EC/Comoros Partnership Agreement: fishing opportunities and financial contribution. Protocol

2010/0287(NLE) - 15/11/2010 - Document attached to the procedure

This document presents the definitive text of the Protocol setting out the fishing opportunities and financial contribution provided for in the Partnership Agreement in the fisheries sector between the European Community and the Union of the Comoros. Following negotiations, the new Protocol was initialled on 21 May 2010 and was amended by an Exchange of Letters on 16 September 2010.

The new Protocol should be signed and applied provisionally, pending the completion of the procedures for its conclusion.

The main characteristics of the new Protocol are as follows:

Financial contribution: the overall annual contribution of the Protocol of **EUR 1 845 750** over the whole period (3 years) is based on:

- an annual reference tonnage fixed at 4 850 tonnes for 70 vessels corresponding to EUR 315 250 per year, and
- support for the development of the sectoral fisheries policy of the Union of the Comoros amounting to EUR 300 000 per year. This support meets the objectives of the national fisheries policy.

Fishing opportunities:

- 45 tuna seiners;
- 25 surface longliners.

Nevertheless, with regard to the annual assessments of the state of stocks, these fishing opportunities could be revised up or down which would lead to a corresponding review of the financial contribution. If the overall quantity of catches by European Union vessels in Comorian waters exceeds 4 850 tonnes per year, the total amount of the annual financial contribution shall be increased by EUR 65 for each additional tonne caught. However, the total annual amount paid by the European Union shall not be more than twice the amount (EUR 630 500).

Experimental fishing: the Protocol stipulates that should European Union vessels be interested in fishing activities which are not indicated in the actual Protocol, the Parties shall consult each other before any authorisation is granted by the Comorian authorities. Where appropriate, the Parties shall agree on the conditions applicable to these new fishing opportunities and, if necessary, make amendments to this Protocol and to the Annex hereto. The Parties shall encourage experimental fishing. To this end and on request of one of the two Parties, the latter shall consult and determine, on a case-by-case basis, the species, conditions and any other relevant parameters.

Duration of the Agreement: the new Protocol is concluded for a duration of three years from the entry into force of the Council decision on the provisional application of the said Protocol and after expiry of the current Protocol on 31 December 2010.

Provision is also made for sustainable fishing and scientific cooperation on responsible fishing.