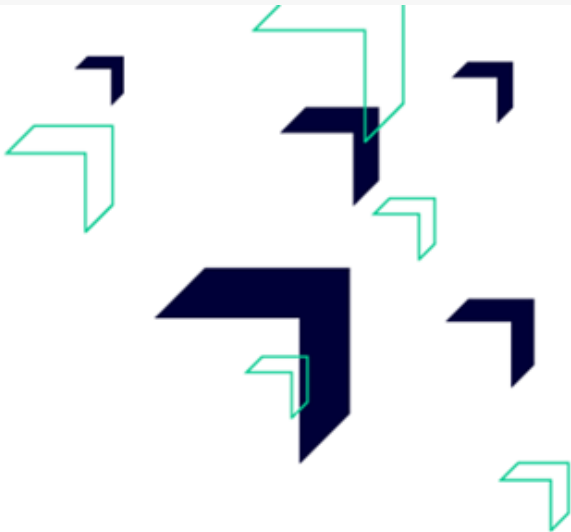


PROGRAMMING OF EUROPEAN UNION FUNDS  
FOR MALTA  
2021-2027

EMFAF  
Eligibility and Selection Criteria – actions falling under Priority 1, SO 1.6  
2021-2027  
*(Excluding actions addressing marine litter)*

17<sup>th</sup> November 2023



Co-funded by  
the European Union

## Common Provision Regulation No 2021/1060:

- Article 40(2)(a), the Monitoring Committee (MC) shall approve the methodology and criteria used for the selection of operations.
- The Managing Authority (MA) is mandated by Regulation 2021/1060 Article 73 to establish and apply criteria and procedures which are non-discriminatory, transparent, that ensure accessibility to persons with disabilities, ensure gender equality and the principle of sustainable development and of the Union policy on the environment in accordance with Article 11 and Article 191(1) TFEU.
- Selected operations are approved with the general understanding that these should be implemented in line with the Annex III of Regulation 2021/1060 horizontal enabling conditions tied to: (i) Public procurement; (ii) State Aid rules; (iii) Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union; and (iv) United Nations convention on the rights of persons with disabilities (UNCRPD).

## Project Eligibility and Selection Criteria

The criteria for the selection of mainstream projects are divided as follows:

- **Eligibility Criteria** which consist in a gateway assessment which ensures that all applications have reached a minimum standard.
- **Selection Criteria** which are designed to assess the fit and contribution of project proposals with the Programme's strategy, its target groups, and its objectives.

# Eligibility Criteria



- ✓ Application Form
- ✓ Eligibility of Beneficiary
- ✓ Remit of beneficiary organisation
- ✓ Capacity of beneficiary organisation
- ✓ Beneficiary in compliance with Common Fisheries Policy rules
- ✓ Project implemented within the eligible territory and its direct benefit

## Eligibility Criteria

- ✓ Verification of co-financing (where applicable)
- ✓ Status of operation
- ✓ Compliance with Article 13 of the EMFAF Regulation (EU) No. 2021/1139
- ✓ Proposal demonstrates the contribution to specific objectives in line with Article 14(1)(d) of the EMFAF Regulation (EU) No. 2021/1139
- ✓ Compliance with Article 11 of the EMFAF Regulation (EU) No. 2021/1139
- ✓ Compliance with Article 25 of the EMFAF Regulation (EU) No. 2021/1139
- ✓ Project Leader from beneficiary organisation

## **Eligibility Criteria**

### **Application Form**

- The Applicant must present a complete application form, filled in with all relevant details and auxiliary documentation.
- No outline applications or incomplete applications shall be considered
- Submission of project proposals must be made within the time-limit set for receipt of applications defined in the call for applications

### **Capacity of beneficiary organisation**

- The Applicant organisation must have adequate administrative capacity, competence and technical resources

# Eligibility Criteria

## Eligibility of Beneficiary

- Applicant is not in an exclusion situation in accordance with Art 136 (1) and Art 141 (1) of 2018/1046 Financial Regulation and Art 73(2)(i) of CPR (*if applicable*).
- The Applicant should sign a declaration confirming that they or any person involved in the project are not in an exclusion situation in accordance with the Financial Regulation and Common Provisions Regulation (*if applicable*).

