



2022/0014(NLE)

26.6.2022

OPINION

of the Committee on Budgets

for the Committee on Fisheries

on Council decision on the conclusion, on behalf of the European Union, of the Agreement in the form of an Exchange of Letters between the European Union and the Republic of Mauritius on an extension of the Protocol setting out the fishing opportunities and the financial contribution provided for by the Fisheries Partnership Agreement between the European Union and the Republic of Mauritius
(05657/2022 – C9-0166/2022 – 2022/0014(NLE))

Rapporteur for opinion: Vlad Gheorghe

PA_Leg_Consent

SHORT JUSTIFICATION

On 28 September 2021, the Council adopted a decision¹ authorising the European Commission to open negotiations for a new Protocol to the Fisheries Partnership Agreement between the European Union and the Government of the Republic of Mauritius and, if necessary to avoid interruption of the fishing activities, for a limited prolongation of the current Protocol to the Agreement (hereinafter ‘the Protocol 2017-2021’), which expired on 7 December 2021.

The said Council decision lays down that, in case the negotiations for a new Protocol to the Fisheries Partnership Agreement between the European Union and the Government of Mauritius would take more time than expected², and in order to avoid interruption of fishing activities, the Commission should seek to agree with the Government of the Republic of Mauritius on the prolongation of the Protocol 2017-2021³, for a limited period of not more than six months, while continuing to try to reach an agreement for a new protocol in accordance with the objectives set out in the decision.

Due to the present restrictions, the first round of negotiations could only be held remotely on 6 December 2021 in Brussels and Port Louis (Republic of Mauritius). During the meeting, the negotiators from the European Union and the Republic of Mauritius established that due to the complex nature of the negotiations, a number of rounds would be needed in order to complete the negotiations. Both parties therefore agreed to extend the Protocol 2017-2021 for a maximum period of six months, in line with the said Council decision. The extension was established by way of an Agreement in the form of an Exchange of Letters, which was initialled on 6 December 2021.

In order for the fishing activities of the European Union fleet operating in the Republic of Mauritius waters not to be interrupted in a significant manner, a Council Decision endorsing the Agreement in the form of an Exchange of Letters should be adopted as soon as possible so as to allow the signature of the agreement by the parties and the resumption of the fishing activities as soon as possible.

The Commission therefore proposes that the Council authorise the signing and provisional application of the Exchange of Letters enabling the Protocol 2017-2021 to be extended for a maximum period of six months.

The aim of the Agreement in the form of an Exchange of Letters is to extend the application of the Protocol 2017-2021 to continue granting fishing opportunities to European Union vessels in Mauritius waters in accordance with scientific advice and the recommendations of the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission (IOTC), within the limits of the available surplus. The aim is also to continue strengthening cooperation between the European Union and the Government of the Republic of Mauritius, thereby creating a partnership framework within which to develop a sustainable fisheries policy and sound exploitation of fishery resources in the fishing zone of the Republic of Mauritius, in the interests of both parties.

The Protocol 2017-2021 allowed the EU fleet to fish in the waters of Mauritius for tuna and tuna-

¹ COUNCIL DECISION authorising the opening of negotiations with the Republic of Mauritius for the conclusion of an Implementing Protocol to the Fisheries Partnership Agreement between the European Union and the Republic of Mauritius (11508/21).

² Due in particular to consequences linked to the current global sanitary situation, stemming from the COVID-19 pandemic.

³ Protocol setting out the fishing opportunities and the financial contribution provided for by the Fisheries Partnership Agreement between the European Union and the Republic of Mauritius (OJ L 279, 28.10.2017, p. 3).

like species, for indicative annual fishing opportunities of 4 000 tonnes. Regarding this, the Agreement in the form of an Exchange of Letters to extend the Protocol by a maximum of six months provides for indicative fishing opportunities of 2 000 tonnes and for the EU financial contribution for access to be adjusted accordingly as set out in point 4 of this Explanatory Memorandum.

