

SFC2021 Programme for EMFAF

CCI	2021IE14MFPR001
Title in English	European Maritime, Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund - Programme for Ireland
Title in national language(s)	GA - European Maritime, Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund - Programme for Ireland
Version	1.2
First year	2021
Last year	2027
Eligible from	1 Jan 2021
Eligible until	31 Dec 2029
Commission decision number	C(2022)9381
Commission decision date	8 Dec 2022

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1. Programme strategy: main development challenges and policy responses

Reference: points (a)(i) to (viii) and point (a)(x) of Article 22(3) and point (b) of Article 22(3) of regulation (EU) 2021/1060 (CPR)

European Maritime, Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund Programme for Ireland (EMFAF Seafood Development Programme) 2021-2027

With over 8,000 kms of coastland and responsibility for one of the largest marine areas in Europe, Ireland's economy, culture, and society are inextricably linked to the sea. Our marine environment is a national asset that yields multiple commercial and non-commercial benefits in terms, of, for example, seafood, tourism, recreation, renewable energy, cultural heritage, and biodiversity. Forty per cent of Ireland's population lives within 5km of the coast, made up of urban, rural and island coastal communities. But it is those in remote coastal communities which are most dependent on the benefits generated by the marine environment and economy. Ireland's coastline is remarkable and a key enabler of regional development, but also a fragile resource that needs to be carefully managed to sustain its character, environment and biodiversity.

The seafood sector is a critical element of the coastal economy. Ireland has a rich tradition in fishing and aquaculture, with its coastal communities at the forefront of ensuring the sustainable development of our natural resource while generating significant economic activity and contributing to national, EU and global food security and supply. The total value of Ireland's seafood economy in 2020 was just under €1.1 billion with more than 16,000 people employed directly and indirectly in the industry. Seafood related employment remains high in coastal regions, generating significant socioeconomic value in these areas. The success of the seafood sector has in no small part been due to the support it has received through the EMFF Seafood Development Programme 2014-2020.

Despite the buoyant seafood sector and strong coastal communities and economies, an unprecedented convergence of global and European events threatens its continued development. COVID-19 represented one of these key challenges. Key channels to seafood consumer markets were severely restricted with, for example, seafood revenue from the food service sector declining by 54% between 2019 and 2020. The impacts were not only felt by fishers, aquaculture operators and processors, but also by the wider coastal communities as tourism revenue declined.

An even greater impact was felt from Brexit and the resulting Trade and Cooperation Agreement (TCA) which has disrupted the operating environment for the Irish seafood sector. Ireland has been disproportionately affected by this event, with the Irish fleet losing 15% of its annual quota, disruption to trade with the UK, disruption to logistics, and lost links with UK institutions. The effects have been damaging to the entire seafood supply chain.

In a time where food security is at the fore, Ireland's position as a net exporter of seafood and a key supplier to EU and global markets must be fostered. Ireland established a specific Seafood Taskforce to make recommendations to mitigate against Brexit. The Brexit Adjustment Reserve (BAR) will assist in implementing these until the end of 2023, which represents a vital intervention. However, the requirement for transformational change extends beyond this period and stakeholders of the Taskforce stressed the importance of the EMFAF programme as a critical intervention for the sustainable development, growth and protection of our maritime resource.

More recently, the invasion of Ukraine has presented a volatile market for key inputs and exposed the fragility of the seafood sector to shocks. Furthermore, inflationary pressures are squeezing margins and have the capacity to drive down much needed investment for its development.

While these macro events are affecting all member states, Ireland's position as a small island nation, with a significant maritime resource and physically separated from its EU partners, has exacerbated the effects. Ireland's seafood sector and coastal communities also face more localised challenges and market pressures. Segments of the fishing fleet are ageing, as is the workforce and the communities in which it resides, as earnings and opportunities are less attractive for potential younger fishers' career choices. Within the processing and aquaculture segments, there are many shared challenges including lack of economies of scale, ongoing focus on commodity outputs rather than added value products, limited R&D and technological advancement, reduced market access and poor access to finance. Areas for improvement can also be seen in control and enforcement, data gathering and scientific knowledge. The volatile operating environment for industry and the state's responsibility for protecting the marine environment has led to the focus of the Irish EMFAF 2021-2027 programme being amended to take account of all the challenges that the Irish seafood Sector is going to face over the coming years.

The EMFAF is the main financial source to ensure effective implementation of the Common Fisheries Policy (CFP), and as such the main objectives outlined in the CFP are of paramount importance when developing the programme. These include, the environmental sustainability of fishing and aquaculture activities, reduction of the impact of fishing and aquaculture activities on the marine environment, economically viable and competitive fishing capture and processing industry and land-based fishing related activity, supporting coastal communities for which fishing and aquaculture activities have a direct economic and social impact in those areas, adaptation to climate change and cleanliness of the oceans. All of this is underpinned by Data Collection and Control and Enforcement which are key elements of this programme.

But the EMFAF programme is not just a tool for CFP. In addition to the dynamics of the seafood sector and the need to protect our natural environment and natural resources, there is a strategic and policy imperative which will guide the development of the sector, creates demands on its stakeholders and obligations in the formulation and implementation of the programme. At its core is the EU policy objectives and principles for support from the EU specified in the EU Common Provisions Regulation (CPR) (Regulation (EU) 2021/1060).

Policy Objective 2 of the CPR refers to a greener, low-carbon transitioning towards a net zero carbon economy and resilient Europe by promoting clean and fair energy transition, green and blue investment, the circular economy, climate change mitigation and adaptation, risk prevention and management, and sustainable urban mobility. Parallels with this objective can be found at EU and national level, all of which inform the development of the programme. For example, the Regional Sea Basin Analysis of the Western Waters identified multiple environmental challenges for Ireland to meet the objectives of the CFP. The EU Biodiversity Strategy 2030 outlined actions required to restore the good environmental status of marine ecosystems by focusing on harvesting sustainably and zero tolerance for illegal practices, implementing maritime spatial plans, conserve fisheries resources and reduce by-catch of species threatened by extinction.

The European Commission's Strategic Guidelines for a More Sustainable and Competitive EU Aquaculture (2021) set out a common EU vision for the further development of aquaculture in the EU in a way that contributes to the European Green Deal and builds an aquaculture sector that is competitive and resilient. At a national level, Ireland's draft National Strategic Plan for Sustainable Aquaculture Development 2021-30 (2021) translates the EU Guidelines into an Irish strategic plan for our aquaculture sector. The Plan identifies a range of investment needs in sustainability, competitiveness, innovation and climate resilience.

Project Ireland 2040 (2021), Ireland's National development Plan, identified a need for investment to

support the sustainable growth and development of the maritime economy, including the seafood sector, and for investment in fishery harbours to develop their capacity to optimise the contribution of our marine resources. More specific strategies such as Ireland's agri-food national strategy, Foodwise 2030 (2021), identified 4 high level missions including climate smart and safe and nutritious food. To achieve these missions, investment is needed to restore and enhance biodiversity and enhance the environmental sustainability of the seafood sector. Investment is also needed to support primary producers in the transition to green and climate friendly technologies, and to enhance the use of technology.

The other key strategic pillar informing the development of this programme is Policy Objective 5 of the CPR which envisages A Europe closer to citizens by fostering the sustainable and integrated development of all types of territories and local initiatives.

The Regional Sea Basin Analysis of the Western Waters identified challenges for Ireland which need to be addressed through investment in coastal communities to foster the local development of a sustainable blue economy in coastal areas through enhancing local partnerships, diversification, promoting economic, human, social and cultural assets, and improving environmental protection. Similarly, the Communication on a new approach for a sustainable blue economy in the EU Transforming the EU's Blue Economy for a Sustainable Future provides direction on developing the blue economy in tandem with ocean policy and with an emphasis on European Green Deal objectives, sustainability and protecting biodiversity.

At a national level, the report of the Irish Seafood Task Force – Navigating Change (2021) identified the significant impacts of Brexit and the TCA on the seafood sector and coastal communities. The report outlined needs in areas such as training and education, finance, mentoring and technical support and programme administration. Keeping people in these coastal communities by allowing them to up-skill, retrain and ultimately keep their skills from a lifetime spent in the marine industry is key. Providing seed funding for new businesses, funding to diversify or expand and enabling capacity development that will allow people to use their skills for new opportunities in the marine sector is paramount to keeping these communities viable in the long term.

In addition to EU and National Policy, the aims of other EU funds have also been considered in the development of this Programme. As part of the Partnership Agreement, a sub-committee of EU fund managers has been established and some working groups were implemented to identify potential complementarities which might exist between EU funds. This formed the basis of a report which was submitted to the Partnership Steering Group and will be used by fund managers to strengthen complementarities between funds over the lifetime of the Programme. Individual high level areas of complementarity have been identified in individual missions within this strategy and will be explored further over the lifetime of the programme.

Vision

Based on the challenges identified for the seafood sector and coastal communities and the policy context, Ireland's Programme requires an ambitious vision to:

"To support a resilient, climate smart, environmentally sustainable and profitable Irish seafood sector in order to maximise its contribution to jobs and growth and maintain the economic and social activities of our most vibrant and sustainable coastal communities"

In order for Ireland to achieve this vision, 4 missions were identified which are intended as a response to medium and long-term structural issues and challenges that have been highlighted in the SWOT but also taking account of potential possibility of crises that may present themselves over the lifetime of the programme.

Mission 1 - A Climate Smart, Environmentally Sustainable Seafood Sector

1 - Dealing with climate change adaptation and mitigation

Ireland is committed to taking meaningful action to address the significant threat of climate change to ensure the long-term sustainable development of the seafood industry. 2020 was a pivotal year for climate action as Ireland pledged its move to a carbon neutral economy by 2050. This was written into Irish law through the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development Acts 2015 to 2021 setting out a programme for government for reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 50% over the coming decade and achieving net zero emissions by 2050. These targets need to find expression in the actions of all segments of the seafood sector.

The EMFAF will contribute to the achievement of these targets over the lifetime of the programme. This includes supports for advisory services, studies and research to reduce carbon emissions, replacement or modernisation of engines of fishing vessels to increase energy efficiency, data collection, evaluation studies and research to tackle climate actions, knowledge sharing, development of process innovation to support operational optimisation in the processing sector, research to quantify the potential of coastal habitats as carbon sinks and improvements to fishing and aquaculture resilience to climate change. Activity in this area will be carried out in the context of identified complementarities with ERDF Climate Change Investment.

2 – Minimising the impact of fishing/aquaculture activities on the marine environments including implementation of NATURA 2000, MPAs, MSFD and WFD.

The Irish Government committed to expand MPAs to 30% of Ireland's 488,762 square kilometre EEZ by 2030 in line with EU targets. Approximately 2.4% is currently designated as MPAs which is considerably far from this target. Special Protection Areas (SPAs) and Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) as part of the Natura 2000 network of sites make the greatest contribution to this.

The EMFAF will support activities to contribute to this goal, indicators on the Marine Strategy Framework Directive, implementation of the Water Framework Directive and in accordance with Prioritised Action Frameworks. This will include continued support for the designation and management Natura sites and MPAs, development and use of more selective fishing gear, restoration of habitats and species, appropriate Control and Enforcement, management measures related to Natura/MPA sites, control of invasive marine species, expansion of the Clean Oceans Initiative to address plastic pollution, increased stakeholder awareness of the Natura/MPA network and conservation measures, and improvement of information-sharing across decision-making bodies.

3 – Managing the fisheries/aquaculture resources in a sustainable manner

Considerable work has taken place towards the restoration of EU fish stocks and Ireland has played its part in this through effective fisheries management. However, there is still work to be done in terms of balancing fleet capacity to ensure viability of the fleet, which will be accomplished under BAR, while EMFAF will also address key issues such as by-catch. With maximum sustainable yields governing fisheries, attention must be turned to aquaculture to contribute to increasing volume of production to meet the needs of the EU and beyond. This has to be done in a manner which is sensitive to the environment.

The EMFAF will support improvements to gear and processes to reduce by-catch, interference with protected and endangered species and damage to marine habitats and the seabed. Actions in this area will contribute to the implementation of measures of Multi-annual Management Plans adopted under Articles 9 and 10 of Regulation (EU) No 1380/2013. Data analysis and evaluation are core to guiding the policy in these areas and so EMFAF will also support data collection and knowledge generation in respect of

protecting our marine resource and its biodiversity. In terms of developing aquaculture, EMFAF will support assessment of aquaculture sites, protect biodiversity in these areas while also assisting producers.

4 – Reduction of waste in the marine environment and promoting the circular economy.

Marine litter is a significant threat to the marine environment and to the industries and communities which depend on that environment. Seafood production has the capacity to contribute to marine litter, yet also has the capacity, through the right supports, to be a key player in combating it.

The EMFAF programme will support various initiatives aimed at innovating to reduce marine litter and waste through better management of fishing gear and also support initiatives to recover, collect and process marine litter as a resource. In doing so it will create entrepreneurial opportunities within the blue economy and protect the biodiversity within Irish and international waters.

5 – Effective Control & Enforcement

Effective control and enforcement is critical for sustainable fisheries, and while Ireland has made substantial advances in this area, there are ongoing challenges that need to be addressed. This is particularly in relation to resourcing and capacity.

The EMFAF programme will help the control authorities to strengthen the control and inspection procedures with actions to

- Support control supervised weighing on landing, as part of control of post-transport weighing regimen to meet Landing Obligations.
- The formation of an investigations team, as highlighted in the administrative inquiry (C (2019)5666) will be supported by the EMFAF programme through various training programmes and may also be considered to procure and deploy appropriate investigation software, e.g., for analysing trade data or social media posts about such operators.
- Initiatives to support the electronic capture and recording of suspected infringements will also be considered under the EMFAF. The automated crosschecking system (VALID) captures information on suspected and confirmed infringements of various grades of seriousness. The new Case Management System supports the collection of data of infringements detected through methods such as physical inspection.

The EMFAF will also enhance capabilities in this area through investment in integrated technologies and systems, increased capacity and resources for fisheries protection, enhanced food safety measures, inter-agency and member state cooperation and, through promotion, the development of a culture of compliance and self-regulation among fishers. Through supporting these activities, the Programme will contribute to the implementation of measures of Multi-annual Management Plans.

6 – Enhance knowledge and data to deal with climate change and impacts on marine biodiversity

Ireland has made a considerable contribution to the collection of data and development of knowledge under the EMFF programme. Ongoing work is required to inform strategy and policy decisions, fisheries management, aquaculture and foreshore licensing, and environmental and biodiversity monitoring.

The EMFAF programme will support a fit for purpose data collection programme in line with new

EUMAP legislation, address knowledge gaps through surveys and research, support advisory services across all fisheries areas and build knowledge among the industry and its stakeholders so that the marine environment can be managed in a responsible and sustainable manner.

The combined EMFAF allocation to control and data collection is well above the 15% threshold with approximately 30% being allocated to both actions under the programme.

Work planned in this area will be carried out cognisant of the complementarities identified with biodiversity protection and restoration activities under the Common Agricultural Policy.

Mission 2 - An Innovative, Competitive and Resilient Seafood Sector, driven by Technology and Talent

1 - Support innovation in all sectors.

The seafood sector has not kept pace with development in other industries, leaving it more prone to shocks in the operating environment, less competitive and less attractive as a career opportunity for younger generations. Investment is also required in the State's control authorities to maximise the use of digital technology to enhance control and enforcement of the CFP.

The EMFAF will provide support to addressing this innovation deficit. Within the fleet, investment will be supported in achieving greater engine efficiency, in gear and technology to minimise fuel use and unwanted catch. This will contribute to sustainability but also to competitiveness. Within the aquaculture and processing segments, there is a need to be more innovative to add value to products, diversify into new products and improve environmental and process efficiency. Support to innovation and production efficiency will also aim at increasing organic aquaculture and increasing its competitiveness in relation to imported organic aquaculture products. Capital investment through EMFAF intervention will support greater production efficiency and a lower environmental impact through modernising equipment and processes, new product development and marketing innovations. These investments will in turn create high-skilled career opportunities for younger generations, enhancing prosperity in more remote coastal communities. Similarly, EMFAF sponsored investment through CLLD will support innovative enterprises in areas such as seafood tech and ancillary services for the seafood sector. For state agencies, EMFAF will support investment in innovative technologies in respect of data collection and analysis, scientific research, and control and enforcement technologies. The EMFAF programme will allocate more than 7.5% of its budget to innovation projects.

Horizon Europe, the EU research and innovation programme for the period 2021-2027 will give opportunities for collaboration between researchers and other related stakeholders in multinational consortia across Europe. Short and medium-term research and innovation activities funded by the EMFAF should complement the more long-term research and innovation activities under Horizon Europe. EMFAF-funded research and innovation should in particular complement related activities under the Mission Restore our Ocean and Waters by 2030.

This mission is embedded in the programme in a wide range of areas including, but not limited to, enhanced fisheries management to reduce the impact of fishing on the ecosystem, data collection to monitor and inform the approach to marine ecosystem preservation and investing in the sector to reduce emissions, reduce marine litter and invest in areas such as organic aquaculture.

2 – Promote generational renewal and the health and safety of all seafood sector workers

The demography of the fishing sector has an ageing profile. Younger generations are finding careers in

fishing less appealing than more lucrative alternative career paths, facing high costs of entry to the sector and are not developing skill sets to supply a strong, dynamic workforce to work the Irish fleet. Similar trends are seen in processing and aquaculture. These trends are borne out in the population profile of the coastal communities in which these operators are based. This presents a considerable challenge to sustainability of the seafood sector as a whole.

EMFAF will address these difficulties through assisting younger fishers in acquiring a vessel, overcoming the high cost of entry into the sector. It will support skills development for fishers to ensure they can operate in a viable yet sustainable manner. It will also provide new opportunities in both aquaculture and processing through diversification, increased value-added and market development, generating careers in R&D and innovation, marketing, and food and environmental science. In terms of the blue economy, EMFAF will support entrepreneurial opportunities, enhancing the career prospects within coastal communities. These interventions will further raise the profile of the sector making it an attractive proposition to younger generations.

Ensuring a safe working environment will also enhance the attractiveness of careers in the sector, and EMFAF will ensure that support is provided to improve health and safety and general working conditions on vessels and with other operators in the seafood space.

3 – Support small scale coastal fisheries

Small Scale Coastal Fisheries are the life blood of many of the most remote coastal communities in Ireland. Despite being the largest segment of the Irish fleet, in terms of vessel numbers, it is fragmented, made up of smaller vessels which are more prone to shocks in the economy and wider global events. The scale on which they operate does not facilitate the economies of scale, capital investment and skills development available in other segments.

EMFAF will offer a suite of measures to support and develop small scale coastal fisheries through assisting younger generations acquire a vessel, capital investment on board their vessel to enhance fish quality and improve energy efficiency, and developing human capital through training, improve access to markets and promotion of seafood through supporting producer organisations, and ensure sustainability of the sector through management of stocks, gathering and assessment of data and investment of control and enforcement. It will also assist fishers in reducing their environmental impact through investment in vessels to reduce carbon footprint, working in partnership with scientists to assess the economic and biological impacts of changes to fisheries, working in partnership with agencies to develop and adopt more selective fishing gear and developing skills and practices to protect our shared coastal resources.

4 – Support sustainable economic development and resiliency in all seafood sectors.

The seafood sector has faced a turbulent operating environment, due to Brexit and the TCA, COVID and Russian aggression towards Ukraine. These and other environmental factors have caused a significant number of issues, including reduced quotas and fishing opportunities, increased input costs, reduced access to inputs and markets and decreased profitability. The sector also faces growing challenges from climate change, including increasing storm frequency and severity, warming oceans, changing fish migration patterns etc. Short term measures such as the BAR have been crucial tools in helping the sector adapt, however, longer term transformational change is required to ensure the longevity and sustainability of the sector.

Through targeted investment in the fleet and in fishers, it can restructure to better distribute fishing

opportunities, improve efficiency to reduce exposure to input costs and develop skills to facilitate fishers in diversification and better management of their operations, while contributing to the reduction in the environmental impact of fishing activities. Capital investment, training and innovation within the processing and aquaculture (including organic aquaculture) spheres will allow operators to do more with less, increase the value-add of their outputs, diversify and reach new markets, thereby increasing profitability and increasing prices on the quay side and increasing their competitiveness.

5 – Promote knowledge transfer and the development of lifelong skills (including digital literacy in all sectors).

The Irish seafood sector has been relying on informal knowledge transfer between generations and has been slower to adapt to innovations, market changes and capitalise on opportunities. The workforce demography of the seafood sector is represented by older age groups who have amassed significant knowledge. and as they leave the sector, there is a risk of this knowledge being lost. At the same time, many older fishers may be slower to adapt to newer technologies. There is a need to develop newer, younger fishers and at the same time up-skill existing fishers to embrace new technologies and new practices.

Under the EMFF programme considerable work was done by our State agencies, in collaboration with industry, to develop new fishing processes and gear, explore the potential of underutilised species, diversification in aquaculture and new production methods in processing. This needs to continue to ensure the future sustainability of the sector, and work is required in order to implement the findings of this type of exploratory work in a commercial setting.

Within our State agencies, there has been considerable work carried out in data collection, scientific and environmental research and industry research. Increasing our knowledge of the marine environment will not only protect our natural resources but also allow for operators in the seafood sector to capitalise on opportunities. The continuation of this work is vital to ensuring the management of our oceans and is best leveraged through sharing of knowledge between our State agencies and between member states.

The EMFAF programme will facilitate training, industry collaboration and collaboration with public bodies to ensure seafood enterprises and their work forces have the knowledge and expertise to grow in an innovative and sustainable manner, and public bodies can effectively contribute to the national and EU body of knowledge on the marine environment. This will be carried out in the context of complementarities identified in other EU programmes, namely European Social Fund (ESF) digital Literacy, ESF/ERDF Management Development and ESF Skills Development.

In developing this programme, potential synergies with the Digital Europe Programme (DEP) were examined. In the needs analysis conducted for this programme, the marine sector in Ireland requires more foundational work among both SMEs in the sector and within public administration. As such the capacity for synergies at this stage are limited. Rather, the programme aims to build a foundation upon which such advanced technologies can be explored. This exploration may include future potential of digitalisation or artificial intelligence in areas such as data collection, control or the possibility of CLLD projects on cultural heritage, involving digitalization. Similarly, Connecting Europe Facility (CEF Digital) currently has limited alignment with sector needs but the programme will form the basis for exploration of this area.

Mission 3 - Vibrant and sustainable coastal communities driven to implement creative community-based strategies to enhance economic opportunity and ensure a dynamic framework for quality growth and development

1 – Support the CLLD approach to economic development in coastal communities by building capacity and developing greater co-operation between all relevant stakeholders in coastal communities

Community Led Local Development (CLLD) empowers coastal communities to support initiatives to create employment and economic activity to sustain livelihoods in an area-based approach and accordingly has a key role to play in addressing the impacts of the TCA, Brexit, climate change, protection of marine biodiversity, growth of the blue economy and the sustainable growth of the seafood sector in these communities.

This initiative is focused on community-led development to enhance the economic opportunities and social sustainability of Fisheries and Aquaculture dependent areas. Each Fisheries Local Action Group (FLAG) has, through a process of public consultation, developed a Local development Strategy to support economic activity in their areas. This bottom-up approach ensures that EMFAF funding is directed to areas which are important to those communities.

Under EMFAF, seven Fisheries Local Action Groups (FLAGs) have been created covering the whole coastline of Ireland. Support for FLAGs will continue under the EMFAF programme. The achievements of the FLAGs and the work to develop and implement their Local Development Strategies (LDS) cannot be overstated. Over the EMFF period, these seven FLAGs provided supports of €11.8 million for the implementation of 841 projects which led to the creation of 235 FTE jobs and the maintenance of a further 341 FTE jobs.

The EMFAF programme will provide supports to FLAGs to implement their local development strategy. The EMFAF will also provide supports like training, animation, capacity building where required to ensure that FLAGs can implement their LDS in an effective manner.

These activities will be carried out with respect to complementarities identified with the LEADER Programme and ERDF Local Enterprise initiatives. Specifically, as per the previous Programme, a memorandum of understanding will be established between the FLAGs and Leader Local Actions Groups to ensure a coordinated approach to supporting coastal communities.

2 – Support diversification into areas such as tourism and the blue economy within coastal communities

Ireland's Blue Economy is pivoting towards better stewardship of its marine or 'blue' resources, going beyond viewing the ocean solely as a mechanism for economic exploitation but also as a precious natural asset that needs to be protected. By highlighting the close linkages between the ocean, climate change, and the well being of the people, building a sustainable Blue Economy is a key priority. This means better conservation efforts for coastlines and marine habitats, a rise in investments into new technologies and businesses, and commercial and job opportunities across a range of marine sectors.

The EMFAF with its limited amount of funding cannot address all sectors of the blue economy but what it can do is support fisheries and aquaculture communities to expand their activities into other areas of the blue economy. As part of the CLLD approach coastal communities can take account of the blue economy in the LDS and where required provide supports to community members to diversify into other areas.

Mission 4 – Ensure effective management and implementation of the EMFAF programme

In order for Ireland to achieve the vision and missions described above there is a need to ensure that the EMFAF programme has an effective management and control system in place to allow for the effective implementation and management of the EMFAF programme over its lifetime. On completion of a 2020 evaluation of the EMFF Programme, areas were identified which merit attention in order to improve the

delivery of the EMFAF programme.

The EMFAF programme through technical assistance will support actions including:

- The development of a new grant management system which will facilitate online application to support schemes, simplify administration for all implementing bodies and beneficiaries and strengthen reporting requirements and the collection of indicator data. The new technology will also support the transition to digital technology in the management of all EMFAF grants.
- Provision of administrative capacity for all implementing bodies to ensure effective management of EU funds.
- Provision of training to all bodies in areas such as State aid, procurement, anti-fraud and equality and diversity.
- Supporting the EMFAF communications strategy over the programming period.

1. Programme strategy: main development challenges and policy responses

Table 1A: Priority justification

Policy objective	Priority	Justification
2. Czech	1.Fostering sustainable fisheries and the restoration and conservation of aquatic biological resources	<p>The Irish fishing fleet is a largely coastal fleet made up of 1,998 vessels, with a total combined gross tonnage of 64,912 GT and power of 189,169 kW. The fleet operates over five segments: pelagic, polyvalent, beam-trawl, specific and aquaculture. The fleet operates from communities all around the Irish coast and supports an estimated 2,500 to 3,000 jobs directly in the fleet with a further 7,000 indirect jobs.</p> <p>The economic performance of the fleet has been positive over the lifetime of the EMFF programme 2014-2020, but in the period 2019-2021 there has been impacts by both COVID and Brexit. The <i>Annual Economic Report (AER) by STECF</i> indicated that the Irish fleet has decreasing revenue and profitability. While there is an increase in live weight of landings from 2019 to 2020 (5%) there is a decrease in value of -8%. Projections for 2020 indicate a deteriorating outcome with decreasing revenue (-9%) to €274 million, GVA (-3%) to €146 million and net profit (-6%) to €37 million. Forecasts for 2021 suggest a lower economic performance compared to 2020 driven by further decreases in landings weight and value because of the TCA and Covid with all economic indicators decreasing for most fleet segments. To deal with these challenges the EMFAF will support actions on board vessels that improve the onboard quality and added value of the catch</p> <p>Besides the economic performance of the fleet there were several other issues identified in the <i>SWOT</i> for the EMFAF programme that needed to be taken into consideration in its development and ensure specific funds were allocated to meet these needs. These include improving energy efficiency, reducing carbon emissions (decarbonisation), generational renewal of an ageing workforce, health, safety and working conditions on board fishing vessels, economic and biological impacts of changes to fisheries policy and marine litter amongst others.</p> <p>Ireland’s fishing fleet faces many challenges to meet the objectives of the CFP. Investment is needed to ensure a sustainable management of fisheries resources, implement the ecosystem-</p>

Policy objective	Priority	Justification
		<p>based approach to fisheries management, eliminate discards, address overcapacity, and enable climate change adaptation and mitigation. Investment is also needed to provide conditions for an economically viable and sustainable fishing sector.</p> <p>The Landing Obligation is an important policy for Ireland to ensure that fisheries resources are properly managed and monitored and the impact on the ecosystem is minimised. The EMFAF programme will support on board investment relating to selective gears to reduce unwanted catch and onshore investment to facilitate handling of unwanted catch.</p> <p>The activities of the Irish fishing fleet will also need to take account of the objectives of the <u>EU Biodiversity Strategy 2030</u> particularly in restoring the good environmental status of marine ecosystems by focusing on harvesting sustainably and zero tolerance for illegal practices, conserve fisheries resources and reduce by-catch of threatened species.</p> <p>The <u>Farm to Fork Strategy</u> highlighted that a shift to sustainable fish and seafood production must be accelerated. Economic data show that, where fishing has become sustainable, income has grown in parallel. The Irish fishing fleet needs to prepare for the challenges in achieving sustainability by reducing wasteful discarding and risks triggered by climate change.</p> <p>The Irish fishing fleet has an important role to play in the implementation of <u>The Food Vision 2030 (2021)</u> Strategy, a new ten-year strategy for the Irish agri-food sector. Its vision is that Ireland will become a world leader in Sustainable Food Systems (SFS) over the next decade. This will deliver significant benefits for the Irish fleet itself, for Irish society and the environment. In demonstrating the Irish seafood sector meets the highest standards of sustainability – economic, environmental, and social – this will also provide the basis for the future competitive advantage of the sector.</p> <p>The Irish fleet has to be aware of the impacts and potential mitigating or adaptation measures to ensure that the increasing challenge of climate change does not have a catastrophic effect of the fleet’s activities as outlined in <u>DAFM Agriculture, Forest and Seafood Climate Change Sectoral Adaptation Plan (2019)</u>. This plan was developed to build resilience to the effects of climate change and weather-related events, reduce any negative impacts where possible, and take advantage of any opportunities.</p>

