

EC/Cape Verde Fisheries Partnership Agreement: implementation of the Agreement 2019-2024. Protocol

2019/0078M(NLE) - 26/02/2020 - Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading

The Committee on Fisheries adopted a report by Cláudia MONTEIRO DE AGUIAR (EPP, PT) containing a motion for a non-legislative resolution on the [draft Council decision](#) on the conclusion of the Protocol on the implementation of the Fisheries Partnership Agreement between the European Community and the Republic of Cape Verde (2019-2024).

The Commission and the Government of Cape Verde negotiated a new sustainable fisheries partnership agreement (EU-Cape Verde SFPFA), together with an implementing protocol, for a five-year period.

Members took the view that the EU-Cape Verde SFPFA should pursue two equally important goals:

(1) to provide fishing opportunities for EU vessels in the Cape Verde EEZ, on the basis of the best available scientific knowledge and advice and without interfering with conservation and management measures by the regional organisations to which Cape Verde belongs – notably the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT) – or overrunning the available surplus;

(2) to promote further economic, financial, technical and scientific cooperation between the EU and Cape Verde in the field of sustainable fisheries and sound exploitation of fishery resources in the Cape Verde EEZ, while at the same time not undermining Cape Verde's sovereign options and strategies relating to its own development.

In the light of the high value of marine biology in Cape Verdean waters, the Agreement should guarantee the adoption of measures to mitigate accidental fishing by EU vessels in the Cape Verde EEZ.

The report stressed that the new protocol on the implementation of this Agreement should be more ambitious than the previous ones, in particular as regards support for the development of the Cape Verdean fisheries sector, calling on the European Commission to take all necessary measures, including enhancing the sectoral support component of the Agreement.

In addition, the EU-Cape Verde FPA and its Protocol should be aligned with the national development plans and the Blue Growth Action Plan for the development, within the ecological limits of the Cape Verdean fisheries sector by pursuing the following objectives:

- strengthening institutional capacity and improving governance;
- strengthening surveillance, control and monitoring of the Cape Verdean EEZ;
- strengthen measures to combat illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing activities, particularly in inland waters;
- strengthen partnerships with other countries interested in fishing activities in the Cape Verde EEZ;

- support the improvement of a data collection programme that enables the Cape Verdean authorities to assess available resources and to support the scientific evaluation of resources; data collection and monitoring of stocks in the context of overfishing should be improved, with particular attention to sharks;
- enable the construction and/or renovation of key infrastructure for fisheries and related activities;
- improve the working conditions of all workers, strengthen organisations representing women and men active in the fisheries sector, establish basic and vocational training centres for fishermen and strengthen measures to encourage young people to engage in the fishing;
- limit by-catches of sensitive species, such as marine turtles;
- enhance scientific research capabilities and the ability to monitor fishery resources and the marine environment.

The report welcomed the fact that the Agreement does not cover small pelagics, which are of great importance to the local population and for which there is no surplus. However, it called for an in-depth evaluation of the benefits of the implementation of the Protocol for local economies and suggested improving the quantity and reliability of data on overall catches, the state of conservation of fisheries resources and the impact of fishing activity on the marine environment.

The Commission is invited to:

- facilitate, through the European Development Fund and other relevant instruments, the necessary steps for the provision of infrastructure which, by reason of its scale and cost, cannot be built solely by means of sectoral support within the framework of the SFPA, for example fishing ports (both industrial and artisanal);
- ask Cape Verde to use the financial contribution provided for in the Protocol to strengthen its fisheries sector in the long term with a view to creating jobs at local level and making fisheries-related activities more attractive to the younger generation;
- keep Parliament immediately and fully informed at all stages of the procedures relating to the Protocol and, where appropriate, its renewal.