

European Fisheries Fund

FACT SHEET



The European Fisheries Fund (EFF) began operating in January 2007. Its aim is to improve the sector's competitiveness and help it become environmentally, economically and socially sustainable. To achieve this, it has a budget of EUR 3.8 billion (or EUR 4.3 billion in current prices) for the seven-year period 2007-2013. Funding is available for all sectors of the industry: sea and inland fishing, aquaculture, and processing and marketing of fisheries products. Particular attention is given to fishing communities most affected by recent changes.

The EFF is designed to be simpler to manage and implement than its predecessor, the Financial Instrument for Fisheries Guidance (FIFG). Alongside its greater flexibility, the EFF contains several innovations. These include assistance to fishermen to move towards more selective fishing methods, increased emphasis on sustainable fishing and measures of common interest, including pilot projects, finance for local development strategies and support for aqua-environmental measures. As under the FIFG, no funding is available for the construction of new vessels or to increase the size of their holds. In common with the other EU structural funds, EU financing cannot be used alone, but only to complement national, regional or local expenditure.

A further novelty is the fact that funding is now heavily geared towards the 'convergence' regions, i.e. those whose economic welfare is below the EU average.

How it works

National authorities draw up a strategic plan giving a long-term view of how they see the development of their fisheries and aquaculture policy between 2007 and 2013, and explaining how this meets the CFP's objectives. The plan must define priorities, objectives, public spending estimates and deadlines. This is then followed by an operational programme describing in more detail the way the national authorities intend to translate the opportunities offered by the EFF into practice. Both are prepared in close consultation with regional and local economic and social partners.

Funding opportunities

The EFF targets five priority areas. Many of its activities continue the practices of the FIFG, but some are new.

Adjustment of the fleet (axis 1)

If a Member State decides to cut fishing opportunities, aid may be available for vessels permanently or temporarily ceasing their activities. Aid can also be given for a range of other operations: on-board

safety and working improvements, more selective gear, small-scale coastal fisheries, socio-economic measures including early retirement, and retraining.

Vessels in certain fleet segments may receive aid to replace their engines to make them more energy efficient, but not more powerful.

Aquaculture, processing and marketing, inland fishing (axis 2)

Aid is available for diversification into new aquaculture species and species with good market prospects, environmentally-friendly aquaculture, public and animal health measures, processing and marketing of fisheries and aquaculture products, and lifelong learning.

Special provisions exist for inland fishing, reflecting its importance in central and Eastern Europe.

Measures of common interest (axis 3)

These are activities not normally supported by the private sector and whose overall importance goes beyond the commercial interests of individual companies. They can include protection and development of aquatic fauna and flora, ports, shelters and landing sites, development of new marketing and promotional campaigns, pilot projects and other collective actions.

European Fisheries Fund



Sustainable development of fisheries areas (axis 4)

Funding in this category is based on local development strategies, reflecting a bottom-up approach. It aims to help local communities reduce their economic dependency on fish catches.

Coastal communities, and those near lakes and ponds with a significant level of employment in the fisheries sector, are eligible for EU aid to strengthen their general competitiveness, add value to fisheries products, develop tourism infrastructure and services, protect the environment, and encourage inter-regional and transnational cooperation.

Technical assistance (axis 5)

This category covers items such as studies, reports, information activities and other actions relating to the implementation of the operational programmes.

Regulatory framework

There are three elements: a Council regulation setting out basic principles; a Commission implementing regulation laying down detailed procedures that Member States must follow; and a *vade mecum* of practical advice for national authorities on how to draft and implement their programmes.

Emergency regime

In July 2008, the Council adopted some temporary derogations to the EFF rules, to make it easier for Member States to accompany the process of fleet restructuring in response to the serious economic crisis that was sweeping through the industry. These included the creation of Fleet Adaptation Schemes, which provide additional support to encourage substantial capacity

reductions in those fleet segments which are most fuel-intensive. These derogations will last for two years, and will be subject to ongoing monitoring and assessment. Full details can be found in Council Regulation (EC) No 744/2008 of 24 July 2008 instituting a temporary specific action aiming to promote the restructuring of the European Community fishing fleets affected by the economic crisis.

Documents

Council Regulation (EC) No 1198/2006 of 27 July 2006 on the European Fisheries Fund.

Commission Regulation (EC) No 498/2007 of 26 March 2007 laying down detailed rules for the implementation of Council Regulation (EC) No 198/2006 on the European Fisheries Fund.

Allocation of EFF aid from 1 January 2007 to 31 December 2013

| Member State | Convergence | Non convergence | Total |
|----------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| Belgium | | 26 261 648 | 26 261 648 |
| Bulgaria | 80 009 708 | | 80 009 708 |
| Czech Republic | 27 106 675 | | 27 106 675 |
| Denmark | | 133 675 169 | 133 675 169 |
| Germany | 96 861 240 | 59 004 177 | 155 865 417 |
| Estonia | 84 568 039 | | 84 568 039 |
| Ireland | | 42 266 603 | 42 266 603 |
| Greece | 176 836 728 | 30 995 509 | 207 832 237 |
| Spain | 945 692 445 | 186 198 467 | 1 131 890 912 |
| France | 34 250 343 | 181 802 741 | 216 053 084 |
| Italy | 318 281 864 | 106 060 990 | 424 342 854 |
| Cyprus | | 19 724 418 | 19 724 418 |
| Latvia | 125 015 563 | | 125 015 563 |
| Lithuania | 54 713 408 | | 54 713 408 |
| Hungary | 34 291 357 | 559 503 | 34 850 860 |
| Malta | 8 372 329 | | 8 372 329 |
| Netherlands | | 48 578 417 | 48 578 417 |
| Austria | 187 326 | 5 071 992 | 5 259 318 |
| Poland | 734 092 574 | | 734 092 574 |
| Portugal | 223 943 059 | 22 542 190 | 246 485 249 |
| Romania | 230 714 207 | | 230 714 207 |
| Slovenia | 21 640 283 | | 21 640 283 |
| Slovakia | 12 681 459 | 1 007 069 | 13 688 528 |
| Finland | | 39 448 827 | 39 448 827 |
| Sweden | | 54 664 803 | 54 664 803 |
| United Kingdom | 43 150 701 | 94 677 188 | 137 827 889 |
| Total | 3 252 409 308 | 1 052 539 711 | 4 304 949 019 |

* Amounts in EUR, current prices