



An Roinn Talmhaíochta,
Bia agus Mara
Department of Agriculture,
Food and the Marine



European Maritime
& Fisheries Fund

European Maritime & Fisheries Fund (EMFF)
Operational Programme 2014-20 - Ireland

Annual Implementation Report 2018

Citizen's Summary



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1. - Introduction

The aim of the Citizens Summary is to provide a summary of the fourth Annual Implementation Report (AIR) for the EMFF OP 2014-2020, which reports on the progress achieved under the EMFF OP for the year 2018.

2. - Background

Following approval by the Government of Ireland's of its EMFF Operational Programme and its adoption by the European Commission on 4 December 2015, the Programme was formally launched on 14 January 2016. The Programme is implemented under Regulation 508/2014 (European Maritime and Fisheries Fund). This is the principal source of development funding for the seafood sector until approximately 2021 and provides a range of support measures for fisheries, aquaculture and seafood processing.

The Programme is co-funded by the Exchequer and European Union as follows

Financial Allocations by Union Priority

Union Priority	EU	National	Total
1 - Promoting environmentally sustainable, resource efficient, innovative, competitive and knowledge based fisheries	€ 27,795,000	€27,795,000	€55,590,000
2 - Fostering environmentally sustainable, resource efficient, innovative, competitive and knowledge based aquaculture	€14,900,000	€14,900,000	€29,800,000
3 - Fostering the implementation of the CFP	€69,790,720	€15,133,482	€84,924,202
4 - Increasing employment and territorial cohesion	€6,000,000	€6,000,000	€12,000,000
5 - Fostering marketing and processing	€19,781,587	€18,500,000	€38,281,587
6 - Fostering the implementation of the Integrated Maritime Policy	€5,334,672	€5,334,672	€10,669,344
7 - Technical assistance	€4,000,000	€4,000,000	€1,590,000
Total	€147,601,979	€91,663,154	€239,265,133

3. - Overview

In 2018 Ireland's EMFF Operational Programme invested a total of €43.5 million in Ireland's seafood sector in 18 schemes. This compares to investment of €27.6 million in 2017. The increasing level of investment spend is a positive indication of a ramping up of investment levels in what for most schemes was their third year of operation. The performance of the Programme in 2018 was notable in a number of respects, in particular:

- Achievement of the Performance Framework milestones for 2018 for all six Union Priorities.
- The 7 newly established Fisheries Local Action Groups (FLAGs) launched their second calls for projects and the outcome was very positive, with 209 grants awarded, 31% of the overall FLAG funds spent and a project pipeline that will contribute to 2019 spend.
- Strong interest in EMFF funding of innovation and research projects across fisheries, aquaculture and processing.
- A notable increase in capital investment in aquaculture as more sites are licensed.
- Investment of €7.6 million for improvements to two Fishery Harbour Centres under the EMFF Fishery Harbour Scheme, with further investments in 2019.
- An increase in the scale of capital projects.
- The launch of the Seafood Capacity Building and Seafood Skills and Trainings Schemes, where we expect a significant take up in future years.
- The development of a strong project pipeline, with the approval of many projects for completion in 2019 and later years.
- Negatively, the continued suspension of recoupment of Control & Enforcement funds in connection with the Points system.

In 2018, the first modification to the EMFF Programme was adopted by the European Commission. The reasons for the programme modification related mostly to the originally proposed fleet decommissioning scheme, which was not implemented in light of the negative conclusions of a Cost Benefit Analysis evaluation. The modified Programme reallocated the €16 million decommissioning budget, with funds being reassigned to the Seafood Promotion Scheme, the Fishery Harbour Scheme and Technical Assistance.

4. - Performance Framework

Ireland has achieved its 2018 Milestones for each of the six Union Priorities.

The 2018 milestones comprise both output and financial milestones to be achieved by end 2018. Achievement of the financial milestones are required to be reported based on claims submitted to the Commission by the submission date of the Annual Implementation Report and based on certified expenditure. In fact, claims submitted by Ireland relate in most cases to Programme expenditure only up to the end of 2017, as the process of performing article 125 verification checks and preparing claims typically takes up to Autumn of the following year to complete and so only a small portion of Ireland's 2018 expenditure is taken into account in the final Performance Framework

figures presented in this report for the 2018 Milestones. The Milestones would have been considerably exceeded in many cases, had the actual spend to end 2018 been considered.

Performance framework					
UP1					
	Milestone for 2018	milestone 85%	milestone 75%	Achievement (EUR/no)	Achievement (%)
Financial indicator (certified and submitted)	€ 14,000,000	€ 11,900,000	€ 10,500,000	€ 14,369,957	102.64%
1.4 - N° of projects on conservation measures, reduction of the fishing impact on the marine environment and fishing adaptation to the protection of species	25	21	19	23	92.00%
1.2 No. Of projects on systems of allocation of fishing opportunities	1	1	1	1	100.00%
1.9 No of projects on promotion of human capital and social dialogue, diversification and new forms of income, start-ups for fishermen and health and safety	30	26	23	59	196.67%
1.6 - N° of projects on protection and restoration of marine biodiversity, ecosystems	18	16	14	200	1111.11%
UP2					
	Milestone for 2018	milestone 85%	milestone 75%	Achievement (EUR/no)	Achievement (%)
Financial indicator	€ 5,000,000	€ 4,250,000	€ 3,750,000	€ 4,984,920	99.70%
2.1 - N° of projects on innovation, advisory services	50	43	38	44	88.00%
2.2 - N° of projects on productive investments in aquaculture	25	22	19	78	312.00%
UP3					
	Milestone for 2018	milestone 85%	milestone 75%	Achievement (EUR/no)	Achievement (%)
Financial indicator	€ 40,000,000	€ 34,000,000	€ 30,000,000	€ 33,572,755	83.93%
3.1 - N° of projects on implementing the Union's control, inspections and enforcement system	1	1	1	13	1300.00%
3.2 - N° of projects on supporting the collection, management and use of data	1	1	1	2	200.00%
UP4					
	Milestone for 2018	milestone 85%	milestone 75%	Achievement (EUR/no)	Achievement (%)

Financial indicator	€ 3,750,000	€ 3,187,500	€ 2,812,500	€ 3,717,281	99.13%
4.1 - N° of local development strategies selected	7	6	5	7	100.00%
UP5					
	Milestone for 2018	milestone 85%	milestone 75%	Achievement (EUR/no)	Achievement (%)
Financial indicator	€ 10,500,000	€ 8,925,000	€ 7,875,000	€ 9,036,219	86.06%
5.2 - N° of projects on marketing measures and storage aid	3	3	2	31	1033.33%
5.3 - N° of projects on processing	40	34	30	92	230.00%
UP6					
	Milestone for 2018	milestone 85%	milestone 75%	Achievement (EUR/no)	Achievement (%)
Financial indicator	€ 2,000,000	€ 1,700,000	€ 1,500,000	€ 3,838,484	191.92%
6.2 - N° projects on the protection and improvement of knowledge on marine environment	2	2	1	21	1050.00%

5. - EMFF Implementation 2018

In 2018, 18 schemes were funded under the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund Operational Programme for Ireland. The table below lists the expenditure for 2018 on each of the schemes.

