

Co-founded by the European Union

Fishers of the future

A study that examines the future role of fishers in society up to 2050



Source - oceans-and-fisheries.ec.europa.eu/fishers-future_en

www.med-ac.eu

What is foresight?

Foresight explores long-term futures and **creates shared visions for policy-making projects**. The foresight approach provides the tools for exploring the **mid- to long-term future in a systematic, participatory and inclusive way**. The resulting collective intelligence allows for a better understanding of the possible future consequences of current trends and emerging developments. **New insights are generated to inform today's decision making and thus to shape the future.**

Background

The 'Fishers of the Future' study is a key element of the 'Pact for Fisheries and Oceans', announced in February 2023, to examine the future role of fishers in society up to 2050.

The **goal** was to explore potential future scenarios for the fishing sector by 2050.

Methodology and sources used

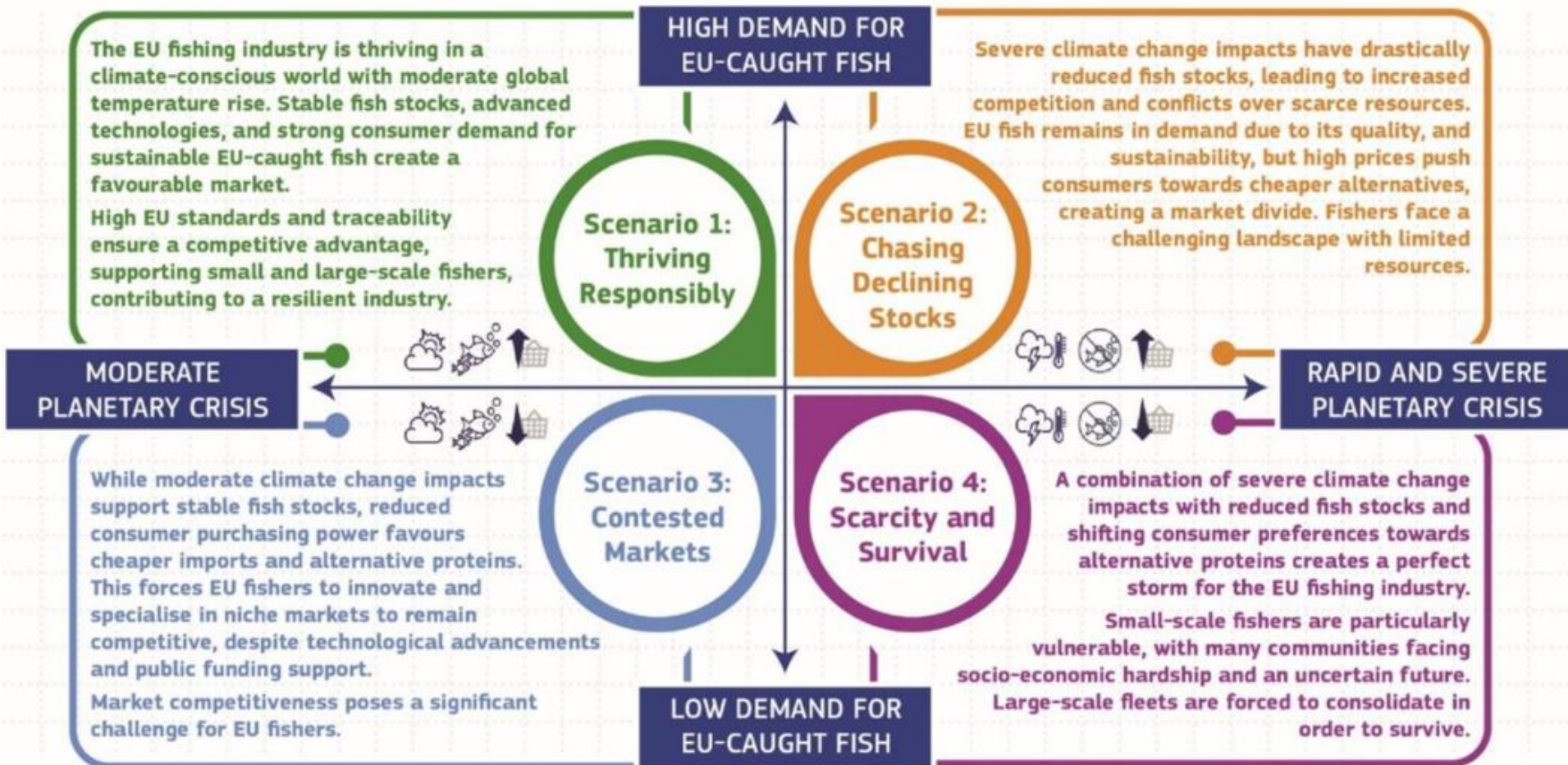
The study was developed in three phases using foresight methodology and with the participation of more than **190 fishers across 22 coastal Member States** as well as official representative bodies of fishers and many other stakeholders.

