

# Interim Evaluation Presentation of the EMFF Operational Programme Implementation 2014-2020

Evaluation conducted by EMCS

Monitoring Committee  
Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> May 2019



Maritime and Fisheries Operational Programme 2014-2020  
Part-financed by the European Union  
European Maritime and Fisheries Fund  
Co-financing rate: 75% European Union; 25% National Funds



*Investing in sustainable fisheries and aquaculture*

## Outline

- [i] Overview
- [ii] Methodology
- [iii] Limitations
- [iv] Programme's Relevance
- [v] How effectively have the stakeholders/partners been involved in the implementation of the OP
- [vi] Review of administrative processes and administrative burden
- [vii] Management Structures and HR Compliment
- [viii] Programme monitoring
- [ix] Current state of play

## Overview

The interim evaluation focuses on 3 main criteria, namely:

Relevance of the  
OP objectives

Effectiveness of Programme  
Implementation &  
Management

Effectiveness of  
implemented  
Measures

## Methodology

**Desk research** – The extensive desk research comprised among others a review of:

- Documents provided by the MA,
- Documents provided by stakeholders/ beneficiaries
- Published documents
- FAME reports
- Other

**Meetings with MA officials** – Following the kick off meeting, numerous meetings were held with MA officials to delve deeper into the Programme's implementation. Furthermore the MA was always available via email and telephone to answer any questions/queries that we had.

## Methodology (contd.)

### Meetings with beneficiaries/ stakeholders

#### Questionnaires that were distributed to:

- Successful and unsuccessful applicants
- Fishers

**Focus Group** - Conducted a focus group session with stakeholders

**Consultation session** – Once the first draft of the interim evaluation is completed EMCS will organise a consultation session with relevant stakeholders. This is planned for end of May 2019.

## Limitations

### Fishers Involvement

Ensuring the involvement from all fishers. EMCS mitigated this by involving the relevant cooperatives.

### Data Limitations

Linked to the above, limitations due to GDPR. This prohibited the collection of quantitative data from questionnaire distribution to all fishers. To mitigate this EMCS cooperated with:

- *Fishing cooperative to contact a sample of their members via both questionnaire distribution and telephone interviews*
- *The MA to contact all applicants (for the various Calls) – this was done via a questionnaire that was distributed to all.*

## Limitations (contd.)

### Support from the DFA

The DFA is a primary beneficiary of the Programme and indeed forms an integral part of the industry.

Interview with the relevant officer is still to be held.

## Programme's relevance

The OP's targets today are still congruent to the socio-economic needs of the fisheries and aquaculture sector, that relate to:

- The need to ensure that the fisher attains enough income for an adequate quality of life
- Strengthening the whole value chain
- Infrastructure investment
- Further investment in the aquaculture sector



## Amendments to the OP

A review of the amendments to the OP evidence that such changes may be broadly segmented into 3:

1. Changes that relate to a shift in investment/s following feedback from the target audience (such as the introduction of Measure in relation to Article 41.1 a+b+c);
2. Changes that relate to the introduction of new Measures (such as the proposed introduction of a new measure under article 48.1.a-d, f-h and a new operation within the article, already planned and included, in the Operational Programme for Malta (Article 48.1.e,i,j.)
3. Changes that relate to minor alterations that do effect the substance of the OP (such as the revision of a target value for 2023 to reflect the definition as included in the final version (version 4.0) of the Definitions of Common Indicators, issued by the FAME Support Unit.

## Does the OP address the current needs of the sector?

While interventions sought to tackle issues highlighted from the SWOT as highlighted by the stakeholders themselves, in practice this was not always achieved in view of the **impracticality of specific measures primarily in relation to regulatory eligibility requirements**. These were reflected in the admissibility criteria utilised as approved by the Monitoring Committee that, in certain instances, limited the number of eligible applicants.