## Beneficiary in compliance with Common Fisheries Policy rules

- Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) No 2022/2181 defines time periods and dates for the inadmissibility of applications in case of infringements and points system.
- The criterion is applicable where the applicant concerned is an ‘operator’ as defined in Article 4(30) of Regulation (EU) No. 1380/2013, thus a natural or legal person who operates or holds any undertaking carrying out any of the activities related to any stage of production, processing, marketing, distribution and retail chains of fisheries and aquaculture products (*if applicable*).

# Eligibility Criteria

## Remit of beneficiary organisation

- Applicant organisation has remit to implement the project within its mandate. It must be publicly mandated or authorized to implement the project by virtue of the applicable law establishing the Organisation or by the respective Statute in the case of NGOs.
- The parameters and objectives of the project must fall within the remit and mandate of the Applicant.
- Supporting documentation as required in the call would need to be provided.

## Project implemented within the eligible territory and its direct benefit

- The eligible territory for the Programme is the whole territory for the Republic of Malta.
- All or part of an operation may be implemented outside of a Member State, including outside the Union, provided that the operation contributes to objectives of the Programme and provides direct benefits to the targeted territory of Malta.



## Eligibility Criteria

### Verification of Co-financing (where applicable)

- In cases where Government is not co-financing the project from national funds, the entity committing itself to provide co-financing (public or other organisations) must produce proof that resources for the whole duration of the project are available.

### **Proposal demonstrates the contribution to specific objectives in line with Article 25 of the EMFAF Regulation (EU) No. 2021/1139**

- Only proposals that selected the relevant Specific Objective/s as published in the call will be considered.
- Contributing to the achievement of Programme objectives and targets is essential.

# Eligibility Criteria

## **Project Leader from beneficiary organisation**

- Such officer carries monetary and legal responsibility for implementing a project on behalf of the beneficiary.
- The persons' direct association with the beneficiary is crucial especially with a view to ensure that the grant is exclusively used for the agreed purpose.

## **Status of operation**

- Status of operation is either ongoing or not yet started, unless otherwise allowed by the Regulation (EU) 2021/1060 Article 63(6).
- Unless otherwise allowed by the specific applicable regulations, operations shall not be considered eligible for support by the Funds where they have been physically completed or fully implemented before the application for funding under the programme is submitted, irrespective of whether all related payments have been made.

# Eligibility Criteria

## Compliance with Article 11 of the EMFAF Regulation (EU) No. 2021/1139

- The application form must be in line with applicable criteria identified under Article 11 of the EMFAF Regulation (EU) No. 2021/1139 *(if applicable)*.

## Compliance with Article 13 of the EMFAF Regulation (EU) No. 2021/1139

- The operation/proposal does not fall under Article 13 of the EMFAF Regulation (EU) No. 2021/1139, which identifies ineligible operations or expenditure.

## Compliance with Article 25 of the EMFAF Regulation (EU) No. 2021/1139

- The operation/proposal must be in line with either Article 25 ‘Protection and restoration of aquatic biodiversity and ecosystems’ of the EMFAF Regulation (EU) No. 2021/1139
- This criterion is applicable for only operations relating to the Protection and restoration of aquatic biodiversity and ecosystems (Priority 1, Specific Objective 1.6).

