

Draft Minutes

Meeting of the Expert group on the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF)

12 June, 2019, Brussels

1. Approval of the agenda and of the minutes of previous meeting

The agenda and the minutes were approved.

2. Nature of the meeting

The meeting was not public but webstreaming was arranged within Commission Services including JRC-Ispra.

3. List of points discussed

3.1. Presentation of outlines of the 2020 Annual Work Programme

COM consulted the experts on the Annual Work Programme of the direct management part of the EMFF for the year 2020 (WP2020) already at its preparatory stage. This is the last WP under the current EMFF. WP2020 provides for a significant degree of complementarity and continuity with the types of actions implemented in the previous years in the fields of:

- Control and enforcement (IT infrastructure, evaluation missions);
- Voluntary contributions (strengthening the scientific bases, contribution to UN organisations, GFCM);
- Governance and communication (Advisory Councils, information and communication);
- Market Intelligence (development and dissemination of market intelligence);
- Scientific Advice (ICES, STECF, enabling studies);
- IMP (along the four spending areas defined by the EMFF Regulation).

The draft work programme is expected for the September meeting of the EMFF Committee for delivering an opinion.

For the question of EE, COM informed that there is no dedicated financing for the purpose of the Baltic Sea. The Baltic Sea is very successfully covered by other resources, eg. the ERDF under macro-regional strategies or the Horizon2020 programme.

3.2. Preliminary results of the evaluation of aquaculture policy

COM presented the preliminary outcome of the interim evaluation of the open method of coordination (OMC) for the sustainable development of aquaculture. The interim evaluation is prepared by an external contractor. Its objectives are to assess the efforts that have been done so far, to inform about the achievements as well as to provide input for future policy making. In this process the OMC received a very positive assessment because It contributed to a more in-depth understanding of the evolution of the development of aquaculture as well as to the improvement of strategic planning. On the other hand, there is little information on the impact of the

OMC on the wider objectives of the CFP. Difficulties and hindering factors were also outlined. Within the context of the evaluation, recommendations (eg. review of the strategic guidelines, clarifying terminology, introducing outcome benchmarking, more pragmatic guidance on introducing aquaculture into spatial planning, developing good practices) have also been developed.

Experts used the opportunity to link this presentation to the Commission proposal for the new EMFF. EE sought justification for the use of financial instruments. LV was worried about the revision of the Strategic guidelines and whether it implies an obligatory update of the national plans.

3.3. Experiences of financing coastguard cooperation under direct management

COM informed the experts on the outcome and results of maritime cooperation and surveillance under mainly direct management.

As regards financing: 3 MEUR is spent on coastguard cooperation, 10 MEUR on CISE in form of grants to Member States.

COM highlighted the ECGFA-Net project (European Coast Guard Functions Academy – Network) that lasted for four years (2015-2019) with the cooperation of fifteen coastguard function authorities. With the help of the project:

- A training portal was developed;
- A training and education framework was established;
- Guidance was provided for standardization of ECGF Student and Expert Exchange Programme tested with EU and third countries;
- Coast Guard Functions Standard Qualification Framework and definition of National Standard Qualification Frameworks were developed due for adoption next November 2019;

The outcomes of the project were disseminated during Coast Guard events and European Maritime Day in 2018 and 2019.

The added value of the direct management part of the EMFF with regard to coastguard cooperation was identified in the possibility of establishing cooperation at EU and/or sea basin level, launching multipurpose operations, developing standard training frameworks and providing capacity building.

For the question of ES, COM confirmed the intention to continue also in the post-2020 period with what has been started in direct management in the current period. As regards specifically CISE, with the set up of a governance system (potentially with EMSA), MS are foreseen to support adaptations and inter-operability to allow for authorities to connect.

As regards the concern by MT of demarcation between the EMFF and BMVI, COM shared that the EMFF plans to support more targeted support. However, in shared management the complementarities should be ensured by the Managing Authorities and the it should be set out already in the Partnership Agreement.

3.4. Evaluation of the entry-exit scheme, and results of the study on engine power

COM presented first the evaluation of the entry-exit scheme that is required by Article 23(3) of Regulation 1380/2013. It was prepared by external contractor on the basis of data from the EU fleet register, information from Stakeholder and public consultation as well as on the basis of review of existing literature. The overall

conclusion of the evaluation is that the Entry/Exit scheme is fit for purpose and effective in complementing the in-depth reforms of fishing fleet capacity management. However, three points of concern were identified:

- direct relevance depends on whether conservation and management measures are effective enough to regulate the use of fishing capacity;
- still high number of unbalanced fleet segments in all basins;
- serious lack of compliance with declared engine power.

As regards the latter, COPM also presented a study on engine power verification by Member States. The study was delivered by an external contractor. It covered 15 Member States (BE, DE, DK, EL, ES, FI, FR, IE, IT, LV, NL, PL, PT, SE, UK) and lasted for a year. The contractor carried out un-announced physical engine power verifications of 80 in the 15 MS from 6 areas and fisheries. Main conclusions of the study are:

- Tests of 68 fishing vessels across 14 Member States showed that misreporting of engine power is a widespread within the sample. Non-compliance (or indications of) was found in every MS and in every investigated fleet segment;
- current systems of certification do not effectively meet the objective to ‘ensure that the certified engine power is not exceeded;’
- In some MS, there is a systematic mismatch between certified & real power mainly due to high level reliance on declarations from engine manufacturer;
- As a good practice, 3 MS were found systematically conducting engine test upon certification;
- As regards verification systems, Only 1 MS has tested engines within CR framework (following sampling plan>desk analysis). 2 others tested beyond CR framework. Others have no system in place or carry out solely desk analysis. Given the high rate of non-compliance of engines detected in this study, even where a verification system is applied it proved to be ineffective.

