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COMMISSION STAFF WORKING DOCUMENT

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF THE EVALUATION

**of the Protocol to the Sustainable Fisheries Partnership Agreement concluded between
the European Union and Guinea-Bissau**

The current 3-year implementing Protocol to the Sustainable Fisheries Partnership Agreement (SFPA) concluded between the European Union (EU) and Guinea-Bissau has been in provisional application since 24 November 2014 and will expire on 23 November 2017¹. It allows EU vessels to fish for a variety of species including tuna and tuna-like species but also high value demersal species such as shrimps, cephalopods and fin-fish. In exchange, the EU pays Guinea-Bissau an annual financial contribution of 9.2 million EUR out of which 6.2 million EUR for access and 3 million EUR to support the development of the country's fisheries policy.

The EU's Common Fisheries Policy (CFP)² establishes mandatory evaluation requirements for SFPAs³ and their implementing Protocols in view of informing decisions regarding new negotiating directives for their renew. External experts carried out a retrospective evaluation of the current Protocol with Guinea-Bissau and a forward-looking evaluation in view of its possible renewal. The evaluation aims to ensure that the EU negotiates fishing opportunities which are in line with the best available scientific advice and that its boats do not compete with local artisanal fishermen who are highly dependent upon coastal fisheries.

The analyses and findings presented in the evaluation report are generally robust despite the fact that it covers only the first 18 months of application of the Protocol⁴. The assessments of the state and potential of the stocks of demersal and small pelagic species are affected by the lack of reliable fisheries statistics in Guinea-Bissau and the unavailability of up-to-date scientific advice and recommendations from the competent fisheries organisation, the Fishery Committee for the Eastern Central Atlantic (CECAF), although this limitation has been mitigated by the work of the Joint Scientific Committee.

The evaluation concludes that the current Protocol is effective, having enabled the sustainable exploitation of surplus stocks in Guinea-Bissau's Exclusive Economic Zone although the state of demersal fish stocks and cephalopods in the area should be monitored closely. Sectoral support benefits the entire fisheries sector and significantly strengthens fisheries research and the fight against illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing. The efficiency of the Protocol is considered average, mainly because of the observed cost-benefit ratio: for 1 EUR invested by the EU, 2.02 EUR is generated as total added value but only 0.84 EUR of this returns to the EU. As regards the distribution of the total added value generated by the Protocol, 42% goes to the EU, 38% to ACP countries and 20% to Guinea-Bissau. In terms of economy, the EU's financial contribution to Guinea-Bissau's public finances is crucial for the functioning of the State. The application of the Protocol has been difficult, due in particular to the numerous implementation problems in the sectoral support component despite its undeniably positive impact in terms of strengthening the capacity of the fisheries administration.

¹ [Council Decision 2014/782/EU of 16 October 2014 on signature and provisional application](#) (OJ L328, 13.11.2014, p. 1) and text of the [Protocol](#) (OJ L328, 13.11.2014, p. 3); [Council Decision \(EU\) 2015/1987 of 5 October 2015 on conclusion](#) (OJ L290, 6.11.2015, p. 1).

² [Regulation \(EU\) 1380/2013 of 11 December 2013 on the Common Fisheries Policy](#) (OJ L354, 28.12.2013, p. 22)

³ Overview: http://ec.europa.eu/fisheries/cfp/international/agreements_en

⁴ COFREPECHE, MRAG, NFDS et POSEIDON, 2016. Évaluation rétrospective et prospective du protocole de l'accord de partenariat dans le secteur de la pêche entre l'Union européenne et la République de Guinée-Bissau. Contrat cadre MARE/2011/01 - Lot 3, contrat spécifique n°17. Bruxelles, 231 p.: https://ec.europa.eu/fisheries/report-protocol-to-the-Fisheries-partnership-Agreement-between-EU-Guinea-Bissau-2016_en

The Protocol is relevant and generally meets the needs of the different stakeholders involved. It complies with the latest recommendations and resolutions from the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT) on the exploitation of tuna resources in the region. However, as the latest CECAF advice is outdated, the Joint Scientific Committee has and will continue to undertake in-depth reviews of the latest information available so that the advice regarding the demersal and pelagic stocks are brought up to date. It is consistent with the objectives of the CFP and other EU policies and sectoral support is used in complementarity with contributions from other donors such as the World Bank. The value added by the Protocol is considered very positive as all stakeholders benefit, especially Guinea-Bissau and the EU's fleet. The Protocol's acceptability is good because it meets the expectations of the EU ship-owners with the exception of the long-liners and, according to international civil society, it represents an improvement in terms of transparency, better redistribution of wealth and the sustainable management of resources. Guinea-Bissau's civil society regrets the lack of transparency in the use of sectoral support and considers that consultation should be improved when defining projects.

The evaluation concludes that the renewal of the Protocol is the preferred option, compared to not concluding a new Protocol, as it is of crucial importance for Guinea-Bissau and would also be pertinent for the EU vessels in view of the importance of the fishing zone, in particular the cephalopod/finfish trawlers.

Nevertheless, the evaluation proposes some adjustments regarding fishing opportunities, catch reporting and rebalancing the cost for access between the EU and the vessel-owners. It also underlines that, in order to be able to include fishing opportunities for tuna in a new Protocol, Guinea-Bissau must become a State Party to the ICCAT.

The evaluation also makes some recommendations for improving the implementation of a possible future Protocol such as extending its duration, enhancing scientific cooperation, proper reporting and monitoring of catches, and protecting demersal resources through (non-discriminatory) management measures if necessary. Regarding sectoral support, it is proposed to increase consultation and transparency on sectoral support programming, ensure better monitoring of the planned actions, make targeted investments to capture more added value, strengthen Guinea-Bissau's fisheries research capacity, and facilitate implementation through technical assistance.

Finally, the evaluation considers it legitimate for Guinea-Bissau to wish to improve its share of the added value generated by the Protocol given the importance of its fishing zone for EU vessels. However, the possibility of adjusting the financial contribution for access under a future Protocol will depend on a range of factors including the type and quantity of fishing opportunities (themselves dependent on the state of the stocks), the market prices for the targeted species and the technical conditions applicable to the EU fleet.