Fisheries Partnership Agreement between the EU and Kiribati

Published by AGRINFO on 23 Oct 2023; Revised 24 Jan 2024

EU–Kiribati Fisheries Partnership Agreement: Conclusion and approval of Protocol

Council Regulation (EU) 2023/2186 of 6 September 2023 on the allocation of fishing opportunities under 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)

Council Decision (EU) 2024/396 of 16 January 2024 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)

Update

The Council of the EU has approved the Protocol on implementation of the Fisheries Partnership Agreement (FPA) between the EU and Kiribati. The Protocol provides for opportunities for EU Member States to fish for tuna in Kiribati's fishing zone, and takes into account the conservation and management measures adopted by the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC).

Impacted products

Tuna

What is changing?

The new Protocol agrees a management regime based on effort (fishing days) instead of catch (reference tonnage). Kiribati makes at least 160 fishing days per year available to EU Member State vessels in its waters. Fishing operators pay an annual access fee to Kiribati, based on the number of fishing days granted. Fishing opportunities established under the new Protocol will be allocated to three tuna seiners from Spain and one from France.

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Why?

The management regime based on effort is better aligned with Kiribati's domestic legislation. It is also in line with the way the WCPFC manages its purse seine tropical tuna fisheries.

Timeline

Decision (EU) 2024/396 applies from 16 January 2024.

Regulation 2023/2186 applies from 2 October 2023.

What are the major implications for exporting countries?

Each year, Kiribati must report to the Joint Committee established under Regulation 893/2007, which was set up to monitor the actions implemented and results achieved with sectoral support. Kiribati must also produce a final report before the Protocol expires.

The Government of Kiribati's objectives are mutually agreed by both parties in accordance with the Protocol. If the Joint Committee determines that the annual and multiannual programmes for implementation are inconsistent with these agreed objectives, the EU may review or suspend its financial contribution.

Background

Sustainable Fisheries Partnership Agreements (SFPAs) with non-EU countries give EU Member State fishing vessels access to the fishing zones of these countries, aiming to strengthen the sustainable use of fishery resources outside EU waters.

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 FPA between the EU and Kiribati was concluded in July 2007. The last Protocol to this FPA expired in September 2015. The new Agreement covers a period of 5 years from the date of signature.

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Resources

European Commission (2023) EU and Kiribati agree on a new fisheries protocol to their sustainable fisheries partnership agreement.

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)

Regulation (EC) No 893/2007 on the conclusion of a Fisheries Partnership Agreement between the European Community and the Republic of Kiribati

Sources

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