All 15 MS will receive their own individual report and where non-compliance was detected follow-up actions against the operators will be required from the MS.

COM will further examine the implications of non-compliances on other regulations (eg. emission control). The outcome of the study will be used to inform the ongoing negotiations concerning the revision of the Control Regulation.

Experts received the presentations with moderate reactions. CY welcomed the recommendations but is on the view that increasing the speed of a vessel is not a matter of the engine. He also shared that the average cost of a verification is 3000 EUR.

3.5. FAME

Presentation from FAME focused on two elements:

- *Needs assessment*
The Needs Assessment of the Managing Authorities is being completed via a series of surveys to the MS and a Pilot Workshop in Prague later in June. This will be followed up at the Annual Stakeholder Meeting in Brussels in October.
- *Update on Infosys*

The Infosys presentation highlighted overall implementation at the end of 2018; 2.4 billion committed (42%), 1 billion spent (19%) as well as several statistics by sea basin, measure and theme.

Several MS (ES, SE and BE) remarked on the importance and utility of Infosys as illustrated by the presentation given. This experience shows that collecting data at a greater frequency in the next period will be very useful for illustrating financial data and state of implementation of the operations several times per year, while only small changes could be expected in indicator values when reported at higher frequencies. The monitoring and evaluation fiche presented later in the meeting confirmed that the focus in the next period is on reporting the former operational data several times a year in Infosys, while the latter, indicator values, will be automatically calculated based on the individual operation data.

3.6. FARNET

Presentation from FARNET focused on the following elements:

- *Report from Smart Coastal Areas seminar (April 2019)*

The FARNET Support Unit presented the most recent Fisheries Local Action Groups seminar that took place in Bantry in April. The theme, Smart coastal areas, was developed to focus on innovative aspects in four areas in particular; smart partnerships, smart resource use, smart financing and smart services. A guide on the theme will be available after the summer. Examples of projects presented at the seminar are available on the FARNET website (<https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/fpfis/cms/farnet2/>)

- *Managing Authorities and National Networks meeting (17-18 June)*

The next Managing Authorities and National Networks meeting will take place from 17 to 18 June. The following will be explored with participants; 'quality' projects – focus, themes and beneficiaries, CLLD delivery and improvement, MA twinning session, updates on implementation, tri-laterals meetings, sea-basis exchanges, etc

- *Summary report of the CLLD Delivery systems survey and Update on CLLD conference (2-4 December)*

The FLAG replies to the survey on CLLD have been analysed and presented – the information is being used to produce a guide on delivery of CLLD to help with the next programming period. This work will also be used for the CLLD conference being held 3-4 December 2019 in Brussels.

3.7. Explanatory fiches on post-2020 EMFF

This section of the meeting was dedicated to explaining how aspects of the post 2020 period will work. COM asserted that the documents and presentations are based on the Commission's proposal and do not currently take account of developments in parliament and council.

- *Climate change contribution tracking*

COM presented the main points of the fiche. It was highlighted that the EMFF is expected to contribute 30% of its overall financial envelope to the

climate change objectives. MS activity in this regard should be focused around programme development and project selection giving due consideration to climate change adaptation and mitigation. The budget allocated to the climate objectives will be automatically calculated based on MS financial reporting according to the coefficients given in Annex IV of the proposal, and for direct management, according to the similar coefficients set out in the annex of the fiche. Several MS (EE, LV, SE, BE, EE, LT) expressed doubt that the 30% expected contribution would be reached given the low coefficients set in the annex, assuming MS operations are broadly similar to the current period.

COM explained that it is an expected contribution, not a target which must be achieved, and that it is on the basis of the MFF, where different funds have different levels of expected contributions, to reach an overall expected 30% contribution. It was further clarified that not every EMFF programme must achieve 30% in order to be approved. The basis for assessing that sufficient consideration is given to climate will primarily be the SWOT analysis and the justifications provided for the programme strategy. The Sea Basin analyses will also have a climate section outlining what the main challenges are related to climate at the level of the sea basin.

- *Common Monitoring and Evaluation System*

COM briefly presented the revised fiche on monitoring and evaluation which was originally discussed at the previous expert group. Version II, as circulated takes account of the feedback and written comments received. COM clarified some key concepts behind the system which were the subject of several written comments from MS after the presentation of the first version; 1. The objective of the system is to measure and track progress, not to penalise when targets are not met. 2. The indicators in Annex I of the proposal are not for MS, but for the Commission to report on. 3. MS should select at least one (the most relevant) common indicator per area of support. It will not be necessary to use several indicators that do not reflect the objectives of the programme of the MS. Discussion on technical aspects such as indicator definitions and types of operations was set aside to follow at the dedicated technical workshop organised by FAME the following day. Written comments on the document were requested by 30 June.

COM (BUDG) also presented the concept of the core performance indicators of the MFF. In order to report on corporate performance at the level of the EU budget, several higher level indicators are included in each of the basic regulations. In the case of the EMFF, these indicators are in Annex I. These indicators, and their equivalents in other regulations, are to be reported at EU level by COM. They should draw information from the common indicators reported by MS at programme level, as well as from other sources as necessary.

3.8. AOB

N/A.

4. Conclusions/recommendations/opinions

There were no points submitted for the approval of the Expert Group and therefore there was no voting at the meeting.

5. Next steps

N/A

6. Next meeting

Next meeting will take place on 30 September, 2019.

7. List of participants

See annex.