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COMMISSION STAFF WORKING DOCUMENT
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF THE EVALUATION

**to the Protocol to the Fisheries Partnership Agreement between the European Union
and Cabo Verde**

Accompanying the document

Recommendation for a

COUNCIL DECISION

**authorising the opening of the negotiations on behalf of the European Union for the
conclusion of an Implementing Protocol to the Fisheries Partnership Agreement
between the European Union and the Republic of Cabo Verde**

{COM(2023) 697 final} - {SWD(2023) 349 final}

Article 31(10) of the Common Fisheries Policy Regulation calls for an ex-post and ex-ante evaluation to be carried out by the Commission before submitting to the Council a recommendation to authorise the opening of negotiations for a new protocol to a sustainable fisheries partnership agreement (SFPA)¹. Ex-ante and ex-post valuation studies aim to inform decision makers before the Council adopts the negotiation guidelines. The obligation to conduct an ex-ante and an ex-post evaluation is also enshrined in Article 34 of the Financial Regulation.² The fishing opportunities negotiated under the SFPAs are in line with the best available scientific advice and fleet activities are not in competition with the local artisanal fishermen.

The first fisheries agreement between the EU and Cabo Verde dates back to 1990. The current SFPA³, a five-year agreement renewable for additional periods of 5 years, entered into force on 19 December 2006. Under the current protocol to the SFPA (which lasts from 20 May 2019 to 19 May 2024), the EU fleet is allowed to fish tuna in Cabo Verde's waters with a reference tonnage of 8.000 tonnes per year. Access is given to 28 purse seiners, 27 surface longliners and 14 pole-and-line vessels. In addition to the fees paid by the EU fleet, the EU pays a financial contribution of EUR 400 000 per year for access, plus an annual specific amount of EUR 350 000 to help support and implement Cabo Verde's sectoral fisheries policy.

In accordance with the 'better regulation' guidelines, this staff working document and its executive summary present the results of a retrospective (ex-post) evaluation carried out by an independent contractor and a forward-looking (ex-ante) evaluation in view of a possible renewal of the Implementing Protocol to the Fisheries Partnership Agreement between the EU and the Republic of Cabo Verde.

The evaluation has fully addressed the questions formulated by the Commission and has provided concrete, reliable and credible results. Based on this evaluation, the Commission has: (i) drawn conclusions based on objective analysis; and (ii) made specific and relevant recommendations for future negotiations on a new protocol between the EU and Cabo Verde.

Therefore, out of all the options considered, the renewal of the Protocol at the end of its implementation period (19 May 2024) clearly appears as the preferred option. The current Protocol positively addresses the identified needs of the different stakeholders. Therefore, the evaluation recommends retaining a similar technical and financial approach in a future Protocol, albeit with some adaptations aimed in particular at: (i) improving the implementing technical conditions of its access component; and (ii) improving synergies with both the blue economy and Cabo Verde's own commercial development policies. On the EU financial contribution for sectoral support, the evaluation recommends reviewing this contribution in line with the absorption and execution capacity of the responsible Ministry in the Cabo Verde government.

1 Doc. 7086/12 PECHE 66.

2 Regulation (EU) 1380/2013 of 11 December 2013 on the Common Fisheries Policy (OJ L354, 28.12.2013, p. 22)

3 OJ L 414, 30.12.2006, p. 1–2