

INFORMATION FICHE NO 5

ACTION PLANS FOR THE OUTERMOST REGIONS

04/02/2019

RELEVANT PROVISIONS IN THE DRAFT LEGISLATION

Regulation	Provisions
EMFF Proposal	Article 6(2) Article 6(3) Article 9(4) Article 21
CPR Proposal	Annex V, appendix 4

This document is based on the text of the adopted EMFF and CPR proposals. It is a provisional text, without prejudice to on-going discussions. This series of fiches is intended to guide Member States, explaining and elaborating the text of the proposal.

OBJECTIVE OF THIS FICHE

This fiche provides orientation concerning the proposed action plans for the outermost regions annexed to the EMFF programmes of the three Member States concerned (France, Portugal, Spain).

LEGAL BASIS

The provisions on the action plans are laid down in Article 9(4) of the EMFF proposal. The template to be used in the programmes is laid down in Appendix 4 of Annex V of the CPR proposal. These proposed provisions are outlined in the Annex to this fiche.

BACKGROUND

The outermost regions face specific challenges linked to their remoteness, topography and climate, and have specific assets on which to develop a sustainable blue economy. As outlined in the Communication “A stronger and renewed strategic partnership with the EU's outermost regions”¹, developing the blue economy will require strategic planning and investments. This includes both traditional sectors (notably e.g. fisheries and aquaculture, tourism, shipping), and innovative sectors (such as marine renewable energy and blue biotechnology).

Moreover, the Communication foresees that the outermost regions should set up blue economy strategies to improve synergies between public policies and investments, and should facilitate access to finance for small-scale operators through micro-credits and financial instruments (such as loans and guarantee funds). Member States should step up the collection of scientific data and support for fisheries and marine research, adopt fisheries management measures, explore, where feasible, the possibility to restrict fishing within a 100 miles zone to vessels registered in the outermost regions.

In order to target EMFF support in the outermost regions to tackle these challenges, the Commission has proposed that the three concerned Member States provide in annex to their programme an action plan for each of their outermost regions. These action plans should focus the programming exercise on clear objectives relevant for the concerned outermost region as regards the sustainable exploitation of fisheries and the development of sustainable blue economy sectors, with a corresponding EMFF financial allocation. This would allow Member States to programme all types of support (compensation for additional costs and structural investment) for the outermost regions in one single document, thus fostering a strategic and consistent approach across the areas of support, also taking into account synergies with other instruments and funding sources.

CONTENT AND STRUCTURE

According to the template in Annex V of the CPR proposal, each action plan should first describe the overall “*strategy for the sustainable exploitation of fisheries and the development*

¹ COM(2017) 623 final, Strasbourg 24.10.2017

of the sustainable blue economy” in the outermost region concerned (section 1). Though Member States have full flexibility in this descriptive section, a clear link should be established with the Blue Economy Strategies called for under the 2017 Commission's Communication on the Strategy for the Outermost regions in so far as adopted by individual outermost regions. This strategic section should demonstrate how actions supported by the EMFF constitute a coherent approach to foster fisheries and the blue economy in each outermost region. It should clearly set out the objectives to be reached over the programming period with the support of the EMFF.

The action plan should then specify the overall strategy with a “*description of the main actions envisaged*” in the context of EMFF support (section 2). This section is organised along three strands corresponding to the main relevant areas of support of the EMFF:

- 1) Structural support to the fishery and aquaculture sector under the EMFF,
- 2) Compensation for the additional costs under Article 21,
- 3) Other investments in the sustainable blue economy necessary to achieve a sustainable coastal development.

There is no strict correspondence between the strands of the action plan and the Priorities of the EMFF, except for strand 2/Article 21. Therefore, both strands 1 and 3 may cover actions under any of the areas of support, except Article 21.

Finally, section 3 of the template describes the synergies with other sources of Union funding (e.g. ERDF, Horizon Europe) and section 4 describes the synergies with the action plan for small-scale coastal fishing. For both sections, Member States have flexibility in the description.

COMPENSATION FOR ADDITIONAL COSTS

The compensation for additional costs under Article 21 of the EMFF will be described in section 2 of the template, in accordance with the provisions of that article and with the delegated act on the criteria for the calculation of the additional costs. This description in the action plan will replace the compensation plans of the current EMFF and thus fully include the compensation regime in the programmes.