Policy objective	Priority	Justification
		<p>Within the EMFAF programme there are several Specific Objectives (SO) that will assist Ireland’s fishing fleet to meet the challenges and needs identified in the SWOT.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (SO1.1) will support actions such as reducing unwanted catches, improving the onboard quality and added value of the catch, young fishers to enter the sector, working in partnership with scientists to assess the economic and biological impacts of changes to fisheries and developing skills • (SO1.2) will support actions to replace or modernise engines to reduce carbon (decarbonisation) • (SO1.3) will make provision for contributing to a fair standard of living in cases of temporary cessation of fishing activities, should the need arise. • (SO1.4) will support Ireland’s obligations under the CFP with regard to fisheries protection and fisheries management science • (SO1.6) will support the Prioritised Action Framework for the Habitats and Birds Directives and the Programme of Measures for the Marine Strategy Framework Directive. It will also support actions under the CFP in support of marine biodiversity and species and habitat restoration. <p>Small Scale Coastal Fisheries - SSCF</p> <p>Ireland’s SSCF fleet consists of 1,486 vessels less than 10 metres length overall and 234 vessels which are between 10 and 12 metres length overall. Traditionally, up to 90% of ownership of the Irish fishing fleet has been vested in skipper/owner single vessel family operations. Despite some consolidation in recent years with the reduction in vessel numbers, this ownership profile continues to dominate the fleet. These boats, which are predominately active within six nautical miles of the Irish shore account for approximately 80% of the Irish fishing fleet</p> <p>In 2019, Ireland launched the Strategy for the Irish Inshore Fisheries Sector 2019-2023 with</p>

Policy objective	Priority	Justification
		<p>the involvement of the National Inshore Fisheries Forum (NIFF) whose members include inshore fishers, environmental interests, marine leisure, marine tourism and other marine stakeholders. The structures also provide opportunities for collaboration between the inshore fishing sector and communities on sustainable strategies to optimise the income opportunities afforded by the coastal resource.</p> <p>The Strategy sets out a vision for the future of the inshore sector, that it “will have a prosperous and sustainable future delivered through a united industry with a strong and influential voice”. The Strategy presented four Main Themes which cover the Organisation and Profile of the Inshore Sector; the Management of inshore resources; the Infrastructure and Resources available to the inshore sector and the Profitability of the sector.</p> <p>Specific objectives are set for each of these themes which focus on building the sector up in terms of its own identity including its people, resources and infrastructure to create a strong Inshore Fisheries industry for the future. Key issues to be addressed through the Strategy include enhancing business skills across the sector, sustainable management of key fish stocks as well as attracting and retaining talent, all with a view to maximising the potential of this sector to support Ireland’s coastal communities.</p> <p>The EMFAF programme through the intervention of the SOs described in the fisheries section above will also contribute to the needs identified in the SWOT and the objectives in the Inshore Strategy.</p> <p>Control & Enforcement</p> <p>The Sea-Fisheries Protection Authority (SFPA) is the independent statutory body responsible for the regulation of the sea-fisheries and the seafood production sectors in Ireland. The SFPA promotes compliance with the EU Common Fisheries Policy, sea-fisheries law and food safety law relating to fish and fish products, verifies compliance and, where necessary, enforces it. This means the fair regulation of all fishing vessels operating within Ireland’s 200-mile limit and Irish fishing vessels wherever they operate, and all seafood produced in Ireland.</p>

Policy objective	Priority	Justification
		<p>The SFPA faces multiple challenges to ensure effective controls are in place to protect Ireland's valuable fisheries resource. Challenges dealing with traceability under Article 58 of the Control Regulation will be supported by the EMFAF through initiatives and projects that include automated cross checking of transport documents, introduction of DNA technology as a rapid means of species identification and the application of molecular methods to manage provenance fraud risks. Implementation of the SFPA ICT Strategy will support the digitisation of existing manual systems and processes as well as improvements to existing fisheries control applications and functions.</p> <p>Under the EMFF programme Ireland has implemented a methodology and assessment process for verification of vessel engine power of fishing vessels. This process is being implemented by the Marine Survey Office as competent authority, with support and coordination of the SFPA. This will continue to be supported under the EMFAF.</p> <p>Work to support Remote Electronic Monitoring (REM) programmes will continue during the EMFAF programme. The outcomes of the current REM Pilot will be a prelude to more initiatives undertaken under EMFAF which will all be linked to the control of the Landing Obligation. Development of a data reporting tool has also been identified as work to be undertaken during the EMFAF programme. This will ensure better mining of the available data to identify the risk of non-compliance with the Landing Obligation.</p> <p>To minimise the risk of non-compliance in areas such as effective control of the landing obligation and effective weighing and catch registration systems, the SFPA will be supported under the EMFAF programme to enhance its automated cross-checking functions to include the electronic crosschecking of transport documents which will support control of catch registration and traceability. The existing VALID application will be expanded to enable detection of non-compliance in catch registration. Pending policy initiatives, the EMFAF programme will also be used to support U12 digitisation of position and catch reporting including the purchase and installation of digital catch reporting and GPS/AIS/VMS devices and systems suited for small vessels) to strengthen the monitoring of the small scale fleet.</p>

Policy objective	Priority	Justification
		<p>Data Collection</p> <p>The Marine Institute is the National Correspondent for the DCF on behalf of the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, and has carried out this function since 2002. The Marine Institute and Board Iascaigh Mhara (BIM) are responsible for the coordination and collection of scientific and economic data to meet Ireland’s obligations under the EU Data Collection Framework.</p> <p>Data collection is essential for the implementation of the CFP. Robust scientific data is required to evaluate the state of fish stocks, the profitability of the different segments of the sector and the effects of fisheries and aquaculture on the ecosystem. It is also used to evaluate EU policies: fisheries management measures, structural financial measures in support of the fisheries and aquaculture dependent areas, mitigation measures to reduce negative effects of fisheries on the ecosystem.</p> <p>Ireland’s data collection programme includes a broader EAFM programme e.g., environmental and ecosystem data collection on surveys, working with ICES to investigate environmental impacts on fisheries and fisheries impacts on the environment, engaging with stakeholders etc. The ecosystem modelling was included to address a specific capacity need to enable Ireland to meet existing and future EAFM requirements i.e., multi-species, and food web modelling and in the context of time varying ecosystem drivers e.g., temperature, system productivity etc. This would be to support an Ecosystem Based Approach to Fisheries Management, in terms of appropriate reference values and indicators of ecosystem changes, particularly in the context of Climate Change.</p> <p>Ireland’s Fit for purpose data collection programme, approved by the Commission (Commission Implementing Decision C (2021)9986, confirming approval of Ireland’s national work plan for data collection in the fisheries and aquaculture sector for the period 2022-2027)</p>

Policy objective	Priority	Justification
		<p>is in line with EUMAP legislation. The EMFAF programme under SO1.4 will provide support to the Marine institute to ensure the effective implementation of the DCF work plan.</p> <p>Marine Biodiversity</p> <p>Ireland’s marine environment is a national asset that yields multiple commercial and non-commercial benefits across multiple sectors. It is a remarkable but fragile resource that needs to be managed carefully to sustain its character and attributes in physical, environmental quality and biodiversity terms.</p> <p>The National Biodiversity Plan lays out a clear framework for Ireland’s national approach to biodiversity, ensuring that efforts and achievements of the past are built upon, while looking ahead to what can be achieved over the next five years and beyond. They include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. mainstreaming biodiversity across the decision-making process in the State; 2. strengthening the knowledge base underpinning work on biodiversity issues; 3. increasing public awareness and participation; 4. ensuring conservation of biodiversity in the wider countryside; 5. ensuring conservation of biodiversity in the marine environment; 6. expanding and improving on the management of protected areas and protected species; 7. enhancing the contribution to international biodiversity issues. <p>Prioritised Action Frameworks (PAFs) are important tools in supporting biodiversity plans. PAFs are aimed at providing a comprehensive overview of the measures that are needed to implement the EU-wide Natura 2000 network and its associated green infrastructure, specifying the financing needs for these measures and linking them to the corresponding EU funding programmes. The PAF for NATURA 2000 in Ireland for the Multi annual Financial Framework period 2021 – 2027 which was published in March 2021 indicated that approximately €1.14 billion is required to ensure full implementation of the actions outlined in</p>

Policy objective	Priority	Justification
		<p>the framework. The EMFAF will compliment funding from other sources including National, EAFRD, EAGF, LIFE+, Horizon Europe to support implementation of the PAF.</p> <p>The EMFAF programme will contribute to the implementation of the PAF through actions that increase awareness of the Natura/MPA network and associated conservation measures, support for the designation and management process of Natura sites and MPAs, protect biodiversity in marine habitats and restoration to improve the status of Habitats Directive Annex IV habitats and species. These actions will be implemented under SO 1.6.</p> <p>On the basis of the needs analysis arising from the SWOT, Ireland's Programme under the biodiversity scheme will include projects inter alia to: Protect & restore vulnerable Elasmobranchs species, to expand Ecosystem data collection on Irish fisheries surveys in support of MSFD, Natura and Habitat mapping; to address data gaps under MSFD indicator 6 on foodwebs by undertaking CPR plankton analyses; and to extend benthic habitat mapping knowledge beyond Irish coastal waters and offshore reef habitat to support sustainable fisheries, and improve MSFD reporting on seabed integrity.</p> <p>Ireland will propose projects to provide appropriate assessments of interactions between aquaculture activities and Natura features (species and habitats) in SAC's. This work underpins the evidence basis for licencing decisions supporting the sustainable development of coastal aquaculture and its interactions with sensitive freshwater habitats and species. Ireland will also propose projects to develop a standardised, fully quantitative, WFD-style tool for assessing benthic status with emphasis on aquaculture sites, and provide for a nationally consistent approach to assessing benthic status or the risk posed to that status in Natura 2000 sites but also in water bodies designated under different EU Directives (WFD and MSFD). There is also a proposed project on establishing and monitoring of a genetic baseline of Irish wild salmon populations for determining extent of contemporary and future genetic introgression from escaped farmed salmon.</p> <p>There were many other issues identified in the <i>SWOT</i> which could impact on marine biodiversity which need to be considered in the EMFAF programme and therefore necessitate</p>

Policy objective	Priority	Justification
		<p>supports to ensure the protection of the marine environment. Issues such as the impact of fishing activities on the marine environment, management and control of the spread of invasive marine species, expanding the Clean Oceans Initiative to address micro and macro plastics, and plastic coming off the land.</p> <p>The EMFAF Programme will provide supports to these needs by implementing relevant actions such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (SO1.1) will support actions working in partnership with scientists to assess the economic and biological impacts of changes to fisheries and investment on board for fishing gear to reduce impact on biodiversity. • (SO1.6) will support actions addressing the issue of marine litter, research into use of fishing gear most harmful to biodiversity, manage and control the introduction and spread of invasive marine species, increase co-ordination and pace at which new measures for biodiversity protection are implemented.
2. Czech	2.Fostering sustainable aquaculture activities, and processing and marketing of fisheries and aquaculture products, thus contributing to food security in the Union	<p>Ireland makes a significant contribution to EU food supply, retaining its position as a net exporter and key supplier to EU and global markets. In 2021, Ireland’s seafood exports were worth €674 million, with exports to the EU increasing 17% between 2020 and 2021 to €397 million. Ireland maintaining and growing this position is a crucial element of food security for the Union. Aquaculture and processing are key segments to achieve this and have significant potential for growth.</p> <p>The DAFM Agriculture, Forest and Seafood Climate Change Sectoral Adaptation Plan (2019) was developed to build resilience to the effects of climate change and weather-related events, reduce any negative impacts where possible and take advantage of any opportunities. This drives the need for investment to ensure the aquaculture and processing sectors have the knowledge and tools required to implement climate adaptation practices, focused climate related research in both sectors, raise awareness on climate change and adaptation issues, support the sectors and foster sustainable growth, development, innovation and adaptation.</p> <p>Similarly, the Farm to Fork Strategy highlighted that a shift to sustainable aquaculture and</p>

Policy objective	Priority	Justification
		<p>seafood production must be accelerated. Challenges to be faced include reducing waste and climate change. It was identified that research, innovation technology in parallel with advisory services, data, knowledge-sharing and skills are the key drivers to promote the transition to sustainable, healthy and inclusive food systems.</p> <p>The Food Vision 2030 (2021) Strategy aims for Ireland to become a world leader in Sustainable Food Systems (SFS). This will deliver benefits for the Irish aquaculture and processing sectors, for Irish society and the environment. In demonstrating that Irish seafood meets the highest standards of sustainability – economic, environmental, and social – this will also provide the basis for the future competitive advantage of the sector.</p> <p>By adopting an integrated food systems approach, Ireland will seek to become a global leader of innovation for sustainable seafood systems, producing safe, nutritious, and high-value seafood that tastes great, while protecting and enhancing our natural and cultural resources and contributing to vibrant coastal communities and the national economy.</p> <p>The strategy identified 4 missions including (climate smart and safe and nutritious food). To achieve these missions, investment is needed to restore and enhance biodiversity, enhance the environmental sustainability of the aquaculture sector, and provide evidence of a safe ethical food supply. Investment is also needed to support primary producers in the transition to green and climate friendly technologies, diversification, enhance the use of technology and data, and attract and nurture diverse and inclusive talent.</p> <p>The emphasis on sustainability has set a core challenge to which all segments of the seafood sector must respond including aquaculture and processing. However, they must also respond to a highly challenging operating environment created by the negative effects and legacy of Brexit, COVID and Russian aggression towards Ukraine, and the subsequent effects of these on costs and the economic cycle. These challenges vary across the segments, be it for aquaculture, processing or producer organisations.</p>

Policy objective	Priority	Justification
		<p>Aquaculture</p> <p>In 2021, Irish aquaculture output was 42,000 tonnes in volume and worth €175m, of which approximately 80% was derived from export sales. Operators in the sector employ almost 2,000 people directly with further jobs created indirectly in ancillary services and through capital investment. Key species produced are salmon and mussels, with a significant contribution from other shellfish also. A significant amount of this output is destined for other Member States. However, while the Irish aquaculture sector presents a strong foundation for growth, the strategic and operating challenges are immense.</p> <p>The aquaculture sector in Ireland has challenges to overcome in order to promote a sustainable and profitable sector. These challenges include lack of available sites and competition for space with other maritime activities, ability to expand aquaculture sector, high mortality rates and food safety issues, environmental issues. Investment is needed to promote sustainable aquaculture practices, boost the competitiveness of the Irish aquaculture sector and to provide conditions for an economically viable aquaculture sector. Investment is also needed in contributing to the protection of biodiversity and preventing serious damage by predators.</p> <p>Within the National Strategic Plan for Sustainable Aquaculture Development (NSPSA) a number of action areas have been identified which require funding. Investment needs were highlighted to stimulate the modernisation of production sites in line with international best practice, increase resource efficiency and reduce environmental impact, advance understanding of market opportunities and innovation capability and develop technical, marketing and management capability. The plan also identified funding around improved quality and sustainability performance through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participation in programmes and systems and that improve product quality and environmental sustainability; • Reducing environmental footprint; • Monitoring and reporting sustainability improvement; • Attaining certification and accreditation; • Improving transparency to customers and the community using traceability and digital

Policy objective	Priority	Justification
		<p>tools;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop carbon models and climate mitigation measures to support the credentials of the sector as a low carbon source of protein; • Enhance Ireland’s organic aquaculture positioning and competitiveness through supporting organic seafood production, meeting the highest standards available for EU producers, and through improved labelling and traceability of organic products; • Improve production efficiency; • Improve husbandry management systems to further improve animal welfare; and, • Increase resource efficiency and reduce environmental impact <p>Within this programme, this range of activities have been grouped into actions to utilise technology and enhance knowledge to facilitate growth; actions to promote the sustainable development of new and existing enterprises and, actions to improve energy efficiency and reduce carbon emissions.</p> <p>The theme of sustainability for aquaculture is also highlighted in the EU Biodiversity Strategy 2030 which outlined actions member states are required to prioritise in that period, including restoring the good environmental status of marine ecosystems by focusing on harvesting sustainably and zero tolerance for illegal practices, implementing maritime spatial plans, conserving fisheries resources and reducing by-catch of species threatened by extinction.</p> <p>The EU Commission Strategic Guidelines for a more sustainable and competitive EU aquaculture in the period 2021-30 (2021) outlined objectives including participating in the green transition, ensuring social acceptance and increasing knowledge and innovation in the aquaculture sector. These guidelines are being applied in the Irish National Strategic Plan for Sustainable Aquaculture Development 2021 - 2030 (2022). This plan highlights multiple challenges for the Irish aquaculture sector. These include administrative procedures, spatial planning and access to water, consumer information, producers and market organisation, human and animal health and welfare, environmental performance, climate change, innovation, marine litter from aquaculture sites, control of aquaculture products, integration of aquaculture in the local economy and data and monitoring.</p>

Policy objective	Priority	Justification
		<p>The sector should be developed in a sustainable way, including shellfish aquaculture, to ensure that feed products for aquaculture are sourced and produced in the most sustainable manner possible. Shellfish plays an important part in improving coastal water quality and may also have a part to play in climate change mitigation through the carbon sequestration potential of shellfish.</p> <p>All of these strategic asks are set against a backdrop of a difficult operating environment for aquaculture operators. The report of the Seafood Task force – Navigating Change (2021) noted significant impacts as a consequence of Brexit, primarily through the imposition of additional costs that will erode its long-term profitability and competitiveness in areas such as increased transport costs either via UK landbridge or direct to Europe, reduction in shelf life due to delays for customs, sanitary and phytosanitary controls or longer shipping routes, and access to feed, lead times and cost inflation and additional customs charges. While intervention is planned to overcome these challenges through BAR funded schemes, the timeframe of these supports, ending in 2023, will not be sufficient to assist a transition of the sector to the post Brexit environment, and will not fully address the needs identified in the SWOT analysis for this operational programme.</p> <p>All of these factors and investment requirements present a strong justification for SO 2.1a in promoting sustainable aquaculture activities, especially strengthening the competitiveness of aquaculture production, while ensuring that the activities are environmentally sustainable in the long term. This strategic objective will support the leveraging of technology to enhance aquaculture licensing that maintains rigour of assessment, reduces administrative burden for operators, and improves transparency for the general public. It will also support actions that protect biodiversity, limit the environmental footprint of aquaculture activities, address marine litter and ensure participation in the national marine spatial planning process.</p> <p>From an economic sustainability perspective, intervention will support differentiation of Irish products to meet customer demands, support investments in technology and innovation to enhance growth and sustainability, support investments relating to logistics and market access</p>

Policy objective	Priority	Justification
		<p>and address fragmentation across the sector to ensure a cohesive aquaculture supply chain to domestic, EU and other markets. Lastly, and underpinning all of the other aims, it will support investment in sustainability measures including data collection and monitoring, and environmental assessments and evaluations. In making these interventions, consumer and public confidence in aquaculture products will be enhanced through improved perceptions regarding the quality, sustainability and environmental friendliness of aquaculture output.</p> <p>Fragmentation in the aquaculture sector, including the dependency on imported sources of seed and juveniles will be addressed through sustainable development of new and existing enterprises, along with studies to address scale, fragmentation, potential opportunities for growth arising from improved structure, organisation and cooperation across the aquaculture value chain.</p> <p>Given the relatively low volumes of production, contributing to the health of the nation's marine, coastal and freshwater ecosystems is key to upholding the high value production that typifies Irish aquaculture. Irish aquaculture is already based upon the use of low trophic species such as shellfish and marine algae that provide a number of ecosystem services. Seaweed particularly can absorb nutrients, offering the potential for remediation services in areas adjacent to terrestrial nutrient run-off. Such ecosystem services can be enhanced through multi-trophic aquaculture (IMTA) approaches. Applying what is currently understood regarding shellfish ecosystem services and its economic value to Irish shellfish aquaculture along with further research in the knowledge gaps, and better use of data, could facilitate more informed spatial planning, a better acceptance across marine stakeholders and development of goods and services across this sector.</p> <p>Shellfish farmers have a vested interest in the maintenance of healthy marine ecosystems and by default healthy shellfish growing waters are the heart of their sustainable business models. The Irish seafood sector is involved in many initiatives that have brought environmental performance to a level over and above the baseline required by legislation. Independently audited certification schemes, focusing on environmental performance, have been widely adopted by the aquaculture sector. To maintain and improve the low impact of Irish aquaculture on water quality, investment in new technologies,</p>

Policy objective	Priority	Justification
		<p>Recirculating Aquaculture Systems and studies and research are foreseen.</p> <p>To address the need to build stakeholder and public awareness of Irish aquaculture the continued development of the campaign on EU aquaculture is proposed. The programme for Ireland has been conceived and delivered according to the aims and objectives of the European Commission’s Inseparable initiative. The programme provides young learners (12-17 years) and schools with an introduction to aquaculture, its socio-economic benefits and the benefits of consuming sustainably farmed seafood.</p> <p>Processing</p> <p>The processing sector is a key contributor to coastal communities and their local economies. In 2021, the sector comprised of 160 enterprises and employed 3,873 people and is particularly important for some of Ireland’s more peripheral and rural areas. In an international context it is a significant exporter, contributing to Ireland’s status as a net exporter of seafood, relative to the overall EU’s position as a buoyant consumer market and net importer of seafood products. The sector is a key contributor to Irish and EU food supply and security in a time where supply chains have been heavily disrupted by global events and in the context of the EU’s dependence on non-member states for seafood supply.</p> <p>However, the sector has a number of structural issues which undermine its potential. In terms of the sector’s output, whitefish is being exported to the UK for further processing, while pelagic processors are focused on high volume, low margin product in a highly price sensitive market. This was recognised in FoodWise 2025 which highlighted that 70% of fish landed into Ireland is exported in unprocessed commodity form. It set a target to reduce this to below 50%. There has been some progress on this objective, due to the positive impact of EMFF support, but commodity exports remain above 60%. The sector is also characterised by many smaller enterprises with poor access to markets and raw materials, lower economies of scale, lack of access to finance and low investment in innovation and R&D.</p> <p>The impact of Brexit and the subsequent TCA exacerbated these challenges, further reducing market access via the UK landbridge, added logistical costs, and reduced access to, and</p>

Policy objective	Priority	Justification
		<p>increased cost of raw material due to loss of quota and reduced imports from the UK in particular. These heightened challenges were recognised by the Seafood Taskforce Report (2021) which highlighted the need for the sector to focus on “creating more from less” and diversification in the context of scarcer inputs and engage in transformational capital investment. This change will improve sustainability from the perspective of more efficient use of scarce raw material, but the need to improve environmental performance was also highlighted. The report recommended BAR funded interventions which have been realised by the introduction of a capital investment scheme aimed at increasing value-added output from the sector, improving environmental performance and improving economies of scale.</p> <p>However, the scale of, and lengthy period required for capital investment and transformational change will not be realised in the life of the BAR and the report recommended ongoing investment through EMFAF. Intervention through SO2.2 is required to continue this change in addition to addressing other needs of the sector, including promoting Irish processor output and developing new export markets.</p> <p>With increasing focus on climate change and protection of biodiversity, it will be essential that the processing sector embeds and promotes the widespread use of sustainability innovations, processes, and methodologies to drive growth and improvement across the sector. Large-scale investment will be needed to address climate change and sustainable development challenges whilst also developing new products to satisfy market demands.</p> <p>The sector must also evolve to meet the increasing requirement to increase quality and sustainability while reducing environmental impact. This is not solely a policy demand but also a reflection of the high standards expected by buyers, particularly in retail markets. In moving to higher value products and further up the value chain, processors will need to demonstrate the highest standards of environmental responsibility and sustainability in all of their sourcing, processes and operations in order to enter these more lucrative markets.</p> <p>Support to seafood processors should aim to improve the sustainability of their operations across key resource areas including waste, water, energy management and emissions, while also demonstrating the sustainability and the traceability of the products being placed on the</p>

Policy objective	Priority	Justification
		<p>market.</p> <p>The need to innovate and for seafood processors to be supported in this endeavour for the benefit of all links in the supply chain is in accordance with OECD findings that SMEs have neither the scale, expertise, capability or resources to do so in their own right. If the Irish seafood sector was not supported in this area, then the sectors competitiveness internationally and ability to grow and capitalise on new opportunities would be seriously undermined</p> <p>The opportunities and growth that can be potentially realised by the seafood sector are dependant on access to a valuable resource, have skilled people and capital producing quality seafood that is healthy and in demand. This arises from both a growing requirement for more protein as well as an increasing cohort of consumers who seek sustainable products that meet their discerning needs.</p> <p>To realise these opportunities there is the requirement for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Growth in technical and innovation capability to reach world class standards and facilities; • Increase the technical sophistication and develop the innovation capability of Irish seafood processors so that the maximum value of the harvested and farmed material can be realised; • Increase profitability through premiumisation and maximising marketplace returns; • Build greater understanding and insight of supply chains and analysis of how Irish seafood can compete more profitably and reduce dependence on undifferentiated markets; • Working collaboratively where appropriate to reduce costs, build scale, avoid intermediaries so that value is protected for increased returns for the sector; • Information and strategic alignment to market trends & opportunities - The seafood processing sector must be aware and have access to information to assess and assist their strategic decision making. • Build market preference from an enhanced reputation for quality and sustainability - Through full participation in quality and sustainability programmes, set and achieve

Policy objective	Priority	Justification
		<p>ambitious targets to provide abundant evidence to customers and consumers of Irish seafood that will enhance its reputation and build market preference, utilise technology effectively to increase transparency of the achievement of standards, and resource the marketing effort required to promote effectively.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop leadership & management capability, attracting people and developing talent - Through training and mentoring develop the management capability within Irish seafood processing so that is best equipped to lead the sector through the transition required and build an industry that is positively regarded so that it can attract new entrants who in turn will be developed with the professional skills needed. <p>Marketing</p> <p>There were significant impacts on trade of seafood throughout 2020 due to the varying waves of Covid-19 infection occurring across countries and continents. Overall, the sector performed very strongly considering the turmoil that affected the world with the volume exported actually increasing by 2%. Prices fell 9% leading to an overall decline in export value of 8%. The shellfish sector saw the highest impact with volume and value declining 33% and 29% respectively.</p> <p>The closure of the hospitality sectors in Europe and Asia had significant impacts on the Irish shellfish sector with Dublin Bay prawns, crab, oysters, whelks, shrimps and prawns all seeing value declines above 25%. The pelagic sector grew in value by 7%, driven by exports of blue whiting, horse mackerel and mackerel, mainly to African countries. Exports of salmon continued to increase in 2020 by 10% despite a 3% decrease in volume. The average price of Irish organic salmon continued to increase, growing by 13% in the year.</p> <p>Imports of seafood increased 1% in volume but decreased by 6% in value due to lower prices. The volume of salmon imported declined by 15%, with increasing prices leading to a 9% decline in value. Shrimps and prawns, tuna and breaded whitefish were the main products imported that saw increases, reflecting the increase in sales in retail of less perishable seafood products in the frozen and ambient sectors.</p>

Policy objective	Priority	Justification
		<p>Dependence on the UK as a source of seafood imports continued to decline with volumes falling 18% in 2020 (value declined 17%). Major substitution of imports occurred from the EU with volumes increasing by 110% driven by a price decrease of 44% resulting in a value increase of 17%. This suggests that Irish importers of seafood are increasingly diversifying the source of their products away from the UK in response to Brexit.</p> <p>The EMFAF Programme with intervention through SO2.2 will support fisheries (incl. SSCF), aquaculture and processing sectors continue to diversify into other markets and identify potential new markets over the programme period. These actions will include provision of advisory services, marketing activities to support business development, promotional events and trade shows and studies and research.</p> <p>Producer Organisations</p> <p>Currently there are six seafood Producer Organisations (PO) in Ireland, five fisheries POs (KFO, IFPO, ISWFPO ISEFPO, IIMRO) and one aquaculture PO (ISPG). All POs have to comply with criteria to achieve recognition under the CMO. POs can play an important role in the market, improving the conditions for the placing on the market of their members' fishery and aquaculture products, improving economic returns for their members, stabilising the market, avoiding and reducing as far as possible unwanted catches, contributing to the elimination of illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing and generally coordinating the activities of their primary producer members.</p> <p>The COVID crisis and Brexit have accentuated the need for a reflection on the supply of fishery products, aquaculture and processing and again POs play an important role in dealing with challenges on their members behalf. The EMFAF with intervention through SO2.2 will aim to assist POs in this role, in particular by supporting the development and implementation of the production and marketing plans. The EMFAF will also provide supports to the formation of new POs, especially in the Aquaculture and SSCF sectors.</p>
5. Greek	3.Enabling a sustainable blue economy in	As an island state, 40% of Ireland's population lives within 5km of the coast, which includes

Policy objective	Priority	Justification
	coastal, island and inland areas, and fostering the development of fishing and aquaculture communities	<p>all of our major cities. However, there is a disparity between these large urban centres, where opportunities for enterprise are abundant, and the more remote centres which are typically dependent on seafood and fewer, traditional industries. In key coastal hubs, the impact of the seafood industry can vary considerably but can account for up to 42% of all economic activity and 53% of all employment, as is the case in the example of Castletownbere.</p> <p>Such an economic sectoral dependency makes such coastal communities particularly vulnerable to shocks such as Brexit and the TCA, COVID, inflation in the wake of Russian aggression in Ukraine, and wider trends in the seafood business, threatening the fabric of these communities. The situation facing these communities is exacerbated as other key sectors, such as tourism, face a challenging recovery in the wake of COVID and struggle to remain competitive during the current inflationary conditions. The seasonality of both industries also has a significant impact on the livelihoods and opportunities for these populations.</p> <p>Demography and population trends are also having an impact on these communities. In coastal communities, in the North and North West, there is population decline of up to 1.5% in the context of a growing national population. The age profile of the population in coastal communities in Ireland is also typically older than the national average, while employment rates are lower.</p> <p>In addition to these issues, there were a number of other areas identified in the SWOT which represent weaknesses for coastal communities, including the lack of interest and awareness in the sea and marine industries by younger segments, weaknesses in facilities and marine infrastructure for use by multiple industries, communications connectivity, geographic and logistical isolation, and lack of localised funding and education opportunities.</p> <p>Such challenges are recognised in EU and national policy. <i>The Regional Sea Basin Analysis of the Western Waters</i>, of which Ireland is part, identified multiple challenges for Ireland to meet the objectives of the Common Fisheries Policy (CFP). Investment is needed to foster the local development of a sustainable blue economy in coastal areas through enhancing local partnerships, diversification, promoting economic, human, social and cultural assets, and</p>

