



Department
for Environment
Food & Rural Affairs

www.gov.uk/defra

Consultation on the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF)

Summary of responses

July 2014

Contents

Introduction	3
Overview of responses	4
Summary of responses to consultation questions:.....	4
SWOT analysis and needs assessment.....	4
UK strategic priorities	5
Measures selected	5
Budgetary allocation.....	6
Multiannual national plan for the development of sustainable aquaculture	6
Impact assessment	7
Response.....	9
Next steps.....	10
Annex A: List of respondents to the consultation.....	11

Introduction

1. This document contains the summary of responses to the consultation on the implementation of the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF) in the UK and the proposed measures that the fund would support. The consultation was carried out by the UK Government and applied to England, Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales.

2. The EMFF is the new fund for the EU's maritime and fisheries policy for 2014-2020 and is the successor to the European Fisheries Fund. The EMFF aims to:

- Help fishermen in the transition to sustainable fishing and to adjust to the requirements of the reformed Common Fisheries Policy (CFP);
- Support the development of sustainable aquaculture;
- Support coastal communities in diversifying their economies;
- Finance projects that deliver economic growth and improve quality of life for coastal communities;
- Deliver on European Blue Growth and the Atlantic Strategy;
- Make it easier to access financing;
- Allow Member States to carry out effective data collection and enforcement programmes as required under the CFP.

3. The fund is expected to open for applications in the UK in early 2015. In addition to the 'core' grant-making portion of the fund with which this consultation is concerned, there will also be separate ring-fenced budgets for enforcement of Community rules and data collection obligations specified by the European Commission. Under the 'core' portion of the fund, each administration in the UK will select a number of measures that it wishes to fund.

4. Included in the consultation and supporting the UK's proposed strategy for the EMFF was the draft SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats) analysis and needs assessment; a draft Multiannual National Plan for the Development of Sustainable Aquaculture (which Member States are required to produce under the reform of the Common Fisheries Policy); and a draft Impact Assessment for the proposed EMFF measures. Comments were requested on these three documents.

5. At the time of the consultation the European Commission had not informed the UK of its EMFF allocation. Therefore the consultation document and the accompanying Impact Assessment assumed that over the whole EMFF programming period, the UK would receive €138 million for the 'core' budget (the same as it received under the EFF), €24 million for control and enforcement measures, and €30 million for data collection. While the allocation of the fund between the four UK administrations had yet to be determined, the

percentage distribution between the strategic priorities had been agreed. This response only reports the comments received on the questions posed on the budgetary allocations in the consultation.

6. In June 2014 the European Commission notified the UK of its EMFF allocation.

Overview of responses

7. Eighteen responses to the consultation were received in total from a wide range of stakeholder organisations representing the fishing / aquaculture sectors, and also Local Authorities, Non-Departmental Public Bodies and Non-Government Organisations. Nine responses were received that included specific responses to the questions asked in the consultation; whilst nine were more generic in nature as to the measures and priorities that the EMFF should support.

Summary of responses to consultation questions:

SWOT analysis and needs assessment

Q1: Do you have any comments on the draft SWOT analysis and needs assessment?

8. Ten responses were received for this question and all recognised the hard work undertaken to produce the SWOT, and that it generally covered all the main issues. One response fully supported the analysis as set out, but nine respondents provided a number of observations as follows:

- [From two respondents] Article 42 (Inland fishing and inland aquatic fauna and flora) is not covered or mentioned in the SWOT analysis, therefore the SWOT needs revising to include the possible measures available under this article (i.e. migratory fish; recreational angling).
- Welsh section failed to recognise the strength of a developed infrastructure of food centres to support product development and diversification;
- An element of realism was needed around what the fund can realistically achieve with the finances available (especially in the fisheries area section):
- More needed to place the fishing industry within the broader context and the constraints and pressures this creates and therefore a number of other elements should be considered [which the respondent listed in detail].

