EC/Côte d?Ivoire Fisheries Partnership Agreement: implementation of the Agreement 2018-2024. Protocol

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PURPOSE: to conclude, on behalf of the Union, the Protocol on the implementation of the fisheries partnership Agreement between the Côte d?Ivoire and the European Community (2018-2024).

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 fisheries partnership Agreement between the Republic of Côte d?Ivoire and the European Community entered into force on 18 April 2008. The previous Protocol to the Agreement entered into force on 1 July 2013 and expired on 30 June 2018.

On the basis of the relevant negotiating directives, the Commission conducted negotiations with the Government of Côte d?Ivoire with a view to concluding a new Protocol to the Fisheries Partnership Agreement between the European Union and the Côte d?Ivoire.

Following those negotiations, a new Protocol was initialled on 16 March 2018. It shall cover a period of six years from the date of its provisional application.

It is now necessary for this Protocol to be approved on behalf of the European Union.

CONTENT: the present proposal calls on the Council to adopt the decision to approve, on behalf of the Union, the Protocol on the implementation of the Fisheries Partnership Agreement between the European Community and the Republic of Côte d?Ivoire (2018-2024).

The main objective of the Protocol is to enable the European Union and the Republic of Côte d?Ivoire to work more closely together on promoting a sustainable fisheries policy, sound exploitation of fisheries resources in Côte d?Ivoire waters, and Côte d?Ivoire's efforts to develop a blue economy.

It also aims to provide fishing opportunities for Union vessels in Côte d?Ivoire waters, on the basis of the best available scientific advice and following the recommendations of the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT).

The Protocol provides for fishing opportunities in the following categories:

- 28 freezer tuna seiners;
- 8 surface longliners.

Joint committee: the partnership Agreement establishes the joint committee responsible for monitoring its implementation. Furthermore, in accordance with the Protocol, this joint committee 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.

BUDGETARY IMPLICATIONS: the annual financial contribution is EUR 682 000, based on:

- a reference tonnage of 5 500 tonnes, for which an annual amount linked to access has been set at EUR 330 000 for the first two years of application of the Protocol and EUR 275 000 for the remaining years (three to six);
- support for development of the sectoral fisheries policy of the Republic of Côte d?Ivoire for an amount of EUR 352 000 per year during the first two years of application of the Protocol and EUR 407 000 for the remaining years (three to six).