

EC/Mauritania Fisheries Partnership Agreement: fishing opportunities and financial contribution for the period 1 August 2008 to 31 July 2012. Protocol

2008/0093(CNS) - 15/07/2008 - Final act

PURPOSE: to conclude a protocol to the European Community/Mauritania Fisheries Partnership Agreement.

LEGISLATIVE ACT: Council Regulation (EC) No 704/2008 on the conclusion of the Protocol setting out the fishing opportunities and financial contribution provided for in the Fisheries Partnership Agreement between the European Community and the Islamic Republic of Mauritania for the period 1 August 2008 to 31 July 2012.

CONTENT: the Council adopted, by a qualified majority, a Regulation on the conclusion of the renegotiated Protocol setting out the fishing opportunities and financial contribution provided for in the Fisheries Partnership Agreement between the European Community and the Islamic Republic of Mauritania.

The European Community has negotiated adjustments to the Protocol's provisions, since the Community's vessels were not making full use of the fishing opportunities available to them under it, thus calling into question its economic and financial benefits. On 13 March 2008 a new Protocol was initialled by Mauritania and the European Community, for the period from 1 August 2008 to 31 July 2012.

The financial contribution under the Protocol is set at EUR 86 million, EUR 76 million, EUR 73 million and EUR 70 million for the first, second, third and fourth years respectively. Of this financial contribution, an amount of EUR 11 million, EUR 16 million, EUR 18 million and EUR 20 million for the first, second, third and fourth years respectively will be allocated to financial support for the implementation of the national fisheries policy and will include EUR 1 million per year for support for the Banc d'Arguin National Park (PNBA).

The fishing opportunities provided for in the Agreement have been laid down for eleven categories. The conditions for each licence period are as follows:

- **crustaceans** (excluding spiny lobster): maximum authorised capacity 9 570 GT (gross tonnage) (Spain 7 313 GT, Italy 1 371 GT, Portugal 886 GT);
- **black hake trawlers and longliners:** maximum authorised capacity 3 240 GT for Spain;
- **demersal fisheries – other than trawlers and targeting species other than black hake:** maximum authorised capacity 1 162 GT for Spain;
- **demersal trawlers – targeting demersal species other than black hake, cephalopods and crustaceans:** maximum authorised capacity 375 GT for Greece;
- **cephalopods:** maximum authorised capacity 13 950 GT for 32 licences (Spain: 24 licences, Italy: 4 licences, Portugal: 1 licence, Greece: 3 licences);
- **spiny lobsters:** maximum authorised capacity 300 GT for Portugal;
- **tuna fisheries:** maximum of 22 licences for seiners (Spain: 17 licences, France: 5 licences); and 22 licences for pole-and-line vessels and longliners (Spain: 18 licences, France: 4 licences);
- **small pelagics** (pelagic freezer trawlers): 17 licences;

- **Crab fishing:** maximum authorised capacity 300 GT for Spain;
- **small pelagics** (non-freezer vessels): maximum authorised capacity 15 000 GT.

In the event of the overall tonnage of 250 000 tonnes per year for category 9 (pelagics) being exceeded, the Community shall pay an additional contribution of EUR 40 per tonne fished.

Unused category 11 fishing opportunities (non-freezer pelagic vessels) may be used by category 9 (pelagic freezer trawlers) at a maximum rate of 20 licences per month. For category 9 (pelagic freezer trawlers), once the Commission has received an annual fishing plan drawn up by the Member States with details of applications by vessel, it shall forward licence applications to the Mauritanian authorities. On this basis, and taking into account the extent to which the reference quota of 250 000 tonnes has been used, the Commission shall inform the Mauritanian authorities whether or not use is to be made of the supplementary quota of 50 000 tonnes over and above the reference quota. If relevant, the Commission shall request those authorities to increase the supplementary quota of 50 000 tonnes.

The annual fishing plan shall specify for each vessel the months of activity and the estimated catches for each month of activity. For the first year of application of the Protocol, fishing plans shall be sent to the Commission not later than 15 October 2008. From 2009, those plans shall be sent to the Commission not later than 31 January of each year.

If the licence applications from the Member States do not cover all the fishing opportunities laid down by the Protocol, the Commission may take into consideration licence applications from any other Member State.

ENTRY INTO FORCE: 07/08/2008.