

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

Citizens Summary for the UK European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF) 2019.

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, 1,682 projects with an EMFF value of €65.3million (£56.7million) were approved representing 97% of the EMFF budget of €67.5million (£57.5million).

Most approved projects fall under Health and Safety, with 667 projects approved (40% of all UP1 projects), Limiting the impact of fishing on the marine environment, with 353 projects approved (21%) and Added value, product quality and use of unwanted catches, which has 224 approved projects (13%).

Of the 1,682 operations have been selected, 129 (8%) are under implementation, 1,235 (73%) are completed, 313 (19%) are covered by a decision granting aid where no expenditure has been declared and 5 (<1%) operations are fully implemented with all expenditure being paid to the beneficiary.

In relation to the gender of applicants, 1,582 (94%) are male, 83 (5%) female with 6 (1%) other and 8 (1%) did not want to specify. Size of the operators requesting assistance were 1,445 micro enterprises, 139 small, 46 medium and 52 large. There are no beneficiaries who are Non-SME's.

The best performing indicators are those related to increasing net profits (1.3), employment maintained (1.8) and reducing injuries and accidents (1.9a).

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, 121 projects with an EMFF value of €16.5million (£14.4million) were approved, representing 85% of the EMFF budget allocation of €19.3million (£16.5million).

Most approved projects under Productive investments in aquaculture relate to Modernisation, with 54 projects approved, while Productive investments and Diversification are the next most popular measures, with 14 and 11 projects respectively. Other investments in Animal health (4), Complementary activities (2) and Restoration (1) have been approved.

Of the 121 operations have been selected, of these 62 (51%) are completed, 38 (31%) are under implementation and 21 (17%) are covered by a decision granting aid where no expenditure has been declared.

In relation to the gender of applicants, 91 (75%) were male, 28 (23%) female and 2 (2%) did not want to specify. Size of the operators requesting assistance were 82 (68%) micro enterprises, 25 (21%) small, 8 (7%) medium and 6 (4%) large.

The best performing indicators are those related to change in volume and value of aquaculture production (2.1 and 2.2) along with increase of net profits (2.3) and Employment Maintained (2.9).

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, 62 projects with an EMFF value of €71.1million (£62.6million) were approved, which is 73% of the total EMFF budget allocation of €97.6million (£83.2million).

A total of 62 operations have been selected, of these 17 (27%) are under implementation, 29 (47%) are completed, 15 (24%) are covered by a decision granting aid where no expenditure has been declared and 1 (2%) is fully implemented with all results achieved.

As outlined in the OP work 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;
- participation in regional and other coordination meetings; and
- meetings of regional fisheries management organisations

There were no significant compliance issues in 2019.

The DCF Annual Report for 2018 was submitted on 31 May 2019 for a separate evaluation and adoption by the European Commission.

During 2019, the UK continued to made progress in developing its plans and approach for accessing EMFF funding to support the implementation of the Common Fisheries Policy. 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;
- upgrading patrol vessels to monitor inshore fisheries and funding surveillance activities in Specific Control & Inspection Programme (SCIP) areas. These plans will be further developed in 2019 to support enforcement bodies to maintain and improve compliance levels.

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 the UK a total of 19 FLAGs have approved local development strategies (LDS). FLAGs approved are as follows; 8 in Scotland (Argyle and Ayrshire, Dumfries and Galloway, Forth, Highland Moray, North East of Scotland, Orkney, Outer Hebrides and Shetland), 6 in England (Dorset and East Devon, Cornwall and Isles of Scilly, Holderness, Hastings, North of Tyne and North Thames), 4 in Wales (North Wales, Pembrokeshire, Swansea and Cardigan Bay) and 1 in Northern Ireland (South East Area).

Since the UK opened for applications in 2016, 291 projects with an EMFF value of €9.0million (£7.9million) have been approved, which is 60% of the total EMFF budget allocation of €13.6million (£11.6million).

Of this, 212 projects with declared EMFF expenditure of €5.2million (£4.6million) have been submitted to the Managing Authority, which is 38% of the total EMFF budget allocation.

A total of 291 selected operations, of these 68 (23%) are under implementation, 144 (50%) are completed and 79 (27%) are covered by a decision granting aid where no expenditure has been declared.

In relation to the gender of applicants, 200 (68%) are male with 65 (22%) female, 1 (1%) other with 25 (9%) did not want to specify. Size of the operators requesting assistance were 210 (72%) micro enterprises, 51 (18%) small, 14 (5%) medium and 16 (5%) large.

During 2019 both the result indicators 4.1 (employment created) and 4.3 (businesses created) have reported expectations to exceed the 2023 target.

Union Priority 5 (UP5) Fostering marketing and processing:

A budget of €27.2million (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, 172 projects with an EMFF value of €22.9million (£20.1million) have been approved, which is 84% of the total EMFF budget allocation of €27.2million (£23.2million).

Of this, 160 projects with declared EMFF expenditure of €15.0million (£13.2million) have been submitted to the Managing Authority, which is 55% of the total EMFF budget allocation €27.2million (£23.2million).

Most approved projects fall under Processing of fishery and aquaculture products, with 148 projects approved (84% of all UP5 projects). Marketing measures and Production and Marketing plans have also had some success, with 24 approved applications.

A total of 172 operations have been selected, 29 (17%) are under implementation, 130 (76%) are completed, 12 (7%) are covered by a decision granting aid where no expenditure has been declared and 1 (<1%) has been withdrawn with some claims paid.

In relation to the gender of applicants, 149 (87%) are male, 21 (12%) female, 1 (<1%) other and 1 (<1%) did not specify. Size of the operators requesting assistance were 60 (35%) micro enterprises, 65 (38%) small and 47 (27%) 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 (5.1.c and 5.1.d).

Budget allocated to Storage Aid of €600 thousand has not being utilised.

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.

Since the UK opened for applications in 2016, 25 projects with an EMFF value of €2.9million (£2.5million) have been approved, which is 55% of the total EMFF budget allocation of €5.3million (£4.5million).

A total of 12 projects have declared EMFF expenditure of €0.6million (£0.6million) have been submitted to the Managing Authority, which is 11% of the total EMFF budget allocation.

A total of 25 operations have been selected, 11 (44%) are under implementation, 1 (4%) is completed and 13 (52%) are covered by a decision granting aid where no expenditure has been declared.

In relation to the gender of applicants, 17 (68%) are male, 6 (24%) female and 2 (8%) did not specify. Size of the operators requesting assistance were 20 (80%) micro enterprises, 4 (16%) large and 1 (4%) non-SME.

Indicator relating to change in the coverage of Natura 2000 areas designated under the Birds and Habitats directives (6.2.a) has some benefits assessed in 2019, while the indicator relating to the change in the coverage of other spatial protection measures (6.2.b), has not realised any benefits.

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, 27 projects with an EMFF value of €9.3million (£8.1million) have been approved, which is 74% of the total EMFF budget allocation of €12.5million (£10.7million).

Approved projects under Technical assistance mainly relate Programme implementation, with 11 projects approved, with Other (meetings/engagement) and IT systems are the next most utilised measures, with 7 and 6 projects approved respectively. Investments covering Communications (1), Control and audits (1) and Network of FLAG's (1) have had some approvals.