and the protection of marine ecosystems through technical measures	Adoption by the Commission	Q3 2024
Commission Implementing Regulation introducing detailed rules on selective devices in the Baltic Sea	Adoption by the Commission	Q1 2024
Commission Delegated Regulations amending fisheries conservation measures in:	Adoption by the Commission	
○ certain marine protected areas of the Skagerrak (DK)		Q1 2024
○ certain marine protected areas of the Baltic Sea (DE)		Q1 2024
○ certain marine protected areas of the Kattegat (SE)		Q1 2024
○ certain marine protected areas of the Baltic Sea (SE)		Q1 2024
Commission Delegated Regulation amending Delegated Regulation (EU) 2017/118 as regards conservation measures in the Dutch Exclusive Economic Zone	Adoption by the Commission	Q1 2024
Commission Implementing Regulation amending Implementing Regulation (EU) 2022/1614 (deep-sea fishing areas and list of vulnerable marine ecosystems)	Adoption by the Commission	Q2 2024
Evaluations and fitness checks		
Output	Indicator	Target
Evaluation of Council Regulation (EC) No 734/2008 on the protection of vulnerable marine ecosystems “Protecting the seabed from bottom trawling by fishing vessels”	Publication of the stand-alone Staff Working Document	Q1 2024
Evaluation of the landing obligation	Publication of a stand-alone Staff Working Document	Q2 2025
External communication actions		
Output	Indicator	Target
Seminar on Fisheries Science	Number of attendees	100
Other important outputs		
Output	Indicator	Target
Second report from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council on the implementation of the Multiannual Plan for the stocks of cod, herring and sprat in the Baltic Sea and the fisheries exploiting those stocks	Adoption by the Commission	Q3 2024

Output	Indicator	Target
Report from the Commission to the European Parliament and to the Council on the results and impact of the North Sea multiannual plan and the Western Waters multiannual plan on the stocks to which those Regulation applies and on the fisheries exploiting those stocks	Adoption by the Commission	Q1 2024
Second report to the European Parliament and to the Council on the implementation of the Regulation (EU) 2018/1241 (the technical measures regulation)	Adoption by the Commission	Q2 2024
Commission Delegated Regulation reviewing Vulnerable Marine Ecosystems indicators and amending the list in Annex III of Regulation (EU) 2016/2336	Adoption by the Commission	Q1 2024
Report from the Commission to the European Parliament and to the Council on the results and impact of multiannual plan for the fisheries exploiting demersal stocks in the western Mediterranean Sea	Adoption by the Commission	Q3 2024

General objective 1: A European Green Deal

Specific Objective 1: More sustainable and competitive fisheries and aquaculture by 2024

*Related to spending programme(s):
European Maritime and Fisheries Fund for 2014-2020 and
European Maritime Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund for 2021-2027*

Result indicator: Profitability of the EU fishing fleet

Main outputs in 2024:

Other important outputs

Output	Indicator	Target
2024 Report on the balance between fleet capacity and fishing opportunities (STECF)	Report published	December 2024
2024 Annual Economic Report on the EU fishing fleet (STECF)	Report published	October 2024
2024 Annual Economic Report on processing (STECF)	Report published	November 2024
2024 Report on Social data in the EU fisheries sector (STECF)	Report published	December 2024
2024 EU Fish Market report and monthly EUMOFA highlights	Reports published	November 2024
Roadmap on the Energy transition of EU fisheries and aquaculture	Roadmap published	Q4 2024
Mission ocean and waters – research and innovation projects on green and energy efficient small-scale fishing fleets	Grant agreements signed	Q2-Q3 2024

General objective 1: A European Green Deal

Specific Objective 1: More sustainable and competitive fisheries and aquaculture by 2024

Related to spending programme(s):
European Maritime and Fisheries Fund for 2014-2020 and
European Maritime Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund for 2021-2027

Result indicators on aquaculture:

- Volume and value of aquaculture production in the EU
- Volume of organic aquaculture production in the EU
- Profitability of aquaculture production in the EU

Main outputs in 2024:

External communication actions

Output	Indicator	Target
EU Aquaculture campaign	Number of impressions Number of engagements	3 million 6,000
Taste The Ocean – campaign with influencers	Number of impressions Number of engagements	2 million 5,000

