

Citizen's summary (Article 50(9) of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013)

Citizens Summary for the UK European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF) 2017.

Background

The UK EMFF programme has a budget of €243 million and aims at achieving key national development priorities along with the "Europe 2020" objectives. The strategy for the use of the funding, contained within the Operational Programme (OP), addresses the general reform of the Common Fisheries Policy (CFP) and the development of the Integrated Maritime Policy (IMP).

The UK EMFF programme objectives are defined under 4 main policy goals:

1. Adapting the fisheries sector to the requirements of the reformed CFP – focused on the transition of the fleet to sustainably managed and discard-free fisheries including innovation
2. Fostering growth potential across the fisheries, aquaculture and processing supply chains - through support for innovation, onshore and offshore investments in infrastructure
3. Supporting the increased economic, environmental and social sustainability of the sector – through efficient use of natural resources, support policies that will attract and maintain people in coastal areas and improving local governance.
4. Fulfilling the UK's enforcement and data collection obligations under the CFP – by developing IT tools and technologies to support control and enforcement, improving the traceability of fisheries products, adapting data collection to respond to the new requirements of the reformed CFP.

Funding priorities

The UK EMFF programme is organised around the following priorities:

Union Priority 1 (UP1) Promoting environmentally sustainable, resource efficient, innovative, competitive and knowledge based fisheries:

A total budget of €67.5million (28%) is available with the aim of striking the right balance between fisheries activities, environmental protection and thus contributing to the sustainable development of the fisheries sector. The accent is put on innovative research projects whose outcomes will add value to the sector, energy savings and scientific knowledge.

Since the UK opened for applications in 2016, 778 projects with an EMFF value of €42.7million (£33.4million) were approved, representing 63% of the EMFF budget allocation of €67.5million (£59.6million).

The majority of approved projects fall under Health and Safety, with 267 projects approved (34% of all UP1 projects), Limiting the impact of fishing on the marine environment, with 175 projects approved (23%) and Added value, product quality and use of unwanted catches, which has 133 approved projects (17%).

Of the 778 selected operations, 86 (11%) are under implementation, 366 (47%) are completed and 326 (42%) are covered by a decision granting aid where no expenditure has been declared.

In relation to the gender of applicants, 737 (95%) were male, 37 (5%) female with 4 other. The size of the operators requesting assistance were as follows; 646 were micro enterprises, 90 small, 24 medium, 4 large and 14 non-SMEs.

The best performing indicators are those related to maintaining employment, increasing net profits, reducing injuries and accidents and increasing fuel efficiency.

Union Priority 2 (UP2) Fostering environmentally sustainable, resource efficient, innovative, competitive and knowledge based aquaculture:

A budget of €19.3 million (8%) is available to focus on aquaculture and supporting innovative projects to help expand production while improving sustainability of the sector. Funding will also support greater profitability in the sector through improvements in predator control, the potential of new species being cultured, opening up of new aquaculture locations and diversification in income through complementary activities.

Since the UK opened for applications in 2016, 53 projects with an EMFF value of €8.3million (£6.5million) were approved, representing 43% of the EMFF budget allocation of €19.3million (£17.1million).

The majority of approved projects fall under Productive investments in aquaculture with 45 projects approved (85% of all UP2 projects).

Of the 53 operations selected, 18 (34%) are under implementation, 9 (17%) are completed and 26 (49%) are covered by a decision granting aid where no expenditure has been declared.

In relation to the gender of applicants, 42 (79%) were male with 11 (21%) female. The size of the operators requesting assistance were as follows; 38 were micro enterprises, 11 small and 4 medium.

The best performing indicators are those related to change in volume and value of aquaculture production along with an increase of net profits.

Union Priority 3 (UP3) Fostering the implementation of the Common Fisheries Policy:

A budget of €97.6 million (40%) is available towards the implementation of control, inspection and enforcement system as required by the Common Fisheries Policy (CFP) as well as the collection, management and use of data required by the CFP.

Since the UK opened for applications in 2016, 12 projects with an EMFF value of €14.5million (£11.3million) were approved, which is 15% of the total EMFF budget allocation of €97.6million (£86.2million).

Of the 12 operations selected, 3 (25%) are under implementation, 2 (17%) are completed and 7 (58%) are covered by a decision granting aid where no expenditure has been declared.

As outlined in the OP work on Data Collection is concentrating on;

- the collection, management and use of data for the purpose of scientific analysis and implementation of the CFP and validation and quality control;
- biological sampling of stocks covered by the CFP;
- research surveys at sea;

- at-sea monitoring of commercial and recreational fisheries, including monitoring of by-catch of marine organisms such as marine mammals and birds;
- collection of economic and socio-economic data;
- development and improvement of data collection and data management systems.
- coordination and support for research on the marine environment; and
- participation in regional and other coordination meetings; meetings of regional fisheries management organisations.

