

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

2004



2009

Committee on Development

2007/0232(CNS)

28.2.2008

OPINION

of the Committee on Development

for the Committee on Fisheries

on the proposal for a Council regulation on the conclusion of the Agreement in the form of an Exchange of Letters on the amendments to the Protocol setting out, for the period from 18 January 2005 to 17 January 2011, the fishing opportunities and the financial contribution provided for by the Agreement between the European Community and the Republic of Seychelles (COM(2007)0664 – C6-0430/2007 – 2007/0232(CNS))

Draftsman: Josep Borrell Fontelles

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SHORT JUSTIFICATION

The European Union's development co-operation policy and the common fisheries policy (CFP) must be consistent, complementary and co-ordinated, contributing, as a whole, to poverty reduction and the sustainable development of the countries concerned.

The EU has committed itself to ensuring the sustainability of fisheries worldwide, as defined at the United Nations 2002 summit in Johannesburg, maintaining or restoring stock levels with a view to producing the maximum sustainable yield.

The EU has accepted the UN's Food and Agricultural Organization's "Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries", to promote long-term sustainable fisheries and to affirm that the right to fish carries with it the obligation to do so in a responsible manner so as to ensure effective conservation and management of the living aquatic resources.

The EU's presence in distant fishing grounds is a legitimate objective, but it must be recalled that the interest of European Union's fisheries ought to be protected alongside the interest in developing the nations with which fisheries agreements are signed.

The European Parliament's Development Committee welcomes the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly resolution of 22 June 2006 on "Fisheries and their social and environmental aspects in developing countries", in particular in so far as it considers that the protection of EU and ACP fishing interests must be coordinated with the sustainable management of fishery resources in economic, social and environmental terms on the one hand, and with the livelihoods of coastal communities dependent on fisheries on the other.

The European Parliament's Development Committee further stresses the reference made in the ACP-EU Fisheries Partnership Agreement to the observation of the Cotonou Agreement; insists that full account must be taken of Article 9 of the Cotonou Agreement on human rights, democratic principles, good governance and the rule of law, and welcomes the guarantees given by the Commission services to the effect that they shall take into consideration the content of Article 9 when negotiating agreements with developing countries, including non-ACP developing countries.

The purpose of the proposed agreement is to amend the existing Protocol to the Fisheries Partnership Agreement between the European Community and the Republic of Seychelles, adopted on 23 January 2006, which repealed and replaced the agreement of 1987 by the date of its entry into force.

The amendments which have been negotiated in the meeting of the EC/Seychelles Joint Committee in March 2007, increase the reference tonnage from 55 000 tonnes to 63 000 tonnes, introduce financial support for the partnership and raise the share paid by ship-owners from EUR 25 to EUR 35 per tonne to bring the Protocol into line with other tuna agreements. The Community contribution is thus reduced from EUR 75 to EUR 65 per tonne. The total financial contribution therefore increases from EUR 4 125 000 to EUR 5 355 000. A specific amount of EUR 1 260 000 per year is aimed for the support and implementation of Seychelles' sectoral fisheries policy.

The fishing opportunities set out in the Protocol, and laid down in Regulation (EC) No 115/2006, had not been amended and is confirmed for 40 Tuna seiners from France, Spain and Italy, and for 12 surface longliners from France, Spain and Portugal, subject to a total of 52 licences.

The amended Protocol will enter into force provisionally from 18 January 2008, for the final remaining three years, till 17 January 2011.

The European Parliament's Development Committee welcomes the referred link to national initiatives and hope that they may include the financing to local infrastructure projects of processing and marketing of the fish, thus allowing local populations to go beyond subsistence fisheries.

The European Parliament's Development Committee also welcomes the fact that the agreement is proposing to implement a sectoral fisheries policy with a view to promoting responsible and sustainable fishing in Seychelles waters, and it fosters scientific and technical cooperation with local authorities. The above mentioned ACP-EU resolution considers that scientific resource assessment must be a precondition for access to fishing, and that an annual evaluation of resources must be a condition for obtaining further fishing permits.

AMENDMENTS

The Committee on Development calls on the Committee on Fisheries, as the committee responsible, to incorporate the following amendments in its report:

Text proposed by the Commission¹

Amendments by Parliament

Amendment 1
Recital 2 a (new)

(2a) The Community's financial contribution should be used for the development of coastal populations living on fisheries and the creation of small local fish freezing and processing industries;

¹ Not yet published in OJ.

PROCEDURE

Title	Amendments concerning the fishing opportunities and the financial contribution provided for by the Agreement between the EC and Seychelles
References	COM(2007)0664 – C6-0430/2007 – 2007/0232(CNS)
Committee responsible	PECH
Opinion by Date announced in plenary	DEVE 29.11.2007
Drafts(wo)man Date appointed	Josep Borrell Fontelles 18.12.2007
Date adopted	27.2.2008
Result of final vote	+: 29 -: 1 0: 0
Members present for the final vote	Alessandro Battilocchio, Thijs Berman, Josep Borrell Fontelles, Danutè Budreikaitė, Marie-Arlette Carlotti, Thierry Cornillet, Corina Crețu, Nirj Deva, Beniamino Donnici, Fernando Fernández Martín, Hélène Goudin, Alain Hutchinson, Filip Kaczmarek, Glenys Kinnock, Maria Martens, Luisa Morgantini, Horst Posdorf, Frithjof Schmidt, Jürgen Schröder, Feleknas Uca, Johan Van Hecke, Luis Yañez-Barnuevo García, Anna Záborská, Mauro Zani
Substitute(s) present for the final vote	Ana Maria Gomes, Fiona Hall, Manolis Mavrommatis, Linda McAvan, Ralf Walter, Gabriele Zimmer