EC/Guinea-Bissau Fisheries Partnership Agreement: fishing opportunities and financial contribution from 16 June 2011 to 15 June 2012. Protocol

2011/0257(NLE) - 28/02/2012 - Final act

PURPOSE: to conclude a Protocol between the European Union and Guinea-Bissau setting out fishing opportunities and the financial contribution provided for in the Fisheries Partnership Agreement between the two parties currently in force.

NON-LEGISLATIVE ACT: Council Decision 2012/145/EU on the conclusion of the Protocol agreed between the European Union and the Republic of Guinea-Bissau setting out fishing opportunities and the financial contribution provided for in the Fisheries Partnership Agreement between the two parties currently in force.

BACKGROUND: on 17 March 2008, the Council adopted Regulation (EC) No 241/2008 on the conclusion of the Fisheries Partnership Agreement between the European Community and the Republic of Guinea-Bissau (see CNS/2007/0209).

The Union has negotiated with the Republic of Guinea-Bissau a new protocol granting EU vessels fishing opportunities in waters in which Guinea-Bissau exercises its sovereignty or jurisdiction as regards fishing.

At the end of those negotiations, the Protocol was initialled on 15 June 2011.

The Protocol was signed in accordance with Council Decision 2011/885/EU and has been applied on a provisional basis since 16 June 2011.

It is now necessary that the Protocol should be concluded on behalf of the European Union.

CONTENT: by this Decision, the Protocol agreed between the European Union and the Republic of Guinea-Bissau setting out fishing opportunities and the financial contribution provided for in the Fisheries Partnership Agreement concluded between the European Community and the Republic of Guinea-Bissau in force between the two parties is hereby approved on behalf of the European Union.

The main aim of the Protocol to the Agreement is to retain the fishing opportunities for the vessels of the European Union within the limits of the available surplus.

The general aim is to continue the cooperation between the European Union and the Republic of Guinea-Bissau, thereby creating a partnership framework within which to develop a sustainable fisheries policy and sound exploitation of fishery resources in the Guinea-Bissau fishing zone, in the interests of both Parties.

The new Protocol is in keeping with the two Parties' concern to strengthen partnership and cooperation in the fisheries sector using all the financial instruments available. To this end, it is recalled that there is a need to create a framework which is favourable to the development of investment.

The Protocol sets out the period of application and the fishing opportunities and the financial contribution provided for by the Agreement.

The main provisions may be summarised as follows:

Financial contribution: the overall financial contribution of the Protocol of **EUR 7 500 000** over the whole period is based on:

- a maximum of 27 authorisations for tuna vessels and 8 800 GRT for trawlers, for a financial contribution of EUR 4 550 000;
- support for the development of the sectoral fisheries policy of the Republic of Guinea-Bissau amounting to EUR 2 950 000.

Fishing opportunities: more particularly, the Protocol – like its predecessor – provides for fishing opportunities in the following categories:

- 4 400 GRT for shrimp freezer trawlers
- 4 400 GRT for fin-fish/cephalopod freezer trawlers
- 23 tuna seiners / surface longliners:
- 14 pole-and-line tuna vessels.

Period of application: this Protocol with its Annexes shall apply with effect from 16 June 2011. They shall apply for a period of one year from its provisional application onwards. The Parties undertake to begin negotiations to conclude a new Protocol aimed at replacing this Protocol on its expiry as soon as possible. The Parties shall attempt to conclude these negotiations within nine months at most, that is, no later than 15 March 2012.

ENTRY INTO FORCE: the Decision shall enter into force on 10/03/2012. The date of entry into force of the Protocol will be published in the Official Journal of the European Union by the General Secretariat of the Council.