EU/Mauritania Sustainable Fisheries Partnership Agreement and Implementing Protocol

2021/0300(NLE) - 08/06/2022 - Text adopted by Parliament, 1st reading/single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 557 votes to 34, with 31 abstentions, a legislative resolution on the draft Council decision on the conclusion of the Sustainable Fisheries Partnership Agreement between the European Union and the Islamic Republic of Mauritania and the Implementing Protocol thereto.

Parliament gave its consent to the conclusion of the agreement.

The agreement will allow French, German, Irish, Italian, Latvian, Lithuanian, Dutch, Polish, Portuguese and Spanish vessels to fish for tuna, small pelagic fish, shellfish and demersal fish in Mauritanian waters. In exchange for this fishery of up to 290 000 tonnes per year, Mauritania will receive EUR 57.5 million annually.

The new agreement is valid for six years and can be tacitly renewed for periods of the same duration. It applies provisionally from 16 November 2021. The new protocol is valid for five years.

The EU financial contribution for sectoral support is set at EUR 16.5 million for the duration of the protocol, which amounts to EUR 3.3 million per year.

The two parties will be able to renegotiate the EU financial contribution and the related fishing opportunities from the third year of application of the Protocol.

The protocol modifies and extends the fishing zone for small pelagics, but on condition that Mauritania proposes a management plan for these stocks. EUR 7.5 million of the EU's financial contribution is conditional on the adoption of a new management plan for small pelagic species.

The new agreement establishes a new coordination body for sectoral support: cellule de coordination. In addition, the improvement of administrative capacity in Mauritania is now included in the areas eligible for sectoral support. The sectoral support provided for in the new protocol is divided into eight areas of intervention, including support for artisanal fisheries and coastal communities, strengthening scientific research, reinforcing control and surveillance activities and providing technical assistance to the Mauritanian authorities.

The new agreement and its protocol contain provisions requiring Mauritania to make public any agreement with a foreign fleet. The protocol also allows EU vessels, in exceptional circumstances, to land their catch outside Mauritanian ports in exceptional circumstances, such as when the land border is blocked.