

EMFF OP Monitoring Committee 27th May 2021

Draft Minutes

Draft Agenda

1. Welcome and Adoption of Agenda	For Adoption
2. Minutes of Meeting of 8 December 2020	For Adoption
3. Annual Implementation Report 2020 - overview of implementation in 2020	For Adoption
4. Proposal for 3 rd modification of EMFF Programme	For Information & Discussion
5. Information & Publicity measures	For Information
Shadow EMFAF Monitoring Committee	
6. Proposal for Interim Seafood Investment Scheme under EMFAF	For Approval
7. Update on planning for SDP 2021-27 programme	For Information
AOB <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Update from Commission• Update on preparation of National Strategic Plan for Sustainable Aquaculture Development 2021-30	For Information

Attendance: Webex - (See Appendix A)

Webex Chat Notes - (See Appendix B)

Agenda item 1 – Introduction & Adoption of Agenda

Paschal Hayes (chair) opened the meeting and welcomed EMFF OP Monitoring Committee (MC) members.

Having established that a quorum was present

Chair invited MC members to declare any conflict of interest – none were declared. We would like everyone to stay on mute but are encouraging the use of emojis as reactions to proceedings.

Chair - Raise your virtual hand to take the floor and when you have the floor please state your name and the organisation you are representing.

Chair - welcomes the following new members to the Committee.

Michelle Harrison - Certifying Authority replacing Carmel Tobin - who I would like to thank Carmel for her contribution

Cathal Gallagher – Inland Fisheries

Brendan Byrne – Irish Fish Producers and Exporters Association replacing Lorcan O’Cinnede

Ciaran Healy NIFF

Richard Guildea NIFF

Seamus Bonner – Irish Islands Resource Organisation

Fintan Kelly – Bird Watch Ireland is attending instead of Mike Walker of Environmental Pillar

Chair: asks if he has missed anybody that is new to the meeting to please raise their hand – No hand raised.

Change to Agenda:

Chair states that for certain agenda items today this EMFF MC will also be serving as a Shadowing Committee for the new programme under the EMFAF as the Monitoring Committee for the new programme cannot be formally established until after the EMFAF has been adopted. This procedure also took place with the changeover from EFF to EMFF

Chair - The agenda has been changed to cater for the Shadow MC business being moved to the latter half of the agenda.

Chair requests revised agenda shared on screen

Attention drawn to item 6 – New agenda item – Proposal for a new Seafood Investment Scheme to be funded under the EMFAF – more details to be presented later in meeting.

Note: 2 AOB points proposed:

- Update from Commission
- Update from BIM with the drafting of the New National Strategic Plan for Sustainable Aquaculture Development 2021-30.

Any further AOB that people wish to add? No hands shown

No further Items were requested to be added to the agenda - **the proposed agenda was adopted.**

Agenda item 2 - Minutes of Meeting 8 December 2020 – For Approval

Chair – There are some textual changes to the Minutes from the meeting on the 8th December, some changes submitted by the Commission, changes from Cliona O'Brien NPWS

Eamon Aylward MA - presented on screen highlighted textual changes to Minutes from 8th Dec - Minutes shared with Committee members pre-meeting differ from what is being shared on screen today.

Sean O'Donoghue KFO: No problem with amendments – Want to be clear that amendments were stated on the day rather than after the event? Note it is factually incorrect under Item 4 No. 2 in terms of timing – the commission getting applications through is not what I said – what I said was timing in getting amendments through not applications. The word “Implement” is missing at the end.

Chair - Advised MC that there was a recording of the MC meeting held on the 8th Dec but with voice and video the file came out too large and not fit for use after meeting - it has since been destroyed. Note there is no recording for today's meeting.

Chair - requests Adrian Antonescu, DGMARE to address Sean O'Donoghue's point as to what was said?

Adrian Antonescu DGMARE - The modifications we proposed are clarification of what was said at the meeting, which is reflected in the minutes, but we wanted to give more substance.

