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PECHE 129

## DECLASSIFICATION

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dated: 22 June 2005

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Subject: **Morocco: Negotiating directives - First exchange of views  
(doc. 8881/05 RESTREINT UE PECHE 91)**

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Delegations will find attached the declassified version of the above document.

The text of this document is identical to the previous version.

  

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# RESTREINT UE



COUNCIL OF  
THE EUROPEAN UNION

Brussels, 22 June 2005

10242/05

RESTREINT UE

PECHE 129

## OUTCOME OF PROCEEDINGS

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of: Working Party on Internal and External Fisheries Policy  
dated: 7 June 2005  
Subject: **Morocco: Negotiating directives - First exchange of views**  
**(doc. 8881/05 RESTREINT UE PECHE 91)**

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1. The Commission recalled that as soon as the political situation had allowed the preparation for the negotiations, the Commission services had made an exploratory visit to Morocco in April 2005 and subsequently requested an evaluation report. The first round of negotiations are foreseen to take place in Brussels in the second week of July 2005. The Commission noted that the situation had changed considerably since the impasse in negotiations in 1999 and therefore it was necessary for the Council to adopt new negotiating directives complementing the old mandate while taking into account new aspects effecting EC-Morocco relations such as the reform of the CFP, the entry into force of an Association Agreement and the situation of the fleet which had operated under the previous agreement.

# RESTREINT UE

In accordance with Council Conclusions of July 2004<sup>1</sup>, the FPA should contribute to the development of a responsible fisheries policy in Morocco, *inter alia* by: prioritising scientific research programmes; encouraging investments in fleet modernisation; improving commercial measures in the fishing sector, including sanitary standards; and supporting the elimination of driftnets.

- ES supported the Commission's approach.
- DE, IT, DK, SE, PT and UK voiced their preference for receiving an evaluation report before the start of negotiations. All delegations felt that the evaluation report was a necessary basis for the Community position since it would provide information on the state of stocks and thus on the available surplus to be targeted by the Community fleet.
- DE, UK, SE noted that the mandate of 1999 had become obsolete and should be updated to reflect significant restructuring of fishing activities in Morocco over recent years. Therefore, it was indispensable that an entirely new set of directives would be adopted prior to the negotiations. SE recalled that in accordance with paragraph 7 of Council Conclusions of July 2004<sup>2</sup>, the impact assessment should be made available to the Member States in good time.
- DK and UK enquired about the financial counterpart envisaged for the Agreement.
- FR stated that they will submit their requests for fishing possibilities to COM.

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<sup>1</sup> See doc. 11485/05 PECHE 254.

<sup>2</sup> Idem.

# RESTREINT UE

- IE stated its interest in fishing under the future Agreement but that the Community should aim at sustainable exploitation of the surplus of fisheries as reflected in the Council Conclusions of July 2004.
  - PL recognized the political importance of an Agreement and, supported by LT, noted an interest in the pelagic fishery. EL asked whether fishing possibilities for sponges was envisaged. ES expressed an interest including cephalopods and crustaceans in the fishing Agreement.
2. The Commission, in response, assured delegations that an assessment report would be made available as soon as possible. He reiterated that the scope of the Agreement would be more moderate than the previous one, including mostly demersal, artisanal and industrial pelagic fisheries. The financial counterpart would be adjusted to the fishing possibilities. The Commission confirmed that the Agreement would be open to all interested Member States but that requests should be considered in terms of available stocks as well as of previous fishing activities in the area.
  3. Following the general discussion on the state of affairs, the Working Party on External Fisheries Policy had a first exchange of views on the draft negotiating directives<sup>1</sup>. As to the procedure, ES held the view that paragraph 7 of the Council Conclusions did not constitute a prerequisite that an evaluation report should be received before Council could adopt negotiating directives. He also noted that a new set of negotiating directives were welcome so as to take into account the altered situation since 1999.
  4. As regards specific comments, ES noted that a reference to the possible exclusion of fishing possibilities for cephalopods and crustaceans should be looked into in the light of additional information. UK noted that parts on the text referring to scientific and technical advice should only be examined once such information was available. ES, UK added that they would submit written comments on the draft directives.

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<sup>1</sup> doc. 8881/05 RESTREINT UE.

## RESTREINT UE

5. With a view to adopting the negotiating directives, the Presidency invited the Commission to submit the assessment report to the Member States as soon as possible. He reiterated the request expressed by the Commission services<sup>1</sup> that the Member States should send in written requests of their eventual interests in fishing possibilities. Any comments from Member States regarding the draft directives would be circulated in a restricted document by the Council Secretariat.

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<sup>1</sup> See ND 204/05.