

Eligibility and Selection Criteria for the EMFAF Programme 2021 – 2027 actions, falling under Priority 1, SO 1.6

Articles 25 of Regulation (EU) 2021/1139

Fostering sustainable fisheries and the restoration and conservation of aquatic biological resources (Excluding actions addressing marine litter)

Evaluation and Assessment

The Assessment and Selection of projects shall be undertaken by a Project Selection Committee. This call is envisaged to be a restricted call, issued to the Environment and Resources Authority (ERA).

Applications will be assessed against the Eligibility and Selection Criteria by the Project Selection Committee and will proceed to be assessed against the Selection Criteria only if the application meets all the requirements of the Eligibility Criteria.

A project must achieve 50% of the marks to be considered for funding. However, the project must achieve the threshold for each of the relevant criteria in order to be considered further, even if the total points achieved exceed 50%.

The voting members shall decide how the project proposal addresses each of the below criteria and assign marking points according to the following guide:

- Excellent 81 to 100% of points
- Very good 76 to 80% of points
- Satisfactory 50 to 75% of points
- Very poor 26 to 49% of points
- Unacceptable 1 to 25% of points.

Table 1: The table below delineates the eligibility and selection criteria being proposed

Eligibility Criteria		Selection criteria		
<p>Eligibility criteria are the essential criteria that all projects must meet in order to be admissible for a further qualitative assessment. Projects which do not comply with the gateway eligibility criteria will NOT proceed to full appraisal and scoring.</p> <p>Note: no numerical markings are involved in this section. Fulfilment of such criteria takes the form of Yes or No. Eligible projects should fulfil all criteria listed below.</p>		Criterion	Marks (max)	Sub-criteria
Criterion	Assessment			
<p>Application Form</p> <p>Applicant must present an application form filled-in with relevant details¹ and auxiliary documentation. Timely submission prior to deadline defined in the call for applications.</p>	Yes/No	<p>The proposed project maximises the contribution to EU key priorities as expressed in the programme objectives and expected results</p>	20	<p>The assessment will include the following selection criteria, amongst others:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 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 listed habitats and species. - The project's ability to implement management processes within marine protected areas and beyond, contributing to the conservation and restoration of marine Natura 2000 areas and the achievement of Good Environmental Status (GES) in Malta's marine waters. - The extent the project involves actions related to the protection and restoration of marine ecosystems, contributing to

¹ Relevant details are those required by the selection committee to evaluate the application and award points.

				<p>the objectives of the EU Marine Action Plan.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The project's ability to ensure that the actions are aligned with Malta's Prioritised Action Framework Plan and the MSFD Programme of Measures.
<p>Capacity of beneficiary organisation</p> <p>Applicant must have adequate administrative capacity, competence and technical resources</p>	<p>Yes/No</p>	<p>Contribution of the project to the programmes type of actions, interventions and Member State Obligations and commitments</p>	<p>20</p>	<p>The assessment will include the following selection criteria, amongst others:</p> <p>Evidence that the project addresses qualitatively and quantitatively the programme objectives and support the recovery, resilience, green transition, and digitalisation.</p> <p>The extent that the project delivers on the type of actions and interventions described in the programme.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>The project's ability to contribute to achieving the targets of the <i>Biodiversity Strategy 2030</i></p>

				<p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p>
<p>Eligibility of Beneficiary</p> <p>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 (<i>if applicable</i>)</p>	Yes/No/NA	Potential of the project to enhance innovation and partnership in the sector	5	<p>If partners are involved, evidence of how they will contribute to the achievement of the Expected Results</p> <p>The ability of the project to mobilise complementary funding/actions to achieve the Expected Results</p> <p>Innovative solutions proposed in this project to achieve the Expected Results</p>
<p>Beneficiary in compliance with Common Fisheries Policy rules</p>	Yes/No/NA	Contribution towards indicators beyond minimum	10	Assessed in terms of contribution towards the programme indicators beyond the minimum required

<p>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 <i>(if applicable)</i>²</p>				<p>Adequate description of the selected result indicators in the project proposal including an explanation of the method of quantification of targets and verification of their attainment.</p> <p>The relevant result indicators to be identified in the call for proposals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 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
<p>Remit of beneficiary organisation</p> <p>Applicant organisation has remit to implement the project within its mandate</p>	<p>Yes/No</p>	<p>Readiness</p>	<p>10</p>	<p>Assessment of whether there are any unrealistic project indicator targets which are not achievable</p> <p>The level of contribution of the proposed indicators towards achieving Programme targets as outlined in the call</p> <p>Risk associated with the timeline of the project as proposed by the Applicant</p> <p>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</p>

² Not Applicable for Public Entities

			nature of the published call and the nature of the proposal
			Other risks
<p>Project implemented within the eligible territory and its direct benefit</p> <p>Reference goes to the Republic of Malta or for its direct benefit</p>	Yes/No	Project Sustainability and Cost-Effectiveness	<p>10</p> <p>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.</p> <p>The financial stability of the Applicant organisation if it is a private entity</p> <p>The proposal includes a qualitative description on how the operations will respect the requirements on durability under Article 65(1) of the CPR</p> <p>Extra marks given based on added value, project effectiveness and the justification of planned expenses. Co-financing necessitates obtaining the best return and added value possible on EU funds invested.</p>
<p>Verification of co-financing (where applicable)</p> <p>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 project are available</p>	Yes/No	Horizontal principles - Fundamental rights, Equal opportunities, non-discrimination, and accessibility	<p>5</p> <p>Effective measures addressing Fundamental rights and compliance with the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union</p> <p>Effective measures addressing gender equality, including the role of women in the fisheries and aquaculture sectors</p> <p>Effective measures addressing equal opportunities for all</p> <p>Effective measures ensuring the principle of non-discrimination</p>

<p>Proposal demonstrates the contribution to a specific objective in line with Article 14 (1)(f) of the EMFAF Regulation (EU) No. 2021/1139</p> <p>Contributing to the achievement of Programme objectives and targets is essential</p>	Yes/No
<p>Project Leader from beneficiary organisation</p> <p>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</p>	Yes/No
<p>Status of operation</p> <p>Status of operation is either ongoing or not yet started, unless otherwise</p>	Yes/No

		Effective measures ensuring accessibility
Sustainable Development	10	Effective measures that contribute towards economic development 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).
Quality of application form	5	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

allowed by the Regulation (EU)2021/1060 Article 63 (6)	
<p>Compliance with Article 11 of the EMFAF Regulation (EU) No. 2021/1139</p> <p>The application form must be in line with applicable criteria identified under Article 11 of the EMFAF Regulation (EU) No. 2021/1139 <i>(if applicable)</i>³</p>	Yes/No/NA
<p>Compliance with Article 13 of the EMFAF Regulation (EU) No. 2021/1139</p> <p>The operation/proposal does not fall under Article 13 of the EMFAF Regulation (EU) No. 2021/1139</p>	Yes/No
<p>Compliance with Article 25 of the EMFAF Regulation (EU) No. 2021/1139</p> <p>The operation/proposal must be in line with Article 25 of the EMFAF Regulation (EU) No. 2021/1139⁴ (if applicable)</p>	Yes/No/NA

		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
Complementarity	5	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.

³ Not Applicable for Priority 1, S.O. 1.6

⁴ Applicable for Biodiversity and Ecosystems related calls.