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Proposal for a

COUNCIL REGULATION

on the allocation of the fishing opportunities provided for in the Protocol on the implementation of the Sustainable Fisheries Partnership Agreement between the European Union and the Republic of Seychelles (2026-2030)

EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM

1. CONTEXT OF THE PROPOSAL

• Reasons for and objectives of the proposal

The Sustainable Fisheries Partnership Agreement (SFPA) between the European Union and Seychelles¹ entered into force on 24 February 2020 for a duration of six years and is tacitly renewable for additional periods of six years.

On the basis of the Council Decision of 23 June 2025² authorising the opening of negotiations on behalf of the European Union of a new Protocol on the implementation of the Sustainable Fisheries Partnership Agreement with the Republic of Seychelles, and the negotiating directives contained therein, the Commission conducted negotiations with the Republic of Seychelles (hereinafter ‘Seychelles’). Following those negotiations, a Protocol was initialled by the negotiators on 1 April 2026. The new protocol covers a period of four years from the date of provisional application set out in Article 19, i.e. the date of signature by the parties.

The purpose of the new Protocol is to grant fishing opportunities to Union vessels in the fishing zones located in the waters of Seychelles, in accordance with scientific advice and the recommendations of the relevant regional fisheries management organisation, the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission (IOTC). The new Protocol provides for the following fishing opportunities:

- 30 tuna purse seine vessels;
- 8 surface longliners.

The objective of the proposal is to allocate those fishing opportunities among the Member States.

• Consistency with existing policy provisions in the policy area

The main aim of the new Protocol to the Agreement is to provide an updated framework that takes into account the priorities of the common fisheries policy (CFP) and the external dimension. This will help maintain and strengthen the strategic partnership between the European Union and Seychelles.

The new Protocol provides for fishing opportunities for Union vessels. It is based on the best available scientific advice and on the recommendations made by the IOTC.

• Consistency with other Union policies

The negotiation of a new protocol to implement the Sustainable Fisheries Partnership Agreement with Seychelles is part of the EU’s external action towards the countries of the Organisation of African, Caribbean and Pacific States (OACPS), and takes into account Union objectives, in particular the respect of democratic principles and human rights.

¹ [EUR-Lex - 22023A0322\(01\) - EN - EUR-Lex.](#)

² [Ares\(2025\)5139411.](#)

2. LEGAL BASIS, SUBSIDIARITY AND PROPORTIONALITY

- **Legal basis**

The legal basis is Article 43(3) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU), which establishes that the Council, on a proposal from the Commission, is to adopt measures on the allocation of fishing opportunities.

- **Subsidiarity**

The proposal falls within the exclusive competence of the European Union pursuant to Article 3(1), point (d), TFEU. The subsidiarity principle therefore does not apply.

- **Proportionality**

The proposal is proportionate to the objective of establishing a legal, environmental, economic and social governance framework for fishing activities carried out by Union vessels in third-country waters, as set out in Article 31 of Regulation (EU) No 1380/2013 establishing the common fisheries policy.

3. RESULTS OF *EX POST* EVALUATIONS, STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATIONS AND IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

- ***Ex post* evaluations/fitness checks of existing legislation**

In 2025, the Commission carried out an *ex post* evaluation of the current Protocol to the SFPA with Seychelles and an *ex ante* evaluation of a possible renewal of the Protocol. The conclusions of the evaluation are set out in a staff working document dated 25 June 2025³.

The evaluation concluded that the Union fishing sectors are strongly interested in fishing in Seychelles and that the renewal of the Protocol is in the interest of both parties. Furthermore, the renewal of the Protocol would help strengthen monitoring, control and surveillance, and would contribute to improved governance of the fisheries sector in the region.

