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Interim evaluation study of the implementation of the direct management component of the EMFF Regulation (Articles 15 and 125)

Final Report - Annexes

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Final Report - Annexes

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INTRODUCTION

Coffey International Development Ltd (Coffey), together with Poseidon (project partner), and F&S, Eurofish and C-P Engineering (Subcontractors) were contracted by the European Commission, Directorate General for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries (DG MARE) to carry out the Interim evaluation study of the implementation of the direct management component of the EMFF Regulation.

This document contains the Annexes to the Final Report, which is the last deliverable of the project.

The Annexes include:

- the full **Evaluation Questions Matrix** for the study: a two-layered analytical framework containing valuation questions, judgement criteria, indicators and data sources both at the level of thematic and cross-cutting analysis;
- the details of the **ten thematic work packages** carried out as part of the evaluation, with each work package section structured in a similar manner: outlining the background to the intervention category the work package addresses, providing details of the methodology deployed in the work package, and detailed findings supporting the subsequent answers to evaluation questions relevant for a given work package;
- the **five full case study reports**, each containing the description of methodology used in the case study, followed by presentation of thematic findings and evidence to address the mandatory evaluation criteria;
- the **Open Public Consultation report**, encompassing the analysis of replies received in the timeframe of this evaluation study (i.e. until 13 July 2018).

The work packages and case studies carried out offer detailed evidence which was used to formulate findings and conclusions relating to the evaluation questions, as presented in the main body of the Report (separate document).

1. THE EVALUATION QUESTIONS MATRIX

WPs	Specific Question	Judgement criteria	Indicators
WP 1A	Have the actions contributed to a more integrated governance of maritime and coastal affairs?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is possible to identify the specific contribution made by projects to the following:: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Development and implementation of IMP integrated sea basin strategies co-operation platforms & networks best practice exchange & dialogue between MS best practice exchange & dialogue with 3rd countries awareness-raising There extent that there are governance aspects where further integration did not occur or is still required, despite projects. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Change in participation levels in integrated maritime governance and number of associated initiatives. Projects' contributions to International agreements and implementation of regional and international commitments in maritime governance and coastal affairs. Qualitative analysis
WP 1B	Are the marine knowledge activities contributing to reducing costs of offshore or coastal activities, promoting innovation and reducing uncertainty in knowledge of the sea?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cross-sectoral initiatives are reducing costs in offshore and coastal activities. Cross-sectoral initiatives are reducing uncertainties in marine knowledge (linked to e.g. designation of certain spatial areas to particular MEAs e.g. aquaculture). Cross-sectoral initiatives are promoting innovation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> MSP contributing to development of MEA specific development plans and permitting. There is an increase in the number of events and level of participation in Maritime innovation events. Project timeframes are reduced for offshore developments. Unit costs of offshore or coastal activities, e.g. (€ per MW installed wind energy capacity)
	Have the marine spatial planning activities helped Member States (MS) set up spatial plans?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> EMFF direct support to IMP has contributed to an increase in the number and coverage of spatial planning in European MS. MS confirm that without this support progress in this area would have been more limited. It is possible to identify the number and coverage of spatial plans prior to IMP support. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Change in number of spatial plans (n)) e.g. at sea basin level Change in coverage of spatial plans (% of sea area)
	Will the maritime surveillance activities lead to an operational system for exchanging information between maritime authorities?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The information systems between maritime authorities enable the necessary information to be shared. All MS authorities make use of the systems in place to their full potential. It is not possible to identify barriers to information sharing now that systems are in place. CISE and the data sharing supported under EMFF direct action has reduced the cost of data collection in MS. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Change in extent of data sharing between all MS (in level of information and MS linkages) Change in budgetary programming to data collection in maritime authorities.

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WPs	Specific Question	Judgement criteria	Indicators
WP 1C	Have 'Blue Growth' initiatives funded by the EMFF facilitated the development of marine economic activities (MEAs) and the jobs they generate?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> EMFF direct support has led to increased MEA development. Studies leading to better understanding of emerging MEA opportunities at sea basin level 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number and type of actions started or planned following EMFF funded studies.
WP 1D	Will the actions taken help MS report the state of the marine environment as part of their obligations under the Marine Strategy Framework Directive?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> EMFF projects have helped MS deliver on reporting obligations under the Habitats Directive. EMFF actions have helped MS deliver on reporting obligations under the MSFD. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Level of compliance in reporting requirements per MS on indicators associated with the Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD) descriptors. Contribution of EMFF to national budgets delivering MSFD reporting obligations. Confirmation by MS that actions have supported understanding and ease of reporting.
WP 2	To what extent have the studies, pilots and scientific advice funded under direct management contributed to improving the overall effectiveness and relevance of scientific advice to policy-making?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scientific advice to policy-making is more effective because of supported projects under each of the areas (a-f) above. Scientific advice to policy-making is more relevant because of supported projects. Beneficiaries of studies, pilots and scientific advice confirm that the topics, outputs have covered the main areas needed. Policy makers at national and EU level confirm that they have taken studies, pilots and scientific advice into account in the evolution of national policy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Change in number of stocks assessed in EU waters Change in % of data-poor stocks in EU waters. Cost of fisheries advice as % of landed value Cost compared to comparative advice outside the EU. Unit price of scientific advice (efficiency) Qualitative assessment
	To what extent have the studies, pilots and scientific advice funded under direct management been coherent with Horizon 2020?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Projects are coherent with Horizon 2020 research. It is not possible to identify duplication or overlaps between EMFF direct management component and H2020 research. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence that activities funded by EMFF direct management component are used for objectives coherent with H2020 Stakeholders' views confirm synergies exist with other types of interventions funded under H2020
	How have data collection related actions strengthened regional cooperation?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regional co-operation has been strengthened through support to data-collection. It is possible to identify specific ways that cooperation has been strengthened. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Qualitative analysis through stakeholder interviews.
WP 3	Which measures are most /least frequently implemented and why?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The extent to which EMFF funding under direct management supported improved MS compliance with the control regulation through international cooperation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Share of budget by type of action, year by year / in total. There is documentary evidence to confirm factors. Stakeholders give feedback on balance of measures.

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WPs	Specific Question	Judgement criteria	Indicators
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extent that it is possible to identify the factors that have influenced the balance between measures implemented. 	
	<p>Why is there a reluctance from MS to apply for joint chartering and/or purchase of control means? Should this measure be abandoned? If not, under which conditions that measure would be relevant in the next programming period?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extent that it is possible to identify other reasons, which limit MS applications and factors that influence these reasons. • There is consensus at EU / MS level that this measure should be abandoned? • Extent that it is possible to identify how to adapt the measure so that it is 'more' fit for purpose / meets needs in the next period. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Qualitative feedback from stakeholders • Analysis of reasons for failure of past submission
WP 4	<p>Are the partnership agreements in line with the objective of the CFP? Do the contributions help improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the international organisations?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partnership agreement are in line with objective of CFP: contributes to knowledge and efficient IOs functioning allowing for better management and therefore stock status, and adoption of new management measures • EU voluntary contributions contribute to the same objectives as other initiatives • Extent that it is possible to identify main improvements to effectiveness and efficiency. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Qualitative assessment of extent to which EU funding contributes to improved IOs functioning and knowledge of fish stocks under the mandate of selected IOs • Analysis of policy documents and relevant evaluation reports concerning other related EU initiatives
WP 5	<p>Have the Advisory Councils been able to provide recommendations on fisheries management matters, including advice on conservation and socio-economic aspects of fisheries, and simplification of rules?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advisory Councils have made a significant contribution to EC fisheries policy, including the Landing Obligation. • The support to Advisory Councils has enabled timely recommendations on fisheries management matters. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support as a proportion of total AC costs. • Number of meetings held • Number of responses to EC. • Response completeness for requests from the EC (e.g. as per Article 9 of Omnibus regulation). • Response timeliness for requests from the EC.

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WPs	Specific Question	Judgement criteria	Indicators
WP 6	To what extent has EUMOFA delivered on the Commission commitments on market intelligence as defined in art. 42 of the CMO regulation (1379/2013)?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> EUMOFA provides unique information not available elsewhere at reasonable costs EUMOFA provides relevant market information as listed in art. 42 of the CMO regulation The Union fisheries and aquaculture sector finds adequate information to support marketing of products Gathering and dissemination of EU market data could not have been achieved by Members States at national and/or regional levels 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expert judgment EUMOFA outputs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Databases coverage Number of publications on relevant market thematic End-users appreciation of EUMOFA performances Level of integration at EU level of market intelligence data Alternative funding mechanisms in the Member States
WP 7	Are the tasks that FARNET implements meeting a need of the local community? If so, what structures are in place to hand over these tasks after 14 years of implementation?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extent that local community needs could be met without FARNET. FARNET is meeting the needs of the local community and these needs still need to be met. FARNET is cooperating with the networking and technical support bodies for local development set up by the ERDF, the ESF and the EAFRD as regards their local development activities and transnational cooperation. Extent that FARNET tasks will continue under other EU funds. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identification of specific needs met for specific local communities FLAG satisfaction level with FARNET performance Level of engagement with other technical support bodies such as European Network Rural Development (ENRD)
	What has FAME's contribution been to a more efficient and effective implementation of the monitoring and evaluation system of the shared management of the EMFF both at MS and EU level?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extent that it is possible to identify the specific contribution made by FAME to M&E implementation at MS and EU level FAME has enabled a more efficient and effective Monitoring & Evaluation under EMFF. FAME has contributed to greater consistency and completeness of EMFF reporting by MS 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> M&E system evolution in MS Level of completeness of EMFF reporting by MS M&E systems are providing useful data to facilitate performance improvement at EU and MS level Managing Authority satisfaction levels with FAME performance. M&E is easier to implement than before FAME
WP8	Relevance: To what extent is the intervention still relevant?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extent to which the needs [as identified in the general IL, e.g. conservation of marine biological resources] continue to exist EMFF support under direct management provides an appropriate solution to support this objective Extent that it is possible to identify better alternative options for EMFF support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> E.g. scientific evidence that resources are over-exploited Stakeholders' perceptions confirm that direct management of EMFF support is the appropriate solution

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WPs	Specific Question	Judgement criteria	Indicators
	<p>Effectiveness:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To what extent have the objectives been achieved? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extent of change towards meeting : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * specific objective of the thematic interventions * specific objective of the EMFF * general objective of the EMFF Extent that it is possible to identify that factors that have influenced the attainment of objectives There is evidence to confirm the uptake of deliverables from €1 million per year contracts. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Performance to date as reported against common indicators, milestones and targets established in the operational programmes (EMFF Reg.) Stakeholders' views on the cumulative effects of the intervention. DG MARE staff / stakeholders confirm / there is evidence in reports of the use of deliverables from €1 million contracts. Beneficiaries' feedback regarding satisfaction / evidence (in terms of quantity and of quality) in relation to specific aspects.
	<p>Efficiency:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To what extent has the intervention been cost-effective? Is the indicative distribution of funding reasonable? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extent to which (activity supported through given intervention) have been carried out at the lowest possible cost Price competitiveness of (activity supported through given intervention) compared to [organisation / third country] The operational costs are proportionate to the results achieved 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Absolute costs of (activity supported through a given intervention) Correlation of beneficiaries / end-users satisfaction composite score and cumulative funding by year
	<p>Coherence: To what extent is the intervention coherent internally (with the objectives of the Common Fisheries Policy and integrated maritime policy) and externally (with wider EU policy objectives)?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Existence of synergies with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * other EU instruments * MS actions * other actors' interventions in the pursuit of CFP objectives and wider EU policy objectives Extent of identified overlaps / duplication 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence that activities funded by EMFF direct management component are used for several objectives / CFP-relevant legislation DG MARE staff and stakeholders' views confirm synergies exist with other types of interventions in the pursuit of CFP objectives and wider EU policy objectives
	<p>EU added value: What is the additional value resulting from the EU intervention compared to what could be achieved by Member States at national and/or regional levels?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extent to which EU support has achieved benefits beyond what could have been achieved by national spending. Extent that objectives provide necessary funding on topics that that would otherwise been provided at national or regional level. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extent that the EU dimension of the Fund provides new insights / learning to national and regional stakeholders. Stakeholders' views confirm the added value of EU funding.

2. THEMATIC WORK PACKAGES

The evaluation was conducted using a two-layered analytical framework. The approach was driven by data collection on specific **thematic** interventions complemented by research on **cross-cutting** issues, which relate to the mandatory evaluation criteria.

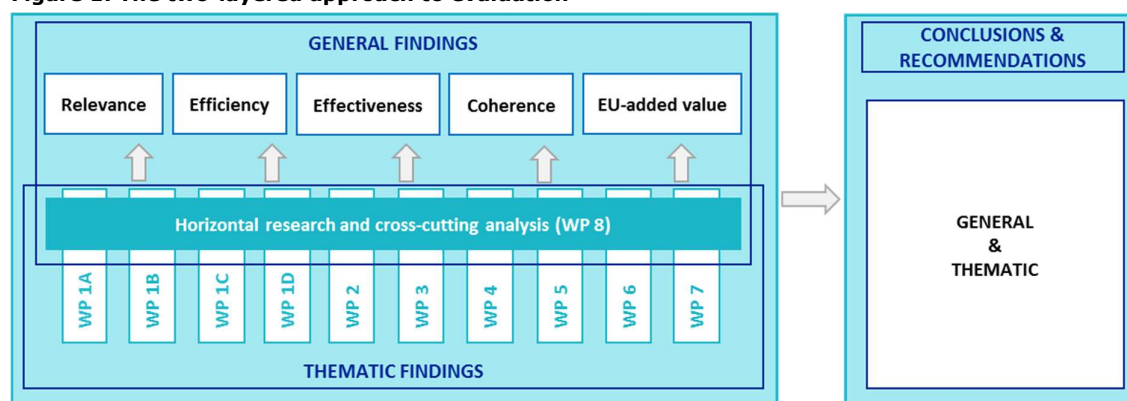
As such, the evaluation study was structured around **ten thematic work packages (WPs)** to address the seven intervention categories (including four for the sub-categories relating to integrated maritime policy). The approach also included a **separate horizontal WP** to support the requirements for general mandatory evaluation criteria.

These two elements are outlined below and summarised in Figure 1:

- **Thematic approach to research and analysis (Work Packages 1-7):** This aspect focused on the specific questions relating to the thematic interventions covered by the EMFF. These will be investigated using ten work packages.
- **Horizontal research and cross-cutting analysis (Work Package 8):** To reach judgements regarding the mandatory evaluation criteria (namely relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, effectiveness, coherence and EU added value), the evaluation study must consider how the interventions relate and correspond to one another. This began with the development of an intervention logic and a two-layered analytical framework (Evaluation Questions Matrix – EQM) to refine evaluation questions, judgement criteria, indicators and data sources both at the level of thematic and cross-cutting analysis. To do this and to ensure that general evaluation questions are answered in a holistic way, we proposed a horizontal work package based on the development of the EQM.

During the final data analysis phase, we integrated the data and analysis from both strands of the evaluation. The answers to the thematic evaluation questions linked to the different work packages fed into the answers to the mandatory general evaluation questions. These findings were then complemented with findings from the horizontal work package.

Figure 1: The two-layered approach to evaluation



The ensuing sections present the detailed reports for each of the **ten thematic work packages**. Each WP report shares a similar structure: it outlines the background to the theme, lists the key consulted data and information sources, and finally presents the key findings relating to the Evaluation Questions pertinent to a given WP.

2.1.WP 1A: Integrated Maritime Policy - Development and implementation of an integrated governance of maritime and coastal affairs

2.1.1. Background

Article 82 of the EMFF Regulation proposes support that “*should contribute to the development and implementation of the Union’s Integrated Maritime Policy (IMP)*”. It specifies this support in relation to four main areas. These are reflected in the first four WPs related to IMP support under direct management.

The first work package (WP1A) requires directly financed support to foster the development and implementation of **integrated governance of maritime and coastal affairs**, in particular by:

- a) promoting actions which encourage Member States and their regions to develop, introduce or implement integrated maritime governance;
- b) promoting dialogue and cooperation with and among competent authorities of the Member States and stakeholders on marine and maritime issues, including by developing and implementing integrated sea-basin strategies;
- c) promoting cross-sectoral cooperation platforms and networks, including representatives of public authorities at national, regional and local level, industry including tourism, research stakeholders, citizens, civil society organisations and the social partners;
- d) improving the cooperation between Member States through exchange of information and best practices among their competent authorities;
- e) promoting the exchange of best practices and dialogue at international level, including bilateral dialogue with third countries. Such dialogue shall include, as appropriate, effective discussion on the ratification and implementation of UNCLOS;
- f) enhancing the visibility of, and raising the awareness of public authorities, the private sector and the general public to an integrated approach to, maritime affairs.

Key Legal and Programming Texts

The support to develop maritime Governance has been included in EU legislation since 2011 with:

- i. the Parliament and the European Council adoption of **Regulation (EU) No 1255/2011 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 November 2011**. Integrated maritime governance is declared as one of the strategic objectives of the EU IMP with operational objectives such as the promotion EU Member States and EU regions to introduce and implement integrated maritime governance or also the promotion of cross sectoral platforms and networks. The programmed budget for the development and implementation of integrated governance of maritime and coastal affairs and visibility of the IMP was at least 4% of the programme (50 000 000€ from 01/01/2011 until 31/12/20131).
- ii. And then followed by **2014 Regulation (EU) No 508/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 15 May 2014** on the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund and repealing Council Regulations (EC) No 2328/2003, (EC) No 861/2006, (EC) No 1198/2006 and (EC) No 791/2007 and Regulation (EU) No 1255/2011 of the European Parliament and of the Council. REGULATION (EU) No 508/2014 highlights the fact that:

¹ Cf.P7 [COM\(2010\)494 final 2010/0257 \(COD\)](#)

- “The scope of the EMFF should include the support for the IMP, including for the **development and implementation of coordinated operations and decision-making** in relation to the oceans, seas, coastal regions and maritime sectors, complementing the different Union policies relating to them, notably, the CFP, and transport, industry, territorial cohesion, environment, energy and tourism policies”.
- “The EMFF should support the promotion of **integrated maritime governance at all levels**, especially through exchanges of best practices and the further development and implementation of sea basin strategies. Those strategies aim to set up an integrated framework to address common challenges in European sea basins, to strengthen cooperation between stakeholders to maximise the use of Union financial instruments and funds, and to contribute to the economic, social and territorial cohesion of the Union”.

The objective set out in Article 82 for the development and implementation of an integrated governance of maritime and coastal affairs is 5 % of the total volume of the EMFF under direct management for the 2014-2020 period (cf. Article 14 and Annexe 3). It provides an indicative distribution of funds under chapters I & II of title VI among the objectives set out in articles 82 (IMP) & 85 (FCP).

Key Actions Undertaken

On the period 2014 -2016, the EMFF supported various actions in particular to raise interest in maritime affairs and prepare implementation in sea basins (Atlantic, Black Sea, Western Mediterranean) in order to prepare the development of dedicated strategy (see cross-sectoral IMP evaluation in next section).

The following table identify the programmed budget for each WP on the period 2014-2016 in order to appreciate the share of programming and the relative weight of EMFF direct management actions.

Table 1: Budgets for IMP work packages – WP 1A

Programmed budget	WP1A	WP1B	WP1C	WP1D	Total programmed
2014	€ 3 520 000	€ 21 240 000	€ 1 300 000	€ 3 260 000	€ 29 320 000
2015	€ 3 682 000	€ 23 928 000	€ 1 260 000	€ 3 637 598	€ 32 507 598
2016	€ 3 806 000	€ 27 792 000	€ 3 259 000	€ 4 269 664	€ 39 126 664
Av 2014-2016	11%	72%	6%	11%	€100 954 262

The average of programmed funding supporting governance (in accordance with EMFF categories annex III) on the period is 11 % of the annual programmed budget (3.7 M€; 4.8 % of the overall direct management EMFF²). This increase illustrates EC decision to support directly integrated governance.

Within the period 2014-2016, an average of 1 425 333€/year were programmed for the development and implementation of integrated governance of maritime and coastal affairs and visibility of the IMP (through meetings, workshops and conferences). This activity continues in the following years of the EMFF. To illustrate it, the annual European Maritime Day (EMD) provide an annual meeting to network, discuss and forge joint action for the Europe’s maritime community. The EMD is held in a different region with a different theme each year. This platform welcomes Europe’s growing maritime community, with industry professionals from across the EU joining policymaker to discuss, debate and exchange best practices. The EMD conference includes plenary and thematic sessions (with the

² 11 million euros out of 231.5 million euros (consultant’s estimate based on data provided by DG MARE).

participation of high level and key-experts) as well as workshops that are self-organised by interested stakeholders. Each year, the EMD conference attracts more than 1 000 maritime stakeholders for a unique, creative and motivating experience.

The Ocean Energy Forum was set up in 2014 to bring together stakeholders to develop a shared understanding of the problems faced by the Ocean Energy sector and to collectively devise workable solutions. Its Secretariat published the Ocean Energy Forum Strategic Roadmap, which was formally delivered to the European Commission on 8 November 2016. This publication of the Roadmap culminates the end of over two-years' work by Ocean Energy Forum stakeholders. The Roadmap identifies a path forward, building on European leadership in ocean energy, and developing technologies that can meet a significant amount of Europe's power demand over the next 35 years. It is considered as a strategic and useful tool for marine renewable energy development in the EU. In line with this roadmap, European commission launched in 2017 a market study on the ocean energy³. Built on exchanges between public and private sectors, this roadmap is a tangible outcome from improved and more integrated governance. The experience is to be replicated for marine biotechnologies.

The increase of commitments in 2015 (set up of the Assistance Mechanism for Atlantic Action Plan) and in 2016 relate to programmed actions in the Mediterranean sea basin or assistance mechanism to support EU MS for implementation of MSP (see next section) or MSFD second phase implementation ([project MEDCIS](#)).

Although project MEDCIS is better linked to WP 1D, it is aimed to establish a network with regional structures (in particular UNEP/MAP), MSFD competent authorities, policy makers and other stakeholders, as well as relevant projects to ensure coordination across regions/sub-regions, and boost dissemination of results and the direct use of the project's outcomes in accessible manner to stakeholders.

Further the preparation of implementation (WP1B), EMFF supported coastguard cooperation such as associated regional forum such European Coast Guard Functions Forum (ECGFF) or Mediterranean Coast Guard Functions Forum (MCGFF) within this WP.

Note also that, EMFF under direct management funded a study in 2017 (funds committed in 2016) to assess the need for strengthening scientific support in third countries, particularly within countries having sustainable fisheries partnership agreements (SFPAs) with the EU, to further evaluate options and policy for the EU and its MS of international oceans governance. The study demonstrated the need of performance indicators and a baseline to assess progress against the UN sustainable development goals in the partner countries evaluated within the study, and of applying a regional approach to developing concrete capacity development projects to exchange skills and experience through projects and twinning programmes. The study is expected to be a pilot for future similar studies in other regions or other partner countries (final report of the study⁴).

2.1.2. Data and information

Key documents reviewed

Table 2: Key documents relevant to WP1A (chronological)

Document name	Author	Year	Purpose
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³ Market study on ocean energy published in June 2018.

⁴ <https://publications.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/a52a5f65-832b-11e8-ac6a-01aa75ed71a1>, access: 12 July 2018

Communication on an IMP for the EU COM(2007) 574 Final	European Commission	2007	Communication
Regulation (EU) No 1255/2011	European Commission	2011	Communication
EMFF Regulation 508/2014 (Art 82)	European Commission	2014	Regulatory instrument
Ex post evaluation of the transitional financial programme of the Integrated Maritime Policy (IMP) and of two preparatory actions on maritime spatial planning	Rafaelsen, B., S. Harka & K. Rigas	2015	Ex-post evaluation
International ocean governance agenda for the future of our oceans (JOIN(2016) 49) and associated texts.	European Commission	2016	Communication
25th Meeting of the Member States Experts Group on Maritime Policy	European Commission	2017	Meeting Report
Mid-term review of the Atlantic Action Plan	European Commission	2018	Ex-post evaluation

Key websites accessed

Table 3: Key websites relevant to WP1A

Website name	Owner	Main content	URL
Integrated Maritime Policy	DG MARE	Links to DG MARE Maritime Forum relating to IMP	https://ec.europa.eu/maritimeaffairs/policy_en
MSP Platform	EC	Stakeholders and governance	http://msp-platform.eu/
European coast guard functions	ECGFA	EU coastguard cooperation and forum	http://www.ecgff-trainingportal.eu/pages/32-coast-guard-functions

In-depth Interviews undertaken

In depth interviews were led with a large panel of end users at policy level ins in order to identify any recommendations for the next programming period of EMFF. Interviews were held with 6 stakeholders as follows:

Table 4: Key interviews relevant to WP1A

Interviewee	Function / organisation	Main areas covered
Alessandra Sensi	Head of Sector Environment and Blue Economy /UfM	Sea basin governance
Julien Le Tellier	Policy officer /UNEP/MAP	Sea basin governance
Christos Theophilou	Policy Officer / EC /DG Mare	Sea basin governance
Damien Perrisé	Policy Officer / CPMR	Region involvement
Frédéric de Montcany	Vice Chairman/ EMC	Private sector and cluster
Pauline Taillac-Deschamp	Policy Officer /IUCN	NGO involvement
Alessandra Sensi	Head of Sector Environment and Blue Economy /UfM	Sea basin governance

Relevant Case Studies

The following case studies were relevant for the WP 1A:

Case study theme	Subject	Relevance to WP
IMP: Marine Spatial Planning	SIMCelt	Yes, with the production of Guidance on Transboundary Cooperation between Member States for MSP.
IMP: Sea basin initiatives	BalticBOOST	Yes, with the support to HELCOM with a joint project
Advisory Councils	NWWAC	Low as it is a sectoral committee (fisheries) – interest in the process to discuss, exchange views and formulate proposals with EU policy makers, national administrations, scientists, and academics a variety of local, regional and horizontal cross cutting issues related to fisheries management within its scope of action

2.1.3. Findings

Developing integrated governance of maritime and coastal affairs covers a wide scope of actions, for which the human component is essential as is based on the identification and involvement of stakeholders. The EMFF programming for governance covers a wide scope of actions to support actions and the setup of assistance mechanism for the full visibility of IMP but also to improve the stakeholders' involvement.

Regarding the **Atlantic Action Plan and governance**, the Mid-term review of the Atlantic Action Plan (EC, 2018) pointed the following facts (i) *“the action plan did not explicitly set out the roles and responsibilities of those involved in its governance and that of the Atlantic*

strategy”, (ii) The Assistance Steering Group (ASG)⁵ as main body overseeing implementation and bringing together key actors in the region “has fostered alliances among its members and steered the work of the assistance mechanism, but done little to agree on and coordinate projects of benefit to the Atlantic area as a whole, and even less to mobilise additional public or private investment in the plan.”

The mid-term review of the Atlantic Action Plan also points out that (i) “the wide range of priorities in the plan makes it difficult for ASG members to cover all issues effectively, thus limiting the effectiveness of the governance mechanism generally”, (ii) “regional, local and civil society stakeholders, whose role is often seen as developing and implementing projects on the ground, are not sufficiently involved in governance”.

The review proposed to strengthen the governance mechanism and add practical content to its work, by giving to the ASG a clearer mandate to support implementation of the plan at operational level. A priority would be to involve other relevant actors (in particular local and regional authorities) more in governance, possibly by setting up thematic working groups or consultation forums in the priority areas or through their participation in ASG meetings. This proposal is fully in accordance with the assumption of the Regulation 508/2014 for an EMFF support to the “**promotion of integrated maritime governance at all levels**” and the “cooperation between stakeholders to maximise the use of Union financial instruments and funds, and to contribute to the economic, social and territorial cohesion of the Union”.

Direct management is considered by UfM Secretary as the most efficient way to fund actions related to several sectors and policies, to support governance initiatives involving non-EU countries and regions, actions involving several sectors at several levels, and “leveraging” other actions carried out within other programmes/funds (e.g. INTERREG). It is acknowledged by regional organisations (UfM or 5+5) in Mediterranean Sea that the direct EMFF support was and is essential for supporting the development of governance at regional scale with stakeholders conference as in [Barcelona](#) (2017) with panels on coastguard functions or advancement of governance in the Western Mediterranean basin.

Some actions may overlap with actions carried out by other DGs and EU institutions (e.g. IEB) and/or lack the critical mass to achieve significant effects. Better cooperation is required, with more focused strategy. Projects duration is often too short to sustainably influence governance (which requires long timescale).

The strong link between CFP and IMP within regulation 508/2014 supports the financing/funding of IMP and associated tools. It helps enhancing DG Mare footprint on global governance in maritime affairs which are now not only related to fisheries (CFP).

EQ 1A: Have the actions contributed to a more integrated governance of maritime and coastal affairs?

Before answering, it must be highlighted that the assessment of the contribution of direct management must be done in a global assessment of the direct management actions on IMP. Indeed, governance is the human component of IMP. It contributes in the definition and implementation of any actions such MSP, Blue Economy development or marine environmental protection as stakeholders are involved in.

Therefore, actions falling under EMFF direct management component had efficiently contributed to a more integrated governance of maritime and coastal affairs in some fields, such as maritime intersectoral cooperation at basin-level scale but also with the support in

⁵ Made up of representatives of the national governments of the five participating countries (France, Spain, Portugal, Eire, United Kingdom)

MSP directive implementation (Cf. W1B). The level of integration of the governance was assessed by the definition of stakeholders' networks or of joint projects.

Those stakeholders interviewed considered that EU provides a major impulse in developing maritime governance, mainly through actions supported by EMFF/IMP with the assistance mechanism in sea basin. But it must be pointed out that projects duration is often too short to sustainably influence governance (which requires long timescale).

Direct management EMFF funded actions such as assistance mechanisms helped in developing governance, e.g. with the provision of logistics. But as they are funded as a project, it was pointed out during interviews that it is essential to set up seamless support with successive mechanism to keep the level of interest and involvement of stakeholders high.

The communication and dissemination have also been essential for governance, the development of VKC or sea basin platform helped for this. It is the main networking platform for public and private Blue Economy stakeholders of the Mediterranean and is regularly being adapted and upgraded to match their needs as well as the objectives of the UfM Forum on Blue Economy. No indicators such number of visits, or number of projects reported on the VKC, or number or registered users are available on the website. The support of EMFF direct management actions such as the set-up of such facility is real but their sustainability with the time must be taken in account in order not to face with any disruption in the services delivery.

Regarding the Atlantic Action Plan mechanism, it was stated during interviews that its contribution for more integrated governance was real (e.g. economic stakeholders, research institutions) but limited, in particular with little participation of public stakeholders at decision-level.

On the period, the objectives of EMFF intervention created the good conditions for the development of the governance with the development of a network of national focal points in these sea basins or sub-sea basins in liaison with regional organizations (UfM, BSEC, BSC, ...) and then to involve stakeholders with raising awareness of maritime assets for a sustainable 'Blue Economy' for instance.

Direct management EMFF contribution has enabled the involvement not only on EU MS but also non-EU countries and regions (e.g. Mediterranean and Black Sea). The use of existing governance structure was essential for the sustainability of the project once it is finished.

As an illustration, the assistance mechanism in West Med supported DG Mare in the definition of the Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions related to Initiative for the sustainable development of the Blue Economy in the western Mediterranean (SWD(2017) 130 final) with goals and priorities such as the cooperation between coastguards – the development of maritime clusters. In November 2017, an informal Ministerial Meeting of the western Mediterranean countries marked the official launch of the Initiative for the sustainable development of the Blue Economy in the western Mediterranean.

Therefore, the linkage between the assistance mechanism and a political steering group including EU and countries was a lever to meet the goals of the project (efficiency and effectiveness) in accordance with national needs already launched actions in particular with indirect EMFF management.

The outcomes of cooperation platforms and frameworks contracts their outcomes in the field of governance are difficult to assess. As sea-basin platforms and networks effectively

connect sectors and actors, their effects are not very visible. The improvement of monitoring with outcomes Indicators beyond outputs indicators could be done.

The launched actions with direct management EMFF are still relevant, as they support coordinated actions at the level of sea-basins, cross-sectoral projects. They could be made more relevant by (i) making the funding strategy more visible; (ii) focusing actions on the fields where direct management is the most efficient instrument (coordination rather than sector, strategies rather than projects), (iii) better monitoring their contribution to the EMFF regulation objectives, (iv) reduce "scattering" into many actions loosely connected.

- If actions contributed to the enhancement of the Governance, its dimension in particular within MSP set up, should be more highlighted not only for its definition (stakeholder involvement) but also for its implementation (including revision/adaptation) in close liaison with public authorities to make/ensure its consistency with national or subsea basin policies.

Recommendation: Support convergence of MSP and ICZM, both to better take into account maritime space in ICZM projects/policies thanks to a shared governance (stakeholders and mechanisms) (link with WP1B)

- The linkage with existing sea basin/regional/national objectives is essential for any project. The liaison with sea basin/regional/national governance structure is therefore essential with any assisting mechanism the role of which is not only to promote and develop project but also to make the liaison with the governance structure (steering group) to meet the objectives of a shared vision.

Recommendation: Regional/Sub-regional action plans are potentially powerful instruments to develop more integrated governance at these scales, and this aspect should be reinforced in the next cycles/plans.

2.2.WP 1B: Integrated Maritime Policy - Development of cross-sectorial initiatives

2.2.1. Background

Work Package (WP1B), focuses on the requirement for the development of cross-sectorial initiatives, the second main area for Integrated Maritime Policy. As per Article 82(b) of the EMFF regulations, measures financed under direct management are expected to contribute to the development of cross-sectorial initiatives that are mutually beneficial to different maritime sectors and/or sectoral policies, taking into account and building upon existing tools and initiatives, such as:

- i. **Maritime Spatial Planning** (MSP) and integrated coastal zone management processes;
- ii. **Integrated Maritime Surveillance** (IMS) so as to reinforce the safe, secure and sustainable use of maritime space in particular by enhancing effectiveness and efficiency through information exchange across sectors and borders, while taking due account of existing and future cooperation mechanisms and systems;
- iii. the progressive development of a comprehensive and publicly accessible **high quality marine data and knowledge base** which shall facilitate the sharing, re-use and dissemination of those data and knowledge among various user groups, thus avoiding a duplication of efforts; for that purpose, the best use shall be made of existing Union and Member States' programmes.

Key Legal and Programming Texts

An **Integrated Maritime Policy** (IMP) was first launched in 2007 via COM(2007) 574 final) and secured via Regulation (EU) 1255/2011 by a communication establishing a **Programme to support the further development of an Integrated Maritime Policy** in December 2011 with the objective to “*foster the development and implementation of integrated governance of maritime and coastal affairs*” and “*to contribute to the development of cross-sectorial tools, namely MSP, the Common Information Sharing Environment (CISE) and marine knowledge on the oceans, seas and coastal regions*”.

- Maritime Spatial Planning (MSP):

the **MSP Directive** (Directive 2014/89/EU) recognised the role of MSP in meeting the **Europe 2020 Strategy** of for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth through identifying the utilisation of maritime space for different sea uses as well as to manage spatial uses and conflicts in marine areas. It requires Member States to design and implement MSPs by 31 March 2021 and provides key scoping and developmental requirements. The **EMFF Regulation** (508/2014) specifically identifies (i) the need for aquaculture development to comply with MSP requirements and (ii) the need to coordinate activities and cooperation between Member States or regions.

- Integrated Maritime Surveillance (IMS):

The **EU Maritime Security Strategy (EUMSS)**, adopted in June 2014, created an overarching strategy against all challenges from the global maritime domain affecting people, activities or infrastructure in the EU. This Strategy provided the political and strategic framework to effectively address maritime security challenges through the employment of all relevant instruments at international, EU and national level. It facilitated improved cross-sectorial cooperation between civilian and military authorities and actors. It contributed to the full use of the growth potential in the maritime domain, in line with existing legislation, the principle of subsidiarity and the supported/supporting relationship. It also aimed to foster mutual support between Member States and to allow for joint security contingency planning, risk management, conflict prevention and crisis response and management. Coupled with the IMP which specifically focused on the integration of

maritime surveillance, one of the key areas of EUMSS was identified as maritime awareness, surveillance and information sharing. At the same time the focus of the IMP on the integration of maritime surveillance was viewed as contributory towards the development of a coherent and coordinated approach to maritime issues, calling for *closer cooperation across sectoral boundaries* involving national and EU maritime authorities. This approach would lead to a more structured and systematic collaboration involving the ability to share information through the development of a Common Information Sharing Environment (CISE) established at National and EU levels. It would also lead to *enhanced effectiveness and greater efficiencies* amongst the many maritime authorities, agencies and bodies involved.

- Marine data and knowledge-base:

The communication on **Marine Knowledge 2020**, from September 2010 addressed the need to improve the scientific knowledge on the marine environment as a key element of the IMP. This communication outlined the initial strategy to enable marine data collection and assembly and sets the basis to enable investments in marine observation from Member States and the EU. This strategy is built around the **European Marine Observation and Data Network** (EMODnet) as its main pillar. EMODnet acts as a single access point to marine data derived from observations, surveys or samples from hundreds of databases maintained on behalf of agencies, public authorities, research institutions and universities across the EU. Notwithstanding this, the 'Marine Knowledge 2020' is wider than EMODnet, and it provides a common framework for all ongoing initiatives on marine observation at national and EU level. This defines a number of basic principles, such as: '*collect data once and then use them for many purposes*' and '*data should be interoperable, accessible and free of restrictions on use*'. It covers the full cycle of marine data, from its initial observation to interpretation, processing, and dissemination. This common framework is applicable to other wider EU initiatives such as: the Data Collection Framework for Fisheries (DCF), the Global Monitoring for Environment and Security Initiative (GMES), the Shared Environmental Information System (SEIS) and WISE-marine.

The communication on **Innovation in the Blue Economy: realising the potential of our seas and oceans for jobs and growth**, together with its accompanying document **Marine Knowledge 2020: roadmap**, both from May 2014, represent a step forward in the sustainable implementation of the 'Marine Knowledge 2020' strategy; and sets the target of '*developing a multiresolution map of the entire seabed and overlying water column of European waters by 2020*' as a *flagship initiative*. In order to achieve this objective five actions are identified: (i) improving the EMODnet to include marine and seabed data; (ii) integrating data systems, by merging three further EU initiatives (i.e., the Copernicus Marine Service, the Data Collection Framework for fisheries, and WISE-marine) with EMODnet using common standards; (iii) facilitating the incorporation of non-confidential data from private companies into EMODnet, in particular data raising licensing requirements and environmental impact assessments; (iv) encouraging Horizon 2020 research consortia to grant open access marine data through EMODnet; and (v) developing a mechanism for strategic coordination of observation systems, sampling programmes and surveying for European sea-basins, through funding from the EMFF.

As per Article 83.2 (c), the **EMFF regulation** (508/2014), specifically identifies its support to '*initiatives to co-finance, purchase and maintain marine observation systems and technical tools for designing, setting-up and running and operational European marine observation and data network system which aims to facilitate the collection, acquisition, assembly, processing, quality control, re-use and distribution of marine data and knowledge, though cooperation between Member States and/or international institutions concerned*'.

Key Actions Undertaken

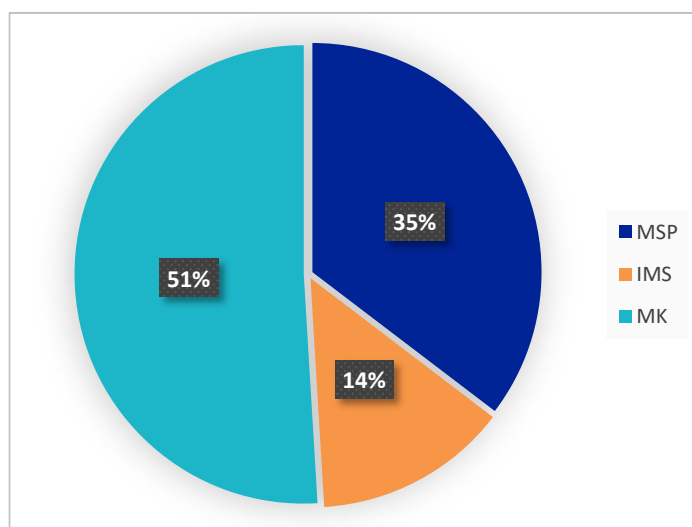
Over two-thirds of the direct EMFF funding to IMP (e.g. all Work Packages 1A-D) has been to cross-sectoral initiatives under WP 1B.

Table 5: Budgets for IMP work packages – WP 1B

Programmed budget	WP1A	WP1B	WP1C	WP1D	Total programmed
2014	€ 3 520 000	€ 21 240 000	€ 1 300 000	€ 3 260 000	€ 29 320 000
2015	€ 3 682 000	€ 23 928 000	€ 1 260 000	€ 3 637 598	€ 32 507 598
2016	€ 3 806 000	€ 27 792 000	€ 3 259 000	€ 4 269 664	€ 39 126 664
Av 2014-2016	11%	72%	6%	11%	€100 954 262

This has been mostly programmed to maritime knowledge projects (51%), MSP (35%) and then integrated maritime surveillance (14%).

Figure 2: Total programmed budget for the period 2014-2017 for WP1B



Maritime spatial planning: around EUR 25 million has been committed to MSP projects to date. The majority of these have been generic projects to support MSP in Member States, with an increasing focus on sea basin level initiatives over time. For instance, the Call for Proposals for ‘Projects on Maritime Spatial Planning (MSP)’ by EASME was designed to support Member states implement the MSP Directive and to launch and carry out concrete, cross-border MSP cooperation initiatives with other Member States, focusing on addressing barriers to applying MSP in cross-border areas. In 2015 an MSP project in the Baltic Sea was launched (Baltic SCOPE), followed by a project in the Black Sea (in 2016) and the North Atlantic (in 2017). These direct MSP projects were supported by more nuanced, thematic projects such as the EUR 1.1 million “Assistance Mechanism for the Implementation of MSP” that provided technical studies such as ‘Evaluation of data and knowledge gaps to implement MSP’ (Cahill *et al*, 2016) and the EUR 500 000 project ‘Economic Impact of Maritime Spatial Planning’ that has been launched to expand the largely qualitative 2010 study on the same subject.

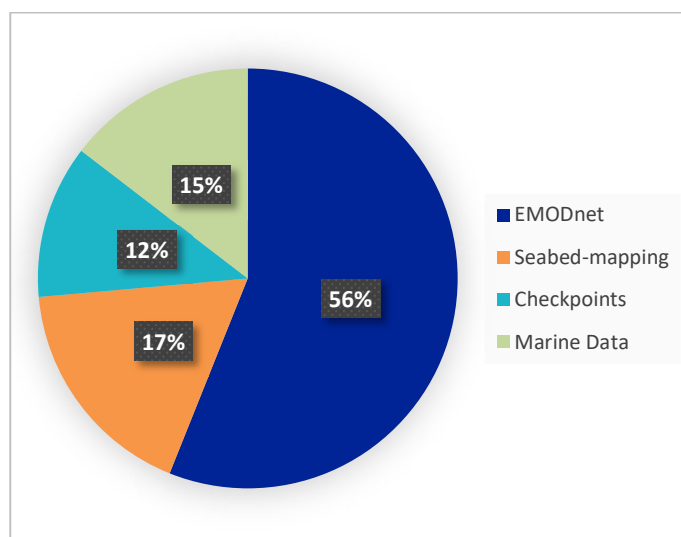
Integrated maritime surveillance (IMS): Between 2014 and 2017 almost EUR 9.7 million of EMFF funding was committed to cross sectoral projects associated with Integrated Maritime Surveillance. Spending on projects involving the development and

implementation of the Common Information Sharing Environment (CISE) in Member States (Greece, Portugal, Spain and Finland) accounted for EUR 2.9 million. This signifies an average spend per project of EUR 415k. These projects mainly concern IMS IT improvements involving the development of information services at the national nodes which can be used by the respective national maritime user communities, and thereby increase the volume of maritime surveillance information sharing within the Member State. One project, FIN CISE, is aimed at developing Finnish maritime surveillance services for future EU CISE by the Finnish Coast Guard.

Elsewhere the cost of technological research towards implementation of CISE and the development of corporate solutions has accounted for EUR 1.017 million, and further development and interoperability projects accounted for almost EUR 2.62 million (2 implementation projects alone costing EUR 2.18million). An Administrative Arrangement with the JRC for the definition of CISE central components and realisation of a TEST CISE, have cost EUR 2.34 million. Set aside from the CISE, five projects have objectives associated with collaboration and interoperability between Member States between those Member States maritime authorities carrying out Coast Guard functions.

Marine data and knowledge-base: In the period comprised between 2014 and 2017 EUR 35.3 million have been committed to Marine Knowledge related projects, representing the 51% of the total EMFF committed budget on IMP-Cross-sectoral initiatives. This programmed budget falls into five main groups (Figure 2): (i) projects related to the core of EMODnet, with EUR 19.8 million represent the larger budget portion with 56% of the total; (ii) projects related to the seabed-mapping and the definition of the European Atlas of the Seas, with EUR 6.2 million represents the 17%; (iii) projects related to the consolidation and integration of other marine data activities and coordination, with EUR 5.1 million represents the 15%; and (iv) projects supporting the Sea basin Checkpoints, with EUR 4.2 million represents the 12%.

