

Investing in sustainable fisheries

The contribution of commercial fishing to coastal communities and local economies across the UK is significant. However, this industry is facing a number of challenges. A decline in fish stocks, damage to marine ecosystems and habitats, changing market demands along with other social and economic factors are all affecting the industry's sustainability.

The European Fisheries Fund (EFF) is a driver of development. It is helping fishermen, fish processing and aquaculture businesses to adapt to these changing needs. It is supporting necessary infrastructure projects and improvements which benefit groups of people working in the fisheries sector. It also supports the development of economies in fisheries areas.

The EFF scheme is implemented in the UK by the following organisations; Marine Management Organisation (England), Marine Scotland, the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (Northern Ireland) and the Welsh Government. The delivery of the EFF scheme across the UK has been, and will continue to be, at the heart of these organisations and this shows a clear commitment to supporting the fishing sector and communities towards a sustainable future.





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Introduction to the European Fisheries Fund

The European Fisheries Fund (EFF) was introduced by the European Union to support the implementation of the Common Fisheries Policy (CFP). The fund, which runs from 2007 to December 2013, provides €4.3 billion to help the European fisheries sector to adapt to the regulations set out in the CFP. It provides support towards a range of activities, including:

- Ensuring the long-term future of fishing activities and the sustainable use of fishery resources.
- Reducing pressure on stocks by matching EU fleet capacity to availability.
- Promoting the sustainable development of inland fishing.
- Boosting economically viable enterprises in the fisheries sector and making operating structures more competitive.
- Helping to protect the environment and the conservation of marine resources.
- Encouraging sustainable development of areas with an active fishing industry.

EU Member States were each required to submit an Operational Programme (OP) in order to secure assistance from the EFF. These strategies set out in more detail the countries' priority areas for awarding funds.

Around £111 million has been made available through the EFF for the UK. This will be used towards the following priorities, which are explained in more detail in the UK Operational Programme (OP).

- To boost the balance between fishing effort and opportunity.
- To boost profitability by obtaining increased returns from the same inputs, and
- To increase profitability compared to other EU Member States.

To access the funding available, people, businesses, organisations and fishing communities must apply through one of four funding streams, or 'Axes,' which are each covered in more detail in this document.

From the start of the programme in 2007 to 31 December 2011 £70.9 million has been committed from the EFF towards projects in the UK.



Axis 1 - Measures for the adaptation of the community fishing fleet

Objective:

The main objective of Axis 1 is to contribute to the sustainable development of fishing resources and to improve performance and profitability of the fishing fleet.

Key measures:

The key measures for the UK in this Axis cover ensuring fishing vessels are able to operate competitively and efficiently, enabling fishing effort to match opportunities and maintaining small-scale coastal fishing activity.

Eligibility:

When the EFF scheme launched in the UK the average age of vessels in the fleet was 23 years. Consequently, critical projects for support through Axis 1 include adapting the fleet to make vessels safer, more fuel efficient and have a lower maintenance requirement.

Upgrading safety, working conditions, hygiene, conservation, energy efficiency or adopting more sustainable fishing methods may all qualify for funding through this Axis of the EFF scheme providing they don't increase the vessel's capacity to catch fish.

Progress:

As at 31 December 2011 a total of £9 million was committed on 585 projects in the UK.

The OP includes a target for Axis 1 of helping to increase the annual value of fish landed per vessel to £111,000 in 2015. This was exceeded in 2011, when the value of fish landed per vessel was £128,775. This value has increased from £95,000 since the scheme began.

Vessel modernisation

Through Axis 1 fishermen may receive support to modernise their vessels in order to improve safety and working conditions, reduce costs and increase energy efficiency.

Improving crew safety

The number of UK fishermen fatalities or injuries has decreased from 64 at the start of the scheme to 45 in 2010 and the EFF plays an important role in helping to reduce this further.

Examples of grants awarded to help improve safety on board fishing vessels include:

- Over £15,000 was granted to a vessel in Banffshire, Scotland to make improvements to the deck. Thin steel plating was replaced by sacrificial timber which is purposely oversized to enhance its fire resistance. This improved onboard safety.
- A vessel in Cornwall, England received a grant of over £8,000 for a new power block. This is used to haul in ring nets and can land the catch anywhere on deck meaning the crew do not have to stand underneath the nets and risk injury.
- Nearly £8,000 was awarded to install new rails and a conveyor belt system on a vessel in Devon, England. The rails were installed to prevent crew falling overboard and the conveyor belt system enhances catch quality by more effectively moving the catch to the fish room.

