



**COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION**

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NOTE

from: General Secretariat
to: Council
Subject: Fisheries Partnership Agreement EU/Mauritania
- Information from the Polish delegation

Delegations will find attached a note submitted by the Polish delegation as a background document to the agenda point on "Any other business" at the Council (Agriculture and Fisheries) on 14 - 15 May 2012.

NOTE FROM THE POLISH DELEGATION
EU-MAURITANIA FISHERIES PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT
CURRENT SITUATION AND OUTLOOK

The EU has seen a protracted impasse in the ongoing negotiations of the new EU-Mauritania protocol in recent months. In spite of numerous efforts to make progress in this delicate process, the number of issues still to be resolved calls into question the possibility of reaching agreement in time allowing for smooth continuation of fishing activities of EU fleet in the area.

The situation of pelagic freezer-trawler fleet operating under the current protocol (category 9) is further aggravated by the fact that this year's EU quota, reduced in 2008 from 440 to 250 thousand tons, has already been exhausted. Given that there are no viable alternatives available to this particular fleet, there is a clear risk of abrupt and irreparable demise of the segment in question. For Poland, it would mean a significant loss in terms of jobs and taxable profit.

As for regional fisheries context, the recent political developments in Guinea-Bissau have complicated the efforts to develop bilateral cooperation with EU in pelagic fisheries. Furthermore, the recent decision of Senegal vis-à-vis foreign pelagic fleets in its waters might increase pressure on Mauritanian authorities to provide additional licenses for pelagic vessels.

In Poland's view, the EU cannot afford to abandon the pelagic fisheries in Mauritania as this would mean free-for-all fishing, lack of scientific information which is today provided almost exclusively by EU fleets and, perhaps, fatal damage to the stocks in question. This would neither benefit Mauritania nor the EU. Moreover, it would greatly damage the EU's global reputation as fishing party ensuring sustainable and transparent fishing practices.

In this context, Poland asks the European Commission:

1. To provide concrete information on immediate and longer-term outlook for EU fleets dependent on EU-Mauritania agreement, in particular its category 9 segment.
2. To enhance efforts in order to achieve an immediate breakthrough in negotiations with Mauritania.