I believe it would be very helpful to have the minutes maybe 1 month after the meeting as it says in the rules – it would be easier for us to remember exchanges and to give useful feedback to you.

Chair: Thanks Adrian and we will try and have Minutes in a more timely fashion after this meeting.

Fabio Galetti DGMARE – Greetings from Alenka Kampl who could not be at meeting today. We are very happy to see information on the future EMFAF programme in agenda. Commission also have updates to provide. Good to be moving forward with Shadow Committee.

Regarding Minutes would like to add what has been already said by Adrian - ideally to receive minutes 2 weeks / 1 month after meeting; however we know it is not always possible. Other states utilise Flash Minutes issued 2 weeks after meeting, with full Minutes issued at a later date.

Patrick Murphy Irish South & West – Thanks Chair and Commission for their clarifications - very helpful moving forward - I would agree 100% with that meetings should be recorded – it's very important to record Minutes – also to distribute earlier after meeting.

Chair – Sean O'Donoghue does that answer your question?

Sean O'Donoghue KFO - Yes it does – Commission have clarified it.

Chair - proposed the adoption of the Minutes asked for any further comments/observations on the amended Draft minutes of the previous meeting.

No further comments by MC

Minutes are adopted.

[Agenda Item 3 – Annual Implementation Report 2020 - overview of implementation in 2020 – For Approval](#)

Keith Kelleher MA: Presentation on AIR Report

Note: Change to Citizen Summary outlined on table

Covid Tie-Up Scheme ring fenced from Feb – Dec record on table.

Discussion following presentation:

Karin Dubsky: Thank you for overview – please if links could be provided in the document

Sean O'Donoghue: Thanks Chair and Keith- UP1 Seafood Data Centre predictive Bio economical Model – what status are all the projects at? Good news the number of jobs created through FLAGS. Do the Department have records of the turnover of these new businesses and are they still trading since Covid? Are the KPIs on the Operation Programme met?

Teresa Morrissey IFA - Aquamis Project is there a completion date? It will be very useful and important; IFA is delighted to see it happening. Would like to see the Covid Aquaculture Scheme reopening and widening criteria to other species – for example the Oyster industry has suffered big losses.

Jerry Gallagher North West Shellfish - Aquaculture Scheme is closed is there going to be further funding available?

Fintan Kelly Bird Watch Ireland: Is there a spend check in place in relation to biodiversity legal obligations? The new strategy needs Data Collection and Stakeholder engagement. In the past the fund has failed in conservation – there have not been enough concrete outcomes.

Fabio Galetti: Thank you for your presentation – It was a difficult year with Covid, and Commission is pleased to see that MA was able to keep up spending commitments and that previous comments had been considered. After the AIR is submitted, we will come back with changes – In general the report is well done.

Adrian Antonescu: Thank you Keith for presentation - It is important to focus on the Performance Indicators to see the outcome of funding on the sector. Technical aspects for clarification – the KPIs as mentioned by Sean should be understood in the EMFAF as programme indicators (output, result and financial indicators). Ireland is doing well on spend. Output indicators – some are blanks in the report, this cannot be accepted – either zero or a positive value showing the number of projects. Result indicators need addressing – FLAGs figures on jobs are noted but this type of info is not widely available across the programme. A quality check of the report will need to be carried out once formal submission is received.

Patrick Murphy Irish South & West FPO - There is a big barrier to new entrants into the fishing industry. There are very few second-hand vessels for sale - New entrants into the fishing industry & age of vessels are issues.

Keith Kelleher MA: Thanks commission – changes in our industry – the unknowns of covid increased difficulty in reaching targets.

Replies to questions:

Keith Kelleher MA: Yes, we can investigate the links going forward.

Keith Kelleher asks Dominic Rihan BIM to reply Sean's question- Bio Economical Model

Dominic Rihan BIM: The Bio Economic project is well advanced and will be like the previous Mara Model. It will be ready for testing in July of this year and will be asking stakeholders to look at the front end. The Data Centre has made a lot of progress and is at the testing phase. It will manage the Data within BIM and will allow faster dissemination of information back to the stakeholders. This will help with better analysis of the CFP.

