

EC/Mauritania Fisheries Partnership Agreement: fishing opportunities and financial contribution. Extension of the Protocol

2019/0210(NLE) - 01/10/2019 - Document attached to the procedure

PURPOSE: signature and provisional application of the Agreement in the form of an Exchange of Letters between the European Union and the Islamic Republic of Mauritania on the extension of the Protocol setting out the fishing opportunities and financial contribution provided for in the Fisheries Partnership Agreement between the European Community and Mauritania, expiring on 15 November 2019.

PROPOSED ACT: Council Decision.

BACKGROUND: the Fisheries Partnership Agreement between the European Community and the Islamic Republic of Mauritania entered into force on 8 August 2008. Its Protocol setting out the fishing opportunities and financial contribution provided for in the Agreement, which entered into force on the same day for a period of two years, has been replaced several times.

The last Protocol to the Agreement expires on 15 November 2019. On 8 July 2019, the Council authorised the Commission to open negotiations with Mauritania on a new Sustainable Fisheries Partnership Agreement and a Protocol implementing the Agreement.

Pending completion of the negotiations on the renewal of the Agreement and its Protocol, the Commission negotiated, on behalf of the European Union, an Agreement in the form of an Exchange of Letters on an extension for a maximum period of one year to the Protocol setting out the fishing opportunities and financial contribution for implementing the Agreement. At the end of those negotiations, the Exchange of Letters was initialled on 4 September 2019.

CONTENT: the Commission proposes that the Council decide to authorise, on behalf of the Union, the signing of the Agreement in the form of an Exchange of Letters between the European Union and the Islamic Republic of Mauritania on the extension of the Protocol setting out the fishing opportunities and financial contribution provided for in the Fisheries Partnership Agreement between the European Community and Mauritania, expiring on 15 November 2019.

The Protocol shall:

- grant fishing opportunities to European Union vessels in Mauritanian waters in accordance with scientific advice and the recommendations of the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT);
- enhance cooperation between the European Union and Mauritania, thereby creating a partnership framework within which to develop a sustainable fisheries policy and sound exploitation of fishery resources in the fishing zone of Mauritania, in the interests of both parties.

The one-year extension to the framework laid down by the Protocol which will expire on 15 November 2019 plays a role in the negotiation process aimed at ensuring the continuity of fishing activity by the European fleet operating in Mauritanian waters.

The annual financial contribution from the European Union is EUR 61 625 000, based on:

(a) an annual amount for access to fishery resources for the categories provided for in the Protocol, set at EUR 57 500 000 for the duration of the extension to the Protocol;

(b) support for the development of Mauritania's sectoral fisheries policy amounting to EUR 4 125 000 for the duration of the extension to the Protocol.