



**2023/0147(NLE)**

21.9.2023

## **OPINION**

of the Committee on Development

for the Committee on Fisheries

on the draft Council decision on the conclusion, on behalf of the Union, of the Protocol on the implementation of the Fisheries Partnership Agreement between the European Community on the one hand, and the Republic of Kiribati, on the other (2023-2028)  
(00000/2023 – C9-0000-2023 – 2023/0147(NLE))

Rapporteur for opinion: Beata Kempa

PA\_Leg\_Consent

## SHORT JUSTIFICATION

The Fisheries Partnership Agreement (FPA) between the European Community and the Republic of Kiribati was signed on 28 April 2008 and entered into force on 30 April 2008 for a duration of six years. It is tacitly renewable and therefore still in force. The latest Protocol on the implementation of the Agreement covered a period of three years and expired on 15 September 2015. On the basis of the relevant negotiating directives, the European Commission carried out negotiations with the Government of the Republic of Kiribati on concluding a new Protocol, which was initialled on 18 December 2022 and covers a period of five years from the date of provisional application.

The aim of the new Protocol is to grant fishing opportunities to Union vessels in the fishing areas within Kiribati waters in accordance with scientific advice and the recommendations of the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission, as well as improve and strengthen the governance framework of the strategic sustainable fisheries partnership between the EU and Kiribati. It protects the Union's fisheries sector while contributing to the implementation of the Kiribati 20-year Vision 2016-2036, particularly in the management and conservation of fish resources, the fight against illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing and in the improvement of working conditions in the small-scale fishing sector. It also includes a clause on the consequences of fishing practices in breach of human rights, highlighting how development cooperation in fisheries needs to be based on a people-centered sustainable approach.

The EU's financial contribution to Kiribati for access to Kiribati's fishery resources is EUR 760 000 per year. This sum is broken down into an annual amount of EUR 360 000 for access to Kiribati's fishing zone and an amount of EUR 400 000 for sectoral support.

Composed of three groups of islands – Gilbert, Phoenix, and Line, and with a population of 117,606 people, Kiribati belongs to the 20 largest exclusive economic zones in the planet. Its geographical location makes the country highly vulnerable to climate change, with flooding and frequent sewage practices jeopardizing its freshwaters. Furthermore, recent demographic growth and urbanization has strained the local economy to sustain local livelihoods. Along with tourism, fisheries is Kiribati's most productive sector, with fishing licenses as primary sources of national revenue. The government has been thoroughly investing in fisheries to achieve the UN's 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Your rapporteur recalls the EU's commitment to the principle of policy coherence for development and the need for the FPAs and their implementing protocols to be in line with the Sustainable Development Goals.

Coastal fishing is the main source of protein for the local communities, who consume fish on a daily basis. Standing challenges in the fisheries sector include lack of know-how and technical assistance for fish conservation, and limited underpaid employment opportunities. In this regard, your rapporteur calls for targeted efforts, through regular consultations with the impacted coastal communities, in providing sectoral support and technical assistance to stimulate the fishing economy and facilitate local economic development.

Your rapporteur takes the view that the Protocol has the potential to promote the responsible and sustainable exploitation of fisheries resources and the development of the national fisheries and maritime policy in Kiribati and is in the interests of both Parties. For this reason, your rapporteur is proposing that the protocol be approved.

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The Committee on Development calls on the Committee on Fisheries, as the committee responsible, to recommend approval of the draft Council decision on the conclusion, on behalf of the Union, of the Protocol on the implementation of the Fisheries Partnership Agreement between the European Community on the one hand, and the Republic of Kiribati, on the other (2023-2028).

## PROCEDURE – COMMITTEE ASKED FOR OPINION

<b>Title</b>	The Protocol on the implementation of the Fisheries Partnership Agreement between the European Community on the one hand, and the Republic of Kiribati, on the other (2023-2028)						
<b>References</b>	2023/0147(NLE)						
<b>Committee responsible</b>	PECH						
<b>Rapporteur for the opinion</b> Date appointed	Beata Kempa 18.7.2023						
<b>Date adopted</b>	20.9.2023						
<b>Result of final vote</b>	<table> <tr> <td>+:                   </td><td>15</td></tr> <tr> <td>–:                   </td><td>1</td></tr> <tr> <td>0:                   </td><td>1</td></tr> </table>	+:	15	–:	1	0:	1
+:	15						
–:	1						
0:	1						
<b>Members present for the final vote</b>	Hildegard Bentele, Dominique Bilde, Christophe Clergeau, Ryszard Czarnecki, Mónica Silvana González, György Hölvényi, Rasa Juknevičienė, Karsten Lucke, Erik Marquardt, Michèle Rivasi, Miguel Urbán Crespo, Bernhard Zimniok						
<b>Substitutes present for the final vote</b>	Frances Fitzgerald, Marlene Mortler, Patrizia Toia, Carlos Zorrinho						
<b>Substitutes under Rule 209(7) present for the final vote</b>	Róza Thun und Hohenstein						

## FINAL VOTE BY ROLL CALL IN COMMITTEE ASKED FOR OPINION

<b>15</b>	<b>+</b>
ECR	Ryszard Czarnecki
ID	Bernhard Zimniok
PPE	Hildegard Bentele, Frances Fitzgerald, György Hölvényi, Rasa Juknevičienė, Marlene Mortler
Renew	Róza Thun und Hohenstein
S&D	Christophe Clergeau, Mónica Silvana González, Karsten Lucke, Patrizia Toia, Carlos Zorrinho
Verts/ALE	Erik Marquardt, Michèle Rivasi

<b>1</b>	<b>-</b>
ID	Dominique Bilde

<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>
The Left	Miguel Urbán Crespo

Key:

+ : in favour

- : against

0 : abstentions