

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

Citizens Summary for the UK European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF) 2016.

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): €67.5 million (28%) will aim at 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. During 2016, 237 projects were approved across the UK with an EMFF value of €12.6million (£10.7million).

Union Priority 2 (UP2): €19.3 million (8%) is focused 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. During 2016, 15 projects were approved across the UK with an EMFF value of €3.6million (£3.0million).

Union Priority 3 (UP3): €97.6 million (40%) will go 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. During 2016, 2 projects were approved across the UK with an EMFF value of €8.5million (£7.2million).

Union Priority 4 (UP4): €13.6 million (6%) 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 2016 eighteen FLAGs were approved across the UK 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). During 2016, 12 projects were approved across the UK with an EMFF value of €224 thousand (£194 thousand)

Union Priority 5 (UP5): €27.2 million (11%) will 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. During 2016, 37 projects were approved across the UK with an EMFF value of €3.9million (£3.3million).

Union Priority 6 (UP6): €5.3 million (3%) will 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. This activity has been undertaken to try and ensure a good level of applications are made to the scheme, however funding has yet to be committed under this UP

The remaining €12.5 million (4%) is allocated to technical assistance to support the UK delivery bodies in implementing and managing the scheme. This will include reinforce the implementation system, ensure efficient administration of the EU funding, including support to reducing burden on beneficiaries, improving e-administration and publicity and information measures. During 2016, €0.7million (£0.5million) of EMFF was committed to projects for delivery and management of the scheme.

Activities in 2016

In 2016, the main activities under the United Kingdom European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF) programme have focused on the delivery of the scheme. These include:

- (i) Scheme Launch – the official UK launch of the scheme was 18 January 2016, with a UK launch event being held in Poole on 8 February 2016 attended by the UK Fisheries Minister, George Eustice, DG Mare, Industry stakeholders and officials from all Intermediate Bodies (IB). England and Scotland opened for applications in January, with Northern Ireland opening for applications on 13 September and Wales undertook a targeted opening on 16 September against specific articles and were fully live at the beginning of 2017.
- (ii) Fisheries Local Action Groups (FLAGs) – eighteen FLAGs were selected in the UK (eight in Scotland, six in England and four in Wales) in 2016 with Northern Ireland continuing with the selection process of a FLAG to deliver the Community Led Local Development strand of the UK EMFF programme.

- (iii) Data Collection Framework (DCF) funding – continuing to work with partners to deliver the UK obligations under the DCF, developing mechanisms to reclaim EMFF funding for the activities which represents a significant change in approach than under previous arrangements. The activities relate to the UK DCF Work Programme which was rolled forward to cover 2014 to 2016 activities. 2016 has also seen the development of the new Annual Work Plan as required under Commission Implementing decision EU 2016/1701, EU Multi Annual Programme Regulation. This work plan was submitted to the EC deadline.
- (iv) Control and Enforcement – continuing to develop plans and policies for the use of EMFF funding to support the UK obligations for control and enforcement activities related to the reformed Common Fisheries Policy (CFP). The UK Fisheries Enforcement Control and Coordination Group (UKFECCG) was established to act as a single competent authority with ToR established which reflect the group’s mandate and operating procedures, submitted to the European Commission in December 2016.
- (v) Applicant facing tools – the UK EMFF delivery bodies have continued to put a significant amount of time and effort into the ongoing development of applicant facing tools such as E-Systems and Guidance Notes in 2016. This has also encompassed assessing the E-System against the working documentation provided by the Fisheries Aquaculture Monitoring and Evaluation (FAME) unit and reporting requirements of the UK to ensure accurate data can be compiled and reported upon.
- (vi) Scheme governance - the UK Managing Authority and UK EMFF delivery bodies have drawn on the significant experience developed under the EFF to aid the development of the underpinning governance structures for the new scheme. This has included the drafting of the Management and Control System (MCS) and supporting Desk Instructions to support designation of all bodies in 2017.
- (vii) EMFF Programme Monitoring Committee (PMC) – the EMFF PMC was formally constituted in 2015 following the approval of the OP, the Rules of Procedure were adopted by all members on 14 December 2015. The EMFF PMC met in June 2016 and provided valuable input, insight and challenge on the early stages of programme implementation.
- (viii) Selection Criteria - A Selection Criteria review was undertaken by the UK Managing Authority in England and Scotland, where 27 projects were assessed. The purpose of the review was to provide the PMC with assurance that the selection criteria is being interpreted and applied on a consistent basis across the UK. Overall, the EMFF Selection Criteria provided a coherent guide supporting the assessment process. This was evident through the Intermediate Bodies application of the criteria rankings and selection of specific objectives and result indicators. The findings of the audit will be presented to the PMC in January 2017.
- (ix) The quarterly performance reports which were established under EFF were reviewed and issued to PMC members quarterly, a meeting was held between the UKMA and a PMC representative to discuss the requirements of PMC and the format/content of the report has been amended to reflect the comments made by PMC members.

