



## OVERVIEW OF EPA NEGOTIATIONS

Updated July 2014

### ECONOMIC PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT NEGOTIATIONS

REGION	NEGOTIATING DIRECTIVES	CURRENT STATUS	NEXT STEPS
<b>WEST AFRICA</b>	All EPA negotiations: Council Decision on 17 June 2002 – provides for WTO-compliant agreements, covering "substantially all trade" in goods (at least 80%) + services, investment and trade-related rules, with a view to fostering ACP integration into the world economy thereby promoting their sustainable development.	<p>Two West African countries, Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana, initialled bilateral "stepping stone (or "interim") EPAs" with the EU at the end of 2007. The interim EPA with Côte d'Ivoire was signed on 26 November 2008. The interim EPA with Ghana has not been signed. Neither agreement has been ratified.</p> <p>West-Africa-European Union negotiations of an Economic Partnership Agreement were closed by Chief Negotiators on 6 February in Brussels. On 10 July 2014, ECOWAS Heads of State endorsed the EPA for signature.</p>	<p>The regional agreement covers goods and development-cooperation and includes rendezvous clauses providing for further negotiations on services and rules chapters.</p> <p>Both sides will now prepare the signature and subsequent ratification of the agreement.</p>

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<b>CENTRAL AFRICA</b>	Idem	<p>Cameroon signed the interim EPA for Central Africa as the only country in the region on 15 January 2009. In July 2014 the Parliament of Cameroon approved the ratification of the Agreement.</p> <p>European and Central African negotiators have discussed at technical level on market access, services, cultural cooperation and accompanying measures. Progress has also been made on the text of the agreement. The negotiations are currently delayed because of the situation in the Central African Republic. The mandate of the Central African negotiators has been updated at the end of March 2014 and negotiations are expected to resume on this basis..</p>	<p>Following notification of ratification of the interim EPA by Cameroon, the Agreement will enter into provisional application and the iEPA Committee will be convened.</p> <p>Regional negotiations are focusing on market access, rules of origin, services and investment, cultural cooperation, accompanying measures (development cooperation) and fiscal impact. Market access and development assistance, in particular, require further discussion.</p> <p><u>Next round:</u> No dates have been set.</p>
<b>EASTERN AND SOUTHERN AFRICA (ESA)</b>	Idem	<p>In 2009 Mauritius, Seychelles, Zimbabwe and Madagascar signed the interim Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA). The Agreement is provisionally applied since 14 May 2012. The European Parliament gave its consent on 17 January 2013.</p> <p>The inaugural interim EPA Committee was held in October 2012 in Brussels, the second meeting took place in May 2013 in Mauritius and the third meeting took place in Brussels in January 2014. The Customs Cooperation Committee and the Joint Development Committee were also held alongside the interim EPA Committee.</p>	<p>Last round of negotiations of the comprehensive regional EPA took place in Mauritius in November 2011 on the basis of a joint draft text. Further progress in the negotiations is linked to presentation of the market access offers for both goods and services by the ESA states. Other open issues are inter alia export taxes, special agricultural safeguards, rules of origin and cumulation, export subsidies, non-execution clause, institutional provisions and dispute settlement.</p> <p><u>Next round:</u> No dates have been set.</p> <p><u>Meeting of the interim EPA Committee:</u> The fourth meeting will take place in the Eastern and Southern Africa region at a date and place to be jointly decided.</p>

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<b>EASTERN AFRICAN COMMUNITY (EAC)</b>	Idem	<p>Burundi, Rwanda, Tanzania, Kenya and Uganda initialled a framework EPA (mainly dealing with trade in goods) on 28 November 2007, and are now negotiating a comprehensive regional EPA. The framework agreement has not been signed or ratified.</p> <p>Following a Ministerial meeting on 30 January 2014 in Brussels, Technical and Senior Officials met in Nairobi on 25-27 March and made substantial progress. The main outstanding issues are the export taxes and the non-execution clause.</p>	<p>Both parties agreed to seek ministerial guidance with a view to convening in due course a final ministerial meeting. .</p> <p><u>Next meetings:</u> Senior Officials are meeting in the EAC region on 23 July 2014.</p>
<b>SOUTH AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY (SADC)</b>	Idem	<p>On 15 July 2014 the EPA negotiations were successfully concluded in South Africa. This ended ten years of negotiations and produced an Agreement that should replace the interim EPA signed by the EU and by Botswana, Lesotho, Mozambique and Swaziland in June 2009. That agreement was never ratified.</p>	<p>The EPA is a comprehensive agreement with the whole SADC EPA Group including South Africa.</p> <p>The Agreement will now be "scrubbed" and prepared for signature.</p>

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<b>CARIBBEAN</b>	Idem	<p>The CARIFORUM – EU EPA was signed in October 2008 and approved by the EP in March 2009. The agreement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• opens up trade in services as well as in goods;</li> <li>• seeks to spur more investment in the Caribbean;</li> <li>• commits governments to other trade-promoting measures, like ensuring free and fair competition;</li> <li>• promotes development that respects the environment and people’s rights at work.</li> </ul> <p>The EPA also sets up several joint institutions. These have met regularly since 2010. In September and October 2012, two of these met for the second time:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• first the Trade and Development Committee (senior officials), and</li> <li>• then the Joint CARIFORUM-EU Council (ministers).</li> </ul> <p>The Trade and Development Committee held its third meeting in Grenada (WI) in November 2013. It reviewed progress and issues so far in applying the EPA, and agreed on next steps.</p>	<p>Both regions need to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• agree on a joint system for monitoring the EPA;</li> <li>• undertake the first five-yearly review of the EPA;</li> <li>• finish setting up a joint Consultative Committee representing civil society as well as a list of Arbitrators;</li> <li>• negotiate an agreement to protect geographical indications (GIs), valuable regional product names.</li> </ul> <p>The fourth meeting of the Trade and Development Committee (senior officials) and the third Joint CARIFORUM-EU Council (ministers) are due to take place later in 2014.</p>

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<b>PACIFIC</b>	Idem	<p>Signed by the EU and Papua New Guinea (PNG) on 30 July and by Fiji on 11 December 2009. EP ratified on 19 January 2011. EU ratification completed by Council on 15 February 2011. The third meeting of the Trade Committee established under the interim EPA took place in Brussels in July 2013. The Parliament of Papua New Guinea ratified the interim EPA on 25 May 2011. In July 2014 Fiji decided to start applying the agreement.</p> <p>In negotiations on a comprehensive regional Economic Partnership Agreement, four technical rounds have taken place since October 2012, the latest one in Brussels from 24 June to 5 July 2013 on fisheries, trade in goods, development cooperation, sustainable development, and rules of origin. Moreover, an informal ministerial meeting with EU and Pacific region representatives to take stock of the current was held in the Solomon Islands on 12 December 2013. However, Papua New Guinea and Fiji did not attend this meeting.</p>	<p>The fourth meeting of the Trade Committee under the interim EPA is due to take place later in 2014.</p> <p>Talks continue on a regional comprehensive EPA. However, the Commission is also ready to explore the possibility to widen the membership and deepen the content of the existing EU – Pacific interim EPA.</p> <p><u>Next round:</u> tbc</p>