



EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

2009 - 2014

Committee on International Trade

2010/0129(NLE)

8.10.2010

DRAFT RECOMMENDATION

on the proposal for a Council decision on the conclusion of an Agreement between the European Union, Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway on an EEA Financial Mechanism 2009-2014, an Agreement between the European Union and Norway on a Norwegian Financial Mechanism for the period 2009-2014, an Additional Protocol to the Agreement between the European Economic Community and Iceland, concerning special provisions applicable to imports into the European Union of certain fish and fisheries products for the period 2009-2014, and an Additional Protocol to the Agreement between the European Economic Community and Norway, concerning special provisions applicable to imports into the European Union of certain fish and fisheries products for the period 2009-2014
(09902/2010) – C7-0225/2010 – 2010/0129(NLE))

Committee on International Trade

Rapporteur: Maria Eleni Koppa

Symbols for procedures

- * Consultation procedure
- *** Consent procedure
- ***I Ordinary legislative procedure (first reading)
- ***II Ordinary legislative procedure (second reading)
- ***III Ordinary legislative procedure (third reading)

(The type of procedure depends on the legal basis proposed by the draft act.)

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DRAFT EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT LEGISLATIVE RESOLUTION

**on the proposal for a Council decision on the conclusion of an Agreement between the European Union, Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway on an EEA Financial Mechanism 2009-2014, an Agreement between the European Union and Norway on a Norwegian Financial Mechanism for the period 2009-2014, an Additional Protocol to the Agreement between the European Economic Community and Iceland, concerning special provisions applicable to imports into the European Union of certain fish and fisheries products for the period 2009-2014, and an Additional Protocol to the Agreement between the European Economic Community and Norway, concerning special provisions applicable to imports into the European Union of certain fish and fisheries products for the period 2009-2014
(09902/2010) – C7-0225/2010 – 2010/0129(NLE))**

(Consent)

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the draft Council decision (09902/2010),
 - having regard to the Agreement between the European Union, Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway on an EEA Financial Mechanism 2009-2014, the Agreement between the European Union and Norway on a Norwegian Financial Mechanism 2009-2014, the Additional Protocol to the Agreement between the European Economic Community and Iceland concerning special provisions applicable to imports into the European Union of certain fish and fisheries products 2009-2014 and the Additional Protocol to the Agreement between the European Economic Community and Norway concerning special provisions applicable to imports into the European Union of certain fish and fisheries products 2009-2014 (09899/2010),
 - having regard to the request for consent submitted by the Council pursuant to Article 217 and Article 218(6), second subparagraph, point (a) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (C7-0225/2010),
 - having regard to Rules 81 and 90(8) of its Rules of Procedure,
 - having regard to the recommendation of the Committee on International Trade and the opinion of the Committee on Fisheries (A7-.../2010),
1. Consents to conclusion of the agreements and additional protocols;
 2. Instructs its President to forward its position to the Council, the Commission and the governments and parliaments of the Member States and of Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway..

EXPLANATORY STATEMENT

1. Background

Since the entry into force of the Agreement on the European Economic Area (EEA) in 1994, the EEA EFTA States (now Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway) have contributed to alleviating economic and social disparities in the EEA. These contributions have always been agreed for periods of five years.

The most recent five-year-period of financial contributions, covering 2004-2009, expired on 30 April 2009. During that period, the overall financial contribution from the EEA EFTA States was EUR 1.467 billion, allocated partly through a multilateral EEA financial mechanism to the EEA Agreement, financed by all three EEA EFTA States, and partly through a bilateral Norwegian financial mechanism, financed exclusively by Norway.

The 2004-2009 financial contributions were negotiated in the context of the 2004 and 2007 EEA Enlargement Agreements. In that context, two bilateral agreements/protocols with Iceland and Norway granting certain concessions with regard to market access for fish and fisheries products were also negotiated for the same 2004-2009 period, with a revision clause, stipulating a deadline coinciding with the expiry of the 2004-2009 financial mechanisms.

Formal negotiations with Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway on their financial contributions for the period 2009-2014 were opened on 26 September 2008. In parallel to those negotiations, but independently of them, negotiations were also launched on the basis of the revision clause of the two bilateral fish protocols with Iceland and Norway, and concluded on 18 December 2009.

2. Content of the agreements

The Commission proposal includes four agreements:

- Two agreements on financial mechanisms for the period 2009-2014: one between the EU, Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway (EEA Financial Mechanism) and one between the EU and Norway (Norwegian Financial Mechanism).

These agreements provide for an overall package of EUR 1.8 billion, composed of a 31% increase in the EEA financial mechanism and a 22% increase in the Norwegian financial mechanism, compared to the period 2004-2009. This outcome reflects the negotiating directives agreed by the Council, which requested a “substantial increase” in the funds. Due to its financial crisis, it was agreed that Iceland’s contribution to the EEA financial mechanism should not be increased in absolute terms.

The EEA funds will be made available to the 12 most recent member states as well as Greece, Portugal and Spain. Priority sectors include environment protection, climate change and renewable energy, civil society, human and social development and the protection of cultural heritage.

The Norwegian funds will be made available to the 12 most recent member states. Priority

sectors include carbon capture and storage, green industry innovation, research and scholarship, human and social development, justice and home affairs, promotion of decent work and tripartite dialogue.

- Two protocols concerning certain fisheries concessions for Iceland and for Norway for the period 2009-2014.

These protocols provide for a renewal of the previous 2004-2009 protocols with unchanged concessions for Iceland and a relatively modest increase in concessions for Norway, on the basis of which Norway will renew the fish transit arrangement, which had also expired on 30 April 2009.

3. Comments of the rapporteur

This proposal gives an opportunity to strengthen the contribution of EEA EFTA states to the reduction of economic and social disparities in the European Economic Area. In the meantime, fisheries concessions remain unchanged for Iceland and are modestly increased for Norway.

Your rapporteur invites the European Parliament to give its consent to the draft Council decision.

On a separate note, your rapporteur recalls that serious divergences remain between the EU, Iceland and Norway on issues related to the management of marine life, notably on whale hunting. Your rapporteur would therefore like to take this opportunity to call for broader discussions on this matter, in view of the abolition of whale hunting and of trade in whale products.