Axis 3 of the EFF in the UK is complementing the improvements made on board vessels and supporting safer activities through funding education and training for fishermen as well as funding collective action projects for members of various fisheries associations.

Energy efficiency and fuel consumption

In 2011 UK fuel prices were among the highest in Europe which has been a major concern for the fishing industry.

The EFF is helping by providing funding towards projects which deliver more fuel efficient working methods such as installing new engines and generators thereby reducing the costs to the fleet. Grants include:

- A vessel in Banffshire, Scotland received over £117,000 for a full vessel modernisation project. This improved fuel efficiency and reduced costs. The safety and working conditions of the crew also improved as did hygiene and product quality.
- Nearly £16,000 was awarded to a vessel in Devon, England for a new generator. This reduced fuel consumption as well as increasing safety for the crew by providing a constant flow of electricity for lighting and hygiene facilities.
- A vessel in Suffolk, England received nearly £6,000 for a new engine. This increased vessel efficiency and reduced emissions, along with reducing the owner's maintenance costs significantly.



Objective:

The main objective of Axis 2 is to improve the profitability and competitiveness of aquaculture, processing and marketing of fishery and aquaculture products.

Key measures:

Through the key measures set in the OP, the UK aims to achieve this in a number of ways, including enabling improvements in production and welfare, supporting projects which respond to changing consumer demand and contributing to lifelong learning in the aquaculture, fish processing and marketing sectors.

Eligibility:

Funding is available to support investments in the construction, extension, equipping and modernisation of fish processing companies enabling them to extend their product ranges and move into new markets. This can include processing machines and other associated equipment and facilities used by the trade.

The EFF scheme also supports the development of aquaculture production sites for species where demand is currently exceeding supply and for companies to diversify into new species for human consumption which aren't widely produced in the UK.

Progress:

As at 31 December 2011 a total of £19.5 million was committed on 269 projects in the UK.

As set out in the OP the EFF aims to help the UK aquaculture industry increase its turnover to achieve £600 million by 2015. Good progress is being made towards this target, with turnover for the sector being around £494 million in 2010. (2011 figures available from December 2012).

The 2015 target of £2.6 billion for the processing sector has already been surpassed, with an annual turnover in 2010 of £3.2 billion. (2011 figures available from December 2012).

Processing

Seafood processor receives funding boost in England

Cornish Seafood processor Falfish were granted over £480,000 to expand ice making and freezing capacity at their plant. The aim of the project is to improve the quality and hygiene of the products and enable the company to meet the demand to supply seafood to various businesses. The site will also include a staff training area and 30 jobs are expected to be created in the local fishing industry.

Scottish seafood processor expands plant to meet increasing customer demand

Whitelink Seafood were granted over £460,000 for a factory restructure of their seafood processing plant in Fraserburgh. This includes a new chilled storage area and a cooking area. This will enable the company to cook and pack langoustine and allow an increase in exportation. The prawn processing

facilities will also be improved to allow increasing customer demand to be met. The company will also be able to commence cooking and packing brown crab and whelks to widen their range of products. Six full time jobs will be created.

New wholesale fish market

Over £440,000 was awarded to City Markets Glasgow City in Scotland for the creation of a new fish market. The new purpose built facilities will meet all food safety, traceability and environmental legislation requirements. The new market will provide a safer and enhanced visiting experience for buyers. The efficiency of logistics will also enhance the quality of the products. The project will create ten full time and two part time jobs within the industry.

Welsh family business receives funding boost

The Lobster Pot in Anglesey, a family business founded in the 1940s, received a grant of over £254,000 for a new facility to process lobsters. The facility includes new improved storage facilities which means the lobsters can be held in stress free conditions prior to being exported to Europe. The facility also includes a drop off point so fishermen can access storage during unsociable hours meaning the quality of the lobster is not compromised. The expansion is expected to create three new jobs. The company also plans to hold tours to engage with local schools and tourists.

