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COMMISSION OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES

Brussels, 3.9.2009
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RECOMMENDATION FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE COUNCIL

authorising the Commission to open negotiations on behalf of the Community with a view to concluding a Fisheries Partnership Agreement with the Solomon Islands

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1. EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM

On 13 March 2006 the Community and the Solomon Islands concluded a Fisheries Partnership Agreement on fishing off Solomon Islands¹. The Protocol thereto, which entered into force on 9 October 2006, defining the fishing opportunities and the financial contribution provided for in the Agreement, is due to expire on 8 October 2009.

In order to take account of the 2004 Council Conclusions on Fisheries Partnership Agreements, a new Fisheries Partnership Agreement should be negotiated to replace the existing one.

Moreover, the Commission proposes that the protocol to be annexed to the new agreement should be more in line with the current opportunities and recognised requirements of Member States' fleets, in accordance with the 2004 Council Conclusions. Initialling a new protocol before the date of expiry of the existing Protocol would allow fishing activities to continue without interruption.

The Council is requested to approve the negotiating directives in the Annex hereto.

2. RECOMMENDATION

In the light of the above, the Commission recommends that:

- the Council authorise the Commission to open and conduct negotiations with a view to concluding a new Fisheries Partnership Agreement with Solomon Islands;
- the Commission conduct those negotiations in accordance with the Treaty establishing the European Community;
- the Council approve the negotiating directives in the Annex hereto.

Done in Brussels

For the Commission

Member of the Commission

¹ Council Regulation (EC) No 563/2006 of 13 March 2006 concerning the conclusion of the Partnership Agreement between the European Community and Solomon Islands on fishing off Solomon Island (OJ L 105, 13.4.2006, p. 33).

ANNEX

Negotiating directives

The negotiations are aimed at concluding a Fisheries Partnership Agreement between the Community and Solomon Islands in accordance with the Council Conclusions of 15 July 2004 based on the Commission Communication of 23 December 2002.

With a view to promoting responsible fishing and sustainable fisheries through this Partnership Agreement, the Commission will base the negotiations on the following objectives:

- define fishing opportunities for Community vessels, taking account of the use actually made of fishing opportunities by operators under the existing Protocol, the future prospects for fishing activities, the state of resources and the Solomon Islands' capacity for implementing a sustainable resource management policy;
- take account of the best available scientific advice;
- reinforce the dialogue on sectoral policy in order to encourage the implementation of a responsible fisheries policy, in keeping with the country's development objectives, particularly as regards fisheries control and surveillance, fisheries resource management and improvement of the health and hygiene conditions of fishery products.