- (x) A review of the UK Communications strategy was conducted following implementation in 2016 and presented to PMC members in January 2017. This review confirmed that the Strategy itself had been an effective tool to ensure that awareness of the UK EMFF scheme, and its associated opportunities, were well understood by potential applicants.
- (xi) The UKMA was asked by the European Commission to present both the UK Communications Strategy and the UK E-System (being used in England, Northern Ireland and Scotland) at the EMFF Experts Group in Brussels on 27 June 2016. The presentation received positive feedback from the European Commission and Member States.
- (xii) During 2016 the IB's have attended a number of events to publicise EMFF;
 - a. In Northern Ireland nine Information Seminars were held to promote the opportunities across all Union Priorities but focusing significantly on UP1, 2 and 5. In addition the Grants Unit attended Industry Stakeholder meetings, including the Agriculture Representative Group, Seafish NI Advisory Committee and Fishing Industry Taskforce to promote the Programme and has also had one-to-one mentoring meetings with a range of potential applicants to the Programme, especially Aquaculture and Fish Processing.
 - b. In Wales, the main focus during 2016 was on the targeted launch of the EMFF programme, prioritising Community Led Local Development (CLLD) and support for health and safety initiatives for fishermen. This period also included the National Assembly for Wales Election 2016, with associated restrictions on publicity activities. Communications activity included an official Ministerial launch event for the EMFF in Wales on 11 February 2016, raising awareness among the sector of the EMFF programme, complemented by attendance at specific stakeholder workshops, including regular attendance at CLLD networks and attendance at an aquaculture stakeholder group event during September 2016.
 - c. Scotland attended a number of events including a CLLD conference in Aviemore, an Aquaculture Europe exhibition in Edinburgh and the Cabinet Secretary has visited Fraserburgh Harbour, Peterhead and the Fin Fish to announce the EMFF awards.
 - d. In England events attended have included the EMFF launch event, British Port Association, Shellfish Association of Great Britain conference, British Trout, Seafish Groups.
- (xiii) During 2016 across the UK 313 projects were approved with an EMFF value of €32.3million (£24.9million), 143 in England, EMFF €13.8million (£11.7million), 141 in Scotland, EMFF €14.9million (£12.6million) and 29 in Northern Ireland €0.8million (£0.7million). This is positive progress as only 2 IB's were live for applications for the majority of the year.
- (xiv) There has been no data provided against the Financial Indicators and the Result Indicators within this Annual Implementing Report (AIR) as there were no operations fully implemented in 2016 nor was any expenditure declared in the accounts of the UK Certifying Authority.

- (xv) The UK fielded representation at a Financial Instruments Compass event in London in February 2016. The purpose of attending was to better understand how Financial Instruments could be developed and rolled out within the UK EMFF programme. The event was useful, but highlighted the level of effort and complexity involved in developing and effectively managing a Financial Instrument. As such, it was agreed at the June 2016 Programme Monitoring Committee that Financial Instruments would not be taken forward under the UK EMFF Programme; however as per section 14 of the UK EMFF Operational Programme, this may be re-considered at a later date.