Quayside expansion in North East England

Over £116,000 was awarded to Hartlepool quayside to expand their processing and storage facilities. This included new scales, lobster tanks, a vacuum packer and refrigeration equipment. This allows more landing at the quayside to meet demand and increase exportation. Three new jobs could be created as a result of the expansion.

New unit to help shellfish processor expand in Northern Ireland

£3,400 was awarded to Ardglass Shellfish in County Down, a micro business hoping to expand. The company sells locally caught periwinkles for exportation to Europe. The grant helped the company to move into a processing unit, purchase a forklift truck and invest in cold storage, therefore improving the capacity to export periwinkles. This improved the quality of the product and allowed the company to handle greater capacity which meant they could further export their products to Spain and France. They were also able to create one full time and one part time job.

Aquaculture

Salmon fishery in Northern Ireland

£151,000 was awarded to help a salmon fishery in County Antrim. EFF helped the company develop by funding new equipment such as suitable nets and cages. This allowed the company to increase production to meet demand, reduce costs and create two extra jobs.

Mussel fishery in Wales

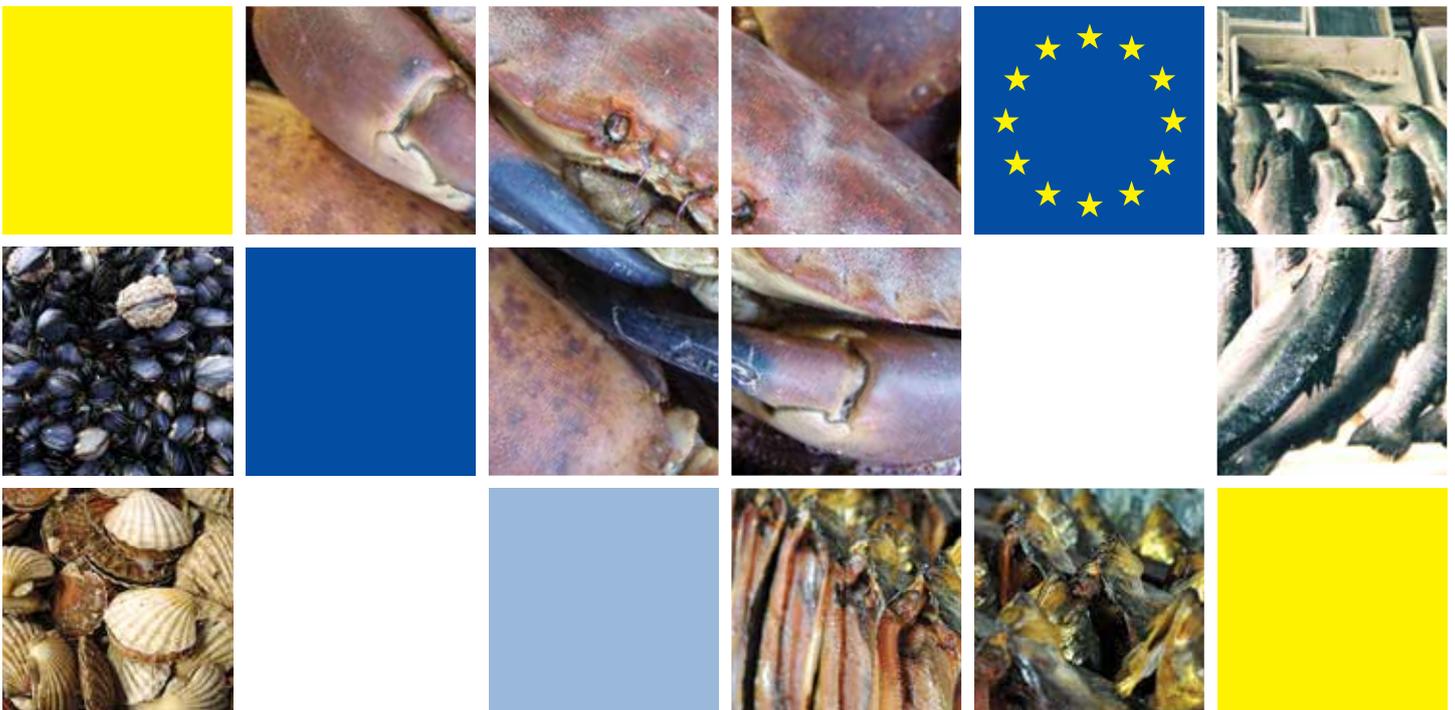
Thomas Shellfish were awarded over £130,000 to develop a new commercial mussel fishery in Queen's Dock, Swansea. The site uses the rope grown system where mussel larvae already in the sea, attach themselves to the rope. The mussels are not harvested until they have reached full size. Due to this type of fishing no dredging is necessary when the ropes are removed. The project utilises sustainable and environmentally friendly methods and should allow the mussels to be exported to Europe on a large scale.