Keith asks Ian Lawler BIM to reply on FLAGs

Ian Lawler BIM - The FLAG survey was carried out this March and April and so figures are up to date

Ann Murphy DAFM replies to Teresa Morrissey IFA - Phase 1 is ongoing and the expected production date is the end of 2021.

Damien Clarke to Jerry Gallagher: Covid Aquaculture Scheme had a positive meeting with IFA and awaiting result of meeting.

Keith Kelleher to Fintan Kelly: There is a big block of work on all these strategies that you mention, it is an important part of the new programme and will be carried out in the EMFAF.

Keith requests if needed to send any further questions off-line.

Keith Kelleher to Commission: Much work has been done with agencies on indicators to date. Structure of Sustainable Part B scheme is an issue – investments occurring can relate to multiple articles. Will engage with Commission in coming weeks on this matter.

Keith Kelleher to Patrick Murphy Irish South & West: Anything that is outlined in the Implementation Plan/ Regulation is the criteria the MA cannot change this.

Patrick Murphy – I hear what you are saying but I am putting it to the Commission and the Monitoring Committee members that this results in the slow uptake of the scheme

Chair: If anyone doesn't agree with approval? – **AIR Taken as approved.**

Agenda item 4 – Proposal for 3rd modification of EMFF Programme

Presentation given by Damien Clarke

Chair opens to floor for Questions:

Sean O'Donoghue: There should be ring fencing for PMP's if funding isn't used – can the UP 5 funding be used in 2022?

Fabio Galetti: We have looked at the proposed modification and have no objections in general. The modifications won't fit with the simplified procedure model so will have to wait maximum 3 months for the proposal to be adopted. It won't stop the use of the proposed budget. There may be a problem with the adoption of some indicators. Can't use any more funds under EMFF for Covid but there is a possibility under EMFAF which may provide support. Could trigger article to initiate support measures otherwise there is no legal basis for support until the EMFAF Regulations have been adopted.

Adrian Antonescu: Thanked Damien – welcome the amendment to the programme – There needs to be a clear system to evaluate the impact on the Sector. It was good to see the number of new jobs in Keith's presentation, but more should be shown on results. There are a limited number of reasons to allow a modification of the output indicators; change of economic environment, change of budgetary allocations or incorrect assumption made at the beginning of the programme. The justification for the change of target values for output indicators in UP1 and UP2 doesn't fit the requirements and needs further clarifications. Otherwise, there are no other obstacles and when programme is submitted, it will be assessed as quickly as possible.

Jerry Gallagher North West Shellfish: Uptake was poor for the Tie-Up schemes assisting Primary Producers, Fishers and Aquaculture. At last update only €1m spent & 200k for Tie-Up Scheme is not enough support of the two industries. The Sustainable Aquaculture Scheme is closed? Is it opening again? On the PO's - there is not a large budget, €400k for 2020 to support POs. More money is going into the state than to the industry.

Seamus Bonner: Raised the point of the recent withdrawal of the EU Weigh In derogation, if supports could be put in place to cover the cost of compliance especially for the Small Scale Fleet that are operating out of areas with very little infrastructure. There is a real danger that some of the smaller fleet are going to be driven out of the industry due to the increased costs.

Karin Dubsky: Could money be allocated in attaining Biodiversity goals? Ireland is not compliant with the Water Framework Directive in most estuaries, not compliant with Habitat and Birds Directive in terms of achieving Good Environmental Status and the Commission have taken

measures against Ireland for not having a management plan for Natura. Practical projects are needed on the ground for helping to create jobs and fishing opportunities for fishermen by having management plans and protecting our inshore areas.