Policy objective	Priority	Justification
		<p>improving environmental protection.</p> <p>Similarly, the <i>Report of the Seafood Task force – Navigating Change (2021)</i> outlined multiple recommendations for coastal communities. Keeping people in these coastal communities by allowing them to upskill, retrain and ultimately keep their skills from a lifetime spent in the marine industry is key. Providing seed funding for new businesses, funding to diversify or expand and enabling capacity development that will allow people to use their skills for new opportunities in the marine sector is paramount to keeping these communities viable in the long term.</p> <p>Finally, <i>Project Ireland 2040</i> outlined National Policy objectives which included supporting the sustainable growth and development of the maritime economy particularly in remote rural coastal communities and islands. Investment is needed to support these communities in developing local strategies to strengthen their role in actions to grow their marine activities or diversify to other activities that will provide growth in these areas.</p> <p>In the face of these challenges and in realising these strategic objectives, there are opportunities to capitalise on the natural advantages and traditions which these remote coastal locations have to offer. The in-depth knowledge of seafood within these communities, combined with the demands on the existing seafood industry to keep up with a changing operating environment and policy context, present opportunities to further develop ancillary and supporting businesses for the seafood sector. The recognition for growth potential has been seen in areas such as the seafood-tech sector, which saw a 53% increase in number of enterprises, 71% increase in employment and 126% increase in aggregate turnover between 2015 and 2020.</p> <p>Outside of seafood, the location, environment and increasing value placed on biodiversity by the wider population, presents tourism opportunities across a large number of segments such as wildlife and eco-tourism, adventure tourism and experiential tourism. This is in addition to local specific opportunities for innovation, micro-enterprise and community initiatives. In the face of challenging, and forecasted worsening economic conditions, market failures in access</p>

Policy objective	Priority	Justification
		<p>to finance, training, economies of scale and lack of innovation which are characteristic for start-ups, SMEs and social entrepreneurship will become more pronounced, particularly in these smaller, more remote locations.</p> <p>The EMFAF programme with intervention through SO 3.1 will contribute to enabling a sustainable blue economy in coastal and, island areas, and to fostering the sustainable development of fishing and aquaculture communities. The EMFAF programme will also assist Ireland’s coastal communities in meeting the challenges and needs identified in the SWOT analysis. Specifically the interventions under this objective will be aimed at:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Protecting and promoting the characteristics of Irish coastal communities that make them authentic and attractive as places to live, work and visit. 2. Diversifying the income of fishers and the coastal community economy through the development of complementary activities in the local blue economy, for example in tourism, direct sales, environmental services, cultural maritime activities, ICT-based industries and those addressing climate change and sustainability. 3. Ensuring that Ireland’s coastal resource is managed to sustain its physical character and environmental quality. 4. Identifying innovations that can lead to a transition towards smarter growth in coastal areas and by ensuring the involvement of local stakeholders. 5. Providing fishers and aquaculture farmers the possibility to diversify their activities by providing niche tourism activities linked to their production and providing local SMEs opportunities to develop innovative products. 6. Capacity building of community knowledge and expertise to develop strategies for sustainable economic development. 7. Developing greater co-operation between fisheries, coastal communities, and Government agencies to use marine spatial planning effectively as a tool to enhance economic activity. <p>This shall be achieved through Community-led local development by the provision of investment in advisory services, business-diversification, innovation and capacity building</p>

Policy objective	Priority	Justification
		<p>supports, training, events and communication, soft supports and socio-cultural development. These will be carried out in a manner that sustains the physical character and environmental quality of our coastal areas, including investment in improving aquatic habitats and biodiversity and management and monitoring of Natura 2000 areas and MPAs and climate change mitigations and adaptations that can be implemented by community groups in their area including marine litter, plastic pollution and the Circular economy.</p> <p>The implementation of the CLLD in Ireland will be carried out by Fisheries Local Action Groups (FLAG). A call for expression of interest will be initiated by the EMFAF Managing Authority to identify potential FLAGS around the coast of Ireland.. The expressions of interest will be evaluated and selected. The EMFAF programme will provide support to the selected FLAGS as outlined under Article 34 of the CPR Regulation no 1060/2021.</p> <p>Bord Iascaigh Mhara (BIM) will work closely with the FLAGs to provide further resources including administrative supports and animation and capacity building expertise and knowledge to ensure the effective implementation of the local strategies by the FLAGs and to ensure awareness of the strategies in their relevant areas. BIM will be supported through technical assistance to ensure these supports are made available to all FLAGs.</p>
2. Czech	4.Strengthening international ocean governance and enabling seas and oceans to be safe, secure, clean and sustainably managed	<p>Ireland’s maritime territory is approximately 10 times the area of its landmass. It represents a meeting point of cold waters from the north and warmer waters from the south to create a productive and food rich environment. Our waters are home to a highly diverse range of fish, marine mammals, marine birds and reptiles and an equally diverse range of physical habitats. Ireland is dependent on these ecosystems and therefore they have to be managed carefully through appropriate policy and actions. Such policy and actions in turn need an appropriate evidence base through gathering data and creating knowledge.</p> <p>There is a clear strategic imperative at both EU and national level which justifies a focus on Marine Knowledge. The <i>Regional Sea Basin Analysis of the Western Waters</i>, of which Ireland is part, identified multiple environmental challenges for Ireland to meet the objectives of the Common Fisheries Policy (CFP). Investment is needed to ensure a sustainable management of</p>

Policy objective	Priority	Justification
		<p>fisheries resources, enabling climate change adaptation and mitigation. To meet these challenges investment is needed in improving knowledge of marine ecosystems to allow efficient management decisions based on the best available scientific advice and conserving and enhancing coastal ecosystems.</p> <p>The <i>Biodiversity Strategy 2030</i> highlighted that the fight against biodiversity loss must be underpinned by sound science. Investing in research, innovation and knowledge exchange will be key to gathering the best data and developing the best nature-based solutions. Improving knowledge of marine ecosystems will allow efficient management decisions based on the best available scientific advice. There is room for improving data collection on the impacts of fisheries on the ecosystems (by-catch of protected species or non-target species) under the Data collection framework. Beyond this, pilot projects, scientific cooperation and local initiatives on improving scientific knowledge of the ecosystems should be encouraged to strengthen the basis for ecosystem-based management of fisheries. EMFAF support could also be considered to develop partnerships between fishers and scientists.</p> <p>There are considerable weaknesses in the area of Marine Knowledge identified by the SWOT analysis. In terms of managing the knowledge that is in place, national marine and climate datasets are held by a wide variety of organisations, coupled with a history of low levels of investment in related digital support tools. There are also considerable gaps in marine knowledge, including, but not limited to marine planning and licencing, Natura areas, climate change, carbon emissions and social impacts, by catch of protected, endangered and threatened species and biological components of seabed mapping. Lastly, there are limited longitudinal approaches to data gathering preventing the formulation of time series data.</p> <p>These factors justify the proposed interventions under Priority 4 that contribute to strengthening sustainable sea and ocean management through the promotion of marine knowledge in particular and such interventions will be used to achieve.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Data collection, access and analysis that will deliver on national obligations and measure changes in the marine environment 2. Methods to compare the metrics and indicators used in the various monitoring

Policy objective	Priority	Justification
		<p>programmes to ensure (data) compatibility.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Improved understanding of the impacts of human activities and climate change on the environment and their cumulative effects, or associated threats and opportunities. 4. Marine data coordination and processing needs to be streamlined to allow reporting across multiple programmes, including CFP, MSP, MSFD, WFD and Natura, marine/coastal climate adaptation. 5. Enhanced quality assured and integrated data and information services or studies to support evidence-based decision making, including enhanced spatial data services and studies and to support national and international programmes. 6. Ensure that Irish marine data are available through national and regional EU portals such as Ireland’s Marine Atlas and EMODNET, facilitating regional-level analyses 7. Understanding of different stakeholder needs and data end product development to ensure EMFAF programme outputs are available to developers, stakeholders and end-users in appropriate formats. 8. Increase inter-agency cooperation and information sharing at national, EU and international level, together with industry and research collaboration. 9. Quantification of the potential of coastal habitats as carbon sinks. 10. Improve understanding of marine activities that could increase resilience to climate change <p>The above interventions primarily contribute to Marine Knowledge as this area was identified as a priority and area of greatest need based on the SWOT evaluation conducted during programme development. The areas of Marine Surveillance and Coast Guard Cooperation identified under the Regulation are recognised. The Sea-Fisheries Protection Authority (SFPA), which is one of Ireland’s two representatives on the European Coast Guard Functions Forum (ECGFF) and fulfils certain Coast Guard functions, particularly in the area of fisheries inspection and control. It will receive support from EMFAF (under Priority 1) across a range of initiatives including, but not limited to, enhanced digitisation of systems, remote electronic monitoring, training and exchange and investment in technologies. In respect of all other Marine Surveillance and Coast Guard functions, coordination and financial support is provided</p>

Policy objective	Priority	Justification
		by national funding. As such, it is not anticipated that Ireland's EMFAF Programme will support these functions related to Marine Surveillance and Coast Guard Cooperation under this specific priority.

1. Programme strategy: main development challenges and policy responses

Table 1A: SWOT analysis & needs

Priority	SWOT analysis
<p>1.Fostering sustainable fisheries and the restoration and conservation of aquatic biological resources</p>	<p>Strengths</p> <p><u>Fisheries</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improving state of stocks with 43% of stocks in NWW exploited sustainably (fished at Fmsy) with the number of overfished stocks decreasing year-on-year [1] [2] • Fisheries recognised as low carbon food producing industries [3] [4] • Modern, highly efficient, and profitable pelagic fleet with an average vessel age of 16 years [5] [6] [7] • Significant on-board processing capacity in the demersal fleet [5] • Highly skilled and innovative workforce at skipper level [8], [9] • Low level of incidence of accidents at sea [9] • Modern Fishery Harbour Infrastructure that can facilitate sectoral priorities and adapt to climate change issues [10] • State of the art fisheries research facilities • Advisory/assessment services organised and responsive to TAC setting needs, including mixed fisheries advice [11] <p><u>SSCF</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A large and diverse sector, comprising 85% of vessels registered 50% of employment [8][16] • A diverse and skilled catching sector [8][16] • Regional & National Fisheries Forums (RIFF, NIFF) providing the sector with a stronger voice and increased profile and advocacy [16] • Increased representation of the sector contributing to policy making • International reputation of Irish food drives demand for inshore sector produce [8][19][23][24] • Sustainable / low impact fishing methods and high quality products [8]

- Clean Atlantic waters, high quality environment [8]

Control & Enforcement

- Single Control Authority. [25][26][27][28]
- Single Agency approach to at sea and air activities in the Irish Area of Operations. [25][26][27][28]
- Functional sea inspection and air surveillance regime. [25][26][27][28]
- Functional shore-based inspection regime. [25][26][27][28]
- Inter-agency co-operation with established Service Level Agreements (SLA) and Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) in place. [25][26][27][28]
- Progress being made towards the introduction of new technology to support control & enforcement activities. [25][26][27][28]
- Good integration across systems to support control and enforcement activities internally at the National Authority. [25][26][27][28]
- Improved technical and business knowledge and experience at the National Authority, the FMC and Naval Service. [25][26][27][28]
- Physical presence nationally in major fishing ports. [25][26][27][28]

Data Collection

- Well-established regulatory regime with fully compliant national work plans to provide data and scientific advice for the implementation of the CFP and national fisheries management
- Responsive to the requirements of the CFP and scientific enduser needs, supporting advice on single stocks, mixed fisheries, multiannual plans and implementation of the landing obligation [2][28] [31] [32] [33]
- Improved data collection on the ecosystem impacts of fisheries and aquaculture, SSCF, socioeconomic data and piloting recreational fisheries [17][19][32][34] [35] [36] [37] [38]
- Well-established time series on most fisheries research surveys with ongoing priority access to two state owned research vessels
- Strong national and international data management practices with data quality accreditation, GDPR

compliance and data sharing agreements between partner agencies [39]

- Enhanced regional coordination through the establishment of regional coordination groups, joint work programmes, common methodologies, data quality assurance and regional databases [2] [31] [32]
- Good stakeholder relationships through regular meetings (IFSRP, NGOS, RACs); presence in all the major fisheries ports and dedicated industry liaison post [14]

Marine Biodiversity

- Legal Framework is in place for protection of Biodiversity: Natura 2000, MSFD, Marine Spatial Plan gives higher priority in sectoral planning [23] [28] [36] [37] [38] [41]
- Strong European and national commitments for biodiversity objectives and MPA targets [3] [16] [18] [30] [41] [42] [43]
- Established risk analysis systems and defined interactions between conservation features and anthropogenic activities provide basis for development of future policy decisions [39]
- Stakeholder support for Biodiversity objectives [19]
- New operatives in aquaculture sector have better understanding of biodiversity goals and regulatory frameworks underpinning these goals [44] [45]

****Note: [XX] after each point refers to relevant documents/policies for which further information can be obtained . A list of these references can be found at the end of threats section in each priority**

Weaknesses

Fisheries

- CFP MSY target for 2020 not fully achieved. GES not fully achieved for MSFD commercial fisheries descriptor by 2020 deadline [12], [2]
- High levels of unwanted catches in key mixed demersal fisheries [1], [2], [7]
- Limited capacity for providing fisheries advice on fine spatial scales and for providing ecosystem-based assessments and advice.
- Lack of knowledge on interactions between fisheries activity and transition to low carbon future (marine renewable energy) [13] [3]

- Ageing whitefish fleet over 12m with an average age of 32 years with 50 % of the fleet having a remnant life of less than 13 years. [5], [7]
- High reliance of demersal fleet on *Nephrops* (30% of fleet have more than 70% *Nephrops* Landings) [5] [7]
- High reliance of RSW fleet on mackerel (65% of earnings for fleet comes from mackerel) [5], [7]
- Retention and recruitment of skilled crew with employment reducing by ~5% per annum. [7] [9]
- Ageing workforce with 25% more than 50 years old and less than 3% of the workforce are below 20 years old. [7]
- Average crew earnings ~10% less than the average national earnings level [6]
- Shortage of trained crew increase the risk of accidents at sea. [9] [8]

SSCF

- Lack of cohesion and disparate voices in sector results in ineffective advocacy for sector. [8]
- Limited reservoir of industry leaders with capacity to engage on emerging issues and represent sector. [8]
- An ageing workforce in the sector due to lack of new entrants [8]
- Inadequate data on the inshore fisheries sector.[8]
- Lack of digital literacy among fishers a barrier to engagement, information gathering, catch reporting and progress.[8]
- Low awareness of marine biodiversity, habitat loss, climate change and environmental impacts [8]
- Wide variation in levels of profitability due to large fluctuations in income creates vulnerability in the sector [8]
- Limited opportunities for diversification.[8]
- Lack of stress testing in business investment opportunities [8]
- Insufficient onboard and onshore infrastructure to maintain consistently high quality seafood products across the sector [8]
- Poor communication and co-operation between the industry and environmental NGOs [8]

Control & Enforcement

- Age of the Naval Service & Air Corps Fleet assigned to fisheries control. [14][25]
- means of controlling and verifying compliance with the Landing Obligations [25][29]
- Age of elements of the Naval Service Fleet.[14]
- Lack of data capture processes across inshore fleet . [25][29][30]
- Limited inshore control capacity by Competent Authority.[25][29]
- Not enough IT integration of fisheries control and enforcement systems between SFPA and FMC /Naval Service systems. Improved sharing and access of information to support control and enforcement[25][29]
- Weak and insufficient sanctioning system [19][25][29]
- Insufficient enforcement of rules on weighing, catch registration engine power etc. [19][25][29]
- The SFPA plays a dual role in terms of fisheries control and food safety. This weakens the effectiveness of fisheries control and enforcement by limiting available resources. [19][29]
- Insufficient information sharing between Member States. [29]

Data Collection

Data and knowledge gaps in the areas of:

- Certain catch data -recreational, unwanted/ bycatch, <12m; some landings into foreign ports [2] [14] [17] [32] [33]
- Lack of transversal and economic data for <12m vessels [2] [17] [32] [37] [38]
- Insufficient data for many economically less important species and for small pelagics [11] [14] [33]
- Assessment methods poorly developed for stocks that do not have age data [11] [33]
- Data to underpin Ecosystem based fisheries advice [2] [11] [17] [33] [36] [37] [38]
- No nationally coordinated and EMFF funded sampling programme for diadromous species and recreational fisheries [19]
- Knowledge gaps on behaviour, movement and stock ID/ mixing issues for some stocks/species [39]

- Limited access to and analysis of detailed and reliable economic data (supply on voluntary basis) [14] [39]
- Dependency on Industry cooperation for at sea, and self-sampling as well as supply of socioeconomic data [14]
- Compromised decision making in case of data and knowledge gaps (bycatch of PETS, discard data, SSCF, stock ID)
- Limited capacity to respond to emerging advisory needs, (e.g. integration of environmental drivers and/or spatial, and social-economic dimensions) [2] [14]
- Disparate and aging databases causing challenges for data integration, dissemination and compatibility with international databases [39]
- No regional sampling or work plans, resulting in potential inefficiencies and data gaps [32]
- Risk of financial and staffing constraint to implement requirements of the new EU-MAP

Marine Biodiversity

- Negative Natura and MSFD assessment outcomes for certain species and habitats [17] [19] [46] [47]
- Land-based pressures impact on marine biodiversity [2] [24]
- Responsibility for regulatory functions spread across government departments and sectors creating complexity in implementation [19]
- Lack of detailed plans for aquaculture operations during application phase [39] [44]
- International targets of 10% MPA designation for 2020 not achieved and Natura 2000 designations not yet completed [16] [48] [49]
- Insufficient research to prove mitigation efficacy of fishing gear measures on sensitive habitats and bycatch; effective measures for reduction of incidental bycatch of sensitive species lacking for certain fisheries and gears

****Note: [XX] after each point refers to relevant documents/policies for which further information can be obtained . A list of these references can be found at the end of threats section in each priority**

Opportunities

Fisheries

- Proximity to key fishing grounds [2] [14] [4]
- Increasing global demand for seafood [3]
- Impact of climate change leading to migration of stocks to Irish EEZ. [15]
- Uptake of innovative fishing technologies and adaptations to fishing practices to improve selectivity in mixed fisheries and reduce unwanted catches. [2] [7] [16]
- Increased fuel efficiency through vessel re-engining and modernisation. [5]
- Innovative gear technology development to reduce CO2 emissions in key fisheries [5]
- Implementation of best available onboard technology and knowledge, toward mitigating the effects of climate change [15] [5]
- Address competition for space through National Marine Planning Framework (i.e. MSP) [17] [18]
- Aligning fisheries objectives with network of MPAs to ensure the network delivers for fish stocks and fishing communities as well as the wider environment. [17]
- Improved co-ordination and understanding of purposes and requirements of issues across the Industry/ Science interface. [11] [18]
- Increasing environmental conscious driven demand using certification and digital technologies to increase traceability. [3] [4]
- Innovative processing technologies to add value and improve quality on board [4] [5]
- Utilisation of innovative data collection methodologies to provide data for stock assessments [11] [18]
- Aligning fisheries objectives with Biodiversity objective to increase the impact of EMFAF funding to support conservation objectives [4] [3] [13]

SSCF

- Stock recovery in certain species leading to increased production.[8]
- Growing policy awareness and emphasis on the value of low impact fisheries to coastal communities.[8]

- Leverage position as low impact wild harvest fishery in markets [8]
- Growing access to diversified markets for Irish shellfish in Asia and mainland Europe due increasing global seafood demand.[4][19]
- Dedicated funding streams and programmes to support the sector.[19]
- Implementation of Maritime Spatial Planning Framework will facilitate the co-ordination and planning of marine activities and provide a platform to improve the sustainability and management of marine and coastal areas and the conservation of marine ecosystems.[23][24]
- Diversification and application of marine skills into Blue Economy [2][23][24]
- Introduce low carbon alternatives and drive innovation at an economically attainable scale. [2][8][18][19][22][24]
- Inherent low carbon nature of fixed gear fishing can put sector at the forefront of climate action in the wider seafood sector.[2][8][18][19][22][24]

Control & Enforcement

- Further Development of the National Information Sharing Environment for maritime information sharing enabling potential integration to Common Information Sharing Environment (CISE). [25][26][27][28]
- Continued interaction with EU member states to encourage implementation of an effective shore based and at-sea inspection regime. [25][26][27][28]
- Development of a culture of compliance. [25][26][27][28]
- Further development and integration of ICT tools, new technologies and specialist expertise to improve fisheries protection. [25][26][27][28]
- Development of projects to integrate all national fisheries management systems. [25][26][27][28]
- Making more information available to stakeholders by way of online services. [25][26][27][28]
- Developing accredited training courses for sea fisheries protection officers and support staff and FMC. [25][26][27][28]
- Increased Joint Deployment Plans – working with EFCA by way of inspections by the National Authority. [25][26][27][28]
- Implement the Recommendations in the Organisation Capability Review of the SFPA. [4][16]

- Implementation of initiatives to support control supervised weighing on landing
- Implementation of the SFPA ICT Strategy and data strategy to support increased digitisation and electronic capture and reporting of data

Data Collection

- Based on results of pilot study, routine data collection programme for recreational fisheries and development of assessment models to include recreational fisheries data [2] [14] [19] [34] [40]
- Nationally coordinated and EMFAF supported sampling programme for diadromous species to address expanded requirements of the DCF [34] [40]
- New control regulation to address critical data gaps (<12m transversal and spatial; recreational catch data);
- Spatial assessment of all fishing effort including <12m for advice on MSP and MPA processes [14]
- Enhanced data collection to support environmental legislations [34] [36] [37] [38] [40]
- Application of innovative technologies to address sampling gaps and improve efficiencies (REM, autonomous vessels, automated recognitions); live reporting through phone applications of inshore vessels and economic data capture through on-line electronic surveys for the National Seafood Surveys [2]
- Enhanced stakeholder collaboration through joint/self-sampling; industry/citizen science projects; stakeholder engagement with scientific process [19]
- Expanding advisory capacity (MSE, ecosystem modelling; integration of spatial or socio-economic dimensions) [14]
- Maximising the benefits of research surveys (use of second vessel; leveraging all data, collect environmental variables; applying novel survey techniques) [39]
- Improved data sharing and integration at national and international level (RDBES), to increase access, quality, efficiency and data use [2] [33]
- Development of regional sampling and work plans through increased regional coordination [14]

Marine Biodiversity

- EU Green Deal and call to action on Biodiversity with new government commitments to protect Biodiversity and expand MPA network, [3] [16] [18] [24] [41] [43] [49]

- Linkages across environmental legislation – (MSFD, MSP, Natura & WFD) allowing for better synergy [16] [36] [37] [38] [41] [42]
- MPA designation and management in early planning phase with opportunity to ensure network delivers for fish stocks and fishing communities as well as the environment [16] [41]
- Increasing public awareness of the need to protect and restore biodiversity [19]
- The National Marine Planning Framework to provide supporting information for licencing of activities including in areas considered important for Biodiversity (Natura 2000, NHA, MPAs) [2] [6] [16][37] [38] [41]

****Note: [XX] after each point refers to relevant documents/policies for which further information can be obtained . A list of these references can be found at the end of threats section in each priority**

Threats

Fisheries

- Reduction in available quotas resulting from the TCA leading to an imbalance between fishing opportunities and capacity. [6] [20] [7] [19] [16] [21]
- Lack of potential new fisheries to diversify for both whitefish and pelagic fleets [4] [5]
- Celtic Seas ecoregion is at the edge of the geographical range of several fish species, increasing sensitivity to environmental variation [2]
- Loss of access to certain fisheries arising from the TCA agreement. [20] [16]
- Constrained access to private finance due to weak financial situation and overcapitalisation. [4] [16]
- Displacement of fishing effort of Irish and vessels from other Member States leading to increased fishing effort and competition for space. [2] [19] [4]
- Divergence of rules applying to Irish vessels fishing in EU and UK waters. [4] [21]
- Highly susceptible to higher fuel costs (i.e., increased carbon tax or removal of VAT rebates on fuel). [5] [15]
- Change in fish distributions and productivity due to climate change [15] [21] [4] [11]
- Loss of biodiversity and continued poor state of key stocks (cod, whiting, herring) [1] [12]

- Competition for space (including zoned space under Marine Spatial Planning), principally from renewable energies [17] [22]
- Marine litter and disposal of redundant fishing gear impacting on the marine ecosystem [10] [16] [2]
- Natural disasters, environmental incidents or health crises

SSCF

- Poor stock management in certain fisheries could lead to further stock depletion [8][19][22]
- Marine Spatial Planning requires more detailed and evidence-based use of marine space. Inadequate inshore sector profile and footprint will hinder the sector in competing for marine space.[8][19][22]
- Disparity in resources and capacity of inshore sector in contrast to other actors in the inshore space e.g., ORE, MPAs [8][19][22]
- Implications of Brexit for inshore sector with potential displacement of fleets and fishing effort. [8][19]
- Climate Change will bring shifts in stock abundance and biodiversity and increased storm frequency [22][23]
- Increased operational costs (e.g., fuel) [8]
- Reduced access to finance due to consolidation in banking sector and perceived risks due to Brexit [8][19]
- Increased cost of vessels and fishing gear due to VAT charges on vessels imported from UK, customs paperwork and transport costs on fishing gear. Reduced UK market access due to Brexit paperwork costs. [8]
- Lack of investment at the small harbours and piers at which the majority of SSCF vessels are based [8][19]
- Natural disasters, environmental incidents or health crises

Control & Enforcement

- Impact of BREXIT. [19][25][26][27][28]

- The existence of a border with a third country introduces risks concerning the landing and transportation of IUU catches [19][25][26][27][28]
- Resource constraints and a large EEZ to control. [19][25][26][27][28]
- Consequences of pandemic and post Brexit - potential displacement of EU and Third Country fishing fleets. [19][25][26][27][28]
- Lack of merging of national fisheries IT systems and an overreliance on paper/manual processes [19][25][26][27][28]

Data Collection

- Late response by science to newly emerging fisheries, new fishing practices and/or targets stocks;
- Not taking account of climate and environmental change in stock assessment and management [2]
- Brexit – UK will no longer be under obligation of DCF, and member states may be required to increase data collection effort,
- Reluctance to adopt remote electronic monitoring and application of new sampling technologies;

Marine Biodiversity

- Significant threat of biodiversity and ecosystem loss due to climate change, pollution, invasive alien species, changes in land and sea use, & overexploitation [2] [16] [19] [24] [37] [38]
- Shifting ecosystem baselines in state make the detection of biodiversity loss difficult [24] [47]
- Multiple activities leading to cumulative pressures with potential conflicts of interests across existing and new sectoral activities (fishing, aquaculture and offshore renewable energy) [16] [41]
- Brexit may cause displacement of fishing effort from other Member States increasing pressure on biodiversity in the Irish zone
- Negative assessment outcome of Habitats Directive can increase challenge of sustainable development while meeting the requirements of the directive [17] [19] [37] [38]
- Process of sectoral marine activity zoning (SMAZ) under MSP may not temporally align with MPA network expansion

Relevant documents/policies that were indicated after point in the SWOT

- [1] "Towards more sustainable fishing in the EU: state of play and orientations for 2021".
- [2] "Regional Sea Basin Analyses".
- [3] "EU Farm to Fork Strategy".
- [4] "Food Wise 2025/Agri-Food Strategy 2030".
- [5] "Strategic analysis of the operational and technical efficiency of the Irish fishing fleet (BIM report in preparation)".
- [6] "EU Fleet Report".
- [7] "STECF 2020 Annual Economic Report on the Fishing Fleet".
- [8] "Irish Inshore Fisheries Strategy, 2019-2023".
- [9] "Report on Safety, Training & Employment in the Irish Fishing Industry 2015".
- [10] "Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine - Fishery Harbours information".
- [11] "Marine Institute Stock Book 2020".
- [12] "MSFD Article 17 Report 2020".
- [13] "ICES 2019 Advisory Plan".
- [14] "Previous SWOTS to support EMFF 2012-2020".
- [15] "Agriculture, Forest and Seafood Climate Change Sectoral Adaptation Plan".
- [16] "Programme for Government - Our Shared Future".
- [17] "NPWS Bilateral and Prioritised Action Framework".
- [18] "The European Green Deal".
- [19] "Stakeholder submissions to DAFM and Bilateral meetings, January 2020".
- [20] "Preliminary analysis of reduction of fisheries quota shares under EU/UK Trade and Cooperation Agreement".
- [21] "Trade and Cooperation Agreement between the European Union and the European Atomic Energy Community, of the one part, and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, of the other part".
- [22] "Climate Action Plan 2019".

- [23] "Towards a Marine Spatial Plan for Ireland/National Marine Planning Framework".
- [24] "Biodiversity Strategy 2030"
- [25] "EU Fisheries Control Regulation (Council Regulation 1224 of 2009)"
- [26] "EU Fisheries Control Implementing Rules Regulation (Commission Regulation 404 of 2011)"
- [27] "IUU Regulation (Council Regulation 1005 of 2008)"
- [28] "Common Fisheries Policy Regulation (European Parliament and Council Regulation 1380 of 2013) "
- [29] "EU Commission Audit Reports"
- [30] " Draft Revision to the EU Control Regulation – EU Commission"
- [31] "DCF Recast"
- [32] " Commission review on the DCF to the Parliament"
- [33] " ICES Advice"
- [34] "EUMAP implementing and delegated acts"
- [35] "Adoption of Irish Work Plans 2020 -2021"
- [36]"Marine Strategy Framework Directive"
- [37] "Habitats Directive"
- [38] "Birds Directive"
- [39] "MI internal review on EMFF to DAFM"
- [40] "Proposed legislation for new EUMAP"
- [41] "National Marine Planning Framework"
- [42] "Water Framework Directive"
- [43] "OSPAR Convention"
- [44] "Aquaculture Lincensing review"
- [45] "Programme of measures - Case C 418/04 Commission v Ireland"
- [46] "MSFD Article 17 Assessment"
- [47] "Article 12 Assessment"
- [48] "Expanding Ireland's Marine Protected Area Network"
- [49] "Convention on Biological Diversity (Aichi targets)"

Identification of needs on the basis of the SWOT analysis and taking into account the elements set out in Article 8(5) of the EMFAF Regulation

Fisheries

1. Balancing fleet capacity with available fishing opportunities in line with the objectives of the CFP and MSFD and following from the quota transfers under the TCA with the UK.
2. Improve energy efficiency, reduce carbon emissions and increased usage of fuel-efficient fishing gears on board fishing vessels
3. Reduce unwanted catches in mixed demersal fisheries.
4. Improve the onboard quality and added value of the catch through development of new technologies.
5. Facilitate the generational renewal of an ageing workforce in the catching sector
6. Improve health, safety and working conditions on board fishing vessels through investment and training.
7. Enhance traceability and certification of seafood caught and landed by fishing vessels.
8. Easier access to finance using EU financial instruments and other sources of funding.
9. Assess the economic and biological impacts of changes to fisheries policy across fleet segments.
10. Enhance dissemination of fisheries data and information to stakeholder including increased awareness of the Natura/MPA network and associated conservation measures.
11. Address the issue of marine litter through mitigation, monitoring and improved port infrastructure.