Public Expenditure in 2018

Scheme Name	Total Public Expenditure
Sustainable Fisheries Scheme	€4,436,516
New Fishermen Scheme	€226,700
Marine Biodiversity Scheme (partial – See UP6)	€307,649
Inshore Fisheries Conservation Scheme	€833,262
Seafood Innovation & Business Planning Scheme	€1,552,095
Seafood Capacity Building Scheme	€1,380,073
Seafood Skills & Training Scheme	€6,456
Fishery Harbour Scheme	€7,670,621
Control & Enforcement Scheme – (partial – See UP3)	€737,232
Total UP 1 - Fisheries	€17,150,604
Sustainable Aquaculture Scheme	€2,589,663
Knowledge Gateway Scheme	€2,538,051

Total UP2 – Aquaculture	€5,127,714
Control & Enforcement Scheme (partial – See UP1)	€ 4,183,280
Data Collection Scheme	€7,800,000
Total UP3 - Common Fisheries Policy	€11,983,280
Fisheries Local Area Development Scheme	€1,948,444
Total UP4 – FLAG	€1,948,444
Producer Organisation Scheme	€312,414
Seafood Promotion Scheme	€2,066,000
Seafood Processing Capital Investment Scheme	€1,160,972
Seafood Scaling and New Market Development Scheme	€476,152
Total UP5 - Processing & Marketing	€4,015,538
Blue Growth and Marine Spatial Planning Scheme	€906,074
Marine Biodiversity (partial see – UP1)	€1,755,311
Total UP6 - Integrated Maritime Policy	€2,661,385
Technical Assistance	€565,265
GRAND TOTAL	€43,488,230

2018 Expenditure Claims submitted to EU

Scheme	Total Investment	Grant Aid	EU	National
Sustainable Fisheries	€8,826,388	€4,421,922	€2,210,961	€2,210,961
Inshore Conservation	€892,180	€663,777	€331,888	€331,888
Marine Biodiversity – UP1	€513,161	€513,161	€256,580	€256,580
Sustainable Aquaculture	€5,607,897	€2,093,366	€1,046,683	€1,046,683
Knowledge Gateway	€469,150	€408,393	€204,196	€204,196
Data Collection	€7,945,331.33	€7,945,331.33	6,356,265.07	€1,589,066.26
Control & Enforcement	€3,834,076.68	€3,834,076.68	€3,450,669.01	€383,407.67
FLAG	€3,076,117	€1,794,259	€897,129	€897,129

Producer Organisations	€916,780	€520,870	€260,435	€260,435
Seafood Promotion	€919,790	€919,790	€459,895	€459,895
Seafood Innovation and Business Planning	€2,799,926	€2,472,160	€1,236,080	€1,236,080
Seafood Processing	€7,111,664	€1,957,683	€978,841	€978,841
Seafood Scaling & New Market Development	€417,829	€299,892	€149,946	€149,946
Marine Biodiversity – UP6	€1,087,686	€1,087,686	€543,843	€543,843
Technical Assistance	€71,213	€69,146	€34,573	€34,573
TOTAL	€44,489,189	€29,001,513	€18,417,984	€10,583,524

5.1 - Union Priority 1- Sustainable Development of Fisheries

In 2018, the EMFF Programme approved €29,421,326 funding for 367 projects under Union Priority One. Actual spend in 2018 was €17,150,604 under 244 projects through nine support schemes under Union Priority. Projects implemented included the following:

- Marine science and data,
- On-board investment in health and safety hygiene, quality, selective gear, energy efficiency and value adding,
- Adaptation to the Landing Obligation.
- Advisory services to the fishing fleet,
- Fostering adaptation to the CFP,
- Networking and dissemination of knowledge,
- Recovery of marine litter and management of waste,
- Stock conservation,
- New entrants.

Many projects approved in 2018 for EMFF funding are of a multi-annual nature and will contribute to spend in 2019.

Marine Biodiversity Scheme

In 2018 € 307,649 was invested under the Marine Biodiversity Scheme under UP1 supporting four projects. Projects supported included the restoration of crayfish, skate, ray and oyster stocks.

New Fishermen Scheme

In 2018, there were four projects completed under the New Fishermen Scheme with public aid of €226,700.

There was an improved interest in the Scheme during 2018 with 8 projects approved for public aid of €375,200. Five projects with grant aid of 148,500 will be carried over into 2019.

Sustainable Fisheries Scheme

Part A - Public Interest Projects:

12 projects were supported with public aid of €1,245,820. These were implemented by BIM for the benefit of the seafood sector and for the public good. The projects focused on:

- Development and testing of selective fishing gears and methods.
- Provision of Partnerships & Advisory Services to the seafood sector.
- Project addressing the problem of parasitic worms in fish.
- To recover marine litter from the sea and the management of fisheries generated waste at sea and ashore.

Part B - On Board Investments

In 2018, 105 Part B projects were supported with public aid of €2,922,738. Projects supported in 2018 included:

Projects supported in 2018 included:

- Selective gears such as square mesh panels and selective cod ends,
- Equipment to improve hygiene, health and working conditions on board such as sanitary facilities and galley facilities for crew,
- Equipment to reduce manual lifting,
- Insulation and ventilation,
- Equipment to improve fuel efficiency including fuel monitoring equipment,
- Gear monitoring equipment and fuel efficient fishing gears,
- Investments that improve fish quality and add value to fishery products on board, such as provision of temperature monitoring systems, weighing and labelling machines and fish handling systems.

Demand under this scheme was exceptionally strong in 2018. While 105 projects were completed and paid, some 185 projects were actually approved for grants worth €5.75m. This strong project pipeline will contribute to spend in 2019.

Part C - Promoting Quality and Added Value Onshore

In 2018, six projects received public aid of €267,958.60

Five of these projects were infrastructure improvement projects which aim to assist fishermen to meet the challenges of the landing obligation. The main elements of the projects are the provision of cold storage facilities and associated handling equipment for the storage of unwanted catches.

Inshore Fisheries Conservation Scheme

In 2018, 80 projects were supported with public aid of €833,261.87.

Grants of €439,634.35 were approved so that BIM could undertake 5 projects for the benefit of the sector. These projects supported

- Networking in the inshore fisheries sector.
- The completion of a strategy for the inshore fisheries sector.
- Governance of native oyster fisheries.
- The installation of landing derricks at minor ports.

2 industry projects were funded to a value of €32,858.40 for the installation of onshore cold store facilities for an SSCF operator and the development of a business plan for an SSCF organisation

73 projects concerning v-notching of lobsters received support of €360,768.82

Fishery Harbours Scheme

In 2018, two projects were implemented with €7,670,621 in public investment. These projects involved the improvement of harbour facilities at the Fishery Harbour Centres in Castletownbere and Killybegs. The objectives of the two projects were as follows:

- Improve safety conditions for staff and users of or visitors to the harbour
- Improve working conditions for staff and users of the harbour.
- Increase the quality of products landed in the harbour.
- Increase the control of products landed.
- Increase the energy efficiency of the harbour.
- Contribute to environmental protection.