Figure 3: Total programmed budget on Marine Knowledge related projects (2014-2017)



The majority of the budget committed under EMODnet projects has been designated to the development and running of the EMODnet platform itself (EUR 13.8 million) and the development of capabilities for ingestion and safe-keeping of marine data (EUR 4.2 million), two projects that represent the pillar of the Marine Knowledge 2020 initiative. Two are the main projects addressing the seabed-mapping group, the High Resolution Seabed Mapping (EUR 4.9 million) and the coastal mapping (EUR 1.2 million) which have the role of defining a high definition map of the European seabed basins and coastal regions, respectively. The third group covers a wide range of projects covering different types of

activities, such as: the Maritime Forum, the technological advisory services; being the Monitoring of the Oceans and Climate Change with Argo (MOCCA) project (EUR 4.0 million) the most representative of this group. MOCCA has as main objective to progress towards the Euro-Argo objectives in "Monitoring the Oceans" and the European effort under the international Argo programme. Finally, in 2014 a project covering four sea basin check points (Atlantic, Arctic, Baltic and Black Sea) was launched (EUR 4.2 million) as to complement the other two sea basin checkpoints already initiated in 2013 (Mediterranean Sea and North Sea). Furthermore, additional funding has been committed to projects related to the Marine Knowledge 2020 initiative among other areas of the IMP, with EUR 2.4 million for projects on WP 1C and EUR 4.0 million on WP 1D.

2.2.2. Data and information

Key documents reviewed

Table 6: Key documents relevant to WP1B (date order by subject)

Document name	Author	Year	Purpose
Common documents			
Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions - An Integrated Maritime Policy for the European Union	{COM(2007) 574 final} {SEC(2007) 1278} {SEC(2007) 1279} {SEC(2007) 1280} {SEC(2007) 1283} /* COM/2007/0575 final */	2007	Communication
Communication on an IMP for the EU COM(2007) 574 Final	European Commission	2007	Communication
Regulation (EU) No 1255/2011	European Commission	2011	Communication
EMFF Regulation 508/2014 (Art 82)	European Commission	2014	Regulatory instrument
Maritime Spatial Planning (MSP)			
Communication from the Commission of 5 November 2008 concerning a Roadmap for MSP: Achieving Common Principles in the EU (COM (2008) 791final)	European Commission	2008	10 key principles for applying MSP
Study on the legal aspects of MSP	MRAG-led consortium	2008	Legal aspects and progress indicators
Study on the economic effects of Maritime Spatial Planning	Policy Research Corporation	2010	Quantification of the benefits of MSP
Directive 2014/89/EU establishing a framework for maritime spatial planning	European Commission	2014	EU Directive
Ex post evaluation of the transitional financial programme of the Integrated Maritime Policy (IMP) and of two preparatory actions on maritime spatial planning	Rafaelsen, B., S. Harka & K. Rigas	2015	Ex-post evaluation

Document name	Author	Year	Purpose
Call for Proposals for EU grants Under the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund Projects on Maritime Spatial Planning (MSP)	EASME	2016	Provides objectives of MSP projects funded under EMFF.
MSP Data Study Executive Summary. Technical Study under the Assistance Mechanism for the Implementation of MSP	Cahill, B., A. Zehden, K. Gee, B. Miguez, J. Calewaert & E. Ramieri	2016	Technical document to support MSP implementation in the EU
11th meeting of the Member States Expert Group on Maritime Spatial Planning	DG Mare (European Commission)	2017	Meeting minutes
Lessons Learned: Obstacles and Enablers When Tackling the Challenges of Cross-Border MSP	Kull, M., J. Moodie, A. Giacometti and A. Morf	2017	Baltic SCOPE output
Coherent Cross-border Maritime Spatial Planning for the Southwest Baltic Sea	Giacometti, A., J. Moodie, M Kull & A. Morf (2017).	2017	Baltic SCOPE output
Integrated maritime security (IMS)			
Towards the integration of maritime surveillance: A common information sharing environment for the EU maritime domain	Commission	2009	Integration of Maritime Surveillance
Draft Roadmap for CISE	Commission	2010	Draft Roadmap
Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament and The Council Next steps within the Common Information Sharing Environment (CISE) for the EU Maritime Domain Com(2014) 451 final 08.07.2014	European Commission	2014	Communication
What is CISE?	Commission	2014	Background information
Organisation of CISE	Commission	2014	Background organisation
Questions on CISE	Commission	2014	Explanatory information
Why CISE?	Commission	2014	Background information
Facts and Figures on CISE	Commission	2014	Facts and figures
CISE Benefits	Commission	2014	Sets out future value to EU.
Operational forward planning for Coast Guard functions	Commission	2014	Forward planning strategy for Coast Guard

Document name	Author	Year	Purpose
CISE Technical Details	Commission	2014	Technical background
Agreement COM/EMSA	European Commission	2015	Operation of the maritime surveillance component of the Copernicus Security Service
Eurosur Handbook C (2015) 9206 Final	European Commission	2015	Practical Handbook for implementing and managing Eurosur
Entity Service Model for CISE (2017)	JRC (European Commission)	2017	Technical document
Marine data and knowledge-base			
Communication on Marine Knowledge 2020: marine data and observation for smart and sustainable growth (COM (2010) 461 final)	European Commission	2010	Communication
European Marine Observation and Data Network Impact Assessment (SEC (2010) 998 final)	European Commission	2010	Impact assessment
Green Paper Marine Knowledge 2020: from seabed mapping to ocean forecasting	European Commission	2012	Green Paper
Interim Evaluation of the European Marine Observation and Data Network accompanying the document Green Paper Marine Knowledge 2020: from seabed mapping to ocean forecasting (COM (2012) 473 final)	European Commission	2012	Interim Evaluation
Study to support Impact Assessment of Marine Knowledge 2020	Ernst & Young / COWI	2013	Technical document
Communication on Innovation in the Blue Economy: realising the potential of our seas and oceans for jobs and growth (COM (2014) 254 final/2)	European Commission	2014	Communication
Marine Knowledge 2020: roadmap (SWD (2014) 149 final)	European Commission	2014	Roadmap
Stakeholder Meeting on the revision of the Data Collection Framework Regulation	DG MARE C3	2014	Meeting minutes
Terms of Reference Associated Partnership Scheme EMODnet	EMODnet Secretariat	2016	Terms of reference
Report on the Blue Growth Strategy Towards more	European Commission	2017	Staff Working Document

Document name	Author	Year	Purpose
sustainable growth and jobs in the Blue Economy (SWD (2017) 128 final)			
EMODnet Annual Report	EMODnet Secretariat	2017	Annual report
Kick-off Meeting of the Marine Knowledge Expert Group (19/01/18)	DG Mare (European Commission)	2018	Meeting minutes
EMODnet Brochure	EMODnet Secretariat	2018	Brochure
Frequently Asked Questions on Data Collection and the EMFF	Commission	-	Frequently Asked Questions

Key websites accessed

Table 7: Key websites relevant to WP1B

Website name	Owner	Main content	URL
Integrated Maritime Policy	DG MARE	Links to DG MARE Maritime Forum relating to IMP	https://ec.europa.eu/maritimeaffairs/policy_en
MSP Platform	EC	MSP database, MSP best practise	http://msp-platform.eu/
Maritime Forum	DG MARE	Links to IMS information and CISE strategy	https://ec.europa.eu/maritimeforum/en
Copernicus	Copernicus Security Services	Provision of satellite data for maritime surveillance	www.copernicus.eu/main/security
EU CISE 2020	EC	Implementation of CISE	http://www.eucise2020.eu/
EMODnet	EMODnet secretariat	EMODnet central portal	http://www.emodnet.eu/
WISE-Marine	EEA	Marine environment data portal	https://water.europa.eu/marine
MOCCA [2015-2020]	ERIC Euro-Argo	MOCCA project	http://www.euro-argo.eu/EU-Projects/MOCCA-2015-2020

In-depth Interviews undertaken

Interviews were held with 15 stakeholders as follows:

Table 8: Key interviews relevant to WP1B

Interviewee	Function / organisation	Main areas covered
David Sanmiguel-Esteban	EASME	"Projects on Maritime Spatial Planning (MSP)", "MSP Projects - Lot 3 - North Atlantic Sea". Status of 'Economic Impact of Maritime Spatial Planning' project
Angela Schultz-Zehden	EU MSP Platform S.Pro	Coordination of MSP across the EU
Ingela Isaksson	Swedish Agency for Marine and Water Management	Project Leader and Coordinator Pan Baltic Scope
Joacim Johannesson	Sweden national MSP coordinator	MSP
Pedro Galache	EFCA Head of Unit Programmes and Assistance	
Andrea Tassoni	EMSA, Head of Cabinet Executive Office	
Vytautas Lukas	European Border and Coast Guard Agency (EBCGA (Frontex))/Operations Unit	
Sergio Bryton	JRC	
Yves Maekelberg	MS Expert sub Group IMS	
Sandra Silva	MS Expert sub Group IMS	
Karina Treille	MS Expert sub Group IMS	
Franco Oliveri	Secretary of the Technical Advisory Group (TAG)	Marine knowledge activities
Jan-Bart Calewaert	Head of EMODnet Secretariat	Coordination and implementation of EMODnet and its role within marine knowledge, with a particular view on the impact that the marine knowledge initiative is having on the Blue Economy.
Remi Gruet	CEO of Ocean Energy Europe	Involvement of OEE on marine knowledge activities and their point of view on the added value of marine knowledge to the ocean energy sector
William Apps	Head of Energy and Development at The Crown Estate	Contacted

Relevant Case Studies

The following case studies were relevant for the WP 1A:

Case study theme	Subject	Relevance to WP
IMP: Marine Spatial Planning	SIMCelt	Key sea basin level marine spatial planning project, so directly relevant to this WP.
IMP: Sea basin initiatives	BalticBOOST	Sea basin level initiative improving data flow, so relevant to marine data and knowledge flow element of this WP.

2.2.3. Findings

EQ 1B.1: Are the marine knowledge activities contributing to reducing costs of offshore or coastal activities, promoting innovation and reducing uncertainty in knowledge of the sea?

As mentioned previously, the EU 'aims to ensure that marine data are easily accessible, interoperable, and free of restrictions on use, with the specific target of developing a multi-resolution map of the entire seabed and overlying water column of European waters by 2020'. To tackle this, the Marine Knowledge 2020 initiative has launched EMODnet and Copernicus as flagships, which have become the first alternative when looking across many types of marine data. As result of the actions developed so far, now national hydrographic agencies, geological surveys, and oceanographic data centres are committed to the initiative. At EU level, the alignment between the regional sea conventions and ICES objectives with the marine knowledge ones has contributed to meeting them. At a global level, EMODnet contributes significantly to GEBCO for bathymetry and OBIS for marine life and to the RCN:OceanObsNetwork for ocean observation. Furthermore, different EU research projects have compiled valuable datasets to date, which are particularly relevant for the Mediterranean basin. Actions taken in the frame of the Marine Knowledge 2020 have made a significant step forward to improve access and usability of marine data across the EU. However, much remains to be done, as many are the data that remain hidden, unavailable, or are incompatible.

Discussions with industry, EMODnet secretariat and users have recognised the relevance of the marine knowledge initiative and the added value that this is bringing to the European maritime sector. Although, marine knowledge is still at an early implementation phase, half way through its seven-year planning period and with only 23% of its committed budget paid, projects like EMODnet are contributing largely to breaking the existing barriers across the European marine data sector. The EU integrated maritime policy has defined Blue Growth as its battle horse, whose aim to foster growth and job creation around the maritime sector. In this frame, Marine Knowledge 2020 was envisioned as a cross-European hub where all marine data and knowledge come together to drive innovation across all sectors of the Blue Economy. This challenge was even accentuated by the overwhelming number of different organisations holding marine knowledge across Europe, all of them with a very different background, culture, and agenda. Hence, the EMFF support to marine knowledge has been pivotal to bring the marine knowledge sector together under a share culture and objective that were unthinkable before. However, much is still to be done to fully develop marine knowledge into a key economic driver.

With EUR 27.2 million committed to date, the three main projects defining the core of EMODnet (EMODnet platform, sea-basin checkpoints, and data ingestion facility) have: brought together a network of more than 150 organisations to share their data products across 7 thematic data portals (i.e., bathymetry, geology, seabed habitats, chemistry,

biology, physics, and human activities); defined the tools and mechanisms to evaluate the quality of data provided and how these create new added value to the society, and made available a novel facility to facilitate industry and academia to share valuable data that otherwise would have been lost. To date, the development of EMODnet has been the main priority of the marine knowledge objective. This makes difficult the evaluation of its direct impact on the Blue Economy, as it has only recently that EMODnet acquired the required maturity to start quantifying the contribution that it has on its users. Notwithstanding, EMODnet users have highlighted the positive impacts that the initiative had on them. Some examples of this are:

Reducing costs of offshore or coastal activities: Potential for cost reduction can be easily achieved according to EMODnet users by, for example: (i) use data and products to avoid offshore operators and environmental managers to collect data again that already exists but which was unavailable before EMODnet, (e.g., for baseline studies or environmental impact assessments); and (ii) reduce the uncertainty on their technical offers and get more contracts, as for example:

'EMODnet associated partner DEME (Dredging International) indicated that the EMODnet query tool is useful to quickly gain information about the general environmental conditions and maritime infrastructures in a particular area which helps them assess if it is worthwhile to prepare proposals in response to public tenders in this area'.

'In another example, IMDC (International Marine and Dredging Consultants) mentioned that EMODnet is helping them boost their business in several ways; among others IMDC used EMODnet Bathymetry data to perform simulations of tsunami propagation in the North Sea for a tsunami hazard assessment of a nuclear facility on the Dutch coast; to conduct a series of FEED studies for a liquefied natural gas (LNG) terminal in Croatia; and to implement a hydrodynamic model for the Mediterranean Sea basin'.

In addition, OEE has also said:

'Marine Knowledge activities, in particular Copernicus and EMONet, together with MSP, are seen as extremely valuable tools for the sector to reduce knowledge uncertainty and drive innovation. This is key for Ocean Energy (wave and tidal) to reduce their costs'.

'Proof of the relevance that marine knowledge activities have for the sector is that 26 out of 125 OEE members (20%) are currently active members of Copernicus'.

ABPmer, a major UK-based maritime development consultancy stated:

I have used EMODnet bathymetry on several occasions in the past – it is comparable to other free global data products (e.g. GEBCO) and is sufficiently representative/correct to produce well calibrated regional scale numerical models. I have used the habitat information on a few other occasions, mainly as a proxy for seabed type distribution. The data have a similar basis to the BGS charts of seabed sediment type, but not always at the highest resolution, and quite a lot of the sediment information is then simplified heavily compared to what I would ideally use (Dr David Lambkin, ABPmer, pers. comm., 18 July 2018).

Promoting innovation: Start-ups are developing new and improving existing APPs using EMODnet data and maps, for example:

'Navionics sells mobile device apps to help recreational boaters with navigation and routing of their excursions at sea'.

Reducing uncertainty in knowledge of the sea: Data are being used to develop new models that represent the reality or give answer to societal problems, for example:

'The UK Met Office is using EMODnet digital bathymetric since recently which has drastically improved the reliability of their storm surge forecasting models and as such their ability to predict storm surges'.

Said that, there are still plenty of areas that require further attention, so that marine knowledge would be able to fully develop its leveraging potential on the Blue Economy. Some of the key challenges that EMODnet faces at this stage are:

- EMODnet needs to be more user friendly, making easy for the user to find data across all disciplines simultaneously.
- Knowledge areas such as biology, fisheries impact, river discharges and coastal erosion present a particular challenge.
- Biological data are highly fragmented (benthic, fisheries data collection framework) and its data holders widely spread across different organisations with completely different cultures. This makes extremely difficult to unify criteria and collect useful data.
- marine knowledge visibility and perception by the general public are a key element for the success of the initiative. For this to be successful, the new initiatives that highlight the value of marine data on the society are needed (e.g., European Atlas of the Seas).
- Data collection is key to sustain a high quality and accessible marine knowledge, this makes that actions towards a more coordinated data collection across all disciplines is required.
- Copernicus Marine Environmental Monitoring Service CMEMS, Data Collection Framework, and WISE-Marine are some of the other key marine knowledge initiatives, however, few has been done so far on bringing them together.
- Public and private organisations have become dependent on the EMODnet data, products, and services. Others are still hesitant, as they require proof that the service will remain available on the long terms or otherwise they will not risk building their services/business on EMODnet resources. For this, a good traceability of the users and the outcomes of how they use the data/knowledge is key.

In terms of the added value that marine knowledge brings to the EU, discussions carried out during this evaluation have shown that the direct management of the marine knowledge initiative has been pivotal to drive a large step forward in building up a collective culture across the European marine data and knowledge sector.

'Collaborations have developed between experts and professionals from businesses, research organisations, public authorities, and civil society. Bridges have been built between operation and monitoring communities as well as between different observing communities (e.g., hydrographic offices, geological surveys, national oceanographic institutes, etc.) all working together with the same objective, to develop the marine data and knowledge base to underpin the Integrated Maritime Policy. This has led to increase the understanding on the marine environment and breakthrough existing barriers'.

'The relevance of EMODnet on transboundary data is even more accentuated as for first time these are comparable and accessible at the same time. This is something critical to the maritime sector, as borders do not limit the sea'.

In sum, a wide leap has been done so far to better understand the European marine environment that would have been impossible without the EMFF support:

- High resolution seabed map (a new digital terrain model with 80 metres resolution in a couple of months)
- The seabed habitats map is widely used and represents a reference worldwide, where most of its visitors have declared their interest of using the data for research purposes (59%);
- EMODnet is increasingly global: EMODnet physics provides near-real time access to physical data from platforms all over the world, being the 80% of the data request mainly from three countries> Italy, Portugal and Belgium, followed by China;
- EMODnet is the only system worldwide that provides access to such a broad range of environmental data and human activities data, Most of its users come from three well identified sectors: environment (20%), energy (17%) and research (14%). The Human Activities portal represents one of the resources with greatest added value (e.g., Oil and Gas industry used to have a good knowledge of its assets at individual company level but it was lacking a wide view showing the interactions across the sector, something that has been possible only thanks to EMODnet as was highlighted by the European representatives from the International Oil and Gas Producers Association IOGP).

Recommendations

- The EMODnet biological data group has also one of the strongest potentials leverage new business and economic growth. This makes crucial to increase funding to develop the right tools to make high quality biological and biodiversity data which exists in various unconnected organisations and data systems more easily accessible in a harmonised way via EMODnet.
- Additional actions that use the existent data to develop new tools and information products are critical to increase visibility and the perception that the general public has on EMODnet. This would contribute to add value to marine knowledge among the society and drive a change in culture towards data sharing (e.g., European Atlas of the Seas).
- In order for EMODnet to fully reach its potential to create a viable business ecosystem around the Marine Knowledge Value Chain it will need to further expand its scope upstream towards data collection activities, i.e. supporting the coordination and implementation of the emerging framework towards a European Ocean Observing System.
- The lack of a contractual obligation, for EMODnet and the other marine knowledge initiatives (Copernicus, data collection framework, WISE-Marine) to work together and exchange resources, hampers their full implementation. Now that EMODnet has acquired a certain level of maturity, it is the moment to speed this process.

EQ 1B.2: Have the marine spatial planning activities helped Member States set up spatial plans?

As discussed above, the 23 maritime Member States of the EU have until 31 March 2021 to develop Maritime Spatial Plans (MSP) for subsequent implementation. Progress to date has varied – most northern states have made good headway e.g. have agreed basic frameworks and implemented pilot MSPs for distinct sea areas under their jurisdiction. In some cases, such as the UK, MSP was already an established concept prior to the EU MSP Directive. Progress in the central Mediterranean is less advanced, with Greece not yet having adopted the MSP Directive, and lacks even a basic framework for maritime spatial planning, despite the obvious potential benefits for a largely maritime country heavily dependent upon marine tourism and short-sea shipping. As of end March 2018, Bulgaria has also yet to fully adopt the Directive (EU, 2017⁶).

Discussions with both the Commission and MS MSP practitioners have uniformly indicated that the need for MSP, irrespective of the Directive itself, remains both high and increasing. MSP has remained highly relevant over the programming period, not just because it effectively represents the first part of a seven-year planning period for the establishment of MSPs across the EU. A EU-wide policy focus on Blue Growth, combined with a resurgence in maritime activities since the 2008 financial crisis means that competition of sea space grows ever fiercer. This has been exacerbated by technical developments in offshore wind farming and aquaculture, expanding the spatial boundaries of these two sectoral activities, with potential conflict with navigation and coastal tourism. Direct EMFF funding into transboundary MSP has had the added benefit of encouraging inter-sectoral discussions and their engagement with their counterparts in neighbouring waters. Well-founded MSP has the potential to reduce coordination and transaction costs and enhance the investment climate in marine economic activities (Policy Research Corporation, 2010). Equally, with marine conservation initiatives, both with development of Natura 2000 marine protected areas, as well as other regional (i.e. OSPAR) and Member State level initiatives (such as the UK's Marine Conservation Zones), there is a greater need to achieve a balance between development and conservation. MSP has the potential to play a critical role in this.

One of the major direct budget contributions into MSP has been made via the 'Assistance Mechanism for the Implementation of Maritime Spatial Planning' budget line (approx. EUR 1.2 million per annum). This was tendered by EASME and is being implemented since 2016 by s.Pro and Ecorys who have established the European MSP Platform⁷ which provides an internet facility for depositing MSP project documents, best practise documents and other relevant material in a public space. It also proactively promoted the gathering of MSP material from across both the EU and elsewhere in order to avoid 're-inventing the wheel'. The project team also conducted sea basin level and individual MS level workshops throughout the EU, prepared policy briefs and distributed synthesis material, as well as preparing technical reports on critical MSP issues. These latter documents illustrate the 'MSP journey', including a study on MSP information and data needs (2016), an assessment of MSP-related issues for Blue Economy development (2017) and they are currently working on conflict-resolution methodologies for different sea space users. This project has fulfilled an important role in making existing techniques and good practise available to practitioners and targeting technical and knowledge barriers to MSP development in the EU. With funding now provided for three years, and available for a fourth, this has also

⁶ European Commission Press Release, dated 7 December 2017. See http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-17-4774_en.htm

⁷ <http://www.msp-platform.eu/>

allowed the project to adapt to the changing nature of MSP status and capability in the EU and focus its energies accordingly.

Although it is relatively early to evaluate the success of MSP preparedness resulting from EMFF funding, discussions with MSP practitioners suggest that the initiatives to date have been effective in increasing the capability of Competent Authorities (CAs)⁸ to progress MSP development, especially in transboundary issues where direct EMFF funding on MSP has been focused. This includes Member States that share a sea basin with other Member States (as in the Celtic Sea) or non-EU countries (e.g. in the Black Sea and Baltic). Transboundary issues have the potential to delay or downgrade maritime spatial planning, and thus exercises to address technical and jurisdictional harmonisation, accounting for the cumulative effects of multiple national marine development in a common sea area and ensuring an ecosystem approach (all elements demanded by the MSP Directive) are all considered useful exercises. Furthermore, transboundary or sea basin level initiatives encourage the often inward-looking CA's to engage with their littoral neighbours, leading to better working relationships and opportunities for sharing of experience and best practise. In the Baltic, this effect has been amplified by engagement of regional bodies such as HELCOM, OSPAR and VASAB in MSP, both broadening their capacity in this field and providing direct linkages to political MSP implementation mechanisms. Baltic SCOPE itself has produced a useful set of 'lessons learned' and 'enablers' when tackling the changes of cross-border MSP (see Kull *et al*, 2017⁹).

This said, there is an argument that the direct EMFF funding focus on cross-border cooperation has meant that some areas of MSP within MS internal sea areas has received insufficient attention and support. The counter-argument is that the largely cross-border support to MSP practitioners has increased their wider capability for maritime spatial planning, and has introduced the broad tools, skills and mechanisms that can be allowed to internal waters. This issue is worthy of further consideration, with the possibly of more direct EMFF funding directed towards developing MS MSP capacity in general (e.g. without a cross-border focus) or even the introduction of funding via the shared EMFF funding arrangement (or its successor) to address particular MS MSP needs. It should also be mentioned that national investment in MSP is highly variable. We were unable to obtain any quantitative figures on this, but given that some Member States, such as Denmark, only have around 1.5 FTE allocated to MSP development (compared to 10 FTE in Sweden), this will be a fundamental constraint to this process.

The effectiveness of MSP projects has also benefited from their non-prescriptive nature, which reflects an understanding that the technical needs, administrative capacity and spatial complexity for the planning of different MS sea spaces is highly variable. There is no single generic approach, and Member States have the freedom to adopt systems that best suit their own planning needs. This said, given that some MS are well advanced in MSP, such as Germany and the UK, there is a lot of experience that can be shared amongst MSP practitioners. Even where there are historical territorial disputes over sea boundary areas, such as between Denmark and Poland in the Baltic, cross-border MSP support via Baltic SCOPE has encouraged bi-lateral discussion by raising the issue with the ministries of foreign affairs with the two countries, arranging joint meetings and pointing out the

⁸ This refers to the competent authorities in the sense of Article 1 of Directive 2014/89EU (MSP Directive) and should not be confused with the competent (management) authorities of the EMFF.

⁹ Kull, M., Moodie, J., Giacometti, A. and Morf, A. (2017). Lessons Learned: Obstacles and enablers when tackling the challenges of cross-border Maritime Spatial Planning - Experiences from Baltic SCOPE. Stockholm, Espoo and Gothenburg - Baltic SCOPE. Report available online at www.balticscope.eu

critical elements on the constituent's spatial plans for detailed discussion and coordinated planning¹⁰.

In terms of efficiency, direct EMFF funding to MSP has shown a distinct iterative process over time, adapting to capacity that is building in most Member States and the progress they are making. As mentioned above there has been an increasing focus on sea basin level initiatives over time, moving from larger to smaller sea areas as the need for increased MSP definition has grown. One criticism that was voiced over various interviews was the relative short duration (two years in most cases) of funded MSP projects. Given the relative newness of the subject, and the need to develop institutional capacity for MSP in most Member States, many cross-boundary MSP projects struggled to develop the necessary comfortable cross-border working relationships, and design and implement activities in the time allowed. The counter-argument is that short projects are often more relevant and ensure that activities and outputs are not necessarily delayed. The solution has been to introduce the consideration of second phases of projects, allowing them to review the outputs to date, update needs analyses, and move support to MSP development to a new level over a subsequent funding stream. For instance, one of the main recommendations from the first round of Baltic SCOPE was the need for the central involvement of national MPS lead in transboundary discussions. This *"created the possibility to actual implement project results at the same time as the national planning process was taken place in the member states. We worked as a team between member states, exchanging experiences, tackling the challenges of the complicated Maritime Spatial Planning. We asked what was needed to achieve successful cross-border cooperation, and where potential barriers lay, and came up with solutions to take further into the national planning process. Baltic SCOPE provided the platform to identify transboundary issues and to develop common approaches to solve these and thereby enhancing the alignment of national Maritime Spatial Plans in the Baltic Sea region"* (Ingela Isaksson, pers. comm., 23 April 2018). We would endorse this relatively new approach, especially if the necessary ex-post and ex-ante evaluations can be built into projects to ensure that their successors remain relevant.

In terms of overall progress in moving towards meeting the deadline for having complete Maritime Spatial Plans by 2021, there is no doubt that direct EMFF support to date has catalysed Member States actions, allowed the development of MSP implementation structures and frameworks, and facilitated a progress towards pilot national maritime spatial planning in certain sea bodies. It has also encouraged pro-active MSP engagement across maritime boundaries, building confidence in MSP at both national levels and allaying fears over political uncertainties in geo-political issues such as Brexit.

This said, the lack of agreed indicators and progress monitoring makes this difficult to assess (it should be noted that MRAG *et al* (2008) proposed various indicators for monitoring MSP development in the EU). Furthermore, much of the work done so far has been the relatively easy processes of framework development and methodology harmonisation, with the more challenging aspects of addressing pressing sea area use competition in contested waters yet to be tackled.

It is suggested that a set of generic MSP progress milestones be developed e.g. from creation of dedicated MSP institutional structures at MS level, through to the development of robust spatial plans for all maritime waters, which could be used to indicate the progress of different MS' in reaching the MSP Directive goal by 2021. This would also allow further, more targeted EMFF (or other) support to Member States that are falling behind. In order to avoid these milestones being too prescriptive, they could be provided as guidance rather than an obligation. Furthermore, future direct EMFF support to MSP should consider

¹⁰ Giacometti, A., J. Moodie, M Kull & A. Morf (2017). Coherent Cross-border Maritime Spatial Planning for the Southwest Baltic Sea, Results from Baltic SCOPE. Stockholm, Espoo and Gothenburg - Baltic SCOPE. Report available online at www.balticscope.eu.

identifying and addressing potential implementation issues as they start to appear. However, it is accepted that the monitoring of MSP progress at Member State levels is not within the remit of the Commission, so an alternative monitoring approach needs to be considered.

EQ 1B.3: Will the maritime surveillance activities lead to an operational system for exchanging information between maritime authorities, taking into account the changed context since the launch of CISE where interagency cooperation has been put in place between EMSA, EFCA & EBCG, which has the potential to achieve the necessary information sharing, with the allocation of substantial additional financial resources?

A. Inter-Agency co-operation between EFCA, EBCGA and EMSA

EFCA has been at the forefront of promoting IMS with MS fisheries control authorities. The use of shared data from interagency co-operation with EMSA and EBCGA plays an important role in the successful co-ordination of Joint Deployment Plans and multipurpose operations. Consequently, the sharing of maritime surveillance data has increased the overall awareness of the maritime situational picture at MS level. The Agency has become a driving force for cross sectoral operations and initiatives involving coast guard functions, notably fisheries control, down to MS level. The advantage of having readily available control means (ships, satellite, aircraft) for cross border and multi-purpose operations, supported by an integrated real time maritime situational picture, has improved interoperability and aided the co-ordination and decision-making processes. It has also encouraged MS maritime authorities to take action to resolve legal and/or 'cultural' obstacles to co-operation.

With large scale integration and fusion of maritime surveillance datasets, validation and quality control has become critically important, bring with it added value regarding improved effectiveness and increased efficiencies. Subject to the relevant data protection rules, the potential added value of having validated and quality controlled maritime surveillance data being made available by MS authorities, EU agencies, and other bodies, would provide for a reliable, unbiased and transparent public open source of information.

Following an amended mandate dated 6 October 2016, there is now a close co-operative relationship between EBCGA and EFCA and EMSA, and EBCGA has shared multi-purpose maritime surveillance data with them, including data from Eurosur and Copernicus services. Fusion of this data, has contributed to an increasing effectiveness and efficiency of the coast guard functions in MS. This, in turn, has led to the prevention, detection and reporting of illegal activities in the maritime domain to the responsible national or EU body (EMSA, EFCA, Europol, Eurojust).

Sharing of data has been effected via secure channels with MS authorities carrying out coast guard functions, which has enhanced the effectiveness and efficiency of the maritime situational picture. Cross sectoral co-operation has led to deconfliction, enabling cost effective planning resulting in better use of resources by those authorities.

Cross sectoral operations covering multi-dimensional fields has frequently involved the 3 EU Agencies. Positive benefits have contributed to the objectives of the EUMSS and the IMP, notably towards the implementation of a CISE, capacity building, multi-threat risk assessments, interoperability and multi-purpose operations.

EMFF funding has been used to develop the implementation of CISE nodes (in effect multi information hubs) within MS infrastructures in respect of coast guard functions, an integral step towards the full implementation of an EUCISE.

EMSA undertook a study to assess the future evolution of SafeSeaNet to support CISE and other communities. The overarching conclusion of the assessments performed was that the SSN ecosystem (the suite of systems managed by EMSA) has the appropriate technical capabilities to exchange the data with other user communities supporting the development of a Common Information and Sharing Environment (CISE) for the maritime domain, since it:

- Is established and operational 24 x 7 x 365 and accessible by all EU Member States as well as relevant EU bodies/organisations;
- Supports and feeds information exchange by/between all maritime user communities through operational services built up over time in accordance with their needs. These services are:
- Adapted to the specific needs of each user community;
- Possesses the technical capabilities and the flexibility to evolve in accordance with the needs of different user communities

EMSA has in depth knowledge of the maritime situation in EU waters. Experience dealing with a variety of safety and security related concerns has given EMSA an extensive knowledge base, sharing the practical realities of addressing them with other EU Agencies and across the sectors. EMSA operates a suite of systems, known as the EMSA Ecosystem, which contribute to cross sectoral surveillance operations between MS maritime authorities, EU Agencies and other bodies. This sharing of information supplements MS capabilities for vessel traffic monitoring, port state control, maritime pollution, defence and fisheries control. Interagency co-operation has fed down amongst MS stakeholders of the three EU Agencies.

EMSA has developed a platform capable of integrating and combining different types of MS data to create a maritime situational picture across maritime interests on a 24/7 basis. Co-operative working arrangements with MS maritime authorities, the Commission, EU Agencies and other bodies, EMSA has successfully contributed to cross sectoral initiatives at MS, Regional and EU level.

B. Outcomes from Inter-Agency co-operation between EFCA, EBCGA and EMSA

Aligned with their mandates the three EU Agencies continue to provide new surveillance and communication services, building capacities, analysing operational challenges and emerging risks in the maritime domain as well as planning multi-purpose operations. Tangible results from this co-operation lead to the enhanced functions of MS coast guards authorities, whilst improving their overall awareness of the maritime situational picture of the maritime domain in respect of search and rescue, maritime surveillance, law enforcement, fisheries control and compliance with maritime regulations.

The three Agencies continue to develop guidelines, recommendations and best practice on coast guard functions as well as arranging capacity building events. Added value of the collaboration and co-operation between the three Agencies in cross sectoral initiatives is highlighted by the involvement of more than 360 national maritime authorities carrying out coast guard functions within the EU.

Achievements so far have demonstrated the benefits that can accrue from this interagency co-operation and sharing of integrated maritime surveillance data, Knowledge has been enhanced and the maritime situational picture awareness considerably improved. In the sphere of multi-purpose operations that have extended across sector borders, such enhancements have positively contributed to the planning and decision-making processes. At the same time, the concept of the multi-purpose operation has led to improvements in the processes of interoperability between sectors. There has been more cost-effective use

of resources brought about by the improved awareness of the real time maritime situational picture involved with co-ordinated and multipurpose operations.

C. Response from PT Member of MS Expert Sub Group for IMS

The Directorate General for Maritime Policy coordinated two interoperability projects in response to the call "MARE/2014/26 – Interoperability improvements in Member States to enhance information sharing for maritime surveillance" – Project 501 Yin and Project 602 Sinker. The objectives of both projects being to improve the interoperability and consequently the sharing of information on maritime surveillance, thus contributing to the development of a common information sharing environment.

Project 501 aims to diagnose the national state of the art of sharing information on maritime surveillance by national public authorities and to define the next steps for its improvement. The project is coordinated by the DGPM with the collaboration of 12 national public entities for which maritime surveillance information is relevant and represent the seven user communities of CISE.

Project 602, Technological Developments. This aimed to develop the technological capabilities to make information services available in the national node NIPIM@R, enabling sharing of maritime surveillance information between the authorities involved, contributing to the efficiency and effectiveness of maritime surveillance, maritime operations, spatial planning and monitoring and control of fisheries and the marine environment at national level. DGPM is the intermediate body for the Integrated Maritime Surveillance (IMS), in particular with regard to the Common Information Sharing Environment (CISE), through the Operational Program MAR 2020 with the implementation of the NIPIM@R in Portugal.

The principal goal was to support achievement of the objectives of IMS through technological capabilities and innovative services to all the authorities involved in maritime surveillance, in order to exchange information and data, increasing interoperability, organizational, legal and semantic partnerships.

DGPM is the Portuguese representative in developing CISE, and in 2018, continues to be involved in the EUCISE 2020 project, actively participating in all work packages and the tasks defined within the project. DGPM has coordinated with in house and external experts from 10 national authorities, covering the seven CISE User Communities (maritime safety and security border control, Maritime pollution and environment, fisheries control, general law enforcement and defence).

"The 'EUCISE2020' is a security research project of the European Seventh Framework Programme. It aims at achieving the pre-operational information sharing between the maritime authorities of the European states. It is also an important milestone in the roadmap for implementation of the European CISE. The CISE supports the development of the Blue Economy of the European Union, is a key innovation of the European maritime governance, is an element of the European Digital Agenda, and, finally, is a pillar of the European action plan for the European maritime security strategy.

The added value here is that DGPM has implemented the NIPIM@R, (Portuguese node to CISE) for sharing Integrated Maritime Surveillance and Monitoring data, at the same time developing a national capacity for integrated surveillance data and information. Information is shared through this hub. It re-uses existing resources to the maximum extent possible, while respecting the specifics and competences of each of the entities involved and promoting the cooperation between the entities in consistent with that ongoing within the EU.

The 501 Project, Preparatory Studies, started in April 2016, and lasted for 19 months (30th of November 2017) with a budget of ~Euros 0.5m. Throughout this project, a set of studies related to legal, technological, existing gaps and cost-benefit analysis were developed, at the level of information sharing on maritime surveillance, and a plan of action agreed to highlight the improvements delivered. The outputs of the project include a documentary on the theme of the project and a short video for dissemination.¹¹¹²

The main results achieved were:

- Adoption of NIPIM@R, as the national CISE node for sharing information on maritime surveillance;
- Increased interconnection between maritime surveillance information systems;
- Increased motivation for the sharing of maritime surveillance information;
- Improvement of the legal framework applicable to the sharing of maritime surveillance information;

The Project 602 also began in April 2016 and lasted for 19 months, (30th of November 2017) with a budget of ~Euros 0.5m,

The main results achieved:

- Availability of fisheries control information.
- Availability of information on recreational craft.
- Improve early detection of anomalies.
- Improve search and rescue.
- Providing information on pollution.
- Availability of information on the marine environment and fisheries.
- Availability of information to support police investigations
- Improve information on coastal and maritime risks.

From a cost benefit point, the DGPM has concluded that the marine knowledge activities effectively reduce the costs of most of Portugal's maritime activities. Data related to activities taking place in the maritime domain, and shared through a Common Information Sharing Environment, adds robustness to the MSP process.

From the perspective of the DGPM, the direct management component of the EMFF still the most effective solution.

D. Response from the FR Member of MS Expert Sub Group for IMS

France has published a national strategy for security of maritime areas in line with the EUMSS, and an action plan has been implemented by the Secretariat General for the Sea. Cross sectoral meetings have enhanced information exchange between maritime administrations at regional and national level.

Cross sectoral initiatives rely on organisation, human factors and good will. However there remains a need for data connections in a cross sectoral approach. NCC EUROSUR is a first step in this approach to collect and share data at any external border, and the white picture delivered by EMSA through IMS, is shared amongst 7 administrations connected with coastguard functions. Perpetuating a CISE approach is dependent on the interoperability

¹¹ <https://www.dgpm.mm.gov.pt/501-en>

¹² [DOC_DGPM_LQ](#)

of its data model, making possible data exchange between systems without the need for human intervention, and thus avoiding duplication of effort and human interface.

The added values resulting from cross sectoral collaboration includes:

- Reductions in duplication of effort;
- The promotion of cross sectoral exchange and interoperability of the data model;
- Development of national interoperability project such as data mining and CISE.

The contribution of shared marine knowledge activities permits more effective planning and deployment of assets (sea and air). For example, the Prefect Maritime is better placed to co-ordinate naval assets in his area of authority, particularly for maritime surveillance and search and rescue. The French maritime administrations in charge of coast guard functions operate 231 naval assets (vessels) 120 aerial assets and operate over 10 different maritime areas (an EEZ of 11 million km² and 19000km of coast line). The effort expanded on coast guard functions totals 270,000 hours at sea and 10,000 hours flying time, at a cost of 300 million Euros.

In respect of direct management being the most effective solution vs shared management, the latter relies on the sustainability beyond the end of any project in order to build long term capacities.

Recommendations and Conclusions

- Between them, three EU agencies continue to provide new surveillance and communication services, building capacities, and analysing operational challenges & emerging risks in the maritime domain as well as planning multi-purpose operations;
- The use of shared data from interagency co-operation with EMSA and EBCGA plays an important role in the successful co-ordination of multipurpose operations;
- Achievements have demonstrated the benefits from interagency co-operation and sharing of integrated maritime surveillance data.
- Knowledge is enhanced, and the maritime situational picture awareness considerably improved;
- The concept of the multi-purpose operation is linked to improvements in the processes of interoperability between sectors.
- Cost effective use of resources brought about by the improved awareness of the real time maritime situational picture involved with co-ordinated and multipurpose operations;
- close co-operation between EBCGA, EFCA and EMSA, with EBCGA contributing shared multi-purpose maritime surveillance data which in turn has contributed to an increasing effectiveness and efficiency of the coast guard functions in MS;
- Cross sectoral co-operation has led to deconfliction, enabling cost effective planning resulting in better use of resources by MS maritime authorities;
- Cross sectoral exchange needs the continuing support of political initiatives and a financial framework;
- EMFF funding has been used to develop the implementation of CISE nodes (in effect multi information hubs) within MS infrastructures;
- The SafeSeaNet ecosystem managed by EMSA has been found to have the appropriate technical capabilities for data exchange with other user communities supporting the development of a Common Information and Sharing Environment (CISE) for the maritime domain;

- Co-operative working arrangements between MS maritime authorities, the Commission, EU Agencies and other bodies, has successfully contributed to cross sectoral initiatives at MS, Regional and EU level;
- Where MS have implemented national CISE nodes for sharing Integrated Maritime Surveillance and Monitoring data, at the same time they have developed capacities for integrated surveillance data and information.

2.3.WP 1C: Integrated Maritime Policy - Support for sustainable economic growth, employment, innovation and new technologies

2.3.1. Background

The third thematic Work Package corresponds to the third main area for Integrated Maritime Policy. Namely, Article 82 (c) of the EMFF regulations proposes support to “sustainable economic growth, employment, innovation and new technologies within emerging and prospective maritime sectors, as well as in coastal, insular and outermost regions of the Union, in a way that complements established sectoral and national activities”.

Projects under this theme include various EU-wide and sea basin focused initiatives such as MEDINBLUE supporting the Secretariat of the Union for the Mediterranean for promoting the Blue Economy in that sea basin.

Key Legal and Programming Texts

On 2 July 2013, Parliament adopted a resolution on Blue Growth welcoming the Commission’s communication on Blue Growth¹³, which points to the potential of the maritime economy to create smart, sustainable and inclusive growth and generate employment opportunities. This resolution seeks to revitalise and support the IMP, while stressing that the Blue Growth Strategy, as part of the IMP, encourage the development of synergies and coordinated policies, thus generating European added value.

Regulation (EU) No 508/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 15 May 2014 on the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund pointed out the fact that “ **the fishery and aquaculture sector**, community-led local development should encourage innovative approaches to **create growth and jobs**, in particular by adding value to fishery products and diversifying the local economy towards new economic activities, including those offered by ‘**Blue Growth**’ and the broader maritime sectors.”

The objective set out in Article 82 for Support for sustainable economic growth, employment, innovation and new technologies was defined at 2 % of the total volume of the EMFF under direct management for the 2014-2020 period (cf. Article 14 and Annexe 3). It is an indicative distribution of funds under chapters I & II of title VI among the objectives set out in articles 82 (IMP) & 85 (FCP).

Key Actions Undertaken

The following table identifies the programmed budget for each WP on the period 2014-2016 in order to appreciate the share of programming and the relative weight of EMFF direct funding. The average of programmed funding supporting governance (in accordance with EMFF categories annex III) on the period is 6% of the annual programmed budget (1.9M€).

Table 9: Budgets for IMP work packages – WP 1C

Programmed budget	WP1A	WP1B	WP1C	WP1D	Total programmed
2014	€ 3 520 000	€ 21 240 000	€ 1 300 000	€ 3 260 000	€ 29 320 000
2015	€ 3 682 000	€ 23 928 000	€ 1 260 000	€ 3 637 598	€ 32 507 598
2016	€ 3 806 000	€ 27 792 000	€ 3 259 000	€ 4 269 664	€ 39 126 664
Av 2014-2016	11%	72%	6%	11%	€100 954 262

¹³ COM Innovation in the Blue Economy 254-2014

The main projects during the period 2014-2016 were feasibility studies and development of tools to share and disseminate information.

The main projects programmed in 2014 were scoping studies on the network of maritime training capacities (260 000€), data collection in North and Baltic Sea (460 000€), coastal and maritime tourism (380 000€) and the way to support research work on Blue Growth with virtual knowledge centre (VKC). The VKC for Mediterranean illustrates the range of offered services to support Blue Economy projects but also to put in liaison the stakeholders (link with WP1A – integrated governance of maritime and coastal affairs)

In 2015, the main actions were focused on:

- the development of knowledge with EU Atlas for the Seas (MARATLAS) (320 000€) to display with GIS tools, layers of information
- the support for the development of Blue Growth for instance with a maritime strategy in the Western Mediterranean Sub-Sea Basin (427 000€) The recent launch by in 2018 for the set-up of an assistance mechanism in Western Mediterranean in 2018 illustrates one of the outcomes of the WestMed Initiative. The outcomes of the feasibility supported EC to develop the shared political will of EU, UfM and 5+5 dialogue¹⁴ to support the Blue Economy in the sub basin (link with WP1A) as called by the EC Communication on Blue economy in the Western Med
- also the assessment of the potential of Outermost regions for Blue Growth (295 000€).

All these studies proposed actions for the development of the Blue Economy in a sea basin approach based on existing activities but also their potentials of development at national or sea basin level.

