Southern Indian Ocean Fisheries Agreement SIOFA

2007/0285(CNS) - 20/12/2007 - Legislative proposal

PURPOSE: to conclude the Southern Indian Ocean Fisheries Agreement.

PROPOSED ACT: Council Decision.

BACKGROUND: In 2000, the South Indian Ocean fishing states together with FAO took the initiative to launch the process for the setting up of a new regional fisheries organisation (Southern Indian Ocean Fisheries Agreement).

In November 2000, the Commission was mandated by the Council to participate in the negotiations of this Agreement on behalf of the Community. After five Intergovernmental Conferences,interested parties reached agreement on a draft Fisheries Agreement. After a review, the final text was opened for signature at a Diplomatic Conference held in Rome on 7 July 2006.

The Community, through its active participation in the negotiations of the text, ensured that the text of the SIOFA Agreement reflects the latest legal international developments in international fisheries legislation. This new RFMO (Regional Fisheries Management Organisation) will exercise its responsibilities for the effective conservation and management of Non-Tuna species in the high seas of the Southern Indian Ocean according to the principles and standards laid down in the Law of the Sea.

CONTENT: bearing in mind that the Community has fishing interests in the South Indian Ocean and is also a Coastal State on behalf of the Reunion Island, Community participation in the SIOFA agreement is highly recommended.

That is why the Community signed the SIOFA Agreement on 7 July 2006, in conformity with the Council Decision No. 2006/496/EC adopted by the Council on 6 July 2006. The Community should therefore proceed to conclude the SIOFA Agreement.

That is precisely the purpose of this proposal, which aims to conclude the SIOFA Agreement in order to become full member of said agreement.

The Agreement shall enter into force ninety days from the date of receipt by the Depositary of the fourth instrument of ratification, acceptance or approval, provided that at least two of such instruments are deposited by States bordering the Area.

The text of the Agreement is attached to the Decision.