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C(2023) 848 final

ANNEX

ANNEX

to the

COMMISSION IMPLEMENTING DECISION

amending Commission Implementing Decision C(2022)371 of 26.1.2022 on the financing of the European Maritime, Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund and the adoption of the work programme for 2022 and 2023

ANNEX

The Annex to the Commission Implementing Decision C(2022)371 is amended as follows:

2. Grants

The global budgetary envelope reserved for grants under this work programme in 2022 and 2023 is EUR 20 700 000 and EUR 26 870 000 respectively.

2.1. Scientific advice and data collection

The following action is added:

2.1.2. Improving scientific knowledge to strengthen the science-basis of management decisions under the CFP

Type of applicants targeted by the call for proposals:

Public and private research centres, institutes, universities, foundations and scientific bodies which are primarily active in fisheries science or in marine science applied to fisheries management and that are legally established in an EU Member State.

Description of the activities to be funded under the call for proposals

Political priorities of the year and context

One of the main principles of good governance applied to the Common Fishery Policy (CFP) is *the establishment of measures in accordance with the best available scientific advice* (Article 3, CFP Basic Regulation).

The success of the CFP is dependent on the availability of scientific advice for the management of fisheries and hence also on the timely availability of relevant supporting data on fisheries. To that end, the EMFAF supports, through shared management, the collection and processing of data by Member States. It also provides the possibility of supporting an effective knowledge-based implementation of the CFP through the provision of scientific advice under direct management.

Other EU financial resources are also available for research projects that could contribute to strengthen the scientific knowledge available in fisheries (e.g. Horizon Europe). Nevertheless, by their nature, those projects are usually large scale and more focused on delivering long-term insights. Thus, they are not always fit to provide immediate scientific advice in a targeted approach and within a shorter timeframe.

The development of scientific knowledge and advice is a continuous process, which is becoming more and more demanding as the advice is required for an increasing variety of fisheries conservation and management issues (e.g. multispecies and ecosystem assessments to implement an ecosystem approach to fisheries management (EAFM), multiannual recovery and/or management plans, management strategy evaluation, technical measures, incidental catch of vulnerable and sensitive species, etc.). Recent political orientations and commitments with impact on the CFP, such as the European Green Deal, EU farm to fork strategy and EU Biodiversity strategy 2030, as well as the report on the functioning of the CFP, are likely to stimulate the need for even more specific scientific input in support of the policy.

At the same time, the main providers of advice to the European Commission such as STECF, ICES, JRC or scientific committees of RFMOs and the national fisheries research institutes

on which they depend, have limitations in terms of capacity and resources to improve the existing knowledge and to address the growing needs in scientific advice.

For example, while the type and quality of data collected by Member States under the Data Collection Framework continues to improve, there are indications that some of this data cannot be entirely exploited owing to shortage of resources (for instance to process samples collected during surveys). This prevents the full use of this data and potentially limits substantial improvements in the quality of the advice for some specific stocks. This also calls for the development of automated methodologies to process samples.

The main scientific priorities related to this call are the reinforcement of policy-oriented fisheries science, the better use of the collected scientific data, the improved cooperation between scientists and industry and the contribution in supporting the EU scientific community, in developing and maintaining the relevant expertise to provide high quality scientific advice.

Objectives pursued

Grants shall aim at developing or strengthening the scientific knowledge needed to support the design of science based for fisheries conservation and management measures. Actions shall contribute, for example, to the following objectives:

1. Improve or update the available scientific knowledge to advise the European Commission on proposing new fisheries conservation and management measures or reviewing the existing ones within the CFP context.
2. Optimise the use of the biological samples and collected scientific data under the Data Collection Framework or any other national initiative.
3. Adapt the scientific advice currently provided for the CFP to the upcoming challenges affecting fisheries management such as climate change, and related changes in ecosystems.
4. Strengthen scientific knowledge to assess and monitor the impact of fisheries on the structure, function and dynamics of marine ecosystems, and their associated services
5. Increase understanding of stock structures, life histories, food webs and multi-species interactions.
6. Increase understanding and operationalization of an ecosystem approach to fisheries management (EAFM) to further develop capacity to provide advice using environmental, social and economic information, including through quantitative analysis.
7. Strengthen scientific and operational knowledge to monitor and assess the impact of fisheries on vulnerable and sensitive species with a view to identify biologically sensitive areas, hot-spots by-catch areas and mitigation measures to monitor and control mortalities.
8. Support the EU scientific community, in developing and maintaining the relevant expertise to provide high quality scientific advice to fisheries management.
9. Support the involvement of policy stakeholders in the provision of fisheries data, the process of the production of scientific advice, and the communication of scientific results.
10. Increase monitoring and understanding on the impact of other human activities and threats to fisheries stocks and linked ecosystems.