For the Union, it is important to maintain an instrument allowing deep sectoral cooperation with Seychelles, which is a strategic player at subregional level due to the fishing area under its jurisdiction and is an important ally in the framework of the IOTC. Furthermore, for the Union fleet this means maintaining access to an important fishing area for the deployment of harvesting strategies under a multiannual international legal framework. Moreover, the importance of Seychelles in terms of processing tuna caught in the Indian Ocean and consequent exports of tuna products to the Union increases the relevance of the envisaged new Protocol, both for the Union fishing industry and for the partner country. For the Seychelles authorities, the aim is to continue relations with the Union with a view, inter alia, to strengthening ocean governance, thereby benefiting from dedicated sectoral support that provides multiannual funding opportunities.

- **Stakeholder consultations**

Member States, industry representatives, international civil society organisations, the fisheries administration and representatives of civil society in Seychelles were consulted as part of the assessment.

³ eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52025SC0136

- **Collection and use of expertise**

The Commission used an independent consultant for the *ex post* and *ex ante* evaluations, in accordance with Article 31(10) of Regulation (EU) No 1380/2013 establishing the common fisheries policy.

- **Impact assessment**

Not applicable.

- **Regulatory fitness and simplification**

Not applicable.

- **Fundamental rights**

A clause on the consequences of violations of human rights and democratic principles is included in the Sustainable Fisheries Partnership Agreement.

4. BUDGETARY IMPLICATIONS

The proposed Regulation does not affect the Union budget.

5. OTHER ELEMENTS

- **Implementation plans and monitoring, evaluation and reporting arrangements**

This procedure is initiated in parallel with the procedures related to the Council Decision on the signing, on behalf of the Union, and provisional application of the Protocol on the implementation of the SFPA between the European Union and the Republic of Seychelles (2026-2030) and the Council Decision on its conclusion. The Regulation shall apply on the date of provisional application of the Protocol.

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THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION,

Having regard to the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, and in particular Article 43, paragraph 3 thereof,

Having regard to the proposal from the European Commission,

Whereas:

- (1) The Commission has negotiated on behalf of the European Union, a new Protocol on the implementation of the Sustainable Fisheries Partnership Agreement between the European Union and the Republic of Seychelles for a duration of four years ('the Protocol').
- (2) This Protocol replaces the most recent protocol implementing the Sustainable Fisheries Partnership Agreement between the European Community and the Republic of Seychelles⁴, which was signed on 24 February 2020 for a duration of six years, and expired on 23 February 2026.
- (3) Following these negotiations the new Protocol was initialled on 1 April 2026.
- (4) On [...], the Council adopted Decision (EU) [...] [*footnote reference*] on the signing and provisional application of the new Protocol, subject to its conclusion at a later date.
- (5) The fishing opportunities provided for in the Protocol should be allocated among the Member States for the entire period of application of the Protocol.
- (6) This Regulation should enter into force as soon as possible given the economic importance of Union fishing activities in Seychelles' fishing zone and the need to . reduce as much as possible the interruption of such activities.
- (7) Article 19 of the Protocol provides for the Protocol's provisional application from the date of its signature in order to allow the fishing activities of Union vessels. This Regulation should therefore apply from the same date,

⁴ Sustainable Fisheries Partnership Agreement between the European Union and the Republic of Seychelles, OJ L 60, 28.2.2020, pp. 5–ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/agree_internation/2020/272/oj

HAS ADOPTED THIS REGULATION:

Article 1

The fishing opportunities set out in the Protocol on the implementation of the Sustainable Fisheries Partnership Agreement between the European Union and the Republic of Seychelles ('the Protocol') shall be allocated among the Member States as follows:

(a) tuna purse seine vessels:

Spain: 17 vessels

France: 12 vessels

Italy: 1 vessels

(b) surface longliners:

Spain: 2 vessels

France: 4 vessels

Portugal: 2 vessels

Article 2

This Regulation shall enter into force on the day following that of its publication in the *Official Journal of the European Union*.

This Regulation shall be binding in its entirety and directly applicable in all Member States. It shall apply from the date of the signature of the Protocol.

Done at Brussels,

*For the Council
The President*