Other important outputs

Output	Indicator	Target
Guidance documents on EU aquaculture:	Stand-alone Commission Staff Working Document published	
○ Guidance on climate adaptation of EU aquaculture		Q3 2024
○ Guidance document on environmental performance of EU aquaculture		Q3 2024
○ Guidance on good husbandry practices in EU aquaculture		Q3 2024
○ Guidance on access to space and water for inland aquaculture		Q3 2024
Study on consumer behaviour and preference of the perceptions of algae-based products	Study launched	Q1 2024

Specific Objective 1: More sustainable and competitive fisheries and aquaculture by 2024

*Related to spending programme(s):
European Maritime and Fisheries Fund for 2014-2020 and
European Maritime Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund for 2021-2027*

Result indicator: Effectiveness of Member States fisheries control systems measured by the number of control action plans implemented within the deadline set

Main outputs in 2024:

Enforcement actions

Output	Indicator	Target
Commission Implementing Decisions establishing an action plan to address shortcomings in the fisheries control system of Member States	Adoption by the Commission	Q4 2024
Control of the implementation of the landing obligation	Number of infringement cases opened, moved or closed	2024
Control of catch registration and weighing systems	Number of infringement cases opened moved or closed	2024
Quota deductions	Number of deductions	2024
Administrative inquiries requested to be conducted by Member States	Number of administrative inquiries	2024

Other important outputs

Output	Indicator	Target
Control expenditure under the: ○ EMFF Regulation (EU) No 508/2014 (shared management) and Regulation (EC) No 861/2006 ○ EMFAF Regulation (EU) 2021/1139	Payments	2024
Commission Implementing Decisions in accordance with Council Regulation (EC) No 1224/2009:	Adoption by the Commission	
○ approving sampling plans and control plans for the weighing of fishery products		Q4 2024
○ approving common control programmes for the weighing of fishery products		Q4 2024
○ revoking the approval of a sampling plan, control plan or common control plan for the weighing of fisheries products		Q4 2024
○ granting an exemption from the obligation to submit the sales note for fisheries products landed		Q4 2024
○ granting an exemption from the obligation of prior notification by masters of Union fishing vessels of arrival time at port and information to provide		Q4 2024
○ establishing the list of Union inspectors who may carry out inspections		Q4 2024
Commission Implementing Decisions in accordance with Council Regulation (EC) No 1224/2009	Adoption by the Commission	Q1 2024

Output	Indicator	Target
Commission Opinion on draft Single Programming Document 2025-2029 of EFCA	Adoption by the Commission	Q2 2024
Commission Implementing Decision establishing specific control and inspection programmes amending Commission Implementing Decision 2018/1986 (SCIPs)	Adoption by the Commission	Q4 2024
Study on the traceability of process products	Study launched	Q3 2024
Launch of the third phase of Recfishing.eu	Contract signed	Q3 2024
Commission Implementing act setting down rules on the conditions to the landing and weighing catches with the view to ensure the accuracy of reporting of catches - implementation of article 14 paragraph 6 of the amended Council Regulation (EC)1224/2009	Adoption by the Commission	Q2 2024
Commission Implementing act approving the list of ports complying with the conditions set in Article 14 paragraph 6 of the amended Council Regulation (EC)1224/2009	Adoption by the Commission	Q2 2024
Roll-out of FLUX UN/CEFACT in the EU for all domains	Number of Member States exchanging in the EU	Increase the number of Member States exchanging in the EU for logbooks and sales notes substantially.
Further Roll-out of data domains in the Ocean Store	New data domains operational in Ocean Store	Q2 2024: Ocean Store operational for basic version of VMS manager Q1 2024: launch of Fleet on Ocean Store project
Guidelines for the monitoring, certification and verification of engine power and for the continuous monitoring of engine power	Guidelines finalised	Q4 2024
Audits and verifications to verify compliance of the Member States control systems	Number of audits and verifications	2024
Study on the implementation and relevance of labelling requirements under the CMO Regulation	Study launched	Q2 2024
Compliance and fisheries control expert groups	Number of meetings per year	4

Specific Objective 1: More sustainable and competitive fisheries and aquaculture by 2024

*Related to spending programme(s):
European Maritime and Fisheries Fund for 2014-2020 and
European Maritime Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund for 2021-2027*

Result indicator: Contribution from the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF) for 2014-2020 and 2021-2027 to climate related EU spending

