

# EC/Mauritania Fisheries Partnership Agreement: fishing opportunities and financial contribution from 18 November 2012 to 15 December 2014. Protocol

2012/0258(NLE) - 31/05/2013 - Committee report tabled for plenary, 1st reading/single reading

The Committee on Fisheries adopted the report by Gabriel MATO ADROVER (EPP, ES) on the proposal for a Council decision on the conclusion of the Protocol setting out fishing opportunities and the financial contribution provided for in the Fisheries Partnership Agreement between the European Union and the Islamic Republic of Mauritania for a period of two years.

Members recommend that the European Parliament should **decline giving its consent** to the conclusion of the Protocol.

They state that this is unarguably the biggest of the EU's fisheries agreements in terms of the volume and variety of fisheries products, and in terms of the financial contribution. The new protocol is worth EUR 110 per annum, EUR 70 million of which is to be paid by the EU and the remaining EUR 40 million per annum will be contributed by the fishing industry in the form of fishing licence fees.

Access will be granted to vessels from 12 Member States (ES, IT, IT, EL, FR, UK, MT, NL, DE, PL, LV, LT).

**Fishing opportunities and technical clauses:** for Members, the main point of contention of the Agreement and its Protocol concerns the introduction of a generalised system of quotas, as opposed to fishing effort based on vessel tonnage. They consider that this will lead to continual conflicts with the local authorities over the weighing of catches (Members cite the example of cephalopods whereby there is no access to this fishery, although there is provision for the situation to be reviewed after the protocol has been in force for one year).

Members have examined the fishing opportunities and state that in general these opportunities are not suited. **The agreement is that this protocol is costly in comparison to the fishing opportunities it permits and the technical conditions it imposes, making it economically unviable.**

Another point of disagreement concerns the legal basis. Members state that the legal basis for the Council adopting a decision on the conclusion of the protocol between the EU and Mauritania should be Article 43 (2), relating to Article 218(6)(2)(a) TFEU, and not, as per the recent Council amendment, Article 43(2) TFEU.

Furthermore, Members are of the opinion that the Fisheries Protocol:

- is not to the EU's financial advantage;
- is not to Mauritania's advantage either, since the fact that the EU fleet is not fishing there will deprive it of a large proportion of the financial contribution.

The committee calls on the Members to **decline to consent to conclusion of the current Protocol.**