1. The **first phase** developed a snapshot of the **situation today**. For this study, this meant developing **profiles** capturing a range of current characteristics of fishers across the EU.
2. The **second phase** focused on the **development of future scenarios** in which fishers might be living and working in 2050, through the identification of **key drivers and trends**.
3. The **third phase** considered **how these scenarios might impact** and shape the profiles of fishers in 2050 (for the large scale and small scale fleets).

See the final **report** for full details about the methodology used.

Fishers of the Future Scenarios

Potential future scenarios towards 2050 based on the two main drivers of change according to the study: **climate and market dynamics**. Each scenario encompasses a complex interplay of other factors such as interactions with other coastal activities, the use of technologies, operational costs, recruitment challenges, etc.



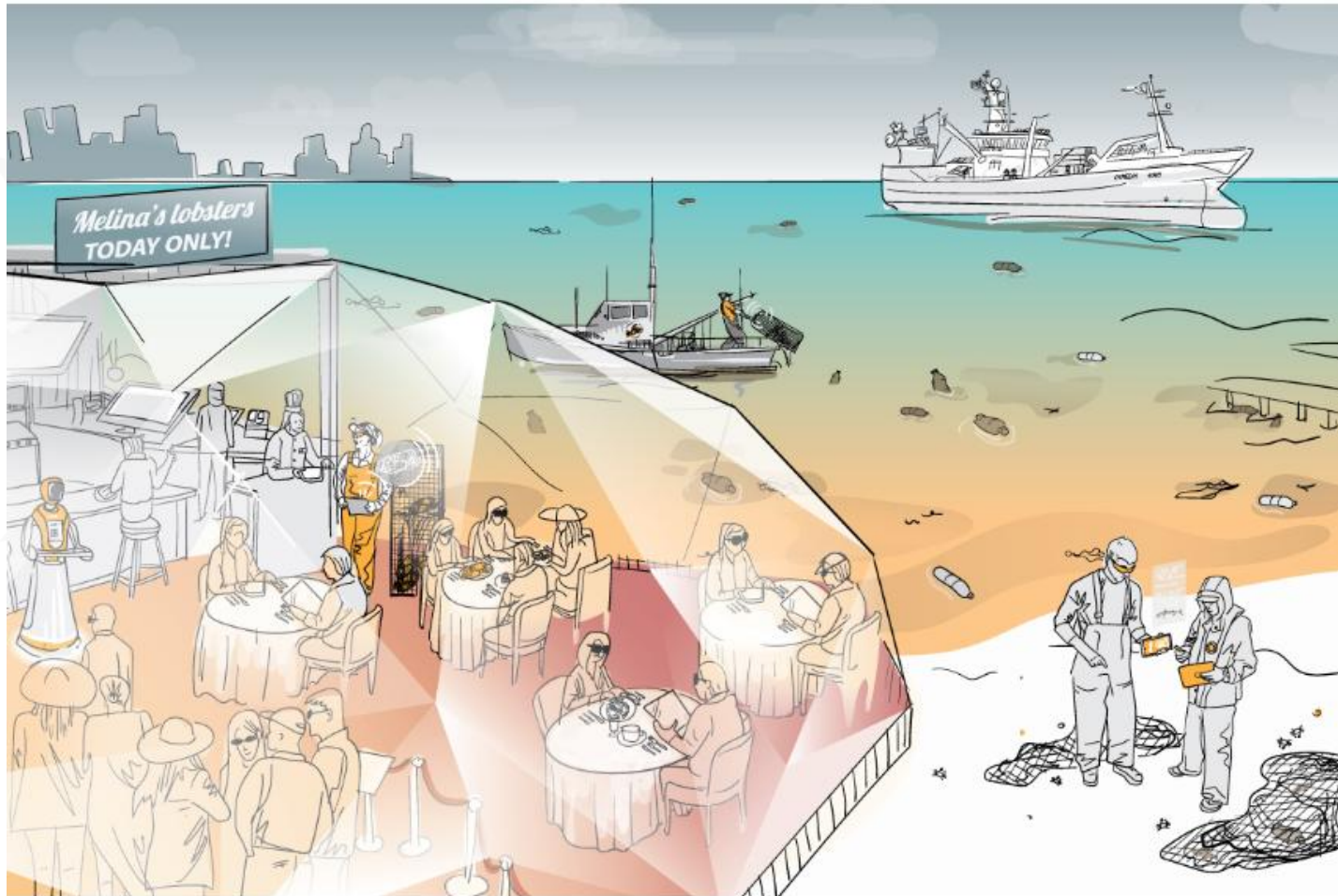
Scenario 1

Thriving responsibly (The EU fishing industry has adjusted well to challenges, high demand for EU-caught fish)