In 2016, the main actions were focused on:

- innovation with the EASME **call for Blue Labs** (programmed 1 700 000€) to pilot new and viable solutions addressing selected maritime and marine challenges and opportunities in the Blue Economy. The focus of this action was to support a novel way of working, where young scientists supported by researchers, industry and local stakeholders, team up to develop innovative solutions to support the development of a sustainable Blue Economy, while preserving marine resources and ecosystems. In 2016, four topics were defined (i) **blue (bio)remediations**: to exploit new metabolites and biomolecules, enzymes and genes from micro-organisms living in extreme marine environments; to develop and test (bio)remediation measures in different areas/places, including the possible re-use and recycling of hazardous materials; (ii) **marine litter**: to develop new technologies, tools and products to address mitigation and management of specific types of litter, including nanomaterials, micro-plastics and explosive litter; (iii) **underwater cultural heritage**: to develop new services, technologies or products (e.g. unmanned autonomous vehicles/robotic systems/etc.) to discover, protect and value underwater cultural heritage; and (iv) **invasive alien species and jelly fish proliferation**: to develop new products, services and tools to address invasive alien species and/or jelly fish proliferation in the marine environment, including early detection, prevention, mitigation and management measures.
- the **development of nautical routes**, as experiences in sustainable maritime tourism linking territories and promoting coastal activities (cf. Channel Sail route). This action still going on with recent call

¹⁴ France, Spain, Italy, Malta, Portugal, Mauritania, Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Libya

2.3.2. Data and information

Key documents reviewed

Table 10: Key documents relevant to WP1C (chronological)

Document name	Author	Year	Purpose
Communication on an IMP for the EU COM (2007) 574 Final	European Commission	2007	Communication
Regulation (EU) No 1255/2011	European Commission	2011	Communication
EMFF Regulation 508/2014 (Art 82)	European Commission	2014	Regulatory instrument
COM Innovation in the Blue Economy 254-2014	European Commission	2014	Communication
EMFF Regulation 508/2014 (Art 82)	European Commission	2014	Regulatory instrument
Ex post evaluation of the transitional financial programme of the Integrated Maritime Policy (IMP) and of two preparatory actions on maritime spatial planning	Rafaelsen, B., S. Harka & K. Rigas	2015	Ex-post evaluation
COM Blue Growth Strategy 128/2017	European Commission	2017	Communication
Ocean Energy Forum Strategic Roadmap	Ocean forum secretariat	2016	Road map and Action plan
Call for Proposals Blue Careers	EASME	2016	Terms of reference
Call for Proposals Blue Labs	EASME	2016	Terms of reference
COM Blue economy in the Western Med 183-2017	European Commission	2017	Communication

Key websites accessed

Table 11: Key websites relevant to WP1C

Website name	Owner	URL
Maritime Forum	DG MARE	https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/maritimeforum/
Virtual Knowledge Centre (Med)	CPRM	http://www.med-vkc-blueeconomy.org/
Atlantic Action Plan	DG MARE	http://www.atlanticstrategy.eu/en
European Network of maritime clusters	ENMC	http://www.enmc.eu

In-depth Interviews undertaken

In depth interviews were led with a large panel of end users at policy level in order to identify any recommendations for the next programming period of EMFF.

Interviews were held with six stakeholders as listed in the table overleaf.

Table 12: Key interviews relevant to WP1C

Interviewee	Function / organisation	Main areas covered
Raffaella Mancini	Blue Economy officer /UfM	Blue Growth and cooperation with in UfM
Julien Le Tellier	Policy officer /UNEP/MAP	Sustainability of Blue Economy in MED
Christos Theophilou	Policy Officer / EC /DG Mare	Assistance mechanism to support Blue Economy
Damien Perrisé	Policy Officer / CPMR	Region involvement in Blue Economy development
Frédéric de Montcany	Vice Chairman/ ENMC	Private sectors
Pauline Taillac-Deschamp	Policy Officer /IUCN	NGO involvement
Claus Schultz	Policy Officer / EC /DG Mare	Blue Growth and Innovation
Xavier Guillou	Policy Officer / EC /DG Mare	Blue Economy Sectors, Aquaculture and Maritime Spatial Planning
Alessia Clocchiatti	Policy Officer / EC /DG Mare	Blue Growth and Innovation

Relevant Case Studies

The following case studies were relevant for the WP 1A:

Case study theme	Subject	Relevance to WP
IMP: Marine Spatial Planning	SIMCelt	Medium for this WP - Further the assessment, definition of scenarios to support the development of Blue Economy with future spatial requirements of key maritime activities including emerging ones.
Scientific advice	STECF	Yes, as a sectoral committee dealing with an economic sector: Scientific, Technical and Economic Committee for Fisheries
Advisory Councils	NWWAC	Relevant for this WP (fisheries management)
Market intelligence	EUMOFA	Yes, as it is a monitoring tool: Market Observatory for Fisheries and Aquaculture Products

2.3.3. Findings

EQ 1C.1: Have 'Blue Growth' initiatives funded by the EMFF facilitated the development of marine economic activities (MEAs) and the jobs they generate?

'Blue Growth' initiatives funded by EMFF can be classified in three categories (1) studies to underpin knowledge, (2) assistance mechanisms to harness existing funding mechanisms (3) grants to pilot and bottom-up projects that involve stakeholders and trigger innovation.

It is too early to be fully able to answer this evaluation question, as it is a long process, with many actions targeted for innovation and public actors. The transfer from innovation to the market can take time, depending upon the technical readiness level of the targeted projects. Regarding the actions launched, it can be stated that the efforts are more focused on the support to maritime economic activities (innovation) than on job creation which is a consequence of the support of the development of MEAs.

More generally, funded projects aimed at promoting knowledge-sharing or enhancing competitiveness and innovation capacities. Some projects are aimed at adapting and diversifying economic activities; these generally target specific sectors (i) to improve the competitiveness and sustainability of fishery industries, mainly by exploring new markets or technologies and (ii) to support aquaculture (including the cultivation of algae).

Under the umbrella of WP1C, it can be stated that EMFF on the period 2014-2016 was more dedicated to support areas of interest to open the way for projects which could be supported by EU funding as done by the Atlantic Action Plan. The Blue Growth initiative and various projects (e.g. MUSES, DATAMOR, MarInfo, SimCelt) were focused on growth enablers, such as maritime spatial planning and marine data, that can be expected to help boost economic growth and job creation in the long term.

The assessment was limited on the topics and the performance of the actions to support innovation and upgrade skills as EMFF impacts on MEAs and jobs.

1) Studies are a prerequisite for any development, but do not directly and quickly contribute to activities development and jobs creation. As an example, EMFF funded a study in 2015 to assess the potential of Outermost Regions for Blue Growth, and in 2016 another study on the market on ocean energy published in June 2018 that is in the continuation of the Ocean Energy Forum Strategic Roadmap formally delivered to the European Commission on 08 November 2016.

The outcomes of such studies indeed support decision for new actions (e.g. grants calls) or to define sectoral strategies (e.g. [study on the market on ocean energy](#) published in June 2018) and the EMFF direct management was instrumental to carry them out, but they have no direct short-term measurable impact on MEAs or jobs creation. Such actions seem very relevant for the objective of supporting Blue Growth and should be continued.

2) Assistance mechanisms. Considered in more detail under the 'IMP Governance aspect in WP1A, the EUR 1.2 million Atlantic Action Plan mechanism was the main dedicated sea basin action for the development and funding facilitation of stakeholder projects, with a strong focus on 'Blue Growth'. The Atlantic Action Plan first priority was to **enable smart growth in the Atlantic**. Of the 1 200+ projects identified as contributing to the action plan, over 500 related to the promotion of entrepreneurship and innovation in the Atlantic area. These received total funding of around EUR 750 million. Priority 1 accounted for over a third of the projects, but the average funding for each project was relatively small. In the case of the AAP mechanism, the set up was mainly by channelling EU funds (ERDF, H2020) to meet the priorities of the Plan. The AAP midterm review (SWD(2018) 49 final) pointed out that "*the assistance mechanism should have been used more active, in alliance with established regional networks and sectoral representation*

groups, especially if this focused on maritime issues in science and innovation, surveillance, ocean energy and maritime investments (as suggested by the Committee of the Regions)" to support MEAs.

3) The AAP midterm review pointed that *"the Services designed to support project promoters, such as guidance and advice through the assistance mechanism, were of limited use or relevance to users, who sought funding directly rather than advice on how to get it."* As a consequence, even if the high number of projects (about 1 200 according to the mid-term review) can be considered under the umbrella of the AAP, it is not possible to say that the assistance mechanism has brought about or triggered all those projects. This said, it did provide a "soft framework" where projects were able to justify their eligibility for other EU funding and is highly likely to have catalysed further stakeholder-based initiatives that will have an impact in the longer term. It can be only stated that it mainly contributed in setting a "soft framework" where projects were able to justify their eligibility for other EU funding. No piece of evidence of the assistance mechanism direct contribution in the setting up of projects has been found, whatever the funding mechanism.

The promotion of EU actions with assistance mechanism was useful for sharing and disseminating funding opportunities in innovation such the BLUE MED initiative (H2020) which contributes to the structuration of actions for innovation with the Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda (SRIA).

The launch of assistance mechanism for Blue Growth in Black Sea (2017) and in the Western Mediterranean (2018) will be helpful for maritime economic activities and jobs creation with the identification of potential maritime economic activities.

3) Grants to support pilot and bottom-up projects

On the period 2014 – 2016, several calls for proposals on **EU grants** were launched "IMP projects Med and Black Sea" action (WP 2015), the "Thematic Routes Underwater Cultural Heritage" (WP2015) and the 'Nautical Routes' action (WP2016), as the forerunners of the Blue Economy calls for grant proposals.

In 2017, AAP included EU grants under EMFF to support for instance aquaculture (Invertebrate IT), multi-use of offshore platform (ENTROPI).

More generally, projects funded through grants aimed at promoting knowledge-sharing or enhancing competitiveness and innovation capacities. Some projects are aimed at adapting and diversifying economic activities; these generally target specific sectors (i) to improve the competitiveness and sustainability of fishery industries, mainly by exploring new markets or technologies and (ii) to support aquaculture (including the cultivation of algae). As these actions are based on propositions from active sectors, it can be expected that they will result in activity development and jobs creation, but no indicator is available to support this hypothesis"

The Commission also launched specific initiatives to promote and support the development of career opportunities in the Blue Economy: "blue careers in Europe" call in 2016 under WP1C (cross sectoral 82b), to fill existing skills' gaps by supporting activities that will increase the employability of various target groups in blue economy sectors. It is however too early to evaluate the impacts of such initiatives on MEAs development and jobs creation.

Subsequent Blue calls aimed for instance at promoting innovative 'laboratories' (called Blue Labs) to pilot new and viable solutions addressing selected maritime and marine challenges and opportunities in the Blue Economy. In order to support Blue Growth, other Blue Calls

were launched in 2017, the Black Sea (EUR 909,200 committed at the end of 2017) as well as the Western Mediterranean via WestMED (2018).

The level of response and programmed grants was used as a set of first indicators. Regarding the proposed indicators, it can be stated that these calls had a large success regarding the number of proposals, but the budget programming was limited to contract all of them. The low level of contracting for Blue careers is also explained as these types of support are usually under Erasmus +. It was considered as an additional opportunity. The option of not having two countries as a condition also increased the number of applicants. The diversity and the large number of proposals illustrate the interest of the stakeholders.

Action or group of actions	Contracted budget	Contracted Budget /Requested Budget	Number of Proposals Financed/Number of Proposals received
IMP projects Med and Black Sea	529 557€	11.8%	12%
Thematic Routes Underwater Cultural Heritage	323 452€	9%	10%
Nautical routes for Europe	1 421 983€	9.6%	9,2%
Blue careers in Europe	3 763 646€	1%	9,2%
Blue Labs	1 960 592€	9.6%	10%
Blue technology	1 912 377€	26%	23%

The direct benefits for maritime economic activities are postponed and are dependant of the availability of commercial solutions which could be derived from the granted projects.

Therefore, and whatever the type of actions, it can be considered that EMFF helped the development of MEAs in the long term with its support for innovation in accordance with sea basin visions.

Whatever the funding mechanism (H2020, EMFF...), the main point stated during interviews with regards to the efficiency of support to the development of MEA and job creation is that actions have been only public funded in order to pave the way to attract private investors.

These actions are to define and share a vision of Blue Economy in the sea- basin in which actions can then be launched later and then to raise awareness on the potentials of Blue Economy of donors, investors (such as EIB) but also private ones. As already pointed out in WP1A, cluster definition is a first step to structure private sectors to create added value within their own sector but also to identify any synergies and funding and financing opportunities between themselves. Therefore, the development of governance is a way to facilitate the development of MEAs in an indirect way.

The multi-funding approach is more and more promoted to finance activity. It could be a brake to assess the single efficiency/effectiveness of the fund but financial engineering with the support of assistance mechanism is essential to cope with the challenges of financing projects. Therefore, assistance mechanisms are essential to support projects setup with financial engineering to meet sea basin objectives and create added value in each sea basin.

The lessons learnt from the first set of call were/are considered in the following and coming calls: stronger involvement of the private sector in funding innovation; and supports and tools were made available to assist applicants to provide proposals answering to needs with increased accuracy: customised EU support to respond to calls, platform of exchange between investors and the private sector, targeted sectors and narrowed conditions to answer to calls. For instance, Blue tech calls are now focusing on funding demonstration

projects, that is close to market technology to scale up technologies and to leveraging private sector funding. Also, the EC supports SMEs through an assistance mechanism to prepare to respond for co-funding on Blue Tech by enabling investors and companies to exchange and provide diverse and robust investment proposals in blue technology innovation.

EQ 1C.2: Do we have an overview of what is being done by other EU financial instruments in support of these objectives?

The Atlantic Action Plan was the unique Blue Growth initiative supporting MEAs on the period 2014-2016 (EQ 1C.1). The EC review (cf. SWD(2018)49final) pointed out the variety of financing instruments which were used for the Atlantic plan (ERDF, H2020, ESF and EMFF). The Atlantic Assistance mechanism played its role in funding and financing opportunities to support the action plan objectives.

Significant ERDF, European Social Fund (ESF) and Youth Employment Initiative (YEI) resources have been committed in support of entrepreneurship and innovation. In particular, ERDF operational programmes have supported the competitiveness of SMEs, and research and innovation.

Therefore, the Atlantic Action plan fulfilled the objectives (N82) of Regulation 508/2014 for the use of EMFF should *"be complementary to, and coherent with, existing and future financial instruments made available by the Union and Member States, at national and sub-national level, for promoting sustainable economic, social and territorial development, the protection and sustainable use of the oceans, seas and coasts, helping to foster more effective cooperation between Member States and their coastal, island, and outermost regions, and taking into account the prioritisation and progress of national and local projects."*

The fact that EMFF on IMP addresses topics in a transversal approach is helpful but if some main actions /projects are funded by EMFF, the point is that the main issue further funding, financing and financing mechanisms must be developed to target the goals.

The multi-funded approach or integration of funding is needed, and assistance mechanism or platform are essential to meet the global objectives (innovation development (H2020), Education (ESF), ...). The offered possibility for non-EU MS partners to attend this funding and financing mechanism is essential to support Blue Economy in a sea basin approach to develop cooperation and value creation. For instance, UfM promotes the inclusion of non-EU Mediterranean countries into the BLUEMED Initiative (H2020).

Through, the UfM labelling, to support projects focusing on i) new approaches and planning tools applied to coastal and maritime tourism; ii) the implementation of sustainable door-to-door transport chains and intermodal solutions, and the development of the Motorways of the Sea services.

The variety of EU financial instruments is an opportunity but is an issue as they are provided/supported by various DGs (ENV, Mare, Regio, Research, Climate, etc). The integration of financial instruments is a key challenge as maritime policy integration. Financial engineering is requested to support any political initiatives implementation.

Further EU funding and in the perspective of their evolution (BREXIT effect), the development of the governance of public (national, regional, EU) funds is essential to keep the same level of progress and gain in public efficiency.

EQ 1C.3: How coherent are the actions taken with actions under other EU instruments with similar objectives and what is their added value?

It can be stated that actions are mainly in accordance with actions under other EU instruments. As pointed in EQ1C.2, several funding mechanisms exist. Assistance mechanisms such as Atlantic action plan are helpful to address similar objectives thanks to a general overview of funding opportunities which can be available within the sea basin. Therefore, and as already written (WP1A), the set-up of assistance mechanism in order to develop a vision and then its implementation (strategy) is the best way to have coherent actions. It was the case for instance with Blue Med (H2020) and West Med Initiative (EMFF) which both support innovation for the Blue Economy but also research and education.

Considering the Atlantic Action Plan as unique Blue Growth initiative, the EC review (cf. SWD(2018)49final) pointed out that "EU and national policy developments and funding priorities were found to be largely supportive of and aligned with the priorities of the Atlantic Action Plan".

It was stated that "EU initiatives were also found to be in line with the priorities and objectives set out in the Atlantic Action Plan. The European Research Area reform agenda supported collaborative research and knowledge transfer across Europe, and related joint programming initiatives (JPIs), such as the 'healthy and productive seas and oceans' JPI, have been deployed with success in the Atlantic."

If the support of assistance mechanisms (EMFF funded) is important to reach the objectives of policy consistency at least for funding, the fact that a political steering group within a sea-basin or subsea basin involving EC and adequate regional organisation and bordering Countries is supported by an assistance mechanism is a way to get consistency in actions. It is all the more important when the sea basin involve non-EU MS who can be supported under the umbrella of other EU Policies with other mechanisms (ENI, CBC, TAEIX). On the period 2014-2016, only the Atlantic mechanism was operating and non-EU MS were involved so the risk of inconsistency did not occur. The new assistance mechanisms (under EASME contract and EMFF funded) in Black Sea (launched in 2017) and in Western Mediterranean Sea (launched in 2016) include such governance mechanism not only for consistency in actions but also for sharing objectives and funding (direct share but also national or regional ones if relevant).

It was stated during interviews that actions related to Blue Economy show limited contributions to CFP, and vice-versa whereas fisheries are one of the historical maritime economic activities and therefore contributes to the Blue Economy.

Recommendations: (i) Develop potential synergies between actions in particular the field of CFP and in the field of Blue Growth. It could be done for instance with the development of the link between coastal strategies of communities based on fisheries (FARNET) and local Blue Economy/Growth strategies. To do so the involvement of stakeholders is also essential in particular of local authorities. (ii) communicate on concrete outcomes (jobs, added value) of actions promoting BG and cooperation in this field (iii) focus on cross-sectoral actions rather than on actions targeted to one sector, and iv) support forward-looking studies to better support strategies at all levels (e.g. in all sectors of Blue Economy/Blue Growth).

It is not easy to identify in projects ToRs (when they are available) the breakout of project objectives (and project funding) targeted to achieving the objectives as defined by the 2014 Regulation. In the same way, project outcomes are not explicitly related to the funding instrument's priorities. This makes evaluation challenging.

Recommendation: improve traceability of EMFF objectives in projects funded by EMFF, at all stages, e.g. by improving the monitoring of these projects (indicators clearly related to policy/regulation instrument objectives, reporting from projects).

2.4.WP 1D: Integrated Maritime Policy - Promotion of the protection of the marine environment

2.4.1. Background

The fourth thematic Work Package corresponds to the final main area for Integrated Maritime Policy Article. Article 82(d) of the EMFF Regulation proposes support that promotes 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 and to further define the boundaries of the sustainability of human activities that have an impact on the marine environment, in accordance with the objectives of achieving and maintaining a good environmental status as required by Directive 2008/56/EC.

Key Legal and Programming Texts

Directive 2008/56/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 June 2008 establishing a framework for community action in the field of marine environmental policy (Marine Strategy Framework Directive) aims at the conservation of marine ecosystems. The Marine Strategic Framework Directive (MSFD) establishes a structure within which EU Member States shall take the necessary measures to achieve or maintain good environmental status (GES) in the marine environment by the year 2020 at the latest. An initial marine status must be defined, in order that actions plans be prepared to reach and maintain GES.

The approach is based on marine ecosystem approach. All actions are to support ecosystem recovery on EU MS marine waters, marine region and marine sub-region. They are defined at EU MS level in a marine strategy including preparation (initial assessment, good environmental status definition, targets), monitoring and programme of measures. Regional cooperation at marine sub-region and region is required to ensure consistency and effectiveness of actions. MS shall, within each marine region or sub-region, make every effort, using relevant international forums, including mechanisms and structures of Regional Sea Conventions, to coordinate their actions with third countries having sovereignty or jurisdiction over waters in the same marine region or sub-region. It is to be based on regional sea convention. MSFD is the environmental pillar of EU IMP. Any marine and maritime EU sectorial strategy or policy must take in account MSFD objectives, for instance the Common Fisheries Policy.

Directive 2009/147/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 November 2009 **on the conservation of wild birds** (amending Directive 79/409/EEC) and **EU HABITATS DIRECTIVE 92/43/EEC** of 21 May 1992 on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora form the Europe's nature conservation policy and establish the EU wide Natura 2000 ecological network of protected areas, safeguarded against potentially damaging developments.

Directive 2001/42/EC on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment (SEA Directive). The SEA Directive applies to a wide range of public plans and programmes (e.g. on land use, transport, energy, waste, agriculture, etc). The SEA Directive does not refer to policies, plans and programmes in the sense of the SEA Directive must be prepared or adopted by an authority (at national, regional or local level) and be required by legislative, regulatory or administrative provisions. The SEA Directive does not have a list of plans/programmes similar to the EIA.

An SEA is mandatory for plans/programmes which are prepared for agriculture, forestry, fisheries, energy, industry, transport, waste/ water management, telecommunications, tourism, town & country planning or land use and which set the framework for future

development consent of projects listed in the EIA Directive or have been determined to require an assessment under the Habitats Directive.

Directive 2014/52/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 April 2014 amending Directive 2011/92/EU on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment simplifies the rules for assessing the potential effects of projects on the environment. It is in line with the drive for smarter regulation, so it reduces the administrative burden. It also improves the level of environmental protection, with a view to making business decisions on public and private investments sounder, more predictable and sustainable in the longer term.

Regulation (EU) No 508/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 15 May 2014 on the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund pointed out the fact that "EMFF should contribute to the protection of the marine environment as set out in Directive 2008/56/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council." The objective set out in Article 82 for Support for Promotion of the protection of the marine environment was defined at 5 % of the total volume of the EMFF under direct management for the 2014-2020 period (cf. Article 14 and Annexe 3). It is an indicative distribution of funds under chapters I & II of title VI among the objectives set out in articles 82 (IMP) & 85 (FCP).

Key Actions Undertaken

On the period 2014-2016, main projects were focused on the implementation of MSFD:

- 2014: **Best practices** for action plans to develop integrated, regional **monitoring programmes** coordinated programmes of measures and addressing **data and knowledge gaps in coastal and marine waters** (programmed budget 2 460 000€)
- 2015: **Supporting the next Implementation Cycle of the Marine Strategy Framework Directive** (programmed budget 2 037 598€) and various actions such as Development of Methodological Aspects in Relation to Good Environmental Status of the Seas and sea basin implementation
 - **BalticBOOST**: EU co-financed project coordinated by HELCOM to improve regional coherence in the implementation of marine strategies through improved data flow, assessments, and knowledge base for development of measures (programmed budget 633 652€)
 - **EcApRHA**: co funded project focused on addressing gaps in the development of biodiversity (pelagic, benthic and food webs) indicators for the OSPAR Regions. In particular, the project aimed to overcome challenges in the development of indicators relating to the MSFD (Marine Strategy Framework Directive 56/2008/EU), such as Descriptor D1 (Biodiversity), D4 (Food webs) and D6 (Seafloor integrity). (programmed budget 714 298)
- 2016: Supporting the next Implementation Cycle of the Marine Strategy Framework Directive (programmed budget 2 719 664€)
 - **INDICIT**: *Implementation of the Indicator of marine Litter on sea turtles and biota in regional sea conventions and MSFD areas* (programmed budget 999 975€)
 - **MISTIC SEAS**: *Reaching Common Grounds on Monitoring Marine Biodiversity in Macaronesia* (programmed budget 519 799€)

The following table identifies the programmed budget for each WP on the period 2014-2016 in order to appreciate the share of allocation and the relative weight of EMFF direct support.

Table 13: Budgets for IMP work packages – WP 1D

Programmed budget	WP1A	WP1B	WP1C	WP1D	Total programmed
2014	€ 3 520 000	€ 21 240 000	€ 1 300 000	€ 3 260 000	€ 29 320 000
2015	€ 3 682 000	€ 23 928 000	€ 1 260 000	€ 3 637 598	€ 32 507 598
2016	€ 3 806 000	€ 27 792 000	€ 3 259 000	€ 4 269 664	€ 39 126 664
Av 2014-2016	11%	72%	6%	11%	€100 954 262

The average of programmed funding supporting governance (in accordance with EMFF categories annex III) on the period is 11 % of the annual programmed budget (3.7M€).

2.4.2. Data and information

Key documents reviewed

Table 14: Key documents relevant to WP1D (chronological)

Document name	Author	Year	Purpose
Habitats Directive (1992)	Council of the European Communities	1992	Council Directive
Communication on an IMP for the EU COM(2007) 574 Final	European Commission	2007	Communication
Marine Strategy Framework Directive (2008)	European Commission	2008	Directive
Regulation (EU) No 1255/2011	European Commission	2011	Communication
EMFF Regulation 508/2014 (Art 82)	European Commission	2014	Regulatory instrument
EMFF Regulation 508/2014 (Art 82)	European Commission	2014	Regulatory instrument
Ex post evaluation of the transitional financial programme of the Integrated Maritime Policy (IMP) and of two preparatory actions on maritime spatial planning	Rafaelsen, B., S. Harka & K. Rigas	2015	Ex-post evaluation
EMODnet Phase III: Analyse compliance with INSPIRE 06-02-18	Sagrminaga, Y & O. Solaun	2018	Technical document

Key websites accessed

Table 15: Key websites relevant to WP1D

Website name	Owner	Main content	URL
Environmental Marine Information System	DG Mare	Data	http://mcc.jrc.ec.europa.eu/emis/
SIMCELT	Project	Case study 2: Assessment of Cumulative Impacts	http://www.simcelt.eu/project-outputs/case-studies/
EcAprHA	OSPAR		https://www.ospar.org/work-areas/bdc/ecaprha/about-ecaprha
INDICIT	Project		https://indicit-europa.eu/description/
MISTIC SEAS	PROJECT		http://mistic-seas.madeira.gov.pt/en
MECDIS.EU	Project	Support Mediterranean Member States towards Coherent and Coordinated Implementation of the Second Phase of the MSFD	Http://Medcis.Eu
BALTIC BOOST	HELCOM		http://www.helcom.fi/helcom-at-work/projects/completed-projects/baltic-boost/project-themes

In-depth Interviews undertaken

In depth interviews were led with a large panel of end users at policy level in order to identify any recommendations for the next programming period of EMFF. Interviews were held with six stakeholders as follows:

Table 16: Key interviews relevant to WP1D

Interviewee	Function / organisation	Main areas covered
Alessandra Sensi	Head of Sector Environment and Blue Economy /UfM	Marine protection
Julien Le Tellier	Policy officer /UNEP/MAP	Ecosystemic Approach in Med and sustainability
Christos Theophilou	Policy Officer / EC /DG Mare	Marine protection and blue economy
Damien Perrisé	Policy Officer / CPMR	Regions involvement in marine protection
Pauline Teillac Deschamps	Policy officer/IUCN	Environmental protection

Relevant Case Studies

The following case studies were relevant for the WP 1D:

Case study theme	Subject	Relevance to WP
IMP: Marine Spatial Planning	SIMCelt	High with the assessment of cumulative impacts within the MSP process (cf. case study 2) The pilot projects demonstrated cumulative effects resulting from seabed disturbance (e.g. abrasion, smothering and substrate loss) and how they impact on benthic habitats, which opens to management of cumulative impacts through MSP
IMP: Sea basin initiatives	BalticBOOST	High with the support to HELCOM in order to meet Baltic sea action plan, MSFD and Habitats directives by developing a biodiversity assessment tool and improving data arrangements for the biodiversity elements
Scientific advice	STECF	Yes, for the scientific support in the field of conservation and management of living marine resources, including biological, economic, environmental, social and technical considerations

2.4.3. Findings

EQ 1D: Will the actions taken help MS report the state of the marine environment as part of their obligations under the Marine Strategy Framework Directive?

The actions and projects funded under direct management are mainly dedicated to support MSs for the next implementation cycle of MSFD at national level (technical and administrative support for Bulgaria and Romania or Mediterranean EU Member States) as well as to share best practices between the different maritime regions to move towards the good environmental status. The EMFF efficiently supported implementation of MSFD in the Black Sea (Romania, Bulgaria) to meet the first step of MSFD (initial assessment of marine status) and to define the programmes of measures to reduce the impacts of MEAs in particular fisheries with adaptation of fishing techniques. The sustainability of this support is an issue for these countries.

Further the implementation of MSFD, it was stated during the interviews that a healthy marine environment is an essential basis for most human maritime economic activities, as they rely on the availability of a good environmental status for their own sustainability. Therefore, any action related to the recovery of good environmental status (cf. MSFD) is important in a balanced way between protection/preservation and exploitation. Actions must be targeted in an ecosystem approach and the various threats (climate change, invasive species) or human impacts means that the range of actions must be done in accordance with a sea basin and in a wider scope than meeting the MSFD objectives.

EMFF support is more expected to support consistency and the development of a sustainable Blue Economy in each sea basin in accordance with the Ecosystem Approach and MSFD objectives for EU MS in the marine or submarine regions (cf. MSFD areas, Art.5 of Directive 2008/56/EC) than in environment policy implementation. The EMFF supports marine protection actions but a further, multi-funded approach is required to meet the

goals which are essentially environment driven. It is more the fact when the sea basin is shared with non-EU MS. No dedicated EMFF actions to meet environmental cross border objectives with non-EU MS in the same marine region have been identified further the ones to support EU MS in MSFD implementation in each sea basin region.

On more time, it is essential to link marine environmental protection with a shared vision for a sustainable Blue Economy. The assistance mechanism in each sea basin approach are to meet these two objectives in order to pave the way for sustainable projects as it was done in Atlantic Action Plan.

The EMFF supported specific actions (biodiversity, marine litter, turtles, noise (QUIETMED ongoing project" Joint programme on Noise (D11) for the implementation of the Second Cycle of the MSFD in the Mediterranean Sea") (cf. WP1B) and cross-cutting actions (regional monitoring programme, coordinated programmes for data and knowledge Mediterranean Sea or the development of Methodological Aspects in Relation to Good Environmental Status of the Sea). It will then help EU MS in the reduction of human impacts on marine ecosystem or species but also to tackle major issue (Marine Litter). It must be pointed out that no actions were supported under EMFF to reduce terrestrial pollution (following the Water Framework Directive - WFD) which are the major source of pollutions in the sea. Some actions such WestMed (EMFF funded) define subsea basin goals to reduce marine and maritime pollution. Nevertheless, some actions supported by EMFF (e.g. SIMCELT) are actually targeted to tackling major environmental issues (cumulative impacts) through IMP instruments (MSP).

The EMFF supported some actions in the field of environment with strong integration content such as MPAs (Habitats Directive) but provided limited support to other more holistic approaches such as ICZM, which provides a relevant framework for integration of Blue Economy and environmental management in coastal zones and are already funded through other programs such as LIFE.

All these actions require strong cooperation between MSs or national institutions and allow sharing of costs and efficient sharing of results, which is a justification to their funding by EMFF. It is one more time the key point to have assistance mechanism which are to address in an integrative manner all the challenges in the subsea basin.

According to the EC review (cf. SWD(2018)49final), the Atlantic Action Plan is closely aligned with the objectives and activities of the Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment of the north-east Atlantic (OSPAR), which also tie in with the Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD). The plan supports OSPAR processes to help develop a coherent network of marine protected areas around Europe's Atlantic coast and calls for action and cooperation through OSPAR to restore ecosystems. A significant level of resources supporting environmental protection and resource efficiency has been committed under the ERDF and the Cohesion Fund. More specifically relating to fisheries and the marine economy, the primary objective of the EMFF is to promote competitive, environmentally sustainable, economically viable and socially responsible fisheries and aquaculture. This is in line with priority 2 of the action plan, as is the Blue Growth agenda, which supports the sustainable management of marine resources, including deep-sea mining and marine biotechnologies. Here too the action plan has contributed to the overall coherence of related policies.

Policy developments in the area of environmental protection and sustainability were already largely aligned, but since 2013 the Atlantic Action Plan has strengthened this coherence with existing policies (e.g. the MSFD), data collection efforts (e.g. Copernicus, EMODNet, SeaDataNet and AtlantOS) and new requirements (e.g. for maritime spatial planning). Projects covering the Atlantic marine and coastal environment have generally been financed from the ESIFs, LIFE or H2020, but funding from the largest projects has

tended to come from H2020 and the EIB. Almost 50 % of all projects on the sustainable management of marine resources are transnational projects, with mostly average budgets.

The close relationship with the sea regional convention organisation (OSPAR, HELCOM) with the support with co funded projects (Baltic Boost, EcAprHA) ensure consistency in action. It will help EU MS to reach the objectives of MSFD in a seabasin approach.

The [EMFF call](#) in 2017 supports marine environment protection with strand 2 which includes general action on prevention, monitoring and reduction of marine litter and strand 4, which helps with grants for the restoration of damaged or degraded Mediterranean coastal and marine ecosystems in zones with a particularly high potential to provide a wide range of marine ecosystem service. Therefore, EMFF 2017 extends the supporting of direct management actions for the Mediterranean Sea. The supporting system is therefore to help MS and third Countries in the sea basin in MSFD implementation.

Relatively few actions have addressed cross-cutting issues. For instance, MSP is potentially a powerful instrument for controlling cumulative impacts that are central to MSFD. As the MSP Directive has been adopted in 2014, no action in this field has been supported by EMFF in the period 2014-2016; it could be a priority now to support synergies between MSP and MSFD and between MSP and SEA/EIA regulations. In the same way, albeit knowledge of pressures related to maritime activities is a problem in implementation of MSFD, actions in the field of maritime surveillance are not oriented to filling this gap.

Recommendation: Improve contribution of cross-cutting actions to environmental objectives

Support convergence of MSP and ICZM, both to better take into account maritime space in ICZM projects/policies, and to better take into account marine environment in coastal zones in MSP.

2.5. General observations on IMP WPs and associated projects

- It is not easy to identify in projects ToRs (when they are available) the breakout of project objectives (and project funding) targeted to achieving the objectives as defined by the 2014 Regulation. In the same way, project outcomes are not explicitly related to the funding instrument's priorities. This makes evaluation uneasy.
- **Recommendation:** improve traceability of EMFF objectives in projects funded by EMFF, at all stages, e.g. by improving the monitoring of these projects (indicators clearly related to policy/regulation instrument objectives, reporting from projects)
- Many projects in fact aims to achieve objectives related to several priorities of EU Regulation; the initial classification (beyond being questionable in several cases – e.g. "QUIETMED", classified WP 1B rather than WP 1D?) leads to miss some potential contributions of some projects to other WPs.
- Some objectives in the EMFF Regulation are achieved mainly by actions not funded by the EMFF (e.g. IMP in the Mediterranean and the Black Sea, funded by ENI or other cooperation instruments).
- The "Project" approach is justified by the nature of funding and regulation, but rises to drawbacks on the long term: lack of sustainability of long term actions, poor memory of projects and results (project websites and libraries disappear when projects end)
- **Recommendation:** create and maintain at EC level a repository or warehouse of past projects, accessible through portal and search tools.

2.6.WP 2: Scientific advice

2.6.1. Background

This thematic Work Package considers the projects that support scientific advice across European sea basins. Scientific advice also extends beyond EU waters with general support to Regional Fisheries Management Organisations (RFMOs) and specific contracts on improving scientific knowledge.

Key Legal and Programming Texts

The Common Fisheries Policy (1380/2013) states that “It is important for the management of the CFP to be guided by principles of good governance. Those principles include decision-making based on **best available scientific advice**, broad stakeholder involvement and a long-term perspective.” It also states in Article 26 that the Commission may consult scientific bodies, in particular that “the Scientific, Technical and Economic Committee for Fisheries (STECF), may be consulted on matters pertaining to the conservation and management of marine biological resources in order to ensure the required assistance of highly qualified scientific personnel, particularly in the application of biological, economic, environmental, social and technical disciplines.”

Much of the data collection to support fisheries management is funded and conducted at MS level with EMFF funding specifically programmed through MS operational programmes for the collection of data under the Data Collection Framework and for other research identified as necessary for the implementation of the CFP, such as the landing obligation. However, some of the scientific knowledge and information needed to ensure the CFP is implemented as planned using ‘the best available scientific advice’ is delivered by the EMFF through direct management.

Article 86 of the EMFF regulation states that, the following types of operations shall be eligible:

- (a) studies and pilot projects needed for the implementation and development of the CFP, including those on alternative types of sustainable fishing and aquaculture management techniques, including within Advisory Councils;
- (b) the preparation and provision of scientific opinions and advice by scientific bodies, including international advisory bodies in charge of stock assessments, by independent experts and by research institutions;
- (c) the participation of experts in the meetings of working groups on scientific and technical issues related to fisheries, such as STECF, as well as in international advisory bodies and in meetings where the contribution of fishery and aquaculture experts is required;
- (d) research surveys at sea in areas under sustainable fisheries partnership agreements;
- (e) expenditure related to the collection, management and use of data, to the organisation and management of fisheries expert meetings and the management of annual work programmes related to fisheries scientific and technical expertise;
- (f) cooperation activities between Member States in data collection, the setting-up and running of regionalised databases, as well as improving scientific expertise in support of fisheries management.

This evaluation has therefore sought to identify how the information derived from EMFF direct management support (e.g. International Council for the Exploration of the Sea

(ICES) advice, contribution to the functioning of the STECF) has contributed to fisheries management (e.g. ICES advice), policy-making (e.g. implementation of the Landing Obligation, contribution to the functioning of the STECF) and to regional co-operation (e.g. Regional Co-ordination Groups). It will also explore the linkage (and coherence) with other scientific funding programmes such as Horizon 2020 (H2020).

Key Actions Undertaken

The full framework of scientific advice and data collection supported under the EMFF direct management has an annual budget of around 9 million, which is broadly split 50/50 between scientific advisory work (provided by ICES and STECF) and other contracts.

Currently, it is Unit C3 (Scientific Advice and data collection) was -created in 2017- which liaises with other units to identify and coordinate scientific advice needs of the various units. This results in an annual work plan for Commission work consisting of recurring and non-recurring advice from ICES and STECF and other contracts. These other contracts may be framework contracts on certain areas, such as the framework contracts for scientific advice for fisheries beyond EU waters and for Mediterranean and Black Seas or specific projects such as Cod mortality tagging in Irish Sea, age-determination of anglerfish and hake or Herring stock identity by genetic analysis, advice for beyond EU waters or specific projects (such as sea lice modelling in Atlantic salmon). The main role of the unit is to establish a bridge between the science and the management.

The single largest beneficiaries of the budgetary programming in 2018 are the two main providers of scientific advice:

- ICES (EUR 1.86m per annum on contribution to stock assessment and requests for advice of which EUR1.36 is recurring advice and EUR 0.23m non-recurring) and
- STECF (EUR 2.09m) of which EUR 1.6 is to the Joint Research Council (JRC) which has operated as the STECF secretariat since 2005 and EUR 1m funds the special allowances to STECF members and external experts' attendance at STECF meetings, also the ad-hoc advice requests and STECF members' participation in non-STEFCF meetings
- Joint Research Council (JRC) (EUR 1.14m) to operate as the STECF secretariat and in addition to provide advice to DG MARE since 2005

As a part of this evaluation, a **case study** was undertaken on STECF, which provides more detail. Further information on ICES is provided below.

In addition to the two main providers, EMFF direct management support since 2014 has been used for framework contracts and specific projects, including:

- Framework Contract for Scientific Advice beyond EU waters (EUR 1m committed per annum)
- Tagging study to determine mortality sources on cod in the Irish Sea (EUR 0.6m in 2015).

Further research projects with somewhat smaller budgets have supported scientific projects and publications to enhance the dialogue with the fishing industry and those affected by the CFP (OP). Some projects are within EU waters, but the majority relate to fishing areas beyond EU waters.

Table 17: Total support under WP2 scientific advice per annum 2014-16

year	programmed	committed	paid
2014	€ 6 990 000	€ 6 528 076	€ 5 658 115
2015	€ 8 680 000	€ 6 537 917	€ 4 632 844
2016	€ 8 590 000	€ 8 309 630	€ 3 236 062

Source: DG MARE (Unit E1), early 2018

2.6.2. Data and information

The following key documents and websites were reviewed in relation to this WP2 theme:

Table 18: Key documents relevant for WP2

Title	Comment, location
Relevant Legislation	EMFF, Omnibus regulation & Establishing STECF
STECF Expert Working Group reports.	Plenary, AER, Balance, Med & Black Sea advice, Landing Obligation, Review of Joint Recommendations
STECF Data Collection Framework reports and databases	https://stecf.jrc.ec.europa.eu/reports/dcf-dcr
AA Activity report by JRC to DG MARE	2014, 2015 and 2016 provided to evaluators by JRC
ICES Annual reports	http://www.ices.dk/publications/our-publications/Pages/Annual-Report.aspx
ICES/EU Administrative Arrangement	2017 version, along with MoUs with Norway and NEAFC
ICES External Advisory Report (2012)	And addendum to report
ICES Report of the Workshop on Regional Seas Commissions and Integrated Ecosystem Assessment Scoping (2014)	ICES. 2015. Report of the Workshop on Regional Seas Commissions and Integrated Ecosystem Assessment Scoping, 17-20 November 2014, ICES Headquarters, Denmark. ICES CM 2014\SSGBENCH:01. 55 pp.
Ex post evaluation of financial measures for implementation of CFP and UNCLOS (& annexes)	https://publications.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/c9818739-de14-11e6-ad7c-01aa75ed71a1/language-en
Horizon 2020 Interim Evaluation (2017)	http://ec.europa.eu/research/evaluations/pdf/brochure_interim_evaluation_horizon_2020_key_findings.pdf#view=fit&pagemode=none
Synergies between Framework Programmes for Research and Innovation and European Structural and Investment Funds contributing to the Interim Evaluation of Horizon 2020 (2017)	http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/horizon2020/sites/horizon2020/files/synergies_study_final_report_6oct2017.pdf

Table 19: Key websites relevant to WP2

Website name	Owner	Main content	URL
ICES	ICES	Stock assessment advice, WG reports	www.ices.dk
STECF	JRC	STECF Excom & EWG reports, DCF data	https://stecf.jrc.ec.europa.eu

In-depth Interviews undertaken

The table below details the interviews undertaken/responses received. Responses were also sought from a number of ICES WG chairs and DG MARE users of scientific advice, but were not received to date.

Table 20: Key interviews relevant to WP2

Interviewee	Function / organisation	Main areas covered
Joost Paardekooper	Head of Unit C3 Scientific Advice and data collection, DG MARE	Commissioning & use of scientific advice
Patrick Daniel	Deputy Head of Unit C3 Scientific Advice and data collection, DG MARE	Commissioning & use of scientific advice
Zsuzsanna Koenig	ICES/STECF/JRC liaison, C3 Scientific Advice and data collection, DG MARE	Commissioning of scientific advice, Use of ICES advice and administrative processes.
Lotte Worsoe Clausen	ICES Secretariat	EU support to ICES
Giuseppe Scarcella	STECF Chair – Balance member, chair of the Expert Working Group 18014 on Balance/Capacity	Chair responsibilities of this EWG and participation in other EWGs as well as STECF plenaries
Leyla Knitweiss	STECF ExCom member	Mediterranean research and STECF plenary/EWGs.

Relevant Case Studies

The following case studies were relevant for the WP 2:

Case study theme	Subject	Relevance to WP
IMP: Marine Spatial Planning	SIMCelt	In part – contained some research elements
IMP: Sea basin initiatives	BalticBOOST	In part – contained some research elements
Scientific advice	STECF	Yes
Advisory Councils	NWWAC	In part – some research undertaken (choke mitigation tool)
Market intelligence	EUMOFA	In part – EUMOFA uses some DCF derived data.

2.6.3. Findings

EQ 2.1: To what extent have the studies, pilots and scientific advice funded under direct management contributed to improving the overall effectiveness and relevance of scientific advice to policy-making?

The effectiveness and relevance of scientific advice supported through direct support should to an extent be ensured through the commissioning process and the evaluation required of funded projects.

The two of the main delivery agents for scientific advice are ICES and STECF. Annual Activity reports (2014-2016) that are required from JRC by DG MARE describe the activities undertaken by JRC and the outputs provided. STECF Expert Groups each produce a report that the meetings of the STECF Plenary review to see that they adequately respond to the ToRs that are agreed with DG MARE. These procedures and the participation of a wide range of independent experts help to ensure the effectiveness of the work by STECF. The need to manage meetings and outputs in line with available capacities and budgets requires discussion to determine the priorities and so the relevance of the work undertaken. DG MARE also co-ordinates the commissioning of scientific advice by DG MARE (now within Unit C3) to prioritise research requests and ensure duplication is avoided. The effectiveness and relevance of STECF are further considered in the case study report.

The EU is the largest of several ICES 'customers' that include coastal states such as Norway and Iceland and RFMOs. The organisation produces an annual report informing those customers and other stakeholders of its work. While the bulk of ICES work continues to revolve around stock assessment and advice, the format of that advice has evolved to make it more relevant to CFP objectives in relation to MSY. In so doing the advice provided can be considered to be more effective in informing fisheries managers needing to deliver CFP objectives.

ICES has also developed ecosystem overviews and assessments to help inform seabasin management and marine planning involving all marine users, including through its 'Strategic Initiative on the Human Dimension (SIHD). In 2012 an external panel reported on its review of ICES Advisory Services, which informed its future strategy and a revision of ICES processes. These developments have helped to improve both the relevance and effectiveness of the work undertaken by ICES, including improved peer review and benchmarking exercises to ensure the advice provided remains the 'best available'.

