



THE EUROPEAN MARITIME AND FISHERIES FUND (EMFF)

DRAFT INVESTMENT PROPOSALS

The Department for Agriculture and Rural Development
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1. Introduction

1.1 The European Maritime and Fisheries Fund

1.1.1 The European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF) replaced the European Fisheries Fund (EFF), from 1st January 2014 and is one of the European Structural Funds (ESIF) administered by the European Commission for the period 2014 to 2020. Its overall objective is to promote 'smart sustainable and inclusive growth', as set out in the Europe 2020 Strategy. In addition to the 'core' grant-making portion of the fund, there are also separate ring-fenced budgets for enforcement, data collection, Integrated Maritime Policy and technical assistance.

The EMFF targets the following six Union Priority areas:-

- Promoting sustainable, resource efficient, innovative, competitive and knowledge based fisheries;
- Fostering sustainable, resource efficient, innovative, competitive and knowledge based aquaculture;
- Fostering the implementation of the Common Fisheries Policy (CFP);
- Increasing employment and territorial cohesion
- Fostering marketing and processing; and
- Fostering the implementation of the Integrated Maritime Policy (IMP).

1.1.2 The Programme provides support opportunities for all sectors of the industry – sea and inland fisheries, aquaculture businesses, producer organisations, processing and support sectors - as well as for wider fisheries areas.

1.2 The UK EMFF Operational Programme

1.2.1 Council Regulation (EC) No 508/2014 (the "EMFF Regulation") requires Member States to draw up an Operational Programme (OP). The Department of the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) has drawn up the Operational Programme for the UK, assisted by and with input from, the 4 devolved fisheries administrations.

1.2.2 A public consultation on the draft UK Operational Programme took place in March 2014 and details of the responses to that consultation can be found at https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/336327/emff-consult-sum-resp.pdf

The OP was formally submitted to the European Commission on 27 April 2015 and approval of the UK's programme was secured on 1 December 2015. A copy of the approved UK Operational Programme will be available at http://ec.europa.eu/fisheries/cfp/emff/country-files/index_en.htm

1.3 Financial provisions

- 1.3.1 The UK's overall allocation for the EMFF Programme is €243.1m. This includes funding ring-fenced for data collection, control and enforcement. The UK has about €137m for core, or project, funding over the duration of the EMFF programme. The "core" allocation for Northern Ireland in Euro is €13.73m which is worth £10.73m at an exchange rate of 1.28. This rate has been used to make all conversions from Euro to Sterling within this document.
- 1.3.2 In addition to EMFF funding, the Programme requires Member States to provide "funding" of at least 25% to complement the Commission's contribution, meaning for every £1 funding invested through the Programme, 75% will be provided by the European Commission and 25% by the Member State.
- 1.3.3 This allocation (10%) is consistent with the size of NI fishing fleet (landings and vessel numbers) and the number of processing plants, employment and ports when compared to the overall UK industry figures. It is also consistent with Northern Ireland spend (as a % of UK total) under the previous EFF Programme.
- 1.3.4 A summary of the total Northern Ireland allocation of funding available under EMFF is as follows: -

| | EMFF | National | TOTAL |
|----------------------------------|----------------|-----------------|----------------|
| Core project funding | €13.73m | €4.58m | €18.31m |
| Data Collection | € 6.15m | €1.53m | €7.68m |
| Control & Enforcement | € 3.14m | €0.35m | €3.49m |
| Technical Assistance | € 0.49m | €0.16m | €0.65m |
| TOTAL NI Allocation | €23.51m | €6.62m | €30.13m |

- 1.3.5 The amounts in respect of Data Collection and Control and Enforcement are "ring-fenced" and cannot be transferred or reallocated to support core funded projects.

1.4 Purpose of the Investment Proposal

- 1.4.1 This Investment Proposal for the Northern Ireland allocation of the UK's European

Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF) has been prepared by DARD Fisheries Division and provides background information on the fishing industry which includes sea fisheries, aquaculture, inland fisheries, processing and the support sector. It also provides a summary of the six Union Priorities within the EMFF Regulation and the context for DARD's investment proposals. The final sections provide more information on how the Department proposes to administer the Fund.

2. Overview of the NI Fishing Industry

2.1 Introduction

2.1.1 For the purposes of this investment plan, references to the Northern Ireland fishing industry includes sea fisheries, aquaculture, inland fisheries, processing and the support sector. The entire industry employs around 1,900 people (both full and part-time), with some 600 employed in the processing sector, 832 in the catching sector and 171 within aquaculture. The main commercial inland fishery is the Lough Neagh eel fishery which provides employment for approximately 300 fishermen and helpers.

2.2 Responsibilities for Fisheries

2.2.1 DARD's Fisheries Division has responsibility for sea fisheries, aquaculture and fish health policy; the enforcement of fisheries legislation; the licensing of aquaculture; fishing vessel licensing; and the administering of fisheries grant schemes. DARD is also a sponsor Department for the Foyle, Carlingford and Irish Lights Commission (FCILC) and the Northern Ireland Fishery Harbour Authority (NIFHA).

2.2.2 The Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure (DCAL) is responsible for the salmon and inland fisheries of Northern Ireland. DCAL is not responsible for the Foyle and Carlingford catchments, which are the responsibility of the Loughs Agency, although the Department retains overall policy responsibility for salmon, eels and certain conservation and development responsibilities in the Loughs Agency area. The fisheries that DCAL manages include an extensive public angling estate.

2.2.3 The Loughs Agency is an agency of the Foyle, Carlingford and Irish Lights Commission (FCILC), a cross-border implementation body established under the 1998 Belfast Agreement. The FCILC's sponsoring Departments are the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development in the North and the Department of Agriculture Fisheries and Food in the South.

2.2.4 The Agency aims to provide sustainable social, economic and environmental benefits through the effective conservation, management, promotion and development of the fisheries and marine resources of the Foyle and Carlingford Areas. DOE (Marine Division) is responsible for protecting the marine area while maximising the sustainable use of its resources, now and for future generations. Its main areas of work are summarised under the following themes: -

- Bathing Waters
- Conservation

- Historic Environment
- Licensing - Marine & Wildlife
- Marine Litter
- Marine Plan for Northern Ireland
- Marine Strategy & Water Framework Directives
- Monitoring
- Shellfish Waters

- 2.2.5 The Department is also responsible for the Coastal Community Fund, which is administered by the Big Lottery Fund. In 2011, the Department published the NI State of the Seas report, which provided an assessment of the marine area, structured around the requirements of the Marine Strategy Framework Directive.
- 2.2.6 From April 2015, the Department of Agriculture will merge with the Marine elements of both the Department of the Environment (NI) and the Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure, to form the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA). While the merger will bring all aspects of fishing and marine environmental policy under “one-roof”, the move will have no implications on the delivery of the NI EMFF Investment Proposals.
- 2.2.7 In 2014, vessels registered in Northern Ireland landed 57,300 tonnes of fish worth approximately £55.7m into ports in the UK and abroad representing around 6.5% of the total value landed by UK vessels. Shellfish (e.g. Nephrops, scallops, lobsters) accounted for 50% of the value of fish landed by NI vessels, pelagic (e.g. herring, mackerel) landings were 46% and demersal (e.g. haddock, cod) landings 4%.
- 2.2.8 In December 2014, there were 364 vessels registered in Northern Ireland (46 based at Ardglass, 103 at Kilkeel, 54 at Portavogie and 161 elsewhere). These figures represent a slight decrease in registered vessels since 2010 when there were 379 Northern Ireland vessels.
- 2.2.9 The Northern Ireland fishing fleet is generally comprised of older vessels with the majority of vessels over 30 years old. This high age profile raises a number of important issues for the local fleet, particularly with regard to ongoing seaworthiness, health and safety and fuel efficiency.
- 2.2.10 The structure of the fleet has changed considerably in recent years. The main fishery for the NI fleet is for Nephrops and there are now 75 vessels, featuring a mixture of single and multiple trawl vessels, fishing exclusively for nephrops. Additional vessels also fish for Nephrops and other species. The strength of this

fishery is based on sustainable Nephrops stocks for which the Total Allowable Catches have been stable over recent years.

- 2.2.11 The whitefish fleet has reduced significantly since 2000 in line with the decline in the cod stock resulting in a succession of TAC cuts, fishing effort restrictions and the imposition of the spring cod spawning closure in the Irish Sea. Although the outlook for some stocks such as haddock are good, cod stocks still remain poor and this is likely to result in limited fishing opportunities for these vessels for the foreseeable future.
- 2.2.12 The pelagic sector targets mainly mackerel and herring mostly in the Irish Sea, West of Scotland, and in the case of the largest vessel, further afield into the Atlantic. These are profitable and sustainable fisheries and long term prospects are generally good.
- 2.2.13 The remainder of the fleet mainly fishes for shellfish in the Irish Sea and ranges from over 15m scallopers to “under 10m” vessels fishing for lobster and crab. This sector is generally sustainable and profitable, but data on shellfish stocks and catches from the under 10m vessels is poor relative to species subject the EC quota regime.
- 2.2.14 The vast majority of landings within Northern Ireland take place in the three Co. Down fishing villages of Ardglass, Kilkeel and Portavogie. In 2014, 25% of the total value of catches was landed into Ardglass, while Kilkeel and Portavogie accounted for 33% and 26% respectively. Only 16% of the total value was landed in other ports. Ardglass is the main centre for processing pelagic fish in NI.
- 2.2.15 Employment within the Northern Ireland catching sector has fluctuated over the last 10 years with a sharp increase in employment numbers over the last 3 years when there have been in excess of 800 people been employed by the catching sector.

2.3 Aquaculture

- 2.3.1 The aquaculture industry is spread throughout Northern Ireland although marine fish farms are located mainly within Northern Ireland’s five sea loughs. Of the 86 currently licensed aquaculture sites, 54 are licensed for the cultivation of shellfish and 32 for the cultivation of finfish.
- 2.3.2 The main shellfish species cultivated are mussels and Pacific oysters although a small quantity of Native oysters and clams are also grown. The main finfish species cultivated are salmon, rainbow trout and brown trout.
- 2.3.3 In 2014, the aquaculture sector in NI produced 1,117 tonnes of finfish worth

£5.097m and 3,240 tonnes of shellfish valued at £4.756m. In total, the aquaculture sector directly employs 79 full time and 92 part time people.