Control & Enforcement Scheme

In 2018, one project was supported with public aid of €737,231.71.

The Information management technology (IMT) division of the Department of Agriculture Food and the Marine (DAFM) develops and maintains the fisheries IT systems to support the control authorities. In 2018 work begun on the development of a new Quota Balancing IT system which will allow for the management of the allocation of fishing opportunities in the main Pelagic Fisheries to:

- Manage the number of stocks within authorised catch limits
- Process in place to adjust future catch limits to address where a vessel has exceeded its allocated catch limit

Further development work under these activities will be advanced in 2019.

Seafood Innovation and Business Planning Scheme

In 2018 17 innovation and business planning projects were supported with total public aid of €1,552,095.

Nine projects from processing enterprises were supported with public aid of €55,598. These projects included a broad range of new product development and product enhancement projects related to fish and seaweed and seafood derivative products, consumer and market testing, market feasibility studies, and business planning.

Bord Iascaigh Mhara undertook eight innovation projects for the benefit of the sector at a cost of €1,496,497. Projects included:

- Operation and support of a new innovation process in the Seafood Innovation Hub, Clonakilty.
- Green Seafood Processing – initiatives in the seafood processing sector to generate cost reductions in the areas of water energy, waste and transport.
- Providing business planning and Client Engagement services.
- Innovation projects nominated by the sector which are contracted to research performing organisations and overseen in partnership with industry.

Seafood Capacity Building Scheme

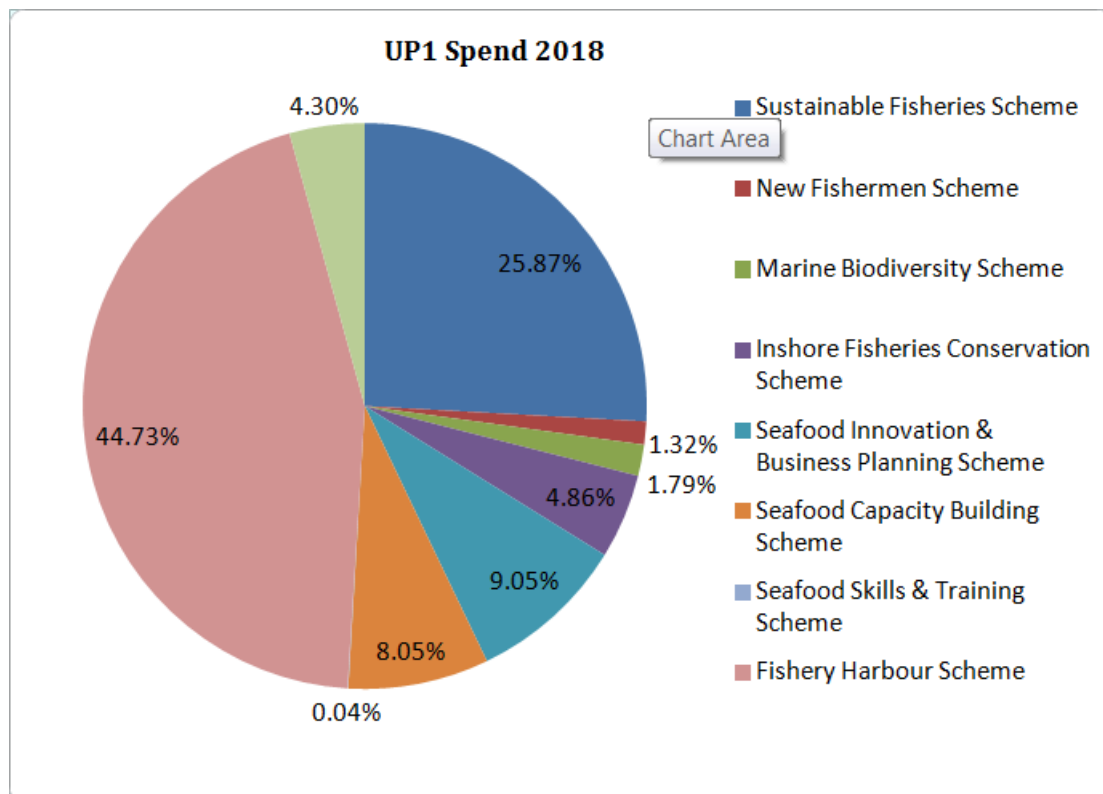
In 2018 the SCBS provided support for seven public body projects. Six of these were BIM led projects, while the seventh was an external project. These projects drew down a total of aid of and €889,804.38 and €486,187 respectively. In addition there were nine projects from seafood enterprises approved in 2018. Three of these drew down a total grant aid of €3,981.97 in 2018, with the remaining approved projects expected to draw down in 2019. While this was the first year of operation of this scheme, it was introduced primarily to provide aid to stakeholder representative bodies, and the lack of applications from these bodies was disappointing. Feedback suggests that while aid of 60% was available, these bodies have difficulty funding the remaining 40% of costs.

Seafood Skills and Training Scheme

This Scheme was launched in 2018. It provides grant aid to people involved in the Irish Seafood Industry to attend and complete defined training courses. In 2018 fifty nine applications were approved with three of these drawing down grant aid, in 2018, amounting to €6,456.85. The remaining approved projects are expected to complete and draw down in 2019. This Scheme is expected to grow significantly in the future.

UP1 – Total Expenditure in 2018

Scheme	Total Expenditure
Sustainable Fisheries Scheme	€4,436,516
New Fishermen Scheme	€226,700
Marine Biodiversity Scheme	€307,649
Inshore Fisheries Conservation Scheme	€833,262
Seafood Innovation & Business Planning Scheme	€1,552,095
Seafood Capacity Building Scheme	€1,380,073
Seafood Skills & Training Scheme	€6,456
Fishery Harbour Scheme	€7,670,621
Control & Enforcement Scheme – QB System	€737,232
Total UP 1 - Fisheries	€17,150,604



5.2 - Union Priority 2 - Sustainable Development of Aquaculture

In 2018, the EMFF Programme invested €5,127,714 in support of 66 aquaculture projects through two support schemes under Union Priority Two. This investment was evenly split between supports for capital investment and for innovation/research/advice. There was good interest in capital investment, particularly for oyster farming, and increasingly from the salmon sector. Changes to the support structure for innovation projects proved positive and attracted strong interest from the research sector, which again involved multi-annual projects that will contribute to spend in 2018. Across the two schemes there has been a doubling in spend and project number compared to 2017

Knowledge Gateway Scheme

In 2018, 28 projects were supported with public aid of €2,538,051. The Managing Authority directly approved 22 projects to be undertaken by BIM for the benefit of the sector and for the public good. 9 of these projects concerned innovation/research while 13 projects were of an advisory services nature.

