European Commission

Maritime Affairs and Fisheries

Vision 2040 for fisheries and aquaculture in the EU

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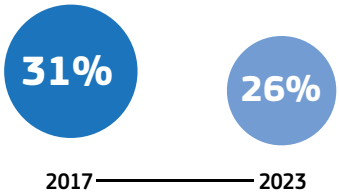
Shaping a sustainable, competitive and resilient sector for the future

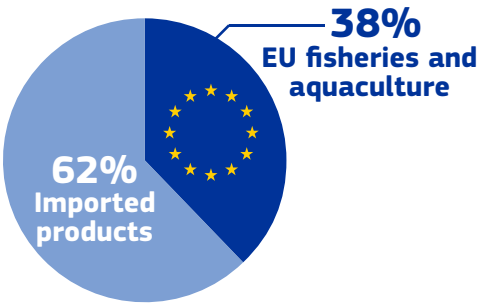
Vision 2040 provides a long-term direction, giving fishers, aquaculture producers and the wider value chain the predictability they need to thrive. The objective is also to reinforce EU food security while keeping fish stocks at sustainable levels and ensure a level playing field with global competitors.

200,500 people employed

Sector is ageing: share of fishers under 40



EU aquatic food consumption 2023



Current challenges

- Fish stocks below healthy levels
- Climate change/ shifting stock distribution
- Growing competition for maritime space
- Ageing workforce, low profitability for some fleets
- Ageing fleet, fossil fuel dependence
- Unfair competition, no level playing field
- Over 60% of products imported
- Stagnating EU aquaculture production
- Complexity of fisheries rules

Our vision

- Rebuilding stocks through an ecosystem approach
- Science-based adaptive management
- Co-design in maritime spatial planning
- Better working conditions and support for new entrants and small-scale fishers
- Decarbonisation and support for fleet modernisation
- Ocean diplomacy and fight against IUU fishing
- Stronger EU sustainable production and consumer transparency
- New EU aquaculture framework
- Targeted simplification measures

Five fields of action to make Vision 2040 a reality

STRONG AND VIABLE BUSINESSES

- Healthy stocks as foundation of fisheries
- Strengthen business viability through diversification of activities and innovation
- A more coherent and predictable framework to support growth and investment in aquaculture

A MODERN AND RESILIENT SECTOR

- Fleet modernisation, energy efficiency and gradual deployment of low-emission technologies
- Reduced fossil-fuel dependency
- Better working conditions, safety, skills and training to attract the next generation

INVESTMENT AND LEGAL FRAMEWORK

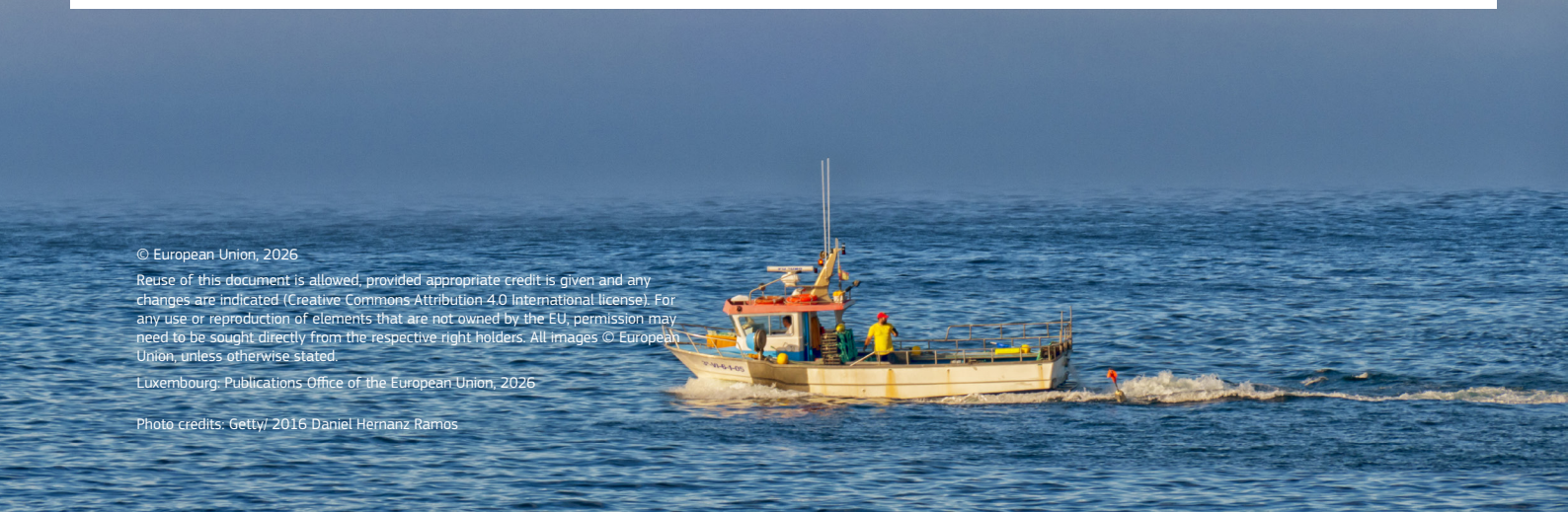
- Better conditions for investment, and financing adapted to the sector
- Continued simplification of rules
- Better access to maritime space

INNOVATION AND KNOWLEDGE

- Digitalisation, AI, better data and stronger cooperation between science and industry
- Research to anticipate climate-driven changes in fish stocks and ecosystems

A STRONGER EU ROLE GLOBALLY

- Strengthen international fisheries governance
- Fight illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing
- Use international partnerships to promote sustainable supply chains
- A level-playing field for EU producers



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