2.4 Processing

- 2.4.1 Most NI processing businesses operate exclusively as either Nephrops, demersal or pelagic processors, with only 8 of the 30 registered processors being classified as “mixed-fish” processors. The sector has a combined annual gross turnover in excess of £76.1m (2013 figures) which represented a 9% increase on the 2012 figure. Great Britain is the main market outlet accounting for 35% of production. The home market accounts for 30% of sales with the remainder in other EU countries some 35%.
- 2.4.2 White fish processors source less of their white fish locally although some raw material is imported primarily from the Republic of Ireland and Scotland. The prawn and mixed processors source most of their raw material locally. In total, Northern Ireland fish processors and merchants employ just over 600 staff with 24 of the processing businesses based in the three South Down ports of Kilkeel, Ardglass and Portavogie.

2.5 Inland Fisheries

- 2.5.1 The main commercial inland fishery is the Lough Neagh and Lower River Bann eel fishery. It is the largest wild eel fishery in Europe and has an output of yellow and silver eels averaging around 600 tonnes. The fishery is maintained and managed by the Lough Neagh Fishermen’s Co-operative Society Ltd (LNFCS). Common ownership, by the fishing community, and combined management of glass eel, yellow eel and silver eel phases permits a management system with long-term sustainability as its main aim. The co-operative organisation is an arrangement linking fishery management to the long-term interests of fishermen and their families, a fundamental driver for sustainable management.

2.6 Support Sector

- 2.6.1 A support sector including net making, ice supply, marine engineering and ship chandlery complements Northern Ireland’s sea fisheries industry and are vital to sustaining the socio-economic well-being of Northern Ireland’s rural fishing dependent communities. The majority of these support services are located around County Down’s 3 commercial fishing ports.
- 2.6.2 The Northern Ireland Fishery Harbour Authority was established in 1973. Its statutory

obligation is to –

- Improve, manage and maintain the harbours of Ardglass, Kilkeel and Portavogie
- Operate harbour facilities
- Dredge and maintain the entrances and channels to the harbours
- Construct, alter or extend any tidal works as necessary.

2.6.3 Over the last six years NIFHA, has delivered a strategically focused series of investments, which have linked improvements to the port's infrastructure and services, to improvements in safety, product quality and environmental performance.

2.6.4 All this has been aimed at helping improve and sustain the operational safety and the excellent fishery produce available from the Northern Ireland fleets. Investments exceeding £6.75 million were funded through the European Fisheries Fund, with national match funding provided DARD.

2.6.5 A breakdown of the information provided in this section is available in [Annex 1](#).

3. Strategic context for investment

3.1 Common Fisheries Policy

- 3.1.1 The new Common Fisheries Policy (CFP) reform came into operation on 1 January 2014 with the three objectives of:-
- achieving Maximum Sustainable Yield for fish stocks;
 - development of measures to achieve the objectives of multiannual plans, conservation measures and discard plans at a regional level; and
 - a commitment to land all fish subject to catch limits (the “landing obligation”) starting in 2015 and completing by 2019
- 3.1.2 The landing obligation poses the most significant challenge to our fishing fleet. This obligation commenced on 1st January 2015 for herring and mackerel fisheries and will apply from 1 January 2016 for Nephrops and whitefish fisheries. It does not apply to species such as scallops, crab and lobster.
- 3.1.3 While fishing fleets can take advantage of exemptions and flexibilities, much work is still to be done to minimise the impact of the landing obligation on the fleet, particularly nephrops trawlers.
- 3.1.4 The landing obligation on pelagic vessels operating in the Irish Sea has applied since 1st January 2015. However, the obligation appears to have minimal impact as the practice of discarding at sea from the Irish Sea pelagic (herring) fisheries is rare with fish being pumped on board and then discharged directly to processors. The main issue is likely to be small amounts of fish under the Minimum Conservation Reference Size (MCRS) that will have to be separated and used for non-human consumption.
- 3.1.5 The main effect of the landing obligation will be felt by the Irish Sea Nephrops fleet. A recently published review by Seafish of the potential economic implications of the landing obligation highlighted that if nothing was done to respond to the landing obligation, whiting quota would be exhausted quickly and there would be an early fisheries closure and obviously serious consequences. The Seafish report reveals that by-catch Irish Sea stocks, for which our Nephrops fleet has only small quotas, will run out very quickly once the fleet is required to land them and count them against quotas by 2019. These stocks are termed “choke” species. In order of impact these are whiting, plaice, cod and haddock.
- 3.1.6 The Seafish analysis excludes the effects of quota uplifts and the adoption of highly

selective fishing gear that may mitigate the impact of the landing obligation significantly more than the use of exemptions within the discard plan. Our fleet has already adopted highly selective fishing gear to reduce cod by-catch and this also reduces by-catches of other choke species. Trials are being supported, and will continue to be supported, to further improve selectivity, especially by-catches of whiting, but it is unlikely that the problem can be completely solved by gear technology. One has to balance selecting out fish against retaining prawns and excluding small fish similar in size to the target species will be very difficult.

- 3.1.7 Through the Fishing Industry Task Force, the industry has also raised a number of practical difficulties aside from quota restrictions and selectivity. The landing obligation requires that catches be sorted into fish above MCRS that can be marketed and fish below MCRS that has to go to non-human food uses such as fish meal. They point out that the extra sorting time on board will halve the amount of time they can fish, storage space on board will be used up and there will be costs for additional fish boxes and ice to keep these fish separated and in good condition. Processors are also unhappy that extra costs will be incurred and there are also uncertainties over the effect of extra landings on fish prices.
- 3.1.8 The landing obligation has been a major focus of attention at the Fishing Industry Task Force and we have been trying to encourage industry to look at developing practical solutions.

3.2 The next steps

- 3.2.1 Huge changes have been made in the last few years to reduce catches of cod and the highly selective fishing gear now in use also significantly cuts catches of juvenile whiting and other unwanted fish. The current gears reduce whiting catches by 50-65% and there is an on-going programme of research involving scientists and the industry to make further improvements. This work will continue up to the final deadline for implementation of 2019.
- 3.2.2 The ability to use many of the flexibilities under the landing obligation depends on being able to provide robust data. This includes; data on the state of stocks and discard levels, data on limits to selectivity in fishing gears, and data on survivability. An important first step will be to identify areas where data is missing or can be improved and thereafter take steps to produce this data. Within the UK a process has already begun to review discard related projects in each region to ensure that work is complementary and cost effective. Regional management groups are also looking at this issue.

- 3.2.3 At EU level DARD is part of the UK delegation on the North Western Waters Management Group of Member States that is developing the discard plans for this region. Local industry representatives are also involved at EU level in the stakeholder led North Western Waters Regional Advisory Group that will be putting forward proposals for mixed fishery management in the Irish Sea.
- 3.2.4 Implementation of the landing obligation is also one of the main priorities for the NI Fishing Industry Task Force. The Task Force includes representatives of the local catching and processing sectors as well as DARD policy, AFBI fisheries science and Seafish economics and will draw extensively on EMFF funding with the aim of minimising the impacts of the landing obligation on the local fleets.

3.3 Experience of the EFF programme

- 3.3.1 In Northern Ireland, the 2007-13 European Fisheries Fund (EFF) programme was delivered to support the implementation of the Common Fisheries Policy, consistent with the aims and objectives within the UK's National Strategic Plan for Fisheries.
- 3.3.2 All eligible project applications and supporting papers, such as Economic Appraisals, were subject to scrutiny and final approval by an EFF Selection Committee that included independent representation.
- 3.3.3 Under EFF, stakeholder advice proved particularly vital in ensuring that grant-aid was allocated in the most appropriate fashion and a continued high level of stakeholder involvement will be necessary to ensure EMFF funds are used in the most effective manner. Our proposals for doing this are set out in Section 6. It is anticipated that the Department will draw on existing structures, such as the Fishing Industry Taskforce, Inshore Fisheries Partnership Group and the Seafish Northern Ireland Advisory Committee, to gather stakeholder's views on the Department's initial EMFF proposals and on the Programme as it is delivered.

3.4 Funding awarded (by Measure) under EFF 2000-2006

| Funding Measure | Spend (£) | Share (%) | Main beneficiaries |
|------------------------------------|-----------|-----------|--------------------|
| Investments on Board & Selectivity | 1,214,252 | 6.51% | Vessels owners |
| Small-Scale Coastal Fishing | 99,784 | 0.54% | Vessel owners |
| Productive Investments | 774,986 | 4.16% | Fish Farmers |

| Funding Measure | Spend (£) | Share (%) | Main beneficiaries |
|-------------------------------|-------------------|------------------|--|
| in Aquaculture | | | |
| Processing & Marketing | 2,640,717 | 14.17% | Fish Processors |
| Fishing ports & landing sites | 6,755,679 | 36.24% | NIFHA & Councils |
| Collective Actions | 2,791,096 | 14.97% | Vessel owners, POs, Fish Farmers, other. |
| Protection of Fauna & Flora | 2,233,429 | 11.98% | Inland Fishermen |
| Community Local Development | 1,830,794 | 9.82% | Fishing communities |
| Technical Assistance | 300,910 | 1.61% | DARD (EMFF Management) |
| Total | 18,641,647 | 100.00% | |

- 3.4.1 The EFF provided a source of much-needed investment to the Northern Ireland fishing industry and supported a large number of successful projects. In the processing sector, assistance was awarded for the construction of new storage facilities and the modernisation and/or extension of existing premises - mainly in order to increase the efficiency of operations through improved production and product quality that would support stronger economic performance.
- 3.4.2 The bulk of the spending under EFF went on measures relating to the catching sector, including very significant investment in the three Northern Ireland fishing ports, to provide the fishing industry with the infrastructure required for a modern fishing fleet.
- 3.4.3 The provision of more selective fishing gear and safety equipment onboard Northern Ireland's fishing vessels were other major successes which would not have been possible without EFF intervention, with many schemes completed as "collective operations projects" managed by a range of organisations such as the two Fish Producer Organisations, the Fisherman's Mission, Seafish and Agri-Food and Biosciences Institute (AFBI).
- 3.4.4 However, there were also disappointments as regards the operation of the scheme. These were particularly notable within aquaculture when, similar to previous funding programmes, the number of viable projects supported through EFF were not sufficient to fully utilise the available funding that was allocated at the start of the EFF

Programme.