The innovation projects included the following:

- Technical development of seaweed cultivation and integrated multi-trophic aquaculture (IMTA).
- Developing hatchery techniques for scallop and native oyster.
- Improving the depuration process for shellfish.
- Quantification and risk assessment of shellfish in respect to viruses.
- Investigating alternatives to veterinary medicines in salmonids
- Emerging treatments for Amoebic Gill Disease (AGD)

The advisory service projects included the following:

- Fish Welfare and Guidance Workshops.
- CQA Standard Programme including Organic Certification.
- Benchmarking CQA standard to Global Seafood Sustainability Initiative standard.
- Online standards portal.
- Production efficiency in Shellfish

Six projects from third level research institutions and industry were supported with public aid of €448,051 in 2018. These are multi-annual projects and so will contribute to spend in 2019 and 2020. These projects concern:

- Integrated multi-trophic aquaculture.
- Development of products from seaweed.
- Environmental management in connection with the WFD.
- Animal husbandry.
- Developing techniques for production of native oysters.

Sustainable Aquaculture Scheme

In 2018 38 aquaculture capital development projects were supported with public aid of €2,589,663. 27 of the projects concerned capital investment in oyster production, 4 concerned capital investments in mussel production, 3 were for higher value capital investment in salmon production, 1 related to trout and 3 projects were for multi species projects onshore.

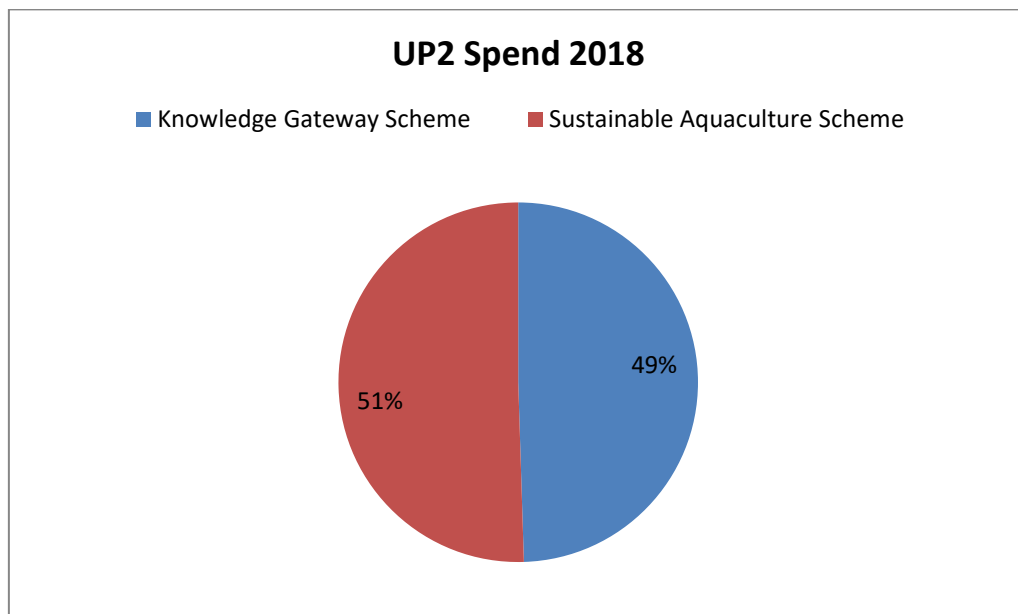
The following were some of the projects that were supported in 2018 under the EMFF Operational Programme 2014-2020:

- Development of Oyster Farms.
- Capacity development on seaweed farms
- Upgrade of salmon technology
- Upgrades of Fish ponds
- Development of oyster handling facilities.
- Introduction of continuous rope mussel systems.

Oyster revenue continues to enjoy a particularly high price point at present and that is reflected in the number of oyster projects being undertaken. It is also likely that 2018 saw an increase in demand for investment in oysters as licences are being renewed.

UP 2 – Total Expenditure in 2018

Scheme	Total Expenditure
Knowledge Gateway Scheme	€2,538,051
Sustainable Aquaculture Scheme	€2,589,663
Total UP2 – Aquaculture	€5,127,714



5.3 - Union Priority 3 – Implementing the CFP - (Data Collection and Enforcement)

In 2018, the EMFF Programme invested €11,983,280 in support of 10 projects through two support schemes under Union Priority 3.

Control and Enforcement Scheme

The Sea Fisheries Protection Authority invested €1,140,342 of EMFF funds in 2018 in support of eight projects under the Control and Enforcement scheme. In addition to the existing multi-annual projects the Managing Authority directly approved 5 new SFPA projects in 2018. The projects currently underway by the SFPA include:

- **ERS Enhancements:** Providing replacement equipment for fishing vessel electronic logbooks and inspection devices for SFPA Sea-Fisheries Protection Officers.
- **Compliance Promotion:** Raising awareness of the Common Fisheries Policy amongst stakeholders within the Irish Fishing Community and to improve compliance and enforcement of the CFP rules through promotional activities and events.
- **Technical Assistance:** The project office continues to provide support to deliver the portfolio of EMFF projects identified by the Control Authorities.
- **Audit Assessment:** Improving the effectiveness and efficiency of the Control and Inspection service through independent and objective assessments of the management control and framework.
- **Training and Exchange:** Development of training and exchange programmes between Member States, in the monitoring, control and surveillance of fisheries activities; training in relation to risk analysis and assessment to promote more effective sea inspection
- **Engine Power Measurement:** Establishment of a national capacity to test the engine power of Irish registered sea fishing boats
- **Sales Notes External Portal:** Supporting the requirement to redevelop the Sales Notes portal which records the first sale of fish, ensuring compliance with the Landing Obligation
- **Vessel Monitoring Systems:** Replacing the existing Vessel Monitoring System (VMS) on all Irish fishing vessels greater than 12m in overall length to ensure continued monitoring of activity on Irish vessels subject to EU and other regulations.

The Department of Agriculture Food and the Marine invested a total of €3,042,938.13 for Phase 2 of the Integrated Fisheries Information System (IFIS) and electronic reporting systems. This project covered the following developments:

- Data exchange application (FERS) developed for the introduction UN/CEFACT standard for exchange of Fishing Activity and Sales via Flux for other member states
- Sales notes, development of an internal and external portal including web services for the transmission of first sale of fish, ensuring compliance with the Landing Obligation

- Enhancements to Vessel tracker application- overlays, catch display data, charts etc.
- ieCatch- ongoing work on redevelopment of vessel software to incorporate changes for the landing obligation and UN/CEFACT standardisation for the exchange of information
- Fleet over Flux- Provide snapshot and daily updates of Fleet register in UNCEFACT format over Flux as required under Article 9 of Implementation regulation EU 218/2017