## Stakeholder Involvement

The assessment of stakeholder/ partner involvement in the implementation of the OP was two-fold:

1. A review of endeavours throughout the whole OP period
2. A review in relation to specific Calls

## Stakeholder Involvement (contd.)

1. A review of endeavours throughout the whole OP period
  - Monitoring Committee yearly meetings;
  - Training sessions/ seminars and workshops – various sessions were organised to date that target stakeholders/ partners with the aim of aiding the implementation process.

## Stakeholder Involvement (contd.)

### 2. A review in relation to specific Calls (Restricted & Open Calls)

- Pre-launch and post launch campaigns
- *Information sessions were held where necessary with potential applicants Sms notifications were sent to fishers or aquaculture producers*
- *Printed adverts*
- *MA website including the new Mobile app was updated with open call information whilst also promoted ongoing operations.*
- *Guidance to applicants as and when required*
- MA assistance throughout project implementation;
- *One to one meetings,,*
- *Bilateral meetings*
- *Progress reports, as well as*
- *Informal ongoing assistance as and when required.*

## Administrative process and administrative burden

### Restricted calls -

A review of applications submitted and awarded as at year end 2018:

- A total of 17 applications were received (for different measures). Of these:
- *14 were awarded (1 awarded operation was withdrawn by applicant)*
- *2 were under evaluation,*
- *1 application was not awarded as deemed inadmissible.*

Overall the MA seeks to assist entities prior to applying whilst also during call issuance stage and the success of such endeavours is evident.

## Administrative process and administrative burden

### Open calls -

- A total of 10 such calls were launched. Of these:
- *A total of 15 applications were submitted, of which 7 were awarded. Rejected applications related to inadmissible applications.*
- *No applications were received for 3 of these calls (2 related to diversification and 1 related to replacement/modernisation of engines).*
- Notwithstanding MA's efforts, fishers still feel that the administrative burden is considerable. Discussions with fishers evidenced their need for assistance in compiling an application. Involving external consultants was costly and not always proved useful. Furthermore, efforts undertaken by the MA to train individuals (from the DFA & MGOZ customer care) to assist fishers with the submission of applications did not have the desired effect.

## Administrative process and administrative burden

### Open calls -

- MA sought to facilitate matters by extending time frames to after closure of calls for certain documentation. This is a positive move to facilitate matters for applicants, but places added burden on the MA and time frames.
- A review of the application indicates that information requested is meaningful and comprises the basic necessities which determine admissibility and eligibility in line with regulatory requirements. Nonetheless applicants, particularly fishers perceive the application to be excessive and discouraging.
- The drive to reduce the administrative burden was not perceived to have been successful overall by the target audience. The aquaculture industry too felt that the paperwork/ documentation required throughout the project implementation was oftentimes excessive.



## MA's HR function

The Managing Authority is headed by a Director General who acts as Head of the Managing Authority. The Managing Authority has the following staff complement:

- 4 FTE (full time equivalent) Programme Manager posts and 1 FTE Senior Manager. To date there is a vacancy for 1 Programme Manager post.
- As for the Financial Control Unit, the post for the Programme Manager (1 FTE) was filled in at the start of 2019 while that of the Senior Manager (1 FTE) is currently vacant.

Other roles that complement the current management structure being:

- The ICT Unit
- Director Funds

## EMFF OP current state of play.

	Target 2018	Target 2023	Certified till May 2019	% of 2018 target
Union Priority 1	€ 2,000,000	€ 11,577,239	€ 3,649,391.43	182%
Union Priority 2	€ 500,000	€ 3,306,822	€ 50,708	10%
Union Priority 3	€ 3,000,000	€ 10,215,936	€ 3,081,901	103%
Union Priority 5	€ 150,000	€ 469,771	€ 203,007	135%
Union Priority 6	€ 500,000	€ 1,600,000	€ 1,020,600	204%
<b>Total</b>	<b>€ 6,150,000</b>	<b>€ 27,169,768</b>	<b>€ 8,005,607.43</b>	<b>126.8%</b>

# Thank you for your attention



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