COUNCIL DECISION (EU) 2021/1117

of 28 June 2021

on the signing, on behalf of the European Union, and provisional application of the Implementing Protocol to the Fisheries Partnership Agreement between the Gabonese Republic and the European Community (2021-2026)

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION,

Having regard to the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, and in particular Article 43, in conjunction with Article 218(5) thereof,

Having regard to the proposal from the European Commission,

Whereas:

(1) The Fisheries Partnership Agreement between the Gabonese Republic and the European Community ([1]) (the 'Agreement'), approved by Council Regulation (EC) No 450/2007 ([2]), entered into force on 11 June 2007. The Protocol setting out the fishing opportunities and the financial contribution provided for by the Fisheries Partnership Agreement between the European Union and the Gabonese Republic ([3]), signed on 24 July 2013 (the '2013 Protocol'), expired on 23 July 2016.

(2) On 22 October 2015, the Council authorised the Commission to open negotiations with the Gabonese Republic ('Gabon') in order to conclude a new protocol. Those negotiations were successfully concluded and the Implementing Protocol to the Fisheries Partnership Agreement between the Gabonese Republic and the European Community (2021-2026) (the 'Protocol') was initialled on 10 February 2021.

(3) The objective of the Agreement and of the Protocol is to enable the Union and Gabon to work more closely together to further promote the development of a sustainable fisheries policy and the responsible exploitation of fisheries resources in the Gabonese fishing zone and in the Atlantic Ocean, while contributing to decent working conditions in the fisheries sector.

(4) The Protocol should enter into force as soon as possible, in view of the economic importance of Union fishing activities in the Gabonese fishing zone and the need to reduce as much as possible the period of interruption of such activities following the expiry of the 2013 Protocol.

(5) The Protocol should be signed and applied on a provisional basis, pending the completion of the procedures necessary for its entry into force,

HAS ADOPTED THIS DECISION:

Article 1

The signing, on behalf of the Union, of the Implementing Protocol to the Fisheries Partnership Agreement between the Gabonese Republic and the European Community (2021-2026) (the 'Protocol') is hereby authorised, subject to the conclusion of the said Protocol ([4]).

Article 2

The President of the Council is hereby authorised to designate the person(s) empowered to sign the Protocol on behalf of the Union.

([1]) OJ L 109, 26.4.2007, p. 3.
([2]) Council Regulation (EC) No 450/2007 of 16 April 2007 on the conclusion of the Fisheries Partnership Agreement between the Gabonese Republic and the European Community (OJ L 109, 26.4.2007, p. 1).
([3]) OJ L 250, 20.9.2013, p. 2.
([4]) The text of the Protocol is published in OJ L 242 of 8.7.2021.

Article 3

The Protocol shall be applied on a provisional basis as from the date of its signature ([5]), pending the completion of the procedures necessary for its entry into force.

Article 4

This Decision shall enter into force on the date of its adoption..

Done at Luxembourg, 28 June 2021.

For the Council
The President
M. do C. ANTUNES

([5]) The date from which the Protocol will be provisionally applied will be published in the *Official Journal of the European Union* by the General Secretariat of the Council.