Main outputs in 2024:

Evaluations and fitness checks

Output	Indicator	Target
Ex post evaluation of European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF)	Publication of the stand alone Staff Working Document	Q4 2024
Mid term evaluation of European Maritime, Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund (EMFAF)	Publication of the stand alone Staff Working Document	Q4 2024

Enforcement actions

Output	Indicator	Target
Commission Implementing Decisions establishing that the Member State has seriously failed to comply with its obligations under the Common Fisheries Policy	Adoption by the Commission	2024
Commission Implementing Decisions on the suspension of the interim payments under the EMFF	Adoption by the Commission	2024
Commission Implementing Decisions on the suspension of the interim payments under the EMFAF	Adoption by the Commission	2024

External communication actions

Output	Indicator	Target
Televised magazine OCEAN, Season 6	Average number of views per month (as measured by Euronews – quarterly reports)	2 million
Regular publication of success stories showcasing EU EMFF and EMFAF-funded projects	Average page views per success story	100

Other important outputs

Output	Indicator	Target
Commission Implementing Decisions on the modification of Member States' EMFAF 2021-2027 programmes (except Luxemburg)	Adoption by the Commission	2024
Mission ocean and waters – synergies and complementarities with EMFAF 2021-2027	Number of Member States' programmes highlighting synergies and complementarities with the Mission	26

General objective 1: A European Green Deal

Specific Objective 2: A sustainable blue economy generating sustainable economic development, jobs and prosperity by 2024

Related to spending programme(s):
European Maritime and Fisheries Fund for 2014-2020 and
European Maritime Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund for 2021-2027

Result indicator: Size of the EU blue economy in terms of:

- Percentage of gross value added (GVA) generated by the blue economy relative to the total economy
- Percentage of employment in the blue economy relative to the total economy
- Direct employment in the blue economy in number of persons in the established sectors

Main outputs in 2024:

External communication actions

Output	Indicator	Target
European Maritime Day 2024	Number of attendees	1,200-1,400
European Maritime Day In My Country 2024	Number of attendees at EMD 'My Country events'	35,000
Maritime Affairs & Fisheries Newsletter	Number of subscriptions to the monthly publication	15,000
Maritime Forum and Maritime Forum newsletter	Number of active communities posting material Number of newsletters published	>10 2

Other important outputs

Output	Indicator	Target
EU Blue Economy Observatory and the EU Blue Economy reporting	Delivery of the Work Programme Publication of different papers and analysis hosted in the Blue Economy Observatory website	2024
Horizon Europe Work programme	Number of topics and budget relevant to DG MARE included in the Work programme 2025	To be determined in the course of 2024
Mission Ocean and Waters Work programme	Adoption of the work programme 2024 and launch of calls Number of projects funded from 2023 calls Preparation of the work programme 2025	Q1-Q4 2024 At least 20 Draft by May 2024
Mission Ocean and Waters – Charter	Number of actions submitted under the Mission Charter	By end 2024 – at least 600 submissions

Output	Indicator	Target
Mission Ocean and Waters – Mission Forum 2024 (5 March 2024)	Number of participants	At least 250
Follow-up to the Communication on the “EU Missions two years on: An assessment of progress in shaping the future we want”	Timely delivery of DG MARE contribution to the Action Plan	Q1-Q4 2024
BlueInvest 2024	Number of members in the BlueInvest community platform Number of companies completing investment readiness / fundraising assistance Satisfaction rate of assistance beneficiaries	2,500 by May 2024 120 over the period May 2022-May 2024 90% over the period May 2022-May 2024
Sea basin strategies	Number of Steering Committee meetings	2-3 per each sea basin
Union for the Mediterranean (UfM)	Implementation of the Ministerial Declaration on Sustainable Blue Economy	By end 2024
Maritime Forum upgrade	Migration to EWPP extended platform for site content and to Newsroom for stakeholder contacts and advanced communication functionalities	Q2 2024
Smart Specialisation Strategies	Number of partnerships	3 for 2024
Blue Med Partnership implementation	Governance structure in place	Q4 2024
Support the development of a North Sea Basin strategy	Launch of the initiative by the North Sea countries	High level declaration / announcement
Black Sea Synergy: review of a regional cooperation initiative – period 2019-2023 (jointly with EEAS)	Publication of a Joint Staff Working Document	Q1 2024
Improved skills in the EU blue economy	Number of large-scale skills partnerships under the Pact for Skills	4 by Q4 2024
Study on skill gaps in the EU blue economy	Publication of tender	Q1 2024
Eurobarometer on EU consumer habits regarding fishery and aquaculture products	Study launched	Q3 2024