- Further consideration needed to support the Under-10 metre / small scale fishing fleet, particularly with regard to Producer Organisation creation / membership and access to quota;
- Take more account of the role of stakeholders other than those representing the commercial sector, processors and scientists. Improve the link with multiannual fisheries action plans. Missing specific mention of incidental catch (bycatch) as opposed to discards.
- Include fisheries and options wider than just the transition to discard free fisheries in the opportunities to use financial engineering to assist SME's to succeed when faced with short-term capital issues.
- In the Needs Assessment, more emphasis is required on the role of POs in developing production and marketing plans in the 'Marketing and Processing related measures'.

UK strategic priorities

Q2: Do you agree with the strategic priorities proposed for the fund in the UK? If not, please provide supporting evidence.

9. Again, ten responses were received to this question, with all supporting the proposed strategic priorities for the fund in the UK. The majority of the respondents recognised and welcomed the focus on implementing the reformed CFP (in particular supporting the transition to sustainably managed discard-free fisheries) as the key priority. One respondent believed that it was necessary to develop the capacity of Fisheries Local Action Groups (FLAGs) and offer greater investment in order to achieve their potential, including increasing the links between the EMFF and other European Structural Investment funds to support their activities. A respondent also felt that the inshore and small scale fleet and the challenges they face in the transition to discard-free fisheries should be given greater importance.

Measures selected

Q3: Do you agree with the selection of measures at Annex A? Will they contribute effectively to the UK's strategic priorities? If not, please provide supporting evidence.

10. Eight of the ten respondents to this question fully supported the proposed selection of measures for the fund. Whilst two other respondents were also supportive, they believed that there were gaps in the priorities that needed to be taken into consideration. Specifically, these related to the measures promoting the sustainable development of fisheries (and in particular provisions relating to capacity of the fleet and effort reduction; fishing opportunities; small-scale fleet; multiannual fisheries management plans; achieving maximum sustainable yield; gear selectivity); and also the integrated maritime policy.

Budgetary allocation

Q4: Do you agree with the proposed allocation of funds between Union Priorities? Will this allow the UK to effectively address its strategic priorities?

11. This question produced divided opinions amongst nine respondents, with four respondents supportive of the proposed allocation of funds between the Union Priorities, and four against. One respondent believed there was insufficient information to provide an unequivocal answer. Out of the four that were against the proposed allocation, these related specifically to the proposed budgets for Scotland and Wales in respect of Union Priorities 1 and 4. Another response to this question highlighted the need for funds to be transferred from one administration to another in the event of underspends in a programme to maximise the use of funds for the benefit of the UK as a whole.

Multiannual national plan for the development of sustainable aquaculture

Q5: Do you agree with the general approach and strategy of the draft multiannual national plan for the development of sustainable aquaculture?

12. Again this divided opinion amongst 7 recipients, with three in favour of the general approach and strategy of the draft Multiannual National Plan (MANP) for aquaculture. The four respondents who disagreed raised the following points:

- Concern over the substantial growth targets for Wales;
- Draft MANP in its present form and content does not provide a unified UK approach;
- Financing not restricted to activities that are demonstrably sustainable and/or supportive of the sustainable development of aquaculture;
- Concern that the expansion of aquaculture would have an adverse effect on migratory fish stocks.

Q6: Do you agree with the aquaculture measures proposed for support under EMFF? Do you feel the MANP is consistent with these measures?

13. Six responses were received with all agreeing with the proposed measures for support; however one respondent felt that the MANP in its current form does not clearly outline the plan for developing aquaculture under the proposed measures.

Q7: Do you feel that it would be appropriate for the industry in England and Northern Ireland to also set aspirations or targets for aquaculture growth? If so, what might these be?

14. One respondent thought it vital that specific aquaculture targets for England and Northern Ireland should be addressed in order for the multiannual national plan to have meaning and effect.

Q8: We have identified existing government and industry initiatives which are contributing to meeting the challenges set by the strategic guidance – are there additional examples?

15. Two respondents highlighted the work at Swansea University on the use of salmon hatcheries for supplementing wild fish stocks and would support the continuation of other relevant research to improve the management of wild stocks under the EMFF. Another respondent believed that the work of the Scottish Association of Marine Science should be highlighted in the MANP.

Impact assessment

Q9: Do you have any additional evidence on the costs and benefits of the scheme, specifically the costs to business of applying for funding?

