



EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

2009 - 2014

*Committee on Fisheries*

**2010/0129(NLE)**

28.10.2010

## **OPINION**

of the Committee on Fisheries

for the Committee on International Trade

on the proposal for a Council decision on the conclusion of an Agreement between the European Union, Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway on an EEA Financial Mechanism 2009-2014, an Agreement between the European Union and Norway on a Norwegian Financial Mechanism for the period 2009-2014, an Additional Protocol to the Agreement between the European Economic Community and Iceland concerning special provisions applicable to imports into the European Union of certain fish and fisheries products for the period 2009-2014 and an Additional Protocol to the Agreement between the European Economic Community and Norway concerning special provisions applicable to imports into the European Union of certain fish and fisheries products for the period 2009-2014

(09902/2010 – C7-0225/2010 – 2010/0129(NLE))

Rapporteur: Pat the Cope Gallagher

PA\_LegAVC

## **SHORT JUSTIFICATION**

### **1. Summary of the Commission proposal**

Since the entry into force of the Agreement on the European Economic Area (EEA) in 1994, the EEA EFTA States (now Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway) have contributed to alleviating economic and social disparities in the EEA. These contributions have always been agreed for five-year periods. The 2004-2009 financial contributions were negotiated in the context of the 2004 and 2007 EEA Enlargement Agreements.

In that context, two bilateral protocols with Iceland and Norway granting certain concessions with regard to market access for fish and fisheries products were also negotiated for the same 2004-2009 period, with a revision clause, stipulating a deadline coinciding with the expiry of the 2004-2009 financial mechanisms.

Formal negotiations with Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway on their financial contributions for the period 2009-2014 were opened on 26 September 2008. In parallel to those negotiations, but independently of them, consultations and subsequently negotiations were also launched on the basis of the revision clause of the two bilateral fish protocols with Iceland and Norway, granting them certain fisheries concessions, providing for annual duty free tariff quotas for certain fisheries products originating in these countries.

The different negotiations were concluded at negotiators' level on 18 December 2009. The result of the negotiations on the two bilateral fisheries protocols between the EU and Iceland and Norway, respectively, for the period 2009-2014 was essentially a renewal of the previous 2004-2009 protocols with unchanged concessions for Iceland and a relatively modest increase in concessions for Norway, on the basis of which Norway will renew the fish transit arrangement, which had also expired on 30 April 2009.

As far as the EEA and Norwegian financial mechanisms are concerned, the result is an overall package of EUR 1.8 billion for the period 2009-2014, composed of a 31 percent increase in the EEA financial mechanism and a 22 percent increase in the Norwegian financial mechanism, compared to the period 2004-2009. Due to its financial crisis, it was agreed that Iceland's contribution to the EEA financial mechanism should not be increased in absolute terms.

As the negotiations suffered unfortunate delays and were not concluded until 18 December 2009, it was necessary for the smooth functioning of the EEA to ensure that the above agreements could enter into force on a provisional basis, pending their final conclusion.

As is common practice when modifying specific elements of existing international agreements, the relevant articles of the TFEU are used as the legal basis for the draft decisions, namely article 207 for the amended fisheries protocols.

### **2. Comments of the rapporteur**

The rapporteur, taking into account the outcome of the above mentioned negotiations, i.e. a

significant increase of the financial mechanism against unchanged concessions for Iceland and only a modest increase in concessions for Norway, would like to suggest that the Committee on Fisheries gives a favourable opinion on the Commission's proposal COM(2010)234.

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The Committee on Fisheries calls on the Committee on International Trade, as the committee responsible, to propose that Parliament give its consent.

## RESULT OF FINAL VOTE IN COMMITTEE

<b>Date adopted</b>	26.10.2010
<b>Result of final vote</b>	+: 21 -: 0 0: 0
<b>Members present for the final vote</b>	Josefa Andrés Barea, Antonello Antinoro, Kriton Arsenis, Alain Cadec, João Ferreira, Carmen Fraga Estévez, Pat the Cope Gallagher, Marek Józef Gróbarczyk, Carl Haglund, Iliana Malinova Iotova, Werner Kuhn, Isabella Lövin, Gabriel Mato Adrover, Guido Milana, Maria do Céu Patrão Neves, Britta Reimers, Crescenzo Rivellini, Ulrike Rodust, Struan Stevenson, Catherine Trautmann, Jarosław Leszek Wałęsa
<b>Substitute(s) present for the final vote</b>	Diane Dodds, Raül Romeva i Rueda