Comment: Cliona O'Brien @ Karin Dubsy: The EU is not taking a case against Ireland regarding a lack of Conservation Management Plans but a lack of Conservation Measures

Replies to Questions:

Damien Clarke to Sean O'Donoghue: We cannot rule it out, if there are delays but not enough in the budget for 2022

Damien Clarke: thanks Commission for comments and we will discuss further.

Damien Clarke: reply to Jerry Gallagher – current spend is €1.2m – budget has never been an issue

Damien Clarke reply to Seamus Bonner: The inshore fisher conservation scheme is currently being looked at.

Damien Clarke reply to Karin Dubsy: A lot of funds given for the MI but have been fully utilised now.

Agenda Item 5 - Information & Publicity Measures

Presentation - Keith Kelleher

Chair: Opens floor for questions

Adrian Antonescu: Thank you for info - 2020 wasn't the best year for communication. The EU Commission approach for 2021-2027 is more coordinated across EU funds - set up several networks at EU and national level. Have seen that Keith is already active in these groups. Hopefully Ireland will be able to show more on performance indicators. Concrete projects are needed to show the benefits of the funding. Looking forward to seeing the new Funds.ie website and new IT System.

Leonie O'Dowd informed of an upcoming Marine Institute EMFF webinar seminar

Agenda Item 6 – Proposal for Interim Seafood Investment Scheme under EMFAF – (Shadow)

Presentation by Damien Clarke

Karin Dubsy: 1st Year for Maritime Spatial Plan – urgent need to give money in EMFAF – needs investment.

Catherine Morrison BIM: Is the figure mentioned proposed percentage rates for total grant aid or total investment?

Sean O'Donoghue: An interim solution - why? The EMFAF is backdated to Jan 2021? Why are we going down this route? I thought funding was available from Jan 2021. Why do we need an interim solution? Concerned as to how we are setting precedent.

Fintan Kelly Bird Watch Irl: The Government has declared a climate crisis yet there is no money dedicated to conservation in the interim scheme. Why are these areas not covered in marine biodiversity? I echo sentiments that previous people have made.

Jerry Gallagher: Are Grant schemes are sticking with the percentages of grants available? If there is a difference, how will this be rectified if it is needed?

Cliona O'Brien: Biodiversity – Inshore Reefs - is any funding available from Interim Seafood Investment Scheme?

Replies to Questions:

Damien Clarke reply to Karin Dubsky and Fintan Kelly: Overall principle of this approach is simplicity and it will be conservative. Will not involve the design of new schemes. Biodiversity is not included to aid speed of implementation. Biodiversity is already being funded under the new programme with a flagship project led by MI which is of the order of €3-4 million.

Damien Clarke reply to Catherine Morrison: Yes - it is total grant Aid.

Damien Clarke reply to Sean O'Donoghue: We can't go ahead until we know what budget is available - it's about the process – conservative approach

Damien Clarke Reply to Jerry Gallagher: grant aid rates will be in line with existing schemes, only difference will be investment limits.

Fabio Galetti: Thanks Damien for presentation. New programme is linked to Green Deal and Farm to Fork. We understand you are working on that and taking it into consideration we need to move forward into a Greener transition. Now for the time being – the proposed scheme is limited in time, while waiting for programme to be adopted. Good that Ireland go ahead to ensure that there are no gaps in funding while waiting for new programme to be adopted, but this is at MS risk. There is clearly a possibility to come under the umbrella of the EMFAF, once the programme is officially adopted. Domestic discussion on how to support schemes in the interim is necessary.

Glad to announce dates - common provision to be adopted on the 25th of June and the 5th of July is the date for the EMFAF Regulation to be complete. We are looking forward to 1st draft of your programme. Commission needs 6/8 weeks to come back with observation on a mature draft because not only the different subject matters specialists in DGMARE will be consulted, but also other COM services (DG ENV, DG CLIMA for ex).

Adrian Antonescu: Welcome the initiative of the MA to introduce schemes but we do not like to see Marine Biodiversity left out, as it should also be a pillar of new programme in COM view.