EMFF direct support has made an important contribution to scientific advice in areas beyond EU waters where EU fleets are operating. This has been provided either through direct support to RFMOs on projects and through the framework contract put in place. In this regard more than 20 studies and support contracts have been established since 2014. Through this framework contract, EMFF direct support has also provided financial support for ensuring the participation of relevant EU scientists in RFMO meetings in support of the EU Delegation.

Some supported projects are *ad hoc*, responding to specific needs and issues identified. Even though these projects do not fit into a pre-determined strategy, the relevance of those projects is determined through the commissioning process and coherence with the CFP objectives are evident. Overall the scientific advice and data collection funded through EMFF direct management is delivered through well-established processes to ensure that advice and data are effective in informing CFP objectives. There is now improved coordination of the work commissioned to see that it responds to key needs and to prioritise work streams, along with some flexibility in the funding to respond to emerging needs. This dual approach in EMFF direct management helps to maintain the relevance of scientific advice for policy-makers.

EQ 2.2: To what extent have the studies, pilots and scientific advice funded under direct management been coherent with Horizon 2020?

As the largest EU research programme with an average annual budget of EUR 11 billion over 7 years, Horizon 2020 is extensive in its scope. At the time of the mid-term evaluation, the most EMFF-relevant area of support, 'Food security, sustainable agriculture and forestry, marine, maritime and inland water research and the bioeconomy', had funded 365 projects totalling EUR 832.1 million.

Horizon 2020 has an Aquatic resources sub-programme, which aims for 'competitive and environmentally-friendly fisheries' and similar aims for aquaculture and bio-technology, which are coherent with CFP objectives. The focus of H2020 projects on innovation means that there is expected to be an intrinsic coherence between H2020 and EMFF funded science, which tends to use tried and tested scientific approaches to deliver scientific advice. For example, STECF is less likely to use Horizon 2020 outputs directly as this research is generally focussed on innovation and new approaches, while one of the strengths of STECF is establishing a comprehensive baseline of information and building a time series to illustrate trends. In this regard the two are complementary as both are necessary for the improved management of fisheries under the CFP.

ICES will use some H2020 research outputs e.g. in its work on marine ecosystems and is also a participant in some H2020 projects, such as ClimeFish, which explores the impact of climate change on fish production. H2020 projects regularly use ICES and STECF outputs in their research, for example: Myfish used the data and reporting on fleet capacity and fishing opportunities; MINOUW and DISCARDLESS used the data and STECF reporting on the Landing Obligation.

The H2020 mid-term evaluation concluded that "Compared to FP7, greater efforts have already been made to increase the synergies between Horizon 2020 and other programmes, notably the European Structural and Investment Funds but these can be strengthened further. The Seal of Excellence is a prime example of the synergies established between Horizon 2020 and the Structural Funds (H2020, 2017).

One example of Horizon 2020's attempt to generate synergies with the European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIFs) (including the EMFF) is the Seal of Excellence (SoE), a quality label awarded to proposals submitted for funding under the calls of the Horizon 2020 SME instrument which succeeded a rigorous evaluation, but could not be funded under the available Horizon 2020 call budgets. The SoE can then be used to approach alternative available funding sources such as ESIFs (JIIP, 2017)¹⁵. However, there may be criteria that would still prevent ESIFs accepting SoE proposals and it is acknowledged by most stakeholders that developing synergies with ESIFs is in its infancy (JIIP, 2017).

Overall, without evidence of explicit consideration of EMFF direct management and H2020 synergies, coherence between the two funding programmes is evident as they both support the delivery of Europe 2020 objectives. Ongoing efforts to develop more synergies between H2020 and the ESIFs should see coherence being explicitly considered in the future.

EQ 2.3: How have data collection related actions strengthened regional cooperation?

The EMFF direct management component has made a significant contribution to the RFMO-related data collection and research described above.

One key provider of scientific advice through EMFF direct management, ICES, plays a major role in regional data collection. It also recognises its role in the Atlantic Ocean Research Alliance Coordination and Support Action (AORAC-SA), supporting the transatlantic research cooperation agreement signed by the European Union, the United States, and Canada in the Galway Statement." (ICES, 2017)¹⁶

¹⁵ JIIP, 2017 Synergies between Framework Programmes for Research and Innovation and European Structural and Investment Funds. Contributing to the Interim Evaluation of Horizon 2020 Final Report.

¹⁶ ICES, 2017 ICES Annual Report 2016.

In parallel with the development of MS data collection under the DCF, the EMFF direct management component has supported the ongoing strengthening of regional cooperation in data collection. This included the meetings of the Regional Co-ordination Groups (RCG) involving seabasin-level meetings between MS data collectors to *inter alia* produce regional sampling plans, ensure consistency and harmonisation on formats, categorisations and stratification. To further progress regional cooperation in the current funding programme (2014-2020), the expectation is to identify additional areas for MS data collection bodies to work together.

There were two specific calls for proposals “Strengthening regional cooperation in the area of fisheries data collection” in 2014 and 2017, with the latest having a EUR 2 million budget to assist regional collection of biological data and EU-wide collection of socio-economic data. The calls were open to consortia from various scientific or research bodies (academic or public authorities) covering several MS.

The first call in 2014 resulted in two regional projects such as Med & Black Sea and **FishPi**. FishPi included a review of the historical operation of RCGs (then termed RCMs), which found improvements in regional coordination between MS. The establishment of the fishery activity matrix and the regional data base are considered to be the main elements that has led to a common understanding of regional fisheries and resulted in harmonised codes for métiers, species, harbours and areas. It has emphasised the building of links, trust, skills and understanding of experts across MS and the important contribution specific projects (COST and WebGR) have made to that process. While these short projects were a success, regional projects over longer time frames would better ensure these regional links are strengthened and more likely to be sustained.

FishPi - improving regional fisheries data collection

FishPi was a research project that was funded under the first call for projects and co-ordinated by St Andrews University, Scotland¹⁷. With a 14-month timeline commencing in April 2015, the project brought together over 40 experts from 13 scientific institutes in 12 countries (10 member states (MS)) and two internationally recognised survey design experts. It trialled the way sampling designs would be developed in a regional setting and showed that collaboration and consultation is required at face to face meetings through regional groups that focus on a particular group of fisheries. A major remit of the project was to develop guidelines to evaluate the quality of data at national and regional levels using shared tools. To that end an R library has been developed and made available on a public access website (<https://github.com/lbdk/fishPifct>).

One of the main outcomes is the framework to take the process forward; developing data formats, data sharing agreements and easily accessible software for data sharing, checking and analysis, and for the simulation testing of sampling designs. These designs are predicated on common data collection protocols and the use of the appropriate statistical estimators; the implementation of such designs would thus require the adoption of the standard survey sampling techniques and the use of common sampling and estimation routines by the sampling institutions.

Overall the data collection activities supported have made a significant contribution to regional cooperation with directly supported projects focused on this aspect and a particularly important contribution to regional cooperation in data collection beyond EU waters through support to RFMO-led projects.

¹⁷James , M A (ed.) 2016 , fishPi - strengthening regional co-operation in fisheries data collection. MASTS.
<https://research-repository.st-andrews.ac.uk/handle/10023/11185>

2.7. WP3: Fisheries control and enforcement

2.7.1. Background

The Common Fisheries Policy (CFP)¹⁸ objectives are to ensure that fishing and aquaculture activities are environmentally sustainable in the long term and are managed in a way that is consistent to achieve economic, social and employment benefits. Its success depends very much on the implementation of an effective control and enforcement system to ensure uniform application of rules by Member States. The measures establishing a Union fisheries control system for ensuring compliance with rules of the CFP are provided for in the Regulation establishing a control system¹⁹ (the Control Regulation), in the Regulation establishing a European Fisheries Control Agency (EFCA)²⁰, and in the Regulation establishing a system to combat illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing (IUU Regulation)²¹. They are complemented by the Regulation on the sustainable management of the external fleet (SMEF)²². The main objective of the Union control system is to ensure uniform application of CFP rules by Member States.

Key Legal and Programming Texts

Article 87 of the EMFF Regulation proposes that the EMFF may support the implementation of the Union control, inspection and enforcement system as provided for in article 36 of the CFP basic Regulation and further specified in the Control Regulation. Control and enforcement measures under direct management may include (article 87.2 of the EMFF):

- Joint purchase and/or chartering by several Member States belonging to the same geographical area, of patrol vessels, aircrafts and helicopters for fisheries control purpose
- Expenditures relating to the assessment and the development of new control technologies, as well as processes for the exchange of data
- All operational expenditures related to control and evaluation by the Commission of the implementation of the CFP

In addition, article 87.3 of the EMFF includes support to implementation of transnational projects that aim to develop and test inter-State control systems through i) international training programmes and ii) initiatives for standardising the interpretation of regulations and associated controls in the Union.

EMFF also consider support to Member States for control and enforcement under shared management measures. Article 76 of the EMFF includes a wide range of eligible operations in relation to control and enforcement concerning inter alia development and purchase of hardware and software, modernisation and purchase of control means, operation costs of control and training and exchange programmes. EMFF budget for article 76 measures is EUR 580 million over the 2014-2020 programming period.

As shown in the following table, actions programmed under article 87 represented and annual amount in excess of EUR 15 million until 2015, and EUR 5 million to EUR 6 million as from 2016. In terms of commitments, the envelope is close to EUR 5.17 million per year

¹⁸ Regulation (EU) No 1380/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council on the Common Fisheries Policy, OJ L 354 28.12.2013 p.22.

¹⁹ Council Regulation N° 1224/2009, OJ L 343, 22.12.2009 p.1

²⁰ Council Regulation (EC) No 768/2005, OJ L 128, 21.5.2005, p.1.

²¹ Council Regulation (EC) No 1005/2008, OJ L 268, 29.10.2005, p.1.

²² Regulation (EU) 2017/2403 of the European Parliament and of the Council. OJ L 347 28.12.2017 p. 81

between 2014 and 2017. In terms of expenditures, EUR 3.1 million per year on average have been paid between 2014-2017 (situation in early 2018).

Table 21: Summary of amounts programmed, committed and paid for measures falling under EMFF article 87

(EUR)	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
<i>Programmed</i>	15 439 690	15 510 967	6 010 967	6 225 000	5 500 000
<i>Committed</i>	3 984 352	6 466 116	4 802 962	5 430 142	
<i>Paid</i>	3 211 017	4 016 856	3 365 702	1 807 947	

Source: DG MARE, situation early 2018.

Overview of budgets programmed / committed

The key actions have been analysed according to the action nomenclature used internally by DG MARE. The following table shows the correlation between the types of actions used by DG MARE and the relevant EMFF sub-articles.

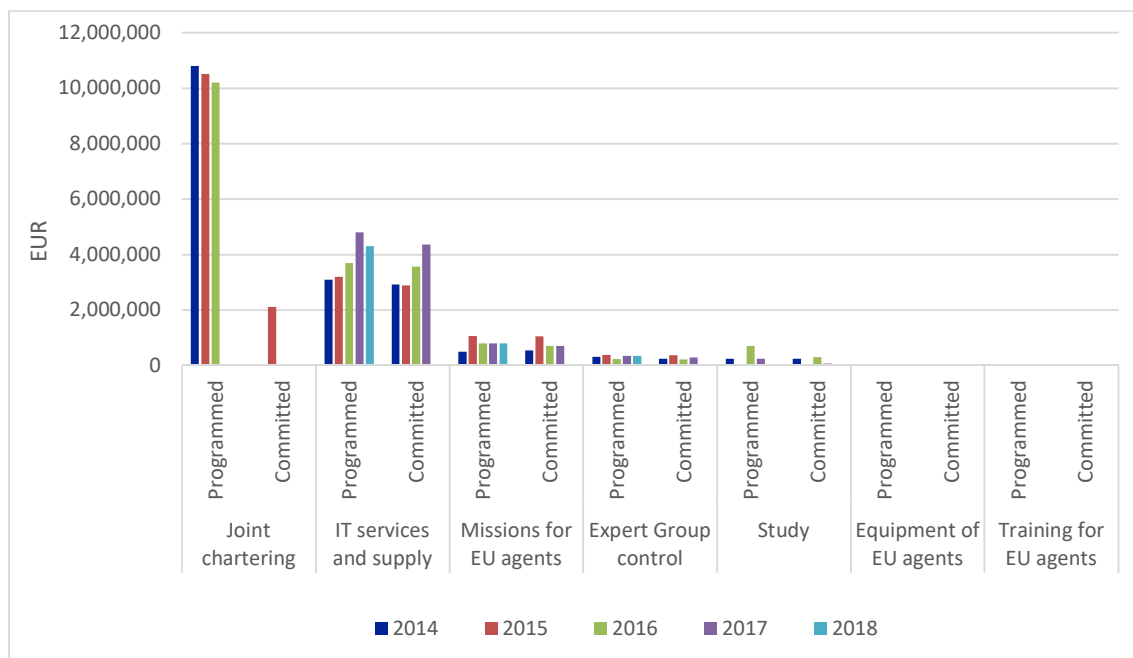
Type of actions	Correlation with EMFF measures
Joint chartering	Art. 87 2 a)
IT services and supply	Art. 87 2 b)
Missions for EU agents	Art. 87 2 c)
Expert Group control	Art. 87 2 c)
Studies	Art. 87 2 c)
Equipment of EU agents	Art. 87 2 c)
Training for EU agents	Art. 87 2 c)

Source: DG MARE

The figure overleaf shows the amounts programmed and committed by type of actions. During the first three years of the programming period, joint chartering of patrol resources was expected to mobilise $\approx 70\%$ of funding available with approximately EUR 10 million per year and IT services supplies another 22% on average with EUR 3.5 million per year. As from 2017, the envelope programmed for joint chartering has been removed due to unsatisfactory uptake by Member States (see next sections) and the envelope for IT services and supply increased to \approx EUR 4.5 million to represent 78% of programmed budgets.

Concerning commitments, IT services and supply represent approximately EUR 3.5 million per year on average over the 2014-2017 period, i.e. 75% of actual commitments under this EMFF article. Other significant commitments include missions for EU agents and meetings of the EU expert group on control with 14% (EUR 750 000 per year) and 6% (EUR 285 000 per year) respectively.

Figure 4: Amounts programmed / committed for the different types of EMFF support under EMFF article 87



Source DG MARE

Key actions implemented

The main action implemented under EMFF article 90 is the European Market Observatory for Fisheries and Aquaculture Products (EUMOFA).

IT developments and softwares developed with EMFF article 87 funding

According to DG MARE, IT development funded under EMFF focused on the following.

The FLUX transportation layer and associated tools (FLUX standards, FLUX viewers²³) which is a messaging integration system developed in open source to exchange data for control purpose between MS and EFCA, as well as with any other organisations / entities potentially concerned (NEAFC, FAO for global record of fishing vessels, RFMOs, third countries). FLUX development is legal obligation as exemplified by the Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2015/1962.

New software's using FLUX are being developed: FLEET (fleet database) expected May 2018, FLUX FMC for VMS and ERS expected May 2018, quota monitoring (?) expected October 2018, vessel licence data expected March 2019.

FLUX development by the Commission started when the United Nations were considering an international standard for global exchanges of fisheries data. The relevance of FLUX standards underpinned adoption by the UN of the UN/CEFACT P1000 standard largely based on FLUX. This standard will be used to support important international developments in the fight against IUU fishing, like the FAO-led Global Record of Fishing Vessels.

²³ As part of the FLUX package, a free ERS viewer has been developed. The ERS viewer can be utilised by any third party to read ERS messages sent by EU vessels. The ERS viewer is reportedly particularly useful for developing third countries.

Missions, equipment and training of EU agents support the operational expenses of EU staff in charge of verifying implementation of control in the Member States and in third countries. EU agents concerned include Commission's inspectors and personnel monitoring the implementation of the IUU regulation. Part of the budget funds subscription fees to centralised global databases such as marine traffic (global AIS) and Global Trade Atlas (global exchanges of fisheries products) used by the Commission to triangulate information.

Expert Group control: all expenses related to reimbursement of travel and subsistence expenses of MS delegates attending the various meetings of the expert control group, plus services during the meetings.

Studies: a few studies in support of the EU fisheries control scheme: ex-post evaluation of the CR (2014), engine power verification by MS (2016), revision of the CR (2017). These studies are used by DG MARE to revise the EU fisheries control system (REFIT, revision). Another study was programmed in 2016 on monitoring of small-scale fisheries but could not be started for administrative reasons.

Actions not implemented

Concerning joint chartering, the intention was to contribute to the costs of chartering of 3-4 patrol vessels for one year in 3-4 different areas. In view of the absence of submission in 2014, DG MARE decided to enlarge the scope of the measure to include fulfilment of EU international obligations (ICCAT, NAFO, NEAFC), to open the measure to chartering of publicly or privately-owned control means and to increase EU contribution rate from 70% to 90% of eligible expenditure²⁴ for chartering and 80% for purchase. According to DG MARE, this funding opportunity has been repeatedly put forward during the various meetings of the expert group of control and other relevant meetings with Member States. In 2015, Spain and Portugal submitted an application for joint chartering in the frame of the Iberian sardine recovery plan which has been accepted with corresponding budget committed (EUR 2.1 million). However, Spain decided to withdraw due to national budgetary constraints and Portugal followed on. No other submissions have been received since, and the DG MARE decided to close this funding opportunity as from 2017.

Transnational projects: the intention was to support the development of transnational projects that aim to develop and test the inter-state control, inspection and enforcement systems. DG MARE indicated that no specific initiatives have been implemented under this heading by the Commission, such as call for expression of interest. According to DG MARE, Member States did not specify needs in this respect either. No such action has been financed so far.

²⁴ In the case of chartering, eligible costs include all costs for privately owned control means (incl. staff costs) and marginal costs for public means

2.7.2. Data and information

Table 22: Key documents relevant to WP3

Document name	Author	Year(s)	Purpose
Table detailing control actions financed over 2014-2017 provided by DG MARE	European Commission	2018	Financial information
Budget appropriation breakdown for art. 87 expenses (MARE document)	European Commission	2014-2018	Financial information
Mapping of control IT tools developed by DG MARE	European Commission	2018	Technical information
MARE correspondence with MS on joint chartering	European Commission	2014	Technical information
Control Regulation, incl. implementing regulations (as amended)	European Commission	2009	Regulatory instrument
Ex-post evaluation of the Control Regulation	Capgemini	2016	Ex-post evaluation
Special Report # 8 EU fisheries controls: more efforts needed	European Court of Auditors	2017	Audit

Table 23: Key interviews relevant to WP3

Name	Organisation / function	Main areas covered
Francesca Arena Françoise Van Lancker	MARE D4	Implementation details of EMFF art. 87 measures
Luis Angel Nieto Moreda	MARE E3	IT developments
Ben Kloppenborg	MARE C4	IT development
Alexis Bench	EFCA	IT developments and EFCA activities
Several	DE competent authorities for control	Relevance of art.87 measures
Several	NL competent authorities for control	Relevance of art.87 measures
Several	IE competent authorities for control	Relevance of art.87 measures
Several	UK competent authorities for control	Relevance of art.87 measures

2.7.3. Findings

EQ 3.1: Which measures are most /least frequently implemented and why?

The measure which are the most frequently implemented under EMFF article 87 include the **development of IT services and supplies supporting the development of harmonised standards and messaging systems for exchange of fisheries data** (VMS, ERS, catches, landings, fleet, fishing authorisations). The main reason is that the Union control system promotes electronic recording and exchange of real-time data to develop effective and efficient control resources. In order to ensure full interoperability of Member States systems for data exchange, a common messaging system utilising harmonised standards was obviously needed and it was somewhat logical that the Commission could take a central role in its development instead of Member States or other third parties. The messaging system known as FLUX based on international standards (UN/CEFACT P1000 based on FLUX standards) is now operational and its utilisation by Members States is now mandatory since the adoption of Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2015/1962 concerning exchanges of information included in article 111 of the control regulation (*inter alia* VMS, logbook information, landing declaration, sales notes) and in article 116 of the same regulation (*inter alia* fishing licences and fishing authorisations), as well as in article 33 of the control regulation (uptake of catch and effort quota). Utilisation of FLUX transportation layer is also mandated for exchange of data on fishing fleet through Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2017/218.

Development of IT services and supplies supporting the development of harmonised standards and messaging systems for exchange of fisheries data in support of control and enforcement entail considerable effort by the Commission for software preparation and maintenance. Initial Commission's commitments for releases of IT tools could not be delivered. According to the DG MARE data, the development of FLUX standards, tools and transportation layer mobilise considerable human and financial resources.

Other measures frequently used under EMFF article 83 include **funding of inspection missions by Commission's agents to verify the implementation of the CFP by Member States and to verify the level of cooperation of third countries in the fight against IUU fishing**. The need for inspections will remain and similar budget commitments will be needed over the second part of the EMFF programming period (\approx EUR 700 000 per year). The same reasoning applies to resources used for funding of the meetings of the control expert group over the next few years as these meetings are an essential platform of exchanges between the Commission and the Member States to coordinate actions and develop a common understanding in relation to control and enforcement (\approx EUR 350 000 per year).

The least implemented measures concern joint chartering and/or purchase of control means (not used at all) under article 87.2 a) and implementation of transnational projects subject of article 87.3. The reasons for not implementing joint chartering and/or purchase of patrol vessels are discussed extensively under the next evaluation question. Concerning transnational projects, some Member States consulted indicated that EFCA is already providing a lot of support to Member States for strengthening and harmonising controls. Other Member States reported that legal systems being fairly different, transnational projects that suit all are potentially very difficult. Lack of resources available to engage in translational projects has also been raised by Member States but also by DG MARE (insufficient staff in the unit in charge). Since no specific budget has been programmed for transnational projects, the question of maintaining a financial envelope is not relevant. However, should EFCA be authorised to receive EMFF funding under shared management as considered by the Commission for EMFF post 2020, and in view of the mandate and experience of the agency in the coordination of transnational control operations, transnational cooperation projects in the field of control may be implemented also under the shared-management component of EMFF.

EQ 3.2: Why is there a reluctance from MS to apply for joint chartering and/or purchase of control means? Should this measure be abandoned? If not, under which conditions that measure would be relevant in the next programming period?

According to DG MARE, the joint chartering and/or purchase of control means has been proposed by the Commission during preparation of the EMFF. The European Parliament requested an increase of the initial budget proposed during trilogue discussions.

Despite efforts deployed by DG MARE to promote this funding opportunity, the joint chartering and/or purchase of control means has not been utilised. According to Member States consulted, the measure is not relevant for **several reasons**:

- Control means are **sufficient and adequately adapted** to the maritime environment Member States are required to control.
- There is a general **lack of human resources for manning own patrol vessels**. Manning additional chartered vessels adequately without impacts on manning own vessels would not be possible
- Joint charter involving two or more Member States may underpin specific **administrative rules that prevent flexible deployment**. In the case of joint purchase, there would be a legal uncertainty
- There is **uncertainty over the scope of expenses covered by EC for joint chartering**. Covering additional costs or MS co-financed parts from national budgets could be an issue due to national contract procedures..

In conclusion, in view of past experience and of Member States explanations, any uptake of the joint chartering and/or purchase of control means measure appears highly unlikely over the second part of the EMFF programming period. The measure may be abandoned. It has *de facto* been abandoned by DG MARE which withdrew the measures from its EMFF article 87 funding programmes as from 2017.

Main recommendations

- The joint chartering and/or purchase of control means may be abandoned
- DG MARE may consider launching an expression of interest for projects falling under article 87.3 of the EMFF Regulation concerning implementation transnational projects.
- In view of the problems encountered by the Commission to finalise and implement the IT tools envisaged in the EU legislation, an increase of the relevant financial envelope should be considered. However, budget availability may not be the only factor explaining current difficulties and the Commission should make a detailed assessment of the problems in relation to IT development.

2.8.WP 4: Voluntary contributions to international organisations

2.8.1. Background

Fisheries international organisations are formed by countries with fishing interests in an area for joint management of relevant fish stocks according to the principles set out by the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS). Some of them manage all the fish stocks found in a specific area, while others focus on highly-migratory species, notably tuna, throughout vast geographical areas.

The organisations are open both to countries in the region (coastal States) and countries with interests in the fisheries concerned (flag States). While some international organisations have a purely advisory role (they are called Regional Fisheries Bodies - RFBs), most have management powers to set catch and fishing effort limits, technical measures, and control obligations through binding measures (these organisations are called Regional Fisheries Management Organisations – RFMOs).

Most international organisations have a core budget elaborated on the basis of compulsory contributions (e.g. membership fees) paid by their contracting and cooperating parties. Core budgets generally cover running expenses of international organisations (e.g. salaries of staff which typically represent more than 50% of the core budget expenses, office charges) with limited core budget resources for investments, or simply for organising large regular meetings. International organisations are highly reliant on extra-budgetary sources of income. These sources of extra-budgetary incomes can be recovered from the fishing industry in exchange for specific services (i.e. ICCAT observer scheme on the bluefin fishery) but in most cases include voluntary contributions from the most economically developed contracting parties (e.g. EU, USA, Brazil, Japan, China, Korea, etc.).

Table 24: Core budgets of a selection of fisheries international organisations

(EUR)	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
IOTC	2 493 492	2 662 259	2 981 655	3 063 031	3 175 329
ICCAT	3 122 635	3 199 887	3 392 031	3 635 672	3 817 573
WCPFC	5 971 689	6 137 803	6 286 174	6 320 644	6 492 319
NAFO	1 536 585	1 610 569	1 623 577	1 728 455	1 867 480
GFCM	1 825 948	1 918 345	2 016 038	2 058 668	2 058 668

Source: relevant IO's websites

Some international organisations do not even have a core budget, like the FAO regional organisation created under Article XI of the FAO constitution (see Error! Reference source not found.). As highlighted by the External Dimension of the CFP Commission Communication²⁵, RFMOs are the key for a for the conservation and management of shared and migratory stocks. Under UNCLOS, as well as under the UN Fish Stock Agreement, the EU has committed itself to participate in the work of the various international organisations, provided it has a real interest in the fisheries managed by these organisations as flag state, coastal state or market state. The Communication follows on an earlier RFMO communication²⁶ in which the Commission promoted increased participation in RFMOs for framing measures for the conservation and management of stocks, promoting EU interests and ensure coherence amongst RFMOs and with the CFP.

²⁵ COM (2011) 424 final of 13.07.2011

²⁶ COM (1999) 613 final of 8.12.1999

As of early 2018, the Union, represented by the Commission, plays an active role in five tuna organisations and 11 non-tuna organisations²⁷. In addition, the EU as a member of FAO supports the global initiatives of the organisation for responsible and sustainable fisheries, including the fight against IUU.

These principles have been enshrined in Article 28 and Article 29 of the CFP adopted at the end of 2013 with specific orientations on the need to base positions on best available scientific advice, on an EU leading role in the process of strengthening the performance of RFMOs so as to better enable them to conserve and manage resources under their management mandate and to enable them to fight IUU fishing. These principles should underpin all EU actions with international organisations. Strengthened and well-functioning international organisations benefit EU interests, but also the benefit of ACP developing countries for which sustainable fisheries are pivotal for their development (small islands developing States in particular).

Under EMFF article 88, voluntary support to international organisations may include:

- Financial contributions provided to United Nations organisations (i.e. FAO) active in the field of the Law of the Sea
- Financial contributions to preparations for new international organisations
- Financial contribution to work or programme carried out by international organisations and which are of special interest to the Union
- Financial contributions to any activity which upholds the interests of the EU and strengthen cooperation with its partners in the third countries.

The following table shows the amounts programmed, committed and paid under EMFF article 88 voluntary contributions to international organisations. It can be noted that the amounts programmed more than doubled between 2014 and 2018. Voluntary contributions to IO's are substantially higher than EU compulsory contributions (i.e. IOs membership fees) that are in the region of EUR 5.4 million per year.

Table 25: Amounts programmed, committed and paid under EMFF article 88 "voluntary contributions to international organisations"

(EUR)	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
<i>Programmed</i>	6 137 369	7 977 720	10 675 000	12 670 000	12 292 000
<i>Committed</i>	6 053 998	7 691 350	10 650 211	7 891 521	
<i>Paid</i>	5 305 279	6 959 004	8 165 793	1 588 067	

Source: DG MARE. Note: situation early 2018.

Depending on the needs, EU can mobilise other sources of funding to support international organisations, including research funds, the European Development Funds and sectoral support envelopes under Sustainable fisheries partnership agreements (SFPAs) concluded with third countries.

The following table lists the main international organisations to which the EU is a contracting party, with identification of EU interest as coastal state and/or as flag state. Additionally, it should be mentioned that the EU has an interest as market state in all organisations listed, being one of the main global market outlet for fisheries products with the USA and Japan. As a market state, the main interest of the EU is to ensure that all

²⁷ Membership to the North Pacific Fisheries Commission is considered by the Commission in view of possible interest of some EU vessels to exploit small pelagic resources in the NPFC convention area.

products placed on the market have been caught in compliance with applicable rules and this underpinned adoption of the IUU Regulation.

Table 26: International organisations to which the EU is party or cooperating party with identification of interest as flag State and/or coastal State

Name	Area of competence	Flag State	Coastal State
Tuna RFMOs			
ICCAT	Atlantic Ocean	X	X
IOTC*	Indian Ocean	X	X
CCSBT	Southern hemisphere	X	
IATTC	Eastern Pacific	X	
AIDCP	Eastern Pacific		
WCPFC	Western Central Pacific	X	
Non-tuna RFMOs			
NEAFC	North-East Atlantic	X	
NAFO	North-West Atlantic	X	
NASCO	North-East Atlantic	X	
SEAFO	South-East Atlantic	X	
SIOFA	High Seas Southern Indian Ocean	X	
SPRFMO	South Pacific	X	
CCAMLR	Antarctic	X	
GFCM*	Mediterranean and Black Sea	X	X
NPFC***	North Pacific	X	
Advisory only RFBs			
WECAF**	Western Central Atlantic	X	X
CECAF**	Eastern Central Atlantic	X	X
Other			
FAO	Global	X	X

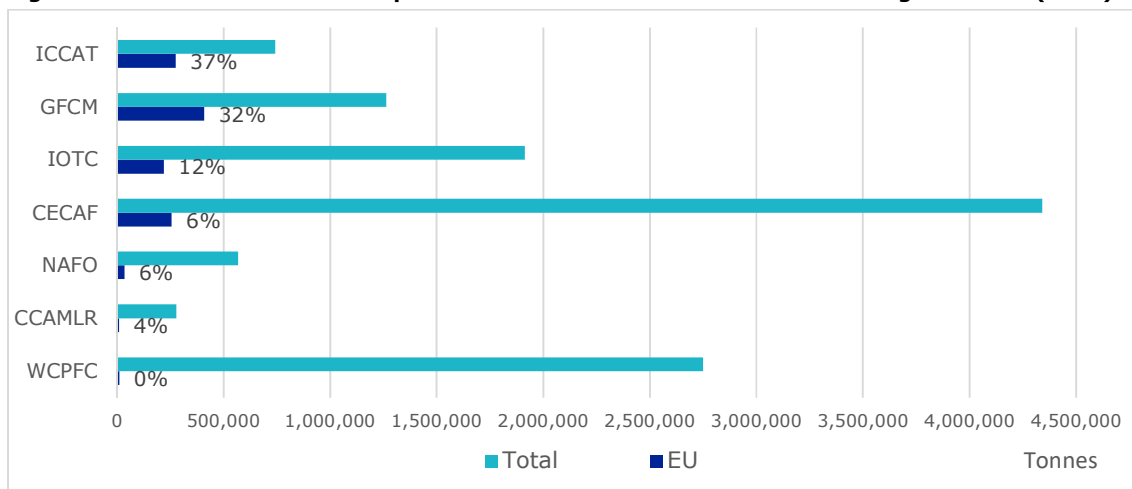
Note: * established under Article XIV of FAO constitution

** established under Article VI of FAO constitution

*** Accession considered

As an illustration of the EU interest as flag State in some of the main international organisations, the next figure shows total catches of species under the mandate of a selection of international organisations and the share of total catches attributable to the EU. ICCAT (37% of total catches attributable to the EU), GFCM (32%) and IOTC (12%) are the main international organisations of interest.

Figure 5: EU and total catches of species under the mandate of international organisations (2016).



Source: IOs databases
2016 data (except GFCM 2015). The percentage represents share of EU catches in total catches.

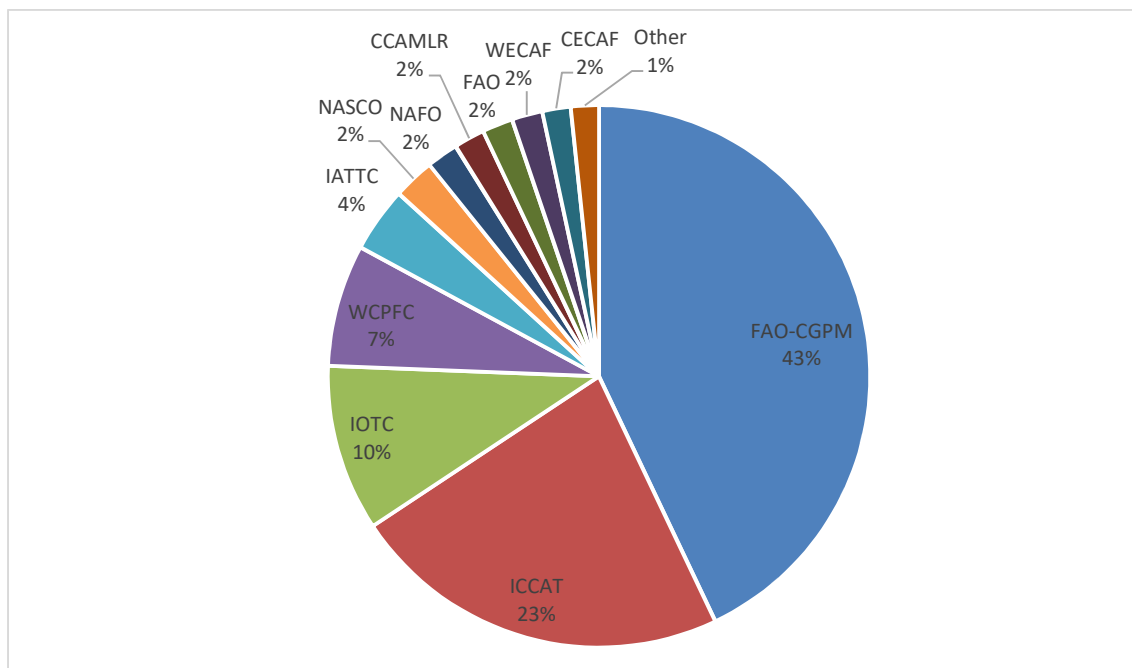
Key actions implemented

International organisations supported

In terms of international organisations supported with EMFF article 88 funding, 43% of total commitments (EUR 13.8 million) over the 2014-2017 period were targeted to FAO-GFCM²⁸ in their efforts to improve the management of Mediterranean fisheries. The other international organisations having received the highest commitments include ICCAT with 23% (EUR 7.4 million) for the management of highly migratory species in the Atlantic Ocean, IOTC with 10% (EUR 3.2 million) for the management of same species in the Indian Ocean and WCPFC with 7% (EUR 2.3 million) for the management of same species in the Western Central Pacific Ocean. In total, these four entities concentrated 83% of total commitments between 2014 and 2017. The priority on FAO-GFCM, ICCA and IOTC can be related to the important stake of the Union in these three IOs as flag State and as coastal State. Concerning support to WCPFC, the relative importance of voluntary funding can be attributed to the large catch volume under its mandate (2.8 million tonnes).

Figure 6: Breakdown of total commitments under EMFF article 88 by beneficiary international organisations (2014-2017)

²⁸ The action table provided by DG MARE does not differentiate what goes to GFCM directly from what goes to FAO to support GFCM.



Source: from DG MARE data

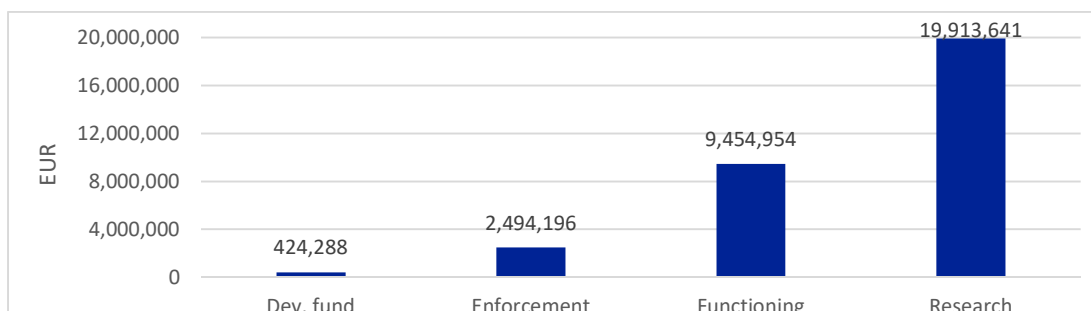
Typology of actions supported

Actions supported through EMFF article 88 have been grouped into four categories on the basis of the description of the action reported in the DG MARE financial database. The table overleaf shows these four categories and what they encompass.

Type of action	
Functioning	Supporting organisation of IO statutory meeting or inter-sessional meetings and/or workshops; Supporting IO performance reviews
Research	Funding of specific research programmes identified by the IO scientific committees to improve quality of scientific advice
Enforcement	Supporting surveillance pilot projects, cross-checking of databases and networking of control authorities
Development funds	EU contribution to development funds implemented by certain IOs to assist developing countries

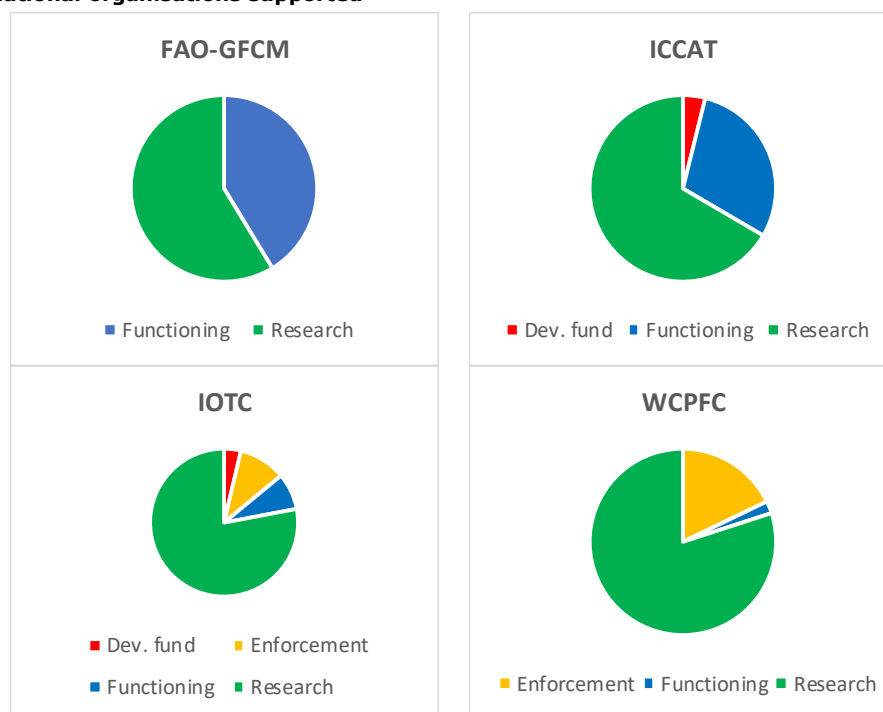
As shown in the following figure, about EUR 19.9 million (i.e. 62%) have been committed to support various research programmes. Approximately EUR 9.5 million (i.e. 29%) have been committed to support the functioning of IOs, EUR 2.5 million in support of enforcement (8%) and 425 000 EUR as contributions to IOs development funds to assist developing countries.

Figure 7: Total commitments under EMFF article 88 broken down by types of activities (2014-2017)



For the four main international organisations supported over 2014-2017 (i.e. FAO-GFCM, ICCAT, IOTC and WCPFC), the next figure shows the breakdown of funding by type of action.

Figure 8: Breakdown of total commitments under EMFF article 88 by types of activities for the four main international organisations supported



The table below presents the main actions supported with EMFF article 88 funding between 2014 and 2017.

IO / Type of action	Main actions supported through EMFF	Commitments (2014-2017)
FAO GFCM		
Functioning	GFCM task force in charge of the adaptation/modernisation of the organisation Selected activities of mid-term strategy towards sustainable fisheries and aquaculture	EUR 5.7 million
Research	Multiannual FAO regional projects on fisheries and aquaculture management in the Mediterranean (Copemed, Eastmed, Medsumed, Adriamed, Shocmed)	EUR 8.1 million
ICCAT		
Functioning	ICCAT statutory and special meetings 2 nd performance review RFMO joint working groups	EUR 2.2 million

Research	Atlantic wide research programme for bluefin tuna Testing of reference points for fisheries management	EUR 4.9 million
Development fund	ICCAT capacity development fund	EUR 0.3 million
IOTC		
Functioning	IOTC statutory and working groups meetings	EUR 0.3 million
Research	Population structure of IOTC species IOTC scientific activities	EUR 2.5 million
Enforcement	FAO-IOTC assistance to improve compliance	EUR 0.3 million
Development fund	FAO-IOTC technical assistance to developing countries	EUR 0.2 million
WCPFC		
Functioning	WCPFC working group	p.m.
Enforcement	Catch data validation Observer data and transshipment activities Extent of shark fining in the WCPO	EUR 0.4 million
Research	Bigeye and yellowfin bycatch reductions Testing of reference points for fisheries management	EUR 1.9 million

Source: DG MARE

2.8.2. Data and Information

Evaluation of EU voluntary contributions to international organisations has been conducted on the basis of documentary evidences. Data and information obtained on IOs included:

- reports on the status of stocks;
- reports of the plenary and of functional (sub)committees,
- performance reviews of international organisations;
- progress reports and evaluations of projects supported as available.

Table 27: Key websites relevant to WP4

IOs	Website
International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT)	https://www.iccat.int
Indian Ocean Tuna Commission (IOTC)	www.iotc.org
Commission for the Conservation of Southern Bluefin Tuna (CCSBT)	https://www.ccsbt.org
Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC)	https://www.iattc.org/
Agreement on the International Dolphin Conservation Program (AIDCP)	https://www.iattc.org/
Western Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC)	https://www.wcpfc.int/
North East Atlantic Fisheries Commission (NEAFC)	https://www.neafc.org/
Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organization (NAFO)	https://www.nafo.int/
North Atlantic Salmon Conservation Organization (NASCO)	www.nasco.int/
South-East Atlantic Fisheries Organization (SEAFO)	www.seafo.org/
South Indian Ocean Fisheries Agreement (SIOFA)	www.siofa.org/
South Pacific Regional Fisheries Management Organisation (SPRFMO)	https://www.sprfmo.int/
Commission for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources (CCAMLR)	https://www.ccamlr.org/
General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM)	http://www.fao.org/gfcm
North Pacific Fisheries Convention (NPFC)	https://www.npfc.int/
Western Central Atlantic Fishery Commission (WECAF)	www.fao.org/fishery/rfb/wecaf
Fishery Committee for the Eastern Central Atlantic (CECAF)	www.fao.org/fishery/rfb/cecaf

Data on programming, commitments and payments under the EMFF Regulation were provided by the Commission.

2.8.3. Findings

EQ 4.1: Are the partnership agreements in line with the objective of the CFP?

EQ 4.2: Do the contributions help improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the international organisations?

Voluntary contributions to international organisations are allocated to beneficiary institutions through specific action grants with a maximum level of 80% co-financing. Action grants are programmed to respond to needs identified by international organisations that cannot be funded with their core budgets to support actions which are of interest for the Union.

The grants supported different types of actions.

- **Research:** grants provided funding for the implementation of research programmes. Since 2014, EMFF supported research on major species managed by the international organisations such as bluefin tuna in the Mediterranean and yellowfin and bigeye in the different oceans. The main objective of these

interventions is to contribute to the improvement of scientific advice on which management decisions should be based according to the principles of good governance enshrined in the CFP (recital 14) and recalled in CFP article 29.4 on Union activities in international fisheries organisations.

- **Functioning:** grants covered different types of support to the functioning of international organisations including i) preparation and organisation of statutory or extraordinary meetings, intersessional meetings and workshops, ii) funding of performance reviews of international organisations and of interventions aiming at strengthening the legal framework of international organisations. The main objectives of these interventions are to strengthen the performance of the international organisations so as to better enable them to conserve and manage fish resources under their mandates according to CFP article 29.2.
- **Enforcement:** grants provided funding for developing control mechanisms and to assist developing countries to better comply with international organisations rules concerning submission of data and monitoring of fishing vessels under their responsibility. The main objective of these intervention is to contribute to increased compliance with international organisation rules for the benefit of their performances.
- **Development funds:** a central preoccupation of international organisations is to take into account the needs of developing States with regards to capacity building. To this end, specific development funds have been set up by international organisations to assist developing States through payments of expenditures for meeting attendance and through mobilisation of technical assistance. The development funds are managed by international organisations. As a developed entity, the EU contributes together with other developed States (e.g. USA, Japan, Taiwan etc.) to development funds. An increased participation of developing States in the work of international organisations contribute to their strengthening by improving data collection and by ensuring involvement of all parties concerned in the decision-making process. Increased participation underpins better adherence to international organisations rules and better compliance.

Overall, EU voluntary contributions to international organisations aim at strengthening the decision-making process. However, conservation and management rules adopted by international organisations are the result of negotiations between the different parties concerned which have often different interests. The extent to which conservation and management rules adequately address the needs cannot be considered as direct impact of EU interventions under the EMFF or under other instruments.

