Extension of Fisheries Partnership Agreement between EU and Mauritius

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Fisheries Partnership Agreement between European Union and Republic of Mauritius

Recommendation for a Council Decision authorising the opening of the negotiations on behalf of the European Union for the conclusion of a Sustainable Fisheries Partnership Agreement and its Implementing Protocol between the European Union and the Republic of Mauritius

Update

The European Commission recommends that the Council of the European Union (EU) should authorise negotiation of a new Sustainable Fisheries Partnership Agreement and Implementing Protocol between the EU and Mauritius. The current 4-year implementing protocol (2022–2026) expires in December 2026.

Impacted products

Tuna

What is changing?

The European Commission proposes the renewal of the Fisheries Partnership Agreement (FPA) and Implementing Protocol with Mauritius, but recommends revising several elements, as follows.

- Upgrade the legal framework from an FPA to a Sustainable Fisheries Partnership Agreement (SFPA).
- Reduce the number of fishing authorisations available to EU vessels, and adjust the reference tonnage and EU access payment accordingly.
- Improve the social clause governing employment conditions for non-EU seafarers on EU vessels.
- Strengthen the design and monitoring of sectoral support, including clearer indicators and priorities.
- Increase transparency and consultation with stakeholders on the use of sectoral support funds.

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- Consider a 6-year duration for the protocol.

Why?

The evaluation of the current protocol concluded that the agreement remains relevant and beneficial to both parties, but the next agreement should adjust better to fishing opportunities, financial contributions, and governance arrangements.

- Fishing opportunities are underused. EU vessels have used fewer licences and caught fewer fish than allowed under the current protocol.
- The financial structure is therefore not well aligned with actual catches. This reduces efficiency for both parties.
- Fewer Mauritian fishers have been employed on EU vessels than envisaged. Employment provisions for Mauritian seafarers must align better with international labour standards.
- The implementation of sectoral support funding has been slow and fragmented.
- Governance and transparency in sectoral support outcomes can be improved.
- A 6-year protocol would provide greater stability.

Timeline

The European Commission seeks authorisation from the Council of the EU to open negotiations between the EU and Mauritius on a new SFPA and protocol before the current 4-year Implementing Protocol expires on 20 December 2026.

What are the major implications for exporting countries?

A renewal of the agreement aims to ensure a fair and balanced deal for all parties that will also consider regional aspects of the fisheries sector, including jobs linked to the fleets operating within the SFPA, notably for the outermost region of La Réunion.

Recommended Actions

The current 4-year Implementing Protocol for the FPA between Mauritius and the EU expires on 20 December 2026. After that date, the EU fleet cannot fish in Mauritian waters if there is no new protocol in place. Once agreed, the protocol should be implemented as soon as possible to minimise any interruption to trade. The FPA must also be renegotiated and upgraded to SFPA in compliance with the Common Fisheries Policy.

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Background

The FPA between the EU and Mauritius entered into force on 28 January 2014 for a period of 6 years. It automatically renews for 3-year periods (European Commission nd). Council Decision 2022/1846 prolonged the protocol temporarily by 6 months.

In 2025, the Commission carried out an evaluation of the current protocol (2022–2026) and its possible renewal. The evaluation concluded that the EU fishing sectors are firmly interested in fishing in Mauritius, and that the negotiation of a new agreement and protocol is in the interest of both parties. The agreement allows EU vessels to fish the surplus of the allowable catch in Mauritius waters and contribute regular supplies of tuna to the local fish-processing industry.

Mauritius is the third largest supplier of canned tuna to the EU market after Ecuador and the Philippines. Products exported from Mauritius enter the EU market duty-free and quota-free, provided they meet the rules of origin defined in the interim Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) between the EU and certain Eastern and Southern African States (including Mauritius and the Seychelles) (European Commission et al. 2021).

Resources

Commission staff working document SWD(2026) 68 final: Evaluation on the Implementing Protocol to the Fisheries Partnership Agreement between the European Union and the Republic of Mauritius

Council Decision (EU) 2022/1846 concerning the 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

European Commission (nd) Fisheries partnership agreement with Mauritius

European Commission (2021) Ex-post and ex-ante evaluation study of the implementing protocol to the fisheries partnership agreement between the European Union and the Republic of Mauritius: final report. Directorate-General for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries

European Commission (2025) EU-Mauritius fisheries agreement – negotiation mandate for a new protocol

Protocol implementing the fisheries partnership agreement between the EU and Mauritius (2022–2026)

Regulation 2022/2584 on the allocation of fishing opportunities under the Protocol implementing the Fisheries Partnership Agreement between the EU and Mauritius (2022–2026)

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Sources

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