- 3.4.5 As a result of reduced employment and wealth creation opportunities within fishing communities across Europe through the implementation of the Common Fisheries Policy, EFF, for the first time, made provision to support community-led local regeneration by Fisheries Local Action Groups, where a sustainable development strategy for the region had been prepared and approved. In NI, EFF provided £1.8m to the South-East Area Fisheries Local Action Group to deliver a range of socio-economic projects identified within the sustainable development strategy, in and around County Down's primary fishing dependencies of Ardglass, Kilkeel and Portavogie.
- 3.4.6 DARD's experience of delivering past European Funding Programmes, in particularly EFF, will be used to effectively manage the EMFF Programme and has been used in developing these proposals for investment in the local fishing industry. DARD is committed to having a fishing industry that is sustainable, profitable, effectively managed and which maximises the contribution to the economies of the communities in which it is based, while fully compliant with its obligations under both the Common Fisheries and national policies.

Achieving sustainability

- 3.4.7 Northern Ireland's key fishery, nephrops, is currently fished at a sustainable level and DARD policy is to follow the scientific advice produced by ICES with the aim of all stocks being fished at Maximum Sustainable Yield levels by 2020. Numbers of cod in the Irish Sea mean that an EU recovery programme remains in place which has led to reduced levels of quota and a spring closure period.
- 3.4.8 The basis for sustainable management of these fish stocks is to have sound, complete and up-to date information on stock levels, mortality, by-catches and discards and fishing effort. This will require close co-operation and trust between fishermen, scientists and administrators, to gather information and to use it to develop sustainable management plans. These plans should ensure that fishing effort is maintained at a level that can guarantee abundant fish stocks in the long term and therefore secure the livelihoods of the fishermen who depend on these stocks. Therefore focus should be placed on
- Gathering relevant information on the main offshore fisheries
 - Increased co-operation and engagement between fishers, scientists and fisheries administrators.

- 3.4.9 The EU fish landing obligation will also help the recovery of fish currently discarded. The obligation will lead to further adoption of highly selective gear so that, by 2019, discards will be significantly reduced and much lower mortality in by-catch species. As well as impacting on fish stocks, the act of fishing can have other impacts on the marine environment which require mitigation where these occur in or near to environmentally important sites. There is a need for the catching sector and environmentalists to exchange views and better understand each other's concerns to ensure greater co-operation in the development of environmentally sustainable fisheries management.
- 3.4.10 Domestic and European retail markets are demanding fish that are harvested sustainably and that catchers adhere to best environmental practices. Many major retailers now view a Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) accreditation for fisheries as the best means of providing that guarantee and assurance to its customers and eco-labelling has become be a major in sourcing policies.
- 3.4.11 Environmental sustainability can therefore be promoted through: -
- Continued research into practices and technologies that reduce by-catches, discards and wider environmental impacts.
 - Co-operation and engagement between the catching sector and environmentalists.

Improving profitability

- 3.4.12 Given the limited scope in the short to medium term to expand existing fisheries in order to meet Maximum Sustainable Yield objectives, and limited opportunities to diversify into alternative fisheries, it is vital that existing fishing opportunities are fished sustainably and that the returns to the catching sector from fishing are optimized. The sector needs to have the confidence to be able to invest in its future development and this requires economic conditions that offer a stable and profitable long term future.
- 3.4.13 This is assisted by having a fishing fleet whose capacity is in balance with its fishing opportunities so that each vessel can generate sufficient income to cover operating costs, make a profit, and be able to re-invest in modern vessels. While DARD will encourage change and restructuring, financial support for such change can only be provided if there is a proven need for it and if it can be demonstrated as providing sound value for money.
- 3.4.14 With limited opportunities, coupled with increasing operating costs, quality initiatives

and dynamic market demands, fishing businesses are acutely aware of the need to maximise the value of the catch rather than simply maximising volumes of production. There will be opportunities to help fishers reduce operating costs and adverse environmental impacts through supporting the use of fuel efficient engines, and more selective gear and fishing methods. Industry profitability might also be improved through greater collaboration between catchers and processors.

3.4.15 The Department believes that a greater focus on product quality from “boat-to-plate” will be needed to maximise the value of the catch and service an increasingly demanding customer base. Continued investment in skills is also required, not only to ensure an appropriately trained and safe workforce operates within all industry sectors, but also to provide, where appropriate, diversification opportunities within fishing dependent communities.

3.4.16 Profitability may be improved specifically through;

- Sustainable and effective management of fisheries involving stakeholders
- Ensuring that the capacity of the fleet matches fishing opportunities
- Reducing the costs of catching and landing fish
- Improving the quality of the catch
- The adoption of traceability or quality assurance schemes
- Placing a greater proportion of the NI catch into higher value markets and niche markets

Encouraging investment

3.4.17 A major challenge facing the industry is a lack of confidence that translates into unwillingness by vessel owners to invest in modern vessels. While over the past few years, the catching sector has invested more in replacement, younger vessels, many vessels are still old and have low asset depreciation and high maintenance costs, including on health and safety equipment.

3.4.18 However, a much more serious problem is the fluctuating cost of fuel and the limited action that can be taken to improve the fuel efficiency of older vessels. Vessels of modern design fitted with the latest technology are significantly more fuel efficient. Therefore, creating the conditions that restore confidence and that encourages vessel owners to invest in replacement vessels is critical to the long term future of the fleet sectors.

3.4.19 The conditions that will encourage investment are;

- Security of long term fishing opportunities
- Functioning and responsive markets
- Stable economic conditions

More effective management

3.4.20 The key to effective fisheries management and development is closer co-operation between fisheries administrators and the industry to develop management plans, policies and regulatory controls that are acceptable, practical and enforceable. Such participation should result in greater stakeholder support and compliance and ultimately the objectives of management and development plans should be more easily achieved.

3.4.21 Major steps have been taken in recent years to improve the quality of data collected from fishing fleets, including electronic recording of landings, sales and vessel monitoring systems. These have improved confidence in fisheries data, traceability and overall management of fisheries.

3.4.22 More effective management and development will involve

- Co-operation and consultation with stakeholders in policy development
- Introduction of acceptable and practical regulatory control measures
- Greater use of information technology for the monitoring, enforcement and for the collection and reporting of fisheries management information.

Supporting local communities

3.4.23 The offshore fish catching sector in Northern Ireland is based at the three Co. Down fishing ports of Portavogie, Ardglass and Kilkeel. Fishing is an important source of employment and the industry supports some 1200 jobs in these communities. By securing a long term future the fish catching sector, fishing based employment will be retained in these communities.

3.4.24 We aim to both support coastal communities to continue with the business of sea fishing, increase the economic value of these activities and the social cohesion arising from them, but also to support diversification away from these activities where appropriate, through the delivery of the Community-led Local Development within fishing dependent communities, which first emerged through the EFF Programme, and further encouraged by the Commission through the EMFF Regulations.

3.5 Inshore sector

- 3.5.1 The inshore sector is coming under increasing pressure from greater levels of human activity and environmental change. The challenge for government and stakeholders is to balance the future development of fisheries and other commercial and recreational activities with the maintenance and enhancement of an ecologically diverse and healthy marine environment.
- 3.5.2 Since 1995 the inshore sector has experienced a significant growth in the number of smaller, “under10m” fishing vessels working inshore waters. As a result of this progressive increase in fishing effort, ensuring inshore fishing effort equates to sustainable levels is therefore a challenge that must continue to be addressed.
- 3.5.3 The major driving force for fisheries management in the inshore sector will be the delivery of the Inshore Fisheries Strategy published by the Department in December 2014, entitled “Northern Ireland Inshore Fisheries: Delivering a Sustainable Future”, in response to the consultation on a Sustainable Development Strategy for Inshore Fisheries.
- 3.5.4 In developing the strategy, there was broad agreement that the key challenges for the inshore fleet were the need to increase focus on inshore fisheries management; increasing obligations to protect the environment; addressing the current gaps in fisheries data; the increasing spatial pressures on fishing grounds; and, sustainability. The Inshore Strategy aims to address these challenges through a partnership approach to governance, improved data collection, effective compliance measures, enhancing economic returns, safer fisheries and improving communication, information and technology.
- 3.5.5 One of the Strategy’s priorities was the creation of a Partnership Group to inform future inshore fisheries policy and increase stakeholder participation in management decisions and their involvement in promoting the long-term sustainability of inshore fisheries. This Inshore Fisheries Partnership Group has since been established to advise DARD on industry needs and priorities for the fisheries and whose opinion regarding the optimal use of EMFF funding will be helpful in delivering on the Department’s strategic aims for the inshore.

3.6 Aquaculture

- 3.6.1 DARD’s Aquaculture Branch has been involved in a number of initiatives designed to encourage an ecosystem-based approach to the sustainable development of aquaculture.

- 3.6.2 DARD commissioned the Agri-Food and Biosciences Institute (AFBI) to develop a carrying capacity model for Northern Ireland's five sea Loughs (Foyle, Larne, Belfast, Strangford and Carlingford) which is now used to predict the carrying capacity of each sea Lough. This helps the Department to manage the quantity of farmed shellfish that may be produced without a negative impact on Loughs' ecosystems.
- 3.6.3 The Co-ordinated Local Aquaculture Management Systems (CLAMS) process is an all island initiative established to manage the development of aquaculture in bays and inshore waters at a local level.
- 3.6.4 The Environmental Code of Conduct for Aquaculture Companies and Traders (ECOPACT) process promotes an ecosystem-based approach to ensure the sustainable development of safe and healthy food products in a viable and efficient manner. This process encourages the optimisation of farm husbandry and maintenance, with consideration to the impact of interactions of the farm related activities with the surrounding environment.
- 3.6.5 The strategic action plan in support of the Northern Ireland Agri-Food Industry "Going for Growth" outlined key growth targets for the fisheries and aquaculture sub-sectors, recognising their contribution to the wider agri-food sector. By working closely with the industry, DARD aims to support a well represented, cohesive and stable aquaculture sector producing high quality products using sustainable methods.

3.7 Processing

- 3.7.1 The strategic direction of the Northern Ireland processing and marketing sector continues to be heavily dependent upon the factors impacting on the catching sector and its future development. The well-established local base for processing pelagic, shellfish and aquaculture species has, during the period of the EFF Programme, been significantly strengthened by Whitby Seafood's relocation of its primary UK scampi-producing operations to South Down.
- 3.7.2 New EC and UK legislation aimed at improving hygiene, health, safety and quality has required significant investment in processing businesses. Increasing demands continue to be made by the retail sector regarding the standard of processing facilities and equipment.
- 3.7.3 As the public appetite grows for healthy food with traceable origins, the Northern Ireland processing sector will need to continue to respond to the demands of a more environmentally aware consumer. It will be important for processors to demonstrate that Northern Ireland produce has been caught from a sustainable resource using

methods that minimise impact on the marine environment and non-target species, and is processed in factories which are clean and safe. Traceability schemes which provide such consumer confidence will be pivotal to the future success of the sector.

