EU/Liberia Sustainable Fisheries Partnership Agreement and Implementation Protocol from 9 December 2015 to 8 December 2020

2015/0224(NLE) - 10/11/2015 - Legislative proposal

PURPOSE: to conclude the Sustainable Fisheries Partnership Agreement, together with the implementation Protocol, setting out the fishing opportunities and financial contribution between the Union and Liberia.

PROPOSED ACT: Council Decision.

ROLE OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT: Council may adopt the act only if Parliament has given its consent to the act.

BACKGROUND: the Union and Liberia negotiated a Sustainable Fisheries Partnership Agreement and an Implementation Protocol thereto, granting Union vessels fishing opportunities in the waters over which Liberia has sovereignty or jurisdiction in respect of fisheries.

The Agreement and the Protocol were signed in accordance with a Council Decision and apply on a provisional basis.

The Agreement and the Protocol should now be approved.

CONTENT: with this proposal, the Council is called upon to approve the Sustainable Fisheries Partnership Agreement between the European Union and Liberia and the Implementation Protocol thereto.

Objective: the aim of the Agreement is to strengthen cooperation between the EU and Liberia in promoting the introduction of responsible fisheries to ensure the sustainable exploitation of marine biological resources in the Liberian fishing zone, in the interests of both parties.

Protocol: a Protocol sets out the fishing opportunities and EU financial contribution, with total amounts varying according to the year of implementation of the Protocol.

For more information on the fishing opportunities and financial contribution, *please see the summary of the initial legislative proposal of 30.9.2015.*

NB: *the allocation of fishing opportunities between the EU Member States is set out in the Protocol.*

Joint Committee: the Agreement establishes a Joint Committee, which is responsible for monitoring the performance, interpretation and application of the Agreement. Furthermore, the Joint Committee may approve certain modifications to the Protocol.

In order to facilitate the approval of such modifications, the Commission will be empowered, subject to specific conditions, to approve them under a simplified procedure.

The Commission will be authorised to negotiate with Liberia modifications to the Protocol in respect of the following issues:

- review of fishing opportunities, and, consequently, of the relevant financial contribution;
- the modalities of the sectoral support regarding fisheries;
- measures to ensure sustainable management of the fisheries resources;
- technical provisions of the Protocol.

In the Joint Committee the Union shall act in accordance with the objectives it pursued within the framework of the Common Fisheries Policy, and promote positions that are consistent with the relevant rules adopted by Regional Fisheries Management Organisations. The Joint Committee shall ensure that the position to be expressed on behalf of the Union takes account of the latest statistical, biological and other relevant information transmitted to the Commission.

Technical provisions set out the framework and practical modalities for approving modifications to the Protocol.

To this effect and based on that information, a document setting out the particulars of the proposed Union position shall be transmitted by the Commission services, in sufficient time before the relevant Joint Committee Meeting, to the Council or to its preparatory bodies for consideration and approval.

Duration of the Agreement: the Protocol and Agreement cover a period of five years from the date of their provisional application, i.e. from the date of their signature.