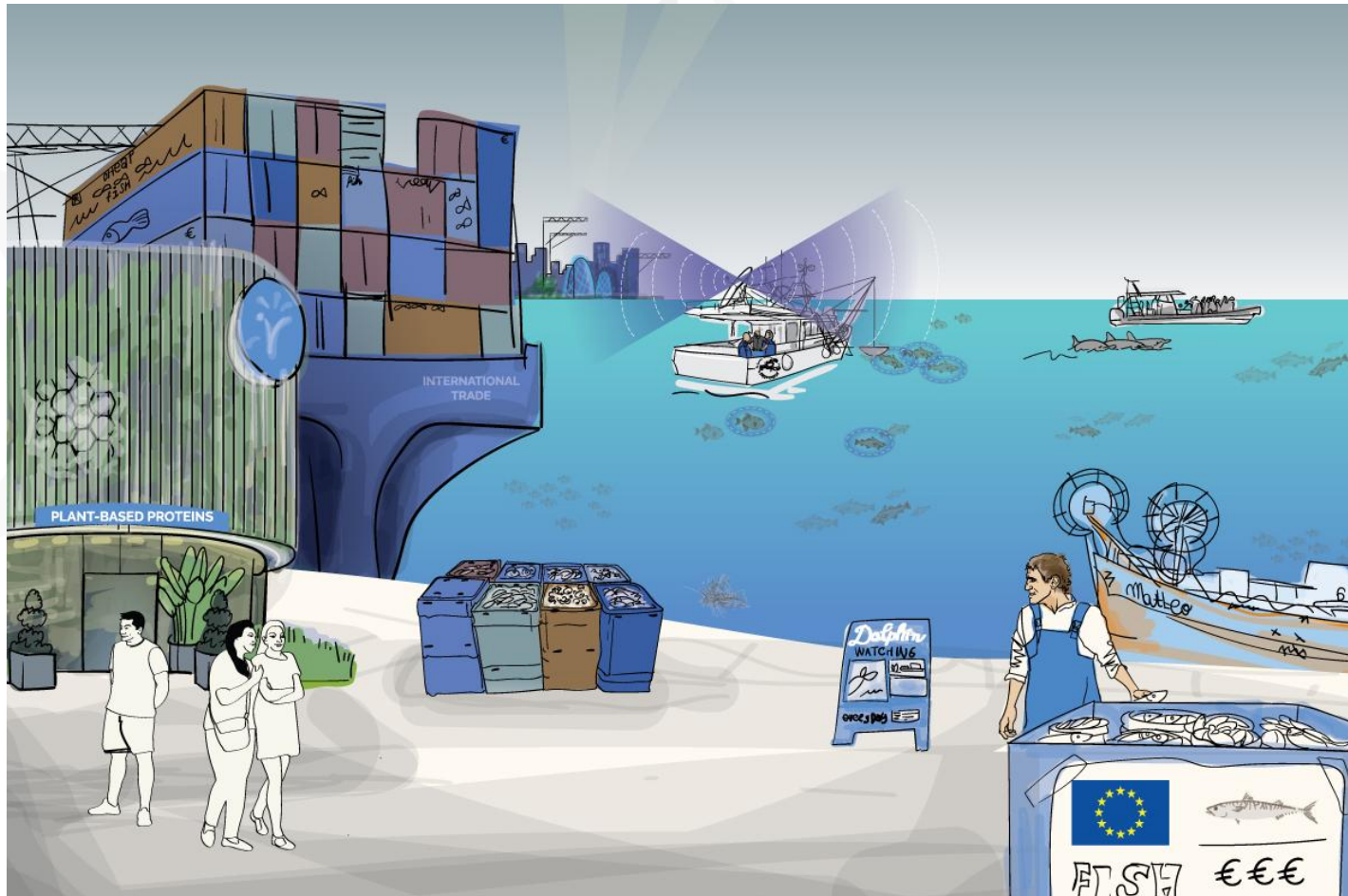
Scenario 2

Chasing declining stocks (climate change, declining stocks, high demand for EU-caught fish)