- 3.7.4 The importance of improving the efficiency of the supply chain cannot be understated. In Northern Ireland the supply chain is presently fragmented. Improved and mutually beneficial collaboration continues to have the potential to develop sustainable and more lucrative trading relationships. The primary objective will be to assist the industry to maximise production potential for high quality and healthy seafood in a sustainable, competitive, and profitable manner for a worldwide market.

3.8 Inland Fisheries

- 3.8.1 The north's main commercial inland fishery is the wild eel fishery based in Lough Neagh and the Lower Bann. Council Regulation (EC) No 1100/2007 put in place a framework for the protection and sustainable use of the stock of European eel. Its implementation saw a concerted effort throughout Europe to take steps to bring about a recovery of the eel population which is considered to be one breeding population through the implementation of Member States' eel management plans which provide for flexible solutions to address catchment-specific problems and (over time) enable the Regulation's 40% silver eel escapement target to be met.
- 3.8.2 The management of the commercial eel fishery on Lough Neagh is regarded as a blueprint for the management of eel fisheries elsewhere. The fishery has been managed with considerable foresight with quota systems, closed fishing times and effective fish passes contributing to successful compliance with the requirements of the EMP. The stocking of glass eels into the Lough is an integral component of this success, a measure which the Co-operative has funded since 1985. The overall impact has been the continuation of a viable indigenous industry striving for a balance between reasonable and highly regulated exploitation and effective conservation measures.
- 3.8.3 Currently, there are trade restrictions on European eel to markets outside of the EU. There are concerns that the export of glass eels from some European Countries to the Far East for consumption and aquaculture purposes diminish the supply available in Europe for restocking and drive up the costs of doing so. Furthermore, the re- importation of mature eels for consumption in European affects market prices and has the potential to have adverse impacts on the viability of wild fisheries here.
- 3.8.4 Under EFF, £750k European Funding was provided to the Lough Neagh Fishermen's

Co-Operative Society Ltd_(via the Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure) to support a five-year programme of restocking of Lough Neagh eels,_consistent with the Commission approved Eel Management Plan, to ensure the fishery remains sustainable.

3.9 Support Sector

- 3.9.1 The provision of safe and modern harbour facilities is a key element of DARD's policy for the sustainable development of the sea fishing industry in Northern Ireland. The Northern Ireland Fishery Harbour Authority which is responsible for the 3 fishery harbours of Ardglass, Kilkeel and Portavogie faces a considerable challenge to maintain services to the fishing industry against a backdrop of increasing costs and reducing income from harbour users.
- 3.9.2 Up to now the Authority has been successful in meeting its running costs from dues and charges but the "break-even" position has become increasingly difficult to secure. A number of factors beyond the control of the Authority have reduced its ability to generate operating income sufficient to meet annual operating costs.
- 3.9.3 A recent review concluded that berthing facilities were adequate for the needs of fleet. In December 2014, there were 115 over 10m vessels and 88 under 10m vessels in length based at the Authority's ports. Berthing facilities are charged through a levy on the value of landed fish and an annual charge for Harbour Dues (i.e. a basic facility charge). The levy on the value of landed fish is currently 2.75%. This is comparable with levies charged by other fishery harbours.
- 3.9.4 The provision and maintenance of slipway facilities is essential to the safe operation of the local fishing fleet and is especially important given the concerns over marine safety. The availability of these facilities is a key factor in retaining and developing jobs in the marine engineering sector which is vital to the sustainability of the local fleet.
- 3.9.5 EFF has supported the maintenance and upgrade of slipping facilities in Kilkeel and Portavogie which continue to have the potential to sustain and grow the marine engineering support sector. The Authority continues to seek new business from fishing vessels based the ROI and west coast of Scotland.
- 3.9.6 The Authority's 3 fish markets are licenced food handling premises which act as key interface facilities between the industry's catching and buying/processing sectors. Utilisation of the markets has reduced in parallel with the reduction in landings.
- 3.9.7 A key function for NIFHA is to maintain navigational safety by dredging approach

channels and berths. The Authority has its own dredger “MD Kilmourne” (based at Kilkeel) where regular dredging of the harbour entrance and inner basin is required to keep the port open. The dredger is also used, but on a less frequent basis, at both Ardglass and Portavogie, and indeed recently, at Ballycastle. Significant investment in the MD Kilmourne was provided under EFF to install new propulsion and protective coating systems and to refurbish accommodation spaces to achieve standards required by the work boat code and good Health and Safety practice.

3.10 SWOT Analysis

- 3.10.1 A UK SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities & threats) Analysis for the fishing industry was prepared by external consultants in 2014 in preparation for the development of the UK Operational Programme. Workshops were held in each fisheries administration to determine the relevance of the analysis to each Devolved Administration.
- 3.10.2 Commercial fisheries will remain an important sector throughout the UK, and CFP reform and improved management approaches will help to stabilise stocks and enhance sustainability, hopefully leading to increased output and profit.
- 3.10.3 The key needs identified in the SWOT analysis are summarised in [Annex 2](#) and cross-referenced to the appropriate Union Priority and EMFF Article that can address the identified need for NI stakeholders.

4. EMFF Union Priorities and Objectives

4.1 Introduction

4.1.1 EMFF is the Commission's tool for supporting Member States to achieve the aims and objectives of the CFP. The Commission has set 6 Union Priorities in respect of objectives for use of EMFF funding as follows: -

4.2 Union Priority 1

Promoting environmentally sustainable, resource-efficient, innovative, competitive and knowledge-based fisheries by pursuing the following specific objectives: -

- the reduction of the impact of fisheries on the marine environment, including the avoidance and reduction, as far as possible, of unwanted catches;
- The protection and restoration of aquatic biodiversity and ecosystems;
- The ensuring of a balance between fishing capacity and available fishing opportunities
- The enhancement of the competitiveness and viability of fisheries enterprises, including of small-scale coastal fleet, and the improvement of safety and working conditions;
- The provision of support to strengthen technological development and innovation, including increasing energy efficiency, and knowledge transfer;
- The development of professional training, new professional skills and lifelong learning.

4.3 Union Priority 2

Fostering environmentally sustainable, resource-efficient, innovative, competitive and knowledge-based aquaculture by pursuing the following specific objectives: -

- the provision of support to strengthen technological development, innovation, and knowledge transfer;
- the enhancement of the competitiveness and viability of aquaculture enterprises, including the improvement of safety and working conditions, in particular of SMEs;
- the protection and restoration of aquatic biodiversity and the enhancement of ecosystems related to aquaculture and the promotion of resource-efficient aquaculture;

- the promotion of aquaculture having a high level of environmental protection, and the promotion of animal health and welfare and of public health and safety;
- the development of professional training, new professional skills and lifelong learning
- The protection and restoration of aquatic biodiversity and ecosystems;
- The ensuring of a balance between fishing capacity and available fishing opportunities

4.4 Union Priority 3

Fostering the implementation of the CFP by pursuing the following specific objectives: -

- The improvement and supply of scientific knowledge as well as the improvement of the collection and management of data;
- The provision of support to monitoring, control and enforcement, thereby enhancing institutional capacity and the efficiency of public administration, without increasing the administrative burden.

4.5 Union Priority 4

Increasing employment and territorial cohesion by promoting economic growth, social inclusion and job creation and providing support to employability and labour mobility in coastal and inland communities which depend on fishing and aquaculture, including the diversification of activities within fisheries and into other sectors of maritime economy.

4.6 Union Priority 5

Fostering marketing and processing by pursuing the following specific objectives: -

- The improvement of market organisation for fishery and aquaculture products
- The encouragement of investment in the processing and marketing sectors

4.7 Union Priority 6

Fostering the implementation of the IMP through the achievement of specific objectives including: -

- Integrated maritime surveillance, and
- The promotion of the protection of the marine environment, in particular its biodiversity and marine protected areas, such as Natura 2000 sites, and the sustainable use of marine and coastal resources.

5. DARD PROPOSED INVESTMENT BY UNION PRIORITY

5.1 Union Priority 1 – Sustainable Development of Fisheries

Article 26 – Innovation

- 5.1.1 The EMFF may support projects that develop or introduce new or substantially improved products and equipment, as well as processes, techniques and management and organisation systems. Operations financed must be carried out in collaboration with a scientific or technical body, recognised by the Member State or European Union, with the results of projects being publicised by the Member State.
- 5.1.2 Article 26 provides the mechanism for supporting innovative partnership work between stakeholders that focuses on addressing industry needs in areas such as, for example, potential for growth, adding value, researching of new markets and niche products, processing waste materials and improved handling of fish on-board.
- 5.1.3 While the most prominent challenge facing the catching and processing sectors at this time is the industry's obligations regarding the Landing Obligation under the reformed CFP, DARD proposes to use Articles 28, 38 and 39 to address such obligations rather than Article 26.
- 5.1.4 DARD proposes to open the Innovation Measure through calls to apply for funding by sea-fisheries stakeholders and anticipates a total of five projects being supported during the Programme period to 2020.

Total Public Investment:

| | |
|----------------|-------|
| EMFF | €350k |
| National | €117K |
| TOTAL..... | €467k |

Article 27 – Advisory Services

- 5.1.5 To improve performance and competitiveness, and to promote sustainable fisheries, EMFF can support feasibility studies and advisory services that focus on the viability of proposals that may be eligible for EMFF support. Article 27 also supports the provision of professional advice on environmental sustainability, business and marketing strategies.
- 5.1.6 While Seafish (UK) offers support to UK fishermen in many areas, much of this work

is undertaken and focused at UK level. Article 27 provides the opportunity for an experienced organisation to tailor a programme of advisory services reflective of the needs of the Northern Ireland catching and processing sectors.

- 5.1.7 DARD will invite appropriately experienced organisations to apply to deliver “Article 27” services, with the Department awarding support to the proposal that meets an industry-agreed project brief and offers optimum Value for Money.

