EU/Madagascar Sustainable Fisheries Partnership Agreement and Implementing Protocol (2023-2027)

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PURPOSE: to conclude, on behalf of the European Union, and provisionally apply a Sustainable Fisheries Partnership Agreement between the European Union and the Republic of Madagascar and its Implementing Protocol (2023-2027).

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: a Fisheries Partnership Agreement between the European Union and the Republic of Madagascar was signed on 19 December 2007 and has been provisionally applied since 1 January 2007. It is tacitly renewable for periods of 6 years from its entry into force. The last Implementing Protocol to this Partnership Agreement was signed on 23 December 2014 and applied from 1 January 2015 until 31 December 2018, when it expired.

The Commission conducted negotiations with Madagascar on concluding a new Sustainable Fisheries Partnership Agreement (SFPA) between the European Union and Madagascar, including a new Implementing Protocol to that Agreement. Following these negotiations, a new text of the Agreement and a new text of the Implementing Protocol were signed on 28 October 2022.

The negotiation of a new SFPA forms part of the EU's external action in relation to African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries and takes into account, in particular, the EU's objectives on respecting democratic principles and human rights.

CONTENT: the purpose of this proposal is to **authorise the conclusion of the Agreement between the European Union and Madagascar and its Implementing Protocol**.

The objectives of the Partnership Agreement and its Protocol are to enable EU vessels to fish in Madagascar's fishing zone and the Union and Madagascar to work closely together to further **promote the development of a sustainable fisheries policy and the responsible exploitation of fishery resources** in that zone and in the Indian Ocean. This cooperation will also contribute to decent working conditions in the fisheries sector.

The new Agreement repeals and replaces the existing Agreement. It covers a period of **4 years** from the date of provisional application laid down in Article 19 thereof, namely 1 July 2023, subject to signature by the Parties, or the date of such signature if it is signed after 1 July 2023.

Fishing opportunities

The new Protocol provides for the following fishing opportunities for highly migratory fish:

- 32 tuna seiners,

- 13 surface longliners with a tonnage greater than 100 GT,

- 20 surface longliners with a tonnage less than or equal to 100 GT,

- and support vessels in accordance with the relevant Indian Ocean Tuna Commission (IOTC) resolutions.

Financial contribution

The annual financial contribution is **EUR 1 800 000**, based on:

(a) a reference tonnage of 14 000 tonnes, for which an annual amount linked to access has been set at EUR 700 000;

(b) support for developing Madagascar's sectoral fisheries policy, amounting to EUR 1 100 000 per year.

This support meets the objectives of cooperation in the fields of sustainable exploitation of fishery resources, aquaculture, sustainable development of the oceans, protection of the marine environment, and the blue economy.