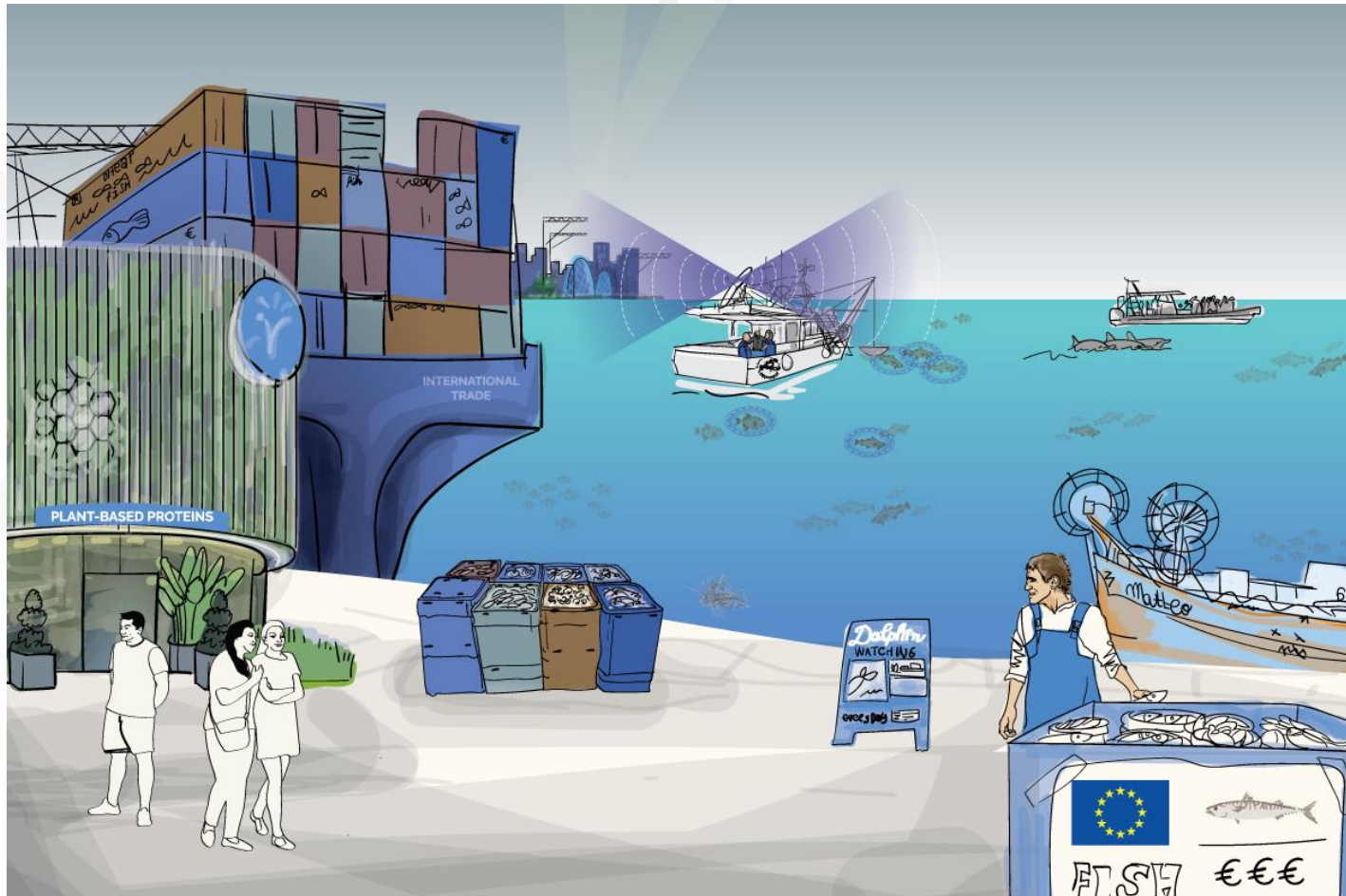
Scenario 3

Contested markets (moderate climate change, low demand for EU-caught fish)