Total Public Investment:

| | |
|---------------|-------|
| EMFF | €300k |
| National..... | €100K |
| TOTAL..... | €400k |

Article 28 - Partnership between scientists and fishermen

- 5.1.8 EMFF encourages the transfer of knowledge between scientists and fishermen and encourages the creation of networks or associations between one or more independent scientific bodies and fishermen to address issues such as data collection and management activities, studies, pilot projects and the dissemination of knowledge and best practices. Article 28 can be support public law bodies, fishermen (and their organisations), FLAGS and non-governmental organisations.

- 5.1.9 As a result of the formation of the Fishing Industry Taskforce and, more recently, the Inshore Fisheries Partnership group, it is clear that during the period of EMFF, greater focus is required on collecting data on key stocks and landings to allow better collective decision-making to support sustainable levels of fishing and practices.

- 5.1.10 DARD anticipates supporting 4 proposals under EMFF – 2 involving inshore and 2 involving offshore operations which may, by their nature, span a number of years. Funding is also included in the proposed budget to support a number of initiatives developed by Producer Organisations as lead partners.

- 5.1.11 Article 28 is additional and complementary to the support proposed under Article 26.

Total Public Investment:

| | |
|---------------|---------|
| EMFF | €750k |
| National..... | €250k |
| TOTAL..... | €1,000k |

Article 32 – Health & Safety

- 5.1.12 Northern Ireland has one of the oldest fishing fleet in the UK with the majority of its fishing vessels over 30 years old. Because of this age profile, assistance will be made available to the industry for vessel modernisation, including safety improvements, working conditions, hygiene, product quality, energy efficiency and selectivity. The Regulation stipulates that any investment under Article 32 must go beyond any requirements under either Union or national laws.
- 5.1.13 The regulation indicates that where an operation consists of an investment on board, support shall not be granted more than once during the programme period for the same type of investment and for the same fishing vessel. A similar caveat applies to investment in individual equipment.
- 5.1.14 DARD will support 4 campaigns focusing on health, safety, hygiene and working conditions. Unless a collective proposal is supported (for example, on health), it is anticipated that other initiatives to improve conditions on board (safety, hygiene and working conditions) will require, at least, a 50% private sector contribution.

Total Public Investment:

| | |
|---------------|-------|
| EMFF | €200k |
| National..... | € 67k |
| TOTAL..... | €267k |

Article 37 – Support for the design and implementation of conservation measures and regional co-operation

- 5.1.15 EMFF can support the design, development and monitoring of technical and administrative means necessary for the development and implementation of conservation and regionalisation, including stakeholder participation and co-operation between Member States in designing and implementing conservation measures and regionalisation. It also permits support of direct restocking when provided for as a conservation measure in a Union legal act.
- 5.1.16 Inland Fisheries is currently the responsibility of DCAL and, under EFF, financial assistance was provided to restock Lough Neagh Eels as part of the Commission approved Lough Neagh Eel Management Plan.
- 5.1.17 The scope is wider than the above narrative suggests, and can cover a range of other conservation measures, fish stock recovery areas and the development of MPAs and conservation measures in international waters.

5.1.18 DARD will continue the support of measures within the Lough Neagh Eel Management Plan but does not plan to broaden the scope of projects supported under Article 37.

Total Public Investment:

EMFF €1.400k
National..... €0.467m
TOTAL..... €1.867k

Article 38 – Limiting the impact of fishing on the marine environment and adaptation of fishing to the protection of species

5.1.19 Article 38 can support fishermen investing in technical modifications that help reduce environmental impacts. This may include equipment that reduces the impact of fishing on non-commercial species, ecosystems and the sea bottom; protect catches and gear from wild predators; and support projects covering the preparation or trial of new technical measures for which a limited period of financing will be set by the EU.

5.1.20 EMFF support cannot be awarded more than once for the same type of equipment on the same Union fishing fleet and only be granted where the gear or equipment has a demonstrably lower impact on the ecosystem and on non-target species than the standard gear or equipment allowed by Union or national laws.

5.1.21 DARD proposes to utilise Article 38 to assist the industry adapt to its obligations under the Common Fisheries Policy and environmental sustainability and has included provision to support provision of up to 300 more selective nets as an incentive to adopt new gears and accelerate the transition to sustainable fisheries.

Total Public Investment

EMFF €560k
National..... €187k
TOTAL..... €747 k

Article 39 – Innovation linked to the conservation of marine biological resources

5.1.22 To minimise the impact of the landing obligation on the local industry, it is imperative that support is provided to collaborative networks including scientists, fishermen, processors and fisheries managers to undertake innovative actions, research or data collection that will, among other things, reduce the catches of unwanted, untargeted

and under size species that, if deemed by the Commission as being “choke species”, will impact on the opportunities for the local fishing fleet, especially the nephrops sector.

5.1.23 DARD proposes to allocate €1.33m public funding to support a four-year proposal to test more selective nephrops fishing gears in order to help identify fishing gears and technologies that will assist the local industry in meeting its obligations under the reformed CFP.

Total Public Investment

| | |
|---------------|----------|
| EMFF | €1.000m |
| National..... | € 0.333m |
| TOTAL..... | €1.333m |

Article 40 – Protection & restoration of marine biodiversity & ecosystems and compensation regimes on the framework of sustainable fishing activities

5.1.24 Under Article 40.1a, EMFF may support the collection of waste by fishermen from the sea, such as the removal of lost fishing gear and marine litter.

5.1.25 Over the years, the DOE, in partnership with the NI Fishery Harbour Authority has launched a “Fishing for Litter” Scheme at the ports of Ardglass, Kilkeel and Portavogie where facilities are provided to allow fishermen deposit litter recovered from the sea to be disposed appropriately.

5.1.26 As a means of addressing the problem of marine litter_DARD proposes support for the continuation/development of the current “Fishing For Litter” scheme operating from County Down’s 3 primary fishing ports.

Total Public Investment

| | |
|---------------|---------|
| EMFF | €37.5k |
| National..... | € 12.5k |
| TOTAL..... | €50.0k |

Article 41 – Energy efficiency and migration of climate change

5.1.27 Article 41 focuses on the provision of support to help mitigate the effects of climate change and to improve the efficiency of fishing vessels. Article 41.1 supports investments in equipment or onboard aimed at reducing the emission of pollutants or greenhouse gases and increasing the energy efficiency of fishing vessels. Investments in fishing gear may also be eligible for support provided it is proven that

they do not undermine the selectivity of that fishing gear.

5.1.28 Consistent with other UK administrations, DARD has worked on the assumption that approximately 1 in 4 fishing vessels will take up the opportunity of funding under Article 41.1 and has made an indicative allocation of €725k total public funding to this Article.

Total Public Investment:

| | |
|---------------|--------|
| EMFF | €544k |
| National..... | € 181k |
| TOTAL..... | €725k |

5.1.29 In addition, under Article 41.2, EMFF may also make contributions towards engine replacements on condition that the vessel's engine power must:-

- Not be increased for vessels up to 12m in overall length
- Be reduced by 20% for vessels between 12m and 18m in length, and
- Be reduced by 30% for vessels between 18m and 24m in length.

5.1.30 A grant may only be given for one engine replacement per vessel during the lifetime of the Programme.

5.1.31 Support under 41.2 can only be provided in respect of vessels belonging to a fleet segment for which the report on fishing capacity has shown a balance with the fishing opportunities available to that segment. While such a report will be required before DARD can open Article 41.2, the Department is, within its investment proposals, making a small, indicative allocation of €40k within its budgets, which is reflective of the total re-engining spend incurred during the EFF Programming period.

Total Public Investment

| | |
|---------------|-------|
| EMFF | €30k |
| National..... | € 10k |
| TOTAL..... | €40k |

Article 42 – Added value, product quality and use of unwanted catches

5.1.32 To improve the added value or quality of fish caught, EMFF may support investments that add value to fishery products, in particular by allowing fishermen to carry out the processing, marketing and direct sale of their own catch.

Article 42 also supports innovative investments onboard that improve the quality of the fishery products, but is conditional on the use of selective gears to minimise unwanted catches and can only be granted to vessels that have fished for at least 60 days during the 2 preceding calendar years.

5.1.33 DARD has made provision of €400k in the spending proposals to support around 25 projects, at an average cost of around £25k per project over the duration of the EMFF Programme.

Total Public Investment

| | |
|---------------|--------|
| EMFF | €300k |
| National..... | € 100k |
| TOTAL..... | €400k |

Article 43 – Fishing Ports, landing sites, auction halls and shelters

5.1.34 EMFF may support investments to improve the infrastructure of fishing ports, auction halls, landing sites and shelters, including investments in facilities for waste and marine litter collection. The objective of such investment must be for increasing the quality, control and traceability of products landed, increasing energy efficiency, contribute to environmental protection and improving the safety and working conditions of fishermen and other stakeholders.

5.1.35 To improve the safety of fishermen, EMFF may be used to support investments in the construction or modernisation of shelters, but not for the construction of new ports, landing sites or auction halls.

5.1.36 Under EFF, infrastructure projects at Northern Ireland ports, received £6.5m public funding in order to maintain and improve the infrastructure necessary for the operation of a modern fishing fleet. Under EMFF, funds will be required to upgrade facilities to deal with unwanted catches and support the smooth transition of the fleet and onshore sectors to a sustainably managed, discard-free fishery. Safety focused proposals will continue to be supported under EMFF.

5.1.37 With reduced funding available under EMFF, *DARD proposes to allocate a budget of €3.33m to projects supported under Article 43*, which will require significant

prioritisation by port authorities to maximise the benefits from the support available.

Total Public Investment

| | |
|---------------|--------|
| EMFF | €2.50m |
| National..... | €0.83m |
| TOTAL..... | €3.33m |

5.1.38 Depending on the nature of the applicant, some activities can receive 100% public aid while others will require a contribution from the beneficiary. In most cases, 75% of the public aid element will come from the EMFF with 25% funding from DARD. In circumstances where other government departments or agencies have policy or management responsibility for the activity, the match funding will come from those departments or agencies.

5.2 Union Priority 2 – Sustainable Development of Aquaculture

Article 48 – Productive Investments in Aquaculture

5.2.1 Article 48 is designed to support: -

- Productive investments in aquaculture
- Diversification of aquaculture production and species cultured
- Modernisation of aquaculture units, including the improvement in working and safety conditions of workers
- Improvements and modernisation relating to animal health
- Investments reducing the negative impact or enhancing the positive effects on the environment and increasing resource efficiency.
- Investments in enhancing the quality of, or in adding value to, aquaculture products
- Restoration of existing aquaculture ponds or lagoons through the removal of silt, or investments aimed at preventing silt deposits
- Diversification of the income of aquaculture enterprises through development of complementary activities
- Investments resulting in a substantial reduction in the impact of aquaculture enterprises on water use and quality
- The promotion of closed aquaculture systems where aquaculture products are

farmed on close recirculation systems, thereby minimising water usage.

