EC/Madagascar Fisheries Partnership Agreement

2007/0006(CNS) - 19/07/2007 - Document attached to the procedure

PURPOSE: to propose an Agreement in the form of an Exchange of Letters on the provisional application of the Protocol setting out the fishing opportunities and financial contribution provided for in the Agreement between the European Community and Madagascar on fishing off the coast of Madagascar for the period from 1 January 2007 to 31 December 2012.

CONTENT: the Community and Madagascar negotiated and initialled, on 21 June 2006, a Fisheries Partnership Agreement which provides Community fishermen with fishing opportunities in Madagascar's fishing zone (please refer to the previous initial proposal).

A proposal for a Council Decision on the **conclusion of the Agreement in the form of an Exchange of Letters on the provisional application of the Protocol** setting out the fishing opportunities and financial contribution provided for in the EC/Madagascar Fisheries Partnership Agreement for the period from 2007 to 2012 was adopted by the Commission on 25 January 2007.

However, the Protocol and the Annex had to be re-negotiated, amended and was re-signed on 16 March 2007 to accommodate requests for additional fishing opportunities for longliners. The reference tonnage and the financial contribution have been adjusted accordingly (refer to the new initial proposal dated 19/07 /2007).

An amended proposal for a Council Decision on the conclusion of the Agreement in the form of an Exchange of Letters on the provisional application of the amended Protocol is therefore necessary, to take account of the amendments made to the Protocol signed on 16 March 2007.

This new Protocol and the Annex were signed for a period of 6 years from 1 January 2007. Pending the entry into force of the new Agreement, this Protocol and the Annex will enter into force on the date on which the Parties notify each other of the completion of the procedures necessary for that purpose. They will apply with effect from 1 January 2007.

The **financial contribution** as amended in the Protocol signed on 16 March 2007 is fixed at **EUR 1 197 000 per year against a reference tonnage of 13 300 tonnes**. Of this financial contribution, 80% will provide annual financial support for defining and implementing a sectoral fisheries policy in Madagascar, with a view to introducing responsible and sustainable fishing.

This financial support will be based on annual and multiannual programming.

The fishing opportunities provided for in the Agreement have been laid down according to three categories:

1) for the fishing category "freezer tuna seiners": 43 vessels;

2) for the fishing category "surface longliners over 100 GT": 50 vessels;

3) for the fishing category "surface longliners of 100 GT or below": 26 vessels.

In addition, 5 vessels may carry out exploratory line or bottom longline fishing for demersal species over two 6-month periods.

Shipowners' fees have been fixed for each category and, overall, could provide Madagascar with an additional annual income of around EUR 465 000 (for a reference tonnage of 13 300 tonnes).

The Commission is accordingly proposing that the Council adopt by Decision the Agreement in the form of an Exchange of Letters concerning the provisional application of the amended Protocol, pending its definitive entry into force.