EU/Seychelles Agreement: access for fishing vessels flying the flag of the Seychelles to waters and marine biological resources of Mayotte, under the jurisdiction of the EU

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PURPOSE: to conclude an Agreement between the European Union and the Republic of the Seychelles on access for fishing vessels flying the flag of the Seychelles to waters and marine biological resources of Mayotte, under the jurisdiction of the European Union.

PROPOSED ACT: Council Decision.

ROLE OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT: the Council may adopt the act only if Parliament has given its consent to the act.

BACKGROUND: in the course of the negotiations for a new protocol to the EU-Seychelles Fisheries Partnership Agreement, held in May 2013, the Seychelles raised the need of negotiating an access agreement for Seychelles flagged vessels **to the waters of Mayotte**, which will fall under the jurisdiction of the EU from 1 January 2014. This would enable Seychelles flagged vessels to continue to have access to Mayotte waters from 1 January 2014.

Seychelles flagged vessels can currently fish in Mayotte waters on the basis of an agreement between the Prefet de Mayotte and the Seychelles flagged vessels owners.

A mandate for the Commission to undertake these negotiations was agreed on 14 October and negotiations were held with the Seychelles shortly following this and concluded on 15 November 2013.

The Agreement should now be concluded on behalf of the EU.

CONTENT: the proposal calls on the Council to approve on behalf of the Union the Agreement with Seychelles on access for fishing vessels flying the flag of the Seychelles to waters and marine biological resources of Mayotte, under the jurisdiction of the EU.

Administrative framework and fees : in order for the authorities in Mayotte to implement the rules of the common fisheries policy, from the date on which Mayotte becomes an outermost region (1 January 2014), it is necessary to set in place :

- the appropriate administrative framework,
- control activities,
- physical infrastructure and
- the appropriate capacity building

Therefore, the necessary financial means will be provided to the fisheries authorities in Mayotte through the use of the funding provided through the shipowners fees to be paid directly to Mayotte. All payments

related to authorisations and catches under the agreement will directly benefit the local community in Mayotte.

France shall be empowered to collect, for the account of its outermost region Mayotte, the payments related to authorisations and catches and other fees due by operators of Seychelles vessels in consideration of the granting of access to fisheries within EU waters around Mayotte.

These receipts shall be used by France for the setting in place of the appropriate administrative framework mentioned above in order for the administration in Mayotte to meet the requirements of the CFP.

Joint committee: the Agreement established a Joint Committee responsible for monitoring the application of the Agreement. In order to facilitate the approval of modifications, it is appropriate to empower the Commission, subject to specific conditions, to approve them under a simplified procedure.