To achieve the objectives, actions can include for example (non-exhaustive list) collection of samples or data in the field and processing of samples (falling outside the scope of national data collection programmes), trials, meta-analysis, modelling (development, improvement, testing and/or validation), data validation or data preparation to feed into models.

Expected results and main tasks to be carried out

The funded actions are expected to improve the knowledge available to the EU (and global) fisheries scientific community and this in turn will have a direct influence on improving the science base of the conservation and management measures designed in the context of the CFP.

Implementation

CINEA

2.4 Maritime Policy and sustainable economy

The following action is **added**:

2.4.3 EU Reference Centre on animal welfare for aquatic animals

Type of applicants targeted by the direct award to a predefined entity.

Legal entity established in one of the EU Member States. Its selection will be done by DG SANTE through a Call for Selection and Designation having as legal basis [Regulation \(EU\) 2017/625 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 15 March 2017 on official controls and other official activities performed to ensure the application of food and feed law, rules on animal health and welfare, plant health and plant protection products](#), and most particularly Art. 95 and 96 that establish the process of designation, the responsibilities and the tasks of the EU reference centres for animal welfare.

The applications have to be submitted through the National Competent Authorities.

Description of the activities to be funded by the grant awarded without a call for proposals on the basis of Article 195 (f) of the Financial Regulation: *for activities with specific characteristics that require a particular type of body on account of its technical competence, its high degree of specialisation or its administrative powers, on condition that the activities concerned do not fall within the scope of a call for proposals*. This article 195 (f) applies because the selected reference centre will be the only body designated to perform research on aquatic animals' welfare.

Political priorities of the year and context

The “*Strategic guidelines for a more sustainable and competitive EU aquaculture for the period 2021 to 2030*” adopted by the Commission in May 2021 (COM(2021)236 final) identified fish welfare as an area for further work.

Objectives pursued

To implement the actions on fish welfare announced in the “*Strategic guidelines for a more sustainable and competitive EU aquaculture for the period 2021 to 2030*”.

Expected results and main tasks to be carried out

Support the development of a code of good practice on fish welfare based on scientific research and evidence, covering farming, transport and killing.

Support the development of common, validated, species-specific and auditable fish-welfare indicators throughout the production chain, including transport and slaughtering.

Implementation

CINEA

2.6. International Ocean Governance

Following the change in the mode of implementation (from direct to indirect), point 2.6.2 is moved to section 4 and becomes 4.4.2

3. Procurement

The global budgetary envelope reserved for procurement contracts in 2022 and 2023 is EUR 35 725 953 and **EUR 31 392 693** respectively

3.1 Scientific advice and data collection

Point 3.1.1 *Studies and services providing scientific advice for fisheries and aquaculture* is modified as follows:

General description of the contracts envisaged

The CFP is based on principles of good governance which include decision-making based on the best scientific advice. The main sources providing this advice are scientific advisory bodies such as the Scientific, Technical and Economic Committee for Fisheries (STECF), the ICES and the RFMOs and Bodies (RFBs).

Short-term needs for additional knowledge are addressed through scientific advice studies and services. The aim of this action is to provide scientific support covering such knowledge gaps that cannot be covered through scientific advisory bodies in support of the EU aquaculture and fisheries management and environmental protection.

Following the CFP regionalisation approach, knowledge gaps will be handled by means of studies and scientific advice clustered inter alia into the following groups:

- ~~the Central Arctic Ocean;~~
- fisheries beyond EU waters;
- **the EU waters in general;**
- **the Mediterranean and the Black Sea;**
- ~~the EU waters excluding the Mediterranean and the Black Sea;~~
- aquaculture.

In addition, open calls will be launched for the conclusion of the following new service framework contracts:

- *Framework contract for the studies providing scientific advice for aquaculture*

The contract aims to provide the Commission with specific and timely scientific advice or other services needed for the provision of the advice, to support the implementation of the Union legislation and guidelines regarding aquaculture.

- *Framework contract for scientific advice for fisheries beyond EU waters*

The contract aims to provide the Commission with specific and timely scientific advice for fisheries management or other services needed for the provision of the advice, within the context of the external dimension of the CFP.

The advice and services are sought to support the implementation of the CFP by applying the precautionary and the ecosystem approach, while ensuring coherence with Union's

environmental legislation (e.g. Marine Strategy Framework Directive) and with the Maritime Policy.