Welfare enhancement at rainbow trout fishery in Scotland

Selcoth Fisheries were awarded £80,000 for a welfare enhancement project for juvenile fish at their rainbow trout fishery in Dumfriesshire. This provided funding for new equipment to keep the trout in stress free conditions and increase survival rates. The improvement in fish welfare will also increase the quality and price of the product. The equipment will reduce the company's oxygen input costs.

Tilapia fish farm recycles waste water

Lockwood estates farm in Lincolnshire, England have established a tilapia fish farm and were awarded over £6,000 to install underground pipes and pumps which allowed them to recycle waste water, avoiding the need to use chemicals whilst maintaining the quality and growth rates of the fish allowing production to increase.



Objective:

Axis 3 supports the sustainable development of the fishing industry, its competitiveness and profitability.

Key measures:

Through this Axis, the scheme aims to support collective actions which contribute to the conservation of resources, improving the services offered by fishing ports, strengthening markets for fishery products or promoting partnerships between scientists and fishermen.

Eligibility:

Grants from this part of the EFF can be used to help pay for improvements to facilities and working conditions, including regeneration projects in ports around the UK. Smaller projects can also be funded through this part of the EFF including lifting and handling equipment (landing davits, forklift trucks and boat hoists), storage facilities (fuel tanks, secure areas and ice systems) and landing facilities (pontoons, jetties and slipways).

Progress:

As at 31 December 2011 £33.9million was committed on 308 projects in the UK.

The OP 2015 target for Axis 3 of 6,500 UK fishermen attending non-mandatory training courses each year was exceeded in 2010 with 8,266 training places taken. (2011 figures not yet available.) This has increased from 6,130 since the scheme began.

Port and harbour redevelopments

Harbour development in Scotland

Over £7.5 million has been awarded for a large scale development at Fraserburgh harbour. The harbour is going to be deepened which will increase the availability of mooring and landing berths at the port. This project will significantly reduce vessel congestion which will increase safety. The development will also ensure delays in landings are avoided meaning the quality of catches landed will improve. The extra capacity will increase the volume of landings in the port meaning better value for the Scottish fishing industry. Two new full time jobs will also be created.

Enhancements to fish dock safeguards jobs

Grimsby fish dock in England received nearly £607,000 to improve their facilities. A new landing area was built which included new grading and weighing equipment.

The expansion of the loading bay allows more room for containers and lorries which means products can be exported quickly and efficiently. An auction area was also developed allowing local catch to be sold on site. This adds value to the fish as it is fresher and in good condition. This contributed to safeguarding jobs at the market as well as the wider fishing industry and local businesses in an area where unemployment is high.

Old fish pier redevelopment

Scrabster Harbour Trust in Caithness, Scotland were awarded £500,000 for the redevelopment of the old fish pier. A large quay will be created and deepening will take place in the harbour to allow a wider variety of vessels to berth. The harbour will also include 24-hour fuel, water and power services to minimise vessel servicing time. The fish market building will also be upgraded to allow fishermen easy access and provide cold storage facilities. The project will deliver benefits to both the regional and wider fish catching and processing sector. Fishing income is expected to increase and the long term sustainability will be protected, which is of great importance to the local fishing community in a remote area of the Highlands.

Fish Market Upgrade

Just under £300,000 was awarded to Ardglass Fish Market in Northern Ireland for an upgrade to their facilities. The fish market was dilapidated and required an upgrade which included new units for the local fishing fleet to store and weigh their catch. The upgrade also included new lighting which improved safety and security on the site and new toilets and showers which improved the standard of hygiene.

