# EU action plan: Protecting and restoring marine ecosystems for sustainable and resilient fisheries

# Why this action plan?

- **State of seas**

- **Sustainability of fisheries**

- Bridge **fisheries** and **environment** worlds

- Builds on existing legislative **framework for both areas**
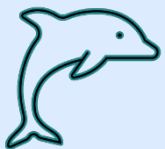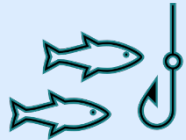
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# What is in the action plan?

- Improve **gear selectivity** & address **bycatch** of **sensitive species**

- Protect the **seabed**

- **Transition** & **knowledge**

- **Governance**

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# Gear selectivity and sensitive species

## Why?

Sensitive or threatened species are at risk

## How?

- New, innovative techniques to boost selectivity

- Set limits for incidental bycatch

- Gradual approach

  - **2023** → harbour porpoise (Baltic & Black Seas), Iberian Atlantic & common dolphin (Bay of Biscay)

  - **2024** → angel sharks, common skate, guitarfish, Maltese skate, great white shark, sand tiger shark, smalltooth sand tiger shark, spiny butterfly ray, sturgeons, marine turtles, Balearic shearwater and Mediterranean monk seal

  - **2030** → remaining sensitive marine species

- Improve the protection of the European eel

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# Protecting the seabed

## Why?

Essential habitats
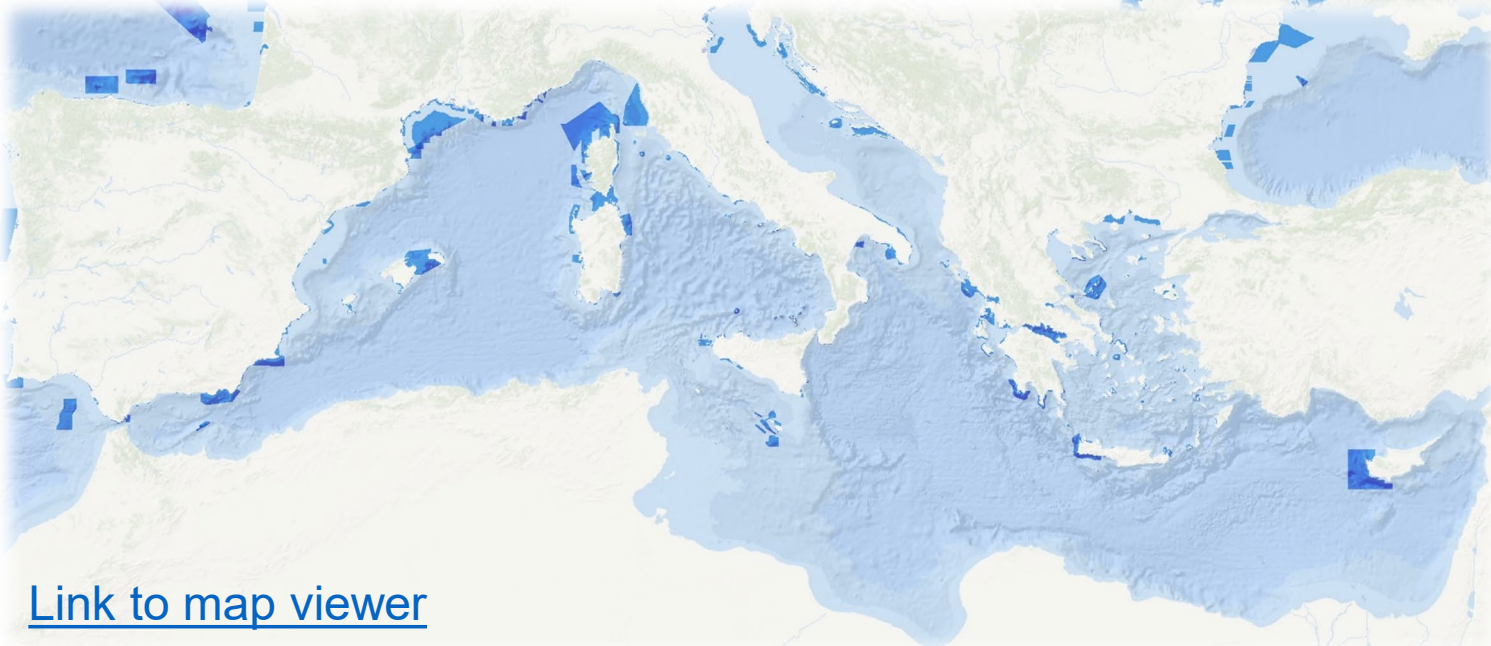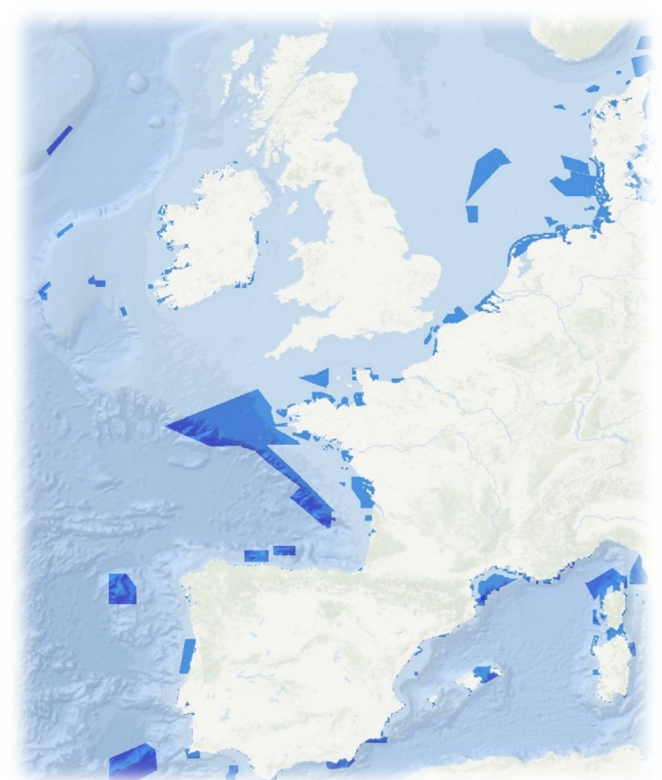
Fish nurseries & spawning areas