- *Framework contract for the studies providing scientific advice in support of the Common Fisheries Policy in EU waters ~~excluding the Mediterranean and the Black Sea~~*

The contract aims to provide scientific advice in support of the implementation of the Common Fisheries Policy in **EU waters in general or specific advice for** the Baltic, North Sea and Atlantic Ocean as well as in EU Outermost Regions and fisheries at the international level. **Specific advice affecting exclusively the Mediterranean and the Black Sea will be covered by the existing FWC (EASME/2020/OP/0021).**

3.1 Scientific advice and data collection

The following action is added:

3.1.3. Studies and services providing support for the data collection

General description of the contracts envisaged

Support activities to the implementation of EU legislation and policies on the data collection framework, in the form of an assistance mechanism for the Regional Coordination Groups (RCGs) for data collection.

Activities under this assistance will include the organisation of meetings, external communication (e.g. media-relations, publications, information materials, stakeholder events, workshops, conferences and support to participatory schemes/activities), maintenance of an information system to make publicly available the latest available information on the regional coordination groups for the data collection, as well as assistance to RCG members for establishing jointly long-term structures for providing support services.

Implementation

DG MARE and CINEA

3.3 Control and enforcement

Point 3.3.4 *Provision of IT Services and supplies* is modified as follows:

Implementation

DG MARE, co-delegation to PMO, DG DIGIT, DG SANTE, DG TAXUD

3.5 Maritime policy and sustainable economy

Point 3.5.1 *Maritime policy and development of a sustainable blue economy and promotion of healthy seas and oceans* is modified as follows:

General description of the contracts envisaged

Support will be given to:

- Design, development and implementation of policies and legislation related to the sustainable blue economy, e.g. scientific, legal and technical support, stakeholders consultation/involvement, missions, inspections, audits, evaluations, impact assessments, **foresight analyses**, methodological and IT support;
- Support, exchange of expertise, synergies and networking to improve the participation of different stakeholders to the design and implementation of the new approach for a sustainable blue economy¹;
- Perform support activities (e.g. secretariat, organisation of meetings) to the implementation of EU legislation and policies, including the identification and the promotion of blue investments, **blue skills**, the exchange of best practices and development of guidance for the sustainable development of blue economy sectors such as aquaculture.

This includes, inter alia:

- Support to the identification and the promotion of blue investments, the exchange of best practices and development of guidance for the sustainable development of blue economy sectors such as aquaculture and the blue bio-economy, with specific attention to mitigate their pollution and/or other environmentally harmful impacts;
- Continued services to support the implementation of the 3 EU Sea Basin Strategies - in the Atlantic, Black Sea and Western Mediterranean, by building on best practices and lessons learned from the past services contracts and by encouraging synergies between the different sea basins;
- Activities of the “Blue Forum for users of the sea” that the Commission will set up in 2022² to coordinate a dialogue between offshore operators, stakeholders and scientists engaged in fisheries, aquaculture, shipping, tourism, renewable energy and other activities; this includes the provision of administrative and technical support to the Commission and to Member States, in relation to the implementation of Maritime Spatial Planning, and in particular of Directive 2014/89/EU;
- Support to the design and implementation of Commission initiatives on algae, ocean observation, climate and decarbonisation through studies and other activities such as improving the consumer knowledge on the sustainability and traceability of seafood and aquaculture products
- An Observatory aiming to gather, analyse and disseminate socio-economic knowledge and intelligence for a better understanding and measurement of the EU sustainable blue economy along the value chain and the EU coastal regions;
- **Design and set up of a blue skills development mechanism in light of the 2023 European Year of Skills, to help with the identification and support of relevant training and up-/re-skilling needs;**
- External communication, e.g. media-relations, publications, information materials, translations, stakeholder events, workshops, conferences and support to participatory schemes/activities;
- An information system to make publicly available the latest available data of the Blue Economy.

¹ COM(2021) 240 final of 17/05/2021

² COM(2020) 741 final of 19/11/2020

3.6. International Ocean Governance

Point 3.6.1 Cooperation with and coordination among international fora, organisations, bodies and institutions is modified as follows:

Under the European Green Deal, and its related Biodiversity Strategy, and other Union priorities, such as IOG Agenda, the external dimension of the CFP and the Union Arctic Policy, the Union is active in promoting a multilateral rules-based order, including in particular the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, and the goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, especially SDG14 on life below water

In this context, the Union will organise actions aimed at fostering collaboration with relevant international agreements, arrangements, **scientific bodies** and partnerships to promote conservation and sustainable use of the seas and ocean at global and regional levels.