In order to avoid duplication with section 2.1.1 of the programme (interventions of the Fund for each area of support), the description of Article 21 in that section should be a short summary of the corresponding part of section 2 of the action plans.

FINANCIAL ALLOCATIONS

Article 6(2) of the EMFF proposal sets out minimum amounts for the outermost regions at Member State's level. Each national envelope has to be distributed across the outermost regions of the Member State through the action plans. Member States freely decide on that allocation but any change at a later stage requires a programme modification. However, current EMFF practice indicates that Member States tend to combine all change requests in single modifications for a longer period of time, thus avoiding multiple programme amendments.

At the level of each action plan, Member States have to break down the allocated amount across the three strands: 1) structural support to the fishery and aquaculture sector, 2) compensation for the additional costs, 3) other investments in the sustainable blue economy necessary to achieve a sustainable coastal development.

According to Article 6(3) of the EMFF proposal, the amount of the compensation for the additional costs shall not exceed 50% of the overall allocation at Member State's level. This aims to ensure a balance between compensation and structural investment. However, since the 50% limit applies at Member State's level, it may be higher in one or more outermost regions if it is lower elsewhere.

SYNERGIES WITH THE BLUE ECONOMY STRATEGIES FOR THE OUTERMOST REGIONS

The Action Plan for the Commission's Communication on the Strategy for the outermost regions (2017) includes the preparation of Blue Economy Strategies for the outermost regions. Ideally, these Strategies would be rather comprehensive in terms of covering all blue economy sectors of importance to the outermost region concerned. However, the outermost regions may prefer to focus on specific sectors of strategic importance for their blue economy. There is no specific timeline, format or content requirement for the adoption of these strategies.

Where the Strategy concerns sectors that fall under the scope of the EMFF under shared management, it should be specifically described in sections 1 and 2 of the EMFF action plan. In this case, the EMFF should be the tool for implementing the Blue Economy Strategy. If the Strategy concerns topics that do not fall under the scope of EMFF support under shared management, it should be addressed in section 3 on the synergies with other Union funding sources in the EMFF action plan.

QUESTIONS

- How can the outermost regions' actions plans make the best use of the EMFF to address the specific challenges linked to the remoteness, topography and climate of the outermost regions?
- How can Member States facilitate the preparation of the action plans, with involvement of all regional stakeholders in the outermost regions, and ensuring that all relevant areas contributing to the blue economy are addressed (including the collection of scientific data and support for fisheries and marine research)?

ANNEX: relevant provisions in the Commission’s proposals

Article 9(4) of the EMFF proposal

Member States concerned shall prepare as part of their programme an action plan for each of their outermost regions referred to in Article 6(2), which shall set out:

- a. a strategy for the sustainable exploitation of fisheries and the development of sustainable blue economy sectors;
- b. a description of the main actions envisaged and the corresponding financial means, including:
 - i. the structural support to the fishery and aquaculture sector under Title II;
 - ii. the compensation for additional costs referred to in Article 21;
 - iii. any other investment in the sustainable blue economy necessary to achieve a sustainable coastal development.

Appendix 4 of Annex V of the CPR proposal (template)

*EMFF action plan for each outermost region
Template for submitting data for the consideration of the Commission*

Date of submitting the proposal	
Current version	

1. Description of the strategy for the sustainable exploitation of fisheries and the development of the sustainable blue economy

<i>Text field [30 000]</i>

2. Description of the main actions envisaged and the corresponding financial means

Description of the main actions	EMFF amount allocated (EUR)
Structural support to the fishery and aquaculture sector under the EMFF <i>Text field [10 000]</i>	
Compensation for the additional costs under Article 21 of the EMFF <i>Text field [10 000]</i>	
Other investments in the sustainable blue economy necessary to	

achieve a sustainable coastal development <i>Text field [10 000]</i>	
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3. Description of the synergies with other sources of Union funding

<i>Text field [10 000]</i>

4. Description of the synergies with the action plan for small-scale coastal fishing

<i>Text field [10 000]</i>
