



EU funds  
for Malta  
2014-2020



OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER  
MINISTRY FOR EUROPEAN AFFAIRS

PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARIAT  
FOR THE EU PRESIDENCY 2017 AND EU FUNDS

# ANNUAL IMPLEMENTATION REPORT

## European Maritime and Fisheries Fund 2014-2020

**Annex 1**  
**Citizen's Summary**

**April 2016**

Funds and Programmes Division, MEAIM, Malta



Maritime and Fisheries Operational Programme 2014-2020  
Part-financed by the European Union  
European Maritime Fisheries Fund (EMFF)  
Co-financing rate: 75% EU Funds; 25% National Funds



***Investing in sustainable fisheries and aquaculture***

## Citizen's Summary of the Annual Implementation Report for year 2014 and 2015

### 1.1 Introduction

The European Maritime and Fisheries Fund Operational Programme (EMFF OP) for the 2014-2020 programming period, formally adopted on 3rd March 2015 is based on the following Union Priorities (UPs) and Specific Objectives:

#### **UP1: Promoting environmentally sustainable, resource-efficient, innovative, competitive and knowledge-based fisheries**

- **Specific Objective 1** - Reduction of the impact of fisheries on the marine environment, including the avoidance and reduction, as far as possible, of unwanted catches (public eligible allocation €200,000);
- **Specific Objective 4** - Enhancement of the competitiveness and viability of fisheries enterprises, including of small-scale coastal fleet, and the improvement of safety and working conditions (public eligible allocation €10,730,572);
- **Specific Objective 5** - Provision of support to strengthen technological development and innovation, including increasing energy efficiency, and knowledge transfer (public eligible allocation €200,000);
- **Specific Objective 6** - Development of professional training, new professional skills and lifelong learning (public eligible allocation €500,000).

#### **UP 2: Fostering environmentally sustainable, resource-efficient, innovative, competitive and knowledge-based aquaculture**

- **Specific Objective 3** - Protection and restoration of aquatic biodiversity and the enhancement of ecosystems related to aquaculture and the promotion of resource-efficient aquaculture (public eligible allocation €3,306,822)

#### **UP3: Fostering the implementation of the Common Fisheries Policy**

- **Specific Objective 1** - Improvement and supply of scientific knowledge as well as the improvement of the collection and management of data(public eligible allocation €4,426,910);
- **Specific Objective 2** - Provision of support to monitoring, control and enforcement, thereby enhancing institutional capacity and the efficiency of public administration, without increasing the administrative burden (public eligible allocation €5,731,003).

#### **UP5: Fostering marketing and processing**

- **Specific Objective 1** - Improvement of market organisation for fishery and aquaculture products (public eligible allocation €469,771).

#### **UP6: Fostering the implementation of the IMP.**

- **Specific Objective 1** – Development and implementation of the Integrated Maritime Policy (public eligible allocation €1,600,000).

In order to achieve these funding priorities, an analysis of the local context's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT analysis) along with a needs assessment of the fisheries and aquaculture sectors were undertaken during the drafting process of the EMFF OP which resulted in the identification of a number of highlighted EMFF measures to be implemented through the EMFF OP. This process in addition to feedback gathered through consultations held with the relevant stakeholders served to ensure that identified issues in the Maltese fisheries and aquaculture sectors are addressed.

## **1.2 Overview of the Implementation of the Operational Programme**

Following the adoption of the EMFF OP on 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2015, the official launch of the programme was held on 26<sup>th</sup> March 2015 which was subsequently followed by the first EMFF Monitoring Committee Meeting held in May 2015.

In order to continue steering its way into the EMFF Programme whilst also ensuring that the necessary tasks and activities are implemented prior to the issuance of EMFF calls, in 2015 the Managing Authority (MA) worked on a number of critical documents such as the Admissibility and Selection Criteria adopted by the EMFF Monitoring Committee, the Monitoring Committee's Terms of Reference and the EMFF Manual of Procedures.

With the aim of attaining its formal designation as Managing Authority, works also started in 2015 on the drafting of the Description of Management and Control Systems, the Project Selection Manual and the National Eligibility Rules for the EMFF Programming period. Development and testing of the modules comprising the EMFF Database was also conducted taking into consideration simplification measures such as the introduction of online applications adopted in the OP.

With reference to the issuance of calls, although no calls were launched in 2015 following the adoption of the EMFF OP in March 2015, MA preparatory tasks were undertaken between November and December 2015 for the first EMFF call for applications under Union Priority 3 (UP3) – Fostering the implementation of the Common Fisheries Policy (CFP), Article 77 Data Collection which was subsequently launched through a restricted call in March 2016.

In view of the effective implementation of the EMFF OP, its Union Priorities and related measures and especially in relation to the preparatory MA activities for the issuance of the initial EMFF calls for applications, towards end 2015 and beginning 2016, the MA kept in contact with the respective stakeholders. This also served to prioritise the calls to be issued and thus the measures to be implemented in 2016 and 2017.

## **1.3 Issues affecting the Performance of the Programme and measures taken to address them**

Although major issues affecting the performance of the programme were not encountered by Malta between 2014 and 2015, the MA notes that certain delays resulted in the implementation of the EMFF programme in terms of issuance of calls due to the late adoption of the EMFF Operational Programme

and also due to resource constraints taking into consideration the fact that in 2015 MA resources were shared between the implementation of the EMFF programme (2014-2020) and the closure of the EFF Programme (2007-2013).

In this regard, with the aim of minimising the risks of the delay in programme implementation, MA efforts in 2015 were focused on ensuring that the necessary resources, tasks and activities as described in Section 2 of this report were available and implemented in time in preparation for the issuance of EMFF calls. EMFF tasks implemented by the MA in 2015 in this regard revolved around ensuring that the requirements and obligations deriving from the Regulation (EU) 1303/2013 and Regulation (EU) 508/2014 such as the official launch of the EMFF programme, the setting up of the monitoring committee and its terms of reference and requirements in relation to the designation of the MA are met by the MA and its stakeholders (where applicable).

MA preparatory tasks implemented between mid to end 2015, helped to facilitate and speed up the process for the issuance of the first call for proposals issued in 2016 which shall be subsequently followed by other calls between 2016 and 2018.

Taking into consideration the Performance Framework of the EMFF programme and its set targets and indicators, as in 2014 and 2015, the MA shall continue maintaining contact throughout the programming period, with its beneficiaries and stakeholders to ensure that any issues affecting the performance of the programme are addressed.

#### **1.4 Evaluations of the EMFF Operational Programme**

In preparation for the 2014- 2020 EMFF programming period, the first phase of evaluation for the EMFF Operational Programme was implemented by the MA through the ***Ex-ante evaluation and Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) on the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund for the programming period 2014-2020.***

This evaluation was carried out in line with the requirements set out in Article 55 of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council with the overall aim of improving the quality of the design of the EMFF OP and verifying whether its objectives and targets can be reached. Recommendations and feedback provided through the Ex-ante Evaluation and the Strategic Environmental Assessment was taken into consideration in the EMFF OP.

Subsequent to this towards end 2015 and beginning 2016, the MA drew up and circulated an evaluation plan to EMFF Monitoring Committee members on 2nd March 2016 in accordance with Section 10 of the EMFF Operation Programme. Since this activity was completed in 2016, details on the Evaluation Plan will be provided in the Annual Implementation Report for the year 2016 to be submitted in May 2017.