- Investments increasing energy efficiency and promoting the conversion of aquaculture enterprises to renewable sources of energy.

5.2.2 The aim is to allow new and existing aquaculture units to improve, expand and/or diversify. It aims to protect the Health and Safety of workers on aquaculture sites. Funding will also facilitate energy efficiency savings and conversion to renewable sources and will also help contribute to Growing for Growth challenges.

5.2.3 Based on the size of the NI aquaculture industry and on actual spend under the previous 2 European Funding Programmes, DARD proposes an allocation of €775k.

Total Public Investment

| | |
|---------------|-------|
| EMFF | €582k |
| National..... | €193k |
| TOTAL..... | €775k |

Article 49 – Management, relief and advisory services for aquaculture farms

5.2.4 To improve the overall performance and competitiveness of aquaculture farms, and to reduce the negative environmental impact of their operations, EMFF may support the setting up or purchase of management, relief or advisory services of a technical, scientific, legal, environmental or economic nature. The aim of the support is to enable aquaculture farms to comply with all Union and national environmental legislation, as well as maritime spatial planning requirements, animal health and welfare and public health requirements, as well as advice on marketing and business strategies. Such services must be provided by a scientific or technical body recognised by a Member State.

5.2.5 This Article is key in underpinning the Going for Growth Strategy as well as allowing farms to access all of the expertise it requires to comply with its statutory obligations in relation to the environment, spatial planning, aquatic health and welfare obligations, as well as marketing and business strategies.

5.2.6 DARD proposes to seek proposals from competent organisations to deliver aquaculture focused services under Article 49 for the duration of the EMFF Programme. The Department has allocated £667k public funding to deliver the initiative.

Total Public Investment

| | |
|---------------|-------|
| EMFF | €500k |
| National..... | €167k |
| TOTAL..... | €667k |

Article 56 – Animal Health and Welfare Measures

5.2.7 Article 56 allows support of measures that foster animal health and welfare in aquaculture enterprises, such as the prevention and bio-security, including the costs of control and eradication of diseases in aquaculture and the development of general and best practices or codes of conduct on bio-security or on animal health and welfare.

5.2.8 While provision to address similar matters was made under previous EU funding programmes, it was not utilised. In line with these past programmes, DARD will make a small provision under EMFF to address any specific animal health and welfare issues that may arise during the programme period. However, it is not proposed to open this Article to individual aquaculture operations but would be made available to collaborative organisations.

Total Public Investment:

| | |
|---------------|--------|
| EMFF | €20.0k |
| National..... | €6.7k |
| TOTAL..... | €26.7k |

5.3 Union Priority 3 – Fostering the implementation of the CFP

5.3.1 In addition to the core “grant” funding for fishery and aquaculture stakeholders, the European Commission has ring-fenced support in respect of control, enforcement and data collection by Member States. Support for such activities has been provided in the past through separate European Funding lines but the Commission has decreed that the continuation of such support will be administered by Member State through the structures in place to deliver other Chapters of the EMFF Programme.

5.3.2 Funding for proposals that positively impact Union Priority 3 is provided through Articles 76 (Control and Enforcement) and 77 (Data Collection).

5.3.3 DARD will, as required by the Commission, administer and manage these Articles under EMFF. With the Commission having “ring-fenced” allocations for these 2 Articles, budgetary provision has no impact on the level of support available under

other Union Priorities within Northern Ireland. Any under-utilisation of funding under Articles 76 and 77 cannot be reallocated.

Total Public Investment (Article 76)

EMFF €3.087m
National..... €0.343m
TOTAL..... €3.43m

Total Public Investment (Article 77)

EMFF €5.874m
National..... €1.469m
TOTAL..... €7.343m

5.4 Union Priority 4 – Increasing employment and territorial cohesion

- 5.4.1 The promotion of economic growth, social inclusion and job creation, and providing support to employability and labour mobility in coastal communities which depend on fishing and aquaculture, including the diversification of activities within fisheries and into other sectors of maritime economy, is eligible for EMFF support, when delivered through a local development strategy by an appointed Sea Fisheries Local Action Group and includes the running costs incurred by the Group in delivering the strategy.
- 5.4.2 DARD will seek expressions of interest from experienced organisations to develop a Sustainable Development Strategy for County Down's fishing communities under EMFF. The successful organisation will then be required to deliver the strategy which, upon approval, will be supported through financial assistance provided under Article 63.
- 5.4.3 Article 63 supports the implementation of community-led local development strategies that focus on some, or all, of the following objectives: -
- Adding value, creating jobs, attracting young people and promoting innovation at all stages of the supply chain of fishery and aquaculture products;
 - Supporting diversification inside or outside commercial fisheries, lifelong learning and job creation in fisheries and aquaculture areas;

- Enhancing and capitalising on the environmental assets of the fisheries and aquaculture areas, including operations to mitigate climate change;
- promoting social well-being and cultural heritage in fisheries and aquaculture areas, including fisheries, aquaculture and maritime cultural heritage; and,
- Strengthening the role of fisheries communities in local development and the governance of local fisheries resources and maritime activities.

5.4.4 The organisation appointed to deliver the approved community-led local development strategy will be required to demonstrate that the strategy positively impacts on these objectives.

Total Public Investment:

| | |
|---------------|---------|
| EMFF | €2.05 m |
| National..... | € 0.68m |
| TOTAL..... | €2.73m |

5.5 Union Priority 5 - Marketing and Processing Related Measures

Article 66 – Production and Marketing Plans

5.5.1 The EMFF may support the preparation and implementation of production and marketing plans (referred to in Article 28 of Regulation (EU) No. 1379/2013), subject to the approval by competent authorities of the annual report referred to in Article 28(5) of 1379/2013. Support granted to Producer Organisations per year cannot exceed 3% of the average annual value of the production placed on the market by that Producer Organisation during the preceding 3 calendar years.

5.5.2 DARD proposes to offer EMFF support to Northern Ireland's 2 Producer Organisations at a rate of €25k per year for five years.

Total Public Investment:

| | |
|---------------|---------|
| EMFF | €250.0k |
| National..... | €83.3k |
| TOTAL..... | €333.3k |

Article 67 – Storage Aid

5.5.3 Under certain circumstances, EMFF may support compensation to recognised producer organisations that store fishery products listed in Annex II to Regulation (EU) No 1379/2014 provided the amount of storage aid does not exceed the amount

of the technical and financial costs for the stabilisation and storage of such products and that the quantities eligible for storage aid do not exceed 15% of the annual quantities of the products put up for sale by the producer organisation. Financial support per year cannot exceed 2% of the average annual value of the production placed on the market by members of the producer organisation in the period 2009-2011. It is a requirement under Article 67 that all such support shall end by 31 December 2018.

- 5.5.4 The European Commission has “ring-fenced” €237k EMFF support for use exclusively for storage aid. DARD do not propose to open Article 67 for applications at the outset of the EMFF Programme but propose to liaise with the industry to develop proposals that could utilise the funding in helping to address the impacts of the landing obligation, subject to need and value for money being identified.

Total Public Investment:

| | |
|---------------|-------|
| EMFF | €237k |
| National..... | € 79k |
| TOTAL..... | €316k |

Article 68 – Marketing Measures

- 5.5.5 EMFF may fund marketing measures that either create producer organisations or find new markets and improve the conditions for the placing of fishery and aquaculture products on the market, providing the proposals relate to species with marketing potential or relate to unwanted catches landed from commercial stocks in accordance with technical measures, or are products obtained using methods that have a low environmental impact or are organic.
- 5.5.6 In addition, support can be provided for initiatives that promote the quality of the products, contribute to the transparency of production and the markets and the traceability of fishery and aquaculture products. Regional, national or transnational promotional campaigns, to raise public awareness of sustainable fishery and aquaculture products are eligible to apply provided they are not aimed at commercial brands.
- 5.5.7 The Department proposes to support one marketing project per year (over five years) at a maximum grant of €25k per project and will make an annual call for applications under this Article.

Total Public Investment:

| | |
|---------------|---------|
| EMFF | €125.0k |
| National..... | € 41.7k |
| TOTAL..... | €166.7k |

Article 69 – Processing of fishery and aquaculture products

5.5.8 The EMFF may support investments in the processing of fishery and aquaculture products that: -

- Contribute to energy savings or reducing the impact on the environment, including waste treatment
- Improve safety, hygiene, health and working conditions
- Support the processing of catches of commercial fish that cannot be destined for human consumption
- relate to the processing of by-products resulting from main processing activities
- Relate to the processing of organic aquaculture products
- Lead to new or improved products, new or improved processes or new or improved management and organisation systems.

5.5.9 Article 69 focuses on the support of SMEs. Based on demand and spend under EFF for processing investment and a general awareness of interest from processors at this time, DARD proposes a total public support allocation of €1.953m for Article 69 projects over the duration of the EMFF Programme.

Total Public Investment:

| | |
|---------------|----------|
| EMFF | €1.465m |
| National..... | € 0.488k |
| TOTAL..... | €1.953m |

5.6 Union Priority 6 – Fostering the implementation of the IMP

5.6.1 EMFF may support operations that contribute to enhancing the development and implementation of the Union’s Integrated Maritime Policy by: -

- Fostering the development and implementation of integrated governance of maritime and coastal affairs,
- Contributing to the development of cross-sectoral initiatives that are mutually beneficial to different maritime sectors and/or sectoral policies
- Supporting sustainable economic growth, employment, innovation and new technologies within emerging and prospective maritime sectors, and

- Promoting the protection of the marine environment.

5.6.2 Operations that can be supported include studies, pilot projects, public information events, conferences, seminars, training and co-ordination activities. However, the salary related costs of personnel of national administrations are not eligible for financial support under this Article.

5.6.3 DARD and the DOE will, during the Programming period, utilise Union Priority 6 support to deliver a number of schemes aimed at protecting and promoting the marine environment that are proven mutually beneficial to different maritime sectors.