According to IO's scientific committee reports available from IOs websites, EMFF supported research programmes contributed to the improvement of scientific advices. Notable examples included the FAO-implemented projects (Adriamed, CopeMed, MedSudMed, and EastMed) which served to harmonise many data collection activities and improved engagement of relevant Mediterranean countries in regional data collection activities, and the ICCAT-implemented Atlantic-wide bluefin tuna research programme (GBYP) with improved data collection and science contributing to improvement management decision-making which can be assumed to have contributed to the spectacular recovery of the stocks over the last three years. The mid-term review of the GBYP, for example, concluded that the project has "produced an impressive increase in scientific investigations into Atlantic bluefin tuna delivering much of the background scientific evidence crucial to conducting and improving stock assessments and ultimately management advice" (ICCAT, 2015). In the NAFO area, the Nereida projects, which started in 2009 provided important information on vulnerable marine ecosystems (VMEs) in the NAFO regulatory area which underpinned adoption of protection measures. The success of the initial research programme supported its extension to increase its coverage to other yet unexplored areas where VMEs may be present.

However, the objectives as stated in evaluations and progress reports of research projects are not always measurable through objective, verifiable indicators, and a number of funded projects (e.g. some of the FAO-implemented projects in the Mediterranean) were not subject to independent review. This was mainly due to their budgets falling under the thresholds required by beneficiaries for evaluation, making it hard for third parties to monitor on an on-going basis the effectiveness of these projects apart from progress reports drafted by the project-implementers themselves.

Other research programmes funded through EMFF are ongoing and their results will be available only by the end of the EMFF programming period. This includes for example a research programme on population structure of IOTC species using modern technology (DNA sequencing and otolith micro-chemistry) which will give important information on the structure of stocks of tuna species in the Indian Ocean with possible impacts on the definition of management units for the different species (at present, Indian Ocean tuna species are considered as forming a unique stock).

EMFF support to IO's functioning could be mobilised to organise meetings that could not have been funded otherwise. Notable examples include organisations of CECAF and WECAF meetings and working groups that their umbrella institutions, FAO, could not fund in the absence of dedicated budget²⁹. EMFF could also support regular and special meetings of ICCAT commission³⁰ during which conservation and management measures are discussed between parties and adopted when a consensus is obtained. ICCAT commission meetings are expensive to organise (\approx EUR 650 000 per meeting) with the organisation core budget (EUR 3.4 million per year³¹) structurally insufficient to cover this level of expenses.

The EMFF also supported independent external review of the performances of some RFMOs (i.e. CCAMLR, IATTC, ICCAT) which are important to support enhancement of the performances of the IOs. It also supported structural changes of some IOs through discussions or interventions aiming at changing / modernising the IOs funding conventions. As an example, the EMFF funding of General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM) task force supported the strengthening of GFCM mandate along the lines proposed by the 2011 performance review with inter alia clearer overall objective of biological, social, economic and environmental sustainability of living marine resources, provisions for the establishment of measures/sanctions to address non-compliance by Members/non-Members and establishment of a dispute settlement mechanism between Contracting Parties. The amended GFCM convention was approved by the end of 2014. According to FAO (2016), the adaptation of GFCM has been effective with GFCM now considered as a modern RFMO with the capability and expertise to take appropriate decisions based on the best available scientific advice and ensure their implementation. The modernisation of GFCM convention is an ongoing process. Further adaptations are being considered under the stewardship of the GFCM task force supported by EMFF, in particular in relation to the IOs mandate in relation to aquaculture. For other international organisations, EMFF supports evaluations to strengthen the WECAFC and CECAF mandates, two FAO organisations that need considerable strengthening according to the conclusions of their respective performance reviews (2011 for CECAF and 2013 for WECAFC). For these two FAO organisations, substantial reforms will materialise only in the medium term making it impossible to evaluate the effectiveness of current EMFF support.

Conclusions

EU voluntary contributions are in line with the objectives of the CFP. With other EU sources of funding, EMFF article 88 contributions provide financial resources to the EU to actively

²⁹ CECAF and WECAFC budgets are small and contributions from FAO regular budget have been decreasing

³⁰ According to ICCAT status, regular meetings of the Commission are organised every two years. Special meetings are organised between two regular meetings.

³¹ Source ICCAT biennial report 2015-2016 – Volume 4

support and contribute to the activities of international organisations (CFP article 29.1). With 62% of EMFF funding invested in research, EMFF contributions contribute to improve available scientific advice that underpin preparation and adoption of relevant conservation and management measures (CFP article 29.2). EMFF support to IOs performance reviews and modernisation of their legal basis contribute to strengthen the performances of IOs so as to better enable them to conserve and manage fish stocks under their purview (CFP article 29.2) while contributing to improved consistency between the respective regulatory frameworks. Considering this, EU voluntary contributions help to improve the effectiveness of international organisations in managing and conserving fish stocks.

Improving the efficiency of the international organisations (second part of the evaluation question) was not a main focus for EU voluntary contributions since this is mostly addressed through IO's internal arrangements based on IOs own internal procedures. However, the programming of EU grants under EMFF article 88 covering different possible types of intervention (ex. the 2016 EU grant to IOTC to support the IOTC scientific committee program of work with EUR 600 000 funding) minimise transaction costs for both sides, and therefore contribute to improve the IOs efficiency.

2.9.WP 5: Advisory Councils

2.9.1. Background

Key Legal and Programming Texts

The Advisory Councils (ACs) are stakeholder-led organisations that provide the Commission and MSs with recommendations on fisheries management matters. Increased regionalization is a key priority in the reformed CFP.

The 2002 Reform of the CFP introduced the concept of Regional Advisory Councils (RACs) and a common framework for these was set out in Council Decision 2004/585/EC. Seven RACs were established in the following years (2004-2008) that covered the European sea areas (North Sea, Baltic, North Western Waters, South Western Waters, Mediterranean) and two covering other sectors: pelagic and long distance fleets.

In addition to the seven existing Advisory Councils, the new CFP (1380/2013) proposed the creation of four new Advisory Councils for the Black Sea, Aquaculture, Markets and Outermost Regions. The Black Sea, Aquaculture and Markets have recently been established and the Outermost Regions is still to be set up.

The current CFP regulation (1380/2013) recognises that:

“Dialogue with stakeholders has proven to be essential for achieving the objectives of the CFP. Taking into account the diverse conditions throughout Union waters and the increased regionalisation of the CFP, Advisory Councils should enable the CFP to benefit from the knowledge and experience of all stakeholders.”

Article 3 on ‘Principles of Good Governance’ includes:

“appropriate involvement of stakeholders, in particular Advisory Councils, at all stages - from conception to implementation of the measures.”

Article 6 on General provisions states: “When applying this Regulation, the Commission shall consult the relevant advisory bodies and the relevant scientific bodies. Conservation measures shall be adopted taking into account available scientific, technical and economic advice, including, where relevant, reports drawn up by STECF and other advisory bodies, advice received from Advisory Councils and joint recommendations made by Member States pursuant to Article 18.”

Article 18 on Regionalisation requires that Member States and groups of MS consult with Advisory Councils on proposed measures. ACs therefore are consulted by the Commission (mostly DG MARE, but also DG ENV on occasion) and by Member States and MS groups (for example the Scheveningen Group in the North Sea).

The EMFF Regulation 508/2014 states that “*In order to improve governance within the CFP and to ensure the effective functioning of the Advisory Councils, it is essential for Advisory Councils to be provided with sufficient and permanent funding in order to pursue effectively their advisory role within the CFP.*”

The ACs are established with a mandatory 60/40 membership of fishing industry/other interest groups (OIGs). OIGs may comprise of NGOs (environmental or labour-related), recreational fishers and ‘women in fishing’ groups. A regulation in 2015 (242) gives the detailed rules on how ACs should function. This regulation was amended in 2017 (1575)

to clarify the election of members in order to maintain the 60/40 representation between industry and OIGs.

Key Actions Undertaken

As the name suggests, Advisory Councils are established as stakeholder groups to provide advice to the Commission and Member States, both in response to requests from these parties and where the AC identifies issues and problems. Article 44 of the CFP regulation (1380/2013) sets out the tasks of the Advisory Councils:

- a. submit recommendations and suggestions on matters relating to the management of fisheries and the socio- economic and conservation aspects of fisheries and aqua- culture to the Commission and to the Member State concerned, and, in particular, recommendations on how to simplify rules on fisheries management;
- b. inform the Commission and Member States of problems relating to the management and the socio-economic and conservation aspects of fisheries and, where appropriate, of aquaculture in their geographical area or field of competence and propose solutions to overcome those problems;
- c. contribute, in close cooperation with scientists, to the collection, supply and analysis of data necessary for the development of conservation measures.

ACs differ in scale of membership as the table below illustrates. The General Assemblies are expected to meet at least once per year. All operate with a smaller Executive Committee that meets on a more regular basis and several operate with smaller working groups or focus groups that are either defined thematically or on a stocks/sub-regional basis. The detailed functioning of the ACs is described in regulation 242/2015.

Table 28: Advisory Council membership numbers for General Assembly and Executive Committees

Advisory Council	General Assembly	Executive Committee
South Western Waters	95	25
North Western Waters	70	22
North Sea	41	25
Mediterranean	46	26
Baltic	40	26
Pelagic	38	17
Long Distance	51	25
Aquaculture	66	20
Market	58	22
Black Sea	15	11

Source: Consultant's compilation from AC websites.

The funding for Advisory Councils is based on a set, equal budget per AC. In 2016 the annual budget per AC increased by 20% from EUR 250,000 to EUR 300,000. The budget is irrespective of membership size, translation demands or travel requirements. The Commission contributes 90% of the budget and ACs are expected to show the remaining 10% is received from its members and/or Member States associated with the AC. Budget was committed for all eleven ACs in 2017. Payments are slightly less than the committed amounts due to underspend by some ACs.

Table 29 Total EMFF direct support under WP5 Advisory Councils per annum 2014-17

Year	Subject	Programmed	Committed	Paid
2014	Advisory Councils (ACs)	€ 1 750 000	€ 1 750 000	€ 1 647 554
2015	Advisory Councils (ACs)	€ 2 750 000	€ 1 750 000	€ 1 658 956
2016	Advisory Councils (ACs)	€ 3 300 000	€ 2 700 000	€ 2 077 642
2017	Advisory Councils (ACs) (11 x 300.000)		€ 2 908 861	€ 1 127 089

Source: DG MARE

In 2017 there were 53 submissions to the Commission by ACs as shown in the table below. ACs also responded to Member State groups and individual member state requests, which are not shown in the table below.

Table 30 Official submissions to the Commission by ACs in 2017*

Advisory Council	Number of submissions
North Western Waters	10
Mediterranean	9
North Sea	8
Long Distance	7
South Western Waters	6
Pelagic	6
Baltic	3
Black Sea	3
Market	3
Aquaculture	1

Source: DG MARE

*Including a joint LDAC, MAC and MedAC submission on Improving implementation of IUU Regulation

2.9.2. Data and Information

Key documents reviewed

The key documents reviewed include:

- EU legislation establishing ACs (1380/2013) and describing the functioning of ACs (242/2015 and 1575/2017);
- AC procedures, annual reports, meeting minutes and advice accessed from the AC websites (see below);
- History and Evolution of the Advisory Councils, Cetmar, April 2018

Key websites accessed

Table 31: Key websites relevant to WP5

Website name	Owner	Main content	URL
South Western Waters	AC Secretariat	Membership, procedures meetings, advice, etc.	http://cc-sud.eu/index.php/en/
North Western Waters	"	"	http://www.nwwac.org
North Sea	"	"	http://nsrac.org
Mediterranean	"	"	http://en.med-ac.eu
Baltic	"	"	http://www.bsac.dk
Pelagic	"	"	http://www.pelagic-ac.org
Long Distance	"	"	http://ldac.eu
Market	"	"	
Black Sea	"	"	https://www.blsaceu.eu/en/
Aquaculture	EC	No website	https://ec.europa.eu/fisheries/cfp/aquaculture/aquaculture-advisory-council_en

In-depth Interviews undertaken

The consultation in relation to this WP with Advisory Council secretariats, membership and relevant stakeholders produced more interviews and responses than planned. This is partly as a result of the consultative nature of the ACs and sensitivities over representation in terms of the OIGs. It was stressed to respondents that they could comment in relation to a single AC or ACs in general; an 'official AC response' in which consensus is sought was not required (as long as the interviewer knew the basis on which responses are given; and the responses would be anonymised). The following interviews were undertaken and/or responses received:

Table 32: Key interviews relevant to WP5

Interviewee	Function / organisation	Main areas covered
Pascale Coulson	DG MARE Unit D3 – CFP and Structural Support, Policy Development and Coordination	Functioning of ACs, processes and proposed approach to consultation.
Sally Clink	Baltic AC Secretariat	"
Lorna Duguid	North Sea AC Secretariat	"
Conor Nolan, Sara Vandamme*	North Western Waters Secretariat	"
Verena Ohms	Pelagic AC Secretariat	"
Sean O'Donohue	Market AC chair, Pelagic AC, NWW AC Ex Com member	"
Javier Lopez	Oceana, MedAC, NWW AC, SWWAC member	"

Lindsay	The Fisheries Secretariat Baltic AC member	
Vera Coelho, Jean Christophe Vandeveld	Pew, Brussels	“
Daniel Voces	Europeche	“
Irene Kingma	Dutch Elasmobranch Society	“
Heather Hamilton	Client Earth	“
Black Sea AC	Secretariat	Response not received
Long Distance AC	Secretariat	Response not received

Several other interviews were held with NWWAC members in relation to that case study (see Case Study 4 on the NWWAC for details).

Relevant Case Studies

The case studies relevant for undertaking WP 5 were:

Case study theme	Subject	Relevance to WP
Scientific advice	STECF	Some connection between ACs and development/use of scientific advice from STECF.
Advisory Councils	NWWAC	Yes – directly relevant to this WP

2.9.3. Findings

EQ 5: Have the Advisory Councils been able to provide recommendations on fisheries management matters, including advice on conservation and socio-economic aspects of fisheries, and simplification of rules?

Most ACs are generally able to provide recommendations on fisheries management measures to both the Commission, the Member State Group (NWW) and individual Member States. The advice has mainly been on fisheries management proposals that are proposed by other parties for comment or proposed by the AC itself. A number of ACs find it very difficult to produce advice that both fishing and other interest groups can sign off on.

The recently established ACs more frequently fail to respond in time or at all, perhaps as procedures are less bedded-in and members are less aware of expected inputs outside of meetings. There are also now sub-sector specific ACs (Market and Aquaculture) that would not be expected to respond to all issues.

Wider conservation issues such as reduction in bycatch or habitat impacts are addressed on occasion. The wider marine ecosystem is an area that Other Interest Groups feel should be given more consideration and environmental NGOs appreciate the efforts of the North Sea AC in this regard with the establishment of an Ecosystem Focus Group. The Baltic AC has recently followed suit with establishment of an ecosystem-based management group.

ACs tend to comment indirectly on the socio-economic impacts of certain measures such as the Landing Obligation. There is little comment on economic matters and advice on market matters are now devolved to the Market AC. This is considered by members to be

a welcome development as the AC workload is high without the addition of market issues and many members feel they do not have the knowledge to provide an adequate response.

There is no evidence of ACs providing advice that directly results in the simplification of rules. However, AC advice is provided on proposed measures that have the overall intent of simplification (e.g. Technical Conservation Measures and the EU Fisheries Control System). The first-hand experience of some members in fishing has helped to identify where rules are causing problems and/or proposals may not be workable. These comments and advice could either prevent certain problematic measures being implemented (which could be considered as simplification) or may result in derogations and exemptions (which may in effect complicate rules by addressing specific circumstances).

Some OIG members consider ACs to be industry groups in which OIGs participate to keep the industry in check and provide a veneer of multi-stakeholder participation, while the 60% industry majority means that the industry view inevitably dominates. It is also felt by some that the ACs may too often point to the problems of implementation rather than work together as a group constructively to find solutions. The Choke Mitigation Tool is cited by members of both groups in several ACs as a constructive output achieved by the NWWAC.

The focus on relatively technical fishery management issues illustrates the strengths and a weakness Advisory Councils. The membership of the AC consists of 60% industry groups and some ACs are unable to provide a consensus view. It is unclear to some ACs whether their recommendations are taken into account, particularly by MS groups that see an overlap in AC membership and the stakeholders they consult directly (e.g. when developing the regional discard plans). It is very useful for the Commission to hear a unified voice from industry and the extensive knowledge of fisheries management from first-hand industry experience of its effects is extremely valuable in refining fisheries management measures (e.g. NWWAC recommendations on management of sole in VIId were adopted by the Commission). This is the key strength of the ACs pointing towards effectiveness of this intervention. It is also evident that the AC industry members are often achieving consensus with what can be competing commercial fishing interests and the members now recognise that the advice should be based on evidence rather than opinion.

The extension of AC membership to other interest groups and the requirement for 40% OIG membership is overall a positive arrangement as it gives a voice to other viewpoints and helps to ensure there is wider consideration of issues, beyond simply the impact to industry. With the integration of environmental objectives within the CFP, consideration beyond the catching sector is a requirement of effective implementation of the CFP. However, the '40% rule' has also perpetuated a binary 'them and us' culture that many ACs struggle to overcome. This can result in tension, a lack of trust and advice that can be either general (as general text is what all parties can agree on), or advice that reports two divergent viewpoints, which is less valuable as it could be more readily ignored by decision-makers.

Ultimately the industry enjoys a majority vote and if consensus can be achieved within the 60% industry group, that is the view that is often carried. Some ACs provide a minority view as either a separate document or within a single advice document, stating which points are endorsed by the whole AC or just industry members. The Pelagic AC is notable in its ability to achieve consensus, which is in part due to the agreed focus being on multi-annual plans for pelagic stocks, which both industry and OIGs support in principle and are able to agree measures within these.

The secretariats spend considerable time and effort trying to keep all parties participating constructively in a process that some can feel is either excessively onerous in trying to appease the few or ultimately unfair in just reporting the majority view. Solutions proposed during interviews with members include:

- Alternatives to the binary definition of membership;
- Independent chairs to better ensure unbiased approaches;
- Secretariats trained in facilitation & conciliation to help groups work towards consensus;
- More active participation by COM in meetings to inform discussions; and
- Clear, agreed voting and drafting procedures for all AC groups at every level.

It is felt by some members that the 60/40 distinction perpetuates a 'them and us' culture that pervades meetings and procedures. Even though several ACs have been established for close to ten years, some still feel that there is a lack of trust and members too often just vote down 'party lines'. There is also concern within OIG members that the broad range of organisations means that consensus within the OIGs is less likely and some organisations could be considered to be closely aligned with catching sector interests.

Article 2 of 242/2015 defines 'Other interest groups' as 'representatives of groups affected by the Common Fisheries Policy other than sector organisations, in particular environmental organisations and consumer groups.' It was then further clarified in 1575/2017 that both [sector organisations and other interest groups] categories decide autonomously on their representation in the executive committee. And that decision should be based on objective criteria related to statutes, members and the nature of activities.

It can be difficult to adequately define certain groups as either sector or other, and to ensure the AC is consistent with Article 4 of 242/2015 which states: The general assembly and the executive committee shall ensure a balanced and wide representation of all stakeholders, with emphasis on small-scale fleets, where appropriate. The number of representatives of small-scale fleets should reflect the share of small scale fleets within the fishing sector of the Member States concerned. Many industry umbrella organisations will include small scale fishing interests within their membership, making it difficult to determine whether SSF are adequately represented and whether additional specific SSF representation is necessary.

Instead, a more extensive categorisation may reduce the consequence of this issue. Including representation from three or more groupings would remove the polarisation of viewpoints into 'industry' and 'others' and may better reflect the diversity in the commercial industry as well as within the OIGs. There may also be procedural methods such as 'Chatham House Rules' in reporting AC meetings and minutes to enable groups to engage more freely and constructively on issues based on the evidence rather than assuming how the representative's membership would want them to respond. This leads to two other procedural developments that could aid constructive dialogue and improve the efficacy of the AC's work and the resulting advice:

- Appointing independent chairs that can be reviewed and assessed to ensure that they are both effective chairs and unbiased in their approaches;
- Training secretariat staff in facilitation, mediation and conflict resolution.

These suggestions are not made in response to specific concerns raised about individual chairs or secretariats. Overall the chairs are reported to work well in ensuring all member voices are heard, but they are invariably industry representatives and independence would minimise the likelihood or perception of bias. It can be very difficult for ACs to appoint a new chair by consensus as required.

As evidenced by the efforts to ensure members could equitably respond to this consultation, the secretariats are sensitive to potential bias and apply a lot of resources to maintain dialogue within the AC membership. Their considerable efforts could be further aided with training in facilitation techniques. Addressing the membership categories and the procedures of the ACs could make the secretariats work a lot more straightforward.

2.10. WP 6: Market intelligence

2.10.1. Background

The EU market policy for fishery and aquaculture products is implemented through the Common Market Organisation Regulation³² which forms one of the pillars of the CFP. Compared to its predecessor, a major innovation of the CMO adopted in 2013 was to promote market transparency which can be defined as the availability of relevant market information to market participants. According to experience in agriculture, transparency increases the efficiency of the markets, reduces information asymmetries and supports evidence-based policy making. Accurate, relevant and timely data on the market situation help participants, reduce uncertainty and allow better adaptation of their production to market signals. To this end, the Commission implemented several market transparency tools for agriculture products and for energy prices³³.

Market transparency through the provision of market intelligence has been introduced under CMO regulation article 42. This article gave to the Commission the obligation to i) gather and disseminate economic knowledge and understand of the Union market for fisheries and aquaculture products along the supply chain, ii) provide practical support to producer organisations and inter-branch organisations to better coordinate information between operators and processors, iii) to regularly survey prices along the supply chain and conduct analysis on market trends and iv) conduct ad-hoc market studies and provide a methodology for price formation surveys. In order to implement these tasks, the CMO regulation invited the Commission to i) facilitate access to available data as relevant and ii) disseminate market information to the general public in an accessible and understandable manner. Member States were required to contribute to the achievement of the market intelligence objective.

EMFF article 90 provided for financial resources to support the development and dissemination of market intelligence by the Commission in accordance with CMO article 42 described above.

According to information available, amounts programmed over the 2014-2018 period under EMFF article 90 represented EUR 4.8 million per year on average. Amounts committed were close to EUR 4.2 million per year on average, i.e. 88% of programmed amounts. In 2014 and 2015, 100% of commitments have been paid, but only 53% in 2016.

Table 33: Summary of amounts programmed, committed and paid for measures falling under EMFF article 90 "Market Intelligence"

(EUR)	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
<i>Programmed</i>	4 944 000	4 944 966	4 827 880	4 667 880	4 815 000
<i>Committed</i>	4 047 880	4 047 880	4 565 030	4 162 880	
<i>Paid</i>	4 047 880	4 047 880	2 426 090		

Source: DG MARE, situation early 2018.

³² Regulation (EU) No 1379/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 December 2013 on the common organisation of the markets in fishery and aquaculture products, amending Council Regulations (EC) No 1184/2006 and (EC) No 1224/2009 and repealing Council Regulation (EC) No 104/2000. OJ L 354, 28.12.2013, p. 1-21

³³ See https://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/market-observatory_en for milk, meat, sugar and crops and <https://ec.europa.eu/energy/en/data-analysis/market-analysis> for gas and electricity

Key actions implemented

Almost 96% of EMFF Article 90 funding has been used to support the European Union Market Observatory for Fisheries and Aquaculture (EUMOFA) over the 2014-2017 period (EU commitment of \approx EUR 4.05 million per year). EUMOFA is fully implemented by a consortium of specialised companies under a service contract with DG MARE which oversees its development and production. The remaining 4% have been utilised to fund complementary actions in relation to Market organisation and supporting market intelligence including an information system on commercial designations of fisheries and aquaculture products and a study on consumption patterns in the Member States. Other studies are in the pipe-line.

EUMOFA started on a pilot scale in 2010 under the form of a preparatory action when it became apparent that market information on fisheries and aquaculture products was needed. It became fully operational in 2014 after adoption of the Common Market Organisation regulation and of the EMFF which provide for its legal bases.

The main visible result of EUMOFA is its website³⁴ in which the two main types of EUMOFA products are published and disseminated to the public: price information along the value chain from net to retail, and series of publications comprising monthly highlights, ad-hoc price transmission studies and annual reports on the EU market. In details, the EUMOFA regularly publishes information:

- The EU fish market: annual report that analyses the structure of the whole European fisheries and aquaculture industry. It replies to questions such as what is produced/exported/imported, when and where, what is consumed, by whom and what are the main trends.
- Monthly Highlights: reports published every month analysing the EU fish market at all supply chain stages, plus the deepening of a specific topic per month. It provides also an overview of the EU macroeconomic features, focusing on the main indicators (fuel price, exchange rates, inflation, unemployment).
- Case studies illustrating price structure along the supply chain for different products and different Member States.

The table below presents the number of publications produced by EUMOFA between 2014 and 2017.

Table 34: Number of EUMOFA publications by type issued between 2014 and 2017

Type of publication (language versions available)	Number of issues
Monthly highlights (FR / EN / ES)	6 issues in 2014 10 issues in 2015 12 issues in 2016 11 issues in 2017
EU fish market (FR / EN / ES / IT / DE)	2014, 2015, 2016 and 2017 issues
Price structure in the supply chain (FR / EN / ES + language of the concerned country)	Methodological guidelines 16 case studies on price transmission along the value chain

Source: EUMOFA website.

³⁴ <http://www.eumofa.eu/>

EUMOFA price database is updated with weekly prices obtained from certain Member States concerning first sales, wholesale, external trade and weekly/monthly data on consumption. Purchase prices of fisheries and aquaculture products by processing industries and ex-factory prices are generally not available due to their sensitive commercial nature. The lack of data on prices at processing stage is somewhat compensated for by the ad-hoc studies (16 so far plus methodological guidelines) published on EUMOFA website.

EUMOFA content is constantly evolving to increase its geographical coverage, to provide more information on a species basis and to include new types of products in its coverage, such as non-food uses (i.e. fish meal). The website is also constantly refined to improve its navigation.

In addition to its outputs disseminated to the general public, EUMOFA has a role in the policy-making process. According to discussions held with Commission's representatives, EUMOFA provides price information to different units of DG MARE to support decision-making. For example, EUMOFA price information is utilised for negotiations of Sustainable Fisheries Partnership Agreements (SFPAs) between the EU and third countries. EUMOFA has also been utilised in the preparation of the multi-annual plan for fish stocks in the Western Mediterranean.

The Commission deployed substantial efforts to raise awareness of the existence of EUMOFA. EUMOFA has been presented in a number of workshops / training sessions organised in the Member States. Third countries representatives have also been trained to EUMOFA utilisation. EUMOFA has also been advertised during the major European Seafood fair, including during the Brussels Seafood Fair which is according to specialists, the major event of this kind in Europe. An analysis of EUMOFA web site traffic between May 2016 and November 2017 revealed that EUMOFA website has been consulted by more than 21 000 unique users during 36 300 work sessions. EUMOFA website page viewed were almost equally split between price data and queries pages (46%) and publications pages (42%).

2.10.2. Data and information

Table 35: Key documents relevant to WP6

Document name	Author	Year	Purpose
Table detailing market intelligence EMFF support over 2014-2017 provided by DG MARE	European Commission	2018	Financial information
EUMOFA annual report 2016	EUMOFA	2017	Technical information
MARE analysis of EUMOFA website statistics	European Commission	2017	EUMOFA website traffic
Results of EUMOFA user surveys	European Commission	2017	Users perception
EUMOFA website	EUMOFA	2018	Technical information
Other Commission-led observatories (AGRI, Energy)	European Commission		Benchmarking

Table 36: Key interviews relevant to WP6

Name	Organisation / function	Main areas covered
Mirko Marcolin	MARE A4	EUMOFA activities
Christophe Vande Weyer	MARE A4	EUMOFA activities
Carola Gonzales-Kessler	MARE A4	EUMOFA activities
Dominique Aviat	EUMOFA contractor	Technical information
Christian Rambaud	MARE B3	Use of EUMOFA data
Questionnaire disseminated to all Market AC members	European and MS associations members having an interested in market organisation – only two responses received	Feedback on EUMOFA

2.10.3. Findings

EQ 6: To what extent has EUMOFA delivered on the Commission commitments on market intelligence as defined in article 42 of the CMO regulation (1379/2013)?

The answer to this evaluation question is presented in a tabular format below, where CMO article 42 commitments are compared with EUMOFA achievements to date.

CMO article 42 commitments	Status (as of early 2018)
Art.42.1 a) <i>gathering and disseminate economic knowledge and understanding of the Union market for fisheries and aquaculture products along the supply chain</i>	DELIVERED EUMOFA publications disseminate knowledge and understanding of the Union market through monthly highlights and the yearly publication on the EU market.
Art.42.1 b) <i>providing practical support to producer organisations and inter-branch organisations to better coordinate information between operators and processors</i>	PARTIALLY CONTRIBUTED Price information and market analysis published by EUMOFA can be considered as of interest to producer organisations (POs). EUMOFA is not the relevant information system to deliver targeted support to be provided to POs as per CMO article 42.1 b) as it is designed to address the needs of a wide range of stakeholders with a single tool.
Art.42.1 c) <i>regularly survey prices along the supply chain and conduct analysis on market trends</i>	DELIVERED EUMOFA database provide price information regularly updated. Analysis of market trends is provided in monthly highlights and yearly publication. EUMOFA cannot encompass all the supply chain due to the sensitive nature of information at processing stage. This is compensated for by regular publication of case studies on price transmission.
Art.42.1 d) <i>conducting ad-hoc market studies and provide a methodology for price formation surveys</i>	DELIVERED Ad-hoc market studies are published in Monthly Highlights series. A methodology for price formation surveys has been defined and published on EUMOFA website

<p>Art.42.2 a) <i>facilitate access to available data on fishery and aquaculture products collected pursuant to Union law</i></p>	<p>DELIVERED</p> <p>Through EUMOFA, the Commission could concentrate available data on fisheries and aquaculture and add value to the process through harmonisation and standardisation of information. Sensitive commercial information (prices at processing stage) is protected.</p>
<p>Art.42.2 b) <i>make market information, such as price surveys, market analyses and studies, available to all the stakeholders and to the general public in an accessible and understandable manner</i></p>	<p>DELIVERED</p> <p>All EUMOFA information is published on a dedicated website open to the general public. Accessibility is improved by publication of the database in all EU language and by translation of publications into several EU languages.</p>

As evidenced by the table, EUMOFA could deliver most of the commitments on market intelligence as defined in article 42 of the CMO regulation. No specific action has been implemented so far within EUMOFA to provide the practical support POs or inter-branch organisations as considered by CMO article 42.1 b), but EUMOFA was not the only relevant action in this respect.

DG MARE is fully aware of this and required EUMOFA to launch in 2018 a survey to better identify producers' organisations' needs with regards to information coordination and see to what extent EUMOFA can address them and how EUMOFA could be adapted to better meet these needs. EUMOFA is not the only action of DG MARE which contributes to achieving the objective of CMO article 42.1 b). Therefore, to complement the role of EUMOFA in this regards, among the actions considered, the Commission promoted the exchange of good practices for the preparation and implementation of the Production and Marketing Plans called for by CMO article 28 in collaboration with the MAC (Market Advisory Council). Relevant good practices have been identified by an evaluation of PMPs completed in 2016. In 2018, DG MARE will also carry-out a pilot project aiming at supporting the creation of transnational professional organisations (producer organisations, associations thereof and inter-branch organisations).

Recommendations

The Commission should develop initiatives to deliver on CMO article 42.1 b) commitment in relation to provision of practical support to producer organisations and inter-branch organisations, possibly aside of EUMOFA

The Commission should continue to provide equivalent financial support to EUMOFA to maintain and increase the quality and the flexibility of services for both stakeholders in the Members States and Union institutions in charge of policy-making.

2.11. WP 7: Technical assistance

The Technical assistance WP focused on assessing two elements:

- tasks implemented by FARNET vis-à-vis the needs of local communities, and
- FAME's contribution of FAME to a more efficient and effective implementation of the monitoring and evaluation system of the shared management of the EMFF

2.11.1. Background

FARNET, the European Network of Fisheries Areas

FARNET is the network connecting groups that are implementing Community-Led Local Development (CLLD) under the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund. It is the continuation of the EFF-supported initiative to facilitate links and share experiences between Fisheries Local Action Groups (FLAGs). FLAGs were established to deliver Axis 4 under EFF and have become the chosen delivery method for CLLD in most Member States.

The FARNET Support Unit (FARNET SU) was established by the Commission in 2009 to implement Axis 4 of the European Fisheries Fund (EFF). Whilst the contract for FARNET I expired in 2015, FARNET II was established in 2014 and started its operations in 2015. The FARNET SU consists of a core team featuring fifteen members, plus two thematic and eighteen geographic experts.

The activities carried out by the FARNET SU respond to the objectives laid down in Art. 92 EMFF, i.e. technically supporting CLLD and the stakeholders involved in its achievement, both on the ground and at the regional, national and transnational level. In this regard, the correct identification of stakeholders is crucial and cannot be limited to local communities and the FLAGs: stakeholders include Managing Authorities (MAs), national networks as well as the EU Commission (DG MARE).

The FARNET SU performs a set of ten core tasks - and related subtasks - as enshrined in its Annual Work Plan and ToR (both undisclosed). Such tasks include, but are not confined to:

- capacity building;
- dissemination of information;
- exchange of good practices;
- cooperation.

The SU tasks are designed to respond to the needs of the local community broadly construed, i.e. including FLAGs (328), MAs, national networks and other local stakeholders (approximately 30).

FARNET's activities are supported by a 1-year direct service contract, renewable 6 times. The first contract was concluded in 2015, and renewed 3 times to date (2016, 2017, 2018).

The **programmed budget** was € 0 in 2014; €2.100.000 in 2015; € 2.000.000 in 2016, 2017 and 2018.

FAME, Fisheries and Aquaculture Monitoring and Evaluation

The Commission has established in 2015 the FAME Support Unit (FAME SU) with two objectives:

- assist in monitoring and evaluating the implementation of the EMFF and provide the Commission with regular updates and analysis of the state of play of the implementation of the EMFF;
- building capacity across the MSs and in the Commission on evaluation and monitoring methodologies, indicators and good practices.

The FAME Support Unit brings together a network of experts with a wide range of professional experiences relevant to the M&E. It provides support at EU level and in the MSs through working papers, reports, stories presenting good projects, workshops, presentations, needs assessments, peer reviews and trainings. The FAME SU consists of a core team featuring six members, twelve thematic experts (covering topics like fisheries, aquaculture, CFP, processing, local development and evaluation), and geographic experts covering twenty-seven MSs.

FAME's activities are supported by a 1-year direct service contract, renewable 6 times. The first contract was concluded in 2015, renewed 3 times to date (2016, 2017, 2018). The contract includes the provision of support services to help the Commission undertake a set of tasks linked to the CMES and fulfil the obligations included in the ESI Funds Regulation.

The **programmed budget** was € 0 in 2014 and €1.000.000 for each following year (2015, 2016, 2017, 2018).

2.11.2. Data and Information

Key documents reviewed

Document title	Author	Main content
Ex-post evaluation of the European Fisheries Fund (2007-2013)- Final Report	DG MARE	Content of actions and measures per spending category financed by the EFF.
Study on the implementation of Axis 4 of the European Fisheries Fund - MARE/2011/01	Cappemini Consulting, Wageningenur, Ramboll	Analysis of the implementation of CLLD-related actions and measures under the EFF
Annex 1 to the Commission Implementing Decision concerning the adoption of the work programme for 2014 [2015/2016/2017/2018] in the framework of the EMFF for the use of the operational technical assistance, serving as financing decision	European Commission	Financing decision concerning TA actions under the EMFF, including operations by FARNET and FAME.
Regulation (EU) No 508/2014 on the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF Regulation)	European Parliament/ Council of the EU	Union financial measures for the implementation of: (a) the CFP; (b) relevant measures relating to the Law of the Sea; (c) the sustainable development of fisheries and aquaculture areas and inland fishing; and (d) the IMP.

Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013 laying down common provisions on the ERDF, the ESF, the Cohesion Fund, the EAFRD and the EMFF and laying down general provisions on the ERDF, the ESF, the Cohesion Fund, the EAFRD and the EMFF	European Parliament/ Council of the EU	Common rules applicable to the ERDF, the ESF, the Cohesion Fund, the EAFRD and the EMFF, which operate under a common framework (the 'ESI Funds'). Provisions necessary to ensure the effectiveness of the ESI Funds and their coordination with one another and with other Union instruments.
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EFF ex-post evaluation

The review of the EFF ex-post evaluation focused on the spending categories relating to (1) community development under Axis 4 EFF, and (2) technical assistance.

Community development covered the only measure under Axis 4, i.e. sustainable development of fisheries areas. This measure was intended to contribute to the following outcomes: (a) sustainable development and improved quality of life in areas with activities in the fisheries sector; (b) protection and enhancement of the environment and natural resources where related to the fisheries sector; and (c) enhanced equality between men and women in the development of fisheries sector and of fisheries areas.

The measure accounted for 11% of total EFF commitments with EUR 441 million committed as of May 2015. The main MS involved were PL (43% of the total spending category), then RO and ES (9%), GR (6%), EE and DK (4% each). The measure, which was a transposition to fisheries areas of the Leader programme under the EU Rural Development policy, was new under the EFF. The implementation mainly occurred during the second half of the programme (92% of commitments occurred after 2010) due to delays in the selection of the FLAGs and the validation of the strategies in the beginning of the programming period.

In some areas, the newly created FLAGs could benefit from the experience of local actors with similar community-led development, in particular with the Leader programme, sometimes relying on a shared board, but in other cases there was also a necessary learning time to build capacity. FARNET was considered to have been a useful in tool in that regard.

In total, about 11,500 operations were implemented by May 2015, for an estimated number of about 28,000 beneficiaries, including NGOs and associations, researchers, local authorities, SMEs (mainly under 10 FTEs), development agencies, POs and others.

The most tangible results at the moment of the evaluation was the number of jobs created or maintained, respectively estimated by FARNET at 6,776 jobs and 9,240 jobs. Furthermore, FARNET estimated that 2,000 new businesses had been created thanks to Axis 4 support.

The evaluation concluded that projects implemented under Axis 4 were coherent with the objectives of the measure to improve quality of life in fisheries areas and the achievements in terms of jobs maintained and created are positive. Other achievements in terms of the quality of life in coastal areas, such as quality of jobs, strengthening of local identities, enhancement of the natural and living environment, cultural endowments, etc. could not be assessed at the time of the evaluation.

The evaluation recommended that future Community Led Local Development support would strengthen the involvement of local communities, in particular fishermen communities, share experiences and where possible capacity with Leader Local Action Groups, strengthen networking and experience sharing among FLAGs. It was suggested that a review of main achievements by FLAG, for example in the form of a simple (mandatory) questionnaire, be implemented on an annual basis without increasing the

administrative burden in order to improve visibility (and therefore legitimacy) of FLAGs actions.

Technical assistance provided the support necessary to facilitate the implementation of the operational programme and to promote innovative approaches and practices for simple and transparent implementation. EFF support to technical assistance represented on average 3% of the total support (EUR 125 million). Four types of action were funded: management and implementation of programmes, studies (excluding evaluations), publicity and information, and other technical assistance measures. The bulk of technical assistance went to programme management and implementation (85% on average). Over the considered financing period (2007-2013), three MS were together granted more than half of the EFF total support for technical assistance: PL (25%), ES (16%) and IT (13%). The share of other individual MS in the total EFF support for technical assistance did exceed 5%.

On average, technical assistance represented 3% of EFF support to MS. This rate remained below the 5% funding cap, but it concealed differences between MS. Almost all MS focused on Management and implementation (85% of spend on TA overall); only LT spent less than 50% of its technical assistance budget for this action. 5 MS used less than 70% with three using other technical assistance measures, such as improving the administrative capacity (e.g. payment system in HR) and the IT system (SE) and two MS commissioned a number of studies.

Some MS with a relatively small OP found the level of technical assistance to be low. The evaluation suggested this could indicate that a critical budget exists for technical assistance to have results.

Technical assistance met MS' needs, especially in a context where the technical expertise is not available and/or budgetary discipline constrains capacity building.

Although the EFF 5% funding cap for TA seemed to be appropriate, it was recommended: (a) to put a transparent mechanism in place to allow MS to go beyond this capping in duly justified circumstances, and (b) to introduce a minimum budgetary amount to allow MS with a small allocation to address adequately monitoring, reporting and evaluation requirements.

Study on the implementation of Axis 4

The study provided input to the European Commission in the preparation of the 2014-2020 programming period in the area of community-led local development (CLLD) for fisheries and aquaculture areas in the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund, the successor of Axis 4.

The study delivered an early set of quantitative results on the implementation of the Sustainable Development of Fisheries Areas (Axis 4) in the European Fisheries Fund (2007-2013). It showed that more than half of the financed projects focused on adding-value and promoting innovation, well-being and cultural heritage and diversification. The other half of the projects supported the diversification of activities in fisheries areas, aimed at enhancing the environment or at strengthening the role of fisheries communities in local development. Moreover, considerable employment effects had been observed: over 8.000 jobs would have been created and nearly 12.500 maintained, whilst Axis 4 would also have contributed to the creation of 220 businesses.

The study also provided insights into the factors and difficulties that have been met in implementing Axis 4 and that determined the general success or failure of different FLAGs, including: involvement of the (fisheries) community; previous local development experience; capacity of the FLAG staff; and effective and legitimized FLAG operations.

EMFF annual work programmes for the use of the operational technical assistance (2014 to 2018)

TA annual work programmes are organised around (1) a description of the objectives of individual TA measures, and (2) related contractual and financial information

The service contract for FARNET I (MARE/2008/09) having expired on 19.05.2015, a new Support Unit for the European Fisheries Areas Network (FARNET II) has been set up in 2014 and started its operations in 2015. FARNET II is in charge of supporting the implementation of community-led local development in fisheries areas. Its tasks are to provide capacity building to FLAGs and managing authorities, to disseminate information, exchange experience and good practice and to support cooperation between the local partnerships. The network cooperates with the networking and technical support bodies for local development set up by the ERDF, the ESF and the EAFRD as regards their local development activities and transnational co-operation.

In the context of the EMFF, the result-orientation underpinning the ESI funds has been fostered by the establishment of a new Common Monitoring and Evaluation System. The establishment of the CMES required new evaluation functions and tasks to be undertaken by the Commission and the Member States. This has required a long-term effort to progressively build the appropriate evaluation capacity to support this new approach, both in the MS and in the Commission. This effort has been undertaken collectively with the MS in order to foster a reinforced evaluation culture in both DG MARE and the MS. A network of evaluators has been created to effectively reach that objective, supported by the FAME Help Desk (or Support Unit).

EMFF and ESI Funds Regulations

The technical assistance (TA) intervention category under the direct management component of the EMFF regulation is intended to facilitate the implementation of operational programmes drawn up by the MSs and in turn implementing measures under shared management. This is done, inter alia, by promoting innovative approaches and practices that are capable of simple and transparent implementation.

First, TA under the EMFF supports MS in implementing the CLLD approach as enshrined in Chapter III of Title V of the Regulation (artt 58-64 EMFF). In this context, FLAGs (Fishery Local Action Groups; art. 61 EMFF) are the chosen tool to implement CLLD at local level through the proposition and implementation of CLLD strategies (art. 60 EMFF).

EMFF TA specifically aims at setting-up a European network of FLAGs aimed at capacity building, disseminating information, exchanging experience and supporting cooperation between local partnerships (EMFF Preamble, pnt. 85). FARNET, the European Network of Fisheries Areas, supports FLAGs in implementing CLLD under the EMFF and connects not only FLAGs but also other stakeholders - such as MAs, citizens and experts from across the EU - to work on the sustainable development of fisheries and coastal areas. FARNET represents Part 1 of the evaluation under WP 7.

Second, TA under the EMFF supports the MA of the MS in complying with the monitoring and evaluation requirements in relations to measures under shared management (art 97.1(a) EMFF). FAME, Fisheries and Aquaculture Monitoring and Evaluation, aims at fostering the development of the Common Monitoring and Evaluation System (CMES) established by Article 107 of the EMFF Regulation and at supporting the MAs in relation to art. 97 reporting. FAME represents Part 2 of the evaluation under WP7.

With regards to tools, the EMFF provides for technical assistance actions at the initiative of the Commission. They are as set up in the Commission annual working plan for EMFF measures financed under direct management.

Art. 92 EMFF provides for technical assistance at the initiative of the Commission. Subject to a ceiling of 1,1% of the Fund, the Commission may initiate technical assistance, inter alia, for:

- the measures of technical assistance specified in art. 58 of the ESI Funds Regulation³⁵;
- the setting-up of a European network of FLAGS aimed at capacity building, disseminating information, exchanging experiences and best practices and supporting cooperation between the FLAGS. That network shall cooperate with the networking and technical support bodies for local development set up by the ERDF, the ESF and the EAFRD as regards their local development activities and transnational cooperation.

In order to implement measures of technical assistance, the Commission adopts implementing acts laying down annual work programmes in accordance with the objectives set out for the TA intervention category of the EMFF direct management component (art. 23 EMFF).

The annual work programmes include a description of the activities to be financed and the objectives to be pursued for each activity. It shall also contain an indication of the type of contract and indicative budget programmed to each activity of operational technical assistance at the initiative of the Commission, an indicative implementation timetable, as well as information on the entity responsible implementation.

Key websites accessed

Web-resources dedicated to FARNET and FAME present the activities and output of the respective Support Units. Whilst FARNET web-presence is supported by a fully-fledged and autonomous website – albeit linked to the Europa general website –, FAME's visibility on the web is lessened by the fact that the SU can only operate on a webpage of Europa.eu.

