



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:

Good progress continues to be made, with 582 applications for projects received. Approved projects (407) have total project costs of more than £27.62m.

1. There continues to be good take-up of the EMFF in England, with 582 applications for projects received under the 'core' programme (i.e. not including expenditure for control and enforcement activities, and data collection measures) totalling over £50.1m total project cost of which nearly £21.43m is EMFF.
2. Out of the 582 applications, 407 have been approved, with total project costs of more than £27.62m, of which £13.89m is EMFF and £2.82m national match. Monies have also started to be paid out to projects, with over £3.33m already paid to applicants.
3. The most popular areas for funding are:
 - Health and safety – equipment and on-board vessel investments (121 projects attracting £848k EMFF);
 - Limiting the impact of fishing on the marine environment – more selective fishing gear and practices (100 projects, attracting £816k EMFF);
 - Processing and marketing – of fisheries and aquaculture products (49 projects, attracting £3.02m EMFF);
 - Adding value and quality – to caught and unwanted fish products (49 projects, attracting £351k EMFF).
 - Infrastructure investments – in ports, harbours, landing sites and auction halls (38 projects, £4.01m EMFF);
 - Investments in aquaculture – new units, diversification of production and species, modernisation of existing units (7 projects, £826k EMFF);
 - Promotion of human capital – job creation, improving social dialogue, training (5 projects, £871k EMFF);
 - Protection/restoration of marine biodiversity and ecosystems – collection of waste, Natura 2000 sites, increasing environmental awareness (11 projects, £1.440m EMFF).

4. There are 175 projects with the Marine Management Organisation (which is both the UK Managing Authority and England Intermediate Body) awaiting approval at various stages of the process with an EMFF grant £7.54m.
5. With regard to CLLD, the six Fisheries Local Action Groups have launched and budgets of £4.8M have now been allocated to FLAGs (£3.6M EMFF, £1.2M Defra). Each FLAG has a specific set of local issues they are looking to address through their strategies and business plans. The MMO has received the first applications for specific projects, but there may be some risks to the FLAG groups meeting their spend profiles for 2017/18 due to the length of time it has taken to send these applications through to the MMO.

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. One area that has not been as popular has been Article 43.2 (investments improving the infrastructure of fishing ports, auctions halls, landing sites and shelters) to facilitate compliance with the obligation to land all catches (the discard ban) and to add value to under-used components of the catch. Demand has been minimal to date, with only one application received/approved. Applicants are citing a lack of clarity at the current time and it was anticipated that as the issues generated by CFP are known, projects would come through to address. However, Article 43.1 (which is still investments in ports and harbours) is over-subscribed.
7. The MMO European Grants Team are looking to target the geographical areas from where applications have been limited. This will involve Roadshows with members of the team providing advice, through to assisting with application submission. Primarily these events will be targeted at areas with minimal MMO Coastal coverage and no active FLAG groups in the area.

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

8. 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.

Robert Matthews, Defra
EMFF Programme Monitoring Committee
29 August 2017