Data Collection Scheme

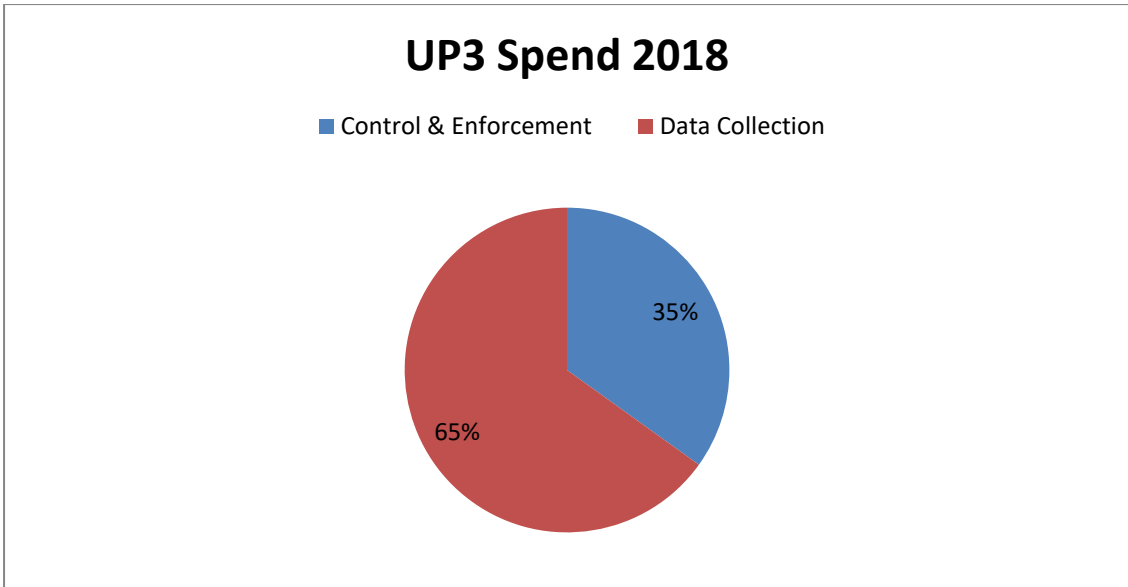
In 2018 €7,800,000 was invested by the Marine Institute in the Data Collection Scheme under Union Priority 3. The national Data collection programme includes catch sampling at sea and in ports, 6 internationally coordinated research survey programmes, inshore and diadromous sampling and surveys, collection of transversal data and the socioeconomic evaluation of the fishing, fish processing and aquaculture sectors.

- Biological data was collected at sea on board commercial and research vessels and in fishing ports around the coast as part of ports based sampling. Some 110 at sea trips were completed. In addition, 65 inshore shellfish observer trips were completed. A total of 288 port sampling trips were completed for demersal stocks. The at sea and port based sampling programme amounted to €357,700 in 2018 excluding staff costs.
- In 2018, a biological sampling programme for the diadromous species salmon and eel was carried out and included surveys in the freshwater, trap returns and the national coded wire tag programme at a cost of €48,600.
- Six internationally coordinated off shore research programmes at sea were completed in 2018, comprising 206 sea days and 2,054 scientific sea days. Total expenditure for these activities was €4,081,000.
- Thirteen inshore shellfish surveys had a cost of €75,186 and provided data for oyster, cockle, scallop, surfclam and razorfish.
- The economic situation of the aquaculture and processing industry sectors was evaluated by BIM through the collection of census data, economic sample surveys and audited accounts from the Companies Registration Office (CRO).

International coordination of fisheries data collection and analysis was achieved through the participation at and contribution to 64 ICES and EU scientific expert groups directly related to the Data Collection Scheme with a cost of €137,800 for 2018

UP 3 – Total Expenditure Declared by beneficiaries in 2018

Scheme	Total Expenditure
Control & Enforcement	€4,183,280.13
Data Collection	€7,800,000
Total UP3 - Common Fisheries Policy	€11,983,280.13



5.4 - Union Priority 4 – Sustainable Development of Fisheries and Aquaculture Areas

Fisheries Local Area Development Scheme

In 2018, the 7 FLAG bodies paid out public aid of €1,948,444.72 to 209 projects.

Nearly 350 project applications were received over the course 2018, with 247 finally selected for grant approval. Payments were made to 209 projects, including some deferred from 2017. Other approved 2018 projects will be completed in 2019 and will contribute to the 2019 spend.

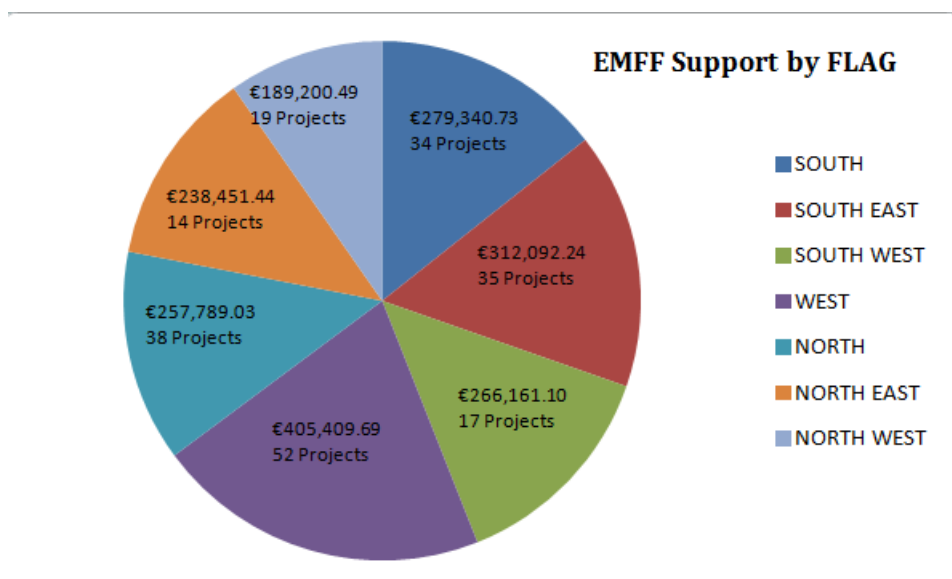
The economic development of coastal areas, particularly in the areas of marine tourism, has accounted for nearly 60% of grant aid. Community projects developing skills and local knowledge as well as promoting social wellbeing and cultural heritage have comprised a further 25% of funds disbursed. The remainder of the projects focused on training and education in addition to protecting and promoting the environment.

FLAG projects implemented in 2018 included the following:

- Capital investments in micro seafood enterprises
- Marine tourism and marine leisure projects,
- Heritage projects,
- Small harbour facilities and environmental projects.
- Environmental and training projects.

FLAG Projects Paid 2018

FLAG Area	Total Investment	Number of Projects
SOUTH	€ 279,340.73	34
SOUTH EAST	€ 312,092.24	35
SOUTH WEST	€ 266,161.10	17
WEST	€ 405,409.69	52
NORTH	€ 257,789.03	38
NORTH EAST	€ 238,451.44	14
NORTH WEST	€ 189,200.49	19
TOTAL	€ 1,948,444.72	209



5.5 - Union Priority 5 – Marketing and Processing

In 2018, the EMFF Programme supported 32 projects with grant aid of €4,015,538 through four support schemes. These investments supported a broad range of activities, including:

- Promotion of seafood
- Capital investment in seafood enterprises to support value-adding investments
- Advisory services to seafood processing SMEs on innovation, new product and packaging development, business planning, energy efficiency and seafood processing technologies
- Development of route to market structures
- Market development
- Consumer and market research
- Innovation and development of new seafood and seaweed products and packaging
- Development of processing technologies and techniques

Seafood Promotion Scheme

In 2018, Bord Bia invested €2.066 million in public expenditure under its approved 2018 work programme. This work programme contributed to the following initiatives.