Total Public Investment:

| | |
|----------------|--------|
| EMFF | €533k |
| National | € 178k |
| TOTAL..... | €711k |

Technical assistance

5.6.4 The EMFF regulation (Article 78) makes provision for managing authorities and implementing bodies to use funding to support the successful and effective delivery of the EMFF Programme within Member States. In Northern Ireland, DARD will, similar to the EFF Programme, make use of Technical Assistance resources to manage, promote, monitor and report on the EMFF Programme's delivery within Northern Ireland.

Total Public Investment:

| | |
|----------------|-------|
| EMFF | €582k |
| National | €194k |
| TOTAL..... | €776k |

5.7 Summary of proposed investment

| | Proposed public investment under EMFF | | | |
|------|---------------------------------------|------------------|------------------|-----------------------|
| | EMFF €000 | National €000 | TOTAL €000 | Conversion €1=1.28 |
| UP 1 | 7,971.50 | 2,657.20 | 10,628.70 | 8,304.00 |
| UP 2 | 1,100.00 | 366.70 | 1,466.70 | 1,146.00 |
| UP 3 | 8,960.10 | 1,812.00 | 10,772.10 | 8,416.00 |
| UP 4 | 2,050.00 | 680.00 | 2,730.00 | 2,133.00 |
| UP 5 | 2,077.10 | 692.40 | 2,769.50 | 2,163.00 |
| UP 6 | 533.40 | 177.80 | 711.20 | 556.00 |
| TA | 582.00 | 194.00 | 776.00 | 606.00 |
| | 23,274.10 | 6,580.10 | 29,854.20 | 23,324.00 |

| Union Priority 1 | €000 | £'000 |
|--|---------------|--------------|
| Innovation (Article 26) | 467 | 365 |
| Advisory Services (Article 27) | 400 | 313 |
| Partnership between scientists & fishermen (Article 28) | 1,000 | 781 |
| Health & Safety (Article 32) | 267 | 209 |
| Design & implementation of conservation measures & regional co-operation (Article 37) | 1,866 | 1,458 |
| Limiting the impact of fishing on the marine environment and adapting fishing to protect species (Article 38) | 747 | 584 |
| Innovation linked to conservation of marine biological resources (Article 39) | 1,333 | 1,041 |
| Protection & restoration of marine bio-diversity & ecosystems and compensation regimes on the framework of sustainable fishing activities (Article 40) | 50 | 39 |
| Energy efficient & migration of climate change (Article 41.1) | 725 | 566 |
| Energy efficient & migration of climate change (Article 41.2) | 40 | 31 |
| Added value, product quality & use of unwanted catches (Article 42) | 400 | 312 |
| Fishing Ports, landing sites, auction sites & shelters (Article 43) | 3,330 | 2,602 |
| Union Priority 1 Total | 10,628 | 8,304 |

| Union Priority 2 | €000 | £'000 |
|---|--------------|--------------|
| Productive Investments in aquaculture (Article 48) | 775 | 606 |
| Management, relief & advisory services for aquaculture farms (Article 49) | 666 | 520 |
| Promotion of Human Capital & Networking (Article 50) - TBD | 0 | 0 |
| Animal Health & Welfare Measures (Article 56) | 26 | 20 |
| Union Priority 2 Total | 1,467 | 1,146 |

| Union Priority 3 | €000 | £000 |
|------------------------------------|---------------|--------------|
| Control & Enforcement (Article 76) | 3,430 | 2,680 |
| Data Collection (Article 77) | 7,342 | 5,736 |
| Union Priority 3 Total | 10,772 | 8,416 |

| Union Priority 4 | €000 | £000 |
|---|-----------------|-----------------|
| Implementation of local development strategies (incl. running costs and animation) (Article 63) | 2,730.00 | 2,133.00 |

| Union Priority 5 | €000 | £000 |
|---|--------------|--------------|
| Production & Marketing Plans (Article 66) | 333 | 260 |
| Storage Aid (Article 67) | 316 | 247 |
| Marketing Measures (Article 68) | 167 | 131 |
| Processing of fisheries & aquaculture products (Article 69) | 1,953 | 1,526 |
| Union Priority 5 Total | 2,769 | 2,163 |

| Union Priority 6 | €000 | £000 |
|---|-------------|-------------|
| Development & implementation of the Integrated Maritime Policy (Article 80) | 711 | 556 |
| Union Priority 6 Total | 711 | 556 |

| | €000 | £000 |
|--|-------------|-------------|
| Technical Assistance (Article 78) | 776 | 606 |

6. Implementation of EMFF Programme in Northern Ireland

6.1 Management of the EMFF in Northern Ireland

- 6.1.1 The Department will manage the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund by drawing on the best practices and lessons learned from the previous EFF Programme as well as incorporating any revised accountability and control requirements associated with the EMFF regulation.
- 6.1.2 As a result, there will be some minor revisions to the application and administrative processes but these will be explained fully in notes for guidance, letter of offer and claim forms, when the EMFF opens for applications. There will be minimal impact of such changes on applicants.
- 6.1.3 The primary change in process is the development and introduction of a new EMFF e-system for the submission of applications seeking financial support and the management of the EMFF processes and funds. The major change for applicants relates to the on-line submission of fully completed claim forms (and supporting evidence) for reimbursement of funds and the on-line submission of monitoring and evaluation reports.

6.2 Allocation of Grant support from EFF

- 6.2.1 As identified earlier in this document, under EFF, Northern Ireland had an initial budgetary allocation of €18.1m for grant awards. Combined with national match funding of 50%, this allowed overall public funding investment under EFF of €36.2m, or approximately £28m.
- 6.2.2 For EMFF, the NI core allocation is €13.73m from Europe. When €4.58m national funding (reduced to 25% for EMFF) is added, the total public funding available to support applications is €18.31m, or approximately £14.3m.
- 6.2.3 Under EFF all projects that achieved the minimum score in the assessment process and provided evidence of value for money were made offers of financial support. Given the reduced budget and need to focus on addressing the requirements of the Landing Obligation, both at sea and on land, it is unlikely that the Department will be able to support all applications that meet any minimum score threshold in place for EMFF.
- 6.2.4 To ensure funding is available for the duration of the EMFF Programme, the

Department, where necessary, may introduce open and closed calls for applications under various articles and which may have a maximum budget allocated for that round of applications. By necessity, applicants need to be aware that the process for grant support will be more competitive than in previous Programmes and only those that provide the maximum benefits (and thus secure a higher score in the assessment process) may be offered financial assistance. It is imperative therefore, that all applications are fully completed, provide as much supporting evidence as possible and are realistic in terms of both costs and timescales for completion.

- 6.2.5 As a result of reduced funding, it is anticipated that the Department will not be able to be as accommodating under EMFF in respect of approving extensions for project completions, increases in funding as a result of unforeseen costs/circumstances nor in providing reassurances to applicants that may wish to “proceed at their own risk” prior to the receipt and acceptance of a formal Letter of Offer.

6.3 Rates of Grant

- 6.3.1 For the EFF Programme, it was normal that the same rate of grant was consistent for all applications received within one measure (similar to an Article under EMFF). For example, Collective Actions and Ports normally attracted 100% grant support, whereas applications from private sector operators could only be awarded a maximum of 40% support for their proposals.
- 6.3.2 Under EMFF the maximum grant support that can be offered to private sector operations is 50% and there is flexibility to award different rates of financial support to promoters within the same Article, depending on the status of the applicant and the final benefactors associated with project completion. To determine the appropriate rate of grant, an applicant will, as part of the application process, require to answer a number of questions on legal status, collective nature of the project, benefits accruing from the potential investment and level of support for the project for other industry stakeholders. The appropriate maximum rate of grant will then be provided to the applicant on the electronic application form.

6.4 Lessons learned from EFF

- 6.4.1 The EFF Programme saw the introduction of the “N+2” spend rule by the European Commission. This meant projects had to be completed within a maximum of 36 months from the date of offer of grant by the Department. Spend not incurred within these timescales had to be deducted from the balance of EFF funding available for future years, thus reducing the amount of potential investment within the industry.

- 6.4.2 In practice, the Department ensured that sufficient projects were brought forward to take up slippage in expenditure and minimise decommitment of funding by Europe. This was a difficult task because some project promoters, despite providing assurances to the Department, failed to spend when they said they would.
- 6.4.3 While similar “N+2” rules on commitment and spend will operate for EMFF, it is more critical that spend will be incurred as projected in applications as a result of the reduced level of public funding available under EMFF. This Department is committed to working closely with other Fisheries Administrations to ensure that no decommitment of EMFF occurs and it is unlikely that DARD will be as accommodating in making in-project revisions to successful applicants as was possible under EFF.
- 6.4.4 Given the budget and spend pressures associated with EMFF, DARD intends to implement more stringent project monitoring arrangements which will involve more contact with project promoters during the life of the project. These arrangements will include setting pre-conditions that must be fulfilled before a letter of offer is issued. These could relate to obtaining planning and other statutory approvals which are needed before a project can be implemented. Approval of applications for EMFF funding will only be granted where it can be demonstrated that all relevant consents, approvals and assessments have been completed and appropriate mitigation measures identified.
- 6.4.5 Officials will meet with project promoters prior to Letters of Offer being issued to explain grant conditions and will insist on realistic implementation plans for projects, including spending projections. The frequency of monitoring meetings will depend on the scale of the project and the project implementation plan.
- 6.4.6 This more “hands-on” approach to communication and monitoring will ensure that DARD has more meaningful, accurate and timely programme management information (such as progress against costs, timescales and revisions to approved projects). It is also aimed to help promoters with project delivery from an early stage and assist ensure the smooth completion of the projects as approved by the Selection Panel. These actions are anticipated to reduce the administrative burdens of the scheme for everyone concerned.

Application and Assessment process

- 6.4.7 The EMFF application process will be similar to the EFF Programme. It will require registration on the EMFF e-system and completion of an on-line application form. As

part of the process, prospective applicants will be provided with contact details for a Project Officer who will be available to discuss potential and submitted applications prior to formal assessment. When an application is received by the Department it will be acknowledged in writing and applicants will be advised of the timescales for decision.