16. Only four responses were received on the accompanying impact assessment. One respondent felt that adequate support mechanisms should be put in place for small scale fishers and to maximise those benefits to wider society and endorsed the statement “many small businesses in the fishing and aquaculture industry face capital constraints and as a result are unable to undertake investments that may be economically worthwhile”.

17. Two others stated that small charities have restricted levels of resources and therefore would still need to receive 100% funding support for their projects. The final respondent highlighted the administrative burdens for industry in applying for EFF funding, particularly individual fishermen who were applying in many instances for small amounts of funding. They therefore felt the costs in time and energy of understanding the application process, completing and submitting forms together with the length of time needed to approve applications, outweighed the benefits of any funding.

Q10: Do you have any evidence of the benefit of specific projects funded by the EFF?

18. One respondent highlighted a number of river habitat and stock management and migratory fish projects in Wales and the benefits of EFF funding for these projects. Another respondent provided information on a number of projects undertaken by FLAGs in Scotland that benefitted local fishing communities. The final respondent to this question highlighted its own application for 1,000 personal flotation devices.

Q11: Do you have any other comments on the draft impact assessment?

19. Four responses were received for this question. One respondent commented that appropriate levels of funding should be made available for the Water Framework Directive, the Marine Strategy Framework Directive, the Habitats Directive and Horizon 2020. They also stated that a 100% European and National funding rate needed to continue; and that it was essential that the benefit of applying for a grant was higher than the cost. Another respondent said it was vital the EMFF is utilised effectively, particularly for the sustainable development of the small-scale sector. The third respondent welcomed the statement that the fund would be integral to helping the commercial fisheries sector adapt to the implementation of the CFP. The final respondent believed that the assumption of a continuing decline in the size of the fisheries sector was not warranted.

20. Nine responses were received from stakeholders that were more generic in their nature and were not structured to answer the questions individually. With regard to these responses, the following key points were identified and highlighted:

- A clearer reflection of the importance of improving the governance and delivery of effective multiannual management plans; and as such the proposed allocations of funding should be prioritised to deliver the governance improvements;
- Very encouraged to see the enhanced emphasis placed on the protection of the marine environment and the role this will play in supporting the fishing industry in its transition to a sustainable, vibrant and low impact future;
- Any infringement should result in restricted access to EMFF funds;
- Whilst pleased that funding for new vessels was not included in the fund, concerned that several others are, namely assistance to new entrants to buy vessels (should be funding for apprenticeships instead) and temporary and permanent cessation of fishing activities;
- There must be strict environmental considerations before any new aquaculture project is allowed taking into account habitat impacted by the project, and impacts on wild populations which may come into contact with the project;
- Aquaculture investment should support those operations that are able and willing to aspire to comply with the international standards set out by the Aquaculture Stewardship Council;
- Important that the opportunity afforded by the inclusion of aquaculture in the revised CFP and the creation of a multiannual plan is not wasted;
- Take positive action to reduce administrative burden on aquaculture industry and stop continued deterioration of shellfish waters;
- Important to include a desire to develop aquaculture in offshore areas, provided that there is investment in onshore infrastructure;

- Difficult to understand why some EMFF aquaculture articles have not been included in UK and national priorities i.e. public health, stock insurance and convert to organic products as these seem ideal for the future of sustainable aquaculture;
- Support the delivery of the integrated maritime policy (incorporating objectives for marine spatial planning and Marine Protected Areas);
- Particularly keen to see funding channelled to projects that deliver in partnership multiple benefits for project partners and the marine environment;
- Needs to be an increase in funding available for data collection to support monitoring programmes and to enable coordinated working between fisheries operatives, scientists and management bodies;
- The EMFF should strengthen the FLAG system put in place under the EFF, in particular providing sufficient funding for FLAGs to self-administer effectively, through dedicated project coordinators who can reach the 'grass roots' level and support and assist the development of projects and initiatives;
- Welcome the measures aimed at supporting the protection and restoration of marine biodiversity;
- Encouraged that there will be a focus on supporting fishing communities, and opportunities identified for fishing, aquaculture and processing and marketing initiatives in these communities.