SSCF

1. Capacity within the SSCF sector to engage with critical issues such marine plastics, climate action, biodiversity loss, habitat restoration, data collection.
2. Improved representation of sector through establishment of Producer Organisations and other advocacy groups for the sector to improve the image and communication of the sector with outside world (NGOs, civil society, national authorities, other national and EU stakeholders)
3. Increase digital literacy generally across SSCF sector.
4. Build basic biological data collection and statistical skills within the sector for data monitoring and engagement with management measures

5. Support young fishers, particularly existing crew of SSCF vessels, to enter the sector (and not potentially decommissioned to re-enter)
6. Increase financial resilience through support to enable better business planning and increasing financial acumen. Smoothing trough and peaks of income to create more income stability, and provision of temporary supports in case of exceptional events causing a significant disruption of markets (including natural disasters, environmental incidents or health crises).
7. Technical assistance to tackle climate action and equally to prepare for climate change impact on fishing patterns and financial assistance to implement climate action measures around business operations.
8. Technical assistance to support industry to reduce/avoid marine plastic pollution and prepare for single plastics directive.
9. Establish sectoral brand based on sustainability and low impact, providing opportunities to increase value and secure markets.
10. Promote and provide transferable skills and qualifications within the sector to improve diversification options and resilience for fishers
11. Support to improve supply chain logistics and seafood quality enhancement
12. Increase awareness on marine biodiversity, habitat loss, climate change and environmental impacts
13. Support to tackle impacts of Brexit as they become evident (impact unclear at present).
14. Investment in the sector, particularly encouraging the adoption of low impact fishing techniques, improving catch quality and reduced carbon footprint.
15. Improve energy efficiency, reduce carbon emissions and increased usage of fuel-efficient fishing gears on board fishing vessels.

Control & Enforcement

1. Take the necessary steps to ensure effective control, enforcement and inspection of all activities that come under the scope of the CFP.
2. Enhanced technology in inshore fisheries including electronic means to capture fishing activity.
3. Undertake further Remote Electronic Monitoring (REM) programmes linked to the control of the Landing Obligations.

4. Development of enhanced data reporting functionality to facilitate SFPA data analysis providing better mining of the available data to identify the risk of noncompliance, including risks around the Landing Obligation and separately the discard-logging obligation.
5. Implementation and integration of improved technologies and development of specialist expertise capacity such as, digitisation of manual processes and systems, increased Exchange of data and improved controls around traceability obligations of operators with the uses of provenance assessment through molecular analysis to determine the catch area, or genetic testing to determine the species at landing or post processing.
6. Renew and upgrade ships and aircraft, substantially deployed in fishery protection throughout the Irish EEZ.
7. Develop a culture of compliance and self-regulation through the development of activities that support an effective control process as well as measures to promote compliance in relation to the CFP among fishermen and all other stakeholders.
8. Ensure sufficient resources are in place for the Sea Fisheries Protection Authority (SFPA) & Fisheries Monitoring Centre (FMC) to fulfil its obligations under Union rules taking into account the dual role the SFPA plays regarding fisheries control and food safety.
9. Continue to support and expand the implementation of Specific Control Inspection Programmes with other MS.
10. Develop a cooperative system, including joint inspections, with Northern Ireland authorities with respect to landings by high-risk Irish vessels in Northern Ireland.
11. Develop and integrate new technologies and processes for capturing, and managing data, conducting risk analysis and improving data quality and sharing, by developing a single IT solution encompassing VMS, ERS and Risk analysis.
12. Further develop the existing capacity to support engine power verification through use of software to test physical verification.
13. Enhanced joint Agency Training – including the development of a core curricula for inspection officers

Data Collection

1. Fit for purpose data collection programme in line with new EUMAP legislation;
2. collection of transversal data and spatial distribution of fishing effort for vessels under 12m;

3. Address specific data and knowledge gaps for data poor stocks to respond to advisory demands;
4. Address emerging advisory needs for stock assessment, MSE, mixed fisheries and ecosystem modelling;
5. Improvement of sampling efficiencies
6. Address specific scientific questions in relation to stock ID, mixing, assessment methods, migration patterns,
7. Optimisation and maximisation of research survey outputs.

Marine Biodiversity

1. Continued support for the designation and management process of Natura sites and MPAs including clearly defined conservation objectives; management measures and monitoring of effects with clear evidence of benefits identified
2. Reduce the use of fishing gear most harmful to biodiversity, including bottom-contacting fishing gear and gear causing bycatch of protected, endangered and threatened species (PET) to levels that allow full recovery of protected habitats and species and reduction of impacts to other habitats and species to levels not threatening their long-term status; continued development and testing of mitigation measures
3. Restoration to improve the status of Habitats Directive Annex IV habitats and species (e.g. Maerl species) and other prioritised species/habitats
4. Appropriate Control and Enforcement of fisheries management measures related to Natura/MPA site management (SFPA)
5. Manage and control the introduction and spread of invasive marine species by the fishing and aquaculture sectors
6. Continue and expand the Clean Oceans Initiative to address micro and macro plastics, and plastic coming off the land
7. Increase stakeholder awareness of the Natura/MPA network and conservation measures including estimation and translation of the ecosystem services value
8. Inclusion of stakeholders in the process of nature conservation, including development of solutions and management plans, diversification, change in practices and gear, participation in data collection and monitoring with recognised role, citizen science
9. Increased co-ordination and pace at which new measures for biodiversity protection are

	<p>implemented within and across sectors and in response to scientific advice</p> <p>10. Improved information-sharing across decision- making bodies (licensing/consenting/planning) to facilitate cumulative impact assessments as required by the EIA Directive and Appropriate Assessment under the Habitats Directives.</p>
<p>2.Fostering sustainable aquaculture activities, and processing and marketing of fisheries and aquaculture products, thus contributing to food security in the Union</p>	<p>Strengths</p> <p><u>Aquaculture</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sheltered bays suitable for aquaculture production. • Environmentally sustainable production with established production capabilities [1] • Nutrient rich waters, good for bivalve culture [1] • Accredited Quality and Environmental Standards, GSSI Benchmarking alongside reputation for good food safety systems in emerging markets especially Asia • Ireland’s image as a quality food producer • Proactive policy environment at both European and National levels • Strong promotional network available through state agencies • Experienced operators with proven track record and new operatives in aquaculture sector have better understanding of biodiversity goals and regulatory frameworks underpinning these goals [17] [10] • Systems in place to carry out full ‘appropriate assessments’ of aquaculture activities and good baseline data on Natura 2000 sites [2] [3] [4]. • Increasing monitoring coverage of marine habitats in nearshore area allows for greater confidence in classification status. • Experienced Organic producers [10] • Strong knowledge transfer, good relationships. • Positive business environment • EU Single Market access • Aquaculture industry that has demonstrated rapid adoption of new technologies [6]

Processing & Marketing

- EU single market access and market diversification supported by involvement in Origin Green [5]
- Insight driven NPD and brand creation and development [7].
- Ireland's image as a quality safe food producer including reputation for responsibly sourced produce [1] [6].
- Clean green image of Atlantic waters [1]
- Processing sector scaling up
- Strong promotional and marketing network available through Bord Bia [1] [8]
- Proximity to rich fishing grounds – good geographical location [9]
- Strong private investment from bigger companies [9] [8]
- Pioneer in organic production [10]
- EU single market access and proximity [1]
- Good market diversification supported by involvement in Origin Green [1]
- Significant employment potential in rural areas with multiplier effect, which is greater than other sectors, from employment [1]
- Species diversity means Ireland has a wide range to offer international customers

****Note: [XX] after each point refers to relevant documents/policies for which further information can be obtained . A list of these references can be found at the end of threats section in each priority**

Weaknesses

Aquaculture

- Commodity focus - limited value adding;
- Overreliance of food service markets for premium products
- Insufficient investment in R&D to date [11] [4] [12]
- Limited business planning from smaller operations and limited access to finance [13] [14]
- Lack of Producer Organisation structures in aquaculture, leading to low PO membership rates,

fragmented and uncoordinated production and weak market position for producers [5] [15]

- Overdependence on intermediaries to access markets.
- Data limitations with regard to environmental interactions and potential cumulative effects [4] [16]
- Limited understanding of freshwater surges as a risk to shellfish aquaculture
- Poor or absent baseline measurements of the carbon footprint of the aquaculture sector [18] [10]
- Small size of sector creates a limited capacity to attract talent at every level including experienced experts and graduates to build inhouse capability [5]
- Low levels of digital literacy in some parts of the sector creating a lack of awareness of available supports and/or emerging issues for the sector [5]
- Long distance from key markets
- Lack of scale to satisfy existing markets, to support the development of additional support services and ancillary services
- Overdependence on foreign seed/juvenile/egg supplies
- Lack of suitable sites for use with salmon farming existing technologies

Processing & Marketing

- Insufficient raw material – farmed and wild [1]
- Underutilisation of some raw materials
- Commodity focus - limited value adding [1] [22]
- Access to finance for small to micro-SME's [18]
- Unequal access to 1st points of sale for local processors [23]
- Low skills in marketing and limited “in market” resources and difficulty in attracting talent [1]
- Lack of organisational route to market [1]
- Fragmentation and lack of scale in sector.
- Low levels of digital literacy
- Lack of R&D investment by private sector
- Lack of product differentiation – many suppliers competing in the same space [22]

- Low brand awareness of Ireland in emerging markets, including Asia [6]

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Opportunities

Aquaculture

- 'Building Brand Ireland to capitalise on the positive international perception of Ireland as a green food producer and increase penetration of premium niche markets [1] [13].
- Under exploited domestic market with strong growth potential [5]
- Growing awareness that diet and food choices have a significant impact on our carbon 'footprint' leading to an increasing global demand for low carbon, healthy protein such as seafood products [7] [1] [17] [10] [19] [12]
- Increasing focus on food security within the EU supports the expansion of the sector [10].
- Off-shore aquaculture sites provide opportunity for aquaculture expansion [7]
- Potential for novel species and niche products to expand market offering [4] [12]
- Scope for increased competitiveness through technology transfer and technological advances [13]
- Climate - Carbon Sequestration potential of seaweed aquaculture [1] [2] [7] [7] [15] [9]
- Potential for innovations in IMTA - new species, products, bay area IMTA and utilisation of waste products [1] [17] [3] [7] [10] [11] [20] [21] [19] [24] [25]
- Blue Bioeconomy – generating innovative products and services from the marine resource [1] [17] [3] [7] [10] [11] [20] [21] [19] [24] [25]
- Further leverage tourism opportunities
- Clearance of licencing backlog in recent years increasing investor confidence [7] [12] [15].
- Greater flexibility in licence conditions to support rapid adoption of new technologies and husbandry practices [5].
- Development and diversification of the Irish aquaculture sector has been highlighted as having the potential to promote employment and economic activity in areas impacted by Brexit.

Processing & Marketing

- Growth in global seafood demand particularly among the Asian middle-class segment [26]
- Significant export potential to increase value [1] [27] [28]
- Build up scale and efficiency [1]
- Attract increased landings into Ireland through strategic investment in harbour, processing, and ancillary infrastructure to deliver additional raw material for seafood sector and develop greater processing scale [1] [7]
- Exploitation of opportunities for nutraceutical and functional food offerings [29]
- Exploit the trend towards healthier eating with branded seafood products [29]
- New markets to fully utilise raw materials and drive sustainability by reducing waste e.g., Pet food, animal feed [18] [10] [17]
- Renewable energy prioritisation for plant upgrades to deliver improved sustainability [7] [17] [10]
- Deployment of best available processing technologies [1]
- Promotion of a coherent package of quality, provenance, sustainability, Green Seafood programmes [1] [7] [10]
- Further leverage tourism initiatives e.g., Wild Atlantic Way
- Under exploited domestic market with strong growth potential
- Improving the use of aquatic and marine resources and, for example, by promoting the production and use of new sources of protein that can relieve pressure on agricultural land [17]
- Potential for new routes to market including online [30]
- Improving the carbon footprint and reducing energy and water use to contribute towards climate targets

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Threats

Aquaculture

- Biological challenges and physical challenges which lead to loss of stock and gear – plankton, disease, changing water temperatures, changing rainfall patterns, changes in frequency and severity of storm events, invasive species (Climate change) [1] [17] [3] [7] [10] [11] [20] [21] [19] [24] [25] [4] [12] [2] [16]
- Eutrophication of coastal and freshwater water bodies leading to suboptimal growing conditions [17] [19] [20] [21] [16]
- Increased competition on price from companies outside the EU particularly in the organic market may lead to loss of markets
- Access to UK and EU markets restricted - Increased risk of delays and risk to product ad increases in associated cost when transiting through a non-EU country to access markets.
- Brexit – the yet unresolved issue of new costs in the form of veterinary certification and inspections for the movement of live shellfish, upon entry into the UK as third country be it as the product destination or as a land bridge.
- Lack of raw material supply to produce fish feed may constrain production [1]
- Reduced raw material access (feed, juveniles, equipment)
- Increased administrative burden associated with raw material imports leading to greater delivery lead times
- Ocean waste / Marine litter and plastic (especially microplastics) leading to reduced consumer confidence in seafood products [17] [10] [19] [7]
- Due to a lack of baseline data on carbon footprint of the aquaculture sector and long term climate change there is a risk of being ill-equipped to provide evidence base for future climate adaptation decisions [5].
- Low brand awareness of Ireland in emerging markets creates greater threats from competing source markets
- The focus on commodity production, fragmentation and lack of scale may threaten future growth.
- Limited capacity to to attract talent at every level including experienced experts and graduates to build inhouse capability
- Low levels of digital literacy

Processing & Marketing

- Cheaper costs associated with 3rd countries especially outside EU [1]
- Depletion of fishing stocks [1]
- Rise of protectionism across EU markets [28]
- Brexit – risk of future non-tariff barriers to access UK market and in importing necessary goods and services from and through the UK [7] [32]
- Growth of Marine Protection Areas and competition for limited marine resources [7]
- Impacts of climate change [7] [17] [10] [25]
- Failure to scale up sustainably [17] [10] [25]
- Seafood safety issues and farmed fish diseases
- Competitiveness in Organic Salmon Sector, new and cheaper entrant into organic market [33]
- Dependence on foodservice channel across core export markets and the consequent impact of Covid style pandemic on this route to market [33]
- Post Covid – Economic crisis, recession, lower spending power, consumer fear around imported seafood in markets such as China [33] [34]
- Increasing difficulty accessing finance as the tone around the investment attractiveness of the sector deteriorates

Relevant documents/policies that were indicated after point in the SWOT for Priority 2

1. Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, "Food Wise 2025," 2020.
2. Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht, "National Biodiversity Action Plan," 2017.
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4. Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, "DAFM Environmental Pillar EMFAF Bilateral," 2020.
5. N. Consultees, Interviewee, *Consultation to inform Draft 1 of the National Strategic Plan for Aquaculture*. [Interview]. 2020.

6. Bord Bia, "Bord Bia Food Brand Ireland Study," 2019.
7. Department of the Taoiseach, "Programme for Government: Our Shared Future," 2020.
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14. Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, "DAFM Enterprise Ireland EMFAF Bilateral," 2020.
15. DG Mare, "Operational Programme SWOT consultation," 2020.
16. Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, "DAFM NPWS EMFAF Bilateral and Prioritised Action Framework," 2020.
17. European Commission, "The European Green Deal," 2019.
18. Directorate-General for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries, "Action Plan for a Maritime Strategy in the Atlantic area Delivering smart, sustainable and inclusive growth," 2013.
19. European Commission, "EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030," 2020.
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21. European Parliament and Council, "Directive 2000/60/EC establishing a framework for the Community action in the field of water policy: Water framework Directive," 2000.
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23. BIM, "Project Atlantic Report," 2019.
24. Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications, "Climate Action Plan 2019," 2019.
25. Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, "Agriculture, Forest and Seafood Climate Change Sectoral Adaptation Plan," 2019.

- 26.BIM, "Statement of Strategy 2018-2020," 2018.
- 27.Bord Bia, "Understanding the opportunity for Haddock in the UK and Whiting in France," 2020.
- 28.Bord Bia, "Future proofing toolkit research studies," 2020.
- 29.Bord Bia, "Consumer Lifestyle trends," 2019.
- 30.Bord Bia, "Project Kaizen - The online opportunity for Irish Seafood," 2020.
- 31.NPWS, "Article 17 Overview Report 2019," 2019.
- 32.Bord Bia, "Brexit Action Plan," 2020.
- 33.Bord Bia, "Ongoing Dialogue with producers and exporters," 2020.
- 34.Bord Bia, "Feeling the Pinch," 2020.
- 35.Independent Aquaculture Licensing Review Group, "Review of the Aquaculture Licensing Process," 2017.

Identification of needs on the basis of the SWOT analysis and taking into account the elements set out in Article 8(5) of the EMFAF Regulation

Aquaculture

- Reinforce a streamlined and efficient licensing system that provides greater business certainty to applicants, encourages investment, improves transparency for the general public and which is adaptive to new technologies and a changing environment.
- Develop innovations in Integrated Multi-trophic Aquaculture, seaweeds and new species
- Reduce the carbon footprint of Irish aquaculture through the use of IMTA, seaweed and other low carbon technologies
- Protect biodiversity in marine habitats limiting the environmental footprint of aquaculture activities while increasing social acceptance.
- Continue to promote the sustainable development of new and existing enterprises throughout the value chain from production to processing
- Review and address fragmentation across Irish aquaculture in order to support a cohesive aquaculture supply chain including in seed and juvenile supply.
- Utilise technology and enhanced knowledge to facilitate growth
- Differentiate Irish products in order to expand access to high-value, niche markets globally.

- Build public and stakeholder awareness of the importance of the Irish aquaculture sector as a significant source of responsibly produced low carbon protein.
- Support investment in measures relating to logistics and market access, which are currently an impediment to industry development.
- Reduction, recovery, and disposal of marine litter and implementation of the plastics directive and development of the Clean Oceans Initiative
- Review and address fragmentation across Irish aquaculture in order to ensure a cohesive aquaculture supply chain to domestic, EU and other market.
- Coordination to ensure aquaculture's participation in the National marine spatial planning process.
- Assist producers affected by major biotoxin episodes and other biological challenges to recover from large scale mortality events and prolonged harvesting suspensions
- Build up scale to realise employment potential in Coastal Communities
- Continue to build the skills and knowledge of the sector in the area of animal health and welfare.

Processing & Marketing

- Support the development of the industry including by adding value to raw material
- Support the development of operational optimisation
- Build competitiveness in the sector.
- Promote economies of scale in the sector
- Build production value sales and employment in the processing sector
- Encourage open access to raw material
- Utilise technology and enhanced knowledge to facilitate growth
- Assist processors in developing existing and creating new markets for Irish seafood
- Improving the use of aquatic and marine resources and, for example, by promoting the production and use of new sources of protein that can relieve pressure on agricultural land.
- Support the structuring and mobilisation of an approach to blue bioeconomy and marine biorefinery development
- Objective, tailored advisory services on sustainable management choices to help SME food

	<p>processors to develop new business models, while avoiding additional administrative and cost burdens</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop industry skills in order to equip them to cope with the increasingly challenging business and market environment • Support the preparation and implementation of Producer Organisations’ production and marketing plans. • Encourage development of PO’s. • Facilitate formation of new POs in certain circumstances, particularly in the aquaculture and inshore fisheries sectors. • Development of management capability and structural changes to increase resilience including apprenticeships, CMO and new role for Producer Organisations in production and marketing plans • Reduce energy and water use and move towards renewable energy sources to contribute towards climate change targets and improve efficiencies. • Develop products from underutilised raw materials and waste products from processing.
<p>3.Enabling a sustainable blue economy in coastal, island and inland areas, and fostering the development of fishing and aquaculture communities</p>	<p>Strengths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extensive network of small harbours, piers, and slipways to facilitate marine related enterprises and activities [3] • Strong sense of cultural awareness with a strong maritime history. [2, 3] • Educational Centres located in coastal communities (e.g., National Fisheries Colleges in Greencastle & Castletownbere) that develop skills in fishing, fish farming and seafood processing for sector. [3, 4] • Considerable experience amongst those involved in fishing and aquaculture, with many lifelong skills embedded within the local community. [2, 3, 4] • Strong sense of collectiveness and community spirit and the people are considered co-operative, active, and entrepreneurial. [1, 3] • Long tradition of boating heritage, building, history, and storytelling. [3] • Clean image, with a strong maritime culture. Access to the water is considered straightforward, and there are therefore opportunities of which new businesses may take advantage. [3, 4]

- Success of the Wild Atlantic Way route which has improved tourism infrastructure, visits and stays. [1, 3]
- Experienced gained and lessons learned from previous FLAGs and strategy development. [3]
- Growing network of innovative marine-related and non-marine enterprises clustered around Ireland's coast economy. [1, 3]
- Strong research capabilities nationally and regionally in new emerging technologies (digital, biotech and bio-products). [3]

****Note: [XX] after each point refers to relevant documents/policies for which further information can be obtained . A list of these references can be found at the end of threats section in each priority**

Weaknesses

- Population is declining in some coastal communities especially in the North & North West regions (-1.5%) in comparison to a national increase in population of 3.7%. [3]
- Lower proportion of people in employment in coastal communities (50.9%) than the national figure (54.55%). [2, 3]
- Lack of interest and/or awareness by younger people in the sea and the marine, which may need nurture and encouragement. [1, 3]
- Lack of integration and cooperation between tourism providers and fishery interests regarding harbour/pier/marina access. [3]
- Access to suitable processing facilities and use of traditional ice plant facilities are prohibitive for some small businesses. [3]
- Strong seasonality particularly regarding the need for stable weather and climate conditions which impacts tourism and fishing and aquaculture. [2, 3]
- Many harbours and piers are considered not suitable for either multi-purpose usage or lack suitable facilities compliant with modern health and safety requirements. [3, 4]
- Distance from markets, training and employment centres constrains the development of new skills and business. [3]
- Telecommunications infrastructure and particularly access to high-speed broadband can be restrictive. [1, 2, 3]

- Lack of business and innovation skills within SSCF communities
- Lack of knowledge and expertise to develop strategies to sustainably develop the economy of those communities
- Lack of co-operation and co-ordination between fishers, communities and government to develop effective marine spatial planning tools
- Lack of local funding opportunities and ability to match-fund is also seen as a weakness for the growth of community organisations and projects. [1, 2, 3]
- Young people seeking employment in more secure sectors such as ICT and do not see fishing and aquaculture as secure employment. [1, 3, 4]
- Despite a National Fisheries Colleges located in coastal communities' courses are limited and only at a beginner/intermediate level. [3]

****Note: [XX] after each point refers to relevant documents/policies for which further information can be obtained . A list of these references can be found at the end of threats section in each priority**

Opportunities

- There are significant tourism opportunities due to the scenic landscape and initiatives such as the Wild Atlantic Way route that are currently underutilised. [2, 3, 4]
- The fishing industry is substantial and provides significant employment opportunities due to the existing infrastructure in the area to support the industry. [2, 3, 4]
- Signs of growth and emerging activity within diversification into seaweed-based products and processes. [3]
- Abundance of natural assets. [2, 3, 4]
- Proximity to rich fishing grounds. [2, 3, 4]
- Beaches and coastline are very scenic and natural, but the areas are underdeveloped prompting the opportunity to pursue projects that increase dwell time in these areas such as providing bilingual signage that shows the cultural heritage. [3]
- Skilled maritime workers currently fishing can be trained to fill roles in other areas of the blue economy such as ORE as well as fishing. [2, 3, 4, 5]
- Potential to develop empty buildings in coastal communities to support socio-economic and

cultural activities in those areas. [2, 3]

- There exists both inland and at sea fisheries resources of value both as a recreational outlet for local people and as a highly valuable tourism attraction. [2,3,4]
- Community groups to develop their own community shared assets and local plans, to improve community relations and development over coming years. [3]
- Schools and activity groups in coastal communities have shown an interest to work together to promote youth awareness of the marine and encourage cross partnership between marine leisure, the fishing and aquaculture industry, and tourism. [3]
- Exploration into offshore development of marine energy may offer an opportunity for local energy generation which is environmentally friendly and cost-efficient for local individuals and businesses. [2, 3]
- The large proportion of the population aged under 15 provides a potential source of workers for new diversified employment opportunities. [3]
- Brexit provides potential opportunities as it will encourage the exploration of new markets as a matter of necessity and drive positive changes in markets and exports. [1, 3]
- Potential for synergistic pier infrastructure improvements such as all tide access, the provision of ice and cold or live storage facilities to add value to landed fish as well as facilitating marine tourism and leisure.

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Threats

- There are lower levels of higher-level education in coastal communities which reduces the potential for the creation of higher skilled jobs. [3]
- There is a significantly older population distribution resulting in age dependency and public services implications for the communities, as well as potential for loss of sectoral knowledge. [1, 3]
- Lack of opportunities for young people into the industry. This provides a risk of a ‘missing generation’ in some areas, with younger people likely to emigrate, resulting in the loss of skills in an area and a declining workforce supporting the economically inactive population. [2, 3]

- Significant numbers of small harbours are falling into disrepair, resulting in permanent loss or deterioration to the extent that the increasing repair bills over time are no longer justifiable. [3, 4]
- The cost of running a tourism event or festival can be prohibitive for some community groups e.g., insurance, staffing, regulation, and promotion. [3]
- Coastal communities without diversification may be overexposed to macroeconomic conditions or regulations beyond their control e.g., quotas, fall in commodity prices, and the UK exit from the European Union. [1, 3, 4]
- Loss of knowledge transfer and sharing of history and culture within the area. [3]
- Health and safety regulations must be viewed as an essential cost of operation, or else there is the risk of loss of life/injury. [3, 5]
- Global warming, beach and water pollution and coastal erosion are all threats to the physical infrastructure and way of life. [2, 3]
- Competition for space, resources and marine infrastructure use between fishing vessels and marine tourism and leisure vessels. [3, 4]
- Potential impact of Brexit and the implications on exports and trade. [1, 2]
- Limited private financial support for industry particularly in relation to business start-up / expansion of activities. [2, 3, 4]
- Existing markets, both domestic and foreign are at capacity and therefore there is little room for additional producers. [3]
- Lack of infrastructure can limit opportunities for fishers to add value to their catch and restrict marine tourism related activities. [1, 3, 4]
- Seafood sector is viewed by some locally as being within decline, which may reduce attractiveness of employment and opportunities within the sector. [3]
- Environmental designations and Special Area of Conservation status perceived as being restricting economic development. [3]

References

[1] “Seafood Task Force Report 2021”

[2] “Regional Sea Basin Analyses”

	<p>[3] “Irish FLAG Strategies 2016-2022”</p> <p>[4] “Irish Inshore Fisheries Strategy, 2019-2023”</p> <p>[5] “Report on Safety, Training & Employment in the Irish Fishing Industry 2015”</p> <p>Identification of needs on the basis of the SWOT analysis and taking into account the elements set out in Article 8(5) of the EMFAF Regulation</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Protect and promote the sense of place and culture and the quality, character and distinctiveness of the Irish coastal communities that make them authentic and attractive as places to live, work and visit. 2. Diversify the income of fishers and coastal community economy. This includes the development of complementary activities in the local blue economy, for example in tourism, direct sales, environmental services, and cultural maritime activities and into new sectors and services, including ICT-based industries and those addressing climate change and sustainability. 3. Ensure that Ireland’s coastal resource is managed to sustain its physical character and environmental quality. Promote greener projects aimed at preventing environmental damage. These can take the form of climate change mitigation actions and the adoption of circular economy principles contributing to a reduction of emissions and pollution. 4. Identifying innovations that can lead to a transition towards smarter growth in coastal areas and by ensuring the involvement of local stakeholders in the development of the blue economy of the future. 5. Niche tourism is a growing area away from large-scale touristic developments. It offers fishers and aquaculture farmers the possibility to diversify their activities by providing tourism activities linked to their production. Local SMEs can develop innovative products by tapping local assets. 6. Capacity building is a key challenge to ensure that communities have the knowledge and expertise to develop strategies to sustainably develop the economy of those communities. 7. Develop greater co-operation between fisheries, local coastal communities, and government agencies to use marine spatial planning effectively as a tool to enhance economic activity.
<p>4.Strengthening international ocean governance and enabling seas and oceans to be safe, secure, clean and sustainably managed</p>	<p>Strengths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ireland has one of the largest sea to land ratios (over 10:1) of any EU State lending significance to this programme [1]

- National commitment to sustainably develop and protect the marine through a strong national policy framework the current Programme for Government and deliver of an Integrated Maritime Plan for Ireland [2] [3] [4] [5] [1]
- Increasing availability of quality-assured marine data through national monitoring programmes (WFD, DCF, Habitats and Birds Directives). [6] [3] [6] [4] [7] [8]
- Strengthened digital services and capabilities (National marine data management systems awarded international accreditation). [2] [6] [9] [1] [10]
- Connectivity with key international bodies (EMODnet, ICES, OSPAR)
- Ireland has digitally mapped most of its seabed through the INFOMAR Programme.
- Ireland's is committed to a new marine planning process with the NMPF and the Maritime Area Planning Act[4] [11]

****Note: [XX] after each point refers to relevant documents/policies for which further information can be obtained . A list of these references can be found at the end of threats section in each priority**

Weaknesses

- National marine and climate datasets are held by a wide variety of organisations making reuse and integration difficult.
- Low legacy investment in marine digital support tools
- Substantial data and knowledge gaps specific to marine planning and licencing.
- Data to support environmental targets and thresholds fro MSFD remains poor. Data gaps for Natura identified in PAF [3] [12]
- Lack of knowledge about human pressures on Ireland's marine environment.
- Lack of a comprehensive suite of indicators to measure implementation of marine policies.
- INFOMAR data lacking biological component
- Limited mechanisms to fund the long-term ocean observations and ad hoc nature of observations undermines delivery of consistent quality time series data. [13]
- Climate change knowledge gaps in oceanographic and ecosystem processes, human pressures, impacts and financial costs.