# Selection Criteria

Criteria	Marks
The proposed project maximises the contribution to EU key priorities as expressed in the programme objectives and expected results	20 marks
Contribution of the project to the programmes types of action, interventions and Member State Obligations and commitments	20 marks
Potential of the project to enhance innovation and partnership in the sector	5 marks

# Selection Criteria

Criteria	Marks
Contribution towards indicators beyond minimum	10 marks
Readiness	5 marks
Project Sustainability and Cost Effectiveness	15 marks

# Selection Criteria

Criteria	Marks
Horizontal principles – Fundamental rights, Equal opportunities, non-discrimination and accessibility	5 marks
Sustainable Development	10 marks
Quality of application form	5 marks
Complementarity	5 marks

## Selection Criteria

**The proposed project maximises the contribution to EU key priorities as expressed in the programme objectives and expected results**

*20 marks*

The assessment will include the following selection criteria, amongst others:

- The project's ability to demonstrate the achievement of common objectives under the EU Habitats, Birds and the Marine Strategy Framework Directives, namely the achievement of Favourable Conservation Status and the protection of designated habitats and species.
- The project's ability to implement and monitor marine protected areas, contributing to the achievement of Good Environmental Status (GES) in Malta's marine waters, and the conservation and restoration of marine Natura 2000 areas.
- The extent the project involves actions related to the protection and restoration of marine ecosystems, contributing to the objectives of the EU Marine Action Plan.
- The project's ability to ensure that the actions are aligned with Malta's Prioritised Action Framework Plan and the MSFD Programme of Measures.



## Selection Criteria

### **Contribution of the project to the programmes types of actions, interventions and Member State Obligations and commitments**

*20 marks*

The assessment will include the following selection criteria, amongst others:

- Evidence that the project addresses qualitatively and quantitatively the programme objectives and support the recovery, resilience, green transition, and digitalisation.
- The extent that the project delivers on the type of actions and interventions described in the programme.
- The proposal's ability to demonstrate how its actions will support the needs of the fisheries sector, including SSCF, by contributing to EU and National Fisheries and Aquaculture regulations and policies. Evidence that the project ensures the sustainable exploitation of fisheries resources by abiding with policies related to achieving maximum sustainable yield (MSY), eliminating by-catch and improving the use of selective gears and innovative solutions.

## Selection Criteria

### **Contribution of the project to the relevant horizontal aspects addressed by the programmes and/or Member State Obligations (*cont.*)**

*20 marks*

- The project's ability to contribute to achieving the targets of the *Biodiversity Strategy 2030* through the effective management of all protected areas in the marine environment and the restoration of degraded ecosystems, particularly those with the most potential to capture and store carbon.
- The project's ability to involve actions which provide a platform for the direct involvement of fishers in the implementation of management actions aiming towards a participatory approach for management of existing MPAs and addressing pressures arising from fisheries activity and other pressures which fishers can assist in addressing.
- The extent that the project is implemented through an inclusive approach involving various stakeholders (in addition to fishers and SSCF) in the participatory management of the marine space, as explained in the programme.

## Selection Criteria

### **Potential of the project to enhance innovation and partnership in the sector**

*5 marks*

- If partners are involved, evidence of how they will contribute to the achievement of the expected results.
- The ability of the project to mobilise complementary funding/actions to achieve the expected results.
- Innovative solutions proposed in this project to achieve the expected results.

# Selection Criteria

## Contribution towards indicators beyond minimum

*10 marks*

- Assessed in terms of contribution towards the programme indicators beyond the minimum required.
- Adequate description of the selected indicators in the project proposal including an explanation of the method of quantification of targets and verification of their attainment.

The relevant result indicators to be identified in the call for proposals:

- Area addressed by operations contributing to a good environmental status, protecting, conserving and restoring biodiversity and ecosystems.
- Actions contributing to good environmental status including nature restoration, conservation, protection of ecosystems, biodiversity, animal health and welfare.

# Selection Criteria

## Contribution towards indicators beyond minimum (*cont.*)

*10 marks*

- Assessment of whether there are any unrealistic project indicator targets which are not achievable.
- The level of contribution of the proposed indicators towards achieving programme targets as outlined in the call.

