Convention for the Conservation of Southern Bluefin Tuna: membership of the Extended Commission

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PURPOSE: to conclude, on behalf of the European Union, the Exchange of Letters to obtain membership of the Extended Commission of the Convention for the Conservation of Southern Bluefin Tuna.

PROPOSED ACT: Council Decision.

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

BACKGROUND: the Commission for the Conservation of Southern Bluefin Tuna (CCSBT) is a Regional Fisheries Management Organisation (RFMO) responsible for the management of Southern Bluefin Tuna (SBF) throughout its distribution. The Convention for the Conservation of Southern Bluefin tuna entered into force on 20 May 1994.

The European Union has been a Cooperating Non-Member of the CCSBT Extended Commission since 2006. Cooperating Non-Members participate fully in the activities of the CCSBT but are not entitled to vote.

On 1 December 2009, the Council authorised the European Commission to seek, on behalf of the European Union, an amendment to the rules of Convention for the Conservation of Southern Bluefin Tuna in order for the European Union to become a Contracting Party.

During its 20th meeting in October 2013, the CCSBT amended the Resolution governing the Extended Commission to allow the European Union to become a Member of the CCSBT Extended Commission through Exchange of Letters.

Since vessels flying the flags of Member States of the Union fish resources in the area of distribution of Southern Bluefin Tuna, it is in the Union's interest to play an effective role in the implementation of the Convention.

CONTENT: this proposal seeks to conclude the legal process launched with the signature and provisional application of the Exchange of Letters to obtain membership of the CCSBT Extended Commission and Extended Scientific Committee after having obtained the consent from the European Parliament.

Upon completion of this procedure, the EU would be entitled to membership and vote in the CCSBT Extended Commission and Extended Scientific Committee.