General objective 1: A European Green Deal

Specific Objective 2: A sustainable blue economy generating sustainable economic development, jobs and prosperity by 2024

*Related to spending programme(s):
European Maritime and Fisheries Fund for 2014-2020 and
European Maritime Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund for 2021-2027*

Result indicator: Improved marine knowledge measured by the degree of use of the European Marine Observation and Data Network (EMODnet) in terms of the quantity of downloaded data per month

Main outputs in 2024:

Other important outputs

Output	Indicator	Target
EMODnet:		
○ Integration of EMODnet Ingestion facility to EMODnet Central, signalling the full centralisation of the EMODnet service under Europa	Shutdown of Ingestion facility and provision of service through EMODnet central	Q3 2024
○ Improved KPIs of EMODnet Central, compared to the baseline created after the 2023 integration	Number of downloads directly through EMODnet Central per month (average per annum) Number of unique visitors to the EMODnet Central per month (average per annum)	Minimum 5% increase compared to the 2023 baseline for both indicators
○ EMODnet for NGOs – one event in Autumn 2024	Number of participants to the event	70-100
	% of companies as Associated partners	15%
Begin development of digital platform for ocean observation	Contract signed	Q3 2024

General objective 1: A European Green Deal

Specific Objective 2: A sustainable blue economy generating sustainable economic development, jobs and prosperity by 2024

*Related to spending programme(s):
European Maritime and Fisheries Fund for 2014-2020 and
European Maritime Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund for 2021-2027*

Result indicator: Reduction of economic impact of marine litter measured in terms of median number of litter items per 100 metres of beach in the EU

Main outputs in 2024:

External communication actions

Output	Indicator	Target
#EUBeachCleanup campaign, led by DG MARE	Number of attendees at events organised worldwide	20,000

Other important outputs		
Output	Indicator	Target
Maintenance of 3 EU4Ocean communities	Sum of registered members of EU4Ocean platform, Blue Schools and Youth4Ocean Forum	Over 500
Co-creation and collaboration events with European teachers and students for ocean literacy using the European Atlas of the Seas	Number of events	Minimum 2 events

General objective 1: A European Green Deal

Specific Objective 2: A sustainable blue economy generating sustainable economic development, jobs and prosperity by 2024

*Related to spending programme(s):
European Maritime and Fisheries Fund for 2014-2020 and
European Maritime Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund for 2021-2027*

Result indicator: Maritime security measured by the number of new CISE (Common Information Sharing Environment) connections/ nodes

Main outputs in 2024:

Other important outputs

Output	Indicator	Target
European Coast Guard Functions Forum (ECGFF)	Grant allocation	Q2-Q4 2024
Mediterranean Coast Guard Functions Forum (MCGFF)	Grant allocation	Q2 2024
CISE incident alerting service	2-3 new services (grant allocated in 2022)	Q3 2024
Creation of new CISE nodes	Number of CISE nodes	3 to 5 new nodes (20 nodes in total by end 2024)
Unexploded Ordnances (UXOs)	Grant to be awarded (call for proposals launched in September 2023)	Q2 2024
Commission proposal for a Council Recommendation regarding participation of maritime surveillance authorities to the operational phase of CISE	Adoption by the Commission	Q3 2024

General objective 1: A European Green Deal

Specific Objective 2: A sustainable blue economy generating sustainable economic development, jobs and prosperity by 2024

*Related to spending programme(s):
European Maritime and Fisheries Fund for 2014-2020 and
European Maritime Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund for 2021-2027*

Result indicator: Installed capacity of EU offshore wind energy and ocean energy

Main outputs in 2024:

Enforcement actions

Output	Indicator	Target
Adoption of national Maritime Spatial Plans	Number of infringement cases moved or closed	2024

Other important outputs

Output	Indicator	Target
Supporting development of sustainable blue economy under the sea basin strategies and in the outermost regions	Number of Steering Committee meetings	2 per sea basin
Supporting cross-border projects on maritime spatial planning in European sea basins	Projects kicked-off	3 projects in 2024