# Selection Criteria

## Readiness

*5 marks*

- Risk associated with the timeline of the project as proposed by the applicant.
- Readiness, assessed based on policy-readiness, tenders, planning and environmental permits, recruitment procedures and, discussions amongst the relevant stakeholders, mandate, amongst others, depending on the nature of the published call and the nature of the proposal.
- Other risks

# Selection Criteria

## Project Sustainability and Cost Effectiveness

*15 marks*

- Magnitude of post operating costs against total project costs and how the benefits will continue to be enjoyed after the project financing has actually ended. The financial stability of the applicant organisation in case of a private entity.
- The proposal includes a qualitative description on how the operations will respect requirements on durability under Article 65(1) of the Common Provisions Regulation.
- Extra marks given on the basis of added value, project effectiveness and also the justification of planned expenses. Co-financing necessitates obtaining the best return and added value possible on EU funds invested.

## Selection Criteria

### **Horizontal principles – Fundamental rights, Equal opportunities, non-discrimination and accessibility**

*5 marks*

- Effective measures addressing Fundamental rights and compliance with the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union
- Effective measures addressing gender equality, including the role of women in the fisheries and aquaculture sectors
- Effective measures addressing equal opportunities for all
- Effective measures ensuring the principle of non-discrimination
- Effective measures ensuring accessibility



# Selection Criteria

## Sustainable Development

*10 marks*

- Effective measures that contribute towards economic growth of the fisheries and/or the aquaculture sector.
- Effective measures that contribute towards responsible fisheries and aquaculture practices and social cohesion of the Small-Scale Fishers.
- The proposal's ability to demonstrate that it is compatible with requirements under European and National legislation, including an adequate description of effective measures to achieve environmental sustainability within the framework of the Maritime Spatial Planning (MSP) Directive, the Integrated Maritime Policy (IMP), the Water Framework Directive (WFD) and the Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD).

## Selection Criteria

### Quality of application form

*5 marks*

- General presentation and overall coherence between different sections of the proposal.
- Proposed budget is in line with the proposed activities, demonstrating sound financial management and the absence of ‘Double Funding’.
- Adequate description and purpose of each activity being proposed including a work plan/Gantt chart with regards to the implementation of these activities.
- Proposal identifies communication strategies/actions showing how the use of public funds will be effectively publicised and communicated with the relevant target groups of the proposed project and the general public.

## Selection Criteria

### Complementarity

*5 marks*

- Proposal identifies complementarity with actions and results of other EU-funded projects, including under relevant Horizon Europe calls and its Mission Ocean.
- The extent that the project complements other research project areas related to, for example, marine restoration, fisheries sustainability (eliminating by-catch/improving selectivity) and marine governance.

## Contact Details



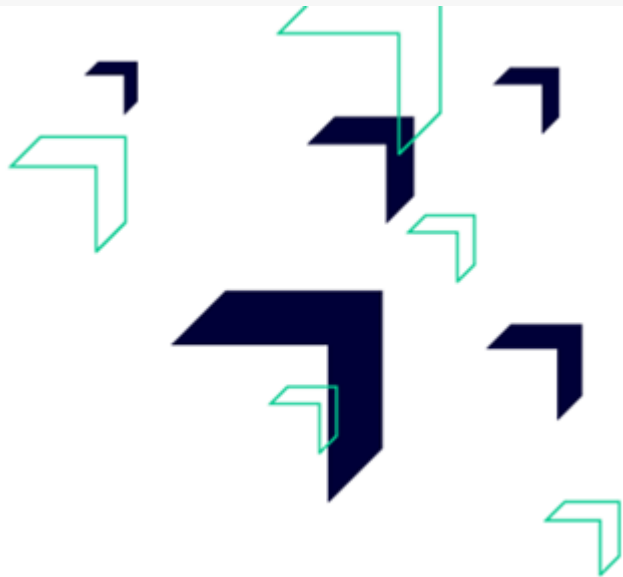
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# Thank you



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