Derelict quay revamped

£275,000 was awarded to Warkworth harbour in Northumberland, England. One of the quays at the harbour was inaccessible due to storm damage. This was resurfaced and stabilised so berthing conditions were safer. A new quay is also to be built in a deep water area of the harbour. This will make the harbour accessible to larger vessels meaning more fishermen can land their catch there. The new quay will also free up space in the existing areas for the under 10 metre fleet, raise additional income for the harbour and prevent further erosion of the river bed.

Port regeneration in Pembrokeshire

South and West Wales Fishing Communities Ltd were awarded over £36,000 for improvements to Milford Haven docks. A new mechanical hoist is to be installed to make the landing area safer and allow diversification of fishing activities such as sprat and line caught mackerel.

Collective actions

Mentor a busnes

Cywain Fisheries in Wales were granted £641,000 to set up a training/steering group to support members of the fisheries sector to create new products and enter new markets. Mentor a busnes provides advice to the fisheries catching and marketing sector as well as the aquaculture sector in Wales by engaging with various associations and their members.

The Innovation Fund launched in November 2010 and was aimed at supporting new ideas which could improve the way the under-10 metre sector operates in England.

Up to 90 per cent funding was available towards projects seeking to develop new, more sustainable ways of working, which in turn may help the long-term future of the sector.

Several projects were funded during 2011 which covered ideas to share experiences, improve safety, reduce the environmental impact of fishing, including discards, and increase catch quality and value.

Simulation training

The Western Training Association was awarded £300,000 to install a ship's bridge and radar simulator at its centre in Plymouth. The new development will be used to deliver a number of additional courses and qualifications at the centre.

The development will help fishermen to obtain the necessary qualifications to diversify their roles within the fishing industry should they wish, such as offshore renewable energy projects. Currently many of their existing qualifications are not transferable to merchant marine roles.

New man over board system

CNV systems Ltd in North Shields, Tyneside was granted over £144,000 through the EFF for a new man over board and alert system. Research identified that the best chance of survival for a fishermen over board is to get back onboard their vessel.

The SC4 inshore fisheries man over board alert and rescue system involves the fishermen wearing a transmitter. Should the fisherman go overboard the system automatically breaks an electronic perimeter around the vessel sending a signal to the unit onboard, which in turn controls the engine power. A distress signal is also sent to the authorities.

The system benefits the fisherman and the authorities, giving specific vessel location data both in real time and historical format. The addition of a vessels' engine being stopped during this event will dramatically improve survival chances both in fair and rough sea conditions.

Smart phone technology

A south coast seafood promotional organisation has set up a new smart phone app. The Local Catch app and website allows users of smart phones, tablets and computers to receive alerts telling them where they can buy fresh seafood recently caught in their area. The project, created by South East Seafood, was awarded over £50,000 through the EFF.

The development should boost the price south coast fishermen receive for their catch as well as helping consumers obtain fresh, local produce. Local Catch is free to download from the Android Market and Apple's App Store and is also available online (www.localcatch.co.uk).