The financial contribution for six months from the European Union is EUR 287 500, based on:

- (a) An amount for access to fishery resources for the categories provided for in the Protocol, set at EUR 110 000 for the duration of the extension of the Protocol;
 - (b) Support for the development of the Republic of Mauritius's sectoral fisheries policy amounting to EUR 110 000 for the duration of the extension of the Protocol. This support meets the objectives of the Republic of Mauritius's national policy on the sustainable management of their maritime fishery resources for the entire duration of the extension of the Protocol;
 - (c) Support for the development of maritime policy and ocean economy amounting to EUR 67 500;
- The amount for commitment and payment appropriations is established during the annual budgetary procedure, including for the reserve line for protocols not yet having entered into force at the beginning of the year⁴.

The Exchange of Letters relating to the extension also lays down a pro-rata reduction clause in the event that the negotiations to renew the Protocol result in this being signed and subsequently entering into force prior to the expiry of the six-months extension to which the Exchange of Letters applies.

The Committee on Budgets calls on the Committee on Fisheries, as the committee responsible, to recommend approval of the proposal for a Council Decision on the conclusion, on behalf of the European Union, of the Agreement in the form of an Exchange of Letters between the European Union and the Republic of Mauritius on an extension of the Protocol setting out the fishing opportunities and the financial contribution provided for by the Fisheries Partnership Agreement between the European Union and the Republic of Mauritius.

⁴ In accordance with the Interinstitutional Agreement on cooperation in budgetary matters (2013/C 373/01).

PROCEDURE – COMMITTEE ASKED FOR OPINION

Title	Conclusion, on behalf of the European Union, of the Agreement in the form of an Exchange of Letters between the European Union and the Republic of Mauritius on an extension of the Protocol setting out the fishing opportunities and the financial contribution provided for by the Fisheries Partnership Agreement between the European Union and the Republic of Mauritius						
References	05657/2022 – C9-0166/2022 – 2022/0014(NLE)						
Committee responsible	PECH						
Opinion by Date announced in plenary	BUDG 5.5.2022						
Rapporteur for the opinion Date appointed	Vlad Gheorghe 3.2.2022						
Discussed in committee	17.5.2022						
Date adopted	21.6.2022						
Result of final vote	<table> <tr> <td>+: </td><td>29</td></tr> <tr> <td>–: </td><td>0</td></tr> <tr> <td>0: </td><td>1</td></tr> </table>	+:	29	–:	0	0:	1
+:	29						
–:	0						
0:	1						
Members present for the final vote	Pietro Bartolo, Olivier Chastel, Andor Deli, José Manuel Fernandes, Eider Gardiazabal Rubial, Alexandra Geese, Vlad Gheorghe, Valérie Hayer, Niclas Herbst, Joachim Kuhs, Zbigniew Kuźmiuk, Pierre Larrouturnou, Margarida Marques, Siegfried Mureşan, Victor Negrescu, Bogdan Rzońca, Nils Torvalds, Nils Ušakovs, Johan Van Overtveldt, Rainer Wieland						
Substitutes present for the final vote	Anna-Michelle Asimakopoulou, Rosa D'Amato, Jonás Fernández, Fabienne Keller, Petri Sarvamaa						
Substitutes under Rule 209(7) present for the final vote	Asim Ademov, Sunčana Glavak, Christian Sagartz, Marc Tarabella						

FINAL VOTE BY ROLL CALL IN COMMITTEE ASKED FOR OPINION

29	+
ECR	Zbigniew Kuźmiuk, Bogdan Rzońca, Johan Van Overtveldt
ID	Gilles Lebreton
NI	Andor Deli
PPE	Asim Ademov, Anna-Michelle Asimakopoulou, José Manuel Fernandes, Sunčana Glavak, Niclas Herbst, Siegfried Mureșan, Christian Sagartz, Petri Sarvamaa, Rainer Wieland
RENEW	Olivier Chastel, Vlad Gheorghe, Valérie Hayer, Fabienne Keller, Nils Torvalds
S&D	Pietro Bartolo, Jonás Fernández, Eider Gardiazabal Rubial, Pierre Larroustourou, Margarida Marques, Victor Negrescu, Marc Tarabella, Nils Ušakovs
VERTS/ALE	Rosa D'Amato, Alexandra Geese

0	-

1	0
ID	Joachim Kuhs

Key to symbols:

+ : in favour

- : against

0 : abstention