



European Union

European Structural
and Investment Funds

**European Structural and Investment
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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 1,487 core projects approved with an EMFF grant value of £46m.

1. The EMFF scheme in England has fully closed, with 1,487 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 £119m with EMFF grant of £46m and National match of almost £11m.
2. The popular areas for funding remain:
 - Health and safety – equipment and on-board vessel investments (483 projects attracting £2.8m EMFF);
 - Limiting the impact of fishing on the marine environment – more selective fishing gear and practices (276 projects, attracting £3m EMFF);
 - Processing and marketing – of fisheries and aquaculture products (83 projects, attracting £4.8m EMFF);
 - Adding value and quality – to caught and unwanted fish products (117 projects, attracting £813k EMFF);
 - Infrastructure investments – in ports, harbours, landing sites and auction halls (116 projects, £12m EMFF);
 - Investments in aquaculture – new units, diversification of production and species, modernisation of existing units (50 projects, £2.1m EMFF);
 - Promotion of human capital – job creation, improving social dialogue, training (18 projects, £1.9m EMFF);
 - Protection/restoration of marine biodiversity and ecosystems – collection of waste, Natura 2000 sites, increasing environmental awareness (64 projects, £5.7m EMFF).

3. With regard to CLLD, the six Fisheries Local Action Groups are now finished developing applications for projects. The allocated budget of £4.2m was committed to 153 projects across the network for projects that delivered in accordance with the Local development Strategy (LDS) and business plan for each FLAG area. £4m has now been paid out to FLAG projects.

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

1. The MMO Grants Team are closer to understanding the final picture with regards to funding that will be recycled back into the EMFF funding envelope, as a result of projects either not completing as expected or completing for less funds than were offered. This underspend is understood to be between £2.5 – £4m with work continuing to reach the exact figure. Due to the amount available as a result of recycled funds, the MMO Grants Team have relaunched the EMFF scheme for a limited time. The team have been strategic and considered specific areas of the fund to reopen that historically have spent quickly given the time constraints involved and as such, we have limited the value of projects to those £50k and under in order to ensure that any funded projects can complete by 31/12/2023. Furthermore, the reopening compliments our domestic scheme FaSS which is already close to realising key targets, thus alleviating any budgetary pressures as well.
2. The iVMS programme for the under 12m fleet in England began its roll out in February 2022 and continues to progress. Vessel owners are being reimbursed up to £650 for the device and its installation through the EMFF scheme, which means a further 2138 applications will need to be approved by the Grants Team through a simplified application process. To date, 1245 iVMS claims have been approved and paid, totalling £790k from the EMFF Control and Enforcement budget.
3. The second iteration of England's domestic [Fisheries and Seafood Scheme](#) (FaSS2) launched in April and continues on from the hugely successful FaSS1. Unlike FaSS1, which was a single year settlement, FaSS2 is a three-year scheme that will support fisheries and seafood supply chain business up to March 2025. With a focus on smaller scale projects, 740 projects have now been awarded funding with a FaSS value of £15.7m.
4. The Grants Team in collaboration with Defra Policy colleagues launched the first round of UKSF Infrastructure Scheme in 2022. The first round invested up to £30m of the overall £66m budget to projects that build capability across the UK seafood sector supply chain through investment in the following areas: improved capability at ports, harbours and processing facilities and aquaculture; and the social and economic welfare of coastal communities. Work continues in this area, round two of the infrastructure scheme is ongoing. The most recently launched round went live in February 2023 and focuses on Fleet Modernisation which covers trials for replacement engines.

Harry Stirk
Grants Team Funding Manager