- Lack of downscaled ocean climate projections. Integrated climate assessments are not well developed, and adaptation responses not well understood. [13] [14] [10] [15]
- Strong dependencies on external (not fit for purpose) data sources for scientific advice; such as IWeBS, or climate products and services not tailored to Irish context. [3] [16] [17] [12] [7] [8] [18]
- Evidence based decision making undermined by data and knowledge gaps, poor or unknown quality data (bycatch of PETS, socio-economic, climate change impacts, MSFD targets, SSCF); [3] [4] [11] [12] [8] [10] [14] [18]

****Note: [XX] after each point refers to relevant documents/policies for which further information can be obtained . A list of these references can be found at the end of threats section in each priority**

Opportunities

- Opportunities to strengthen collaboration and improve sharing of information and knowledge gathering across marine environmental and planning related programmes (DCF, Natura, WFD, MSFD, MSP & Climate Change). [1] [2] [6] [9] [19] [14]
- Opportunities to increase accessibility and integration of data sources and climate services to facilitate availability for end users and evidence-based decision making.
- Improved data quality and sharing by implementing standards, developing digital tools and services. [2] [6] [9] [20] [17] [18] [19]
- Opportunities to fill knowledge gaps necessary for a sustainable blue economy and implementation of Ireland’s Maritime planning framework, as well as MSFD, Natura, CFP and climate change impacts. [2] [6] [9] [19] [1]
- Opportunities to develop Ireland’s leadership in new digital technologies.
- Support a marine focus in jobs-led recovery for Ireland post COVID and Brexit. [2]
- Support international collaboration and cross-border marine management through sharing more data into harmonised products (e.g. EMODnet) [2] [6] [9] [20]
- Develop ecosystem-based marine planning, management approach to support delivery of a sustainable maritime economy [1]
- Secure integrated long-term climate observations, by enhancing Ireland’s observing infrastructure and establishing reference laboratory capabilities [14]

- Improved scenario modelling and understanding of the implication of climate change on Ireland’s marine and coastal habitats and resources, communities, infrastructure and marine-based economic activities [21]
- Inclusion of climate consideration into national obligations such as MSP, CFP, MSFD, Natura [21]

****Note: [XX] after each point refers to relevant documents/policies for which further information can be obtained . A list of these references can be found at the end of threats section in each priority**

Threats

- Existing digital technology will no longer be supported in coming years. [6] [9] [3] [4] [11]
- Lack of availability of data and tools to support decision makers, if marine data (sectoral, environmental, climate and socio-economic) remains in silos and not coordinated at a national level. [6] [9] [3] [4] [5] [11] [10] [7] [8]
- Sectoral led planning of marine activities. [3] [4] [5] [11] [16] [10]
- Lack of intercalibration leading to incompatible monitoring programmes (and potentially excessive sampling effort). [6] [9] [3] [4] [5] [11] [10] [7] [8]
- Being ill-equipped to provide evidence base for climate adaptation decisions required in the coming years e.g., changes in fish distribution, aquaculture production capacity [13]

Relevant documents/policies that were indicated after point in the SWOT

[1] Harnessing Our Ocean Wealth.

[2] Programme for Government - Our Shared Future.

[3] Marine Strategy Framework Directive.

[4] National Marine Planning Framework.

[5] Offshore Renewable Energy Development Plan.

[6] The Open Data and the Re-use of Public Sector Information DIRECTIVE (EU) 2019/1024.

[7] Water Framework Directive.

[8] Habitats/Birds Directives.

	<p>[9] The Public Service Data Strategy (2019-2023).</p> <p>[10] MI EMFF Review and EMFAF Gap Analysis.</p> <p>[11] The Maritime Area Planning Act..</p> <p>[12] Prioritised Action Framework.</p> <p>[13] Climate Change Advisory Council 2020 Annual Review.</p> <p>[14] EPA Status of Ireland’s climate report 2020.</p> <p>[15] Agriculture, Forest and Seafood, Climate Change Sectoral Adaptation plan.</p> <p>[16] DCF review.</p> <p>[17] New EUMAP.</p> <p>[18] WMO Guidelines: National Framework for Climate Services.</p> <p>[19] EU Marine Knowledge (Integrated Maritime Policy).</p> <p>[20] National Marine Research and Innovation Strategy.</p> <p>[21] MSFD Common Implementation Strategy draft Work programme 2020-2022.</p> <p>[22] Previous SWOT.</p> <p>[23] EMFF Public Consultation.</p> <p>[24] EMFF Bilateral Consultations.</p> <p>[25] Internal MI Review & Gap Analysis.</p> <p>[26] A profile of Local Government Climate Actions in Ireland 2020.</p> <p>[27] Sea Basin Strategy – Action Plan.</p> <p>[28] From Farm to Fork.</p> <p>[29] Seabasin Analysis- Atlantic.</p> <p>Identification of needs on the basis of the SWOT analysis and taking into account the elements set out in Article 8(5) of the EMFAF Regulation</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Data collection, access and analysis that will deliver on national obligations (i.e., Natura, MSFD, MSP, Climate Change) and measure changes in the marine environment (e.g., in relation to GES or favourable conservation status). 2. Methods to compare the metrics and indicators used in the various monitoring programmes to
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ensure (data) compatibility.

3. Improved understanding of the impacts of human activities and climate change on the environment and their cumulative effects, or associated threats and opportunities.
4. Marine data coordination and processing needs to be streamlined to allow reporting across multiple programmes, including CFP, MSP, MSFD, WFD and Natura, marine/coastal climate adaptation.
5. Enhanced quality assured and integrated data and information services or studies to support evidence-based decision making, including enhanced spatial data services and studies and to support national and international programmes (e.g. foreshore licensing, climate adaptation and ocean renewable energy policy support).
6. Ensure that Irish marine data are available through national and regional EU portals such as Ireland's Marine Atlas and EMODNET; This will facilitate regional-level analyses (e.g. MSP or climate programmes).
7. Understanding of different stakeholder needs and data end product development to ensure EMFAF programme outputs are available to developers, stakeholders and end-users in appropriate formats.
8. Increase inter-agency cooperation and information sharing at national, EU and international level, together with industry and research collaboration.
9. Quantification of the potential of coastal habitats as carbon sinks.
10. Improve understanding of marine activities that could increase resilience to climate change; e.g., coexistence of fisheries and aquaculture with marine renewable energy

2. Priorities

Reference: Article 22(2) and point (c) of Article 22(3) CPR

2.1. Priorities other than technical assistance

ID	Title
1	Fostering sustainable fisheries and the restoration and conservation of aquatic biological resources
2	Fostering sustainable aquaculture activities, and processing and marketing of fisheries and aquaculture products, thus contributing to food security in the Union
3	Enabling a sustainable blue economy in coastal, island and inland areas, and fostering the development of fishing and aquaculture communities
4	Strengthening international ocean governance and enabling seas and oceans to be safe, secure, clean and sustainably managed

2.1.1. Priority: 1.Fostering sustainable fisheries and the restoration and conservation of aquatic biological resources

Specific objectives

Specific objective
1.1. Strengthening economically, socially and environmentally sustainable fishing activities
1.2. Increasing energy efficiency and reducing CO2 emissions through the replacement or modernisation of engines of fishing vessels
1.6. Contributing to the protection and restoration of aquatic biodiversity and ecosystems
1.3. Promoting the adjustment of fishing capacity to fishing opportunities in cases of permanent cessation of fishing activities and contributing to a fair standard of living in cases of temporary cessation of fishing activities
1.4. Fostering efficient fisheries control and enforcement, including fighting against IUU fishing, as well as reliable data for knowledge-based decision-making

- 2.1.1. Priority: 1. Fostering sustainable fisheries and the restoration and conservation of aquatic biological resources
- 2.1.1.1. Specific objective: 1.1. Strengthening economically, socially and environmentally sustainable fishing activities
- 2.1.1.1.1. Interventions of the Funds

The related types of actions – point (d)(i) of Article 22(3) CPR and Article 6 ESF+ Regulation

Actions to reduce or store unwanted catches in the Irish Fleet including the SSCF will be addressed through, among others/including:

- Investment in on-board production equipment
- Investment in physical infrastructure at existing fishing ports (taking into account the Port Reception Facilities Directive 2019/883 and all its obligations)
- Studies and research
- Pilot projects
- Gear selectivity to reduce unwanted catches.

Actions to Reduce the use of fishing gear most harmful to biodiversity in the Irish Fleet including SSCF will be addressed through, among others/including:

- Gear modification to minimise habitat impacts,
- Gear selectivity to reduce unwanted catches,
- Gear selectivity in relation to endangered, threatened and protected species,

Actions to improve the onboard quality and added value of the catch and enhance traceability and certification of seafood in the Irish Fleet including the SSCF will be addressed through, among others/including:

- Investments in on-board production equipment.
- Investment to improve traceability

Actions to support young fishers, particularly existing crew of SSCF vessels, to enter the sector and facilitate generational renewal will be addressed through, among others/including:

- Training to improve skills and develop human capital
- First Acquisition of a vessel

Actions to improve health, safety and working conditions on board fishing vessels in the Irish Fleet including the SSCF will be addressed through, among others/including:

- Investments in safety equipment
- Investments in working conditions.
- Training to improve skills and develop human capital

Actions to assess the economic and biological impacts of changes to fisheries policy in the Irish Fleet including the SSCF will be addressed through, among others/including:

- Evaluations
- Studies and research

Actions to improve energy efficiency, reduce carbon emissions (decarbonisation) in the Irish Fleet including the SSCF will be addressed through, among others/including:

- Advisory Services
- Studies & Research
- Investment in reduction of energy use and energy efficiency.

Actions to reduce marine litter in the Irish Fleet including the SSCF will be addressed through, among others/including:

- Advisory Services
- Studies & Research (including mitigation and monitoring actions for fisheries and reduction, recovery, disposal of marine litter)
- Retrieval and proper disposal of marine litter

Actions to develop skills (e.g., digital literacy) and capacity within the sector to engage with critical issues including the introduction of new technologies and digital transformation in the Irish Fleet including the SSCF will be addressed through:

- Advisory services
- Training to improve skills and develop human capital
- Events
- Capacity building
- Knowledge sharing

2.1.1. Priority: 1. Fostering sustainable fisheries and the restoration and conservation of aquatic biological resources

2.1.1.1. Specific objective: 1.1. Strengthening economically, socially and environmentally sustainable fishing activities

2.1.1.1.1. Interventions of the Funds

The main target groups – point (d)(iii) of Article 22(3) CPR

- Fishing Vessel Owners
- Fishing Vessel Crew (Training Actions)
- SSCF Vessel Owners
- SSCF Vessel Crew (Training Actions)
- Public Bodies
- Research Performing Organisations (RPO) including Colleges
- Seafood Producer Organisations

2.1.1. Priority: 1. Fostering sustainable fisheries and the restoration and conservation of aquatic biological resources

2.1.1.1. Specific objective: 1.1. Strengthening economically, socially and environmentally sustainable fishing activities

2.1.1.1.1. Interventions of the Funds

Actions safeguarding equality, inclusion and non-discrimination – point (d)(iv) of Article 22(3) CPR and Article 6 ESF+ Regulation

A guidance tool has been developed by the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission (IHREC) and all EU Funds Managing Authorities in Ireland. This guidance tool is a practical and bespoke support for Intermediate Bodies and Beneficiary Bodies. It seeks to enable them to effectively advance equality and human rights in their planning, implementation, monitoring, reporting, and evaluation of initiatives funded under all EU funded programmes and in doing so, it enables their compliance with the EU regulations.

To ensure relevance to this diversity of Funds, the guidance tool is designed to enable flexibility by the responsible authorities in responding to the various steps involved, in a way that can be aligned with the specific manner in which each of EU Funded programme is organised.

This guidance tool, in assisting public bodies engaged in the EU funded programme process to comply with EU regulations governing EU funds where these pertain to equality and human rights, includes a focus on implementing the Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty in the planning, implementation, monitoring, reporting, and evaluation of initiatives funded under the EU funded programmes. It does not replace the existing and ongoing statutory obligation on public bodies to undertake an assessment of human rights and equality issues in relation to all of their functions, to set it out in their strategic plan actions, proposed or already in place, to address those issues, and to report on the progress made in their annual report.

2.1.1. Priority: 1. Fostering sustainable fisheries and the restoration and conservation of aquatic biological resources

2.1.1.1. Specific objective: 1.1. Strengthening economically, socially and environmentally sustainable fishing activities

2.1.1.1.1. Interventions of the Funds

Indication of the specific territories targeted, including the planned use of territorial tools – point (d)(v) of Article 22(3) CPR

No Specific territories targeted.

2.1.1. Priority: 1. Fostering sustainable fisheries and the restoration and conservation of aquatic biological resources

2.1.1.1. Specific objective: 1.1. Strengthening economically, socially and environmentally sustainable fishing activities

2.1.1.1.1. Interventions of the Funds

The interregional, cross-border and transnational actions – point (d)(vi) of Article 22(3) CPR

No interregional, cross-border and transnational actions planned to be implemented under this Specific Objective.

- 2.1.1. Priority: 1. Fostering sustainable fisheries and the restoration and conservation of aquatic biological resources
- 2.1.1.1. Specific objective: 1.1. Strengthening economically, socially and environmentally sustainable fishing activities
- 2.1.1.1.1. Interventions of the Funds
- The planned use of financial instruments – point (d)(vii) of Article 22(3) CPR

The Ex-ante Assessment for the use of Financial Instruments within Ireland’s European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) and European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF) Operational Programmes was completed by Indecon International Economic Consultants is dated 2 February 2018 and is available on the Department’s website.

One of the main recommendations from the report was the FI should be established based on a combination of funding from the EAFRD and the EMFF. Without combining the funding sources, Indecon believes that an FI for the seafood sector would not reach a minimum scale efficient and would not be a viable instrument. EAFRD through the Rural Development Programme (RDP) has made a decision not to implement FIs and as a result the EMFAF programme 2021-2027 will not make use of FIs during the current Programming period due to the fact that national funded FIs are currently being implemented through the Strategic Banking Corporation of Ireland (SCBI) and are available to both agriculture and seafood sectors.

2.1.1. Priority: 1. Fostering sustainable fisheries and the restoration and conservation of aquatic biological resources

2.1.1.1. Specific objective: 1.1. Strengthening economically, socially and environmentally sustainable fishing activities

2.1.1.1.2. Indicators

Reference: point (d)(ii) of Article 22(3) CPR and Article 8 ERDF and CF Regulation

Table 2: Output indicators

Code	Indicator	Measurement unit	Milestone (2024)	Target (2029)
CO01	Number of operations	number	56.00	1,013.00

2.1.1. Priority: 1. Fostering sustainable fisheries and the restoration and conservation of aquatic biological resources
 2.1.1.1. Specific objective: 1.1. Strengthening economically, socially and environmentally sustainable fishing activities
 2.1.1.1.2. Indicators
 Reference: point (d)(ii) of Article 22(3) CPR

Table 3: Result indicators

ID	Indicator	Measurement unit	Baseline or reference value	Reference Year	Target (2029)	Source of data	Comments
CR03	Businesses created	entities	0.00	2023-2029	20.00	EMFAF IT System & Closure Reports	
CR08	Persons benefitting	persons	0.00	2023-2029	915.00	EMFAF IT system & Closure Reports	
CR10	Actions contributing to good environmental status including nature restoration, conservation, protection of ecosystems, biodiversity, animal health and welfare	actions	0.00	2023-2029	140.00	EMFAF IT System & Closure Reports	
CR16	Entities benefitting from promotion and information activities	entities	0.00	2023-2029	250.00	EMFAF IT System & Closure Reports	
CR21	Datasets and advice made available	number	0.00	2023-2029	28.00	EMFAF IT system and Closure reports	

2.1.1. Priority: 1. Fostering sustainable fisheries and the restoration and conservation of aquatic biological resources

2.1.1.1. Specific objective: 1.1. Strengthening economically, socially and environmentally sustainable fishing activities

2.1.1.1.4. Indicative breakdown of the programmed resources (EU) by type of intervention for EMFAF

Table 9: Indicative breakdown of the programmed resources (EU) by type of intervention for EMFAF

Code	Amount (EUR)
01. Reducing negative impacts and/or contributing to positive impacts on the environment and contributing to a good environmental status	1,000,000.00
02. Promoting conditions for economically viable, competitive and attractive fisheries, aquaculture and processing sectors	11,910,915.00
11. Data collection and analysis, and promotion of marine knowledge	1,000,000.00

2.1.1. Priority: 1. Fostering sustainable fisheries and the restoration and conservation of aquatic biological resources

2.1.1.1. Specific objective: 1.2. Increasing energy efficiency and reducing CO2 emissions through the replacement or modernisation of engines of fishing vessels

2.1.1.1.1. Interventions of the Funds

The related types of actions – point (d)(i) of Article 22(3) CPR and Article 6 ESF+ Regulation

Actions to improve energy efficiency, reduce carbon emissions in the Irish Fleet including the SSCF will be addressed through:

- Investment in reduction of energy use and energy efficiency, through the replacement or modernisation of a main or ancillary engine

2.1.1. Priority: 1. Fostering sustainable fisheries and the restoration and conservation of aquatic biological resources

2.1.1.1. Specific objective: 1.2. Increasing energy efficiency and reducing CO2 emissions through the replacement or modernisation of engines of fishing vessels

2.1.1.1.1. Interventions of the Funds

The main target groups – point (d)(iii) of Article 22(3) CPR

- Fishing Vessel Owners
- SSCF Vessel Owners

2.1.1. Priority: 1. Fostering sustainable fisheries and the restoration and conservation of aquatic biological resources

2.1.1.1. Specific objective: 1.2. Increasing energy efficiency and reducing CO2 emissions through the replacement or modernisation of engines of fishing vessels

2.1.1.1.1. Interventions of the Funds

Actions safeguarding equality, inclusion and non-discrimination – point (d)(iv) of Article 22(3) CPR and Article 6 ESF+ Regulation

A guidance tool has been developed by the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission (IHREC) and all EU Funds Managing Authorities in Ireland. This guidance tool is a practical and bespoke support for Intermediate Bodies and Beneficiary Bodies. It seeks to enable them to effectively advance equality and human rights in their planning, implementation, monitoring, reporting, and evaluation of initiatives funded under all EU funded programmes and in doing so, it enables their compliance with the EU regulations.

To ensure relevance to this diversity of Funds, the guidance tool is designed to enable flexibility by the responsible authorities in responding to the various steps involved, in a way that can be aligned with the specific manner in which each of EU Funded programme is organised.

This guidance tool, in assisting public bodies engaged in the EU funded programme process to comply with EU regulations governing EU funds where these pertain to equality and human rights, includes a focus on implementing the Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty in the planning, implementation, monitoring, reporting, and evaluation of initiatives funded under the EU funded programmes. It does not replace the existing and ongoing statutory obligation on public bodies to undertake an assessment of human rights and equality issues in relation to all of their functions, to set it out in their strategic plan actions, proposed or already in place, to address those issues, and to report on the progress made in their annual report.

2.1.1. Priority: 1. Fostering sustainable fisheries and the restoration and conservation of aquatic biological resources

2.1.1.1. Specific objective: 1.2. Increasing energy efficiency and reducing CO2 emissions through the replacement or modernisation of engines of fishing vessels

2.1.1.1.1. Interventions of the Funds

Indication of the specific territories targeted, including the planned use of territorial tools – point (d)(v) of Article 22(3) CPR

No specific territories targeted.

2.1.1. Priority: 1. Fostering sustainable fisheries and the restoration and conservation of aquatic biological resources

2.1.1.1. Specific objective: 1.2. Increasing energy efficiency and reducing CO2 emissions through the replacement or modernisation of engines of fishing vessels

2.1.1.1.1. Interventions of the Funds

The interregional, cross-border and transnational actions – point (d)(vi) of Article 22(3) CPR

No interregional, cross-border and transnational actions planned to be implemented under this Specific Objective.

2.1.1. Priority: 1. Fostering sustainable fisheries and the restoration and conservation of aquatic biological resources

2.1.1.1. Specific objective: 1.2. Increasing energy efficiency and reducing CO2 emissions through the replacement or modernisation of engines of fishing vessels

2.1.1.1.1. Interventions of the Funds

The planned use of financial instruments – point (d)(vii) of Article 22(3) CPR

Financial Instruments Not applicable

2.1.1. Priority: 1. Fostering sustainable fisheries and the restoration and conservation of aquatic biological resources

2.1.1.1. Specific objective: 1.2. Increasing energy efficiency and reducing CO2 emissions through the replacement or modernisation of engines of fishing vessels

2.1.1.1.2. Indicators

Reference: point (d)(ii) of Article 22(3) CPR and Article 8 ERDF and CF Regulation

Table 2: Output indicators

Code	Indicator	Measurement unit	Milestone (2024)	Target (2029)
CO01	Number of operations	number	2.00	50.00

2.1.1. Priority: 1. Fostering sustainable fisheries and the restoration and conservation of aquatic biological resources

2.1.1.1. Specific objective: 1.2. Increasing energy efficiency and reducing CO2 emissions through the replacement or modernisation of engines of fishing vessels

2.1.1.1.2. Indicators

Reference: point (d)(ii) of Article 22(3) CPR

Table 3: Result indicators

ID	Indicator	Measurement unit	Baseline or reference value	Reference Year	Target (2029)	Source of data	Comments
CR18.2	Energy consumption leading to CO2 emissions reduction	litres/h	0.00	2023-2029	9.00	EMFAF IT System & closure Reports	

2.1.1. Priority: 1. Fostering sustainable fisheries and the restoration and conservation of aquatic biological resources

2.1.1.1. Specific objective: 1.2. Increasing energy efficiency and reducing CO2 emissions through the replacement or modernisation of engines of fishing vessels

2.1.1.1.4. Indicative breakdown of the programmed resources (EU) by type of intervention for EMFAF

Table 9: Indicative breakdown of the programmed resources (EU) by type of intervention for EMFAF

Code	Amount (EUR)
03. Contributing to climate neutrality	1,000,000.00

2.1.1. Priority: 1. Fostering sustainable fisheries and the restoration and conservation of aquatic biological resources

2.1.1.1. Specific objective: 1.6. Contributing to the protection and restoration of aquatic biodiversity and ecosystems

2.1.1.1.1. Interventions of the Funds

The related types of actions – point (d)(i) of Article 22(3) CPR and Article 6 ESF+ Regulation

Actions to enhance dissemination of fisheries data and information to stakeholder including increased awareness of the Natura/MPA network and associated conservation measures will be addressed through:

- Studies and research,
- Knowledge sharing
- Data assembly and dissemination.
- Events

Actions to address the issue of marine litter and continue and expand the Clean Oceans Initiative will be addressed through:

- Retrieval and proper disposal of marine litter
- Investment in physical infrastructure at existing fishing ports
- Events
- Awareness raising, communication to the wider public (include mitigation and monitoring actions for fisheries and reduction, recovery, disposal of marine litter)
- Studies and research, (including mitigation and monitoring actions for fisheries and reduction, recovery, disposal of marine litter)
- Knowledge sharing.

Actions to tackle climate action and equally to prepare for climate change impact on fishing patterns and implement climate action measures around business operations will be addressed through:

- Events
- Awareness raising, communication to the wider public
- Reduction and prevention of pollution/contamination

- Data collection
- Evaluation
- Knowledge sharing
- Other (environmental)
- Studies & Research
- Advisory Services

Action to increase awareness on marine biodiversity, habitat loss, climate change and environmental impacts will be addressed through:

- Awareness raising, communication to the wider public,
- Studies and research,
- Knowledge sharing.

Action to provide continued support for the designation and management process of Natura sites and MPAs will be addressed through:

- Natura 2000 areas management and monitoring (soft operations),
- MPA management and monitoring (soft operations).
- Data collection
- Data assembly and dissemination

Actions to reduce the use of fishing gear most harmful to biodiversity

- Natura 2000 areas management and monitoring (soft operations),
- MPA management and monitoring (soft operations),
- Advisory services

Actions to support reducing unwanted catches in the Irish Fleet including the SSCF will be addressed through:

- Studies and research
- Pilot projects

Actions to support restoration to improve the status of Habitats Directive Annex IV habitats and species will be addressed through:

- Investments in Natura 2000 areas restoration,
- Specific investments for improving aquatic habitats and biodiversity.

Actions to support appropriate Control and Enforcement of fisheries management measures related to Natura/MPA site management (SFPA) will be addressed through investments for control and enforcement for public authorities.

Actions to manage and control the introduction and spread of invasive marine species by the fishing and aquaculture sectors

- Data collection
- Data assembly and dissemination
- Knowledge sharing

Actions to increase co-ordination and pace at which new measures for biodiversity protection are implemented within and across sectors and in response to scientific advice through knowledge sharing

Actions to improve information-sharing across decision- making bodies to facilitate cumulative impact assessments as required by the EIA Directive and Appropriate Assessment under the Habitats Directives will be addressed through:

- Data collection
- Data assembly and dissemination
- Knowledge sharing

2.1.1. Priority: 1. Fostering sustainable fisheries and the restoration and conservation of aquatic biological resources

2.1.1.1. Specific objective: 1.6. Contributing to the protection and restoration of aquatic biodiversity and ecosystems

2.1.1.1.1. Interventions of the Funds

The main target groups – point (d)(iii) of Article 22(3) CPR

- Public Bodies
- Fishers

2.1.1. Priority: 1. Fostering sustainable fisheries and the restoration and conservation of aquatic biological resources

2.1.1.1. Specific objective: 1.6. Contributing to the protection and restoration of aquatic biodiversity and ecosystems

2.1.1.1.1. Interventions of the Funds

Actions safeguarding equality, inclusion and non-discrimination – point (d)(iv) of Article 22(3) CPR and Article 6 ESF+ Regulation

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To ensure relevance to this diversity of Funds, the guidance tool is designed to enable flexibility by the responsible authorities in responding to the various steps involved, in a way that can be aligned with the specific manner in which each of EU Funded programme is organised.

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2.1.1. Priority: 1. Fostering sustainable fisheries and the restoration and conservation of aquatic biological resources

2.1.1.1. Specific objective: 1.6. Contributing to the protection and restoration of aquatic biodiversity and ecosystems

2.1.1.1.1. Interventions of the Funds

Indication of the specific territories targeted, including the planned use of territorial tools – point (d)(v) of Article 22(3) CPR

There is no specific territories targeted.

2.1.1. Priority: 1. Fostering sustainable fisheries and the restoration and conservation of aquatic biological resources

2.1.1.1. Specific objective: 1.6. Contributing to the protection and restoration of aquatic biodiversity and ecosystems

2.1.1.1.1. Interventions of the Funds

The interregional, cross-border and transnational actions – point (d)(vi) of Article 22(3) CPR

No interregional, cross-border and transnational actions planned to be implemented under this Specific Objective.

2.1.1. Priority: 1. Fostering sustainable fisheries and the restoration and conservation of aquatic biological resources

2.1.1.1. Specific objective: 1.6. Contributing to the protection and restoration of aquatic biodiversity and ecosystems

2.1.1.1.1. Interventions of the Funds

The planned use of financial instruments – point (d)(vii) of Article 22(3) CPR

Financial Instruments Not applicable

2.1.1. Priority: 1. Fostering sustainable fisheries and the restoration and conservation of aquatic biological resources

2.1.1.1. Specific objective: 1.6. Contributing to the protection and restoration of aquatic biodiversity and ecosystems

2.1.1.1.2. Indicators

Reference: point (d)(ii) of Article 22(3) CPR and Article 8 ERDF and CF Regulation

Table 2: Output indicators

Code	Indicator	Measurement unit	Milestone (2024)	Target (2029)
CO01	Number of operations	number	5.00	44.00

2.1.1. Priority: 1. Fostering sustainable fisheries and the restoration and conservation of aquatic biological resources

2.1.1.1. Specific objective: 1.6. Contributing to the protection and restoration of aquatic biodiversity and ecosystems

2.1.1.1.2. Indicators

Reference: point (d)(ii) of Article 22(3) CPR

Table 3: Result indicators

ID	Indicator	Measurement unit	Baseline or reference value	Reference Year	Target (2029)	Source of data	Comments
CR10	Actions contributing to good environmental status including nature restoration, conservation, protection of ecosystems, biodiversity, animal health and welfare	actions	0.00	2022-2030	23.00	EMFAF IT system & Project Closure Reports	
CR21	Datasets and advice made available	number	0.00	2022-2030	43.00	Marine Institute Annual Reports and Individual Project Closure Reports , EMFAF IT System	

2.1.1. Priority: 1. Fostering sustainable fisheries and the restoration and conservation of aquatic biological resources

2.1.1.1. Specific objective: 1.6. Contributing to the protection and restoration of aquatic biodiversity and ecosystems

2.1.1.1.4. Indicative breakdown of the programmed resources (EU) by type of intervention for EMFAF

Table 9: Indicative breakdown of the programmed resources (EU) by type of intervention for EMFAF

Code	Amount (EUR)
01. Reducing negative impacts and/or contributing to positive impacts on the environment and contributing to a good environmental status	3,800,000.00
03. Contributing to climate neutrality	700,000.00

2.1.1. Priority: 1. Fostering sustainable fisheries and the restoration and conservation of aquatic biological resources

2.1.1.1. Specific objective: 1.3. Promoting the adjustment of fishing capacity to fishing opportunities in cases of permanent cessation of fishing activities and contributing to a fair standard of living in cases of temporary cessation of fishing activities

2.1.1.1.1. Interventions of the Funds

The related types of actions – point (d)(i) of Article 22(3) CPR and Article 6 ESF+ Regulation

Activating temporary cessation support in case of natural disasters, environmental incidents , economic or health crises

2.1.1. Priority: 1. Fostering sustainable fisheries and the restoration and conservation of aquatic biological resources

2.1.1.1. Specific objective: 1.3. Promoting the adjustment of fishing capacity to fishing opportunities in cases of permanent cessation of fishing activities and contributing to a fair standard of living in cases of temporary cessation of fishing activities

2.1.1.1.1. Interventions of the Funds

The main target groups – point (d)(iii) of Article 22(3) CPR

- Fishing Vessel Owners
- SSCF Vessel Owners
- Fishing Vessel Crew
- SSCF Vessel Crew

2.1.1. Priority: 1. Fostering sustainable fisheries and the restoration and conservation of aquatic biological resources

2.1.1.1. Specific objective: 1.3. Promoting the adjustment of fishing capacity to fishing opportunities in cases of permanent cessation of fishing activities and contributing to a fair standard of living in cases of temporary cessation of fishing activities

2.1.1.1.1. Interventions of the Funds

Actions safeguarding equality, inclusion and non-discrimination – point (d)(iv) of Article 22(3) CPR and Article 6 ESF+ Regulation

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2.1.1. Priority: 1. Fostering sustainable fisheries and the restoration and conservation of aquatic biological resources

2.1.1.1. Specific objective: 1.3. Promoting the adjustment of fishing capacity to fishing opportunities in cases of permanent cessation of fishing activities and contributing to a fair standard of living in cases of temporary cessation of fishing activities

2.1.1.1.1. Interventions of the Funds

Indication of the specific territories targeted, including the planned use of territorial tools – point (d)(v) of Article 22(3) CPR

No specific territories targeted.

