EC/Madagascar fisheries agreement: protocol for the period from 1st January 2004 to 31st December 2006

2004/0070(CNS) - 17/02/2005 - Final act

PURPOSE : to conclude a new Protocol for tuna fishing opportunities and financial contribution between the EU and the Democratic Republic of Madagascar for the period 1 January 2004 and 31 December 2006.

LEGISLATIVE ACT : Council Regulation 555/2005/EC on the conclusion of the Protocol defining for the period 1 January 2004 to 31 December 2006 the tuna fishing opportunities and the financial contribution provided for in the Agreement between the European Economic Community and the Democratic Republic of Madagascar on fishing off Madagascar.

CONTENT : the new Protocol will cover the period 1 January 2004 to 31 December 2006. The Protocol grants fishing opportunities for 40 tuna seiners and 40 surface long liners. The financial contribution is fixed at EUR 825 000 per year, covering an annual catch of 11 000 tonnes of tuna in the waters off Madagascar. A large portion of this amount (EUR 505 000 per year) is earmarked for targeted measures, such as scientific and training programmes, support for an inspection and surveillance system, assistance with the development of traditional fisheries etc.

As well as being in keeping with the tuna agreements concluded by the Community with other Indian Ocean countries, new elements have been introduced into the Protocol. They stress the promotion of responsible and sustainable fishery in the Indian Ocean. Specifically speaking the new elements introduced include:

- An exclusivity clause, which prohibits the existence of private licences or other private arrangements outside the scope of the Agreement;

- A detailed programme for targeted measures , including a schedule and the objectives to be achieved;

- VMS requirements to reinforce checks on vessels operating in the waters off Madagascar, including the transmission of hourly reports giving their course and speed;

- The social clause applicable to local seamen signed on by Community vessels;

- Penalties imposed for infringements of the Protocol and

- A section on safeguarding the marine environment and protected species.

The fishing opportunities provided for in the Protocol shall be allocated among the Member States as follows:

- tuna seiners: Spain: 22 vessels; France: 16 vessels; Italy: 2 vessels;

- surface longliners: Spain: 24 vessels; France: 10 vessels; Portugal: 6 vessels.

If licence applications from these Member States do not cover all the fishing opportunities laid down by the Protocol, the Commission may take into consideration licence applications from any other Member State.

ENTRY INTO FORCE : 16 April 2005.