EC/Comoros Fisheries Partnership Agreement

2006/0032(CNS) - 05/10/2006 - Final act

PURPOSE: to approve a partnership Agreement in the fisheries sector between the European Community and the Union of the Comoros.

LEGISLATIVE ACT: Council Regulation 1563/2006/EC concerning the conclusion of the Partnership Agreement in the fisheries sector between the European Community and the Union of the Comoros.

CONTENT: in 1988, the Community concluded an Agreement with the Islamic Federal Republic of the Comoros on fishing off Comoros. Negotiations on a new Partnership Agreement were initialled in 2004. The purpose of this Regulation is to approve the new Partnership Agreement, which will last for seven years and which can be renewed for an additional seven year period unless notice of termination is given.

The Partnership Agreement provides for the strengthening of economic, financial, technical and scientific co-operation in the fisheries sector. It also establishes partnerships between undertakings with a view to developing economic activities in the fisheries sector and in related activities of common interest.

The main provisions of the Partnership Agreement, which is attached to the Regulation, are as follows:

Scope: The Agreement sets out the principles, rules and procedures that govern economic, financial, technical and scientific co-operation; access to Comorian water by Community fishing vessels; arrangement for policing; and the setting up of company partnerships.

Principles: Both parties agree to promote responsible fishing in Comorian waters; they agree to co-operate on defining and implementing a sectoral fisheries policy and on carrying out regular evaluations; they agree to implementing the Agreement according to good economic practice and social governance; and they agree that Comorian seamen, who are employed by Community vessels, will be regulated according to standards set by the ILO.

Scientific co-operation: both the Community and the Comoros agree to monitor the evolution of resources in the fishing zone in Comorian waters through joint scientific meetings that will be held annually.

Community access: Community vessels will be given access to the fishing zones off the Comoros. Community fishing activities will be subject to the laws and regulations in force in the Comoros.

Licences: Community vessels will only be allowed to fish in the waters off the Comoros if they are in possession of a fishing licence issued under this Agreement.

Financial Contribution: the Community agrees to pay a single financial contribution to the Comoros, which is set out in the Protocol attached to this Agreement. The single contribution is composed of two related elements. Firstly, access by Community vessels to the fishing off the Seychelles and secondly, supporting responsible and sustainable fishing.

In other provisions, the Agreement sets out the terms and conditions for terminating or suspending the Agreement as well as setting up a Joint Committee the purpose of which is to monitor the application of the Agreement.

ENTRY INTO FORCE: 23 October 2006.