EC/Mozambique fisheries agreement: period from 1st January to 31st December 2006

2003/0154(CNS) - 14/07/2003 - Legislative proposal

PURPOSE : to present a proposal for a Council Regulation on the conclusion of the Fisheries Agreement between the European Community and the Republic of Mozambique. CONTENT : the EC and Mozambique concluded a Fisheries Agreement in 1998 which offered Community vessel owners fishing opportunities for shallow-water shrimp, deep-water shrimp and tuna in return for financial compensation. In practice, this Agreement was gradually restricted to tuna fishing, before being terminated in 1993 by Mozambique, which considered that it was no longer in a position to promote the development of its fishing sector. In May 1996 the Council of Ministers requested the Commission to negotiate a new bilateral Agreement with Mozambique. Exploratory talks were held with Mozambique from 1999 and the new Agreement was initialled on 21 October 2002. The Agreement will enter into force for a period of three years following reciprocal notification by the Parties that their respective adoption procedures have been completed. It will be automatically renewable unless express notice of termination is given by one of the Parties. A Protocol establishing the fishing opportunities and financial compensation and a technical annex, which form an integral part of the Agreement, will enter into force on 1 January 2004 for an initial period of three years. In gaining access to Mozambique waters, EC fishing vessels are therefore resuming fishing activities already carried on in the past, and the new Agreement will be added to the network of Community tuna agreements in the region. Where shrimp fishing opportunities are concerned, the Protocol lays down that a maximum of ten vessels will be authorised to fish for a quota of 1 000 tonnes of deep-water shrimp, as well as 535 tonnes of by-catches. The Commission is responsible for monitoring developments in shrimp-fishing vessels' catches in order to ensure that the overall quota is not exceeded. In addition, for the tuna fishery, the Protocol provides for fishing opportunities for 35 freezer tuna seiners and 14 surface longliners, with a reference tonnage of 8 000 tonnes of tuna and related species. The overall financial compensation has been fixed at EUR 4 090 000 a year, including EUR 3 490 000 for deep-water shrimp fishing (including by-catches) and EUR 600 000 for fishing for tuna and related species. The entire financial compensation will be allocated to measures targeted at institutional development, marine surveillance, research, training, quality control and participation by Mozambique in the meetings of the Joint Committee and other international meetings. This must contribute significantly towards the increased development of management capacities for Mozambique fisheries as a whole. Shrimp fishing vessels fishing under the Agreement will be obliged to take on a sufficient number of Mozambican seamen to make up half of their crew. They will be subjected to health inspection procedures in accordance with Mozambique legislation. These vessels' catches will normally be transhipped in a Mozambican port in the presence of the Mozambican authorities, but if a vessel wishes to leave the fishery zone with its catches on board, it may do so following an inspection in one of the ports by the Mozambican authorities. In either case, catches willbe the subject of international transit certification. None of these inspection procedures may affect the Community origin of the catches. In view of the foregoing, the new Agreement is considered to be well balanced, with a good price-quality ratio, and to be of strategic importance to the EC tuna fishery in the Indian Ocean. Furthermore, it will encourage the responsible and sustainable exploitation of resources to the mutual benefit of the Community and Mozambique. The Commission proposes on this basis that the Council adopt the conclusion of this new Fisheries Agreement between the EC and Mozambique by Regulation. The following measures shall be financed from the financial compensation, to the tune of EUR 4 090 000 a year, broken down as follows: - EUR 1 500 000 for monitoring marine fisheries; - EUR 1 000 000 for institutional development; - EUR 1 000 000 for research; - EUR 430 000 for training; - EUR 100 000 for quality control; - EUR 60 000 for participation in Joint Committee and other international meetings. FINANCIAL STATEMENT : - budget line : B78000: International Fisheries Agreements; - total allocation for action : EUR 4 090 000 to EUR 5 290 000 per year in commitment appropriations; - period of application :the Agreement has been concluded for an initial period of three years, automatically renewable until terminated by one of the two

parties. The Protocol, which contains provisions concerning the fishing opportunities and financial compensation, has been concluded for a period of three years from the date of its entry into force (1.1.2004 to 31.12.2006).