Resources available on FARNET website include – but are not limited to - reports of Transnational Seminars and MA Meetings; FARNET Magazine issues, Guides and Technical Reports; Tools for FLAGS and MAs. A narrative is therein used that conveys a positive message and positive stories about CLLD in the fisheries and aquaculture sector.

Resources available on FAME website are in turn limited to Working Papers on M&E methodology.

³⁵ Regulation (EU) no 1303/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 December 2013, laying down common provisions on the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund, the Cohesion Fund, the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development and the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund and laying down general provisions on the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund, the Cohesion Fund and the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund and repealing Council Regulation (EC) No 1083/2006. Art. 58 on Technical assistance at the initiative of the Commission provides that the ESI Funds, including the EMFF specifies that TA may include, inter alia, support for institutional strengthening and administrative capacity-building for the effective management of the ESI Funds; measures related to the analysis, management, monitoring, information exchange and implementation of the ESI Funds, as well as measures relating to the implementation of control systems and technical and administrative assistance; actions to disseminate information, support networking, carry out communication activities, raise awareness and promote cooperation and exchange of experience, including with third countries; actions to improve evaluation methods and the exchange of information on evaluation practices; the strengthening of national and regional capacity regarding investment planning, needs assessment, preparation, design and implementation of financial instruments, joint action plans and major projects; the dissemination of good practices in order to assist Member States to strengthen the capacity of the relevant partners referred to in Article 5 and their umbrella organisations.

Table 37: Key websites relevant to WP7

Website name	Owner	Main content	URL
FARNET website	FARNET/ EU Commission	FARNET activities (including Transnational Seminars and MAs Meetings), guides, technical reports and tools for FLAGs/MAs	https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/fpfis/cms/farnet2/
FAME webpage	EU Commission	FAME activities and Working Papers	https://ec.europa.eu/fisheries/cfp/emff/fame_en

In-depth Interviews undertaken

Members of both FARNET and FAME Support Units provided detailed answers to the list of questions contained in the WP7 in-depth interview guide annexed to the evaluation inception report. No specific narrative was detected across interviews conducted with members of the FARNET and FAME Support Units.

Table 38: Key interviews relevant to WP7

Interviewee	Function / organisation	Status
Gilles VAN DE WALLE	FARNET Team Leader	Completed
Monica VERONESI BURCH	FARNET Deputy Team Leader	Completed
Urszula BUDZICH TABOR	FARNET Thematic & Territorial Coordinator	Completed
Yves CHAMPENTIER	FARNET CLLD Thematic Expert	Completed
Angelos SANOPOULOS	FAME Team Leader	Completed
Christine HAMZA	FAME M&E Coordinator/CLLD Expert	Completed
Szilvia MIHALFFY	FAME EMFF Expert	Completed

2.11.3. Findings

EQ 7.1: Are the tasks that FARNET implements meeting a need of the local community (a)? If so what structures are in place to hand over these tasks after 14 years of implementation (b)?

The documental evidences analyzed and the in-depth interviews carried out with members of the SU show that FARNET meets the needs of the local community and these needs still need to be met.

Such needs are identified in various ways, including:

- individual CLLD strategies as drafted by FLAGs and analyzing the territory, identifying the actors, setting priorities and actions needed;
- a need assessment analysis carried out by the SU in 2015 through stakeholders' interviews;
- daily contacts with FLAGs, MAs and other local stakeholder, as well as visits on the ground. Contacts are kept and visits are paid by both the permanent members of the SU and by the geographic and thematic experts;

- expression of interest from MAs and FLAGS for tailor-made capacity building activities to address specific needs (see Reports and Quarterly Reports).

The needs of the local community thus identified and that the SU operations are intended to meet include:

- support for the set-up of national fisheries areas networks;
- support for MAs, including at the bilateral level, in relation to rules and procedures for the launching of CLLD;
- facilitating transnational cooperation;
- supporting the enhancement of communication and coordination within the vertical chain linking the FLAGS to the national level;
- at FLAGS level, technical support for showing results.

Moreover, with the agreement of DG MARE, the SU prioritizes needs and each year identifies five priority countries (and related crucial issues to be addressed) for which the SU direct support can make the difference.

Occasionally, the SU identifies needs but cannot act upon them, as it does not receive a request for support from either the relevant MA or FLAG. In this regard, the visibility of FARNET through social media, the website and field activities does not always guarantee awareness, especially on the ground, of the SU support operations. This is especially critical given that the autonomous identification of needs by the SU cannot automatically trigger the latter's action.

FARNET operations designed to meet identified needs include:

- twice per year methodology and thematic Transnational Seminars with FLAGS;
- twice per year MAs Meetings, including the Commission DG MARE;
- exchanges of good practices, including at the level of national networks;
- publications, such as FARNET Technical Reports and FARNET Guides;
- capacity-building trainings;
- constant bilateral on-demand support to MAs and FLAGS.

Whereas FLAGS and MAs work on several themes at the same time, the choice of the specific themes to be addressed during bi-annual Transnational Seminars and MAs Meetings is based on a dual criteria of urgency and commonality of demand across several MSs.

Conversely, FARNET addresses the needs of individual FLAGS or MAs via capacity building activities, which amount to approximately ten per year.

Moreover, amongst the fourteen FARNET Guides already published or forthcoming, the Guide #11: "Results-oriented CLLD in fisheries areas" and the Guide "Evaluating CLLD. Handbook for LAGs and FLAGS" (forthcoming, May 2018) respond to the FLAGS' need for support in showing results in relation to the achieved degree of CLLD.

The level of satisfaction – or lack thereof - of the local community and the FLAGS in particular, and the degree to which the SU is capable of meeting the local needs are the object of a self-assessment process at the SU level, which was ongoing at the time of drafting of the present report.

Based on the analysis of available documental evidence (FARNET website), as well as on the in-depth interviews carried out with the members of the SU, the level of satisfaction of FLAGs (and other stakeholders) with FARNET support is high.

The SU is perceived by FLAGs as both a reference and a source of technical support for implementing their respective CLLD strategies. MAs on the other hand, turn to the SU to seek expert advice on how to nurture local development of fishery and coastal communities and on how to foster cooperation at the regional and national level. In general, the SU and *a fortiori* the network as such are looked at as the animators of the CLLD discourse at the EU level.

The **relevance** of FARNET rests on several additional elements, including:

- the lack of equally specialized technical bodies dealing with CLLD at the EU level,
- the transnational nature of its operations,
- the absence of solid national networks,
- the SU engagement with other non-CLLD focused technical bodies,
- the SU efficiency and effectiveness,
- the coherence of FARNET and of the SU operations with other EU policies.

A strong case in favor of the relevance of FARNET is represented by the fact that the local needs are unlikely to be addressed by means other than FARNET. No structures are currently in place that could perform the same tasks whilst at the same time guaranteeing the same outcomes. Also, no structures are in place to hand over FARNET's tasks after 14 years of implementation.

This finding emerges clearly when considering the SU's technical output, whose very high degree of specialization is unlikely to be met at the EU, national, regional or local level. This remains true notwithstanding the increasing level of competence of stakeholders on the ground, which is in fact one of the positive externalities of FARNET's operations. It is also unlikely that the SU tasks will be proficiently performed under other EU funds, if this implies discontinuing FARNET's operations and reassigning its tasks to a different body.

When referring to the network as such, the SU has encouraged the setting-up of national networks aimed at supporting FLAGs. Such networks already exist in most but not all MSs. However, their overall performance is limited compared to FARNET's. Three reasons explain the difficulties encountered by national networks. First, national budgetary concerns cause some MSs to be altogether unable to invest in their establishment. Moreover, those MSs who are prepared to invest cannot deploy financial resources that are comparable to those supporting FARNET operations. Second, national networks are not as highly specialized as FARNET. Finally, they cannot capitalize on the learning potential that a transnational network such as FARNET possesses. In fact, handing over FARNET's tasks to more narrow levels of intervention entails a high risk of localization.

Other elements of FARNET/SU's **EU added value** which confirm that similar results could not be achieved without it and/or at national/regional level include:

- a privileged position from which the SU observes and "animates" CLLD across the EU. The knowledge of what goes on the ground allows the SU to detect problems, identify solutions and encourage stakeholders;
- a neutral non-political stance, allowing the SU to use the authority that comes with its affiliation to DG MARE without being perceived as authoritative by often conservative and inward-looking fishery and coastal local communities;
- a widely recognized and recognizable brand that has gained positive feedback from the stakeholders.

Moreover, the SU engages with other technical support bodies, including the ENRD, ERDF, ESF, EAFRD and FAME, even though none of those supports on a comparable network. Exchanges with the ENDR in particular happen on a consistent basis, and capitalize on the following elements:

- shared staff and external experts;
- mutual involvement in working groups and other meetings;
- logistical proximity

In turn, engagement with other technical support bodies is less consistent. The SU and FAME have nonetheless worked together, for example, on the **forthcoming publication of the FARNET Guide** "Evaluating CLLD. Handbook for LAGs and FLAGS" (May 2018).

In terms of **efficiency**, the budget programmed to FARNET seem sufficient in relations to the assigned tasks. In particular, a more efficient system of resource management is now in place, which deploys financial resources on the basis of the tasks to be performed (lump sums) rather than on the basis of the time spent to complete the tasks (daily fees).

However, certain elements of the resource management are still susceptible of improvement:

- the SU's ability to cope with urgencies is hampered by a currently less than adequate number of full-time staff;
- FARNET website being currently linked to Europa.eu and managed by DIGIT makes web-management less efficient compared to what could be achieved by outsourcing it;
- the issuing frequency of the FARNET Magazine – currently once per year – is inadequate considering the role that this publication plays in fostering the image of the network vis-à-vis the FLAGS. Account being taken of possible budgetary constraints, increasing the number of publications to two or three per year would help nurturing the image of an EU that is closer to the local communities;
- increasing the multilingualism of FARNET output production would facilitate FLAGS' access to the various thematic and methodology tools.

The proved effectiveness of the SU rests on a number of **strengths**, however **weaknesses** affecting SU's operations have also been identified. These are all presented in the table below.

Table 39: Identified strengths and weaknesses of FARNET SU

Identified strengths	Identified weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • strong technical support team that is able to capitalize on its expertise in order to engage with traditionally conservative and inward looking local fisheries and coastal communities; • a high degree of continuity based on a virtual lack of turnout in the composition of the team; • a strong methodology and procedural approach build over several years of activity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FLAGS cooperation across borders appears difficult to manage for the SU and does not seem to take off; • delays have been registered in the implementation of CLLD at local level. Caused by the complexities of the national administrative machineries, such delays seem to be anyway less conspicuous than in the context of EFF Axis 4 interventions and have been managed by the SU and FLAGS at the best of their respective capacities;

- | | |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• flexibility and availability to the stakeholders;• enjoyment of the trust relation with the client, i.e. DG MARE | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• a greater degree of autonomy in the implementation of CLLD should be afforded to the MAs, whilst at the same time keeping in place mechanisms for experience sharing at the EU level |
|---|---|

Finally, although it is doubtful whether contributing to the CFP falls within the mandates of CLLD-oriented FARNET and relating Support Unit, a high degree of coherence has been identified between the CFP and the local community objectives. More specifically, the latter do overlap to the extent that both CFP and CLLD seeks to promote sustainable fishery and aquaculture, sustainable Blue Economy and sustainable international governance of maritime resources.

On the other hand, no duplication between FARNET operations and activities carried out in the framework of other policies has been detected. The reason for this is to be found in the highly technical and specialized nature of the tasks performed – and of the output produced – by the SU.

EQ 7.2: What has FAME's contribution been to a more efficient and effective implementation of the monitoring and evaluation system of the shared management of the EMFF both at MS and EU level?

The Commission has established in 2015 the FAME Support Unit (FAME SU) with two objectives: first, assist in monitoring and evaluating the implementation of the EMFF and provide the Commission with regular updates and analysis of the state of play of the implementation of the EMFF; second, building capacity across the MSs and in the Commission on evaluation and monitoring methodologies, indicators and good practices.

The FAME Support Unit brings together a network of experts with a wide range of professional experiences relevant to the M&E. It provides support at EU level and in the MSs through working papers, reports, stories presenting good projects, workshops, presentations, needs assessments, peer reviews and trainings. The FAME SU consists of a core team featuring six members, twelve thematic experts (covering topics like fisheries, aquaculture, CFP, processing, local development and evaluation), and geographic experts covering twenty-seven MSs.

The FAME SU has contributed to a more efficient and effective implementation of the monitoring and evaluation system of the shared management of the EMFF through the publication of several working papers available to the public on the FAME webpage. These working papers cover the following fisheries and aquaculture-specific M&E methodology themes:

- definition of common indicators (October 2016);
- EMFF operation timeline (June 2017);
- EMFF evaluations and related toolbox (October 2017);
- EMFF Art. 97(1)(a) reporting data requirements (February 2018).

Through the working paper on definitions of common indicators, for instance, the FAME SU aimed at operationalizing concepts necessary to M&E activities at both the EU and MS level. The CMES for the EMFF comprises context, result and output indicators as well as a reinforced intervention logic, milestones and target values. Three types of common indicators address different levels of objectives and serve different purposes: (a) context indicators – generally included in the Data Collection Framework (DCF) – are linked to the wider objectives of the EMFF and reflect the situation at the beginning of the programming period; (b) output indicators are the direct products of activities implemented under

Operational Programmes (OPs) intended to contribute to results. In most cases they are expressed as number of operations co-financed by the EMFF OP; (c) result indicators are variables that measure the gross effects of the EMFF interventions on specific dimensions targeted by a policy action. The effect to be measured and the target refer to the OP intervention only. They are based on information from beneficiaries and/or MAs and report on changes in absolute or relative terms.

The intervention of the FAME SU resulted in the publication in October 2016 of the working paper "Definition of Common Indicators". The document was developed in cooperation with DG MARE and in consultation with the MS. It provides a set of operational definitions for all common indicators, as well as a basis for the monitoring and evaluation obligations as part of the implementation of OPs.

The use of definitions provided in the document is strongly recommended for the sake of consistency and comparability across MS. Each indicator is in fact defined through - inter alia - the indication of sub-indicators, a definition, the indication of the measurement unit and data source to be used by the M&E authorities. Indicators therein operationalized include, for example, "changes in unwanted catches". Prior to FAME intervention, 90% of stakeholders (i.e. MAs) were unable to operationalize the concept and therefore could not deliver this indicator.

Other significant examples of specific FAME SU's contributions to more effective and efficient M&E under EMFF include the creation of a validation tool for the standard Art. 97(1) database, also known as Infosys. Under the latter provision, the EMFF Regulation requires MS to report fisheries and aquaculture data through individual national databases, which are then used by the Commission for M&E purposes. In the past, such reporting activity was subject to a great deal of inherent errors. The FAME SU developed a tool under Microsoft Office that is able to: (a) perform ex-ante plausibility checks of the input, (b) produce an error report, and thus (c) reduce the margin of error of the standard Infosys by an 80% rate.

On a more social level, the SU has managed to create and "animate" a European community around the theme of fisheries and aquaculture M&E, which gathers for need assessments and peer-review workshops. The latter are two-day events organized every other year (so far one workshop took place, in 2016, and the second one was planned for 2018).

The future needs identified in 2017 include evaluation capacity building, methodological support for the evaluation of the EMFF in the period 2014-2020, the planning of the post-2020 CMES, the identification of good EMFF projects, the facilitation of high quality reporting in relation to the Annual Implementation Reports and the Infosys database, and the presentation of EMFF achievements to the wider public on the Open Data Platform.

The Annual Work Plan 2018 is broken down into four clusters, each one entailing two to three Core Tasks (CTs), for a total of ten CTs. If the need arise, further topics can be addressed, these are called Ancillary Tasks to be activated as needed.

Table 40: Clusters of FAME 2018 AWP

	Cluster	Core Tasks ()
#1	Management	CT01: Management and coordination of FAME CT02: Preparation and finalization of the Annual Work Plan CT09: Collaborative platform
#2	Methodology and Evaluation Capacity	CT03: Methodological development for the implementation of the Common Monitoring and Evaluation System (CMES) CT06: Frequently asked questions□
#3	Data, Analysis and Reporting	CT04: EMFF progress CT05: Art 97.1 Database CT08: Stories
#4	Review and Quality Assurance	CT07: Annual stakeholder meeting CT10: Needs assessment/Peer review

For 2018 the following priorities per cluster have been set:

- 1) **Management:** enhancement of the communication between DG MARE, Member States and FAME SU experts; and increased presence and awareness of FAME SU work and achievements at events and meetings related to the ESI Funds, fisheries/aquaculture/maritime issues and evaluation.
- 2) **Methodology and evaluation capacity:** development of a working paper on Community-led Local Development evaluation (together with FARNET); support of DG MARE and the Member States with answers to their methodological questions; and provision of inputs to the discussion on the CMES post 2020 and the new regulations impact assessment.
- 3) **Data, analysis and reporting:** development of working papers on the Annual Implementation Reports 2017 and the operation of the Infosys database; provision of up-to-date reports on EMFF implementation; and identification of further good practices from completed and ongoing projects, covering the entire EMFF thematic spectrum and all the MSs.
- 4) **Review and quality assurance:** organization of the annual stakeholder meeting in September 2018 focusing presumably on the CMES post 2020; and organization of the FAME peer review focusing on the monitoring and evaluation performance of the MSs and their experiences with recently conducted EMFF evaluations.

Against this background, the FAME SU specific contribution to M&E implementation as exemplified above testifies a crucial input to the development of the EMFF CMES. To the extent that it has been instrumental in closing the gap between the stakeholders' methodology capacities and the M&E requirements under the EMFF, FAME has enabled a more efficient and effective M&E under EMFF and has contributed to greater consistency and completeness of EMFF reporting by the MS.

Several appear to be the drivers of FAME successful contribution to the development of the EMFF M&E. Those include: a permanent structure, whose expertise is complemented by the inputs by thematic and geographical experts; the continuity of the FAME SU operations; the focus on the harmonization of twenty-seven potentially divergent M&E systems in the form of a single CMES; and cross-fertilization between MAs thanks to the transnational

nature of FAME. These elements account for the EU added value of FAME and support the formulation of a judgment whereby, first, not the same level of development of M&E under the EMFF could have been achieved without FAME and the FAME SU; and second, no comparable results could have been achieved at the national or regional level.

In relation to FAME transnational nature and to the resulting cross-fertilization between MAs, the 2016 peer-review workshop proved to be very useful. It put the various MAs in a position to appreciate and acknowledge their own strengths and weaknesses through a deep understanding of how M&E is performed across Europe. For example, a fruitful comparison emerged between the MA-oriented database and the beneficiaries/users-oriented one operated respectively in Spain and in the UK.

The evidence gathered concerning the M&E system evolution in MS and the level of completeness of EMFF reporting by MSs is in turn limited and not sufficient to formulate a definitive judgment on the impact that FAME contribution has had on the M&E specific activities at both the EU and MS level. Further data on the matter will presumably be available in the course of 2018 and, more specifically, after the peer review exercise will have taken place.

Finally, concerning the efficiency of the FAME SU, exchanges with its management by means of in-depth interviews revealed that the latter's operations enjoy sufficient resources in the light of the limited number of stakeholders with whom the SU interact. In fact, it is believed that SU's interventions being currently based on a standardized approach allows for the achievement of economies of scale in the management of available resources.

Still, other management elements have hampered the efficiency of the FAME SU to an undefined degree. First, the lack of a visual identity comparable to the one supporting FARNET's operations: the lack of a dedicated website in particular does not allow for an efficient dissemination of best practices. Second, the timeline for the setting-up of the FAME SU caused operations (and related output production) to be considerably delayed. This is proved by the fact that, despite having been established in 2015, the first methodology tools were only published one year later, in 2016

3. CASE STUDIES

Five case studies were originally suggested in the proposal for this evaluation. Based on a number of discussions with DG MARE and DG ENV, three of the proposed case studies have been amended.

The case studies carried out as a part of this evaluation, and their relevance to the Work Packages are presented in the table below. The short summaries of each case study are presented subsequently and the detailed case study reports are included in the ensuing sections.

Table 41: Case studies carried out

Case study theme	Case study	WP relevance
IMP: Marine Spatial Planning	SIMCelt	WP 1B
IMP: Sea basin initiatives	BalticBOOST	WP 1D
Scientific advice	STECF	WP 2
Advisory Councils	NWWAC	WP 5
Market intelligence	EUMOFA	WP 6

The structure of the case study outputs was common across all five case study areas. It combined both the mandatory evaluation criteria, as well as the evaluation questions specific to the given Work Package theme / themes being covered by the case study. This ensured that all relevant information was captured and presented in a way which allowed for consistent and robust analysis of the findings.

Case Study 1: Supporting Implementation of Maritime Spatial Planning in the Celtic Seas (SIMCelt)

SIMCelt is a cross-border project involving partners from the UK, Ireland and France and aims to support cooperation on the implementation of the Maritime Spatial Planning (MSP) Directive in the Celtic Seas. The project has various outputs, including case studies (e.g. on cross-border marine and coastal planning), a data portal³⁶ (showing physical features, human uses and management areas – is also integrated with EMODnet) and various events to promote MSP in the Celtic sea area.

Key contacted stakeholders included (i) SIMCelt project partners, (ii) geographic stakeholders (e.g. national and area specific groupings (Clyde Marine Planning Partnership (CMPP), Solway Firth Partnership) and thematic stakeholders (e.g. aquaculture and renewable energy strategic planners) from around the sea basin.

Case study 2: BalticBOOST

The *Baltic Sea project to boost regional coherence of marine strategies through improved data flow, assessments, and knowledge base for development of measures (2015-2016)* (“BalticBOOST”) aimed to develop assessment tools and set up data arrangements to support indicator-based assessments of the state of and pressures on the Baltic Sea. A

³⁶ See <http://data.simcelt.eu/>

broader knowledge base was intended to allow the project to propose principles for joint environmental targets for pressures affecting seabed habitats. The project also aimed to support the development of a joint report that documents regional coordination of actions agreed in HELCOM and MSFD Programmes of Measures for those Contracting Parties to HELCOM that are EU Member States.

The BalticBOOST case study complemented WP 1D (Sea basin initiatives). It involved desk research reviewing the project documentation structured around the project themes. In each theme these involve extensive background documentation and outcome documents from thematic workshops. The desk review was accompanied by series in-depth interviews with the project secretariat and the lead partners for each BalticBOOST work packages.

Case Study 3: Scientific, Technical and Economic Committee for Fisheries (STECF)

This case study contributed to WP 2, scientific advice. Using the common case study reporting format developed at the inception stage of the evaluation, the evaluators generated a detailed questionnaire incorporating the EQM questions specific to MSP (WP 2) to evaluate the success of the STECF in contributing to scientific knowledge.

Key stakeholders contacted as part of this case study included the JRC as STECF Secretariat; contacts within the Commission DG MARE liaising with STECF and using their outputs; a sample of the 30 listed STECF members (including plenary & expert group members); Industry and other potential users of STECF outputs.

Case Study 4: North Western Waters Advisory Council (NWWAC)

NWWAC is one of 11 Advisory Councils currently established as required by the CFP regulation to support a more regionalised approach to CFP implementation. It is one of seven related to specific sea basins. It was one of the first to be established, originally as a Regional Advisory Council 2005. The principal aim of the NWWAC is to bring together stakeholders from across Europe, to advise the Commission on matters of fisheries management in respect of the North Western Waters - ICES areas V (EC waters), VI, VII.

This case study contributed to WP 5 related to Advisory Councils. The first stage of conducting the case study was a review of background material, most being available on the AC website. This included all recommendations made by the AC to the Commission. We then used the finalised detailed interview structure to consult with the secretariat, chair and a sample of the 70+ members (target 8) in a proportionate 60/40 split of industry/other stakeholders. This allowed us to explore all evaluation areas and the specific EQs relating to WP5, including the contribution of EMFF direct management component to the NWWAC and its objectives.

Case study 5: The European Union Observatory for Fisheries and Aquaculture products (EUMOFA)

EUMOFA officially started in 2014 after adoption of EMFF but pilot phases of the project have been started as early as 2009 to satisfy an EP request on improved transparency under the form of a Preparatory Action. These pilot phases have been useful to validate the principles and functions of the observatory, to establish all data sources that EUMOFA would centralise and harmonise before dissemination, and to assess the level of financial resources that would be necessary to run it. This explains why EUMOFA could satisfy most of the requirements of art. 42 of the CMO (market intelligence) as soon as 2014.

The most visible part of EUMOFA is the publicly accessible website which provides information of fish prices along the value chain (from the net to the plate), monthly reports including analysis and the yearly report on the EU fish market. However, EUMOFA has also a role in providing information to other Commission units to inform policy making with recent examples of information transmitted to inform Mediterranean management plans and SFPAs monitoring and negotiations. In addition, EUMOFA provides specific assistance and training to stakeholders in the Member States. The case took due consideration of these “invisible” actions for the broader public which are fully part of the observatory mechanisms.

The key consulted stakeholders included private sector concerned by fish commercialisation and processing, the Market Advisory Council, public administrations involved in fish market development (ex. BIM in Ireland or OFIMER in France) and other DG MARE units.

3.1. Case Study 1: SIMCelt

3.1.1. Introduction

Purpose and scope

SIMCelt is a cross-border project involving partners from the UK, Ireland and France and aims to support cooperation on the implementation of the Maritime Spatial Planning (MSP) Directive in the Celtic Seas. MSP is not new in the Celtic Seas. Previous initiatives such as the Transboundary Planning in the European Atlantic (TPEA, a DG Mare project that was completed on May 2014³⁷) and the LIFE+ Celtic Seas Partnership have all progressed MSP in this sea area. However, SIMCelt is the first MSP project under direct EMFF funding to have been fully completed and was directly related to assisting Member States progress towards the 2021 MSP Directive deadline. The project has various outputs, including case studies (e.g. on cross-border marine and coastal planning), reports on various aspects of the MPS process including cooperation and evaluation, a data portal (showing physical features, human uses and management areas – is also integrated with EMODnet) and various events to promote MSP in the Celtic sea area.

This case study will contribute mainly to WP 1B, but will also have lessons for the other three WP areas of the first Work Package (e.g. WP 1A, 1C & 1D) given its sea basin nature (1A), its importance to planning sustainable Blue Growth (1C) and its role in compiling marine data and contributing to marine environmental protection (1D).

Policy context

The MSP Directive (Directive 2014/89/EU) recognises the role of MSP in meeting the Europe 2020 Strategy of for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth through identifying the utilisation of maritime space for different sea uses as well as to manage spatial uses and conflicts in marine areas. It requires Member States to design and implement MSPs by 31 March 2021 and provides key scoping and developmental requirements. The EMFF Regulation (508/2014) specifically identifies (i) the need for aquaculture development to comply with MSP requirements and (ii) the need to coordinate activities and cooperation between Member States or regions.

This case study will assess the contribution of EMFF funding to Member State maritime spatial planning in the Celtic Seas, ahead of the March 2021 deadline for the preparation of such plans. As hinted above, the case study covers other elements of IMP implementation, such as supporting sea basin level cooperation amongst member states, promoting sustainable and 'joined up' multi-sector Blue Growth and ensuring the good environmental status of EU seas and oceans through the Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD) and Water Framework Directive (WFD). It also has relevance to sector-specific policies and strategies, such as the Common Fisheries Policy (CFP) and offshore renewable energy development.

3.1.2. Case study methodology

This case study has been conducted through a mixture of a review of the main study outputs and interviews (guided by semi-structured questionnaires). The interviews were with a mixture of participants, ranging from the main client (EASME and DG Mare), the project coordinator and most importantly, the project beneficiaries, including from the Member State Competent Authorities responsible for MSP. For a list of interviewees, see the table overleaf.

³⁷ See <http://www.tpeamaritime.eu/wp/>

Table 42: Interviews carried out in support of the case study

Interviewee	Function / organisation	Status
Dr. Anne Marie O'Hagan	SIMCelt Coordinator & Senior Research Fellow, MaREI Centre, University College Cork, Cork IE	Completed
David Sanmiguel-Esteban Greta Borg	EASME Project Adviser (Maritime Policy) EASME (MSP Specialist)	Completed
Philip Nugent	Marine Spatial Planning Unit, Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government (IE)	Completed
Clair McFarlan	Partnership Manager, Solway Firth Partnership (SFP)	Completed

Table 43: Document sources

Document name	Status
Summary Information on Marine Aspects of the Celtic Seas	Completed
Analysis of Data Needs and Existing Gaps – Specifically Relating to Transboundary Working	Completed
Case Study #1: Understanding Specific Cross-Border Issues and Opportunities	Completed
Case Study #2: Assessment of Cumulative Impacts	Completed
Case Study #3: Planning Across Borders	Completed
Case Study #4: Understanding and Applying Ecosystem Services to MSP	Completed
Newsletter 3 (July 2017)	Completed
Minutes of the Project Closing Event (November 2017)	Completed

3.1.3. Overview of the EMFF funded direct interventions

Purpose

The General Objectives of SIMCelt were to **support implementation of the MSP Directive by Member States (MS) within the Celtic Seas** (OSPAR Region III) (Key Objective 1), and to **contribute to supporting cross-border cooperation between MS in relation to implementation of the MSP Directive** (Key Objective 2). Use of any output/outcomes of the project will be decided by individual Member States (MS) as determination of any approach to maritime spatial planning lies with MS for their respective marine areas.

SIMCelt proposed to achieve this by focusing on a number of activities that reflected and responded to perceived needs as set out in the call for proposals, and also identified by the current priorities of the MSP authorities whose remit impacts on the Celtic Seas, including national and devolved administrations, which were directly involved as participants in the action. These originally proposed activities are summarised under the following objectives and indicators:

Table 44: SIMCelt Specific Objectives and Indicators

SIMCelt Specific Objectives	Indicators
1. To inform awareness and understanding of the range of factors potentially impacting on the marine area within the Celtic Seas, their potential cumulative impacts and projected future trends.	Description of existing conditions and activities, trends and impacts.
2. Building on existing mechanisms, to identify opportunity and best practice for data sharing and joint use of data; within the specific context of transboundary areas and issues within the Celtic Seas.	Improved exchange of data and enhanced interoperability of marine spatial data mechanisms. Documentation summarising examples of good practice in relation to specific aspects of MSP implementation relevant to transboundary areas and issues.
3. To identify and address important data gaps and support the coherence of data analysis across marine area boundaries.	Integration of new data sources to existing data systems.
4. To examine the potential impact and interaction of maritime sectoral activities, specifically where they span marine area borders.	Collation of sectoral information relating to future trends and priorities.
5. To explore the potential spatial requirements for marine conservation; specifically, the challenges around transboundary working.	Description of current and potential marine protected areas.
6. To examine the challenges to, and opportunities for, transboundary cooperation on MSP and possible approaches to addressing these.	In specific localities, scope the challenges and opportunities for transboundary cooperation and test innovative ways of working.

Source: Anne Marie O'Hagan, pers. comm., 13 March 2018

Implementation History

SIMCelt was a EUR 1,811,520 project responding to an EASME call for proposals for MSP projects in the Northern European Atlantic³⁸. Starting in January 2016 it was originally scheduled for two years but was granted a three month 'no-cost' extension and the project was formally wrapped up at the end of March 2018. The extension was mainly due to a delay in activities from elections in the UK as well as technical complications over delivering the MSP Challenge Game (Anne Marie O'Hagan, pers. comm., 14 March 2018).

The SIMCelt partners across the three Member States included the following presented overleaf.

³⁸ Action on Maritime Spatial Planning in the Northern European Atlantic (MARE/2014/46)

Table 45: Project Partners

France	Ireland	United Kingdom
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agence Française pour la Biodiversité • National Hydrographic Service SHOM 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MaREI Centre, University College Cork (UCC) [coordinator] • Marine Institute 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department of Agriculture, Environment & Rural Affairs (DAERA, Northern Ireland) • Marine Scotland • University of Liverpool (England)

The project had three main components as follows:

C1: Supporting Implementation of MSP	The main technical component including: C1.1 Initial Assessment – Developing an Overview C1.2 Support for Member States Implementation of MSP (including spatial demands and scenarios for maritime sectors and marine conservation, data and information requirements, stakeholder engagement and case studies on approaches to MSP implementation). C1.3 Development of Cooperation on MSP C1.4 Evaluation on MSP Process
C2: Management and Coordination	Operational components supporting the project in reaching its objectives effectively and efficiently.
C3: Communication and Dissemination	

The main beneficiaries of the project are seen to be the Competent Authorities mandated at Member State level to be responsible for delivering national maritime spatial planning, together with the subsidiary agencies working at developed geographical and sectoral levels. In the case of SIMCelt, this included:

- 1) **Ireland:** Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government (DHPLG) with technical and scientific support from the Marine Institute, a partner in SIMCelt.
- 2) **UK:** Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra), the Scottish Government and the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) in Northern Ireland.
- 3) **France:** The National Hydrographic Service (SHOM) and the Agence Française pour la Biodiversité (AFB). In France, the Regional Prefectures in charge of the coordination of Maritime Facades are the authorities with major MSP planning remits.

In addition, there were a large number of stakeholders involved, especially with the case studies, including the Solway Firth Partnership (on the England / Scotland border) who represent a wide array of geographic and sectoral interests on this large trans-boundary estuary, as well as in the Irish Sea and Northern Brittany regions.

The main outputs of SIMCelt were either technical reports from Component 1 or progress reporting and project dissemination outputs from Components 2 and 3. These are listed overleaf.

Technical Outputs

Component	Deliverable Name
C1.1.	D1 - Summary Information on Marine Aspects of Celtic Seas
C1.2.1	D2 - Series of Maritime Sectoral Briefing Notes (5)
C1.2.1	D3 - Overview Report on the Current State and Potential Future Spatial Requirements of Key Maritime Activities
C1.2.1	D3B Part 1 – Marine Protected Areas in the Celtic Seas - Analysis of National Frameworks and Part 2 - Marine Protected Areas in the Celtic Sea -North-East Atlantic Database completion and analysis
C1.2.2	D4 - Analysis of Data Needs and Existing Data Gaps - Specifically Relating to Transboundary Working
C1.2.2	D5 - Agreed Action Plan to Address Data Needs and Improve Data Exchange
C1.2.2	D6 - Initial Activity to Address Data Needs
C1.2.2	D7 - Data Management Guidance Document
C1.2.2	D8 - Thematic Digital Atlas Charts Relevant to MSP in Celtic Seas (Portal)
C1.2.3	D9 - Report on Potential Approaches for Stakeholder Engagement on MSP - Pilot Testing at Local Transboundary Scale
C1.2.4	D10 - Issue Specific Analysis (ORE and Shipping & Navigation) - Practice Focused and Policy Relevant (CS#1)
C1.2.4	D11 - Cumulative Effects Assessment Methodology (CS#2) (Story Map)
C1.2.4	D12 - Case Study Report on Approaches to Cross-Border Cooperation including Stakeholder Engagement Mechanisms (CS#3) (5 reports)
C1.2.4	D13 - Case Study on Understanding and Applying Ecosystem Services to MSP (CS#4) (Story Map)
C1.3	D14 - Transboundary Cooperation Between MSs for MSP
C1.4	D15 - Report on Analysis of Approaches to Evaluate MSP in Celtic Seas and Conclusions
C1.2.4	D16 - Overview Report on all SIMCelt case studies

Reporting Outputs

Component	Output
C1.2.2	O1 - Task Group on Data Established
C1.2.2	O2 - Translation of Portal into English
C1.2.2	O3 - Decision Support Tool
C1.2.2	O4 - Training Workshop (on data aspects)
C1.2.2	Oa - Additional data workshop
C2.1	O5 - Steering Committee
C2.2	O6 - Project Group
C2.3	O7 - Project Management Schedule
C2.4	O8 - Project Management SharePoint
C2.3	O9 - Periodic Report #1
C2.3	O10 - Periodic Report #2
C2.3	O11 - Periodic Report #3 / Interim Report #1
C2.3	O12 - Periodic Report #4
C2.3	O13 - Periodic Report #5
C2.3	O14 - Periodic Report #6 / Interim Report #2
C2.3	O15 - Periodic Report #7
C2.3	O16 - Periodic Report #8
C2.3	O17 - Periodic Report #9 / Interim Report #3
C2.3	O18 - Periodic Report #10
C2.3	O19 - Periodic Report #11
C2.3	O20 - Periodic Report #12 / Final Report
C3.2	O21 - Project Website
C3.3	O22 - Newsletter #1
C3.3	O23 - Information Leaflet
C3.3	O24 - Newsletter #2
C3.3	O25 - Newsletter #3
C3.3	O26 - Newsletter #4
C3.4	O27 - Outreach Record
C3.5	O28 - Peer Review Article
C2.3	O29 - Periodic Report #13
C2.3	O30 - Periodic Report #14 / Final Report

Outcomes

SIMCelt has produced around 16 technical reports, developed an online data portal and marine protected area (MPA) database and produced 'Maritime Spatial Planning Challenge' table top and digital games for the Scottish marine region, which have the potential to be used in other marine regions. In addition, it has participated in over 28 MSP and other related events in various EU locations, providing an exhibition stand, workshops and presentations to a wide audience in maritime affairs. When looked at in terms of SIMCelt's own objectives the outcomes are as follows:

- 1) **To inform awareness and understanding of the range of factors potentially impacting on the marine area within the Celtic Seas, their potential cumulative impact and projected future trends.** SIMCelt produced a series of reports on maritime economic activities (MEAs) operating in the Celtic Seas, their sectoral components and the potential future spatial requirements of key MEAs. They also produced two case studies supporting the development of a methodology for cumulative effects assessment in the MSP process.
- 2) **Building on existing mechanisms, to identify opportunity and best practice for data sharing and joint use of data; within the specific context of transboundary areas and issues within the Celtic Seas.** SIMCelt produced a number of reports, including (i) an Analysis of Data Needs and Existing Data Gaps - Specifically Relating to Transboundary Working (D4), (ii) an Agreed Action Plan to Address Data Needs and Improve Data Exchange (D5), (iii) Initial Activity to Address Data Needs (D6) and (iv) Data Management Guidance Document (D7). These documents both define the data gaps, identify data harmonisation issues and then try to address these via both guidance, the development of thematic digital charts and a data portal (see next).
- 3) **To identify and address important data gaps and support the coherence of data analysis across marine area boundaries.** The SIMCelt Data Portal Demonstrator³⁹ is a tool with a primary objective to support the analysis of data needs and existing gaps. It explores MSP data relevant to the Celtic Seas, compares available information across MS boundaries, helps identify transboundary issues and highlights barriers to accessing meaningful information.
- 4) **To examine the potential impact and interaction of maritime sectoral activities, specifically where they span marine area borders.** SIMCelt produced five maritime sectoral briefing notes (on aquaculture, cables and pipelines, offshore wind energy, ports and shipping, and wave and tidal energy) and reported on the current state and potential future spatial requirements of key MEAs in the Celtic Sea. As mentioned above, this included development of a methodology for cumulative impacts of multi-sectoral development in the maritime space.
- 5) **To explore the potential spatial requirements for marine conservation; specifically, the challenges around transboundary working.** One case study was dedicated to developing an understanding and then applying ecosystem services to MSP, using the Irish Sea as an example⁴⁰. The output, in the form of a story map, uses ICES, OSPAR and EMODNET seabed habitat mapping data to demonstrate how spatial data sets on sectoral activities (e.g. fishing) and transboundary ecosystems can be used to help marine planners incorporate

³⁹ See <http://data.simcelt.eu/>

⁴⁰ See <http://daera-ni.maps.arcgis.com/apps/MapJournal/index.html?appid=a8ae0dbccc7a4844af90dc7ca418804b>

ecosystem services to make informed and balanced decisions when delineating spatial zones.

- 6) **To examine the challenges to, and opportunities for, transboundary cooperation on MSP and possible approaches to addressing these.** Again, SIMCelt produced a number of reports including (i) potential approaches to stakeholder engagement on MSP - pilot testing at local transboundary scale (D9), (ii) a case study on approaches to cross-border cooperation including stakeholder engagement mechanisms (CS#3), (iii) transboundary cooperation between MSs for MSP (D14) and (iv) an analysis of approaches to evaluate MSP in Celtic Seas (D15). In addition, it developed a 'Maritime Spatial Planning Challenge' table top game and a digital version of this, for the Scottish marine region, an approach that could be replicated in other maritime planning areas.

3.1.4. Thematic findings

There are two evaluation questions relevant to MSP in Work Package 1B (Integrated Maritime Policy - Development of cross-sectorial initiatives):

- 1) Have the marine spatial planning activities helped Member States (MS) set up spatial plans?
- 2) Are the marine knowledge activities contributing to reducing costs of offshore or coastal activities, promoting innovation and reducing uncertainty in knowledge of the sea?

1. Have the marine spatial planning activities helped Member States (MS) set up spatial plans?

In the case of SIMCelt we are specifically considering Ireland, France and two devolved administrations of the UK. It should be remembered that this project focused on the Celtic Seas, so only represented a part of the French and UK maritime space, although does represent an important transboundary area, both at national and sub-national (e.g. for the UK devolved administrations and French prefectures) levels.

Each MS has until March 2021 to complete their Maritime Spatial Plans. As such it is premature to judge whether SIMCelt has helped achieve this, but the evidence suggests that *it has been an important engagement tool* in this process. In the case of the UK, the project has proved a useful information source for MSP. For example, the Solway Firth case study worked closely with Marine Scotland and also with the Marine Management Organisation on their North-West Plan for England, which is still in progress and expected to be adopted by 2020 (Clair McFarlan, SFP, pers. comm., 11 April 2018). In Ireland, where MSP preparation only got underway in Q3 of 2017 by which time SIMCelt was well advanced, the outputs from SIMCelt and the expertise of the personnel involved provided important lessons for MSP development and provided the Irish Competent Authority with a lot of practical information to guide stakeholder engagement in particular (Philip Nugent, DHPLG, pers. comm., 11 April 2018).

SIMCelt – as with other transboundary MSP initiatives, has also encouraged contact, information exchange and data harmonisation with neighbouring Member States. This has been important, as the MSP Directive requires national MSPs, albeit with transboundary cooperation between MSs. It has allowed the development of bi- and multi-lateral relationships with the Competent Authorities in neighbouring states, as well as with MSP practitioners. This is an important foundation for solving transboundary planning issues and agreeing their subsequent implementation pathways. It has also provided a much-needed confidence in the MSP planning process, especially for Ireland who are relatively late starters in the process. This will be continued, as the SIMCelt Project Coordinator, Dr

Anne Marie O'Hagan, will sit on the Irish National MSP Advisory Group. The impact in France is less easy to describe, especially given the strong roles of Prefectures in MSP planning at local levels, and the fact that SIMCelt events and deliverables were predominantly in English, which is likely to have proven a barrier to some.

2. Are the marine knowledge activities contributing to reducing costs of offshore or coastal activities, promoting innovation and reducing uncertainty in knowledge of the sea?

As mentioned above, SIMCelt produced five maritime sectoral briefing notes (on aquaculture, cables and pipelines, offshore wind energy, ports and shipping, and wave and tidal energy). Again, it would be premature to judge whether the project's activities have reduced the cost of offshore or coastal activities, but it is evident that MSP has the potential to encourage innovation and lessen risks to sustainable development through better planning information and reduce potential for sectoral or trans-boundary conflicts. For instance, marine aquaculture is very important in the Celtic Seas (the majority of EU salmon is grown in this sea body) and MSP should facilitate fish farming to expand further out to sea without conflicting with other sectors (e.g. offshore energy or short-sea shipping) and grow in harmony with the expanding marine conservation zone network. Stakeholder engagement through SIMCelt has already assisted in developing the necessary cross-sectoral understanding to enable this process. Similarly, the two briefs on offshore wind and wave & tidal energy recognise the importance of planning both generation sites and as importantly, their interconnectors in harmony with other sea space users, and the role that MSP can proactively identify local, national and transboundary issues at an early stage, thus potentially avoiding financially and environmentally costly development mistakes. The SIMCelt data portal and associated thematic atlases also provide a useful source of information on sectoral activities in the Celtic Sea and how they overlap, a useful information source for coastal planners and private sector developers alike.

3.1.5. Mandatory evaluation criteria

Relevance

Maritime Spatial Planning remains a high priority for all three Member States as they strive towards fulfilling the 2021 MSP Directive objectives and deadline. As the basic concept of MSP is now clear, with many preliminary harmonisation issues resolved, there is now the need to fully align MSP across national and sub-national boundaries, suggesting that this transboundary focused direct EMFF assistance is as relevant as ever. This is also evidenced by the number of sea basin plans for sustainable Blue Growth (e.g. the Atlantic Action Plan), sectoral planning at EU and national level (e.g. meeting renewable energy targets such as those set by the 2009 EU Renewable Energy Directive (2009/28/EC) and expanding marine conservation under Natura 2000, OSPAR and national initiatives such as the UK's Marine Conservation Zones (allowed for under the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009).

One potential game changer is the UK's decision to leave the EU in 2019. 'Brexit' is unlikely to change the course of MSP in the UK (but this depends on the final agreement), but it has slowed down UK implementation rates as the agencies wrestle with other problems. It directly impacted SIMCelt implementation and was partially responsible for necessitating a three month extension. According to Philip Nugent of Ireland's MSP Implementation Unit, "At EU level, the UK decision to leave the EU has transformed and will continue to radically transform the operational and policy context in which marine planning administrations in Ireland, the UK and other MS that share sea space with the UK operate" (Philip Nugent, DHPLG, pers. comm., 11 April 2018). Brexit also has implications for the UK's participation in international conventions and for transboundary MSP in the Celtic Seas once the UK is no longer part of the EU. This said, ecosystem-based management is a recognised principle

of international law and whilst the UK is leaving the EU, there will still be a requirement to work with other countries on many aspects of environmental management, including the spatial aspects covered by the need for MSP.