- International trade exhibition programme for seafood - which comprised a Bord Bia Ireland Pavilion at 8 international trade shows including the following:
 - SEG, Brussels
 - Biofach, Nuremburg
 - Tokyo Seafood Show
 - Seafood Asia, Hong Kong.

A total of 65 seafood processors from the pelagic, shellfish, salmon and added value seafood sectors participated across these 8 international seafood shows.

- Domestic market seafood campaigns - two campaigns to promote shellfish among Irish consumers were carried out in 2018. A seafood television series called “Trails” was launched which aimed to educate Irish consumers about the range and diversity of Irish seafood available and of the simplicity of cooking with seafood.
- 'Feet on the Street' resources - These additional ground resources in China and Japan have resulted in 25 inward buyers visits to Ireland and it has also resulted in 9 food journalists from China, Korea and Japan visiting Irish seafood farms and processing facilities and generating fantastic media coverage on the Irish sector in these target markets in 2018.
- International consumer research - Six deep dive seafood studies undertaken across key markets in Asia and a further 10 seafood studies undertaken in European seafood markets.
- Emerging Market Seafood promotions - 5 promotions carried out in leading retail and foodservice outlets in China and Japan in 2018.

Producer Organisation Scheme

In 2018 four projects were supported with public aid of €312,414.47 based on eligible expenditure of €480,637.64. Four claims were received from the Producer Organisations in relation to expenditure incurred in 2017.

The grant aid rates involved a mixture of fixed maximum assistance or a 65% grant aid rate. Expenditure related to direct staff costs, with other typical costs incurred involving the engagement of consultants to assist in the preparation of the Marketing Plans and Activity Reports. Capital items mainly involved upgrading of computer software and equipment.

Seafood Scaling and New Market Development Scheme

In 2018 6 projects were supported with public aid of €476,152.

- Two projects combined to invest in developing markets in Asia. These included the retention of the services of a native In-Market Consultant. These two projects accounted for

EMFF grants of €122,548 which at a grant rate of 50% leveraged a total investment into the projects of €245,096.

BIM undertook four scaling projects for the benefit of the sector at a cost of €353,604. Projects included:

- Project Atlantic - Ireland has a quota of approximately 20% of the 1.2 million tonnes of seafood caught annually off the Irish Atlantic coast highlighting the opportunity to increase landings from foreign vessels into Ireland. Food-Wise 2025 set the goal to significantly increase additional landings into Ireland, generating value and employment in processing and ancillary port services. Project Atlantic is BIM led with a joint industry and State Steering Group with the objective to determine and enable the Irish seafood sector to add value to the increased landings into Irish fishery ports.
- China Seafood Council & Domestic Seafood Council members are discussing in-market issues and ways to collaborate on identifying sectors of the business where efficiencies can be created.
- Carrying out Supply Chain Projects to identify where value is created and where it can be improved, and how can technology can be used to create value and cost reduction.

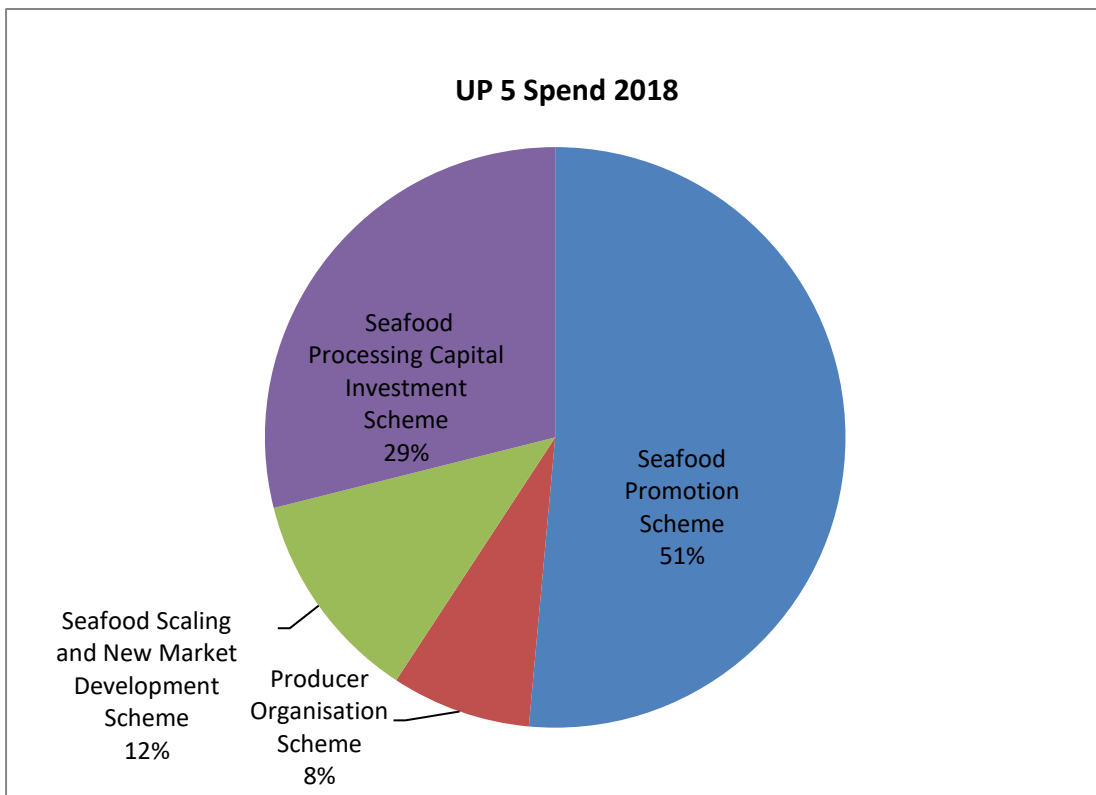
Seafood Processing Capital Investment Scheme

In 2018 twenty one capital investment projects were implemented by 16 seafood companies and were supported with public aid of €1,160,972.

- There were 9 fresh whitefish/salmon value added projects, 3 smoked salmon/trout projects, 2 shellfish projects, 4 pelagic, 2 food ingredients and 1 seaweed project.
- Under the Scheme a grant rate of 30% is allowed for value adding secondary processing equipment, while 15% is allowed for other eligible investments.
- In general, the projects related to fresh whitefish/salmon processing and typically involved expenditure on state of the art seafood processing equipment including fish filleting portioning and packing lines.
- Shellfish projects typically included cookers, graders and freezing equipment.
- The food ingredients projects related to equipment for processing blue whiting into protein to be supplied into the global food ingredients industry.
- Salmon and trout smoking operations invested in a mix of seafood smoking equipment.
- The four pelagic projects related to value adding equipment and buildings. Buildings and ancillary equipment formed the expenditure for the one seaweed project.