During 2017, the UK made progress in developing its plans and approach for accessing EMFF funding to support the implementation of the CFP. A key feature has been to focus on areas where the UK needs to improve levels of compliance. A wide range of initiatives are being progressed which include;

- redeveloping IT as an enabler to improve compliance;
- developing training programmes for compliance officers; and
- upgrading patrol vessels to monitor inshore fisheries and funding surveillance activities in Specific Control & Inspection Programme areas.

Union Priority 4 (UP4): Increasing employment and territorial cohesion

A budget of €13.6 million (6%) is available for fisheries and aquaculture dependent communities to diversify their economies and bring added value to their fishing activities through improved local marketing and supply chain logistics. In 2017, the Northern Ireland South East Area FLAG was established, bringing the total number of FLAGs in the UK to nineteen. FLAGs approved prior to 2017 were as follows; eight in Scotland (Argyle and Ayrshire, Dumfries and Galloway, Forth, Highland Moray, North East of Scotland, Orkney, Outer Hebrides and Shetland), six in England (Dorset and East Devon, Cornwall and Isles of Scilly, Holderness, Hastings, North of Tyne and North Thames) and four in Wales (North Wales, Pembrokeshire, Swansea and Cardigan Bay).

Since the UK opened for applications in 2016, 91 projects with an EMFF value of €3.6million (£2.8million) have been approved, which is 27% of the total EMFF budget allocation of €18.1million (£15.9million).

Of the 91 operations selected, 17 (19%) are under implementation, 4 (4%) are completed and 70 (77%) are covered by a decision granting aid where no expenditure has been declared.

In relation to the gender of applicants, 78 (86%) were male, 12 (13%) female and 1 (1%) other. The size of the operators requesting assistance were as follows; 68 were micro enterprises, 12 small, 2 medium, 6 large and 3 non SME.

The most common indicators selected were employment created and business created, both of which are showing positive progress towards reaching the 2023 target.

Union Priority 5 (UP5) Fostering marketing and processing:

A budget of €27.2 million (11%) is available to focus on investments in the development of new or improved fisheries and shellfish products, as well as marketing and promotional campaigns. The Producer Organisations will be supported to take a greater role in production and marketing.

Since the UK opened for applications in 2016, 126 projects with an EMFF value of €16.0million (£12.5million) have been approved, which is 59% of the total EMFF budget allocation of €27.2million (£24.1million).

The majority of approved projects fall under the processing of fishery and aquaculture products, with 108 projects approved (86% of all UP5 projects).

Of the 126 operations selected, 41 (33%) are under implementation, 35 (28%) are completed and 50 (40%) are covered by a decision granting aid where no expenditure has been declared.

In relation to the gender of applicants, 112 (89%) were male with 14 (11%) female. The size of the operators requesting assistance were as follows; 38 were micro enterprises, 51 small and 37 medium.

All indicators have positive expected results against them, particularly those related to change in value and volume of first sales in non-Producer Organisations.

There are currently no plans to utilise the Storage Aid budget of €0.6million (£0.5million) which is likely to be decommitted as this funding is ring-fenced and cannot be reallocated to other Union Priorities.

Union Priority 6 (UP6) Fostering the implementation of the Integrated Maritime Policy:

A budget of €5.3 million (3%) is available to support the Marine Strategy Framework Directive and an effective marine planning process. Funding will be used to establish baselines and monitoring to tackle more complex issues such as cumulative impacts, future analysis and filling knowledge gaps. The main activities under this UP have focused on informal engagement with potential applicants and stakeholders to highlight potential options for funding under the EMFF scheme.

Since the UK opened for applications in 2016, 5 projects with an EMFF value of €0.8million (£0.6million) have been approved, which is 15% of the total EMFF budget allocation of €5.3million (£4.7million).

Of the 5 operations selected, all are covered by a decision granting aid where no expenditure has been declared.

In relation to the gender of applicants, 4 (80%) were male with 1 (20%) female. The size of the operators requesting assistance were as follows; 4 were micro enterprises and 1 large.

Union Priority 7 (UP7) Technical Assistance:

A budget of €12.5 million (4%) is allocated to support the UK delivery bodies in implementing and managing the scheme. This will include reinforcing the implementation system, ensuring efficient administration of the EU funding, including support to reduce the burden on beneficiaries, improving e-administration and publicity and information measures.

Since the start of the EMFF scheme, 25 projects with an EMFF value of €5.9million (£4.6million) have been approved, which is 47% of the total EMFF budget allocation of €12.6million (£11.1million).