EU/Seychelles Sustainable Fisheries Partnership Agreement and Implementation Protocol (2020-2026)

2020/0002(NLE) - 17/02/2020 - Legislative proposal

PURPOSE: to conclude, on behalf of the European Union, the sustainable fisheries partnership agreement between the European Union and the Republic of Seychelles and its implementing protocol (2020-2026).

PROPOSED ACT: Council Decision.

BACKGROUND: in accordance with a Council Decision, a Sustainable Fisheries Partnership Agreement between the European Union and the Republic of Seychelles and its implementing protocol were signed, subject to their conclusion at a later date.

The Partnership Agreement repeals the Fisheries Partnership Agreement between the European Community and the Seychelles, which entered into force on 2 November 2007 for a duration of six years and has been tacitly renewed and is therefore still in force.

The most recent protocol implementing the Fisheries Partnership Agreement between the European Community and the Seychelles was signed on 18 December 2013 and was provisionally applied from 18 January 2014. It expired on 17 January 2020.

The Partnership Agreement and the Protocol should be approved.

CONTENT: this draft Council Decision seeks to approve, on behalf of the Union, the Sustainable Fisheries Partnership Agreement between the European Union and the Seychelles and the Protocol on the Implementation of the Sustainable Fisheries Partnership Agreement between the European Union and the Seychelles (2020-2026).

The main aim of the Partnership Agreement and the Protocol is to enable the Union and the Seychelles to work more closely together to further promote the development of a sustainable fisheries policy, and enable the responsible exploitation of fisheries resources in the Seychelles fishing zone and in the Indian Ocean, while contributing to decent working conditions in the fisheries sector.

The Partnership Agreement provides for the establishment of a Joint Committee to be responsible for monitoring the application of the Partnership Agreement and the Protocol. The Joint Committee can adopt certain modifications to the Protocol.

In order to facilitate the approval of such modifications, the Commission shall be authorised, subject to specific substantive and procedural conditions, to approve them on behalf of the Union under a simplified procedure.

The EU’s position on proposed modifications to the Protocol shall be established by the Council. The proposed modifications shall be approved unless a blocking minority of Member States objects to those modifications.

The Partnership Agreement and the Protocol shall enter into force as soon as possible in view of the economic importance related to Union fishing activities in the Seychelles fishing zone and the need to reduce the interruption of such activities as much as possible.