General objective 4: A Stronger Europe in the World

Specific Objective 3: More sustainable fisheries worldwide and improved international ocean governance by 2024

*Related to spending programme(s):
Regional Fisheries Management Organisations*

Result indicator: Sustainable management of the main regulated tuna and tuna-like species fished by the EU fleet under the purview of Regional Fisheries Management Organisations (RFMOs) of which the EU is a Member

Main outputs in 2024:

Other important outputs

Output	Indicator	Target
BBNJ ⁽²⁶⁾	EU ratifies and starts implementing the BBNJ, supports others to do so	2024-2025
	Further develop the High Ambition Coalition	Additional countries join the coalition in 2024, agenda turns to implementation

⁽²⁶⁾ [Intergovernmental Conference on an international legally binding instrument under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction \(BBNJ\)](#)

Output	Indicator	Target
Marine Regions Forum: 2nd conference and preparatory meetings co-hosted with partners in the Western Indian Ocean region	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Event takes place - Participants represent the relevant partners 	Q3 2024
Port States Measures Agreement: support to third countries under the FAO global capacity development umbrella programme	Number of third countries that received support to strengthen the countries' legal, technical and operational capacities to implement the Agreement	50 in 2024
Our Ocean Conference 2024 – EU commitments	EU commitments adopted by the Commission and endorsed by the Council	10 EU commitments
Implementation of the Updated EU Arctic policy (JOIN(2021) 27 final):		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Progress towards key actions identified in the Joint Communication 	<p>Coordination with, and support to all relevant DGs in charge of implementing key actions (e.g. Horizon Europe, Interreg).</p> <p>Commission represented in key Arctic events, giving due visibility to the Joint Communication and the role of the Commission.</p>	<p>Two Inter-service Group coordination meetings per year; follow-up overview document updated twice a year.</p> <p>Participation of DG MARE in the following annual conferences: Arctic Futures Symposium, Arctic Frontiers, Arctic Circle Assembly</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Progress in implementation of the Agreement to prevent Unregulated High Seas Fisheries in the Central Arctic Ocean 	Adoption of a conservation and management measure for exploratory fishing by the deadline established in the Agreement	24 June 2024
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o EU Arctic Forum and Indigenous Peoples' Dialogue - Conference in Brussels, Belgium on 14-15 May 2024 	Number of participants	200-250
EU-Africa Strategic Group for policy cooperation and dialogue on international ocean governance	Final report of the EU-Africa Strategic Group for policy cooperation and dialogue on international ocean governance is delivered	Q2 2024
Africa Blue Invest event	Number of participants	200
Joint Implementation of Ocean Partnerships with China	Follow up organised and preparation of the next 3 High Level Dialogues with China	Q1 2024
Commission Decision approving the Memorandum of Understanding on enhancing cooperation on fisheries and maritime affairs between the European Union and the Republic of Iceland	Adoption by the Commission	Q1 2024

General objective 4: A Stronger Europe in the World

Specific Objective 3: More sustainable fisheries worldwide and improved international ocean governance by 2024

*Related to spending programme(s):
Regional Fisheries Management Organisations*

Result indicator: Conservation measures based on scientific advice adopted for the main regulated species fished by the EU fleet under the purview of Regional Fisheries Management Organisations (RFMOs) of which the EU is a Member

Main outputs in 2024:

New policy initiatives

Output	Indicator	Target
Transposition of RFMO (27) rules into EU law – proposals for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council:	Adoption by the European Parliament and the Council	
○ amending ICCAT Regulation 2017/2107 and the Bluefin tuna proposal (COM(2022)171 final)		Q1 2024
○ laying down conservation and management measures applicable in the Area covered under the Southern Indian Ocean Fisheries Agreement (SIOFA) (COM(2022)563 final)		Q3 2024
Transposition of RFMO rules into EU law – proposals for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council:	Adoption by the Commission	
○ Regulation laying down conservation and management measures applicable in the Area covered under the South-East Atlantic Fisheries Organisation (SEAFO)		Q4 2024
○ Amending Regulation (EU) 2023/2124 on certain provisions for fishing in the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM) Agreement area		Q1 2024
○ Regulation laying down conservation and management measures applicable in the Area covered under the North Pacific Fisheries Commission (NPFC)		Q4 2024
Transposition of RFMO rules into EU law – Commission Delegated Regulations:	Adoption by the Commission	
○ Delegated Commission Regulation (EU) amending Regulation (EU) 2019/833 of the European Parliament and of the Council, and Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2020/124 as regards certain provisions of, and Annexes to the conservation and enforcement measures of the Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organisation (NAFO)		Q1 2024

