EU/Mauritius Fisheries Partnership Agreement: fishing opportunities and financial contribution 2017-2021. Protocol

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PURPOSE: to conclude a new fisheries Protocol between the European Union and the Republic of Mauritius.

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 first Protocol to the Fisheries Partnership Agreement set out, for a period of three years, the fishing opportunities granted to Union vessels in the fishing zone under the sovereignty or jurisdiction of Mauritius and the financial contribution granted by the European Union. The period of application of that Protocol expired on 27 January 2017.

A new protocol must now be approved on behalf of the Union.

CONTENT: the Commission proposes that the Council adopt a decision approving on behalf of the Union the **new Protocol** setting out the fishing opportunities and the financial contribution provided for by the Fisheries Partnership Agreement between the European Union and Mauritius.

The objective of this Protocol is to enhance cooperation between the European Union and Mauritius to **promote a sustainable fisheries policy**, sound exploitation of fisheries resources in Mauritius waters and support Mauritius in the development of its sustainable ocean economy.

Fishing opportunities: the fishing opportunities granted for highly migratory species shall be as follows: **40 tuna seiners and 45 surface longliners**.

Mauritius shall authorise a maximum of 20 supply vessels to assist in the operations of Union fishing vessels authorised in Mauritius waters unless the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission (IOTC) decides otherwise.

Financial contribution: the new Protocol shall provide a total financial contribution of **EUR 2 300 000** for the entire period (2017-2021).

This total financial contribution shall comprise:

- an annual amount for access to Mauritius waters of EUR 220 000 equivalent to a reference tonnage of 4000 tonnes per year;
- a specific amount of EUR 220 000 per year for the support and implementation of Mauritius' sectoral fisheries policy; and
- an additional amount of EUR 135 000 to support the development of maritime policy and ocean economy.

Duration: the Protocol shall apply, on a provisional basis, from the date of signature. It shall apply for a period of **four years** from the date of its provisional application.

Provision is made for possible suspensions.

The Agreement establishes the **Joint Committee** responsible for monitoring its implementation. It may approve certain amendments to the Protocol. In order to facilitate the approval of such amendments, the Commission should be empowered, subject to specific conditions, to approve them under a simplified procedure.