carbon sink

## How?

- Mid-2023 → Set limits for extent of seabed lost or adversely affected under environmental law

- Gradually phase out mobile bottom fishing in all Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) by 2030:

  - **March 2024** → national measures/joint recommendations for all Natura 2000 sites under Habitats Directive protecting the seabed & marine species

  - **March 2024** → outline for all MPAs & describe detailed measures for at least 20% of each Member State's marine waters

  - **2030** → all MPAs, existing and new ones

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# Where to start?

*Natura 2000 sites protecting the seabed and marine species*
*(Habitats directive)*

Link to map viewer

*To accompany fishers:*

- Actions in the CFP & Energy transition Communications
- EU funding available
- Further data collection, research & innovation

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# EU funding to support a smooth transition

## *What?*

EMFAF programmes for 2021-2027 have set a high **ambition for sustainable and resilient fisheries**

➢ need to translate it into **actions delivering concrete results**

Public support **empowers solutions** from Member States and stakeholders

➢ need for **collaboration** to design impactful projects

## *How?*

- **Contribute to the sustainable management of fisheries and marine resources:**

  - **collect scientific data** to design fisheries conservation measures and establish and manage MPAs

  - **design and implement innovative solutions** to improve gear selectivity, avoid incidental by-catch of sensitive species and lower the impact of fishing on marine ecosystems and habitats

  - **manage fishing fleets** towards a balance between their capacity and the available resources

  - **control fishing activities** to enforce the CFP, prevent illegal fishing and foster a culture of compliance

- **Facilitate a gradual phasing out of mobile bottom fishing in MPAs**

  - **support collective strategies** to organise the phasing out smoothly with all the stakeholders concerned

  - **assess the socio-economic impact**, by taking into account each specific situation

  - **identify business alternatives** (e.g. diversification to other gear or areas, or to other economic sectors)

  - **provide individual advisory services and training programmes** to facilitate the transition

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# Governance and process

**Measures**

→ Measures for priority species
→ Phasing out mobile bottom fishing in Natura 2000 sites with seabed conservation objectives (Habitats Directive)

→ Mobile bottom fishing phased out in all MPAs
→ Protect remaining sensitive species

**2023**　　**2024**　　　　　**2030**

**Governance**

New special group established

Member States' roadmaps prepared & delivered

**Implementation of Member States' roadmaps**

**Mid-term review Biodiversity strategy --> assess action plan progress**

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# Thank you

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