2.1.1. Priority: 1. Fostering sustainable fisheries and the restoration and conservation of aquatic biological resources

2.1.1.1. Specific objective: 1.3. Promoting the adjustment of fishing capacity to fishing opportunities in cases of permanent cessation of fishing activities and contributing to a fair standard of living in cases of temporary cessation of fishing activities

2.1.1.1.1. Interventions of the Funds

The interregional, cross-border and transnational actions – point (d)(vi) of Article 22(3) CPR

No interregional, cross-border and transnational actions planned to be implemented under this Specific Objective.

2.1.1. Priority: 1. Fostering sustainable fisheries and the restoration and conservation of aquatic biological resources

2.1.1.1. Specific objective: 1.3. Promoting the adjustment of fishing capacity to fishing opportunities in cases of permanent cessation of fishing activities and contributing to a fair standard of living in cases of temporary cessation of fishing activities

2.1.1.1.1. Interventions of the Funds

The planned use of financial instruments – point (d)(vii) of Article 22(3) CPR

Financial Instruments Not applicable

2.1.1. Priority: 1. Fostering sustainable fisheries and the restoration and conservation of aquatic biological resources

2.1.1.1. Specific objective: 1.3. Promoting the adjustment of fishing capacity to fishing opportunities in cases of permanent cessation of fishing activities and contributing to a fair standard of living in cases of temporary cessation of fishing activities

2.1.1.1.2. Indicators

Reference: point (d)(ii) of Article 22(3) CPR and Article 8 ERDF and CF Regulation

Table 2: Output indicators

Code	Indicator	Measurement unit	Milestone (2024)	Target (2029)
CO01	Number of operations	number	0.00	100.00

2.1.1. Priority: 1. Fostering sustainable fisheries and the restoration and conservation of aquatic biological resources

2.1.1.1. Specific objective: 1.3. Promoting the adjustment of fishing capacity to fishing opportunities in cases of permanent cessation of fishing activities and contributing to a fair standard of living in cases of temporary cessation of fishing activities

2.1.1.1.2. Indicators

Reference: point (d)(ii) of Article 22(3) CPR

Table 3: Result indicators

ID	Indicator	Measurement unit	Baseline or reference value	Reference Year	Target (2029)	Source of data	Comments
CR08	Persons benefitting	persons	0.00	2023-2029	100.00	EMFAF IT system and Project Closure reports	

2.1.1. Priority: 1. Fostering sustainable fisheries and the restoration and conservation of aquatic biological resources

2.1.1.1. Specific objective: 1.3. Promoting the adjustment of fishing capacity to fishing opportunities in cases of permanent cessation of fishing activities and contributing to a fair standard of living in cases of temporary cessation of fishing activities

2.1.1.1.4. Indicative breakdown of the programmed resources (EU) by type of intervention for EMFAF

Table 9: Indicative breakdown of the programmed resources (EU) by type of intervention for EMFAF

Code	Amount (EUR)
04. Temporary cessation of fishing activities	1,000,000.00

2.1.1. Priority: 1. Fostering sustainable fisheries and the restoration and conservation of aquatic biological resources

2.1.1.1. Specific objective: 1.4. Fostering efficient fisheries control and enforcement, including fighting against IUU fishing, as well as reliable data for knowledge-based decision-making

2.1.1.1.1. Interventions of the Funds

The related types of actions – point (d)(i) of Article 22(3) CPR and Article 6 ESF+ Regulation

Actions to develop a fit for purpose data collection programme in line with legal requirements will be addressed through:

- Data collection
- Investment in IT – hardware
- Investment in IT – software
- Knowledge Sharing

Actions to collect transversal data and spatial distribution of fishing effort for vessels under 12m will be addressed through:

- Investments for control and enforcement for public authorities,
- Investments for control and enforcement for private business,
- Data collection,
- Investment in IT – hardware,
- Investment in IT – software,
- Knowledge sharing.

Actions to address specific data and knowledge gaps for data poor stocks to respond to advisory demands will be addressed through:

- Studies and research,
- Knowledge sharing
- Investment in IT – hardware
- Investment in IT – software
- Data collection.

Actions to address emerging advisory needs for stock assessment, MSE, mixed fisheries and ecosystem modelling will be addressed through:

- Studies and research,
- Knowledge sharing,
- Investment in IT – hardware,
- Investment in IT – software,
- Data collection

Actions to improve sampling efficiencies will be addressed through:

- Knowledge sharing,
- Investment in IT – hardware,
- Investment in IT – software,
- Data collection

Actions to address specific scientific questions in relation to stock ID, mixing, assessment methods, migration patterns will be addressed through:

- Studies and research,
- Knowledge sharing,
- Investment in IT – hardware,
- Investment in IT – software,
- Data collection

Actions to optimise and maximise research survey outputs will be addressed through:

- Studies and research,
- Knowledge sharing,
- Investment in IT – hardware,
- Investment in IT – software,

- Data collection

Actions to ensure effective control, enforcement and inspection of all activities will be addressed through.

- Investments for control and enforcement for public authorities, including equipment equipment (including but not limited to weighbridges in designated ports, etc), vessels and aircraft for control agencies
- Investments for control and enforcement for private business
- Investment in IT – hardware (including but not limited to)

-support effective verification of vessel engine power

-purchase and installation of digital catch reporting and GPS/AIS/VMS devices and systems within the SSCF.

-Installation of REM on vessels

- Investment in IT – software (including but not limited to)

-IT systems for registration, crosschecks of fisheries data (including transport documents), validation, reporting and exchange of fisheries data and to fight IUU.

-procure and deploy appropriate investigation software

-analysis of REM data from vessels

-digitised traceability systems,

Actions to develop, implement and integrate improved technologies to support digital transition will be addressed through:

- Investment in IT – hardware
- Investment in IT – software
- IT development and maintenance

Actions to develop specialist expertise capacity will be addressed through:

- Training to improve skills and develop human capital (including but not limited to)

-the installation of REM on vessels (including CCTV and sensors)

-the analysis of REM data from vessels

-effective control, enforcement and inspection of key aspects of weighing

-dealing with traceability

-ensure an effective verification of vessel engine power

Actions to enhance the awareness of control and enforcement activities among fishers and all other stakeholders and develop a cooperative system will be addressed through:

- Training to improve skills and develop human capital
- Events
- Awareness raising, communication to the wider public
- Capacity building
- Investment in IT – hardware,
- Investment in IT – software,
- Data collection.

2.1.1. Priority: 1. Fostering sustainable fisheries and the restoration and conservation of aquatic biological resources

2.1.1.1. Specific objective: 1.4. Fostering efficient fisheries control and enforcement, including fighting against IUU fishing, as well as reliable data for knowledge-based decision-making

2.1.1.1.1. Interventions of the Funds

The main target groups – point (d)(iii) of Article 22(3) CPR

- Marine Institute - DCF Competent Authority
- Sea Fisheries Protection Agency - Control & Enforcement Agency
- Public Bodies
- Government Departments
- Fishing Vessel Owners
- Fishing Vessel Crew
- SSCF Vessel Owners
- SSCF Vessel Crew

2.1.1. Priority: 1. Fostering sustainable fisheries and the restoration and conservation of aquatic biological resources

2.1.1.1. Specific objective: 1.4. Fostering efficient fisheries control and enforcement, including fighting against IUU fishing, as well as reliable data for knowledge-based decision-making

2.1.1.1.1. Interventions of the Funds

Actions safeguarding equality, inclusion and non-discrimination – point (d)(iv) of Article 22(3) CPR and Article 6 ESF+ Regulation

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2.1.1. Priority: 1. Fostering sustainable fisheries and the restoration and conservation of aquatic biological resources

2.1.1.1. Specific objective: 1.4. Fostering efficient fisheries control and enforcement, including fighting against IUU fishing, as well as reliable data for knowledge-based decision-making

2.1.1.1.1. Interventions of the Funds

Indication of the specific territories targeted, including the planned use of territorial tools – point (d)(v) of Article 22(3) CPR

No specific territories specified.

2.1.1. Priority: 1. Fostering sustainable fisheries and the restoration and conservation of aquatic biological resources

2.1.1.1. Specific objective: 1.4. Fostering efficient fisheries control and enforcement, including fighting against IUU fishing, as well as reliable data for knowledge-based decision-making

2.1.1.1.1. Interventions of the Funds

The interregional, cross-border and transnational actions – point (d)(vi) of Article 22(3) CPR

Within data collection activities, Ireland is currently involved in international cooperation in the form of multi-lateral cost sharing agreements on surveys, and bi-lateral agreements on sampling. Ireland is also currently involved in Regional Coordination Groups (RCGs) and intersessional subgroups (ISSGs) working towards the development of a Regional Work Plan.

2.1.1. Priority: 1. Fostering sustainable fisheries and the restoration and conservation of aquatic biological resources

2.1.1.1. Specific objective: 1.4. Fostering efficient fisheries control and enforcement, including fighting against IUU fishing, as well as reliable data for knowledge-based decision-making

2.1.1.1.1. Interventions of the Funds

The planned use of financial instruments – point (d)(vii) of Article 22(3) CPR

Financial Instruments Not applicable

2.1.1. Priority: 1. Fostering sustainable fisheries and the restoration and conservation of aquatic biological resources

2.1.1.1. Specific objective: 1.4. Fostering efficient fisheries control and enforcement, including fighting against IUU fishing, as well as reliable data for knowledge-based decision-making

2.1.1.1.2. Indicators

Reference: point (d)(ii) of Article 22(3) CPR and Article 8 ERDF and CF Regulation

Table 2: Output indicators

Code	Indicator	Measurement unit	Milestone (2024)	Target (2029)
CO01	Number of operations	number	3.00	29.00

2.1.1. Priority: 1. Fostering sustainable fisheries and the restoration and conservation of aquatic biological resources

2.1.1.1. Specific objective: 1.4. Fostering efficient fisheries control and enforcement, including fighting against IUU fishing, as well as reliable data for knowledge-based decision-making

2.1.1.1.2. Indicators

Reference: point (d)(ii) of Article 22(3) CPR

Table 3: Result indicators

ID	Indicator	Measurement unit	Baseline or reference value	Reference Year	Target (2029)	Source of data	Comments
CR08	Persons benefitting	persons	0.00	2023-2029	50.00	EMFAF IT system and Project Closure reports	
CR12	Effectiveness of the system for “collection, management and use of data” (scale: 3=high, 2=medium, 1=low)	scale	3.00	2021-2027	3.00	Annual STECF Reports	
CR16	Entities benefitting from promotion and information activities	entities	0.00	2023-2029	15.00	EMFAF IT system and Project Closure reports	
CR19	Actions to improve governance capacity	actions	0.00	2022-2029	18.00	EMFAF IT system & Closure Reports.	

2.1.1. Priority: 1. Fostering sustainable fisheries and the restoration and conservation of aquatic biological resources

2.1.1.1. Specific objective: 1.4. Fostering efficient fisheries control and enforcement, including fighting against IUU fishing, as well as reliable data for knowledge-based decision-making

2.1.1.1.4. Indicative breakdown of the programmed resources (EU) by type of intervention for EMFAF

Table 9: Indicative breakdown of the programmed resources (EU) by type of intervention for EMFAF

Code	Amount (EUR)
10. Control and enforcement	22,000,000.00
11. Data collection and analysis, and promotion of marine knowledge	28,000,000.00

2.1.1. Priority: 2.Fostering sustainable aquaculture activities, and processing and marketing of fisheries and aquaculture products, thus contributing to food security in the Union

Specific objectives

Specific objective
2.1. Promoting sustainable aquaculture activities, especially strengthening the competitiveness of aquaculture production, while ensuring that the activities are environmentally sustainable in the long term
2.2. Promoting marketing, quality and added value of fisheries and aquaculture products, as well as processing of those products

2.1.1. Priority: 2. Fostering sustainable aquaculture activities, and processing and marketing of fisheries and aquaculture products, thus contributing to food security in the Union

2.1.1.1. Specific objective: 2.1. Promoting sustainable aquaculture activities, especially strengthening the competitiveness of aquaculture production, while ensuring that the activities are environmentally sustainable in the long term

2.1.1.1.1. Interventions of the Funds

The related types of actions – point (d)(i) of Article 22(3) CPR and Article 6 ESF+ Regulation

Actions to utilise technology and enhanced knowledge to facilitate growth in the aquaculture sector will be addressed through:

- Advisory services
- Studies and Research
- Investment in animal health and welfare
- Knowledge sharing
- Training to develop skills and develop human capital.
- -
- Additional investments to support business development.
- Events
- Data collection
- -
- Food quality and hygiene safety
- Pilot Projects

Actions to promote the sustainable development of new and existing enterprises in the aquaculture sector will be addressed through:

- Advisory services
- Environmental Services - protect and enhance the marine and inland environment through fishing and cultivation techniques that support biodiversity (including Integrated Multi-trophic Aquaculture,(IMTA) , enhance the landscape, and improve the quality of water, air and soil.
- Productive investments for sustainable aquaculture

- Training to improve skills and develop human capital.
- Investments in safety equipment.
- Water usage and quality in aquaculture
- Additional investments to support business development.
- Events
- Development of product innovation (including Integrated Multi-trophic Aquaculture, seaweeds and new species)

Actions to improve energy efficiency and reduce carbon emissions in the aquaculture sector will be addressed through investment in:

- Investment in reduction of energy use and energy efficiency.
- Investment in renewable energy systems
- Advisory Services Studies & Research

Actions to address the issue of marine litter and the circular economy in the aquaculture sector will be addressed through:

- Retrieval and proper disposal of marine litter
- Events
- Awareness raising and, communication to the wider public (including mitigation and monitoring actions for fisheries and reduction, recovery, disposal of marine litter, and single-use plastics directive)
- Studies and research (including mitigation and monitoring actions for fisheries and reduction, recovery, disposal of marine litter,)
- Advisory Services (include mitigation and monitoring actions for fisheries and reduction, recovery, disposal of marine litter)
- Knowledge sharing

Actions to protect biodiversity in marine habitats will be addressed through

- Natura 2000 areas management and monitoring.
- Data collection

Actions to build public and stakeholder awareness of the importance of the Irish aquaculture sector will be addressed through

- Awareness raising, communication to the wider public.
- Events

Actions to review and address fragmentation across Irish aquaculture sector will be addressed through:

- Advisory Services
- Marketing activities to support business development.
- Studies and Research (including aquaculture supply chain including in seed and juvenile supply).
-

Actions to coordinate aquaculture's participation in the National marine spatial planning process will be addressed through assistance including

- Events
- Studies and research
- Knowledge sharing
-

Actions to reinforce a streamlined and efficient licensing system will be addressed through investments for control and enforcement for public authorities.

- Investment in IT – software
- IT development and maintenance
- Data assembly and dissemination

2.1.1. Priority: 2. Fostering sustainable aquaculture activities, and processing and marketing of fisheries and aquaculture products, thus contributing to food security in the Union

2.1.1.1. Specific objective: 2.1. Promoting sustainable aquaculture activities, especially strengthening the competitiveness of aquaculture production, while ensuring that the activities are environmentally sustainable in the long term

2.1.1.1.1. Interventions of the Funds

The main target groups – point (d)(iii) of Article 22(3) CPR

- Aquaculture Enterprises & Employees
- Public Bodies
- Research Performing Organisations

2.1.1. Priority: 2. Fostering sustainable aquaculture activities, and processing and marketing of fisheries and aquaculture products, thus contributing to food security in the Union

2.1.1.1. Specific objective: 2.1. Promoting sustainable aquaculture activities, especially strengthening the competitiveness of aquaculture production, while ensuring that the activities are environmentally sustainable in the long term

2.1.1.1.1. Interventions of the Funds

Actions safeguarding equality, inclusion and non-discrimination – point (d)(iv) of Article 22(3) CPR and Article 6 ESF+ Regulation

A guidance tool has been developed by the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission (IHREC) and all EU Funds Managing Authorities in Ireland. This guidance tool is a practical and bespoke support for Intermediate Bodies and Beneficiary Bodies. It seeks to enable them to effectively advance equality and human rights in their planning, implementation, monitoring, reporting, and evaluation of initiatives funded under all EU funded programmes and in doing so, it enables their compliance with the EU regulations.

To ensure relevance to this diversity of Funds, the guidance tool is designed to enable flexibility by the responsible authorities in responding to the various steps involved, in a way that can be aligned with the specific manner in which each of EU Funded programme is organised.

This guidance tool, in assisting public bodies engaged in the EU funded programme process to comply with EU regulations governing EU funds where these pertain to equality and human rights, includes a focus on implementing the Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty in the planning, implementation, monitoring, reporting, and evaluation of initiatives funded under the EU funded programmes. It does not replace the existing and ongoing statutory obligation on public bodies to undertake an assessment of human rights and equality issues in relation to all of their functions, to set it out in their strategic plan actions, proposed or already in place, to address those issues, and to report on the progress made in their annual report.

2.1.1. Priority: 2. Fostering sustainable aquaculture activities, and processing and marketing of fisheries and aquaculture products, thus contributing to food security in the Union

2.1.1.1. Specific objective: 2.1. Promoting sustainable aquaculture activities, especially strengthening the competitiveness of aquaculture production, while ensuring that the activities are environmentally sustainable in the long term

2.1.1.1.1. Interventions of the Funds

Indication of the specific territories targeted, including the planned use of territorial tools – point (d)(v) of Article 22(3) CPR

There is no specific territories targeted.

2.1.1. Priority: 2. Fostering sustainable aquaculture activities, and processing and marketing of fisheries and aquaculture products, thus contributing to food security in the Union

2.1.1.1. Specific objective: 2.1. Promoting sustainable aquaculture activities, especially strengthening the competitiveness of aquaculture production, while ensuring that the activities are environmentally sustainable in the long term

2.1.1.1.1. Interventions of the Funds

The interregional, cross-border and transnational actions – point (d)(vi) of Article 22(3) CPR

The MNSPA outlined opportunities to collaborate with other jurisdictions to tackle common challenges to aquaculture sector development, environmental adaptation and resilience.

2.1.1. Priority: 2. Fostering sustainable aquaculture activities, and processing and marketing of fisheries and aquaculture products, thus contributing to food security in the Union

2.1.1.1. Specific objective: 2.1. Promoting sustainable aquaculture activities, especially strengthening the competitiveness of aquaculture production, while ensuring that the activities are environmentally sustainable in the long term

2.1.1.1.1. Interventions of the Funds

The planned use of financial instruments – point (d)(vii) of Article 22(3) CPR

The Ex-ante Assessment for the use of Financial Instruments within Ireland’s European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) and European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF) Operational Programmes was completed by Indecon International Economic Consultants is dated 2 February 2018 and is available on the Department’s website.

One of the main recommendations from the report was the FI should be established based on a combination of funding from the EAFRD and the EMFF. Without combining the funding sources, Indecon believes that an FI for the seafood sector would not reach a minimum scale efficient and would not be a viable instrument. EAFRD through the Rural Development Programme (RDP) has made a decision not to implement FIs and as a result the EMFAF programme 2021-2027 will not make use of FIs during the current Programming period due to the fact that national funded FIs are currently being implemented through the Strategic Banking Corporation of Ireland (SCBI) and are available to both agriculture and seafood sectors.

2.1.1. Priority: 2. Fostering sustainable aquaculture activities, and processing and marketing of fisheries and aquaculture products, thus contributing to food security in the Union

2.1.1.1. Specific objective: 2.1. Promoting sustainable aquaculture activities, especially strengthening the competitiveness of aquaculture production, while ensuring that the activities are environmentally sustainable in the long term

2.1.1.1.2. Indicators

Reference: point (d)(ii) of Article 22(3) CPR and Article 8 ERDF and CF Regulation

Table 2: Output indicators

Code	Indicator	Measurement unit	Milestone (2024)	Target (2029)
CO01	Number of operations	number	29.00	262.00

2.1.1. Priority: 2. Fostering sustainable aquaculture activities, and processing and marketing of fisheries and aquaculture products, thus contributing to food security in the Union

2.1.1.1. Specific objective: 2.1. Promoting sustainable aquaculture activities, especially strengthening the competitiveness of aquaculture production, while ensuring that the activities are environmentally sustainable in the long term

2.1.1.1.2. Indicators

Reference: point (d)(ii) of Article 22(3) CPR

Table 3: Result indicators

ID	Indicator	Measurement unit	Baseline or reference value	Reference Year	Target (2029)	Source of data	Comments
CR01	New production capacity	tonnes/year	0.00	2023-2029	6,800.00	EMFAF IT system and closure reports. Annual Survey of Aquaculture SMES.	
CR10	Actions contributing to good environmental status including nature restoration, conservation, protection of ecosystems, biodiversity, animal health and welfare	actions	0.00	2023-2029	15.00	EMFAF IT system and Closure reports	
CR16	Entities benefitting from promotion and information activities	entities	0.00	2023-2029	100.00	EMFAF IT system and Closure reports	
CR19	Actions to improve governance capacity	actions	0.00	2023-2029	1.00	EMFAF IT system and Closure reports	
CR21	Datasets and advice made available	number	0.00	2023-2029	56.00	EMFAF IT system and Closure Reports	

2.1.1. Priority: 2. Fostering sustainable aquaculture activities, and processing and marketing of fisheries and aquaculture products, thus contributing to food security in the Union

2.1.1.1. Specific objective: 2.1. Promoting sustainable aquaculture activities, especially strengthening the competitiveness of aquaculture production, while ensuring that the activities are environmentally sustainable in the long term

2.1.1.1.4. Indicative breakdown of the programmed resources (EU) by type of intervention for EMFAF

Table 9: Indicative breakdown of the programmed resources (EU) by type of intervention for EMFAF

Code	Amount (EUR)
02. Promoting conditions for economically viable, competitive and attractive fisheries, aquaculture and processing sectors	15,000,000.00
06. Contributing to a good environmental status through implementing and monitoring of marine protected areas, including Natura 2000	1,000,000.00

2.1.1. Priority: 2. Fostering sustainable aquaculture activities, and processing and marketing of fisheries and aquaculture products, thus contributing to food security in the Union

2.1.1.1. Specific objective: 2.2. Promoting marketing, quality and added value of fisheries and aquaculture products, as well as processing of those products

2.1.1.1.1. Interventions of the Funds

The related types of actions – point (d)(i) of Article 22(3) CPR and Article 6 ESF+ Regulation

Actions to differentiate Irish fisheries and aquaculture products in order to expand access to high-value, niche markets globally will be addressed through:

- Advisory services
- Food safety and hygiene safety and
- Marketing activities to support business development.
- Events
- Development of product innovation
- Development of process innovation
- Pilot Projects
- Studies and Research

Actions to support investment in measures relating to logistics and market access of fisheries and aquaculture products will be addressed through investment in:

- Advisory services
- Pilot projects
- Studies and research

Actions to support the development of the processing sector by adding value to, and fully utilising raw material will be addressed through

- Advisory Services
- Capacity Building

- Knowledge sharing
- Pilot Project
- Development of product innovation
- Development of process innovation
- Development of marketing innovation

Actions to support the development of operational optimisation in the processing sector will be addressed through

- Advisory Services
- Capacity Building
- Knowledge sharing
- Pilot Project
- Development of process innovation
- Studies and research
- Additional investments to support business development.

Actions to build competitiveness, promote economies of scale and employment in the processing sector will be addressed through investment in

- Advisory Services
- Pilot Projects
- Knowledge Sharing
- Capacity building
- Investment in reduction of energy use and energy systems
- Investment in renewable energy systems
- Studies and Research

Actions to provide support to operators and POs in the Seafood Sector in case of exceptional events causing a significant disruption of markets, as provided by Article 26.2 of the EMFAF Regulation

- Activating compensation support when occurrence of an exceptional event has been established

Actions to encourage open access to raw material will be delivered through

- Capacity Building
- Knowledge sharing
- Pilot Project

Actions to improve energy efficiency, reduce carbon emissions will be addressed through:

- Investment in reduction of energy use and energy efficiency.
- Investment in renewable energy systems
- Advisory Services
- Studies & Research

Actions to address the issue of marine litter and the circular economy will be addressed through:

- Retrieval and proper disposal of marine litter
- Events
- Awareness raising and, communication to the wider public. (include mitigation and monitoring actions for fisheries and reduction, recovery, disposal of marine litter, Single-use plastics directive)
- Studies and research (include mitigation and monitoring actions for fisheries and reduction, recovery, disposal of marine litter,)
- Knowledge sharing

Actions to utilise technology and enhanced knowledge to facilitate growth in the processing sector will be delivered through

- Advisory services
- Investment in animal welfare
- Training to develop skills and develop human capital.

- Additional investments to support business development.
- Events
- Data collection
- Development of marketing innovation
- Food quality and hygiene safety

Actions to assist processors in developing existing and creating new markets for Irish seafood will be delivered through

- Advisory Services
- Pilot Project
- Development of marketing innovation
- Studies and research
- Additional investments to support business development.
- Events
- Awareness raising, communication to the wider public.

Actions to support blue bioeconomy and marine biorefinery development in the processing sector will be delivered through

- Advisory Services
- Pilot Project
- Development of product innovation
- Development of process innovation

Actions to develop industry skills will be delivered through

- Advisory Services
- Training to develop skills and develop human capital.
- Development of process innovation

Actions to support the preparation and implementation of Producer Organisations' production and marketing plans, encourage development of PO's, and facilitate formation of new POs and will be delivered through

- Preparation and implementation of production and marketing plans by producer organisations
- Formation Supports (Provide supports to potential new Seafood Producer organisations in preparing for recognition as a PO)

2.1.1. Priority: 2. Fostering sustainable aquaculture activities, and processing and marketing of fisheries and aquaculture products, thus contributing to food security in the Union

2.1.1.1. Specific objective: 2.2. Promoting marketing, quality and added value of fisheries and aquaculture products, as well as processing of those products

2.1.1.1.1. Interventions of the Funds

The main target groups – point (d)(iii) of Article 22(3) CPR

- Seafood Processing Enterprises & Employees (Traning Actions)
- Public Bodies
- Seafood Producer Organisations
- Research Performing Organisations (RPO)

2.1.1. Priority: 2. Fostering sustainable aquaculture activities, and processing and marketing of fisheries and aquaculture products, thus contributing to food security in the Union

2.1.1.1. Specific objective: 2.2. Promoting marketing, quality and added value of fisheries and aquaculture products, as well as processing of those products

2.1.1.1.1. Interventions of the Funds

Actions safeguarding equality, inclusion and non-discrimination – point (d)(iv) of Article 22(3) CPR and Article 6 ESF+ Regulation

A guidance tool has been developed by the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission (IHREC) and all EU Funds Managing Authorities in Ireland. This guidance tool is a practical and bespoke support for Intermediate Bodies and Beneficiary Bodies. It seeks to enable them to effectively advance equality and human rights in their planning, implementation, monitoring, reporting, and evaluation of initiatives funded under all EU funded programmes and in doing so, it enables their compliance with the EU regulations.

To ensure relevance to this diversity of Funds, the guidance tool is designed to enable flexibility by the responsible authorities in responding to the various steps involved, in a way that can be aligned with the specific manner in which each of EU Funded programme is organised.

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2.1.1. Priority: 2. Fostering sustainable aquaculture activities, and processing and marketing of fisheries and aquaculture products, thus contributing to food security in the Union

2.1.1.1. Specific objective: 2.2. Promoting marketing, quality and added value of fisheries and aquaculture products, as well as processing of those products

2.1.1.1.1. Interventions of the Funds

Indication of the specific territories targeted, including the planned use of territorial tools – point (d)(v) of Article 22(3) CPR

No specific area targeted.

2.1.1. Priority: 2. Fostering sustainable aquaculture activities, and processing and marketing of fisheries and aquaculture products, thus contributing to food security in the Union

2.1.1.1. Specific objective: 2.2. Promoting marketing, quality and added value of fisheries and aquaculture products, as well as processing of those products

2.1.1.1.1. Interventions of the Funds

The interregional, cross-border and transnational actions – point (d)(vi) of Article 22(3) CPR

No interregional, cross-border and transnational actions planned.

2.1.1. Priority: 2. Fostering sustainable aquaculture activities, and processing and marketing of fisheries and aquaculture products, thus contributing to food security in the Union

2.1.1.1. Specific objective: 2.2. Promoting marketing, quality and added value of fisheries and aquaculture products, as well as processing of those products

2.1.1.1.1. Interventions of the Funds

The planned use of financial instruments – point (d)(vii) of Article 22(3) CPR

The Ex-ante Assessment for the use of Financial Instruments within Ireland’s European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) and European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF) Operational Programmes was completed by Indecon International Economic Consultants is dated 2 February 2018 and is available on the Department’s website.