Scenario 4

Scarcity and survival (scarce fish stocks, low demand for EU-caught fish)



The closing event of the Fishers of the Future Foresight Study took place on
14 January 2025 in Brussels.

The event **agenda** included:

Opening comments from Costas Kadis

Presentation of the project – by Macarena Davies, Tetrattech

Panel discussion with

Stylianos Mitolidis, Director of Directorate D (DG MARE)

Cor Blonk, Chair of the Sectoral Social Dialogue Committee (SSDC) for
Fisheries

Sergio Lopez, Chair SWWAC – South West Waters Advisory Council

**Emiel Brouckaert, Chair NWWAC - North Western Waters Advisory
Council**

Macarena Davies, Tetrattech

Final wrap up by Stephen Davies, Advisor (DG MARE)

*“The **NWWAC, LDAC, MAC, PeIAC, MEDAC, and SWWAC** welcomed DG MARE’s “Fishers of the Future” initiative which provides a means to collect valuable **socio-economic data on the EU fishing industry** and to improve the knowledge regarding the make-up of the sector, with the aim of examining the future role of fishers in society up to 2050.” **27 May 2024***

About the first phase

- These profiles seem rather simplistic and do not fully capture the full and diverse reality of the EU fishing industry.
- Some sectors across EU Member States seem not to be represented, both in terms of geographical coverage as well as fleet segments.
 - The survey is quite limited in terms of representativeness in sampling coverage (less than 200 responses), which instead should proportionally reflect the geographical distribution and socio-economic contexts of fishing activities and of the various fleet segments.

*“The whole process would have benefited from a **longer timeframe** and **deeper engagement with all stakeholders** and a more representative participation of all fishers from all EU sea basins. The ACs working with the industry representative groups would be happy to **facilitate these additional surveys** and assist in the formulation of additional profiles.*

*The ACs also have some concerns regarding the **transparency and clarity** of the objectives in relation to the project [...]. The ACs consider it vital that all further work is carried out with a **maximum level of stakeholder engagement** [...]*

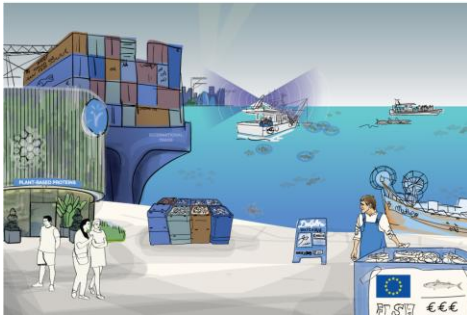
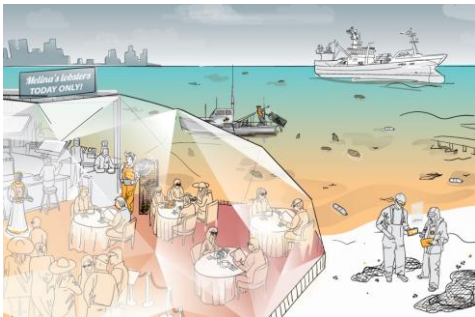
*it is important to highlight that the use of **only one working language** in the participatory event and in workshops contributed to the **exclusion of a significant part of stakeholders.**”*

“The **outcomes** of the project should also **clarify how future fishers will contribute to food security** and to ensuring the supply of seafood to the EU market, while also addressing the role of fishers in reaching the environmental objectives the union is bound to achieve.

In conclusion,

it is essential that the diversity of **the entire EU fleet is considered and represented in this important project**, [...]. This should be a condition sine qua non for the EU as a **basis for any future policy recommendations derived from this project**.

In this regard, it would be useful to understand how the outcomes of the project will link in with the recently announced full evaluation of the Common Fisheries Policy.”



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