UP 5 – Total Expenditure Declared by beneficiaries in 2018

Scheme Name	Total Expenditure
Seafood Promotion Scheme	€2,066,000
Producer Organisation Scheme	€312,414.47
Seafood Scaling and New Market Development Scheme	€476,152
Seafood Processing Capital Investment Scheme	€1,160,972.
Total UP5 - Processing & Marketing	€4,015,538



5.6 - Union Priority 6 – Implementation of the IMP (EU) Integrated Maritime Policy

In 2018, the EMFF Programme invested €2,661,385 in support of 20 projects through two support schemes under Union Priority 6.

Blue Growth & Marine Spatial Planning Scheme

In 2018, 9 MSP projects were supported with public aid to the total spend of €906,074.

The Blue Growth & Marine Spatial Planning Scheme supports actions with the specific objective to provide technical and scientific support for the development of a Marine Spatial Plan (MSP) for Ireland.

The implementation of UP6 will allow Ireland to improve the level of protection of marine resources and to create conditions for the sustainable exploitation of natural resources.

Funded under this Scheme are 5 Spatial Data and Evidence projects, which provide a technical and scientific foundation for implementation of MSP in Ireland. In 2018, a detailed data discovery and gap analysis was undertaken. Over 1900 MSP related datasets were identified nationally.

Also funded are 2 Projects in the area of Data Management and Information Services for MSP. 2018 saw the implementation of an MSP Data Catalogue, Data Storage and Data Management Quality Framework. These systems will provide assurance on the reliability, availability and versioning of MSP data. A huge achievement for the Marine Institute in 2018 was the IODE accreditation for the DMQF.

There are 2 marine invasive species research projects around species surveillance and mapping. One of these projects kicked-off in late 2018 with a review of the current status of IAS in Ireland and early detection methods. The second will commence in 2019.

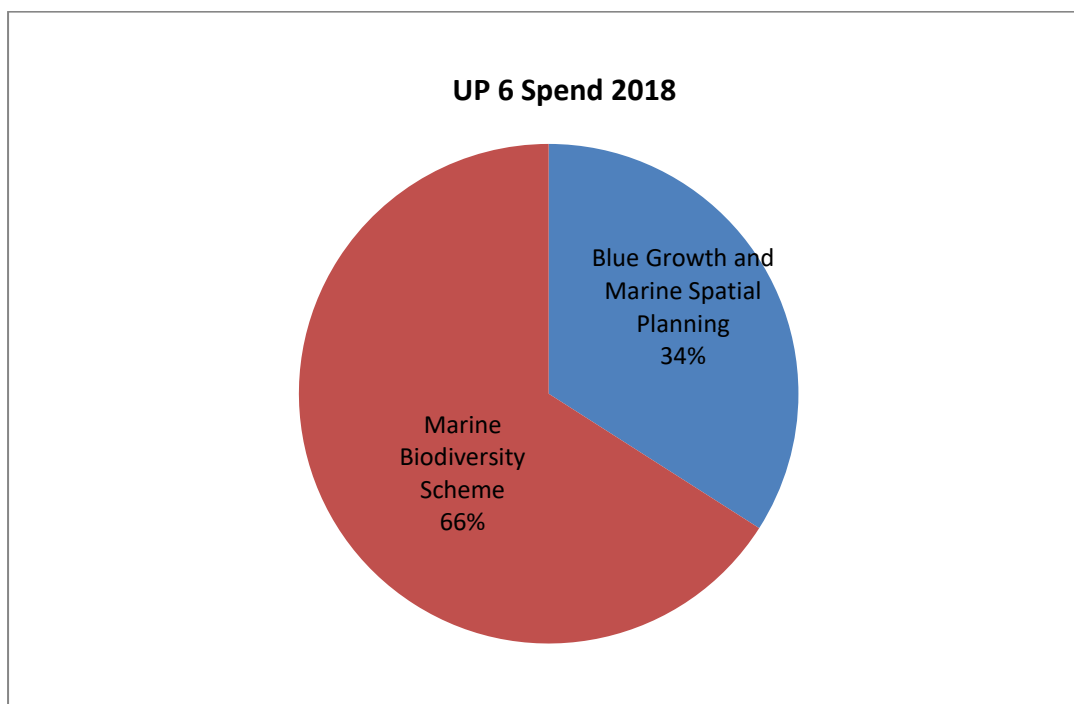
Marine Biodiversity Scheme (see also UP 1)

In 2018 € 1,755,311 was invested to support 11 projects under the Marine Biodiversity Scheme in Union Priority 6. These projects were covering the areas of NATURA Fisheries Interactions, NATURA Aquaculture Interactions and support for the Marine Strategy Framework Directive & Biodiversity. One additional project was initiated in 2018. The 11 projects can be broken down into the following actions:

- 4 projects related to mapping of fishing pressure and fishery NATURA interaction.
- 3 projects focused on the assessment and mitigation of aquaculture impacts on NATURA sites in 2018.
 - Appropriate Assessment Reports of aquaculture activities from 6 Bays were completed.
 - Three draft assessments prepared and revisions made to 4 sites.
 - Monitoring of mitigation measures continued in two sites and was initiated in a third site in 2018.
- 3 projects were completed to support the Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD) and Biodiversity.
- The “Informatics project” aims to set up the infrastructure and competence to efficiently integrate and utilise fisheries related data (including fishery/ecosystem interaction data) to support CFP, NATURA and MSFD implementation. During 2018, the development of four applications was completed and the digital stock book, a fish species dashboard, an Irish ground fish survey data explorer and a tagging app are now publically available.

UP 6- Total Expenditure in 2018

Scheme Name	Total Expenditure
Blue Growth and Marine Spatial Planning	€906,074
Marine Biodiversity Scheme	€1,755,311
Total UP6 – Integrated Maritime Policy	€2,661,385



5.7 - Union Priority 7 – Technical Assistance

In 2018, total EMFF expenditure on Technical Assistance amounted to €565,265.

Technical Assistance supported the costs to State agencies of additional resources to implement EMFF schemes and to project manage EMFF projects, including contracted staff resources, which accounted for most of the costs, and project management consultancy. It supported the administration and animation of FLAGs, information and publicity measures, EMFF training and the costs of the Monitoring Committee.

6. - Issues Affecting the Performance of the Programme

While the broad range of measures implemented through the Programme contributed to its success in 2018, a number positive issues made a notable contribution. The modification of the Programme in 2018 paved the way for a doubling of the Programme allocation for the Seafood Promotion Scheme and its subsequent investment of in excess of €2 million in 2018, more than doubling previous levels. The launch of the Seafood Capacity building Scheme in 2018 resulted in new

investment of €1.4 million in networking and knowledge transfer initiatives. Investment in the development of new information technology systems to support the control authorities in managing and enforcing the CFP reached a level of €3.8 million.