Finally, it should be mentioned that budgetary provisions, and the continued scrutiny on public finances at both national and local levels all have implications for the resources and capacity allocated to MSP. In the UK this means that the rare limitations on what can be achieved in terms of collaboration and the sharing of resources (Clair McFarlan, SFP, pers. comm., 11 April 2018).

Effectiveness

SIMCelt had two main objectives, (i) to support implementation of the MSP Directive by Member States within the Celtic Seas and (ii) to contribute to supporting cross-border cooperation between MS in relation to implementation of the MSP Directive.

Support implementation of the MSP Directive by Member States within the Celtic Seas: this has been largely addressed in responding to the first evaluation question in the thematic section above. In Ireland, SIMCelt has definitely catalysed MSP development. SIMCelt partner, the Marine Institute, has a key role as technical and scientific adviser to the IE Competent Authority and the project has been an important part of this, including in preparing for a recently published MSP Road Map⁴¹. MSP in the UK is more regional, with the UK's Marine Management Organisation (MMO) developing 11 regional spatial plans. For various reasons, only Scotland and Northern Ireland were directly involved in SIMCelt (Defra pulled out just before its start and Wales is restricting its MSP activities to inshore waters, and thus not involved in transboundary issues), and this could limited the effectiveness of the project in progressing MSP in the UK as a whole. In this process, Northern Ireland will have benefited considerably, as they will have learned much from the Scots who are well advanced in MSP, even at EU level. As mentioned above, the impact in France is less easy to describe, especially given the strong roles of Prefectures in MSP planning at local levels, and the fact that SIMCelt events and deliverables were predominantly in English is likely to have proven a barrier.

Supporting cross-border cooperation between Member States in relation to implementation of the MSP Directive. This was the main strength of SIMCelt. Although it took some time to identify and then develop working relationships with counterpart staff in neighbouring countries, these have been cemented over the project and will provide an important foundation for detailed MSP planning and its subsequent implementation. It is important to understand that these transboundary issues don't just apply to Member State borders, but also to the developed administrations in the UK and the prefectures in France. Once these relationships were established, then the project enabled the exchange and pooling of information, both in formal terms (e.g. via the data portal) or informally through meetings and other project-mediated events. The project was structured so that the key barriers to transboundary MSP identified in the original call for proposals was individually addressed in different case studies across the Celtic Seas. For instance, developing methodologies for cumulative assessment was a bi-lateral initiative between Ireland and France, planning MSP across borders was between Scotland and England in the Solway and understanding and applying ecosystem services in transboundary MSP was led by Northern Ireland for the whole Irish Sea.

⁴¹ DHPLG (2017). Towards a Marine Spatial Plan for Ireland. Downloaded from http://www.housing.gov.ie/sites/default/files/publications/files/towards_a_marine_spatial_plan_for_ireland.pdf on 24 April 2018

Efficiency

SIMCelt was a mixture of fact-finding, gaps analysis, methodology development and practitioner / stakeholder consultation and capacity-building. This reflects guidelines in the original call for proposals as well as the needs on the ground in late 2015. Discussions with both the SIMCelt project coordinator and a number of MSP practitioners from Ireland and Scotland confirm that this approach suited the early phase of MSP development at that time, albeit with Scotland being considerably more advanced in the subject than France and Ireland. The reports were well targeted, involved considerable stakeholder participation in their preparation, and are practical documents that responded to the needs of the time. Some of these reports and case studies are pre-emptive in nature, focusing on the emerging needs for cumulative assessment and ensuring the ecosystem approach to spatial planning. Other products for the project – such as the sectoral briefing notes, the MSP Challenge game all encourage external engagement of the project with practitioners and sectoral stakeholders. The project's use of SharePoint, together with a comprehensive and useful website⁴², has encouraged dissemination of project outputs. If there is any criticism, the workshops tended to be rather introvert, and could have benefited from wider participation (Anne Marie O'Hagan, pers. comm., 14 March 2018).

For various reasons SIMCelt did not include all the national level authorities in MSP development in the Celtic Seas. The main reason is the highly devolved nature of maritime governance in the UK and France. In the UK, neither the MMO nor Defra (MMO was a Steering Group member) were involved as project partners, and in France the direct beneficiaries were thematic bodies (e.g. hydrography and biodiversity conservation). This inevitably blunted the project's impact, certainly in England. Like most other projects under direct EMFF funding, this was a two-year initiative. Given the multitude of governance and sectoral stakeholders involved, it took a considerable amount of time just to identify and establish working relationships, a process somewhat complicated by language issues in France. However, as discussed earlier, these are valuable and long-term bonds. Furthermore, as with many government bodies, the Competent Authorities (CAs) were not fully familiar with dynamic, research-based projects and lacked the capacity to grow with the project, an issue complicated by elections in the UK. Again, whilst a challenge, the results indicate that SIMCelt has been a valuable mechanism for building CA knowledge and capacity, and also encouraged a multilateral flow of information exchange, especially from Marine Scotland who are experienced in MSP development.

The project was administered from University College Cork (UCC) in Ireland. Whilst we were unable to obtain detailed budget figures, UCC received around 10% of the total budget for administration, with the remaining 90% devoted to research and other project activities by UCC and its partners. Given the focus of the project on catalytic, rather than implementation activities, it is not possible to conduct a meaningful cost-benefit analysis, but the number and quality of deliverables suggests a high degree of overall efficiency.

Coherence

MSP development is by nature a multi-sectoral approach, with considerable potential – and need – for coherence with other EU and MS policies and development objectives. One key area is *marine conservation*, where Natura 2000 (inc. the Habitats and Birds Directives), the OSPAR MPA network commitments and national approaches such as the UK's Marine Conservation Zones all need to be recognised in maritime spatial planning. SIMCelt focused

⁴² See <http://www.simcelt.eu/>

considerable energy on this issue, including producing (i) a comparative analysis of national strategies for marine conservation in the Celtic Sea Region with an associated database and (ii) a case study on understanding and applying ecosystem services to MSP. In addition, the Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD) Directive (2008) aims to achieve Good Environmental Status (GES) of the EU's marine waters by 2020 and to protect the resource base upon which marine-related economic and social activities depend. SIMCelt has contributed in both identifying MEAs that need to be included in MSP in the Celtic Sea, assessing their current and future spatial requirements, and providing both data and methodologies to delineate environmental impacts of sectoral activities.

Fisheries and aquaculture management are also subject to EU and national guidance. Fisheries falls under the CFP, where special considerations include spatial management areas, gear zoning and avoiding conflicts with other sea users, as well as the environmental considerations discussed above. Aquaculture, whose management competency lies with the national administrations, is considered a key MEA in regard to the EU Blue Growth strategy, and thus needs to be developed in synergy with other MEAs to maximise cross-sectoral leverage. These have been dealt with by SIMCelt through a series of maritime sector briefing notes (with one specifically on aquaculture), development of scenarios and also in the case studies (the CS on understanding and applying ecosystem services to MSP focuses particularly on capture fisheries). Other sectoral interests such as offshore energy (e.g. wind, wave and tidal) are also covered by SIMCelt briefing notes and should help progressing towards the Renewable Energy Directive (2009). Other SIMCelt outputs will also support meeting objectives under the Infrastructure for Spatial Information in the European Community (INSPIRE) Directive (2007). In addition, the outputs also potentially support a number of the investment priorities of European Territorial Cooperation (ETC, or better known as Interreg V), including research & innovation, environment and reduce efficiency and combatting climate change.

EU Added Value

There has been considerable added value from this project, largely due to its forward-looking design. Until the advent of SIMCelt, most MSP activities had been focusing on the internal waters of the three MSs involved, and SIMCelt has added the essential transboundary aspect to these efforts, in line with the requirements of the MSP Directive and other EU legislation. Whilst directly addressing the transboundary issues of methodological harmonisation, common data use and agreeing spatial planning requirements in cross-border areas, it has had the additional benefit of developing working relationships between practitioners in the Celtic Seas, spreading and exchanging best practices, and providing confidence in the relatively new art of MSP. This has been particularly important for Ireland where MSP is in its infancy, and this cross-fertilisation of ideas and methodologies has benefited national MSP activities and the recent publication of their MSP roadmap. In Scotland, where MSP is more established, it has opened channels of communication around the Celtic Sea which will be invaluable when the plans are prepared, and the challenge of their implementation is started. Essentially SIMCelt has engendered a partnership approach that is both long-standing and was largely absent before.

3.1.6. Key findings

Lessons learnt

- The project was delivered on budget. Some of the deliverables were delayed due to national elections in the UK and time overruns on the IT development of the MSP Challenge game.
- The project led to greater engagement between the MSP Competent Authorities (CAs) in France, Ireland and the UK, resulting in both experience / best practice exchange, as well as on-going contacts for trans-boundary discussions. It would have been useful to have included all the MSP practitioners in the devolved administrations in the project in order to ensure complementarity between national and sub-national MSP efforts.
- MSP is still highly relevant – there is the deadline of 31 March 2021 for MSPs, and there is increasing competition for sea space in parts of the Celtic Seas, thus necessitating maritime spatial planning. Brexit may be a complication (it is consuming CA time in the UK), but the need for MSP is still evident, even if the UK is outside the EU. It is evident though that the type of support is evolving as MSs build the foundations for MSP and start moving towards detailed plans and implementation processes. This suggests that future EMFF interventions recognise the progression in their design.
- The project has catalysed engagement in MSP, esp. in Ireland who have just produced a Road Map for MSP development and implementation, a process facilitated by SIMCelt. In Scotland it has been less transformative but has still assisted practitioners identify and engage with other interested parties across sectors and jurisdictional boundaries.
- The project has helped address several barriers e.g. ensuring a cumulative impact assessment, adopting an ecosystem approach and addressing transboundary issues.
- As the project has been mainly in English-speaking countries, there is an acknowledged need for increased financial resources for translation where necessary, both for meetings and deliverables.
- There is still a need to develop post-SIMCelt fora and funding. The Irish Sea Maritime Forum is very UK centric and lacks funding to take on this role but there is widespread recognition that something of this type is necessary.

Identification of influencing factors

The short project duration (originally 24 months, extended to 27 months) and outcome-based funding structure provided an incentive for rapid and efficient project implementation. In the event, the time period was too short, leading to many of the technical activities being concentrated in the final half of the project timetable, but the project achieved its objectives by project closure in March 2018. This said, it is recognised that further support is needed to ensure transboundary working relationships are maintained and maximised, and that new challenges in MSP design - and in a few years implementation – are identified and addressed by new initiatives.

As mentioned above, SIMCelt was targeted at the needs of the time (e.g. as identified over 2015, following the 2014 MSP Directive). These needs are evolving, as MSP preparation moves from awareness-building to planning, harmonisation, GIS development, plan finalisation and (post-2021 at the latest), MSP implementation. This suggests that future initiatives must recognise this progression and target the prevailing needs as required.

The EASME call for proposals, whilst providing a strong objective-led framework, was not overly prescriptive. MSP needs to operate in different ways in each Member State, depending upon the particular environmental, cultural, economic and environmental conditions that prevail. This non-prescriptive nature allowed three quite different nations, in quite different stages in MSP development, to work together and help ensure that national Maritime Spatial Plans work coherently at sea basin level.

3.2. Case study 2: BalticBOOST

3.2.1. Introduction

The Baltic Sea project to boost regional coherence of marine strategies through improved data flow, assessments, and knowledge base for development of measures (2015-2016) (“BalticBOOST”) aimed to develop assessment tools and set up data arrangements to support indicator-based assessments of the state of and pressures on the Baltic Sea. A broader knowledge base was intended to allow the project to propose principles for joint environmental targets for pressures affecting seabed habitats. The project also aimed to support the development of a joint report that documents regional coordination of actions agreed in HELCOM and MSFD (Marine Strategy Framework Directive) Programmes of Measures for those Contracting Parties to HELCOM that are EU Member States.

BalticBOOST was coordinated by HELCOM and had 10 partners from the HELCOM EU Member States and one international organisation (ICES). The project implementation was guided by HELCOM groups as well as HELCOM workshops carried out as part of the project.

Table 46: Name of partners in BalticBOOST project and abbreviations used

Abbreviation	Name
SYKE	Finnish Environment Institute
ICES	International Council for the Exploration of the Sea
TI	Johann Heinrich von Thünen-Institute, Federal Research Institute of Rural Areas, Forestry and Fisheries
LFN	Latvian Fund for Nature
IOW	Leibniz Institute for Baltic Sea Research
NIVA Denmark	NIVA Denmark Water Research
EMI	University of Tartu
SLU Aqua	Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences, Department of Aquatic Resources, Institute of Marine Research
SMNH	Swedish Museum of Natural History
FOI	Totalförsvarets forskningsinstitut, Sweden
DTU Aqua	Technical University of Denmark, National Institute of Aquatic Resources
AAU	Aarhus University, Denmark (subcontractor)

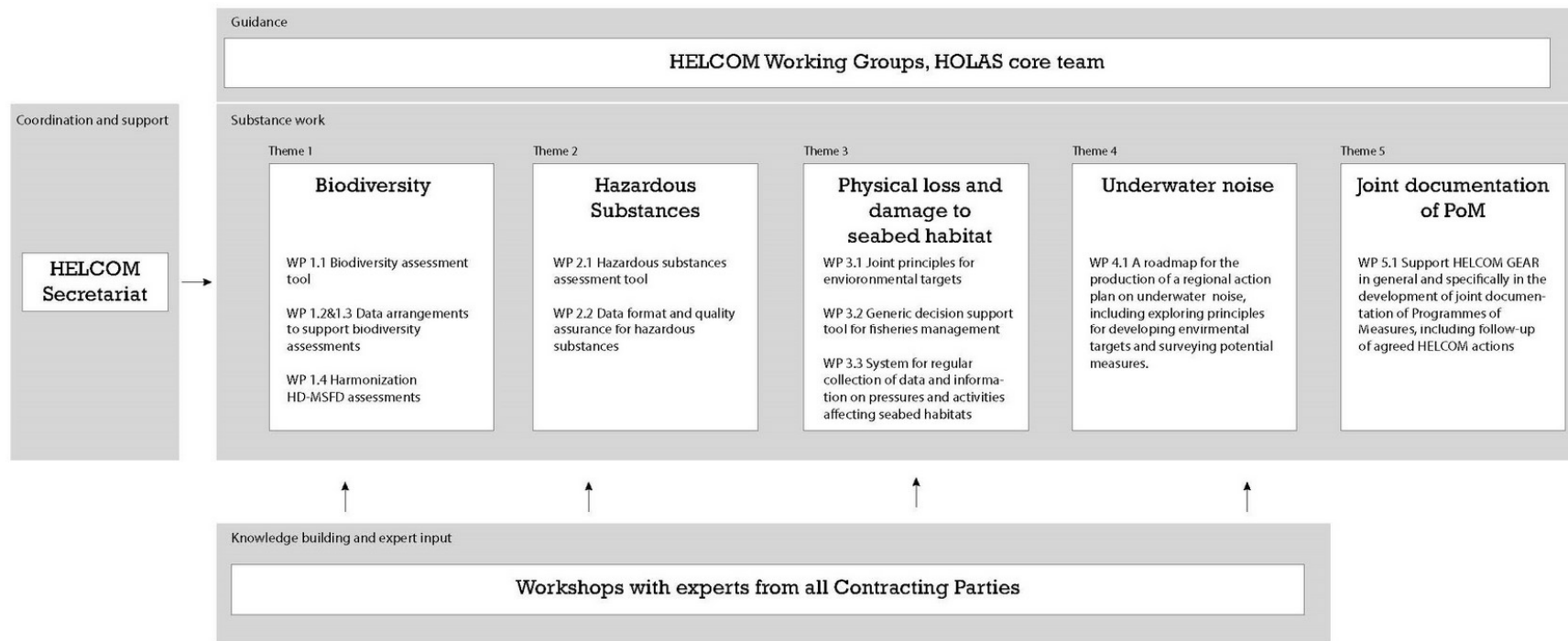
The project focused on five themes that were further developed into separate work packages, and it was structured as demonstrated in the figure overleaf. The subsequent table details the elements of each work package.

The project started in 15 September 2015 and ended 14 December 2016, with all projects deliverables delivered and approved. The final report was submitted in accordance with the project timeline and is publicly available⁴³.

⁴³

<http://www.helcom.fi/Documents/HELCOM%20at%20work/Projects/Completed%20projects/BalticBOOST/Final%20report%20BalticBOOST.pdf>

Figure 9: Structure of the BalticBOOST project



Source: <http://www.helcom.fi/helcom-at-work/projects/completed-projects/baltic-boost>

Table 47: Outputs and deliverables of BalticBOOST

WP1: Biodiversity	
focuses on developing a biodiversity assessment tool and improving data arrangements for the biodiversity elements where this is limited (e.g. coastal fish, birds and seals) so that a comprehensive assessment of biodiversity in the Baltic Sea can be carried out by 2018. The status of seal populations is used as a case study to explore the possibility to align assessments under the HELCOM Baltic Sea Action Plan, MSFD and the Habitats Directive.	
WP 1.1 Deliverable 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A tool for assessing biodiversity
WP 1.2 Deliverable 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Databases coastal fish, birds and seals
WP 1.3 Deliverable 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data flow principles for trawl survey data
WP 1.4 Deliverable 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aligning the assessments of Good Environmental Status in the MSFD/BSAP with assessments of Favourable Conservation Status in the Habitats Directive regarding status of seal populations
WP2: Hazardous substances	
refining an existing HELCOM tool for assessing the status hazardous substances. Key components for adequate assessment of hazardous substances are to agree on matrices for indicators and to have access to quality assured data	
WP 2.1 Deliverable 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A tool for assessing hazardous substances
WP 2.2 Deliverable 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A data flow for HELCOM hazardous substance assessment
WP3: Physical loss and damage to seabed habitats	
exploring ways to determine how much disturbance from different activities that specific seabed habitats can tolerate while remaining in Good Environmental Status (GES). A tool for assessing the impacts of fishing gear on specific habitat types and species is also developed. Finally, an arrangement for regular collection of data and information on pressures and activities that affect the Baltic Sea is being piloted, to provide support to this Theme as well as future assessment of pressures impacting the Baltic Sea. With this information as a basis the project will propose joint principles for defining environmental targets for pressures affecting seabed habitats.	
WP 3.1 Deliverable 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Estimating physical disturbance on seabed
WP 3.1 Deliverable 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guidelines to define environmental targets for pressures affecting the seabed habitats
WP 3.2 Deliverable 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fisheries Impact Evaluation Tool
WP 3.2 Deliverable 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development and use of the Fisheries Impact Evaluation Tool BalticBOOST
WP 3.2 Deliverable 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technical review of the Fisheries Impact Evaluation Tool
WP 3.3 Deliverable 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spatial data sets on human activities and pressures acting on seabed habitats
WP4 Noise	
Focuses on Underwater Noise and will review existing knowledge on impact of noise in the Baltic Sea, explore the possibility to determine acceptable levels of underwater noise for marine species, and survey possible measures to manage and mitigate relevant impacts on the Baltic Sea	
WP 4.1 Deliverable 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reporting format registry of impulsive events
WP 4.1 Deliverable 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proposal for a regional monitoring programme of continuous noise
WP 4.1 Deliverable 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report on noise sensitivity of animals in the Baltic Sea
WP 4.1 Deliverable 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Principles for defining levels of underwater noise consistent with good environmental status and decision support trees for establishing environmental targets for ambient and impulsive noise
WP 4.1 Deliverable 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compilation report on internationally available mitigation measures and Baltic Sea country specific information
WP5 Joint documentation of PoMs (Programmes of Measures)	
supports the development of a joint document on regional coordinated Programmes of Measures and a system to follow-up actions agreed by HELCOM	

Additionally, the project included a number of workshops:

- Workshop on Hazardous substances (BalticBOOST HZ WS 1-2016), outcome and background documents
- Workshop on the HOLAS II hazardous substance assessment (BalticBOOST HZ WS 2-2016), outcome and background documents
- Workshop on Biodiversity (BalticBOOST Biodiv WS 1-2016), outcome and background documents
- Workshop on Biodiversity (BalticBOOST Biodiv WS 2-2016), outcome and background documents
- Workshop on Physical loss and damage to seabed habitats (BalticBOOST Theme3WS 1-2016), outcome and background documents
- Workshop on Physical loss and damage to seabed habitats (BalticBOOST Theme3WS 2-2016), outcome and background documents
- Workshop on Noise (BalticBOOST Noise WS 1-2016), outcome and background documents

3.2.2. Case study methodology

The BalticBOOST case study **complements WP 1D (Sea basin initiatives)**. The case study involves desk research reviewing the project documentation structured around the project themes. Under each theme extensive background documentation and outcome documents from thematic workshops were reviewed. The desk-based review was accompanied by interviews.

Table 48: Key interviews relevant to case study 2: BalticBOOST

Name	Organisation / function	Role in the BalticBOOST project
Ulla Li Zweifel	HELCOM (University of Gothenburg)	HOLAS II Manager, Project coordinator, WP 5 leader
Lena Avellan	OSPAR, former HELCOM	WP2 leader
Neil Holdsworth	ICES	Coordinated all ICES activities in the project
Sebastian Valanco	ICES	WP 3.1 and 3.2
Daniel Von Denderen	DTU Aqua former ICES	WP 3.1 and WP 3.2
Samuli Korpinen	SYKE	WP 3 leader
Hans Mose Jensen	ICES	WP 2.1 and 2.2
Jesper Harbo Andersen	NIVA Denmark	WP 1.1 and WP 2.1

3.2.3. Thematic findings

Help for the MSs to report on the state of the marine environment

The BalticBOOST project helped the MSs to report on the state of the marine environment as part of their obligations under the Marine Strategy Framework Directive. The whole purpose of the project was to support the potential indicators that can be used as descriptors in the Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD, 2008/56/EC). The project also fed results to the assessment project HOLAS II (HELCOM State of the Baltic Sea - Holistic Assessment II), that HELCOM is working on. If the HELCOM member states do a

good job with HOLAS II so they can use HOLAS II nationally to report on MSFD, they have succeeded.

The project also reported on seabed habitat pressure and a lot of work was done on the data on indicators for hazardous substances.

The BalticBOOST project certainly had a positive effect but to different degree in different countries. As an example, the "CHASE tool" (for Hazardous Substance status assessment) that was developed is being implemented, but only by some countries. HELCOM has made a very good holistic assessment implementing the CHASE and BEAT tools and they are improving all the time. The BalticBOOST Biodiversity Assessment Tool (BEAT 3.0) was developed under the BalticBOOST project and was used to perform the integrated biodiversity assessment for HOLAS II.

Some of the people interviewed felt it was too early to say if the project had helped to report on the state of the marine environment. The member states are working on the initial assessments now (early 2018). The initial assessments will be sent to the EU Commission later in 2018 for approval. The reporting is still in process and the result of the approval process is still unknown.

The project has only helped MS indirectly to report on the state of the marine environment in Natura 2000s.

Help to MS to report on the Water Framework Directive (WFD) was provided through the work package on hazardous substances and dataflow in work package 2. Indirectly the developed CHASE tool can be used in the WFD, but it is not used today.

The Habitats Directive data flow for seals, biodiversity for birds, and the specific action on benthic habitats could help the MS to deliver on reporting obligations.

Promotion for the protection of the marine environment

The project contributed to promote the protection of the marine environment mainly through the implementation of the MSFD and the Marine Habitats Directive. The work on MSFD was primarily about assessing good environmental status and putting together a program of measures to achieve good environmental status by 2020. The project has definitely contributed to getting the information in place to be able to understand what good environmental status is with reference to the different descriptors that are involved in it.

The project was able to contribute by producing some useful tools that, if picked up by national managers, can then potentially protect the marine environment. It was however not evaluated if the tools were in fact picked up by the managers (outside the scope of the project).

It is hard to assess whether the results are used by managers afterwards. One interviewee was sceptical if project results about the protection of the marine environment were used in further work by managers.

The project helped to assess hazardous substances and the state of the data available for hazardous substances. It gave a lot of input to the future HOLAS II assessment that, ultimately, will be a part of the MSFD reporting. A concrete follow-up example of an action in the project is the ongoing work with HELCOM on the hazardous substances assessment tool. The framework for data flow has been established in a harmonised way. Now it is possible to make an assessment tool in addition.

The developed assessment tools contribute to promote the protection of the marine environment. As an example, WP 4.1 worked with the reporting format registry of certain events.

One interviewee thought it was still too early to say if the project had promoted the protection of the marine environment, because the final HOLAS II report had not been evaluated. For the next period the measures that should be implemented to improve HOLAS II will be decided.

Within the work on biodiversity fish indicators the project highlighted a lot of issues with the proposed indicators that HELCOM had. Problems were also identified with the data collection HELCOM would like to use. After the project ICES have worked a lot with experts to define a better indicator, but also to define a methodology to work with the existing data to produce an indicator.

The specific remarks on the work packages and deliverables of BalticBOOST are presented in the table overleaf.

Table 49: Specific remarks on the work packages and deliverables of BalticBOOST

(Sub)WP / deliverable	Remarks
WP1: Biodiversity	
WP 1.1 A tool for assessing biodiversity	The target was fully reached. The BEAT tool was delivered in time and was approved by the Commission.
WP 1.2 Deliverable 1: Databases coastal fish, birds and seals	The deliverable was fully reached
WP 1.3 Deliverable 1: Data flow principles for trawl survey data	A lot of work was done in WP 1.3. The indicators that HELCOM had initially were not in a good shape. The indicators that HELCOM was supposed to use in HOLAS II in the end were not used as indicators in HOLAS II because they were not correct. From this project partners understood that HELCOM was building its indicators on the wrong principles. The core indicator for biodiversity “the large fish indicator” was not even called a pre-core indicator in the end.
WP 1.4 Deliverable 1: Aligning the assessments of Good Environmental Status in the MSFD/BSAP with assessments of Favourable Conservation Status in the Habitats Directive regarding status of seal populations	Reported as planned
WP2: Hazardous substances	Both deliverables in WP2, the chase tool and the data flow, were quite successful. The methods that was chosen to reach the targets changed slightly underway, but the targets were reached. The NIVA Denmark developed integrated tool was chosen in the start. During the project the scientists within WP 2 changed to focus more on the OSPAR MIME (Monitoring and on Trends and Effects of Substances in the Marine Environment) group method.
WP 2.1 Deliverable 1: A tool for assessing hazardous substances	Was fully reached. The CHASE tool was delivered in time and has been approved by the Commission.
WP 2.2. Deliverable 1: A data flow for HELCOM hazardous substance assessment	Was fully reached.
WP3 Physical loss and damage to seabed habitats	A lot of the work in WP3 fed into work on requests from DG Environment and in to other projects as well. All targets in WP3 were reached in time and in a good quality. There was corporation with the FP7 project BENTHIS that fed data into the WP3.2 Deliverable 1 “Fisheries Impact Evaluation Tool”. The BENTHIS project also received results from the BalticBOOST project.
WP 3.1 Deliverable 1: Estimating physical disturbance on seabed WP 3.1 Deliverable 2: Guidelines to define environmental targets for pressures affecting the seabed habitats	Were fully reached. HELCOM realised that it was hard to settle these environmental targets in a quantitative way for both deliverables. It was simply too complex to put into the HOLAS II process. It looks now as if OSPAR and HELCOM are now looking at the way that ICES does the work on descriptors for the MSFD. It is a great strength of the project that work done in parallel by different organisations inspires each other with different methods and results. An example of cooperation was for instance the BENTHIS EU FP7 project that gave a lot of data to the BalticBOOST project especially on deliverables 1 and 2.
WP 3.2 Deliverable 1: Fisheries Impact Evaluation Tool	All fully reached.
WP 3.2 Deliverable 2: Development and use of the Fisheries Impact Evaluation Tool BalticBOOST	

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WP 3.2 Deliverable 3: Technical review of the Fisheries Impact Evaluation Tool	
WP 3.3 Deliverable 1: Spatial data sets on human activities and pressures acting on seabed habitats	
WP4 Noise	
WP 4.1 Deliverable 1: Reporting format registry of impulsive events	Was reported as planned
WP 4.1 Deliverable 2: Proposal for a regional monitoring programme of continuous noise	Was reported as planned and presented for the HELCOM group
WP 4.1 Deliverable 3: Report on noise sensitivity of animals in the Baltic Sea	Reported as planned
WP 4.1 Deliverable 4: Principles for defining levels of underwater noise consistent with good environmental status and decision support trees for establishing environmental targets for ambient and impulsive noise	
WP 4.1 Deliverable 5: Compilation report on internationally available mitigation measures and Baltic Sea country specific information	
WP5 Joint documentation of PoMs (Programmes of Measures)	The targets of WP5 were fully reached. For instance, an operational database was created, that is available for the public

3.2.4. Mandatory evaluation criteria

Relevance

There are some project subjects that are still relevant for funding. For instance, these are the different project stools such as those within seabed protection and reduction of underwater noise. Additionally, some of the work from BalticBOOST came into the HELCOM TAPAS project. Seabed habitats are still relevant for funding and results from BalticBOOST have also already been followed up by funding for other projects that are ongoing today. There is still a lot of room to fund scientific research within seabed habitats. There is still work to be done in the hazardous substances and data flow area. An example is the EU Environmental Agency that has asked NIVA Denmark to develop the CHASE and BEAT tools further for a better coverage on the European scale. The results will be reported in October 2018.

In terms of specific needs that could be addressed, the MSFD reporting is a very important area. The WP 3.1 Deliverable 2 (Guidelines to define environmental targets for pressures affecting the seabed habitats) should be continued and the scientific work needed must be led by ICES (OSPAR and HELCOM have slightly different approaches). The BalticBOOST project has been a success story in terms of what it has delivered; its engagement with the ICES community; and its contribution to policy making.

Effectiveness

At an overall level the project **achieved most of the expected results within time and funding**, but in some areas, it was not able to deliver everything what was expected: the biodiversity fish indicators were one example because of a problem with the indicators themselves. The data sets were also much more difficult than expected. The deadlines were reached within the expected time and used resources.

Efficiency

It was a great advantage that the network behind the project was already in place before the project started. The timeline was very short, but the partners managed it within the time frame. There were a lot of good workshops and follow up. When the project ended it was directly followed up by HOLAS II.

Whilst opinions prevailed that the project participants did a good job overall, there could have been more coordination between the work packages and the tasks. A lot of autonomous work was carried out in the individual work packages. The project could have been more efficient – it is a matter of engagement and resources of the member states. But in general, the project was efficient at delivering results.

Coherence

BalticBOOST **cooperated closely with a lot of other projects and initiatives**. It was hard for some to distinguish between initiatives, which is a good sign and signifies synergies between ongoing activities. Under HOLAS II partners from a number of projects (including the BalticBOOST project) have cooperated in a wide range of countries. The project organised a lot of workshops some back to back with ICES.

There was direct follow up by HELCOM projects like the TAPAS project. Besides that, in the MSFD process an example is the marine strategy coordination where the representatives from the regional seas meet MS representatives and share information on projects they run, their results, and how it can be picked up by other regional sea representatives. Results have for instance been fed into the GES group (Good Environmental Status) and the DIKE group (Data Information Knowledge Exchange).

The WKFBI (Workshop on Fisheries Benthic Impact) and BENTHIS have cooperated with the BalticBOOST project. The organisations ICES, HELCOM and OSPAR have cooperated a lot.

One of the workshops was held at the request of the EU for advice on the MSFD on descriptor 6 (Sea-floor Integrity). The OSPAR "EcApRHA project" (Applying an Ecosystem Approach to (sub) Regional Habitat Assessment) funded by DG Environment received the Benthic indicators from the BalticBOOST project.

There were synergies rather than overlaps between parallel projects. Yet, internally, some overlaps were noted especially in WP3.1 and WP3.2. But when managed correctly overlaps can lead to transfer of knowledge and learning. For instance, the new knowledge and methods from the BENTHIS project was transferred to HELCOM via the BalticBOOST project.

It was **not the aim of the project to contribute to the CFP objectives** and it only contributed partly to them. If the EU mapping is moving in the direction of accounting for other things than fish catches and harvesting, then the project will have contributed to it. At the same time, the activities in the BalticBOOST project have **contributed to the European environmental action programme, and the results have been taken up by new projects**. The European environmental action programme will be finalised in 2021 with a report called "State of Europe Seas" and "Marine messages II". The mapping on human pressures on the seabed can contribute to other wider EU policy objectives within maritime spatial planning.

EU Added Value

The EU has been very keen for the northern regions to exchange information with the Mediterranean and the Black Sea. Particularly the Baltic Sea has a good track record of doing that with the Black Sea because both seas have a similar setup. At a point they had a project specifically for the exchange of information (Baltic to Black). That project ran just before BalticBOOST.

When HELCOM works with other organisations with a wider scope than just the Baltic Sea area there are possibilities for cross fertilising ideas and streamlining ways of working. This will enable the EU to have, in the future, cross regional assessments that are in line with each other. In particular it will benefit countries that have a foot in several sea conventions. For instance, HELCOM and OSPAR for Germany, Sweden and Denmark.

The results on descriptor 6 (Sea-floor Integrity) in the BalticBOOST project were new and were clearly of value to the EU. The data flow has been improved by the project. HELCOM and OSPAR are the main drivers for the development in the marine area on how to do things within data flow.

HELCOM was **the first to use indicator-based tools such as CHASE and BEAT**. BalticBOOST made it possible to update the tools and now they will be used on a wider European scale in 2018 and in 2019.

The project has definitely achieved benefits beyond what could have been achieved by national spending, as there were no national-level funds to support this type of work. No countries would pay for BalticBOOST in 2015 and the EMFF was necessary, otherwise it could not have been done. The funding was enough for the project. It could of course have been prioritised at the national level. It would have happened at the regional level because it is for instance in the mandate of HELCOM. HELCOM would need to implement HOLAS II anyway, even if the project had not existed. By contrast OSPAR has not used EU funding to the same degree as HELCOM. OSPAR is in that sense limited compared to HELCOM. The whole idea behind the "BOOST" was to boost the ongoing work and that was a great success.

In terms of **EMFF strengths and weaknesses to support cooperation in the scope of the project**, BalticBOOST furthered existing work and cooperation as intended from start which was a **clear strength**. The EMFF supported the BalticBOOST project, which would otherwise not have been funded by national states. The regional approach and the cooperation were strengths as well.

As regards **weaknesses**, the project had limited time and was delayed at the start. It would have been useful to have had a kick-off workshop where everyone was introduced to each other and a clearer division of tasks. And more information on what the other work packages was doing. The project was very wide and funding for kick-off workshops should have been earmarked. What is more, it can differ how much support the individual member state has to implement changes nationally. A project has a limited time span and to sustain data and dataflow it is very important with long term funding.

3.2.5. Key findings

Lessons learnt

- The project was a great success, although very challenging in that it was running in parallel with the HOLAS II assessment. As such, BalticBOOST had to adapt and adjust to changes in the requirements in the HOLAS process while at the same time holding true to its deliverables. A significant perceived constraint was that the project timeline was too short.
- The interviewed project participants believed that more funds should have been made available for cooperation with other projects: the project worked as intended boosting the HELCOM work and with better coordination, more results could have been achieved by the BalticBOOST project. A lot of partners were reportedly working in silos not knowing what others were doing.
- The main element of the project which in hindsight could have been done differently is the coordination: stakeholders wished that they were more aware of what others were doing.
- As a significant project outcome, the tools which have been developed as a part of BalticBOOST have been subsequently updated and they are used not only by HELCOM, but also nine different countries. This means that nine countries agree today about the way things are being done.

Identification of influencing factors

- The main **success factor** was that the project involved the same people as in its 2009-2010 iteration. That made the setup very simple and straightforward to develop and update the tools.

- The core limiting factor in the project was that the workshops for work packages 3.1 and 3.2 did not produce as much as hoped. This was attributed to people working in silos and not listening to each other. However, the final report developed by HELCOM was judged as well synthesized and deriving all the most important and successful elements of the work.

3.3. Case Study 3: Scientific, Technical and Economic Committee for Fisheries (STECF)

3.3.1. Introduction

Purpose and scope

The STECF is a grouping of external independent experts, supported by a secretariat, that advise the Commission in relation to the CFP, which states that it is important for the management of the CFP to be guided by principles of good governance. Those principles include decision-making based on best available scientific advice, broad stakeholder involvement and a long-term perspective (CFP regulation 1380/2013).

To that end, the STECF is requested to provide advice on recurring aspects of the CFP such as progress on CFP objectives, fleet economic performance, and the balance of fleet capacity with fishing opportunities. It also reports on certain sub-sectors such as aquaculture and fish processing on a biennial basis following data calls issued to Member States under the Data Collection Framework (199/2008). STECF is also involved in the evaluation of MS reports of the DCF.

3.3.2. Case study methodology

This case study informs the **WP2 theme on 'Scientific advice and knowledge'**. The STECF is one of two main perennial budget programming for scientific advice and knowledge, the other being ICES.

This case study has been conducted through a mixture of a review of STECF outputs and interviews (guided by semi-structured questionnaires). The interviews were with a mixture of participants, ranging from the main client (DG Mare), the STECF secretariat (JRC), STECF expert working group chairs and beneficiaries.

Table 50: Key interviews relevant to case study 3: STECF

Name	Organisation / function	Status
Dr Zsuzsanna Koenig	DG MARE	completed
Dr Giuseppe Scarcella	National Research Council - Institute of Marine Sciences Ancona, Italy (STECF Balance EWG Chair)	completed
Dr Leyla Knitweisse	University of Malta, STECF Plenary Member	completed
Daniel Voces	Europeche	completed
Dr Hendrick Doerner	JRC, Ispra, Italy STECF secretariat	Response received
Dr John Casey	JRC, Ispra, Italy STECF secretariat	Response received

3.3.3. Overview of the EMFF funded direct interventions

Purpose

1993 legislation originally established an STECF (93/619/EC) and further legislation has revised the purpose and scope of the STECF to ensure it aligns with the current CFP. The CFP Regulation (1380/2013) requires that "the Commission shall consult appropriate scientific bodies. STECF shall be consulted, where appropriate, on matters pertaining to

the conservation and management of living marine resources, including biological, economic, environmental, social and technical considerations. Consultations of scientific bodies shall take into account the proper management of public funds, with the aim of avoiding duplication of work by such bodies.”

The latest legislation setting up a Scientific, Technical and Economic Committee for Fisheries (2016/C74/05) describes the tasks and how the Commission should consult the STECF:

Tasks (Article 2)

In the field of conservation and management of living marine resources, including biological, economic, environmental, social and technical considerations, the group’s task shall be:

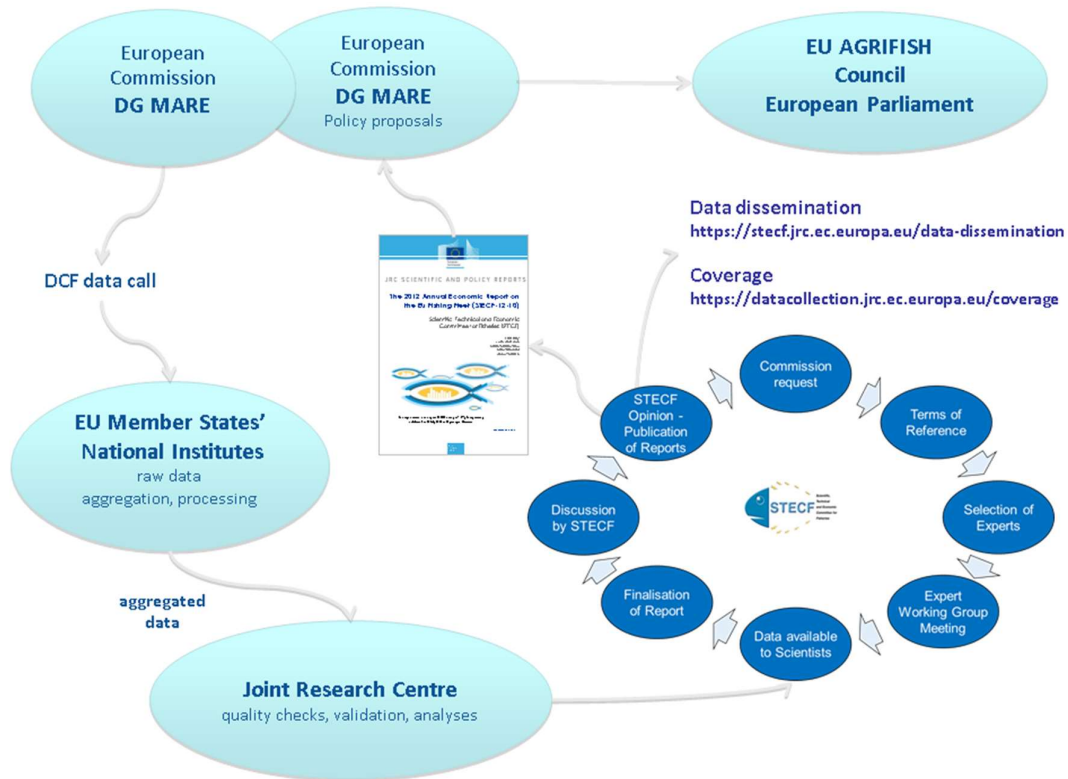
- (a) to assist the Commission in the preparation of legislative proposals, delegated acts or policy initiatives.
- (b) to monitor the evolution of policy and bring about an exchange of experience and good practice.

Consultation (Article 3)

The Commission may consult the group on any matter relating to marine and fisheries biology, fishing gear technology, fisheries economics, fisheries governance, ecosystem effects of fisheries, aquaculture or similar disciplines. The Commission may require the adoption of such an opinion within a defined period. In agreement with the Commission services the group may also provide opinions on its own initiative to the Commission on such matters.

The legislation states the role of the STECF in providing opinion to the Commission on specific matters as determined by the Commission. In addition, “the chair of the group may advise the Commission to consult the group on a specific question.” This provides opportunity for the STECF to advise the Commission on what it should be asking.

The diagram overleaf illustrates the process of developing and sharing scientific advice and organisations involved:



source: <https://stecf.jrc.ec.europa.eu/web/stecf/about-stecf>

Implementation History

Two annual budgets are programmed through direct management in relation to STECF:

- The annual operation of the STECF working groups (costs to support 20 plenary and expert working group meetings);
- Secretariat services to the STECF (provided by the Joint Research Council, JRC).

An Administrative Arrangement (AA) is agreed through discussion between JRC and the Commission. Secretariat services to the STECF (provided by the Joint Research Council, JRC) are tasks which are part of the JRC AA. The following roles are defined to support the functioning of the STECF⁴⁴:

- **STECF secretariat:** planning; coordination; front office; web site; collecting, checking, and publishing declarations (if authorized by expert), final editing and publishing of reports – Commission role
- **JRC Data Collection team:** servicing data calls through DCF – Commission role

⁴⁴ STECF guidelines for Expert Working Group Chairs (Oct, 2016): https://stecf.jrc.ec.europa.eu/c/document_library/get_file?uuid=7f31489d-f894-4896-9428-2081130778b2&groupId=43805

- **JRC experts/chairs:** attending STECF Working Groups and plenary meetings as independent experts equal to invited experts (provide declarations of interest and commitment as any other expert) – non-Commission role

The JRC Fisheries and Aquaculture sector has provided STECF secretariat services since 2005. It was part of the G.03 Unit Maritime Affairs which belonged to the Institute for the Protection and the Security of the Citizen IPSC which is ISO 9001 certified since 27 June 2011. Since July 2016 the JRC was restructured and the Fisheries and Aquaculture sector is now part of the D.02 Unit Water and Marine Resources belonging to Directorate D - Sustainable Resources.

In 2016 the budget for STECF advice rose to EUR 1 million (from EUR 820,000 in 2015) and also increased for JRC secretariat services from EUR 1.46 million in 2015 to EUR 1.6 million.

The costs of data collection are mainly funded through the Member State Operational Programmes. JRC's role in the co-ordination of data collection by MS is important as the data collected under the DCF on biological, fishing activity capacity and economic aspects of fisheries are a key information source for many STECF Expert Working Groups. The JRC manages the data calls under the DCF, which in 2016 amounted to four: Annual Economic Report (AER), aquaculture economics, Fisheries Dependent Information for assessing fishing effort regimes, and one on Mediterranean and Black Sea.

STECF did previously review and comment on the annual ICES Advice. However, as the ICES peer review process has developed, STECF review was considered unnecessary duplication and no longer occurs. STECF does, however, consider GFCM advice on Mediterranean stocks and conducts its own stock assessment of some Mediterranean and Black Sea stocks⁴⁵.

As an institution, JRC was also in receipt of additional funding from the 2016 EMFF direct management budget for administrative arrangements for:

- "Assistance in the implementation of the MSFD – 2016". (EUR 680,000)
- "Assessment and development of new control technologies" (EUR 300,000)

The latest iteration of the STECF Rules of Procedure (version 27, Oct 2016) is available on the STECF website⁴⁶.

Outcomes

In 2016 there were 21 STECF meetings (3 plenary, 14 EWG, 1 ad hoc and 3 preparatory working group meetings) and 24 reports were produced⁴⁷. In 2016 there was also 45 *ad hoc* requests for advice submitted by DG MARE to STECF. The Commission is the intended beneficiary of the reporting and advice, but STECF reports are published and therefore an important reference material for many stakeholders involved in the fisheries sector. Annual publications such as the Annual Economic Report (AER) are a key source of information on the economic performance of the sector. The DCF data that is collated and made available by JRC is also an important source for sector research. The Scientific Fishery Data Dissemination Tool developed by the JRC helps to disseminate this data⁴⁸. Since 2002

⁴⁵ STECF involvement in Mediterranean advice is considered further in the evaluation questions below.

⁴⁶ <https://stecf.jrc.ec.europa.eu/web/stecf/about-stecf>

⁴⁷ JRC 2016 Activity Report for Administrative Arrangement JRC-MARE no 30702-2015 NFP. Report of Activities for the Period mid September 2015 – mid September 2016.