The Commission and the European External Action Service launched the updated International Ocean Governance Agenda. The Agenda encourages creating an Intergovernmental Panel for Ocean Sustainability (IPOS) building on applicable global expertise and existing scientific bodies (e.g. IPCC, IPBES, WOA). To achieve this objective, the Union will explore through this action the feasibility of setting up a new integrating science to policy interface for the ocean (an IPOS). The overall goal of the action is to promote production of transdisciplinary consensus-based scientific advice to decision-makers and political processes at the global level. Finally, the activity should engage in building a coalition of ocean science and policy actors and creating momentum to setting up an IPOS under the UN framework.

The Union is engaged in the Arctic Region, notably in countering global processes (climate change) affecting the Arctic in particular. The Union's interests in the Arctic touch upon many topics including energy, transport, environment, fisheries as well as sustainable economic development and cooperation with local population, including indigenous peoples. The Union will promote its commitment in the region following its updated Arctic policy.

The Union organises regularly an Arctic stakeholders' forum and a dialogue with Indigenous Peoples, to facilitate and strengthen stakeholders' collaboration in the region. These two events will be organised in 2022 and in 2023.

To achieve these objectives the Union will also organise events to promote the visibility of the Union actions and will support the participation of experts/speakers and stakeholders to these events.

Point 3.6.3 International cooperation and development of ocean research and data is modified as follows:

General description of the contracts envisaged

The Union promotes ocean research, data and science (the third pillar of the EU IOG Agenda is strengthening international ocean research and data). Comprehensive, reliable, comparable and accessible ocean knowledge will improve policy-making, drive innovation and facilitate a sustainable 'blue' economy. The Union has been building scientific collaboration with international partners, to achieve a better understanding of ocean dynamics and trends, to drive innovation and reduce costs, and will continue to do so in the upcoming two years.

Scientific support, including to local scientific fisheries observers, will be provided in the Eastern Central Atlantic fisheries area.

Finally, in implementing its science based approach the Union will fund scientific studies that will bring clarity on technical issues **such as those** related to international negotiations where the Union is involved, including the (Marine Biodiversity of Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction) BBNJ negotiations.

To achieve these objectives the Union will also organise events to promote the visibility of the Union actions, and will support the participation of experts/speakers and stakeholders to these events.

Actions covering multiple priorities

The following action is added:

3.8 Arrangements for monitoring, reporting and evaluation of MARE's legal basis

3.8.1 *Ex post evaluation of EMFF and mid-term evaluation of EMFAF*

General description of the contracts envisaged

Following the provisions of Article 45 of Regulation (EU) 2021/1060, the Commission shall carry-out a mid-term evaluation to examine the effectiveness, efficiency, relevance, coherence and Union added value of the EMFAF fund by the end of 2024.

At the same time, according to Article 57 of Regulation (EU) 2013/1303, the Commission shall carry out, an ex-post evaluation of the EMFF fund also by the end of 2024. To that end, by 31 December 2025 the Commission shall prepare a synthesis report outlining the main conclusions of the ex-post evaluation.

To cover such obligations under both funds, DG MARE will sign procurement contracts with external economic operators.

Implementation

DG MARE

4. Actions implemented in indirect management

The global budgetary envelope reserved for actions implemented under indirect management in 2022 and 2023 is EUR 11 950 000 and **EUR 12 835 000 respectively**.

4.1. Control and enforcement

Point 4.1.1 is deleted

4.2 Voluntary contribution to international organisations

The following action is added:

4.2.7 Memorandum of Understanding for the Conservation of migratory sharks (Sharks MoU) under the umbrella of The United Nations Environment Programme Finance Initiative (UNEP FI)

Implementing entity

UNEP FI

According to Article 62(1)(c)(ii) of the Financial Regulation, under the indirect management mode, the Commission may delegate budget execution tasks to different types of partners, to international organisations or their agencies, such as the UNEP-FI, within the meaning of Article 156 of the Financial Regulation.

Description

The EU signed the Sharks MoU, an independent, non-legally binding instrument linked to the Convention for the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS) family of multilateral agreements, in November 2011. Some Member States[1] (MS) have also signed the MoU. The MoU currently concerns 29 shark species listed in Annex 1 of the MoU.

The objective of the MoU is to achieve and maintain a favourable conservation status for migratory sharks based on the best available scientific information, taking into account the socio-economic and other values of these species for the people of the Signatories". The MoU is implemented through a Conservation Plan that has been adopted during the first meeting of the Signatories (MoS1) that took place in September 2012 in Bonn. This plan applies only to the species listed in Annex 1 of the MoU and establishes a comprehensive list of actions for the conservation of the migratory species concerned.

