



## EMFF OP 2014-2020

### Implementation plan

### Aquaculture System Scheme

*(Good Governance and Reducing the Administrative Burden)*

<b>Operational Programme</b>	EMFF Operational Programme 2014-2020
<b>Priority</b>	Union Priority 2 Sustainable Aquaculture
<b>Thematic Objective</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ TO3 - Enhancing the competitiveness of small and medium-sized enterprises</li> <li>▪ TO 6 - Preserving and protecting the environment and promoting resource efficiency</li> </ul>
<b>Specific Objective</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ SO2 - Enhancement of the competitiveness and viability of aquaculture enterprises, including improvement of safety or working conditions, in particular of SMEs.</li> <li>▪ SO3 - Protection and restoration of aquatic biodiversity and enhancement of ecosystems related to aquaculture and promotion of resource efficient aquaculture.</li> </ul>
<b>Scheme</b>	Aquaculture System Scheme
<b>EMFF Certifying Body</b>	Finance Division, Dept. Of Agriculture, Food & the Marine.
<b>Managing Authority</b>	Marine Agencies & Programmes Division, Dept Of Agriculture, Food and Marine
<b>Intermediate Body</b>	Not applicable
<b>Grant Rate</b>	Up to 100% (Public projects)
<b>EU Co-Financing Rate</b>	50%
<b>Legal Basis</b>	Articles 51 & 78 EMFF

## 1. Objective of Intervention

Article 34 of the Common Fisheries Policy Regulation required Member States to prepare multi-annual national strategic plans for aquaculture. Drafting of these plans by member States was informed by *Strategic Guidelines for the Sustainable Development of EU Aquaculture*, published by the European Commission in 2013. These Guidelines focused on 4 key goals, namely:

- Simplify Administrative Procedures
- Coordinated Spatial Planning
- Enhancing competitiveness
- Exploiting competitive advantages

Ireland's National Strategic Plan for Sustainable Aquaculture Development, published in 2015, proposes 24 actions to be implemented over the period up to 2020 to drive the sustainable development of the aquaculture sector and sustainably grow production in the sector by 45,000 tonnes. Over 8 Chapters the Plan addresses various key issues and challenges for sustainable aquaculture, including promoting growth, knowledge innovation and technology, sustainability, coordinated spatial planning and aquaculture licensing.

Chapter 8 of the National Strategic Plan for Sustainable Aquaculture Development addresses challenges concerning aquaculture licensing and specifies a vision for 2020 of:

- *“A streamlined and efficient licensing system that provides greater business certainty to applicants, and transparency to the general public”.*

*Four actions are proposed to achieve this aim. One of these, Action No. 24, commits Ireland to:*

- *“Develop a data management and information system with online aquaculture licence application and tracking functionality and spatial mapping of aquaculture sites and exclusion areas” (hereafter called the Aquaculture System Project).*

This commitment is repeated in the Union Priority 2 Strategy for Sustainable Development of Aquaculture specified in section 3.1 of EMFF OP. The purpose of this Scheme is to support the implementation of Action 24 and develop a system that has the potential to be transformative for the governance and transparency of Irish aquaculture and to greatly reduce the administrative burden for operators and other stakeholders.

## **2. Eligible Beneficiaries**

- Department of Agriculture Food and the Marine

## **3. Eligible Activities**

- Costs payable to contractors to develop and supply software for the Aquaculture System Project.

## **4. Ineligible Costs**

- Hardware
- Operational costs of the beneficiary

## **5. Support Rate**

- 100 % of eligible costs, subject to maximum support of €1 million.

## **6. Selection Process**

- The beneficiary shall, prior to agreeing contracts for the development of the Aquaculture System Project, submit an application to the Managing Authority outlining the specification of the system, the required budget and the timescale for implementation of the Aquaculture System Project.
- Subject to satisfactory application, the Managing Authority shall notify the beneficiary of approval of the Aquaculture System Project for support under the EMFF OP.

## **7. Selection criteria:**

- Satisfactory specification of the system, cost and timescale for implementation of the Aquaculture System Project.
- This is a non-competitive intervention.

## **8. Document Retention**

In accordance with Article 140 of the Common Provisions Regulation (EC) 1303/2013, the Managing Authority will ensure that all supporting documents regarding expenditure, verification checks, certification and audits on operations for which total eligible expenditure is less than €1,000,000.00 are kept available for the EU Commission and Court of Auditors for a period of three years from 31 December following the submission of the accounts in which the expenditure of the operation is included.

In the case of operations over €1,000,000.00 all supporting documentation shall be kept for a 2 year period from 31 December following the submission of accounts in which the final expenditure of the completed operation is included.

## **9. Monitoring and Reporting arrangements**

The Managing Authority will provide periodic updates to the Monitoring Committee on the progress of this Scheme. These updates will form part of the agenda for meetings of the Monitoring Committee.

The Department of Agriculture Food and the Marine (as beneficiary) will provide information on the implementation of this Scheme to the Managing Authority to contribute to:

- The compilation of the Annual Implementation Report under article 114 of the EMFF Regulation to be transmitted to the Commission by 31 May each year.
- A Common Monitoring and Evaluation System under article 107 of the EMFF Regulation;
- Data on operations selected for funding required to be submitted to the Commission under Article 97(1)(a) of the EMFF Regulation by 31 March each year.

The Managing Authority will annually present information on the implementation of this Scheme to the Monitoring Committee through the Annual Implementation Report, which will be presented for the Committee's approval.

The Managing Authority will maintain a website providing details of this Scheme and its progress.

## **10. Information and Publicity**

The contribution of the Irish exchequer and EMFF 2014-2020, will be acknowledged in all brochures, promotional material, press releases, publicity activity, advertisements, signage, applications forms, annual reports, letters of offer, etc., by use of appropriate logo and text references.

The Managing Authority and the Department of Agriculture Food and the Marine (as beneficiary) will ensure compliance with Annex V of Commission Regulation 508/2014 concerning the provision of information on the Operational Programme and the co-funding provided by the Union.