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

2019/0090(NLE) - 10/04/2019 - Document attached to the procedure

PURPOSE: signature, on behalf of the Union, and provisional application 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.

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, which entered into force on 15 April 2008, was then tacitly renewed and remains in force. The previous Protocol to this Agreement expired on 23 November 2017.

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 covers a period of five years from the date of its provisional application, i.e. from the date of its signature.

The Protocol should be approved on behalf of the Union, subject to its conclusion at a later date. In order to ensure an expeditious start to fishing activities by Union vessels, the Protocol should be applied provisionally upon its signature, pending its entry into force.

CONTENT: the Commission proposes that the Council decide to authorise the signature, on behalf of the European Union, of the Protocol on the implementation of the Fisheries Partnership Agreement between the European Community and the Republic of Guinea Bissau (2019-2024), subject to its conclusion.

The objective of the Protocol is to enable the European Union and the Republic of Guinea-Bissau to work more closely on promoting a sustainable fisheries policy, sound exploitation of fisheries resources in Guinea-Bissau waters and efforts by Guinea-Bissau to develop a blue economy.

The Protocol provides fishing opportunities in the following categories: (i) shrimp freezer trawlers; (ii) fin-fish and cephalopod freezer trawlers; (iii) small pelagic trawlers; (iv) tuna freezer seiners and longliners; (v) pole-and-line tuna vessels.

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 negotiation of a new protocol to the Fisheries Partnership Agreement with Guinea-Bissau forms part of the Union’s external action in relation to ACP countries and takes into account, in particular, Union objectives on respecting democratic principles and human rights.