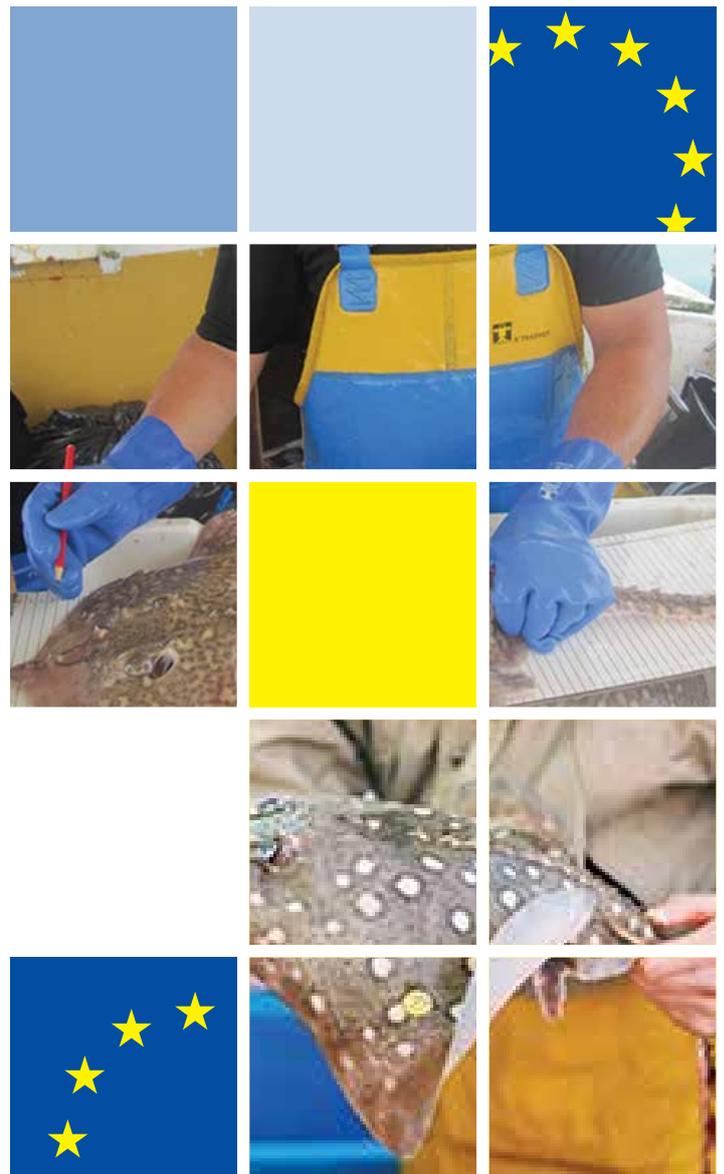
Fishermen social network

Over £18,000 was granted to the Greenfishers project in Berkshire.

The project is aimed to improve access to fisheries information and share local knowledge within the under 10 metre fleet in England via a website.

Fishermen can log onto the website which is organised through a map of the coast, showing where under 10 metre vessels are based. It also includes names and pictures of vessels as well as people and businesses linked to the vessel.

'Green' best practices and activities which the vessel takes part in can be shared and promoted including Seafish Responsible Fishing Scheme; Fishing for litter; Fisheries Science Partnership; Fisheries sustainability certification; along with best practice that participants want to showcase or would like to know more about.



Objective:

The objective of Axis 4 is to support the sustainable development of fisheries areas and is delivered through local groups who represent the area. In the UK around £8.5 million has been made available to help these communities.

Following a competitive selection process, 23 areas across the UK have been chosen to become Fisheries Local Action Groups (FLAGs) as part of the scheme. The groups have been set up in the following areas and will each use a share of the funding to help diversify their local economies.

England

Cornwall, Hastings, North Devon, North & West Cumbria, Holderness Coast and North Norfolk.

Scotland

Shetland, Orkney, Highland, Western Isles, Aberdeenshire, Angus, Fife, East Lothian, Scottish Borders, Dumfries and Galloway, Moray and Argyll, Bute & South Ayrshire.

Wales

Swansea, Pembrokeshire, Ceredigion, and Gwynedd & Anglesey.

Northern Ireland

There is one FLAG in Northern Ireland.

FLAGs provide a good knowledge of the challenges facing the local fishing fleet and are committed to involving a wide range of people in their work including those working directly in the fisheries sector. The FLAGs also include local councils, private sector businesses, fishermen's associations and education and conservation organisations.

The strategies being produced by the FLAGs link to a range of themes which meet the Axis 4 objectives. Some of the practical ideas already discussed include developing local brands and new markets for fish products, maximising fishing-related opportunities provided for tourists, encouraging co-operation and communication within the fishing industry and working with partners on initiatives to help people learn more about their local marine environment and fishing.





Cadgwith Cove

Applying for funding

Anyone considering developing their business, investing in new facilities and equipment or carrying out a project which may benefit the fisheries sector is encouraged to first contact their government's EFF delivery team to see whether their idea may qualify for funding through the EFF.

The EFF cannot support work that has already been started or items that have already been purchased, so it is vital that potential applicants speak to the relevant organisation before committing to any project.

More information about the EFF can be found in the fisheries section in the appropriate regional website or can be obtained by calling:

England	www.marinemanagement.org.uk 0300 123 1032
Northern Ireland	www.dardni.gov.uk 0300 200 7852
Scotland	www.scotland.gov.uk 0845 774 174
Wales	www.wales.gov.uk 0300 060 3300