The specific objective of the identified project is provide Signatories to the Sharks MoU with a clear picture of the conservation situation across the globe, thus helping identifying possible loop-holes that would need to be addressed either through direct intervention by the MoU or through the input that Signatories could provide in other fishery management fora, particularly RFMOs

4.3 Maritime policy and sustainable blue economy

The following action is added:

4.3.3 Support and hosting of a digital platform for ocean observation

Implementing entity

European Environment Agency (EEA)

According to Article 62.1(c)(iv) of the Financial Regulation, under the indirect management mode, the Commission may delegate budget execution tasks to different types of partners, to international organisations or their agencies, such as the EEA, within the meaning of Article 156 of the Financial Regulation.

Description

This action will enable and ensure the necessary technical support for setting up and maintaining a new IT platform (Ocean Observation Platform) to assemble ocean observation campaign plans from public sector bodies and public undertakings into a spatial database.

The European Environment Agency (EEA) will support the Ocean Observation Digital Platform by providing, inter alia, access to their information technology infrastructure and tools. EEA will also provide advice and documentation and will take into account the needs of the digital platform in the ongoing development of Reportnet 3.0

Reportnet 3.0 is used for reporting on environmental legislation relevant to ocean observation such as the Habitats Directive and the Marine Strategy Framework Directive.

4.4. International Ocean Governance

The mode of implementation (from direct to indirect) for action 2.6.2 has been updated and it becomes 4.4.2:

4.4.2 Prevention, deterrence, and elimination of illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing; the development of actions, measures, tools and knowledge that enable safe, secure, clean and sustainably managed oceans

Implementing entity

INTERPOL Environmental Security Programme (ENS)

Description of the activities to be funded by grant(s) awarded without a call for proposals on the basis of Article 195(c) of the Financial Regulation.

INTERPOL is a unique body on a European scale to address the needs of the action described here. The fight against IUU fishing, is a key element of Union's International Ocean Governance agenda as well as of the Union Biodiversity Strategy.

The Commission applies a 'zero-tolerance' approach towards IUU fishing, which is a priority under the European Green Deal. When engaging in IUU fishing, in particular international cases of IUU fishing involving several countries across the globe, operators may commit criminal offences.

The Union will continue to support INTERPOL to assist member countries with a view to addressing IUU fishing and crimes connected to the fisheries sector.

The following action is added:

4.4.3 Contribution to World Bank PROBLUE Trust Fund

Implementing entity

The World Bank

Description

Engaging with the World Bank with the aim to build capacity towards sustainable blue economies is part of our Union International Ocean Governance (IOG) agenda. As a follow up of the Union contribution to PROFISH (2018-2020), this action will ensure continuous Union involvement in PROBLUE partnership council, with the objective of supporting International Ocean Governance and facilitating donor coordination.

The expected results are greater coordination, coherence and complementarity at global level between the WB portfolio and the Union programmes. This could be achieved through active participation of the Commission in PROBLUE, notably to the Partnership Council meetings, with the objective to:

- promote the Union’s international ocean governance strategy,**
- bring more focus on the Union’s experience and activities and**
- work on increased complementarity between the World Bank portfolio and the Union programmes.**

6. Other actions and expenditures

The global budgetary envelope reserved for other actions and expenditure in in 2022 and 2023 is EUR 3 910 000 and **EUR 3 610 000** respectively.

Point 6.1.1 is deleted

6.3 Maritime policy and sustainable blue economy

The following action is added:

6.3.3 Administrative Arrangement with the Joint Research Centre (JRC) on the Blue Economy

Amount

EUR 400.000

Description

Following the signature of an Administrative Arrangement between DG MARE and DG JRC in 2019, this Administrative Arrangement will continue to provide DG MARE with the necessary scientific and technical expertise to support its economic analysis of the EU blue economy beyond February 2022.

The JRC will further provide support to produce economic analysis and economic reports for the blue economy including tasks related to data management, trends analysis at the EU, Member States and sectors level.

The action will also cover the collaboration with JRC's Competence Centre on Modelling for measuring the socio-economic effects of future policy scenarios (investments, structural policy, innovation, labour productivity, climate change) in the blue economy and maritime regions.

The action aims at expanding collaboration on the bio and circular economies as well as collaboration with JRC's Technology Transfer Unit for exploring ways to promote the transfer of technology in the blue economy from the laboratory to the market stage.

Finally, the action will also support the analysis of the economic impacts of climate change on the EU blue economy.

Implementation

DG MARE