Issues negatively affecting the performance of the Programme in 2018 included the following:

An EMFF grant of €21,831,664 million was awarded to the Marine Institute in 2018 to fund their 2017-2019 Data Collection work programme. This award exhausted the financial allocation available under the Programme for Data Collection. However, the work programme had actual funding requirements of €24,868,379, meaning that some €3,036,715 could not be funded under the EMFF Programme for the 2017-19 period. Likewise, there are no EMFF funds available for data collection for 2020, the final year of the Programme, indicating that the EMFF allocation for Data Collection is short approximately €12 million. The EMFF Regulation ring-fences funds for data collection and transfers into that envelope from other under-performing areas of the Programme budget are not permitted. This rigidity in the Regulation means that important data collection activities, which are essential to the formulation of policy at EU level, will be dependent on constrained national funds in 2019 and 2020 and also the EMFF Programme will miss out on the opportunity to fund important National and EU priorities.

The ongoing difficulties being encountered by Ireland's minority Government in enacting legislation to implement the EU points system for owners and master of fishing vessels, in connection with serious infringements of the CFP, has given rise to a situation where, to date, the European Commission has suspended recoupment to Ireland of in excess of €6 million in connection with EMFF Programme investment in control and enforcement. The amount suspended will increase as further claims are submitted. A continuation of this situation has the potential to cause a curtailment of investment in control and enforcement until the issue with the points system is resolved.

The Seafood Capacity Building Scheme was introduced in 2018 to bring EMFF resources to stakeholder representative groups in order to enhance their capacity to disseminate information to their members and the general public and to participate in public debate and decision making relating to the CFP. Measures supported included staging of conferences and workshops, website development, development and dissemination of documents, and costs of attending expert meetings, conferences etc. Aid was offered to these target groups at the maximum 60% permitted under the EMFF Regulation. However, disappointingly no applications were received in 2018 from these target groups. Feedback suggests that causes included a lack of awareness and an incapacity to fund the 40% balance of investments. While the scheme was promoted to these groups at the time of its launch, further efforts are being made to encourage applications. However, the Regulation prevents the Managing Authority from increasing the maximum support rate.

Previous Annual Reports have reported on the somewhat muted demand from aquaculture enterprises for EMFF support of capital investment. By end 2018 approximately €6 million had been awarded from a Programme budget of €20 million. Demand is running at approximately €2 million per year, meaning that the allocation will need to be reviewed.

7. - Promotion of the EMFF Programme

Managing Authority Information and Publicity Actions

In 2018 the EMFF Managing Authority had planned to avail of two major stakeholder events to promote the opportunities available and provide information on the EMFF OP 2014-2020. Unfortunately at the last minute – attendance at the Skipper Expo International in Galway was cancelled due to severe weather conditions.

The Annual **Sea-Fest** event showcases Ireland’s abundant maritime resources by raising awareness of the value and opportunities provided by the sea and also celebrating our proud maritime heritage. Sea-Fest is a key part of *Harnessing Our Ocean Wealth: An Integrated Marine Plan for Ireland (HOOW)* and its goal of increasing participation and engagement with the sea. The EMFF Managing Authority operated an information stand at the event which promoted the EMFF OP 2014-2020 and provided information to interested parties.

This promotion involved a dedicated EMFF OP stand at the event, with a specially commissioned EMFF OP backdrop, manned by EMFF Managing Authority staff. The EMFF OP document and a specially published EMFF OP Summary Booklet were made available, together with a variety of promotional items with the EMFF Logo. Managing Authority staff fielded questions and inquiries from stakeholders on the OP and its constituent schemes.

The EU Flag is prominently displayed at the premises of the EMFF OP Managing Authority at the National Seafood Centre, Clonakilty, Co. Cork

In 2018, the EMFF Managing Authority continued to maintain its dedicated **EMFF website**, which provides a range of useful information for stakeholders on the EMFF OP 2014-2020. The website can be found at the following link: www.agriculture.gov.ie/emff . The website provides access to the Programme document, details of and links to schemes, selection criteria, National Eligibility Rules, list of beneficiaries, contact details, documents relating to the Monitoring Committee and documents relating to the development of the Programme.

Press releases were issued throughout 2018 to highlight particular noteworthy EMFF activities. These were as follows:

23 April 2018 Minister Michael Creed announces €5m in Grants, supporting €13m investment in 26 Seafood Processing & Aquaculture companies

<https://www.agriculture.gov.ie/press/pressreleases/2018/april/title,116482,en.html>

14 May 2018 Minister Creed announces €1.6 million EMFF grants by Fisheries Local Action Groups

<https://www.agriculture.gov.ie/press/pressreleases/2018/may/title,117090,en.html>

1 July 2018 Creed Announces Public Consultation on Inshore Fisheries Strategy

<https://www.agriculture.gov.ie/press/pressreleases/2018/july/title,118489,en.html>

16 July 2018 Minister Creed Announces €1.5 million EMFF Grants by Fisheries Local Action Groups

<https://www.agriculture.gov.ie/press/pressreleases/2018/july/title,118928,en.html>

23 July 2018 *Creed announces €1.5m of Grants to support €4m in investment by 20 Seafood Companies*

<https://www.agriculture.gov.ie/press/pressreleases/2018/july/title,119172,en.html>

11 December 2018 *Minister Michael Creed TD receives Marine Institute Fish Stock Book 2018*

<https://www.agriculture.gov.ie/press/pressreleases/2018/december/title,122553,en.html>

BIM Information & Publicity Actions

As the primary intermediate body for the EMFF Programme, BIM has been designated tasks by the EMFF Managing Authority to ensure that Programme's objectives and funding opportunities offered by the EMFF are disseminated widely to potential beneficiaries and all interested parties.

BIM maintains a dedicated **EMFF Scheme website** (<http://www.bim.ie/schemes>) where it provides summary information on each scheme, and access to scheme brochure documents, application forms and key contacts.

Further information on the schemes and events supported by the EMFF can also be found on the BIM website at <http://www.bim.ie/news-and-events/>

In administering EMFF grant schemes, BIM requires as part of the letter of offer that **beneficiaries acknowledge the EMFF funding** received in a number of ways. Where they have a company website, they must acknowledge the EMFF aid in an appropriate section of the website. Where they have business premises, they must display in a public place (such as reception area) an A4 sized poster to a specified format acknowledging the EMFF aid. Some examples are as follows (scroll down at link to see acknowledgement):

- (<http://www.biomarine.ie>)
- (<http://keohaneseafoods.ie/>)
- (<http://sofrimar.ie/quality/product-innovation/>)
- (<http://www.rockabill.ie/news/>)
- (<http://www.goodfish.ie/about-us/>)

BIM stages a range of **stakeholder conferences**, workshops and other events, many of these funded through the EMFF. Engendering the greatest possible level of stakeholder and public awareness of the key policy objectives underpinning the EMFF and the CFP is essential if these objectives are to be accepted by local communities and civil society. In turn generating an adequate level of acceptance is equally important so as to create the circumstances to allow the necessary change management processes to occur and be successful. With EMFF funding, BIM hosted the *National Seafood Conference* in 2018 and staged a major participation in *Seafest 2018* and the *Skipper Expo*. These events helped foster social dialogue through education and the dissemination of information via modern interactive techniques and technologies concerning the fisheries sector and the actions and

interventions being taken, with the support of the EMFF, to enhance environmental sustainability, lessen impact on marine ecosystems, promote social cohesion and stimulate innovation.

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