(27) [Regional fisheries management organisations \(RFMOs\) \(europa.eu\)](https://eura.europa.eu/regional-fisheries-management-organisations-rfmos)

Enforcement actions		
Output	Indicator	Target
Appropriate control system of Member States in relation to Bluefin Tuna farming	Number of infringement cases opened, moved or closed	2024
External communication actions		
Output	Indicator	Target
Season 3 of the podcast series developed in cooperation with Euronews	Average number of listeners per episode	5,000

General objective 4: A Stronger Europe in the World

Specific Objective 3: More sustainable fisheries worldwide and improved international ocean governance by 2024

*Related to spending programme(s):
European Maritime and Fisheries Fund for 2014-2020 and
European Maritime Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund for 2021-2027*

Result indicator: Fighting illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing measured by the number of non-EU Member States that the Commission has engaged in a dialogue with, and the number of countries having addressed their deficiencies

Main outputs in 2024:

New policy initiatives

Output	Indicator	Target
Commission Decisions on pre-identification of a third country as a non-cooperating third country in fighting IUU fishing	Adoption by the Commission	2024
Revocations of pre-identifications		2024
Commission Decisions on identification of a third country as a non-cooperating third country in fighting IUU fishing		2024
Revocations of identifications		2024
Proposals for Council Implementing Decisions amending Implementing Decision 2014/170/EU, establishing a list of non-cooperating third countries in fighting illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing		2024
Commission Implementing Regulation on the EU list of vessels engaged in IUU fishing (update of list)	Adoption by the Commission	Q2 2024
Commission Implementing Decision on revision of Commission Regulation (EC) No 1010/2009 on preventing, deterring and eliminating illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing	Adoption by the Commission	Q4 2024

Output	Indicator	Target
Commission Delegated Regulation laying down the template of a document providing evidence that the fishery products did not undergo operations other than unloading, reloading or any operation designed to preserve them in good and genuine condition	Adoption by the Commission	Q4 2024
Other important outputs		
Output	Indicator	Target
Report from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council on the application of Council Regulation (EC) No 1005/2008 establishing a community system to prevent, deter and eliminate illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing (the IUU Regulation)	Adoption by the Commission	Q4 2024

General objective 4: A Stronger Europe in the World

Specific Objective 3: More sustainable fisheries worldwide and improved international ocean governance by 2024

*Related to spending programme(s):
European Maritime and Fisheries Fund for 2014-2020 and
European Maritime Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund for 2021-2027*

Result indicator: Control of imports of fisheries products in the EU measured by the number of catch certificates import refusals by Member States

Main outputs in 2024:

Other important outputs

Output	Indicator	Target
Revision of the Commission Implementing Regulation in accordance with Council Regulation (EC) No 1005/2008	Adoption by the Commission	Q4 2024
Commission Delegated Regulation complementing Council Regulation (EC) No 1005/2008 in accordance with Article 14.1b of that Regulation	Adoption by the Commission	Q2 2024
CATCH developed in line with legal basis for its compulsory use	CATCH environment aligned with adopted legal basis - revision of the Fisheries Control System	Q2 2024
Risk management of the IUU catch certification system (CATCH)	List of automated alerts in CATCH environment	Q4 2024
Guidelines for the use of CATCH	Finalisation of guidelines modules for Member States' authorities, third countries' authorities, EU importers and third countries' exporters	Q4 2024
FAQs for stakeholders as regards changes to catch certification scheme and the IT system CATCH	Finalised FAQs published on DG MARE website	Q4 2024

Output	Indicator	Target
Notification of the changes to catch certification scheme and the IT system CATCH to third countries	Notifications sent to all flag States notified under Council Regulation (EC) No 1005/2008	Q2 2024

General objective 4: A Stronger Europe in the World

Specific Objective 3: More sustainable fisheries worldwide and improved international ocean governance by 2024

