

EU and Guinea-Bissau Fisheries Partnership Agreement

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EU and Guinea-Bissau Fisheries Partnership Agreement – conclusion of Implementing Protocol and allocation of fishing opportunities

[Proposal](#) for a Council Regulation on the allocation of fishing opportunities under the Implementing Protocol (2024–2029) to the Fisheries Partnership Agreement between the European Community and the Republic of Guinea-Bissau

[Proposal](#) for a Council Decision on the conclusion, on behalf of the European Union, of the Implementing Protocol (2024–2029) to the Fisheries Partnership Agreement between the European Community and the Republic of Guinea-Bissau

[Proposal](#) for a Council Decision on the signing, on behalf of the European Union, and provisional application of the Implementing Protocol (2024–2029) to the Fisheries Partnership Agreement between the European Community and the Republic of Guinea-Bissau

Update

The European Commission has negotiated a new Implementing Protocol to the EU's Fisheries Partnership Agreement (FPA) with Guinea-Bissau. The previous Protocol expired on 14 June 2024.

Impacted products

Cephalopods, crustaceans, demersal (bottom-dwelling) fish, small pelagic (open-sea) fish, tuna

What is changing?

The Commission has negotiated a new Implementing Protocol to the FPA between the EU and Guinea-Bissau. The Protocol provides fishing opportunities for EU fleets from France, Greece, Italy, Portugal, and Spain. These include shrimp freezer trawlers, fin-fish and cephalopod freezer trawlers, tuna freezer seiners and long liners, and pole-and-line tuna vessels.

The new Protocol will allow the following fishing opportunities:

- fin-fish and cephalopod freezer trawlers: 3,500 tonnes per year
- shrimp freezer trawlers: 3,700 tonnes per year
- small-pelagic trawlers: 0 tonnes per year
- tuna freezer seiners and longliners: 28
- pole-and-line tuna vessels: 13.

The newly agreed Protocol will:

- support the national administration of Guinea-Bissau in its transition to a management system based on catch limits
- support Guinea-Bissau's compliance with its reporting obligations to the Regional Fisheries Management Organisations of which it is a member, in particular the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT)
- strengthen the ability of the national administration to implement controls linked to the export of fishery products to the EU.

Why?

The continuation of sectoral support is important because Guinea-Bissau is preparing a reform of its management system, and is creating an export chain for fishery products to the EU.

The total allowable catch (TAC) for small pelagic species is set at 0 tonnes due to concerns about the state of the stocks, and because fishing opportunities by EU trawlers targeting small pelagic species were underutilised in the previous Protocol.

Timeline

The previous Protocol (2019–2024) expired on 14 June 2024. The new Protocol will apply on a provisional basis from the date it is signed. The Regulation will apply from the same date.

What are the major implications for exporting countries?

Under the new Protocol, export certification to the EU and support towards the construction of the industrial fishing port aims to create a favourable environment for private investment and economic activities to encourage economic cooperation between the EU and Guinea-Bissau, and to meet the need for integration of the fisheries sector into the overall economy, which is a national priority for Guinea-Bissau.

Civil society actors in Guinea-Bissau regret that the previous Protocol had limited impact on economic integration between operators in the national fishing sector, and that the positive impacts of the Protocol in Guinea-Bissau have been mostly invisible or misunderstood (European Commission 2024: [Evaluation](#) to the Protocol).

Sectoral support under the new Protocol will assist the Guinea-Bissau fisheries administration with monitoring, control, and surveillance of fishing activities because there is no other external funding available to support the governance of the sector (European Commission 2024: [Evaluation](#) to the Protocol).

Background

Sustainable Fisheries Partnership Agreements (SFPAs) ensure consistency between the EU's Common Fisheries Policy and other European policies, including sustainable use of partner country resources; combating illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing; integration of partner countries into the global economy; and better political and financial governance of fisheries.

The current [Agreement](#) between the EU and Guinea-Bissau entered into force in June 2007. It is part of the network of [Sustainable Fisheries Partnership Agreements](#) available to EU operators in the Atlantic Ocean. Guinea-Bissau's fishing area includes high-value commercial species such as cephalopods, crustaceans, demersal fish, and small pelagics, and offers an estimated 360,000 tonnes of fisheries resources. The country has no fishing fleet capable of exploiting these resources on its own. Therefore, access agreements with foreign fleets enable Guinea-Bissau to exploit this potential. In the previous implementing Protocol, the EU fishing opportunities represented 27% of the total allowable potential for industrial fishing in Guinea-Bissau. About 90% of catches, mainly cephalopods and shrimp, supply the EU market investment (European Commission 2024: [Evaluation](#) to the Protocol).

The Agreement currently creates economic development opportunities mainly in foreign ports (Abidjan, Dakar) and EU ports (Las Palmas), although it has also impacted national employment and supply to local markets. Industrial fishing port infrastructure in Guinea-Bissau is inadequate, and catches made by EU trawlers are not landed, processed, or marketed in Guinea-Bissau. EU operators expressed that the business environment in the country does not yet encourage investment ([Evaluation](#) to the Protocol).

During the previous Protocol (2019-2024), the EU contributed €11,600,000 per year for access, plus the fees paid by the EU fleet, plus an annual amount of €4,000,000 to help support and implement Guinea-Bissau's sectoral fisheries policy, including establishing fish storage warehouses and studies for a new industrial fishing port. The financial contribution under the new Protocol is set at €17,000,000 per year (€12,500,000 for access to fishery resources plus

€4,500,000 in support of Guinea Bissau's sectoral policy) ([Evaluation](#) to the Protocol).

Resources

Caillart, B., Guérin, B., Guélé, M.-É. (2023) [Évaluation rétrospective et prospective du Protocole à l'accord de partenariat dans le domaine de la pêche entre l'Union européenne et la Guinée-Bissau](#). European Commission.

[Protocol](#) on the implementation of the Fisheries Partnership Agreement between the European Community and the Republic of Guinea-Bissau (2019–2024)

[Evaluation](#) to the Protocol to the Fisheries Partnership Agreement between the European Union and Guinea-Bissau, Commission Staff Working Document SWD(2024) 5 final

[Recommendation](#) for a Council Decision authorising the opening of the negotiations on behalf of the European Union for the conclusion of an Implementing Protocol to the Fisheries Partnership Agreement between the European Union and the Republic of Guinea-Bissau, COM(2024) 10 final

Regulation [1380/2013](#) on the Common Fisheries Policy

[2007/854/EC](#): Council Decision concerning the conclusion of the Agreement in the form of an Exchange of Letters on the provisional application of the Protocol setting out the fishing opportunities and financial contribution provided for in the Fisheries Partnership Agreement between the European Community and the Republic of Guinea-Bissau for the period 16 June 2007 to 15 June 2011

Sources

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