Chair: We would rather wait but waiting will cause a hiatus on the new funding. It will be up to the shadow committee to fill the funding space or wait until all steps are completed.

Damien Clarke: I'm conscious of eligibility – it's perceived as simple to rollover schemes but that is not the case, many competing demands for funds in the new programme so we need to be cautious.

Cliona O'Brien: Can MI get in touch with a NPWS to discuss funding in the new programme.

Sean O'Donoghue: Clarity on Interim Solution needed - I recognise the gap and that is not wanted. In the new scenario can the beneficiaries apply for the difference in grant aid in the Interim Grant?

Damien Clarke: No proposed difference in grant aid – only difference a cap will be introduced for the interim scheme.

Chair: Any other questions:

Oliver O'Cadhla: expressing interest in Biodiversity project, can MI provide detail on this.

Chair: will address under AOB

Chair: – Proposal to the meeting is Monitoring Committee happy to go ahead with Shadow Interim Scheme?

Anyone against?

Karin Dubsky Env Pillar: Against Shadow Interim Scheme and losing money to Biodiversity

Fintan Kelly Bird Watch Irl: Note that previous programme I think there should have been Biodiversity funding carried forward – in Interim Scheme for biodiversity

Chair: 2 Speakers against

Note – (Message from Fintan Kelly in Chat) Fintan Kelly not against the approval of an Interim scheme but wanted it noted that more should have been done ensure that biodiversity measures were included in the interim measures.

Proposal taken as Approved

[Agenda Item 7 – Update on Planning for SDP 2021-27 Programme](#)

Presentation by Damien Clarke

Chair: Any questions?

Sean O'Donoghue – you didn't mention the food strategy 2030?

Cliona O'Brien: will there be any further bi laterals with what is in the programme?

Damien Clarke: - A huge amount of reports to be taken into consideration before programme comes out – yes, all strategies are taken into consideration.

Damien Clarke: Already further bi-laterals have been accommodated and we will come back to consult as much as possible.

Fabio Galetti: Request once a draft is ready you share it with DGMARE. Please prioritise getting draft of chapters 1 and 2 to Comm for review due to the extended consultation process required. Welcome updates on development of partnership agreement and BAR choices. Reiterated COM readiness to also informally discuss with the MA, to assure a smooth approval of the programme once formally submitted.

Chair: Open to engagements with stakeholders as requested.

[AOB](#)

Cliona O'Brien: request Biodiversity update is brought forward under AOB

[Update from Commission:](#)

Fabio Galetti: Comm adopted measures around the sustainable blue economy on 17 May - please be aware of this. Newly adopted guidelines for sustainable aquaculture will impact the new programme. Comm notes that Ireland will update the National Strategic Plan on Aquaculture.

Update on preparation of National Strategic Plan for Sustainable Aquaculture Development 2021-30

Update by Catherine Morrison BIM:

A consultant has been appointed to assist with the development of the plan. We have carried out consultations with stakeholders and have developed a first draft. The Strategic Environmental Assessment and Appropriate Assessment process are underway. RPS have been contracted to carry out the SEA and AA. The screening and scoping stages of the SEA are complete. Drafting of the Environmental Report is underway. An alternatives workshop is planned for 18 June to look at alternatives to the proposed actions in the plan. The second draft along with the SEA Environmental Report will be going to public consultation by mid-summer. The SWOT is being reviewed to ensure consistency with the Operational Programme SWOT.

In the second draft we are expanding the sections on climate change and biodiversity and looking at overarching issues around Brexit, transboundary co-ordination and Covid 19. Once we have a good second draft in agreement with the Managing Authority, we would propose submission to the Commission for informal comment. Provided all goes well, the final plan along with SEA and AA should be complete during Q4 2021.

Update on Biodiversity Scheme

Update by Leonie O'Dowd Marine Institute:

We are in a transition period – projects are continuing from this year into next year. Key aspects to be continued in the new programme are being reviewed. Environmental compliance, data collection, assessments etc. are areas in focus.