- 6.4.8 Guidance notes will be provided on the website (and in paper copy where appropriate) and will consider convening advice clinics as deemed necessary to maximise the benefits of EMFF investment to all stakeholders.
- 6.4.9 Throughout the life of the EMFF programme the Department may make several calls for grant applications (tranches) under each Article. This will mean that there will be a period of time during which, we would for example, accept applications for processing and marketing or some other area. We will aim to publish details in advance of when particular tranches will open and indicate the amount of grant that will be released under that tranche. This will assist prospective project promoters to carry out research and discuss their ideas for potential projects before any call for grant applications is made to ensure submitted applications are eligible under the EMFF and national rules.
- 6.4.10 The Department proposes to convene a Selection Panel to assess all applications. The Selection Panel will include suitably qualified people who will make an independent assessment of projects based on a scoring system designed to reflect the selection criteria approved by the Commission as contained within the UK's Operational Programme.
- 6.4.11 All applications received will be subject to assessment for eligibility (compliance with EMFF rules), equality screening, value for money, additionality, displacement and an environmental assessment. Projects will be scored by panel members to ensure available resources are utilised effectively through awarding support to those projects that score highest in the assessment process. While under EFF, projects only had to exceed a minimum score to secure an offer of financial assistance, with reduced funding and the possibility of periodic calls for proposals, for example, on a yearly basis, it is possible that some projects that secure a score over and above the minimum requirement, may not be offered financial assistance but would be free to re-apply when the Article is re-opened for applications.

Administration

- 6.4.12 DARD Fisheries Grants Section will be responsible for all aspects of programme

administration, including providing Secretariat support for the Selection Panel meetings, completing project appraisals, equality screening, issuing Letters of Offer, processing payments, and monitoring and evaluating individual projects.

- 6.4.13 With DARD being the appointed implementing body for the delivery of the Northern Ireland portion of the UK EMFF allocation consistent with the requirements of the EMFF Regulations and Implementing decisions, DARD Fisheries Grants Unit also be accountable to the UK Managing Authority for EMFF (Marine Management Organisation and the UK Programme Monitoring Committee for the proper and controlled delivery of EMFF within Northern Ireland.

Publicity Arrangements

- 6.4.14 The opening of the EMFF for applications will be formally launched by the Minister shortly after the UK Operational Plan is approved. The Department will publicise the launch through press releases to the national and trade media. The Grant Team will organise publicity events at ports and will be pleased to attend meetings of representative organisations to provide presentations and other information about the Fund, including the application process.
- 6.4.15 It is intended that the Department's web-site will be the main source for EMFF information providing links to all important documents, advice notes, application forms and details of Selection Panels, grant decisions and publicity requirements for successful applicants. Fisheries Division and the DARD Press Office will be responsible for information and publicity about the EMFF and should be consulted well in advance of project launches, completion events etc. to maximise publicity potential for the EMFF.
- 6.4.16 Each beneficiary will be expected to acknowledge the European Community financial assistance by, where appropriate, way of a billboard or appropriate plaque and acknowledgement on websites, brochures etc. The European Commission's Transparency Initiative also means that summary information of all successful applicants projects must be publicised by each Member State and this will be a condition within every letter of offer issued for consideration by successful applicants.

7. ANNEXES TO THE INVESTMENT PROPOSALS

7.1 Annex 1: NI Fishing Fleet Statistics

Distribution licensed fishing vessels, by size, across Northern Ireland

| | 10m and under | | Over 10m | | Total | |
|--------------|---------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|
| | Dec 2010 | Dec 2014 | Dec 2010 | Dec 2014 | Dec 010 | Dec 2014 |
| Ardglass | 20 | 18 | 26 | 28 | 46 | 46 |
| Kilkeel | 55 | 47 | 60 | 56 | 115 | 103 |
| Portavogie | 21 | 23 | 40 | 31 | 61 | 54 |
| Other | 135 | 131 | 22 | 30 | 157 | 161 |
| Total | 231 | 219 | 148 | 145 | 379 | 364 |

Fish landed in NI by port 2010-2014

| PORT | 2010 | | 2011 | | 2012 | | 2013 | | 2014 | |
|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| | Tonnes | Value (£'000) |
| Ardglass | 10,206 | 6,944 | 9,997 | 9,829 | 6,807 | 7,850 | 7,839 | 6,934 | 6,875 | 6,270 |
| Kilkeel | 5,679 | 6,966 | 6,071 | 8,992 | 5,288 | 9,090 | 5,189 | 7,661 | 4,466 | 8,227 |
| Portavogie | 2,830 | 4,708 | 2,630 | 5,518 | 3,671 | 7,236 | 3,379 | 5,551 | 3,250 | 6,472 |
| Other | 3,224 | 2,442 | 3,205 | 2,507 | 5,222 | 4,570 | 2,962 | 3,120 | 3,469 | 3,833 |
| TOTALS | 21,939 | 21,060 | 21,883 | 26,846 | 20,988 | 28,746 | 19,369 | 23,266 | 18,058 | 24,802 |

Employment by the NI catching sector 2005 - 2014

| Yr | Full-Time | Part-Time | Total |
|------|-----------|-----------|-------|
| 2005 | 514 | 55 | 569 |
| 2006 | 547 | 66 | 613 |
| 2007 | 557 | 101 | 658 |
| 2008 | 532 | 93 | 625 |

| | | | |
|------|-----|-----|------|
| 2009 | 541 | 113 | 654 |
| 2010 | 535 | 113 | 648 |
| 2011 | 578 | 110 | 688 |
| 2012 | 654 | 154 | 808* |
| 2013 | 675 | 139 | 814* |
| 2014 | 683 | 149 | 832* |

7.2 Addressing SWOT key needs through EMFF investment

| Key Need Identified | EMFF Articles addressing Key Need | Union Priority Covered |
|--|---|------------------------|
| Ensuring key skills & critical infrastructure are preserved during transitional phases | 26 – Innovation 27 – Advisory Services 32 – Health & Safety 43 – Ports 48 – Productive Investments (Aquaculture) 49 – Advisory Services (Aquaculture) 63 – Community-led Local Development 69 - Processing | 1, 2, 4, 5 |
| Encouraging diversification into other activities in the marine environment | 26 – Innovation 48 – Productive Investments (Aquaculture) 49 – Advisory Services (Aquaculture) 63 – Community-led Local Development 69 - Processing | 1, 2, 4, 5 |
| Support for adaptation to climate and other environmental change | 26 - Innovation 41 - Energy Efficiency & Climate Change | 1, 2 |

| Key Need Identified | EMFF Articles addressing Key Need | Union Priority Covered |
|---|---|------------------------|
| | 48 – Productive Investments (Aquaculture) 49 – Advisory Services (Aquaculture) | |
| Innovating and incentivising in key areas of CFP reform, including MSY issues relating to mixed fisheries and technical and practical approaches to the reduction of discards | 27 – Advisory Services 38 – Limiting Impacts 39 – Conservation of resources 66 – Production & Marketing Plans | 1, 5 |
| Support for projects that aid adaptation of monitoring, evaluation and management of quota systems impacted by CFP reform | 28 - Partnership 39 – Conservation of resources 66 – Production & Marketing Plans | 1, 5 |
| Assisting with measures that reduce cost / increase profitability – whilst avoiding any increase in catching ability | 27 – Advisory Services 42 – added value 66 – Production & Marketing Plans 67 – Storage Aid 68 – Marketing Measures 69 - Processing | 1, 5 |
| Assisting with measures that improve supply chain mechanisms and market access, with a view to value adding and delivering higher prices to fishermen | 26 – Innovation 27 – Advisory Services 42 – Added Value 49 – Advisory Services (Aquaculture) 63 – Community-led Local Development | 1, 2, 4, 5 |

| Key Need Identified | EMFF Articles addressing Key Need | Union Priority Covered |
|---|---|-------------------------------|
| | 66 – Production & Marketing Plans 67 – Storage Aid 68 – Marketing Measures 69 - Processing | |
| Fostering increased collaboration between science / management and the commercial sector – participatory research | 26 – Innovation 27 – Advisory Services 28 - Partnership | 1 |
| Encouraging active collaboration in all areas relating to marine planning, integrated coastal zone management and the creation and management of marine protected areas | 28 – Partnership 79 – Integrated Maritime Policy | 1, 6 |
| Assisting with measures that support achievement of Good Environmental Status under the Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD) | 40 - Marine Biodiversity 41 - Energy Efficiency & Climate Change 48 – Productive Investments (Aquaculture) 79 – Integrated Maritime Policy | 1,2, 6 |
| Investing in more science and evidence-based management for the inshore fisheries sector | 27 – Advisory Services 28 - Partnership | 1 |
| Gear selectivity and, technical spatial measures trials for successful mixed fisheries management and the move towards an eco-system based approach | 27 – Advisory Services 38 – Limiting Impacts | 1 |

| Key Need Identified | EMFF Articles addressing Key Need | Union Priority Covered |
|--|---|-------------------------------|
| | 39 – Conservation of resources | |
| Species survivability research | 28 - Partnership 38 – Limiting Impacts 39 – Conservation of resources | 1 |
| Support to embed regional approach to management and Advisory Councils | 66 – Production & Marketing Plans | 5 |
| Support for independently assessed fishery certification | 27 – Advisory Services 28 – Partnership 49 – Advisory Services (Aquaculture) | 1, 2 |
| Addressing price decline | 26 – Innovation 27 – Advisory Services 49 – Advisory Services (Aquaculture) 63 – Community-led Local Development 68 – Marketing Measures 69 - Processing | 1, 2, 4, 5 |
| Improving access to credit and other forms of financing | 27 – Advisory Services 49 – Advisory Services (Aquaculture) 63 – Community-led Local Development | 1, 2, 4 |
| Improving the resilience of operators who depend on very few species | 26 – Innovation 27 – Advisory Services | 1, 2, 5 |

| Key Need Identified | EMFF Articles addressing Key Need | Union Priority Covered |
|---|---|------------------------|
| | 37 – conservation measures 38 – Limiting Impacts 39 – Conservation of resources 48 – Productive Investments (Aquaculture) 49 – Advisory Services (Aquaculture) 69 - Processing | |
| Maintaining a critical mass to ensure viable infrastructure | 26 - Innovation 27 – Advisory Services 32 – Health & Safety 38 – Limiting Impacts 39 – Conservation of resources 43 – Ports 48 – Productive Investments (Aquaculture) 49 – Advisory Services (Aquaculture) 63 – Community-led Local Development | 1, 2, 4 |

| Key Need Identified | EMFF Articles addressing Key Need | Union Priority Covered |
|-------------------------------------|---|-------------------------------|
| Addressing barriers to new entrants | 26 – Innovation 27 – Advisory Services 49 – Advisory Services (Aquaculture) 63 – Community-led Local Development | 1, 2, 4 |