Response

21. The UK Government thanks those organisations that responded to the consultation. The responses that were received have been very beneficial to us in identifying the priorities for the EMFF to be outlined in the UK Operational Programme. Whilst the UK as a whole, and individual administrations, could in principle provide financial assistance for all of the measures available for support and as requested by stakeholders, the four administrations are seeking to maximise value for money and impact by concentrating on their respective priorities. From the outset the European Commission has stated that the key priority for the EMFF is the implementation and delivery of the reformed CFP and the UK agrees with this. As such we will ensure that we allocate sufficient funds to the measures that will achieve our CFP obligations.

22. However we will also make support available to investments in sustainable aquaculture, processing, and marketing, particularly projects that will encourage growth in those sectors and encourage innovation and diversification. With regard to aquaculture, we have noted the concerns raised, and will look to take these into account as we develop the UK Multiannual National Plan for the Development of Sustainable Aquaculture. We are also developing innovative approaches for larger scale high energy/more exposed sites, multi-trophic farms and the potential for combining maritime activities, such as co-location

of renewable and aquaculture sites; and engaging with local communities to lock-in financial and other benefits from investments from aquaculture's sustainable growth. Demonstrator projects are under consideration including the use of state-of-the-art equipment and promoting advanced husbandry techniques (such as use of cleaner fish as alternatives to sea lice medicines) and would benefit from targeted support.

23. We will also provide support to encourage the sustainable development of the wider marine environment, particularly safeguarding the stocks and resources available to future generations of fishermen, by encouraging partnerships between the catching sector, marine environmental organisations and scientists.

24. Each administration will also look to build on the EFF Axis 4 programme and continue to provide support for community led local development initiatives and the Fisheries Local Action Groups (FLAGs) networks. We also recognise the importance of data collection and control and enforcement, particularly with regard to implementing the new CFP, and we will ensure that adequate funding is allocated in recognition of the specific needs of these measures.

25. With regard to the UK's EMFF allocation, the UK administrations will work together to ensure that the funds are fully utilised for the benefit of the UK programme as a whole. This means that we will introduce mechanisms for transferring EMFF money between administrations in the event of any underspend to minimise any decommitment of UK EMFF funds. This will also ensure that UK funds are being made available to meet demand and where they can be put to the most effective use. We will also be broadening the membership of the UK's EMFF Programme Monitoring Committee so that all sectors and stakeholders with an interest in the EMFF are represented and have a say in monitoring the delivery and effectiveness of the UK programme.

26. All the UK administrations will endeavour to simplify scheme administration in order to reduce the burdens on applicants, for example, by making greater use of electronic applications and guidance, and simplified paper applications. In addition, consideration is being given to providing an advisory service for potential applicants.

Next steps

27. The result of the consultation has been fully analysed. After careful consideration we have concluded that we will continue to work closely with the Scottish, Welsh and Northern Irish administrations to finalise the strategic priorities proposed for the fund and the specific measures it will support, taking into account the final UK budget allocation. We will also focus on finalising the SWOT analysis and needs assessment, and impact assessment, amending these as necessary to reflect the comments we received from stakeholders and working with the evaluators appointed to review these. All four administrations will also focus on drafting the appropriate implementing legislation in their respective territories.

Annex A: List of respondents to the consultation.

Afonydd Cymru

Blackpool, Fylde and Wyre Economic Development Company / Wyre Borough Council

Cardigan Bay Fisheries Local Action Group

COSLA

East of Scotland European Consortium

Institute of Fisheries Management

Marine Conservation Society

Natural England

Natural Resources Wales / Cyfoeth Naturiol Cymru

North Eastern Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority

National Federation of Fishermen's Organisations

New Under Ten Fishermen's Association

Royal Society for the Protection of Birds

Scottish Fishermen's Federation

Scottish Salmon Producers' Organisation

Shellfish Association of Great Britain

Sussex Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority

WWF

Wye & Usk Foundation

© Crown copyright 2014

You may re-use this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/ or write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or e-mail: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk

This document/publication is also available on our website at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/common-fisheries-policy-european-maritime-and-fisheries-fund-in-the-uk-2014-to-2020>

Any enquiries regarding this document/publication should be sent to us at:

EMFF Consultation

Defra

Area 8A, 9 Millbank

c/o Nobel House

17 Smith Square

London

SW1P 3JR

Or email: emff.consultation@defra.gsi.gov.uk