Related to spending programme(s):
Regional Fisheries Management Organisations

Result indicator Number of sustainable fisheries partnership agreements (SFPAs) in force

Main outputs in 2024:

New policy initiatives

Output	Indicator	Target
Proposals for negotiation mandates and/or for the signature and conclusion of a new SFPA/Protocol or the renewal of an existing SFPA/Protocol with the following third countries ⁽²⁸⁾ :	Adoption by the Commission	
Angola – mandate		Q1 2024
Côte d'Ivoire – mandate and proposals		Mandate: Q1 2024 Proposals: Q4 2024
Equatorial Guinea – mandate and proposals		Q4 2024
Guinea – mandate and proposals		Q1 2024
Guinea-Bissau – mandate and proposals		Q1 2024
Kenya – proposals		Q4 2024
Liberia – proposals		Q4 2024
Morocco mandate (new SFPA) and proposals		Mandate: Q3 2024 Proposals: Q2 2025
Mozambique – proposals		Q4 2024
São Tomé e Príncipe – mandate		Q2 2024
Senegal – mandate and proposals		Q1 2024 / Q4 2024
Cook Islands – mandate		Q2 2024
Cabo Verde – protocols		Q1 2024
Greenland – mandate		Q2 2024 (tbc)

⁽²⁸⁾ SFPAs and their associated protocols enter into force after concluding negotiations with the third country concerned.

Evaluations and fitness checks		
Output	Indicator	Target
Evaluations on SFPAs / Protocols:	Staff Working Document published together with the negotiation mandate	
Evaluation - Angola		Q1 2024
Evaluation - Côte d'Ivoire		Q1 2024
Evaluation - Equatorial Guinea		Q4 2024
Evaluation - Guinea		Q1 2024
Evaluation - Guinea-Bissau		Q1 2024
Evaluation - Morocco		Q3 2024
Evaluation - São Tomé e Príncipe		Q2 2024
Evaluation - Senegal		Q1 2024
Evaluation - Cook Islands		Q2 2024
Evaluation - Greenland		Q2 2024 (tbc)
Evaluation of the Sustainable Fisheries Partnership Agreements	Staff Working Document published	Q2 2024
Other important outputs		
Output	Indicator	Target
Commission Decisions regarding credits for the implementation of SFPAs (financing decisions)	Adoption by the Commission	2024

Part 2 – Modernising the administration

A. Human resource management

Objective: DG MARE employs a competent and engaged workforce and contributes to gender equality at all levels of management to effectively deliver on the Commission’s priorities and core business.

Main outputs in 2024:

Output	Indicator	Target
Regular interactive Town hall meetings with the Director-General and other (senior) managers to ensure staff are well informed and have opportunity to provide feedback on the latest developments	Number of Town hall meetings	2 in 2024
Colleagues invest time in their personal development (trainings, coaching, job shadowing etc)	Days invested in personal development (trainings, coaching, job shadowing etc)	50% of MARE staff have 5 days of training / year

B. Sound financial management

Objective: The authorising officer by delegation has reasonable assurance that resources have been used in accordance with the principles of sound financial management and that cost-effective controls are in place which give the necessary guarantees concerning the legality and regularity of underlying transactions.

Main outputs in 2024:

Output	Indicator	Target
Effective controls: Legal and regular transactions	Estimated risk at payment	remains < 2 % of relevant expenditure
	Estimated risk at closure	remains < 2 % of relevant expenditure
Efficient controls	Budget execution	remains 100% of payment appropriations
	timely payments	remains 97% of payments (in value) made on time
Economy of controls	Overall estimated cost of controls	remains < 5% of funds managed

C. Fraud risk management

Objective:The risk of fraud is minimised through the application of effective anti-fraud measures and the implementation of the Commission Anti-Fraud Strategy (CAFS) ⁽²⁹⁾ aimed at the prevention, detection and correction ⁽³⁰⁾ of fraud.

