EC/Guinea-Bissau Fisheries Partnership Agreement (2019-2024). Protocol

2019/0090(NLE) - 10/04/2019

PURPOSE: to approve the conclusion of the Protocol on the implementation of the Fisheries Partnership Agreement between the European Community and the Republic of Guinea Bissau (2019-2024).

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 Fisheries Partnership Agreement between the European Community and the Republic of Guinea-Bissau entered into force on 15 April 2008. The previous Protocol to the Agreement entered into force on 24 November 2014 and expired on 23 November 2017.

An *ex post* evaluation report concluded that the EU tuna fishing sector has a strong interest in fishing in Guinea-Bissau and that a renewal of the Protocol would help strengthen monitoring, control and surveillance and contribute to improved fisheries governance in the region.

The Commission negotiated, on behalf of the European Union, a new Protocol on the implementation of the Agreement. At the end of the negotiations, the Protocol was initialled on 15 November 2018. The Protocol has provisionally applied since its date of signature. It must now be approved on behalf of the Union.

CONTENT: the Commission proposes that the Council decide to approve, on behalf of the Union, the Fisheries Partnership Agreement between the European Community and the Republic of Guinea Bissau (2019-2024).

Objective

The new Protocol provides fishing opportunities for Union vessels in Guinea-Bissau waters, on the basis of the best available scientific advice and following the recommendations of the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT). It will also enable the European Union and the Republic of Guinea-Bissau to work more closely on promoting sound exploitation of fishery resources in Guinea-Bissau waters and to support efforts by Guinea-Bissau to develop its blue economy, in the interests of both parties.

Fishing opportunities

The Protocol provides for fishing opportunities in the following categories:

- shrimp freezer trawlers;

- fin-fish and cephalopod freezer trawlers;

- small pelagic trawlers;

- tuna freezer seiners and longliners;

- pole-and-line tuna vessels.

For the first three categories, fishing opportunities are expressed in terms of fishing effort (GRT) for the first two years and in terms of catch limit (TAC) for the last three years.

Financial contribution

The European Union's annual financial contribution amounts to EUR 15 600 000, based on:

- an annual amount for access to fishery resources, for the categories provided for in the Protocol, set at EUR 11 600 000 per year for the entire duration of the Protocol;

- support for the development of the sectoral fisheries policy and the blue economy of Guinea-Bissau for an amount of EUR 4 000 000 per year for the entire duration of the Protocol. This support meets the objectives of Guinea-Bissau’s national policy on the sustainable management of its continental and maritime fishery resources for the entire duration of the Protocol.

The new Protocol covers a period of 5 years from the date of its provisional application, i.e. from the date of its signature.