



European Union

European Structural
and Investment Funds

**European Structural and Investment Funds
2014 - 2020**

Growth Programme for England

ESI Funds Growth Programme Board

European Maritime & Fisheries Fund (EMFF) Programme Update

Purpose:

To provide the Board with a progress report on EMFF implementation in England.

Recommendation(s):

That the Growth Programme Board notes the report.

Summary:

Excellent progress continues with 657 core projects approved with an EMFF grant value of over £20m.

1. **Please note:** for this paper we have slightly changed the methodology in comparison with previous papers submitted to the Board. This paper focusses on (a) approved projects and (b) those in the pipeline, i.e. received by the Marine Management Organisation, under consideration but not yet approved. The figures in the previous papers to the Board included information on the number of applications received to date. This figure included a large number of projects that were subsequently withdrawn by the applicant, or had been submitted under the incorrect article of the EMFF Regulation and so had to be re-submitted.
2. There continues to be good take-up of the EMFF in England, with 657 projects approved under the 'core' programme (i.e. not including expenditure for Control and Enforcement activities, and Data Collection Framework measures). The total project cost associated is over £45m with EMFF grant of over £20m and National match of over £5.7m.
3. There are also 227 pipeline projects which are with MMO and progressing through the various stages of the process with an EMFF grant value of over £10.6m (the majority of this, £7m, is to be assessed at EMFF Panel 21 March 2018). There has been £7.23m paid out to applicants to date.
4. The most popular areas for funding are:
 - Health and safety – equipment and on-board vessel investments (173 projects attracting £1.18m EMFF);
 - Limiting the impact of fishing on the marine environment – more selective fishing gear and practices (152 projects, attracting £1.43m EMFF);
 - Processing and marketing – of fisheries and aquaculture products (76 projects, attracting £4.7m EMFF);

- Adding value and quality – to caught and unwanted fish products (76 projects, attracting £475k EMFF);
 - Infrastructure investments – in ports, harbours, landing sites and auction halls (53 projects, £4.73m EMFF);
 - Investments in aquaculture – new units, diversification of production and species, modernisation of existing units (11 projects, £1.1m EMFF);
 - Promotion of human capital – job creation, improving social dialogue, training (6 projects, £922k EMFF);
 - Protection/restoration of marine biodiversity and ecosystems – collection of waste, Natura 2000 sites, increasing environmental awareness (27 projects, £3m EMFF).
5. With regard to CLLD, the six Fisheries Local Action Groups have been allocated budgets of £4.8m (£3.6m EMFF, £1.2m Defra). Each FLAG has a specific set of local issues they are looking to address through their Local development Strategies (LDS) and business plans. To date there have been 32 FLAG projects approved by MMO with a total project cost of £1.962m (EMFF £543k National £180k). There are a further 12 projects with MMO at various stages of the process with total project costs 398k (EMFF £298k National £100k).

Our current ‘top challenge(s)’ and how we are addressing them

6. The top challenge for delivery of the EMFF scheme remains ensuring that the seafood sector in England maximises its use of the scheme, in particular where take up is not in line with the current budgets specified in the Operational Programme.
7. Union Priority 5 (Processing & Marketing of Fisheries & Aquaculture products) was closed for applications in December 2017 due to the budget being exhausted. There are also significant pressures being realised within Union Priority 1 and in the coming months it is expected more budgets will be exhausted and further areas of the scheme will be closed. Reviews are ongoing so early notice can be given where possible.
8. Since the last update the European Grants Team have been working hard to generate applications for the upcoming panel 21 March 2018 which is the largest panel to date (all projects over £100k are assessed by EMFF panel). There are 20 projects to be assessed with an EMFF grant value of £7m National £617k. If these projects are approved this will add to the pressure on budgets and the panel scheduled for 30 June 2018 may need to be tailored to suit.

Challenges in different areas of the country/Can we learn from delivery in different areas?

9. Unlike the other Structural Funds, delivery of EMFF projects in England is not delivered by regional teams as the number of projects is small and the applications require some degree of technical knowledge of the seafood sector; all English applications are processed by the MMO’s EMFF team at their headquarters in Newcastle. Data is not categorised on a regional basis.

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EMFF Programme Monitoring Committee