Main outputs in 2024:

Output	Indicator	Target
Raising awareness regarding OLAF-related procedures to ensure that DG MARE staff remains vigilant to fraud	Information sessions organised about OLAF-related procedures	At least 1 information session in 2024
Support to Member States in their anti-fraud efforts	Continuous support, as applicable	Discuss fraud-related matters with Member States during the annual coordination meetings and / or other suitable occasions
Regular meetings with counterparts from OLAF policy and investigative units	Number of meetings per year	At least 4 meetings in 2024

D. Digital transformation and information management

Objective:DG MARE is using innovative, trusted digital solutions for better policy-shaping, information management and administrative processes to forge a truly digitally transformed, user-focused and data-driven Commission

Main outputs in 2024:

Output	Indicator	Target
Digital Culture Trainings for relevant stakeholders to increase awareness on cybersecurity and innovative digital technologies.	% of target group (system owners, business managers and IT experts) to follow cybersecurity or specific IT training.	50% Cybersecurity 25% Digital Innovation
Business-driven Digital Transformation Automation and optimization of business processes.	Number of initiatives supporting business digital transformation (new or major updates).	10
Seamless Digital Environment Progressing with the adoption of cloud-based technologies.	% of systems (as defined in GovIS2) in the (new) Cloud Infrastructure.	30%

⁽²⁹⁾ [Communication from the Commission 'Commission Anti-Fraud Strategy Action plan - revision 2023 COM\(2023\) 405 of 11 July 2023](#) –‘the Communication on the 2023 revision’ – and the accompanying document, [SWD\(2023\) 245](#) – ‘the revised Action Plan’.

⁽³⁰⁾ Correction of fraud is an umbrella term, which notably refers to the recovery of amounts unduly spent and to administrative sanctions.

Output	Indicator	Target
Green, Resilient and Secure Digital Infrastructure Ensure continuous improvement of DG MARE cybersecurity	% of systems with an IT Security Plan less than 2 years old	90%
Digital-ready policymaking Multidisciplinary teams working on the implementation of the revised Fisheries Control Regulation.	Number of multi-disciplinary meetings (policy, IT and/or Member States) for preparing implementing rules.	10
List of key actions on information management and data protection: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure continued compliance with Regulation (EU) 2018/1725 (IDPR) when processing personal data • Continued awareness raising on the rules of personal data protection for DG MARE staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Up to date records of all processing operations, data subjects are Informed in line with Article 15 and 16 IDPR by specific privacy statements • Proper handling and documentation of data breaches and data subject requests • Percentage of DG MARE staff having followed a training on data protection 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full compliance with Regulation (EU) 2018/1725 every time personal data are processed • 100% DG MARE staff having received a training in data protection since entry into force the IDPR by 2024
Reorganisation and clean-up of the DG's paper archives	Linear meters of paper archives treated	> 150 meters
Promoting the correct use of Ares by staff	Number of training sessions organised	2 newcomers' trainings and 2 thematic trainings

E. Sound environmental management

Objective: DG MARE takes account of the environmental impact of its day-to-day actions, taking measures to reduce the impact of the administration work, supported by their respective EMAS Correspondents or EMAS Site Coordinators.

Main outputs in 2024:

I Reducing emissions from staff and expert' business travel and reducing CO2 and other atmospheric emissions

Output	Indicator	Target (2019 as baseline)
Reduced emissions from staff missions	CO2 emissions from DG MARE staff missions	Reduction by 8% compared to 2023
Reduced emissions from experts travel under the administrative budget	CO2 emissions from DG MARE expert missions	Reduction of experts' emissions by 8% compared to 2023

II. Reducing resource use in buildings and workspace (energy)

More efficient use of resources (energy):

Output	Indicator	Target (2019 as baseline, as appropriate)
Participation in corporate energy saving actions through building closure.	Number of DG MARE buildings participating in: - end of year energy saving action - summer energy saving action	100% participation in BEST actions.

III. Organise sustainable events

Output	Indicator	Target (2019 as baseline, as appropriate)
Organisation of sustainable meetings and events in line with the EC guidelines	Number of sustainable events	1

IV. Circular economy (public procurement (GPP), waste, biodiversity and sustainable food

Output	Indicator	Target (2019 as baseline, as appropriate)
Gradual introduction of GPP criteria in contracts and starting to monitor the process	% of contracts with "green" provisions (and / or by value in EUR)	Increase in the % of contracts with "green" provisions (and / or by value in EUR)

V. Staff awareness

Output	Indicator	Target (2019 as baseline, as appropriate)
Awareness actions in the framework of EMAS corporate campaigns on: - Digital mindfulness - Mobility	Number of awareness / participatory actions	2 actions per year