Flagship scheme identified for EMFAF – contributing to protection of aquatic biodiversity – supporting endangered species in south-west – particularly crayfish in this case.

Chair: Any questions for Fabio, Catherine & Leonie

No questions.

Fabio Galetti – thanks for all the contributions and look forward to receiving the draft of the Aquaculture Plan along with the proposed EMFAF.

Chair – thanks to everybody for attendance and participation.

Appendix A:

Attendees:

ATTENDANCE SHEET	EMFF OPMC 27 th May 2021
Monitoring Committee	Organisation

1. Antonescu, Adrian	DGMARE
2. Aylward, Eamon	DAFM
3. Brennan, David	Marine Harvest
4. Byrne, Brendan	Irish Fish Producers and Exporters Association
5. Bonner, Seamus	Irish Islands Resource Organisation
6. Clarke, Damien	DAFM
7. Coppinger, Declan	Bord Bia
8. Dubsky, Karin	Environmental Pillar
9. Einniu, Maire	Udaras Na Gaeltachta
10. Flannery, Kevin	FLAG Rep/ North West Shellfish
11. Finnegan, Nicola	ESF
12. Galetti, Fabio	DGMARE
13. Gallagher, Cathal	Inland Fisheries Ireland
14. Guckian, Barry	NWRA
15. Guildea, Richard	NIFF
16. Hayes, Paschal	DAFM
17. Hennessy, Breda	DAFM
18. Hall, Mary	DAFM
19. Healy, Kieran	NIFF
20. Kelleher, Keith	DAFM
21. Kelly, Fintan	Bird Watch Ireland
22. Lane, Cora	DPER
23. Lawler, Ian	BIM
24. Lyons, David	DHLGH
25. Lynch, John	Irish South & East

26. O’Cadhla, Oliver	DHPLG
27. McCarthy, Aine	SFPA
28. Morrison, Catherine	BIM
29. Morrissey, Teresa	IFA
30. Murphy, Ann	DAFM
31. Ni Aonghusa, Caitriona	Marine Institute
32. O'Brien, Cliona	DHLGH
33. O'Donoghue, Sean	KFO
34. O'Dowd, Leonie	Marine Institute
35. Rihan, Dominic	BIM
36. Myles, Rachael	Dept of Defence
37. Scanlon, Tom	BIM
38. Silke, Joe	Marine Institute
39. Harrison, Michelle	DAFM
40. Twomey, Michelle	DAFM
41. Gibbons, Cillian	DAFM
42. Murphy, Patrick	Irish South & West
43. Gallagher, Jerry	Northwest Shellfish
44. Ward, John	IFPO

Appendix B:

WebEx Chat Notes:

Re: the December minutes:

from Karin Dubsy to everyone: 10:25 AM

I had my hand up and would like to note that in the minutes above Where new scheme implemented in 2 to 3 years then we will lose more biodiversity in and out Natura 2000 sites and fishermen will lose out too *and I am still Karin with an I.*

from Karin Dubsy to everyone: 11:16 AM

Request/comment Re: Output and indicators. Adrian noted the EMFF indicators to assess financial implementation and effects on the sector. Could you please clarify the indicators for effects on biodiversity - achieving Art 40.1 Protection and restoration of biodiversity?

Damien you said the modification 'you agreed earlier' we didn't agree. You outlined it and it was for info and discussion. This is just comment for the record

from Karin Dubsy to everyone: 12:44 PM

Given Fabio's points it would be important for the EMFF monitoring committee be involved in the informal draft programme and to ensure the conservation side is strong

from Karin Dubsy to everyone: 12:50 PM

Against going ahead as we cannot lose more biodiversity

from Fintan Kelly to everyone: 12:55 PM

Just to note I wasn't against the approval of an interim scheme, but I wanted it noted that I felt that more should have been done to ensure that biodiversity measures were included in the interim measures.