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2.1.1. Priority: 2. Fostering sustainable aquaculture activities, and processing and marketing of fisheries and aquaculture products, thus contributing to food security in the Union

2.1.1.1. Specific objective: 2.2. Promoting marketing, quality and added value of fisheries and aquaculture products, as well as processing of those products

2.1.1.1.2. Indicators

Reference: point (d)(ii) of Article 22(3) CPR and Article 8 ERDF and CF Regulation

Table 2: Output indicators

Code	Indicator	Measurement unit	Milestone (2024)	Target (2029)
CO01	Number of operations	number	20.00	557.00

2.1.1. Priority: 2. Fostering sustainable aquaculture activities, and processing and marketing of fisheries and aquaculture products, thus contributing to food security in the Union

2.1.1.1. Specific objective: 2.2. Promoting marketing, quality and added value of fisheries and aquaculture products, as well as processing of those products

2.1.1.1.2. Indicators

Reference: point (d)(ii) of Article 22(3) CPR

Table 3: Result indicators

ID	Indicator	Measurement unit	Baseline or reference value	Reference Year	Target (2029)	Source of data	Comments
CR04	Businesses with higher turnover	entities	0.00	2023-2029	200.00	EMFAF IT Systems and Closure Report	
CR08	Persons benefitting	persons	0.00	2023-2029	200.00	EMFAF IT System and Project Closure Report	
CR10	Actions contributing to good environmental status including nature restoration, conservation, protection of ecosystems, biodiversity, animal health and welfare	actions	0.00	2023-2029	6.00	EMFAF IT system & Project Closure Report	
CR16	Entities benefitting from promotion and information activities	entities	0.00	2022-2029	150.00	EMFAF IT System & Project Closure Reports	
CR17	Entities improving resource efficiency in production and/or processing	entities	0.00	2023-2029	30.00	EMFAF IT system and Closure reports	
CR19	Actions to improve governance capacity	actions	0.00	2023-2029	40.00	EMFAF IT system and Closure reports	
CR21	Datasets and advice made available	number	0.00	2023-2029	54.00	EMFAF IT system & Closure Reports	

2.1.1. Priority: 2. Fostering sustainable aquaculture activities, and processing and marketing of fisheries and aquaculture products, thus contributing to food security in the Union

2.1.1.1. Specific objective: 2.2. Promoting marketing, quality and added value of fisheries and aquaculture products, as well as processing of those products

2.1.1.1.4. Indicative breakdown of the programmed resources (EU) by type of intervention for EMFAF

Table 9: Indicative breakdown of the programmed resources (EU) by type of intervention for EMFAF

Code	Amount (EUR)
01. Reducing negative impacts and/or contributing to positive impacts on the environment and contributing to a good environmental status	300,000.00
02. Promoting conditions for economically viable, competitive and attractive fisheries, aquaculture and processing sectors	35,300,000.00

2.1.1. Priority: 3. Enabling a sustainable blue economy in coastal, island and inland areas, and fostering the development of fishing and aquaculture communities

Specific objectives

Specific objective
3.1. Enabling a sustainable blue economy in coastal, island and inland areas, and fostering the sustainable development of fishing and aquaculture communities

2.1.1. Priority: 3. Enabling a sustainable blue economy in coastal, island and inland areas, and fostering the development of fishing and aquaculture communities

2.1.1.1. Specific objective: 3.1. Enabling a sustainable blue economy in coastal, island and inland areas, and fostering the sustainable development of fishing and aquaculture communities

2.1.1.1.1. Interventions of the Funds

The related types of actions – point (d)(i) of Article 22(3) CPR and Article 6 ESF+ Regulation

Actions to diversify the income of fishers and coastal community economy. will be addressed through:

- Advisory services
- Additional investments to support business development (strategy development, administration, equipment)
- Other business-diversification operations not involving fisheries, aquaculture, or innovation
- Training to improve skills and develop human capital

Actions that identify innovations that can lead to a transition towards smarter growth in coastal areas will be addressed through:

- Advisory services
- Training to improve skills and develop human capital
- Events
- Awareness raising, communication to the wider public
- Capacity building
- Development of marketing innovation
- Development of process innovation
- Development of product innovation
- Cooperation in CLLD
- Pilot projects in CLLD

Actions to develop and promote niche tourism will be addressed through:

- Advisory services

- Additional investments to support business development (strategy development, administration, equipment)
- Other business-diversification operations not involving fisheries, aquaculture, or innovation
- Training to improve skills and develop human capital.

Actions to build capacity develop greater co-operation between all relevant stakeholders in coastal communities will be addressed through:

- Awareness raising, communication to the wider public.
- Training to improve skills and develop human capital.
- Cooperation in CLLD.
- Advisory services
- Pilot projects
- Studies and research

Actions to ensure that Ireland's coastal resource is managed to sustain its physical character and environmental quality will be addressed through.

- Advisory services (including mitigation and monitoring actions for fisheries and reduction, recovery, disposal of marine litter, Single-use plastics directive)
- Environmental Services
- Awareness raising, communication to the wider public· (including mitigation and monitoring actions for fisheries and reduction, recovery, disposal of marine litter, Single-use plastics directive)
- Specific investments for improving aquatic habitats and biodiversity
- Natura 2000 areas management and monitoring (soft operations)
- MPA management and monitoring (soft operations)
- Investments in MPA restoration

Actions to protect and promote the sense of place and culture and the quality, character and distinctiveness of the Irish coastal communities will be addressed through:

- Pilot projects in CLLD.
- Socio-cultural development in CLLD.



2.1.1. Priority: 3. Enabling a sustainable blue economy in coastal, island and inland areas, and fostering the development of fishing and aquaculture communities

2.1.1.1. Specific objective: 3.1. Enabling a sustainable blue economy in coastal, island and inland areas, and fostering the sustainable development of fishing and aquaculture communities

2.1.1.1.1. Interventions of the Funds

The main target groups – point (d)(iii) of Article 22(3) CPR

- Enterprises in coastal communities
- Community Groups
- NGOs
- FLAG Groups
- SSCF
- Aquaculture enterprises.

2.1.1. Priority: 3. Enabling a sustainable blue economy in coastal, island and inland areas, and fostering the development of fishing and aquaculture communities

2.1.1.1. Specific objective: 3.1. Enabling a sustainable blue economy in coastal, island and inland areas, and fostering the sustainable development of fishing and aquaculture communities

2.1.1.1.1. Interventions of the Funds

Actions safeguarding equality, inclusion and non-discrimination – point (d)(iv) of Article 22(3) CPR and Article 6 ESF+ Regulation

A guidance tool has been developed by the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission (IHREC) and all EU Funds Managing Authorities in Ireland. This guidance tool is a practical and bespoke support for Intermediate Bodies and Beneficiary Bodies. It seeks to enable them to effectively advance equality and human rights in their planning, implementation, monitoring, reporting, and evaluation of initiatives funded under all EU funded programmes and in doing so, it enables their compliance with the EU regulations.

To ensure relevance to this diversity of Funds, the guidance tool is designed to enable flexibility by the responsible authorities in responding to the various steps involved, in a way that can be aligned with the specific manner in which each of EU Funded programme is organised.

This guidance tool, in assisting public bodies engaged in the EU funded programme process to comply with EU regulations governing EU funds where these pertain to equality and human rights, includes a focus on implementing the Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty in the planning, implementation, monitoring, reporting, and evaluation of initiatives funded under the EU funded programmes. It does not replace the existing and ongoing statutory obligation on public bodies to undertake an assessment of human rights and equality issues in relation to all of their functions, to set it out in their strategic plan actions, proposed or already in place, to address those issues, and to report on the progress made in their annual report.

2.1.1. Priority: 3. Enabling a sustainable blue economy in coastal, island and inland areas, and fostering the development of fishing and aquaculture communities

2.1.1.1. Specific objective: 3.1. Enabling a sustainable blue economy in coastal, island and inland areas, and fostering the sustainable development of fishing and aquaculture communities

2.1.1.1.1. Interventions of the Funds

Indication of the specific territories targeted, including the planned use of territorial tools – point (d)(v) of Article 22(3) CPR

The areas identified by the individual Fisheries Local Action Groups as part of their Local Development Strategy.

2.1.1. Priority: 3. Enabling a sustainable blue economy in coastal, island and inland areas, and fostering the development of fishing and aquaculture communities

2.1.1.1. Specific objective: 3.1. Enabling a sustainable blue economy in coastal, island and inland areas, and fostering the sustainable development of fishing and aquaculture communities

2.1.1.1.1. Interventions of the Funds

The interregional, cross-border and transnational actions – point (d)(vi) of Article 22(3) CPR

There is potential for interregional, cross-border and transnational actions under this specific objective through the implementation of co-operation projects at both a national level and an EU member state level.

2.1.1. Priority: 3. Enabling a sustainable blue economy in coastal, island and inland areas, and fostering the development of fishing and aquaculture communities

2.1.1.1. Specific objective: 3.1. Enabling a sustainable blue economy in coastal, island and inland areas, and fostering the sustainable development of fishing and aquaculture communities

2.1.1.1.1. Interventions of the Funds

The planned use of financial instruments – point (d)(vii) of Article 22(3) CPR

The Ex-ante Assessment for the use of Financial Instruments within Ireland’s European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) and European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF) Operational Programmes was completed by Indecon International Economic Consultants is dated 2 February 2018 and is available on the Department’s website.

One of the main recommendations from the report was the FI should be established based on a combination of funding from the EAFRD and the EMFF. Without combining the funding sources, Indecon believes that an FI for the seafood sector would not reach a minimum scale efficient and would not be a viable instrument. EAFRD through the Rural Development Programme (RDP) has made a decision not to implement FIs and as a result the EMFAF programme 2021-2027 will not make use of FIs during the current Programming period due to the fact that national funded FIs are currently being implemented through the Strategic Banking Corporation of Ireland (SCBI) and are available to both agriculture and seafood sectors.

2.1.1. Priority: 3. Enabling a sustainable blue economy in coastal, island and inland areas, and fostering the development of fishing and aquaculture communities

2.1.1.1. Specific objective: 3.1. Enabling a sustainable blue economy in coastal, island and inland areas, and fostering the sustainable development of fishing and aquaculture communities

2.1.1.1.2. Indicators

Reference: point (d)(ii) of Article 22(3) CPR and Article 8 ERDF and CF Regulation

Table 2: Output indicators

Code	Indicator	Measurement unit	Milestone (2024)	Target (2029)
CO01	Number of operations	number	50.00	512.00

2.1.1. Priority: 3. Enabling a sustainable blue economy in coastal, island and inland areas, and fostering the development of fishing and aquaculture communities

2.1.1.1. Specific objective: 3.1. Enabling a sustainable blue economy in coastal, island and inland areas, and fostering the sustainable development of fishing and aquaculture communities

2.1.1.1.2. Indicators

Reference: point (d)(ii) of Article 22(3) CPR

Table 3: Result indicators

ID	Indicator	Measurement unit	Baseline or reference value	Reference Year	Target (2029)	Source of data	Comments
CR06	Jobs created	persons	0.00	2023-2029	160.00	EMFAF IT system & Closure reports	
CR07	Jobs maintained	persons	0.00	2023-2029	150.00	EMFAF IT system & closure Report	
CR10	Actions contributing to good environmental status including nature restoration, conservation, protection of ecosystems, biodiversity, animal health and welfare	actions	0.00	2023-2029	17.00	EMFAF IT system and Closure Reports	
CR14	Innovations enabled (number of new products, services, processes, business models or methods)	number	0.00	2023-2029	5.00	EMFAF IT system and Closure reports	
CR19	Actions to improve governance capacity	actions	0.00	2023-2029	40.00	EMFAF IT system and Closure Reports	

2.1.1. Priority: 3. Enabling a sustainable blue economy in coastal, island and inland areas, and fostering the development of fishing and aquaculture communities

2.1.1.1. Specific objective: 3.1. Enabling a sustainable blue economy in coastal, island and inland areas, and fostering the sustainable development of fishing and aquaculture communities

2.1.1.1.4. Indicative breakdown of the programmed resources (EU) by type of intervention for EMFAF

Table 9: Indicative breakdown of the programmed resources (EU) by type of intervention for EMFAF

Code	Amount (EUR)
14. CLLD implementation of strategy	9,000,000.00

2.1.1. Priority: 4.Strengthening international ocean governance and enabling seas and oceans to be safe, secure, clean and sustainably managed

Specific objectives

Specific objective
4.1. Strengthening sustainable sea and ocean management through the promotion of marine knowledge, maritime surveillance or coast guard cooperation

2.1.1. Priority: 4. Strengthening international ocean governance and enabling seas and oceans to be safe, secure, clean and sustainably managed

2.1.1.1. Specific objective: 4.1. Strengthening sustainable sea and ocean management through the promotion of marine knowledge, maritime surveillance or coast guard cooperation

2.1.1.1.1. Interventions of the Funds

The related types of actions – point (d)(i) of Article 22(3) CPR and Article 6 ESF+ Regulation

Actions relating to data collection, access and analysis that will deliver on national obligations and measure changes in the marine environment will be addressed through:

- Studies and research,
- Knowledge sharing,
- Investment in IT – hardware,
- Data collection,
- Investment in IT –software.

Actions to ensure data compatibility will be addressed through:

- Studies and research
- Knowledge sharing
- Data collection
- Investment in IT –software

Actions to improve the understanding of the impacts of human activities and climate change on the marine environment will be addressed through:

- Studies and research
- Knowledge sharing
- Data collection
- Socio-cultural development

Actions that streamline Marine data coordination and processing needs will be addressed through:

- Knowledge sharing
- Investment in IT – hardware
- Investment in IT –software

Actions to enhance data quality to support evidence-based decision making will be addressed through:

- Studies and research
- Knowledge sharing
- Investment in IT – hardware
- Investment in IT –software

Actions to ensure that Irish marine data and knowledge are made available to all relevant stakeholders will be addressed through:

- Studies and research
- Knowledge sharing
- Investment in IT – hardware
- Investment in IT –software

Actions to understand different stakeholder needs and to ensure EMFAF programme outputs are available to developers, stakeholders and end-users in appropriate formats will be addressed through:

- Events,
- Studies and research
- Knowledge sharing
- Investment in IT – hardware
- Investment in IT –software

Actions to increase cooperation, research collaboration and information sharing at national, EU and international level will be addressed through

- Events
- Awareness raising, communication to the wider public
- Knowledge sharing
- Investment in IT – hardware
- Investment in IT –software

Actions to quantify the potential of coastal habitats as carbon sinks will be addressed through:

- Studies and research
- Data collection

Actions to improve understanding of marine activities that could increase resilience to climate change will be addressed through:

- Studies and research
- Knowledge sharing

2.1.1. Priority: 4. Strengthening international ocean governance and enabling seas and oceans to be safe, secure, clean and sustainably managed

2.1.1.1. Specific objective: 4.1. Strengthening sustainable sea and ocean management through the promotion of marine knowledge, maritime surveillance or coast guard cooperation

2.1.1.1.1. Interventions of the Funds

The main target groups – point (d)(iii) of Article 22(3) CPR

- Public bodies
- Decision makers and government departments (e.g., DAFM, DHLGH, DECC)
- Research organisations and third level sector
- Marine Industries (e.g., Aquaculture & fishing/Offshore wind/technology development/tourism)
- Wider marine stakeholder communities (e.g., local organisations, NGOs)

2.1.1. Priority: 4. Strengthening international ocean governance and enabling seas and oceans to be safe, secure, clean and sustainably managed

2.1.1.1. Specific objective: 4.1. Strengthening sustainable sea and ocean management through the promotion of marine knowledge, maritime surveillance or coast guard cooperation

2.1.1.1.1. Interventions of the Funds

Actions safeguarding equality, inclusion and non-discrimination – point (d)(iv) of Article 22(3) CPR and Article 6 ESF+ Regulation

A guidance tool has been developed by the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission (IHREC) and all EU Funds Managing Authorities in Ireland. This guidance tool is a practical and bespoke support for Intermediate Bodies and Beneficiary Bodies. It seeks to enable them to effectively advance equality and human rights in their planning, implementation, monitoring, reporting, and evaluation of initiatives funded under all EU funded programmes and in doing so, it enables their compliance with the EU regulations.

To ensure relevance to this diversity of Funds, the guidance tool is designed to enable flexibility by the responsible authorities in responding to the various steps involved, in a way that can be aligned with the specific manner in which each of EU Funded programme is organised.

This guidance tool, in assisting public bodies engaged in the EU funded programme process to comply with EU regulations governing EU funds where these pertain to equality and human rights, includes a focus on implementing the Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty in the planning, implementation, monitoring, reporting, and evaluation of initiatives funded under the EU funded programmes. It does not replace the existing and ongoing statutory obligation on public bodies to undertake an assessment of human rights and equality issues in relation to all of their functions, to set it out in their strategic plan actions, proposed or already in place, to address those issues, and to report on the progress made in their annual report.

2.1.1. Priority: 4. Strengthening international ocean governance and enabling seas and oceans to be safe, secure, clean and sustainably managed

2.1.1.1. Specific objective: 4.1. Strengthening sustainable sea and ocean management through the promotion of marine knowledge, maritime surveillance or coast guard cooperation

2.1.1.1.1. Interventions of the Funds

Indication of the specific territories targeted, including the planned use of territorial tools – point (d)(v) of Article 22(3) CPR

There are no specific territories targeted under this specific objective.

2.1.1. Priority: 4. Strengthening international ocean governance and enabling seas and oceans to be safe, secure, clean and sustainably managed

2.1.1.1. Specific objective: 4.1. Strengthening sustainable sea and ocean management through the promotion of marine knowledge, maritime surveillance or coast guard cooperation

2.1.1.1.1. Interventions of the Funds

The interregional, cross-border and transnational actions – point (d)(vi) of Article 22(3) CPR

There are no interregional, cross-border and transnational actions proposed under this specific objective

2.1.1. Priority: 4. Strengthening international ocean governance and enabling seas and oceans to be safe, secure, clean and sustainably managed

2.1.1.1. Specific objective: 4.1. Strengthening sustainable sea and ocean management through the promotion of marine knowledge, maritime surveillance or coast guard cooperation

2.1.1.1.1. Interventions of the Funds

The planned use of financial instruments – point (d)(vii) of Article 22(3) CPR

Financial Instruments Not applicable

2.1.1. Priority: 4. Strengthening international ocean governance and enabling seas and oceans to be safe, secure, clean and sustainably managed

2.1.1.1. Specific objective: 4.1. Strengthening sustainable sea and ocean management through the promotion of marine knowledge, maritime surveillance or coast guard cooperation

2.1.1.1.2. Indicators

Reference: point (d)(ii) of Article 22(3) CPR and Article 8 ERDF and CF Regulation

Table 2: Output indicators

Code	Indicator	Measurement unit	Milestone (2024)	Target (2029)
CO01	Number of operations	number	5.00	24.00

2.1.1. Priority: 4. Strengthening international ocean governance and enabling seas and oceans to be safe, secure, clean and sustainably managed

2.1.1.1. Specific objective: 4.1. Strengthening sustainable sea and ocean management through the promotion of marine knowledge, maritime surveillance or coast guard cooperation

2.1.1.1.2. Indicators

Reference: point (d)(ii) of Article 22(3) CPR

Table 3: Result indicators

ID	Indicator	Measurement unit	Baseline or reference value	Reference Year	Target (2029)	Source of data	Comments
CR21	Datasets and advice made available	number	0.00	2023-2029	66.00	Marine Institute Annual Reports and Project Closure Reports	

2.1.1. Priority: 4. Strengthening international ocean governance and enabling seas and oceans to be safe, secure, clean and sustainably managed

2.1.1.1. Specific objective: 4.1. Strengthening sustainable sea and ocean management through the promotion of marine knowledge, maritime surveillance or coast guard cooperation

2.1.1.1.4. Indicative breakdown of the programmed resources (EU) by type of intervention for EMFAF

Table 9: Indicative breakdown of the programmed resources (EU) by type of intervention for EMFAF

Code	Amount (EUR)
01. Reducing negative impacts and/or contributing to positive impacts on the environment and contributing to a good environmental status	3,300,000.00

2.2. Technical assistance priorities

Reference: Article 22(2) and point (c) of Article 22(3) CPR

Type

3. Financing plan

Reference: points (g)(i), (ii) and (iii) of Article 22(3), Article 112(1), (2) and (3), and Articles 14 and 26 CPR

3.1 Transfers and contributions

Programme amendment related to	<input type="checkbox"/> contribution to InvestEU
	<input type="checkbox"/> transfer to instruments under direct or indirect management
	<input type="checkbox"/> Transfer between ERDF, ESF+, Cohesion Fund or to another Fund or Funds

3.1 Transfers and contributions

Table 15A: Contributions to InvestEU (breakdown by year)

To InvestEU window	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	Total
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3.1 Transfers and contributions

Table 15B: Contributions to InvestEU (summary)

Sustainable Infrastructure (a)	Innovation and Digitisation (b)	SME (c)	Investment and Skills (d)	Total (e=a+b+c+d)
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3.1 Transfers and contributions

Justification

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3.1 Transfers and contributions

Reference: Articles 14, 26 and 27 CPR

Table 16A: Transfers to instruments under direct or indirect management (breakdown by year)

Instrument	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	Total
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Programme amendment related to

Reference: Articles 14, 26 and 27 CPR

Table 16B: Transfers to instruments under direct or indirect management (summary)

Total

3.1 Transfers and contributions

Justification

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3.1 Transfers and contributions

Reference: Articles 14, 26 and 27 CPR

Table 17A: Transfers between ERDF, ESF+ and Cohesion Fund or to another Fund or Funds (breakdown by year)

Transfer to fund	Category of region	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	Total
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3.1 Transfers and contributions

Reference: Articles 14, 26 and 27 CPR

Table 17B: Transfers between ERDF, ESF+ and Cohesion Fund or to another Fund or Funds (summary)

ERDF more developed	ERDF transition	ERDF less developed	ESF more developed	ESF transition	ESF less developed	CF	AMIF	ISF	BMVI	Total
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3.1 Transfers and contributions

Transfers between ERDF, ESF+ and Cohesion Fund or to another Fund or Funds - justification

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3.4 Transfers back

Table 20A: Transfers back (breakdown by year)

From InvestEU or other EU Instrument	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	Total
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3.4 Transfers back

Table 20B: Transfers back (summary)

From InvestEU or other EU Instrument	Total
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3.5 Financial appropriations by year

Reference: point (g)(i) of Article 22(3) CPR and Articles 3, 4 and 7 JTF Regulation

Table 10: Financial appropriations by year

2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	Total
0.00	27,613,863.00	26,695,226.00	25,746,588.00	23,326,226.00	19,341,754.00	19,645,895.00	142,369,552.00

3.6 Total financial appropriations by fund and national co-financing

EMFAF programmes using technical assistance according to Article 36(5) CPR in accordance with the choice made in the Partnership Agreement.

Table 11A Total financial allocations by fund and national contribution

Priority	Specific objective	Basis for calculation	Union contribution			National contribution	Total	Co-financing rate
			Total	Union contribution without TA pursuant to Article 36(5) CPR	Union contribution for TA pursuant to Article 36(5) CPR			
1. Fostering sustainable fisheries and the restoration and conservation of aquatic biological resources	1.1.1. Strengthening economically, socially and environmentally sustainable fishing activities. All operations except those supported under Articles 17 and 19	Public	13,685,552.00	12,910,915.00	774,637.00	12,100,000.00	25,785,552.00	53.0744969121%
1. Fostering sustainable fisheries and the restoration and conservation of aquatic biological resources	1.1.2. Strengthening economically, socially and environmentally sustainable fishing activities. Operations supported under Articles 17 and 19	Public	1,060,000.00	1,000,000.00	60,000.00	1,000,000.00	2,060,000.00	51.4563106796%
1. Fostering sustainable fisheries and the restoration and conservation of aquatic biological resources	1.2. Increasing energy efficiency and reducing CO2 emissions through the replacement or modernisation of engines of fishing vessels	Public	1,060,000.00	1,000,000.00	60,000.00	1,000,000.00	2,060,000.00	51.4563106796%
1. Fostering sustainable	1.3. Promoting the adjustment of	Public	1,060,000.00	1,000,000.00	60,000.00	1,000,000.00	2,060,000.00	51.4563106796%

Priority	Specific objective	Basis for calculation	Union contribution			National contribution	Total	Co-financing rate
			Total	Union contribution without TA pursuant to Article 36(5) CPR	Union contribution for TA pursuant to Article 36(5) CPR			
fisheries and the restoration and conservation of aquatic biological resources	fishing capacity to fishing opportunities in cases of permanent cessation of fishing activities and contributing to a fair standard of living in cases of temporary cessation of fishing activities							
1. Fostering sustainable fisheries and the restoration and conservation of aquatic biological resources	1.4. Fostering efficient fisheries control and enforcement, including fighting against IUU fishing, as well as reliable data for knowledge-based decision-making	Public	53,000,000.00	50,000,000.00	3,000,000.00	45,000,000.00	98,000,000.00	54.0816326531%
1. Fostering sustainable fisheries and the restoration and conservation of aquatic biological resources	1.6. Contributing to the protection and restoration of aquatic biodiversity and ecosystems	Public	4,770,000.00	4,500,000.00	270,000.00	3,500,000.00	8,270,000.00	57.6783555018%
2. Fostering sustainable aquaculture activities, and processing and marketing of fisheries and aquaculture products, thus contributing to food security in the Union	2.1. Promoting sustainable aquaculture activities, especially strengthening the competitiveness of aquaculture production, while ensuring that the activities are environmentally sustainable in the long term	Public	16,960,000.00	16,000,000.00	960,000.00	12,500,000.00	29,460,000.00	57.5695858792%
2. Fostering sustainable aquaculture activities, and processing and marketing of fisheries and aquaculture products, thus contributing to food security in the Union	2.2. Promoting marketing, quality and added value of fisheries and aquaculture products, as well as processing of those products	Public	37,736,000.00	35,600,000.00	2,136,000.00	30,900,000.00	68,636,000.00	54.9798939332%
3. Enabling a sustainable blue economy in coastal, island and inland areas, and	3.1. Enabling a sustainable blue economy in coastal, island and inland areas, and fostering the sustainable	Public	9,540,000.00	9,000,000.00	540,000.00	6,000,000.00	15,540,000.00	61.3899613900%

Priority	Specific objective	Basis for calculation	Union contribution			National contribution	Total	Co-financing rate
			Total	Union contribution without TA pursuant to Article 36(5) CPR	Union contribution for TA pursuant to Article 36(5) CPR			
fostering the development of fishing and aquaculture communities	development of fishing and aquaculture communities							
4. Strengthening international ocean governance and enabling seas and oceans to be safe, secure, clean and sustainably managed	4.1. Strengthening sustainable sea and ocean management through the promotion of marine knowledge, maritime surveillance or coast guard cooperation	Public	3,498,000.00	3,300,000.00	198,000.00	3,000,000.00	6,498,000.00	53.8319482918%
Grand total			142,369,552.00	134,310,915.00	8,058,637.00	116,000,000.00	258,369,552.00	

4. Enabling conditions

Reference: point (i) of Article 22(3) CPR

Table 12: Enabling conditions

Enabling condition	Fulfilment of the enabling condition	Criteria	Fulfilment of criteria	Reference to relevant documents	Justification
1. Effective monitoring mechanisms of the public procurement market	Yes	<p>Monitoring mechanisms are in place that cover all public contracts and their procurement under the Funds in line with Union procurement legislation. That requirement includes:</p> <p>1. Arrangements to ensure compilation of effective and reliable data on public procurement procedures above the Union thresholds in accordance with reporting obligations under Articles 83 and 84 of Directive 2014/24/EU and Articles 99 and 100 of Directive 2014/25/EU.</p>	Yes	<p>National Public Procurement Policy Framework</p> <p>https://ogp.gov.ie/national-public-procurement-policy-framework/</p> <p>National Public Procurement Guidelines on Goods and Services</p> <p>https://ogp.gov.ie/public-procurement-guidelines-for-goods-and-services/</p> <p>www.eTenders.gov.ie</p> <p>Capital Works Management Framework</p> <p>https://constructionprocurement.gov.ie/</p> <p>DPER circular 13/2015</p>	<p>The Office of Government Procurement (OGP) has responsibility for developing and setting out the overarching policy framework for public procurement in Ireland.</p> <p>The National Public Procurement Guidelines outline the responsibilities of contracting authorities to comply with monitoring and reporting arrangements in line with EU procurement legislation. The arrangements in relation to these directive are at pp. 72-3. Reports are submitted by OGP as required.</p> <p>eTenders provides a central facility for advertisement of procurement opportunities and award notices across the public sector which is reported on by OGP.</p> <p>The CWMF is an integrated set of contractual provisions, guidance material and technical procedures which covers all aspects of the delivery process of a public works project from inception to final project delivery and review.</p> <p>As is noted in DPER circular 13/2015 on</p>

Enabling condition	Fulfilment of the enabling condition	Criteria	Fulfilment of criteria	Reference to relevant documents	Justification
				<p>https://www.gov.ie/en/circular/2b0103e70fec4127983d2c1e60e0546d/</p> <p>This will be updated for 21-27 period.</p>	<p>management and control procedures for ESIF, Managing Authorities, Intermediate Bodies and Beneficiaries are responsible for ensuring that projects and operations are in compliance with Procurement Guidelines and EU legislation.</p>
		<p>2. Arrangements to ensure the data cover at least the following elements:</p> <p>a. Quality and intensity of competition: names of winning bidder, number of initial bidders and contractual value;</p> <p>b. Information on final price after completion and on participation of SMEs as direct bidders, where national systems provide such information.</p>	Yes	<p>https://ogp.gov.ie/public-procurement-guidelines-for-goods-and-services/</p> <p>https://www.etenders.gov.ie/Media/Default/SiteContent/LegislationGuides/Circular_10_-_14_0.pdf</p>	<p>The National Public Procurement Guidelines set out these arrangements on page 72-73.</p> <p>Information on price at award is provided in the Contract Award Notice required for every contract above the value of €25,000.</p> <p>eTenders, the national procurement platform, records the details of all interested bidders. eTenders is a live platform. In addition, page 22-23 of the National Procurement Guidelines on Goods and Services set out the policy on SME participation in public procurement.</p>
		<p>3. Arrangements to ensure monitoring and analysis of the data by the competent national authorities in accordance with article 83 (2) of directive 2014/24/EU and article 99 (2) of directive 2014/25/EU.</p>	Yes	<p>www.eTenders.gov.ie</p> <p>Report of the Interim Procurement Reform Board</p>	<p>OGP analyses the data captured on eTenders and prepares Article 83 and Article 99 reports to the European Commission as required.</p> <p>This document that is regularly published and contains additional information.</p>
		<p>4. Arrangements to make the results of the</p>	Yes	Public Service Spend and Tendering	Reports are published on the OGP website

Enabling condition	Fulfilment of the enabling condition	Criteria	Fulfilment of criteria	Reference to relevant documents	Justification
		analysis available to the public in accordance with article 83 (3) of directive 2014/24/EU and article 99 (3) directive 2014/25/EU.		<p>Analysis</p> <p>https://ogp.gov.ie/wp-content/uploads/OGP-2017-Public-Service-Spend-and-Tendering-Analysis.pdf</p> <p>Report of the Interim Procurement Reform Board</p>	<p>once finalised. The OGP also publishes an annual Spend and Tendering Analysis report.</p> <p>This document that is regularly published contains additional information.</p>
		5. Arrangements to ensure that all information pointing to suspected bid-rigging situations is communicated to the competent national bodies in accordance with Article 83(2) of Directive 2014/24/EU and Article 99(2) of Directive 2014/25/EU.	Yes	<p>https://ogp.gov.ie/public-procurement-guidelines-for-goods-and-services/</p> <p>https://www.ccpc.ie/business/help-for-business/guidelines-for-business/bid-rigging-what-you-need-to-know/</p>	<p>Contracting Authorities must report suspected bid-rigging to the Competition and Consumer Protection Commission (see p. 19 of guidelines)</p> <p>The Competition and Consumer Protection Commission (CCPC) is an independent statutory body with a dual mandate to enforce competition and consumer protection law in Ireland. It regularly publishes information for consumers and businesses. For example, it recently published a “Business Guide on Bid Rigging”.</p> <p>Ireland’s Anti-Fraud Coordination Service (AFCOS) based in the EU and International Division of Dept of Finance are responsible for anti-fraud coordination for EU funds in Ireland.</p>
2. Tools and	Yes	Managing authorities have the tools and	Yes	https://enterprise.gov.ie/en/What-We-	Granting authorities will require that

Enabling condition	Fulfilment of the enabling condition	Criteria	Fulfilment of criteria	Reference to relevant documents	Justification
capacity for effective application of State aid rules		<p>capacity to verify compliance with State aid rules:</p> <p>1. For undertakings in difficulty and undertakings under a recovery requirement.</p>		<p>Do/EU-Internal-Market/EU-State-Aid-Rules/</p> <p>A list of undertakings under a recovery requirement is available from the Commission's website.</p> <p>Published data will be consulted. For example, the universities are registered charities and their financial data is published on the website of the Charities Regulator</p> <p>Company financial data is available here - https://www.cro.ie/. The Companies Registration Office (CRO) is the central repository of public statutory information on Irish companies and business names.</p>	<p>applicants for support from the funds confirm within the application process that they are not an undertaking in difficulty and that they are not subject to a recovery order. Granting authorities may rely on accountants certificates, published financial statements and databases (including Arachne) to verify as appropriate.</p> <p>Checks will be carried out and documented by the awarding bodies at the project selection stage and again as part of the management verification process as appropriate. Applicants will be required to complete self-declarations and to provide supporting documents as appropriate. Awarding bodies will be able to validate information against national databases (see above), accountant's certificates and/or audit reports.</p> <p>The Managing Authorities will review the checks carried out and documented at the level of the operation by the awarding bodies as part of the MA management verification process and using an approved sampling methodology</p>
		<p>2. Through access to expert advice and guidance on State aid matters, provided by State aid experts of local or national bodies.</p>	Yes	<p>https://enterprise.gov.ie/en/What-We-Do/EU-Internal-Market/EU-State-Aid-Rules/</p> <p>GBER schemes are published on the website of the Granting Authority (and the relevant information is made available to</p>	<p>The State Aid Unit in the Department of Enterprise Trade and Employment (DETE) provides guidance on interpretation of state aid rules and state aid training. EMFAF's parent department and several ERDF intermediary bodies have in-house expertise in relation to State Aid.</p>

Enabling condition	Fulfilment of the enabling condition	Criteria	Fulfilment of criteria	Reference to relevant documents	Justification
				<p>the Commission as part the information note required within 20 days of the granting of aid under the scheme).</p> <p>DETE is currently considering creating a centralised website for all GBER schemes.</p>	<p>DETE will provide advice, where relevant, on schemes at design stage and during the implementation phases of programmes. Advice is available to all public service bodies and the unit operate a case management system to ensure service delivery. If the issue is particularly complex or Managing Authority decide to seek another opinion they can deploy technical assistance to procure state aid advice including legal advice or specialist training. The State Aid Unit will provide tailored training to Managing Authorities and public bodies delivering schemes upon request subject to capacity. The Interdepartmental Committee on State Aid is a state aid network, which includes Managing Authorities, shares information and knowledge.</p>
3. Effective application and implementation of the Charter of Fundamental Rights	Yes	<p>Effective mechanisms are in place to ensure compliance with the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union ('the Charter') which include:</p> <p>1. Arrangements to ensure compliance of the programmes supported by the Funds and their implementation with the relevant provisions of the Charter.</p>	Yes	<p>Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission Act 2014 http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/2014/act/25/enacted/en/print</p> <p>IHREC Strategy Statement https://www.ihrec.ie/app/uploads/2019/02/Final-Strategy-Statement-ENG-VERSION.pdf</p> <p>Implementing the Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty</p> <p>https://www.ihrec.ie/app/uploads/2019/03/IHREC_Public_Sector_Duty_Final_Eng_WEB.pdf</p>	<p>The MAs will ensure compliance with the Charter in all Funds.</p> <p>IHREC will support the MAs with monitoring, assisting to ensure compliance with the Charter.</p> <p>The Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty (the Duty) requires public bodies to have regard to non-discrimination, equality, and human rights in carrying out their functions. Adherence to the Duty by all implementing bodies will help to ensure compliance with the Charter.</p> <p>Building on the Duty, a guidance tool has been developed with IHREC to assist Intermediate Bodies (IBs) and</p>

Enabling condition	Fulfilment of the enabling condition	Criteria	Fulfilment of criteria	Reference to relevant documents	Justification
				<p>Guidance Tool on Equality and Human Rights in EU Funds</p> <p>https://eufunds.ie/regulations-guidance/</p>	<p>Beneficiaries in advancing equality and human rights.</p> <p>IHREC will be invited to sit on the PMCs and will be consulted throughout the development of the PA and OPs and in implementation, monitoring and evaluation of OPs.</p> <p>Compliance will be ensured through application of the Duty and with the help of the Commission’s ‘Fundamental Rights Checklist’ and IHREC guidance. Each IB or scheme delivery partner will report annually on progress in relation to human rights and equality and on continued compliance with the Charter.</p> <p>Training on human rights and equality will be procured and provided to staff in the MAs, IBs and Beneficiaries as required.</p>
		<p>2. Reporting arrangements to the monitoring committee regarding cases of non-compliance of operations supported by the Funds with the Charter and complaints regarding the Charter submitted in accordance with the arrangements made pursuant to Article 69(7).</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>Where a complaint regarding the Charter or potential case of non-compliance of operations supported by the Funds with the Charter is brought to the attention of the MA, the MA will establish the facts of the case. If the case is established by the MA to be a potential breach of the Charter, the MA will request that IHREC provide an assessment. The MA will state clearly the reasons for its belief that a potential breach of the Charter has occurred.</p> <p>Upon formal receipt of such a request,</p>

Enabling condition	Fulfilment of the enabling condition	Criteria	Fulfilment of criteria	Reference to relevant documents	Justification
					<p>IHREC will complete their assessment with reference to Ireland’s obligations under the Charter.</p> <p>Where IHREC deem that the Charter has not been complied with they will inform the Monitoring Committee. IHREC will set out its findings in a report and propose recommendations, if any, drawing on the Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty and the guidance tool developed by IHREC and the MAs to support integration of equality and human rights standards under the Funds. The MA will respond and inform the Committee of any remedial actions taken and of the scope to draw lessons for the implementation of programmes. Reporting on any cases of non-compliance and complaints will take place at least annually.</p>
<p>4. Implementation and application of the United Nations Convention on the rights of persons with disabilities (UNCRPD) in accordance with Council Decision 2010/48/EC</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>A national framework to ensure implementation of the UNCRPD is in place that includes:</p> <p>1. Objectives with measurable goals, data collection and monitoring mechanisms.</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>The National Disability Inclusion Strategy</p> <p>Mid-Term Review of National Disability Inclusion Strategy</p> <p>Comprehensive Employment Strategy for People with Disabilities 2015-24</p> <p>https://www.ihrec.ie/crpd/</p> <p>NDA – Monitoring of NDIS</p>	<p>The current mechanism to implement the UNCRPD commitments is the National Disability Inclusion Strategy (NDIS) and its Steering Group.</p> <p>The NDIS has been extended until the end of 2022 with implementation of actions and monitoring by the NDIS Steering Group continuing. Progress is tracked against a set of 62 indicators identified by the National Disability Authority (NDA).</p> <p>There will be ongoing assessment of the implementation of actions identified in the NDIS until the strategy concludes. The</p>

Enabling condition	Fulfilment of the enabling condition	Criteria	Fulfilment of criteria	Reference to relevant documents	Justification
				<p>www.nda.ie</p> <p>Launch of Disability Consultation Network</p> <p>www.gov.ie/en/consultation/a3ef2-launch-of-disability-participation-and-consultation-network/</p>	<p>Mid-Term review of the NDIS commits to the development of a specific UNCRPD implementation plan, expected in 2022.</p> <p>The Comprehensive Employment Strategy for People with Disabilities (CESPD) is also of particular relevance in relation to Article 27 of the UNCRPD.</p> <p>IHREC is the independent monitoring mechanism for UNCRPD in Ireland, and will work with the NDA to carry out this task.</p> <p>A Disability Participation and Consultation Network has been established to ensure that persons with disabilities have input into the formation of policy and legislation in Ireland.</p>
		<p>2. Arrangements to ensure that accessibility policy, legislation and standards are properly reflected in the preparation and implementation of the programmes.</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>The National Disability Inclusion Strategy</p> <p>Comprehensive Employment Strategy for People with Disabilities 2015-24</p> <p>Disability Act 2005</p> <p>Employment Equality Act 1998-2015</p> <p>Equal Status Act 2000-2018</p>	<p>The MAs will ensure that accessibility policy, legislation and standards are properly reflected in the preparation and implementation of programmes. Where relevant, interventions will be aligned with and enable progress on the implementation of the NDIS & CESPD.</p> <p>The NDA and IHREC are members of the Partnership Process Steering Group which advises on preparation for 2021-27 and will be consulted throughout the development of the PA and OPs. They will be invited to sit on the Monitoring</p>

Enabling condition	Fulfilment of the enabling condition	Criteria	Fulfilment of criteria	Reference to relevant documents	Justification
				<p>NDA Code of Practice on Accessibility of Public Services and Information provided by Public Bodies</p> <p>NDA Centre for Excellence in Universal Design</p> <p>http://universaldesign.ie/</p> <p>Implementing the Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty</p> <p>https://www.ihrec.ie/app/uploads/2019/03/IHREC_Public_Sector_Duty_Final_Eng_WEB.pdf</p>	<p>Committees.</p> <p>The MAs will ensure that accessibility policy, legislation and standards will be reflected in all stages through consultation on key documents and active monitoring. Relevant policy, legislation and standards include the NDIS, CESP, the Disability Act and the Equality Acts. The NDA and IHREC have developed detailed guidance for use by public bodies involved in preparation and implementation of programmes. Each IB or scheme delivery partner will report annually on disability issues.</p> <p>Training in relation to disability issues will be procured and provided to staff in the MAs, IBs and Beneficiaries as required.</p>
		<p>3. Reporting arrangements to the monitoring committee regarding cases of non-compliance of operations supported by the Funds with the UNCRPD and complaints regarding the UNCRPD submitted in accordance with the arrangements made pursuant to Article 69(7).</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>Where a complaint regarding UNCRPD or potential case of non-compliance of operations supported by the Funds with UNCRPD is brought to the attention of the MA, the MA will establish the facts of the case. If the case is established by the MA to be a potential breach of UNCRPD, the MA will request that IHREC provide their assessment. The MA will state clearly the reasons for its belief that a potential breach of UNCRPD has occurred.</p> <p>Upon formal receipt of this request, IHREC will complete their assessment</p>

Enabling condition	Fulfilment of the enabling condition	Criteria	Fulfilment of criteria	Reference to relevant documents	Justification
					<p>with reference to Ireland’s obligations under UNCRPD, the Employment Equality Acts and the Equal Status Acts. Where IHREC deem that UNCRPD has not been complied with, they will inform the Monitoring Committee. IHREC will set out its findings in a report and propose recommendations, if any, drawing on the Public Sector Duty and the guidance tool developed by IHREC and the MAs to support integration of equality and human rights under the Funds. The MA will respond and inform the Committee of any remedial actions taken and of the scope to draw lessons for the implementation of programmes. Reporting on any cases of non-compliance and complaints will take place at least annually.</p>

5. Programme authorities

Reference: point (k) of Article 22(3) and Articles 71 and 84 CPR

Table 13: Programme authorities

Programme authorities	Name of the institution	Contact name	Position	Email
Managing authority	Marine Programmes Division (MPD), DAFM	Sinead McSherry	Principal Officer	sinead.mcsherry@agriculture.gov.ie
Audit authority	Internal Audit Unit, DAFM	Fergal Fennell	Assistant Principal Officer	fearghal.fennell@agriculture.gov.ie
Body which receives payments from the Commission	Finance Division, DAFM	Michelle Harrison	Assistant Principal Officer	michelle.harrison@agriculture.gov.ie

5. Programme authorities

The repartition of the reimbursed amounts for the technical assistance pursuant to Article 36(5) CPR if more bodies are identified to receive payments from the Commission

Reference: Article 22(3) CPR

Table 13A: The portion of the percentages set out in point (b) of Article 36(5) CPR that would be reimbursed to the bodies which receive payments from the Commission in case of technical assistance pursuant to Article 36(5) CPR (in percentage points)

6. Partnership

Reference: point (h) of Article 22(3) CPR

The EMFAF programme 2021-2027 was prepared by the Department of Agriculture, Food & the Marine. The Programme document was prepared in co-operation with a wide range of partners and stakeholders as required under Article 8(1) of the Common Provisions Regulation and as detailed in the ‘Code of Conduct on Partnership’. Involvement of the partners occurred in a number of steps as follows.

Contribution of the Partners

The involvement of the Partners in the preparation of the Programme over the steps outlined below was essential to its successfully identifying the main issues and challenges facing the seafood sector in the coming years and identifying the most appropriate strategy and measures to address those challenges and make most effective use of EMFAF supports. The Partners contributed to the thoroughness and accuracy of the SWOT analysis and their contribution was particularly notable in respect of all priorities of the EMFAF. The Partners made important contributions to the Needs Analysis, and this influenced the selection of measures and financial allocations.

As part of the programme development, FLAG groups worked closely with the EMFAF Managing Authorities to carry out a SWOT and needs Analysis for Coastal Communities which then fed into the SWOT and Needs analysis for Priority 3 under the programme.

Step 1 - Initial consultation with Monitoring Committee (30 May 2019 and 3 December 2019)

The current EMFF OP Monitoring Committee was identified as the principal focus of stakeholder engagement for the EMFAF OP 2021-2027 programme development. Over the course of two monitoring committee meetings held in 2019 the EMFF and several implementing bodies held both a workshop and gave presentations on several topics of relevance to the Irish Seafood sector over the coming years. The workshop which was held in May 2019 the OPMC examined an initial SWOT and Needs for the seafood sector covering multiple themes. In December 2019 the OPMC was given presentation on several topics such as Climate Change, Marine Biodiversity and Clean Oceans initiative.

Step 2 - Initial Public Consultation Process - (December 2019/January 2020)

The formal EMFAF Seafood Development Programme 2021-2027 (EMFAF programme 2021-2027) development process commenced with an initial public consultation launched in December 2019. This initial public consultation was seeking the views of stakeholders and other interested parties as the Minister for Agriculture Food and the Marine begun the process of preparing Ireland’s Operational Programme for the 2021-27 period under the European Maritime, Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund (EMFAF). This initial public consultation was intended to inform preparation of the new Programme. Development of the new Programme was commencing against the background of Brexit uncertainty and in the context of an ongoing EU legislative process to agree the new EU Regulation, which again created some uncertainty in terms of what may be done through the new Programme. While these uncertainties made it more difficult to develop the new Programme at this time and also made it more difficult for stakeholders to comprehensively address the issues that will most affect them, the timescale for preparation of the new Programme was such that the process was commenced at that point in time.

To assist the relevant stakeholders a structured questionnaire was issued as part of the public consultation process. The main areas of focus were the following.

- Lessons Learned from EMFF 2014-20
- Climate Change
- Marine Biodiversity
- Clean Oceans
- Small Scale Coastal Fisheries
- BREXIT
- Access to & Cost of Credit
- Financial Instruments
- Investment Priorities for EMFAF 2021-27
- SWOT and Investment Needs Analysis

As a result of this public consultation process 21 submissions were received.

Step 3 - Bilateral Consultation Meetings with key stakeholders (January 2020)

To complement and assist with that public consultation, the EMFAF Managing Authority arranged to meet bilaterally with key stakeholders to hear their views directly, which took place in January 2020. The following list of key stakeholders was specifically invited to make submissions and was offered bilateral consultation meetings:

- Producer Organisations
- IFA Aquaculture
- National Inshore Fisheries Forum
- Irish Fish Processors & Exporters Association
- Environmental Pillar
- Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht (National Parks and Wildlife Service)
- Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government
- Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment
- Department of Defence
- Enterprise Ireland
- Údarás na Gaeltachta
- Bord Iascaigh Mhara
- Marine Institute
- Sea Fisheries Protection Authority
- Bord Bia
- Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland
- Environmental NGOs
- FLAGs

12 meetings with these key Stakeholders were held.

Step 4 - Seafood Taskforce (January 2021 - October 2021)

The Task Force was established by the Minister for Agriculture, Food & the Marine, Charlie McConalogue TD with a wide range of representation from across the seafood sector, local authorities and development groups as well as DAFM and relevant Government State Agencies. Chaired by Aidan Cotter assisted by a Steering Committee comprising Margaret Daly and Michéal O’Cinneide, the Task Force held fourteen meetings during the period March – October 2021.

The Terms of Reference of the Task Force were to examine the implications arising from the EU/UK TCA for the Irish Fishing industry and coastal communities particularly dependent upon it. It was, in particular, to outline initiatives that could be taken to provide supports for development and restructuring so as to ensure a profitable and sustainable fishing fleet and to identify opportunities for jobs and economic activity in coastal communities dependent on fishing. The Task Force considered how all available funding streams could be used to address, to the extent possible, the initiatives identified and the State agencies to support those initiatives. The Task Force also considered and recommended constructive actions that would help to alleviate the inequitable relative contribution of quota share by Ireland in the EU/UK TCA.

The examination and initiatives identified related to:

- The Irish fishing fleet,
- The Irish seafood processing industry,
- Other marine support industries, and
- Coastal communities particularly dependent on the seafood industry.

In addressing the Terms of Reference set, the Task Force focused on the following issues:

- The burden imposed by the TCA and how to address losses, necessary funding arrangements and the role of the Common Fisheries Policy Review.
- Longer-term fleet re-structuring measures through Voluntary Permanent Cessation schemes for the whitefish and inshore sectors that will restore balance between fishing capacity and available fishing opportunities.
- Short-term supports including a possible Voluntary Temporary Cessation Scheme and support schemes for the catching sectors, processors and Fishermen’s Co-operatives to mitigate the immediate impacts of the TCA.
- Potential onshore initiatives in the areas of processing, aquaculture, public marine infrastructure and Community Led Local Development (CLLD) that will help to strengthen and
- enhance coastal communities especially dependent on the seafood industry.

To assist the work of the Task Force, a public consultation was launched on 22 March and was open for one month. It was advertised in twelve papers (one National, two Trade Papers, nine Local Papers) and on the DAFM and BIM websites as well as BIM Social Media platforms. In total, 27 submissions were received from around the country representing the primary seafood producers and coastal community stakeholders. Multiple submissions were also received by the members of the Task Force that helped the deliberations of the Task Force. The recommendations made by the Task force were reviewed and incorporated into the EMFAF programme where relevant.

Step 5 - Public Consultation on Draft EMFAF Programme Document & SEA Report

A formal public consultation on the EMFAF Document was held on July- August 2022. This public consultation was seeking the views of stakeholders and other interested parties as the Minister for Agriculture Food and the Marine finalised Ireland's Operational Programme for the 2021-27 period under the European Maritime, Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund (EMFAF). This public consultation was intended to inform stakeholders on the proposals of the new Programme. This consultation ran in parallel with the SEA.

As a result of the consultation process 10 submissions were received from relevant stakeholders.

Partnership and EMFAF implementation

Relevant organisations and stakeholders will be invited to support the EMFAF Managing Authority in the implementation of the Programme and will be involved in the programme's implementation, monitoring and evaluation at national level in the work of the Monitoring Committee.

The composition of the Monitoring Committee is intended to be wide-ranging and will take into account the provisions set out in Articles 8 and 39 of Regulation (EU) 1060/2021 requirements. The composition of the Monitoring Committee will essentially correspond to the composition of the committee formed in the 2014-2020 EMFF programming period. The work of the Programme Monitoring Committee will promote the implementation of the partnership principle and will bring added value to programming.

In the preparation and implementation of the programme , the aim is to coordinate and coordinate activities with other EU funds. Cooperation between the Funds is promoted, for example, through cross-representation in study groups and monitoring committees, but also through joint informal meetings. The authorities acting as intermediate bodies guide and advise operators in applying for funding and in the implementation of projects , e.g. taking into account the needs of small organisations and operators.

The Fisheries Local Action Groups will implement the partnership principle in the preparation and implementation of strategies. The preparation of the strategies aims to involve locals actors in a wide-ranging and diverse manner. The management is involved in the selection of local projects, associations, businesses and local residents. FLAG activities are carried out in strong cooperation rural Leader activities through the implementation of Memorandums of understating between these groups in similar local areas.

7. Communication and visibility

Reference: point (j) of Article 22(3) CPR

Communication, visibility and transparency actions will be implemented in accordance with the CPR provisions under article 46-50 and in accordance with the EMFAF Regulation and they will aim at the visibility of the programme and the funding opportunities of the EMFAF.

The need for effective communication has a legal basis in the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union, which guarantees the right of all citizens to be informed about European issues. The MA will respect the integrity of this right by using all appropriate means to communicate to key stakeholders and, in particular, the general public, the opportunities, achievements and impact of the EMFAF Operational Programme in a visible, open and transparent way.

The MA will communicate the role, opportunities, results and impact of the EMFAF in order to contribute to the openness and transparency of the delivery of the EMFAF OP for Ireland. The key objectives are to:

- Highlight the positive contribution that the EMFAF is making to improve the lives of people living in coastal areas around Ireland
- Promote awareness of the results of the funding amongst the general public
- Ensure that potential beneficiaries are aware of the opportunities it presents
- Maximise an understanding of the objectives and achievements of operations supported by the EMFAF.
- Ensure compliance with the regulations and that the responsibilities of beneficiaries are understood and applied

The target audience will differ depending on the nature of the message to be communicated and appropriate media will be used to reach each audience. The target audience for each measure will comprise one or more of the following groups:

- General Public and Potential beneficiaries
- PMC, IBs, beneficiaries, and participants
- European Commission, European Commission Representation and European Parliament in Ireland.
- National and local media;
- Government Departments, Regional Assemblies, Local Authorities, Public Bodies, Employment Services
- Visiting delegations
- Elected representatives
- Economic and Social Partners
- Bodies representing civil society
- Academia, education and training bodies

Each year, the MA will implement a communications plan. The MA will ensure that mechanisms for the evaluation of communication measures are in place, in order to ascertain their effectiveness. In doing so the MA will be able to prioritise resources for the deployment of the most effective communication tools to meet its strategic objectives. According to the survey, out of those interested in hearing more about the EMFAF, 51% want to get information from websites, while 32% chose Social Media. 38% are interested in radio and newspaper adverts.

Measures will include:

- A single website portal to act as the main repository for information on EU Funds, including all information on the EMFAF OP. The website will form a central pillar in the delivery of the communication objectives
- Build upon existing social media profiles
- Information events
- Advertising
- Publications containing participant stories to highlight the positive contribution of the EU
- The use of data to publicise the results of the EMFAF
- Work with the national communication committee to deliver joint activities

To evaluate the overall impact of the communication activities, two surveys will be commissioned to measure the level of overall public awareness and attitudes of EU. Any other communication activity implemented during the course of the OP will include relevant indicators. All targets have been calculated on 2014-2020 communication results.

Tool Indicator Annual Target Evaluation Method

- Website Visitors 10,000 - Google Analytics
- Website Page Views 30,000 - Google Analytics
- Twitter Impressions 150,000 - Twitter Analytics
- Twitter New Followers 200 - Twitter Analytics
- Facebook Page likes +10% - Facebook Insights
- Facebook Post Reach +2% - Facebook Insights
- Case Studies Case Studies Collected 10 - Case Studies published on the website
- Publications Publications Produced 4 - Publications uploaded to website including newsletters, data required under Article 37.5 any other reports
- Publications Newsletter Reach 1000 people - Newsletter distribution + Digital Views
- Beneficiary Events Events attended by MA 10 - Attendance & publicity of event
- MA Events Presentations delivered 5 - Information provided on the OP
- MA Events Satisfaction 80% - Survey

At least **0.25%** of the OP budget will be dedicated to communication measures and will include a budget for assisting Intermediate Bodies with communication activities. The budget will have a degree of flexibility in order to react to changing circumstances and may be subject to change.

The MA will nominate a communication officer who will be responsible for the delivery and coordination of all measures. The MA will actively engage in the European Network of Communication Coordinators, to explore new and innovative approaches to communicating European funding.

The MA will report to the PMC and the Commission at least once a year on communication activities. the programme website will be operational within six months of the adoption of the programme and can be found on <https://eufunds.ie/european-maritime-and-fisheries-fund/emfaf-2021-2027/>

8. Use of costs, lump sums, flat rates and financing not linked to costs

Reference: Articles 94 and 95 CPR

Table 14: Use of unit costs, lump sums, flat rates and financing not linked to costs

Intended use of Articles 94 and 95 CPR	Yes	No
From the adoption, programme will make use of reimbursement of the Union contribution based on unit costs, lump sums and flat rates under the priority according to Article 94 CPR (if yes, fill in appendix 1)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
From the adoption, programme will make use of reimbursement of the Union contribution based on financing not linked according to Article 95 CPR (if yes, fill in appendix 2)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Appendix 1

A. Summary of the main elements

Priority	Specific objective	Estimated proportion of the final allocation within the priority to which the SCO will be applied in %	Type(s) of operation covered		Indicator triggering reimbursement		Unit of measurement for the indicator triggering reimbursement	Type of SCO (stand scale of unit, lump sums or flat rates)	Amount (in EUR) or percentage (in case of flat rates) of the SCO
			Code	Description	Code	Description			

Appendix 1

B. Details by type of operation

Appendix 1

C. Calculation of the standard scale of unit costs, lump sums or flat rates

1. Source of data used to calculate the standard scale of unit costs, lump sums or flat rates (who produced, collected and recorded the data, where the data is stored, cut-off dates, validation, etc.)

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2. Please specify why the proposed method and calculation based on Article 94(2) CPR is relevant to the type of operation.

3. Please specify how the calculations were made, in particular including any assumptions made in terms of quality or quantities. Where relevant, statistical evidence and benchmarks should be used and, if requested, provided in a format that is usable by the Commission.

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4. Please explain how you have ensured that only eligible expenditure was included in the calculation of the standard scale of unit cost, lump sum or flat rate.

5. Assessment of the audit authority(ies) of the calculation methodology and amounts and the arrangements to ensure the verification, quality, collection and storage of data.

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Appendix 2

A. Summary of the main elements

Priority	Specific objective	The amount covered by the financing not linked to costs	Operation type		Conditions to be fulfilled/results to be achieved triggering reimbursement by the Commission	Indicator		Unit of measurement for the conditions to be fulfilled/results to be achieved triggering reimbursement by the Commission	Envisaged type of reimbursement method used to reimburse the beneficiary or beneficiaries
			Code	Description		Code	Description		

B. Details by type of operation

Management of the crayfish fishery to protect critically endangered species

The objectives of the project are consistent with and reflective of the EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030 to eliminate (fishery) by-catch of species threatened with extinction and to introduce fishery management measures to enable recovery. Incentivizing actions to protect biodiversity and to “do no harm” (with respect to socio-economic impacts) when implementing these actions is a specified objective of the EU Biodiversity Strategy. The majority of project funding here will be used to evaluate, reduce and eliminate interactions with endangered and protected species and habitats in the project area and will involve key stakeholders directly in that process. This will be a multi-annual project covering the period 2021-2025.

Data Collection Framework

The Marine Institute has the delegated responsibility to organise and co-ordinate the data collection scheme to meet Ireland’s obligations under the Data Collection Framework (DCF) recast regulation (EU) 2017/1004. The following summarises the proposed Data Collection Programme for the Irish Seafood Operational Programme under EMFAF 2021-2027. The proposed programme is a continuation of the existing data collection activities carried out during 2014-2020 and additional components taking account of the following:

- a. the new legal obligations under the revised EUMAP which comes into force on the 1.1.2022;
- b. the needs identified during the SWOT analysis and intervention logic when developing the new programme strategy for EMFAF.

This will be a multi-annual project covering the period 2021-2027.

Marine Knowledge Scheme

This scheme will be implemented under Priority 4 and will contain multiple operations that cover the dissemination of knowledge and data relating to the marine environment and climate change. The scheme will be implemented in the period 2022 to 2029.

Appendix 4

EMFAF action plan for each outermost region

DOCUMENTS

Document title	Document type	Document date	Local reference	Commission reference	Files	Sent date	Sent by
PF Methodology Paper	Supplementary Information	16 Nov 2022		Ares(2022)7959447	PF Methodology Paper	17 Nov 2022	Pasley, David
Natura Impact Statement	Supplementary Information	16 Nov 2022		Ares(2022)7959447	Natura Impact Statement	17 Nov 2022	Pasley, David
NIS Appendix A	Supplementary Information	16 Nov 2022		Ares(2022)7959447	NIS Appendix A	17 Nov 2022	Pasley, David
NIS Appendix B	Supplementary Information	16 Nov 2022		Ares(2022)7959447	NIS Appendix B	17 Nov 2022	Pasley, David
NIS Appendix C	Supplementary Information	16 Nov 2022		Ares(2022)7959447	NIS Appendix C	17 Nov 2022	Pasley, David
NIS Appendix D	Supplementary Information	16 Nov 2022		Ares(2022)7959447	NIS Appendix D	17 Nov 2022	Pasley, David
SEA Statement	Supplementary Information	16 Nov 2022		Ares(2022)7959447	SEA Statement	17 Nov 2022	Pasley, David
SEA Environmental Report	Supplementary Information	16 Nov 2022		Ares(2022)7959447	SEA environmental report	17 Nov 2022	Pasley, David
National Strategic Plan for Aquaculture - Ireland	Supplementary Information	16 Nov 2022		Ares(2022)7959447	NSPA _ Ireland	17 Nov 2022	Pasley, David
IE EMFAF Formal observations letter MA Response	Supplementary Information	16 Nov 2022		Ares(2022)7959447	EMFAF Formal Observations MA response	17 Nov 2022	Pasley, David
Programme snapshot 2021IE14MFPR001 1.2	Snapshot of data before send	17 Nov 2022		Ares(2022)7959447	Programme_snapshot_2021IE14MFPR001_1.2_en.pdf	17 Nov 2022	Pasley, David