⁴⁸ <https://datacollection.jrc.ec.europa.eu/data-dissemination>

STECF reports have been cited in 205 articles, 14 conference papers, 11 reviews and 11 book chapters⁴⁹.

For 20 of the 24 STECF reports released in 2016, JRC scientists are listed as scientific co-authors and five out of 15 EWG meetings were chaired by JRC staff, which illustrates that the JRC's work for the STECF extends beyond secretariat and data management duties.

3.3.4. Thematic findings

Answers specifically in relation to STECF are given below for the following specific questions that are asked under WP2:

EQ 2.1: To what extent have the studies, pilots and scientific advice funded under direct management contributed to improving the overall effectiveness and relevance of scientific advice to policy-making?

The STECF contributes to the CFP requirement to consult appropriate scientific bodies and help to deliver the CFP objective of basing decisions on the best available scientific advice. In responding to DG MARE requests directly, including *ad hoc* requests (totalling 30 in 2015 and 45 in 2016), the STECF advice is highly relevant to policy-making.

In terms of the overall effectiveness of scientific advice to policy-making, the situation is mixed. The involvement of many independent and external scientists in the STECF is critical to the effective production of the detailed advice that is requested by DG MARE. The participation of independent scientists from many Member States is also important to the wider acceptance by the sector and the Member States of the resulting scientific advice.

The annual work programme ensures that essential advice for policy-making is timely. The annual reporting on certain aspects provides a time-series that allows trends to be identified and monitored, which can be reflected in the advice. This makes for more effective policy-making as it is not only 'snapshots' of situations, but longer-term trends that allow better assessment of the impact of policy. The role of STECF (and JRC) in DCF data management, preparation and analysis is essential to this process.

There are some instances where the scientific advice provided is less effective. Two specific examples are the advice on Capacity and Fishing Opportunities⁵⁰ and the Mediterranean Stock Assessments⁵¹. The latest Balance report⁵² (17-18) concludes that:

STECF concludes that the guidelines on balance indicators (COM (2014) 545 Final) should be revised in line with previous advice, taking into account concerns and proposals in previous EWG reports [STECF-15-02, STECF-15-15] and Annex 1 of the report by EWG 16-09. This revision would enable scientific expertise to be better employed to assist the Commission and Member States in meeting their obligations under Article 22 of the CFP (Regulation (EU) No 1380/2013).

This illustrates that STECF recognises that the effectiveness of this advice is currently limited. Despite this being identified in previous STECF reports, the proposed corrective

⁴⁹ SCOPUS, Elsevier, October 2016

⁵⁰ Balance, <https://stecf.jrc.ec.europa.eu/reports/balance>

⁵¹ <https://stecf.jrc.ec.europa.eu/reports/medbs>

⁵² Scientific, Technical and Economic Committee for Fisheries (STECF) – Assessment of balance indicators for key fleet segments and review of national reports on Member States efforts to achieve balance between fleet capacity and fishing opportunities (STECF-17-18); Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg.

actions of revised indicators have not been taken and there has been no revision to the Terms of Reference for the group.

In the case of the Mediterranean stock assessments, the timing of the work and the interaction with GFCM stock assessment process reduces the effectiveness of the advice. With regard to timing, as the EWG only has one week to produce its report for STECF on an increasing number of Mediterranean stocks, participants and STECF plenary members recognise that this can limit the effectiveness of the advice.⁵³ On the interaction with GFCM stock assessment: with two separate stock assessment and advice process are conducted in parallel (one through GFCM and one through STECF), there is duplication in effort and some divergence in the results of these different stock assessment processes. GFCM references its own advice for management purposes, while the EU (an active member in GFCM) considers STECF advice. This can lead to differences in the proposed management response between the two parties, which undermines the confidence of Member States and the sector in the management that results. There have been meetings between the relevant parties to address this situation.

EQ 2.2: To what extent have the studies, pilots and scientific advice funded under direct management been coherent with Horizon 2020?

STECF rarely uses Horizon 2020 outputs directly as this research is generally focussed on innovation and new approaches, while one of the strengths of STECF is establishing a comprehensive baseline of information and building a time series to illustrate trends. In this regard the two are complementary as both are necessary for the improved management of fisheries under the CFP.

Horizon 2020 does have an Aquatic resources programme, which aims for 'competitive and environmentally-friendly fisheries' and similar aims for aquaculture and bio-technology. Projects have certainly used STECF work within their research, for example: **Myfish** will have used the data and reporting on fleet capacity and fishing opportunities; **MINOUW** and **DISCARDLESS** used the data and STECF reporting on the Landing Obligation. STECF therefore makes a substantial contribution to the scientific knowledge on which these innovative projects can build.

EQ 2.3: How have data collection related actions strengthened regional cooperation?

The structure of the STECF (bringing together experts from throughout the EU) along with its work to combine and report MS data at a regional scale informs regional management have undoubtedly contributed to regional cooperation. The fundamental building blocks of STECF's work are the data collected by JRC under the Data Collection Framework (DCF). Responding to the data calls is the responsibility of the individual Member States and there is not always direct regional cooperation. However, in independently assessing and reporting on the quality and completeness of data provided, the STECF acts as a forum for sharing good practice and enables MS to learn from others in relation to data collection⁵⁴.

⁵³ Confidential interviews with plenary members.

⁵⁴ It should be noted that EMFF direct management budget funded two separate calls for proposals to Strengthen Regional Cooperation in data collection. See WP2 main evaluation.

In the case of the Mediterranean, more could be done to ensure STECF actions are complementary to the GFCM, which would help to strengthen regional cooperation. STECF reiterates the strong need for a better coordination and full harmonization among the scientific bodies of FAO-GFCM and EU, in order to develop common approaches and make the best use of the human resources (STECF, 2016⁵⁵).

The meeting on GFCM-STECF-ICES co-ordination in September 2016 continued the ongoing discussion on a regional database of anonymised primary fisheries data (disaggregated) and which body will be in charge of hosting it. Different options for hosting the database have been made, but in the current meeting the only one discussed was that GFCM would host the MED EU data database (JRC, 2016⁵⁶).

Overall, while data collection remains the responsibility of individual Member States, the operation of the STECF has made some contribution to regional co-operation on data collection.

3.3.5. Mandatory evaluation criteria

Relevance

The STECF remains highly relevant and necessary for the implementation of the CFP in light of its objectives to base decisions on the best available scientific advice. The relevance of STECF is evident in the number of requests for advice, including ad hoc requests by DG MARE. According to JRC's annual activity reports there were 32 requests for advice (ToRs) in 2014, 30 in 2015 and 45 in 2016. In recent years the additionality of STECF has improved with better co-ordination with the work of ICES on stock assessment ensuring that STECF tasks are more focused on using the work of ICES in developing STECF advice.

Effectiveness

Overall the STECF has been effective in delivering scientific advice in relation to the CFP and at the request of DG MARE.

A 2015 evaluation on financial measures states that "Although establishing clear causal links is difficult, it is likely that STECF advice was effective in influencing many areas of management decision making under the CFP. For instance, STECF advice on discards may have directly informed the preparation of Article 15 of the new CFP (the landing obligation)." (EC, 2015⁵⁷) The involvement and influence of STECF has continued in the implementation of the CFP, including the landing obligation through STECF evaluation of the Landing Obligation Joint Recommendations (e.g. STECF 17-08⁵⁸).

By involving a large number of independent experts in EWG's followed by review of the resulting reports by the STECF Executive Committee in plenary, the STECF ensures the

⁵⁵ STECF, 2016. Reports of the Scientific, Technical and Economic Committee for Fisheries (STECF) - Mediterranean assessments part 2 (STECF-16-08). 2016. Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg, EUR 27758 EN, JRC 101548, 483 pp.

⁵⁶ Administrative Arrangement JRC-MARE no 30702-2015 NFP Report of Activities for the Period mid-September 2015 – mid September 2016. JRC, October 2016

⁵⁷ EC DG MARE, 2015: Ex post evaluation on Union financial measures for the implementation of the Common Fisheries Policy and in the area of the Law of the Sea 2007-2013.

⁵⁸ Scientific, Technical and Economic Committee for Fisheries (STECF) – Evaluation of the landing obligation joint recommendations (STECF-17-08). Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg, 2017, ISBN 978-92-79-67480-8, doi:10.2760/149272, JRC107574

advice produced is peer reviewed and is considered to be independent from DG MARE. It is thus effective in delivering the best available scientific advice, even if that advice is sometimes constrained by the time available to undertake the work and the available data.

Efficiency

The budget for payment to STECF experts for meetings and report production increased from EUR 410,000 in 2014 to EUR 820,000 in 2015 and to EUR 1 million in 2016. This substantial increase is reflected in the number of meetings held (in 2014 225 experts attended STECF meetings compared to 389 in 2016) and reports produced (13 reports in 2014 compared to 29 in 2015 and 24 in 2016). The 2016 regulation establishing the STECF (2016/C 74/05) gave new levels of reimbursements and special allowances resulting in an increase cost per meeting attendee. The administration budget of STECF by JRC has also increased from EUR 1.13 million in 2014 to EUR 1.46m in 2015 and EUR 1.6m in 2016 (covering 18.5 months rather than the usual 12 months). Budgets are agreed with DG MARE on an annual basis under the Administrative Arrangement between JRC and DG MARE.

The efficiency of the STECF is dependent on the correct balance being struck between delivering advice to DG MARE in as cost-effective a manner as possible and ensuring the resulting advice is robust and accepted by stakeholders. To achieve the latter, sufficient participation by experts from many MS is required to give assurance that the resulting advice is devoid of bias from individual regions. It is also important that experts from a range of research groups are involved (government agency experts, research institutes and private sector experts) to ensure that institutional bias does not emerge. The process of Expert Working Groups internally reviewing outputs prior to further peer review by the STECF Executive Committee in plenary provides quality assurance. For these reasons, while STECF reports could be produced more efficiently with a smaller drafting group and a smaller meeting attendance, the current arrangements generally ensure the requisite balance between efficient production and inclusion.

Coherence

The STECF is entirely coherent with the CFP and EMFF objectives to support the implementation of the CFP. The work of STECF is focused on CFP implementation, which is coherent with other EU policy instruments such as the Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD) even if the focus of the STECF is only on the CFP. There is also an effort to ensure wider coherence with other scientific advice: "Where necessary, the secretariat shall coordinate activities of STECF and its working groups with those of other Community and international bodies. (article 6(56) of 2016/C 74/05)". As the aforementioned issues surrounding Mediterranean stock advice illustrate, this is not always achieved. However, for the most part there is coherence between STECF actions, other EU instruments, MS actions and other actors (such as ICES). It should be noted that the JRC undertakes several other activities contributing to CFP implementation (such as genetics, bio-economic modelling and the Assessment for All stock modelling initiative), which are funded through its institutional budget, which is in addition to the EMFF direct management component. The work of STECF is coherent with (and dependent upon) the collation of data under the DCF by MS. Also, the implementation of the landing obligation by MS is coherent with the work of STECF, which reviews the joint recommendations being put forward by MS groups.

EU Added Value

EU support is essential to the functioning of the STECF as it provides budget for MS expert participation in meetings as well as the secretariat of the STECF. Without this centralised

coordination, it is understood that such a body would not exist. In its absence, such scientific and technical advice would be managed by Member States where the priorities, agendas and approaches to the provision of advice would differ. The essential element of independence and broad participation would be lost if advice were derived from national spending, along with much of the credibility of the outputs.

The STECF responds to the questions asked, including ad hoc requests from the Commission. This of course reflects the priorities of DG MARE, which are first and foremost implementation of the CFP and its objectives.

3.3.6. Key findings

Lessons learnt

The evaluators consider that the STECF remains highly relevant and is effective in delivering the requested scientific (technical and economic) advice to DG MARE at an acceptable cost. The efficiency of how the work is delivered strikes a balance to ensure the timely delivery of robust advice that is generally accepted by DG MARE and stakeholders.

The STECF work is coherent with the CFP and in turn with other EU policies. For the most part STECF work is coherent with the work of other scientific bodies and international organisations. Critically, the coherence between STECF and ICES is generally good. An exception has been in the Mediterranean where there has been a lack of coherence with GFCM assessment activities and FAO-funded work in the region, resulting in some duplication and disparity between the EU and GFCM in the resulting management planning. DG MARE and STECF sought to address this issue through specific meetings with GFCM on the subject, but some inconsistencies persist.

Identification of influencing factors

The factors contributing to STECF successful delivery include:

- Independence from DG MARE and the MS;
- Involvement of independent experts from many different MS in EWG;
- Flexibility to involve external experts e.g. from MS Administrations, research institutes and the private sector.

It is not considered that STECF has failed in the aspects evaluated, but some constraint factors include:

- The budget programming constrains the amount of ad hoc requests that can be made. Administrative agreement and budget are set, but ad hoc requests vary in terms of both the number and complexity of requests.
- Applying scientific, objective approaches to advise on subjectively worded policy (e.g. “high survival”, “very difficult to achieve” or “disproportionate costs” in assessing to *de minimis* exemptions in implementation of the Landing Obligation).

3.4. Case Study 4: North Western Waters Advisory Council (NWWAC)

3.4.1. Introduction

Purpose and scope

This case study informs the WP5 theme on 'Advisory Councils'. The scope of the case study includes the administrative structure and processes of the AC as well as the outcomes that result from those processes. The ACs are all required to maintain a 60/40 share of membership in the General Assembly and Executive Committee between industry groups (60%) and Other Interest Groups (OIGs). The implications of this is another aspect explored in this case study.

Policy context

The NWWAC is one of seven ACs that have been established for 10 years or more. As a stakeholder-led organization with around 70 General Assembly members, it is one of the larger ACs.

It covers a wide geographic area and involves the participation of members from several member states (Ireland, UK, Belgium, Netherlands, France, Spain) along with several EU-wide organisations. Its geographic location means that 'Brexit' is a key consideration for the AC and it has been pro-active in engaging with other ACs on their future role following the UK's exit from the EU.

3.4.2. Case study methodology

This case study has been conducted through a mixture of a review of NWWAC outputs and interviews (guided by semi-structured questionnaires). The interviews were with the secretariat (BIM in Ireland) and a range of members covering both fishing industry and other interest groups (OIGs) (see table below). The secretariat gave the opportunity to all members to respond to the questionnaire (provided in English, French and Spanish) and/or be interviewed by the consultants.

Interviewee	Function / organisation
Pascale Coulson	DG MARE Unit D3 – CFP and Structural Support, Policy Development and Coordination
Conor Nolan,	North Western Waters Secretariat
Sara Vandamme	North Western Waters Secretariat
Emile Brouckaert (response pending)	Rederscentrale, Belgium NWWAC Chair
Javier Lopez	NWWAC Vice Chair Oceana, (also MedAC, SWWAC members)
Sean O'Donohue	NWW AC Ex Com member (also Market AC chair and Pelagic AC member)
Vera Coelho, Jean Christophe Vandevelde	Pew, Brussels
Jacques Bigot	France Pêche Durable et Responsable
Daniel Voces	Europeche
Irene Kingma	Dutch Elasmobranch Society

3.4.3. Overview of the EMFF funded direct interventions

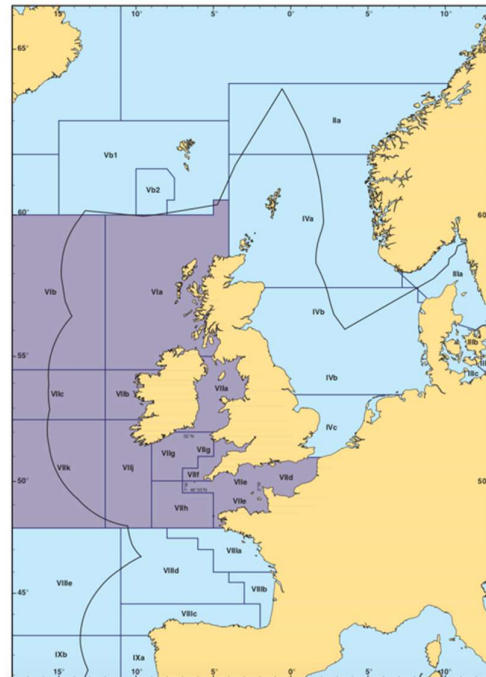
Purpose

The NWWAC is a stakeholder-led Advisory Council established under the CFP. It states that its mission as:

“To provide strategic advice from the stakeholders (fishing industry and civil society) to the European Commission and the Member States in fisheries management.”

The NWWAC membership consists of a number of tiers. This allows access to the process by as many stakeholders as possible in an endeavour to balance efficiency and inclusiveness.

Rules for Membership of the Advisory Councils are set out in Council Decision 2004/585/EC. In the General Assembly and Executive Committee, 60% of the seats are allotted to representatives of the fisheries sector and 40% to representatives of the other interest groups, as defined in Annex III of Regulation of the Council and the European Parliament (EU) No 1380/2013., on the Common Fisheries Policy.



It holds a series of regular meetings 10-15 times a year to discuss, exchange views and formulate proposals with EU policy makers, national administrations, scientists, and academics a variety of local, regional and horizontal cross cutting issues related to fisheries management within its scope of action. The NWWAC then produces a draft of advice that is 'generally agreed by consensus' which is subsequently submitted to the European Commission and the Member States.

Implementation History

The NWWAC was established in 2005 and currently has a membership of 70 organisations with an Executive Committee of 22 (intended to be 24-30 and currently with 2 vacancies). The secretariat duties are provided by Bord Iascaigh Mhara (BIM) the Irish Seafood Development Agency.

Due to the large area covered by the NWWAC, the work of the AC is conducted via four Sub Area Working Groups:

- West of Scotland - ICES areas Vb (EC) VIa, VIb - Western Approaches [WG 1]
- West of Ireland and Celtic Sea - ICES areas VII (except d, e & a) [WG 2]
- English Channel - ICES areas VIIId & e [WG 3]
- Irish Sea - ICES area VIIa [WG 4]

The NWWAC ExCom may in some instances choose to develop a horizontal working group an Advice drafting group, as is the case for Advice on the Landing Obligation to enable a more workable number of participants to develop a draft text that is then circulated for consideration by the wider membership for comment.

There are also temporary Focus Groups that can be proposed by the Sub Area Working Groups and established by the Executive Committee. Current and recent focus groups include 'Control and Compliance', 'Brown Crab' and 'Sole in VIIId'.

Procedures are described in the flow diagrams on the website: <http://www.nwwac.org/fileupload/Image/Flow%20Diagram.pdf>. The procedures are categorised as:

- Written Procedure (i.e. less than 2 months) for Non-RAC papers seeking NWWAC response
- Normal Internal Procedure (i.e. more than 2 months) for Non-RAC papers seeking NWWAC response
- Process of Developing NWWAC Own Initiative Papers/Opinions

Outcomes

The NWWAC website (nwwac.org) lists the meetings held each year for the Annual assembly, the Executive Committee and the various Working Groups and Focus Groups. It publishes the requests for advice, the advice produced by the NWWAC and where received, a response to that advice. In 2017 the following NWWAC advice was provided:

Recommendations on management of skates and rays: Extensive proposal on alternative management approaches. "It is the objective of the NWWAC to provide advice to the European Commission on more appropriate management alternatives for elasmobranch fisheries, which could be investigated, in order to achieve an improved level of confidence in the European system of resource management." Submitted March 2017.

Advice on the implementation of the Landing Obligation: Comment on the difficulties experience with the LO implementation in 2016 Despite the difficulties that can be expected in the first year of implementation of a new regulatory instrument, the experience of 2016 was not wholly negative. It was also a year where the NWWAC was actively consulted by the NWW MS group and the improved communication allowed for the discussion of the difficulties encountered and the exploration of solutions, e.g. through the development of a choke species action plan. Submitted January 2017.

Advice on Joint Recommendations for 2018: In addition to comment on the specific details of the recommendations for stocks under the Landing Obligation, the NWWAC 'recognises the efforts made by the NWW MS Group to develop a 'Choke Toolbox' to be used to avoid future choke problems.'

Mitigating the risk of whiting choking the demersal fisheries in the Irish Sea: in which the AC asks the Commission to consider the removal of the TAC for whiting (along with some control and monitoring measures) as existing tools would not be sufficient according to the Choke Mitigation Tool developed by the AC. Submitted 23 October 2017. EC response thanked the AC.

EC Delegated Act on the functioning of ACs: Comments made in response to the 2015/242 regulation. Submitted June 2016.

Response to the consultation on fishing opportunities. Submitted 15 September 2017. In addition to more detailed and specific responses to the presentation of 2018 advice by ICES, the NWWAC also welcomed the acknowledgement that CFP governance has clearly shifted to a more decentralised governance, including multiannual plans and delegated acts adopted through regionalisation, as it has had productive and respectful collaboration with the NWW Member States Group, particularly regarding the implementation of delegated acts regarding discard plans.

Sole VIIId management: in which the NWWAC advised a TAC increase of 15%, well below the 40% possible increase based on scientific advice. Submitted 22nd November 2017. The Commission response (letter 30 Nov 2017) was to follow this advice, stating: Given the history of the sole stock in 7d and the exemplary effort of the fishing industry and the Member States to improve its condition, the European Commission has decided to propose the 2018 TAC of 2933 tonnes i.e. a 15% increase over the 2017 TAC (pre-top up proposal). This proposal also means that the stock of sole in 7d would be for the first time at the MSY level, which is a very important step forward in the light of the 2020 target. We can only congratulate you for this important achievement which has been possible only thanks to the hard work and investment of the stakeholders.

It is noted that generally the EC provides a written response to the AC, if only to thank the AC for its contribution (an exception being on sole VIIId management as described above). The UK and Scottish authorities responded to NWWAC comment/advice. However, responses from the NWW Member State group are not evident in the published correspondence.

3.4.4. Thematic findings

Answers specifically in relation to NWWAC are given below for the following specific questions that are asked under WP5:

EQ 5: Have the Advisory Councils been able to provide recommendations on fisheries management matters, including advice on conservation and socio-economic aspects of fisheries, and simplification of rules?

The NWWAC has been able to provide recommendations on fisheries management measures to both the Commission, the Member State Group (NWW) and individual Member States. The advice has mainly been on fisheries management proposals (e.g. sole VIIId, skates and rays, *Nephrops*, brown crab) that are either proposed by other parties for comment or by the NWWAC itself.

Wider conservation such as reduction in bycatch or habitat impacts are addressed on occasion, for example, in 2017 the UK authorities consulted the NWWAC on MPA proposals. The NWWAC does not provide recommendations on these aspects as a consensus view between the AC members may not be achievable, instead an opinion may be provided that describes both the fishing industry opinion and those of Other Interest Groups.

The NWWAC has commented indirectly on the socio-economic impacts of certain measures such as the Landing Obligation and in this instance has developed a Choke Mitigation Tool to help inform the debate. This is seen as a very useful piece of work that is now being used by other ACs. There is little comment on economic matters and advice on market matters are now devolved to the Market AC. This is a welcome development as the AC workload is considered by members to be high without the addition of market issues and many members feel they do not have the knowledge to provide an adequate response.

There is no evidence of the AC providing advice that directly results in the simplification of rules. However, AC advice is provided on proposed measures that have the overall intent of simplification (e.g. Technical Conservation Measures and the EU Fisheries Control System). The first-hand experience of some members in fishers has helped to identify where rules are causing problems and/or proposals may not be workable. These comments and advice could either prevent certain problematic measures being implemented (which could be considered as simplification) or may result in derogations and exemptions (which may in effect complicate rules by addressing specific circumstances).

3.4.5. Mandatory evaluation criteria

Relevance

The NWWAC, as with the other ACs are increasingly relevant given the need for stakeholder advice and the objective of regionalisation. This is particularly evident with the implementation of the Landing Obligation on a regional basis, where Joint Recommendations are made by Member State groups that must be considered in detail to ensure workable solutions are identified. The short deadlines that have been given for attendance at NWW group meetings and responses to requests for advice to member states gives the impression that the AC is considered less relevant to MS groups that must also consult on a national basis. This may be as much a procedural issue that has led to this perception, but the lack of response to the advice provided strengthens the view that MS and the NWW group consider the NWWAC advice to be less relevant than the Commission.

Effectiveness

Overall the NWWAC has generally been effective in delivering fisheries management advice as requested of it. In some instances, developing consensus advice has not been possible either due to:

- The timing of requests and the deadlines set by the Commission (on occasion) and the NWW group (often).
- Irreconcilable differences within the AC, generally due to divergent views between the industry (60%) and OIG (40%)
- The timing of requests for advice issue
- Different opinions
- The NWWAC describes members as 'Catching sector', 'Fishing Sector Other' or 'Other Interest Group', but ultimately the members are defined as industry and others.

The NWWAC has been pro-active in response to the problems posed by the Landing Obligation. Extensive work by the AC and its membership developed a Choke Mitigation Tool (see website). This tool identifies the species expected to 'choke' each fleet (stop vessels from fishing as that species quota is the first to be exhausted) operating in the Celtic Sea, West of Scotland Irish Sea and Channel. It identifies the Member States impacted and the level of risk for each stock. The tool is being used as the basis for NWWAC advice on implementing the Landing Obligation and is now being used by several other ACs. The Choke Mitigation Tool is cited by members of all groups as a constructive output achieved by the NWWAC and the Commission has acknowledged the important contribution made by the AC in this regard.

Efficiency

The NWWAC operates in 3 languages: meetings are in English, but documentation and materials are also translated into French and Spanish. It is also one of the larger ACs in geographical area and membership terms with 70 General Assembly members. This places a comparatively greater budgetary pressure on the NWWAC than for some other ACs. The AC has understandably sought to make the work more manageable through four sub-area working groups, horizontal working groups and thematic focus groups. Despite these institutional efforts some members suggest that the sub-area working group arrangements can lead to repetition during meetings and that the drafting of advice could be more

efficient if smaller drafting groups were established earlier in the drafting process. Despite these minor criticisms, the overall efficiency of the NWWAC.

Most respondents state that with the recent increase the overall budget is sufficient to deliver the tasks required. However, the AC would like more flexibility to use underspend and apply for additional funding to contribute to scientific research. If multi-annual support is possible it would allow increased flexibility for ACs to manage their resources against fluctuating demands for advice.

Coherence

As the ACs are established through the CFP, their coherence with CFP objectives should be assured. The requests for advice from the Commission and from the Member States all seek to best implement the CFP. The involvement of the OIGs in discussions and in the drafting the advice does help to ensure environmental objectives and wider EU environmental policies such as the Marine Strategy Framework Directive are kept in mind by the ACs.

EU Added Value

The EU Added Value is evident to all participants in the AC as well as Commission and Member State authorities. Without EU support the NWWAC would not exist in its present form. Some suggest that a sub-area industry grouping may have been formed for some sea areas to respond to the multiple fisheries management and marine development issues facing the sector. However, this would likely be a 100% industry group rather than having a 60/40 membership requirement. While this insistence on the 60/40 membership causes frictions in this and other ACs, the participation of OIGs helps to ensure that CFP environmental objectives are considered and that a wider range of views are debated at AC level. While a consensus view cannot always be achieved, the considerable effort applied by the ACs to do so is of great benefit to the Commission. The alternative would be the Commission receiving these disparate views directly with no understanding of where common ground may exist. The EU value added for the 40% OIG membership is that financial support means that an organisation's resources are less of a barrier and so a wider range of stakeholders have the potential to participate.

A stakeholder group without EU funding would also not be as well-resourced with member organisations or Member States expected to foot the bill. This would prevent participation by certain smaller sector groups and the AC would experience major difficulty in agreeing fee levels and recovering monies due. The secretariat could spend a lot of its time on financial administrative matters rather than on helping the group to produce the advice.

3.4.6. Key findings

Lessons learnt

The key findings from this case study are that:

- The ACs are highly relevant to the regional implementation of the CFP and in particular with the Landing Obligation
- Very short deadlines and a lack of response to the NWWAC gives the impression that MS do not consider the NWWAC as relevant as the Commission does.

- Advice can generally be delivered in a timely manner if adequate notice is given.
- Consensus is not always possible and divergent views are provided in AC responses
- Socio-economic issues are addressed indirectly in terms of impact to industry
- Market issues are deferred to the Market AC
- Other Interest Groups note the dominance of industry groups in AC priorities
- The budget is sufficient to ensure the AC can deliver the required advisory tasks despite the large membership and translation demands
- There is not sufficient funds to directly support scientific studies
- The AC would prefer more budget flexibility and to access funds for scientific work

Identification of influencing factors

The successes of the NWWAC are the result of:

- A secretariat that is sensitive to the concerns of both industry and OIGs and seeks to apply procedures without bias.
- Scientific capacity within the secretariat that has helped to produce sound management advice based on evidence and to develop useful outputs like the Choke Mitigation Tool
- A strongly committed membership

Some suggested improvements have been made during the course of consultation:

- Review of meeting and drafting procedures to ensure they are as efficient and effective as possible;
- Publication of procedures to increase transparency & membership awareness;
- Facilitation and mediation training to support the office holders and Secretariat.

3.5. Case study 5: EUMOFA

3.5.1. Introduction

Purpose and scope

The European Union Observatory for Fisheries and Aquaculture products (EUMOFA) is the main tool implemented by the Commission to assemble and disseminate information of the Union markets for such products. The main services provided by EUMOFA are:

- price database covering the distribution chain from landings to consumers (including consumption patterns) in the Member States, and
- a series of publications providing analysis of the Union market for fisheries and aquaculture products. Additionally, EUMOFA has an advisory role in informing Commission decision-making process.

Policy context

According to the experience in agriculture⁵⁹, transparency increases the efficiency of the markets, reduces information asymmetries and supports evidence-based policy making. Accurate, relevant and timely data on the market situation helps participants, reduce uncertainty and allow better adaptation of their production to market signals. To this end, the Commission implemented several market transparency tools for agriculture products and for energy prices⁶⁰ in the form of market observatories aiming at providing the relevant operators and stakeholders with more transparency by means of disseminating market data and short-term analysis in a timely manner.

Through the adoption of the Common Market Organisation (CMO) Regulation⁶¹ which forms one the pillars of the CFP with respect to marketing of fisheries and aquaculture products, a legal requirement for transparency and increased understanding of markets for fisheries and aquaculture products has been introduced under CMO article 42 under the heading “Market Intelligence”. In summary, this article gives to the Commission the responsibility of:

- gathering and disseminate economic knowledge and understanding of the Union market for fisheries and aquaculture products along the supply chain,
- providing practical support to producer organisations and inter-branch organisations to better coordinate information between operators and processors,
- regularly surveying prices along the supply chain and conducting analysis on market trends, and
- conducting ad-hoc market studies and provide a methodology for price formation surveys.

In order to implement these tasks, the CMO regulation invited the Commission to i) facilitate access to available data as relevant and ii) disseminate market information to the general public in an accessible and understandable manner. Member States were expected to contribute to the achievement of the market intelligence objective.

EUMOFA is the main implementing tool for market intelligence required under CMO article 42.

⁵⁹ Agricultural Markets Task Force. Enhancing the position of farmers in the supply chain. November 2016

⁶⁰ See https://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/market-observatory_en for milk, meat, sugar and crops and <https://ec.europa.eu/energy/en/data-analysis/market-analysis> for gas and electricity

⁶¹ Regulation (EU) No 1379/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 December 2013 on the common organisation of the markets in fishery and aquaculture products, amending Council Regulations (EC) No 1184/2006 and (EC) No 1224/2009 and repealing Council Regulation (EC) No 104/2000. OJ L 354, 28.12.2013, p. 1-21

3.5.2. Case study methodology

This case study has been conducted through an extensive review of documentation on EUMOFA activities and outputs available from the observatory website and from DG MARE. In addition, information has been collected through interviews with DG MARE representatives and EUMOFA contractors. A questionnaire on EUMOFA performances and usefulness has been submitted to all members of the Market Advisory Council through its secretariat. Unfortunately, only two responses have been received, representing an insufficient sample to draw robust conclusions.

Table 51: Key documents relevant to EUMOFA

Document name	Author	Year	Purpose
Table detailing market intelligence EMFF support over 2014-2017 provided by DG MARE	European Commission	2018	Financial information
EUMOFA annual report 2016	EUMOFA	2017	Technical information
MARE analysis of EUMOFA website statistics	European Commission	2017	EUMOFA website traffic
Results of EUMOFA user surveys	European Commission	2017	Users perception
EUMOFA website	EUMOFA	2018	Technical information
Other Commission-led observatories (AGRI, Energy)	European Commission		Benchmarking

Table 52: Key interviews relevant to case study 5: EUMOFA

Name	Organisation / function	Main areas covered
Mirko Marcolin	MARE A4	EUMOFA activities
Christophe Vande Weyer	MARE A4	EUMOFA activities
Carola Gonzales-Kessler	MARE A4	EUMOFA activities
Dominique Aviat	EUMOFA contractor	Technical information
Christian Rambaud	MARE B3	Use of EUMOFA data
Questionnaire disseminated to all Market AC members	European and MS associations members of MAC having an interested in market organisation – only two responses received	Feedback on EUMOFA

3.5.3. Overview of the EMFF- funded direct interventions

Purpose

EMFF article 90 provides for financial resources to support the development and dissemination of market intelligence for fisheries and aquaculture products by the Commission in accordance with CMO article 42.

According to information available, amounts programmed over the 2014-2018 period under EMFF article 90 represented EUR 4.8 million per year on average. Amounts committed were close to EUR 4.2 million per year on average, i.e. 88% of programmed amounts. Over 2014 - 2016, 100% of commitments have been paid.

EUMOFA is implemented by a consortium of private companies through a service contract concluded according to financial rules (e.g. public tendering process).

Table 53: Summary of amounts programmed, committed and paid for measures falling under EMFF article 90 "Market Intelligence"

(EUR)	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
<i>Programmed</i>	4 944 000	4 944 966	4 827 880	4 367 880	4 815 000
<i>Committed</i>	4 047 880	4 047 880	4 565 030	4 162 880	
<i>Paid</i>	4 047 880	4 047 880	4 047 880		

Source: DG MARE, situation early 2018.

EUMOFA is implemented by a consortium of private companies through a annual service contract (renewable 3 times) concluded according to financial rules (e.g. public tendering procedure) under the supervision of a steering committee coordinated by DG MARE. The cost of EUMOFA is EUR 4.05 million per year covering all expenses, including purchase of data which, according to EUMOFA contractors, represents \approx 8% of the total budget.

Implementation History

The principle of a Commission-led observatory for fisheries and aquaculture markets was first tabled in 2008⁶². EUMOFA became officially implemented when the EMFF regulation was adopted in May 2014, with EMFF article 90 providing a legal basis for its funding through direct management. In fact, EUMOFA started as early as 2010 on a pilot scale basis to satisfy a request of the European Parliament (preparatory action) on greater transparency of fisheries and aquaculture markets which has been included in the 2011 Commission proposal for a revised CMO⁶³. The pilot EUMOFA continued until 2014 to prepare for the adoption of the CMO Regulation. This explains why EUMOFA website was visible on the internet before the set-up of the fully-fledged observatory.

A challenge faced by the Commission was to raise awareness on EUMOFA existence and services provided. To this end, the Commission presented EUMOFA in a number of workshops / training sessions organised in the Member States. EUMOFA has also been advertised during the major European Seafood fair, including during the Brussels Seafood Fair which is according to specialists, the major event of this kind in Europe. An analysis of EUMOFA web site traffic between May 2016 and November 2017 revealed that EUMOFA website has been consulted by more than 21 000 unique users during 36 300 work sessions. EUMOFA website page viewed were almost equally split between price data and queries pages (46%) and publications pages (42%).

Outcomes

EUMOFA publishes and disseminates through its publicly accessible website. EUMOFA production can be broken down into two main categories: databases and publications. In addition, EUMOFA supports policy-making.

⁶² COM (2008) 453 final of 8.7.2008

⁶³ COM (2011) 416 of 13.07.2011 – see article 49.

Database products

The following market information is available in database form from the EUMOFA website:

- Weekly indicators on first sales, wholesale, import and retail
- Monthly and quarterly data provided by species and place of sale. Import/export data are reported by country, species and partner countries. Further details are provided by preservation state and presentation.
- Yearly data concerning supply balance sheets, landings, aquaculture, import, export, processing and consumption
- A macroeconomic dashboard presenting expenditure and inflation for fish and food in the Union, monthly marine gasoil prices, Union food price monitoring for a selection of commodities (e.g. cereals, meat) with comparison with fish prices, household consumption of most important fresh products in the EU and main exchange rates.

Available databases can be queried through EUMOFA predefined queries or ad-hoc queries defined by users as appropriate.

Written production (i.e. publications)

EUMOFA provides a number of analyses on the status of the Union market for fisheries and aquaculture products through series of publications accessible from the website.

- Monthly Highlights are 30 to 40 pages documents providing analysis on first sales in Europe for a selection of species in certain Member States, extra-EU imports of key commodities, consumption patterns of a selection of fisheries and aquaculture products, detailed case studies on various topics of interest for Union's markets and updates on the macroeconomic context. Monthly Highlights are available in English, French and Spanish.
- Annual analysis of the EU fish market: \approx 100 page document providing in-depth analysis of the EU fisheries and aquaculture situation for production, supply and trade and consumption by year with analysis of trends
- Detailed studies on price transmission along the value chain: due to the sensitive commercial nature of some price information, in particular at processing stage (e.g. prices of products purchased, prices of products sold), price transmission has to be measured through case studies covering specific products. Price transmission studies are implemented through a methodology transparently available from the EUMOFA web site.

The following table shows the number of publications issued by EUMOFA between 2014 and 2017.

Table 54: Number of EUMOFA publications by type issued between 2014 and 2017

Type of publication	Number of issues
Monthly highlights	6 issues in 2014 10 issues in 2015 12 issues in 2016 11 issues in 2017
EU fish market	2014, 2015, 2016 and 2017 issues
Price structure in the supply chain	Methodological guidelines 16 case studies on price transmission along the value chain

Source: EUMOFA website

Compared to other Commission's led observatory in the agriculture sector, EUMOFA is a fully-fledged tool incorporating a wide range of information on the EU markets for fisheries and aquaculture products that users can utilise in a flexible manner according to their needs. By comparison, other Commission's led Agriculture observatories are more statics and do not provide detailed analysis of the markets. In 2016, the Agriculture Task Force concluded⁶⁴ that Commission-led market observatories for agriculture products could be improved in particular as regards the timeliness and the standardisation of data collected from Member States and recommended integration as appropriate of consumption data and producers' input price. In addition, the Task Force recommended adoption of modern and easy-to-use communication formats such as web-based applications. Since EUMOFA already includes the features recommended by the Agricultural Task Force for agriculture market observatories in 2016, it can be concluded that EUMOFA performs better than its agriculture counterparts.

Support to policy-making

Following indications from DG MARE, EUMOFA data are used by different DG MARE services to inform policy making. One example is the recurrent utilisation of EUMOFA data by the DG MARE unit in charge of negotiating sustainable fisheries partnership agreements (SFPA) with third countries, with prices of target species subject to access arrangement informing decisions on the value of the financial compensation to be paid to third countries and evaluations of the performances of SFPAs. Another example was the consideration of the value of the different species in the preparation of the of the multi-annual plan for fish stocks in the Western Mediterranean. This advisory role is not visible to the general public, but it is important to inform DG MARE legislative activities.

3.5.4. Thematic findings

The main evaluation question in relation to EUMOFA is ***To what extent has EUMOFA delivered on the Commission commitments on market intelligence as defined in art. 42 of the CMO regulation (1379/2013)?***. The following sections review CMO article 42 commitments and identify the extent to which they have been delivered through EUMOFA.

Commitment 1: gather, analyse and disseminate economic knowledge and understanding of the Union market for fisheries and aquaculture products along the supply chain taking into account the international context (Art.42.1 a)

EUMOFA gathers economic information on the Union market for fisheries and aquaculture markets from various sources in Member States and from international sources (Eurostat, FAO). Economic information gathered encompasses all the supply chain from landing stage, or ex-farm stage for aquaculture, to retail. Market information is analysed in EUMOFA periodic publications (Monthly Highlights, Annual analysis for the EU fish market, see Table 54), and disseminated to the general public. The international context is taken into account through maintenance of a macro-economic dashboard and consideration of international developments in EUMOFA analysis. EUMOFA can be evaluated as delivering this CMO commitment.

⁶⁴ Agricultural Markets Task Force. Enhancing the position of farmers in the supply chain. November 2016

Commitment 2: provide practical support to producer organisations and inter-branch organisations to better coordinate information between operators and processors (Art. 42.1 b)

This CMO commitment considers a practical support to a specific category of professional organisations, the producer organisations (POs), their associations and the Inter-Branch Organisations (IBOs). The main rationale is that the CMO gives a pivotal role to these organisations in the marketing of fishery and aquaculture products through implementation of Production and Marketing Plans mandated by CMO article 28. EUMOFA, which is an instrument developed to provide information and analysis to the general public, is not the main relevant tool to deliver tailored support to POs. However, though data gathered and analysis produced, EUMOFA brings a contribution for coordination of information and partially contribute to this CMO commitment.

Commitment 3: regularly survey prices for fishery and aquaculture products in the Union market along the supply chain and conduct analyses on market trends (Art. 42.1 c)

EUMOFA database provide price information regularly updated on a weekly basis as appropriate. Analysis of market trends are provided in monthly highlights and yearly publication. However, EUMOFA cannot encompass all the supply chain in a systematic manner due to the sensitive nature of price information at processing stage (i.e. prices of raw material purchased, ex-factory price of processed fisheries products). EUMOFA can be evaluated as delivering this CMO commitment to the extent it is possible given the sensitivity of information on prices at certain stages of the supply chain. However, this is compensated for by regular publication of case studies on price transmission (16 case studies published so far).

Commitment 4: conduct ad-hoc market studies and provide a methodology for price formation surveys

In Monthly Highlights, EUMOFA disseminates analysis on the markets for certain species selected by the EUMOFA steering committee. Each Monthly Highlight (\approx 40 issues between 2014 and 2017) presents a different market studies. EUMOFA prepared and disseminated a methodology for price formation surveys available from its website. This methodology is implemented to conduct the case studies on price transmission cited above. EUMOFA can be evaluated as delivering this CMO commitment.

Commitment 5: facilitate access to available data on fishery and aquaculture products collected pursuant to Union law (Art. 42.2 a)

Through EUMOFA, the Commission could concentrate available data on fisheries and aquaculture and add value to the process through harmonisation and standardisation of information

Commitment 6: make market information, such as price surveys, market analyses and studies, available to all the stakeholders and to the general public in an accessible and understandable manner, subject to Regulation (EC) No 45/2001 of the European Parliament and of the Council⁶⁵.

Access to available data and analysis is facilitated by publication of available data and analysis on a publicly accessible dedicated website with functionalities available in all EU languages. No personal data are published. EUMOFA can be evaluated as delivering this CMO commitment.

⁶⁵ Regulation (EC) No 45/2001 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 December 2000 on the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data by the Community institutions and bodies and on the free movement of such data (OJ L 8, 12.1.2001, p. 1).

3.5.5. Mandatory evaluation criteria

Relevance

EUMOFA is the main initiative implemented by the Commission to deliver EU commitments as regards market intelligence for fisheries and aquaculture products, in particular commitments made under CMO article 42.1 a), c) and d) and CMO article 42.2. The continued relevance of EUMOFA in this respect is therefore evident.

Effectiveness

EUMOFA is designed to respond to the needs of its potential users which include a wide range of stakeholders (policy-makers, analysts, fishermen, processors, distributors, consumers, etc.) which may have needs as regards information on the markets. For example, according to feedback received from some stakeholders, fish producers express needs for first sale prices for all species / grade combinations and from all auction places while seafood distributors are more interested by detailed information on consumption patterns for fresh and frozen products in the different Member States.

Users' needs have been explored in detail by DG MARE⁶⁶ through an online survey deployed between November 2016 and March 2017. Advice and opinions of 234 EUMOFA users could be obtained. Whilst the online surveys confirmed an overall positive rating by users, in particular in relation to analysis disseminated through publication, several avenues for improvement have been suggested including i) integration of additional data in EUMOFA (aquaculture, data by species / presentation, broader geographic coverage), ii) improvements of EUMOFA functionalities (search tools, queries, video tutorials) and iii) communication and outreach as a majority of users discovered existence of EUMOFA website through search engine. According to DG MARE and EUMOFA contractors, all suggestions for improvement are being addressed.

As suggested by the positive appreciation of EUMOFA by users having contributed to the online survey, EUMOFA is effective in providing data and analysis on the EU market for fisheries and aquaculture products as expected by CMO article 42. The benchmarking of EUMOFA with other observatories implemented by the Commission also supports a positive appreciation of EUMOFA effectiveness in delivering relevant market information. Over the second half of the EMFF programming period, EUMOFA effectiveness can certainly be improved through integration of users' expressed needs, as appropriate.

Efficiency

EUMOFA is implemented through a service contract negotiated with a consortium of private companies following a public tendering procedure. According to DG MARE, the proposal of the selected consortium offered the best value for money and was below initial forecast (EUR 4.08 million contract value vs EUR 4.5 million forecast). EUMOFA contract is re-tendered every four years. The decision to contract out almost entirely EUMOFA implementation to a single contractor increases its efficiency by reducing transaction costs and administrative burden stemming from multiple procurements for data purchase, IT developments, analyses etc.

⁶⁶ A detailed report of the survey is available from DG MARE

According to EUMOFA data⁶⁷, household consumption of fresh fish products in 12 Member States⁶⁸ represented a value of EUR 15 979 billion in 2016. By comparison, the EU investment in EUMOFA (EUR 4.08 million) is insignificant.

Coherence

EUMOFA is the main implementing tool of CMO article 42. It is designed to deliver CMO commitments with respect to market intelligence. EUMOFA internal coherence cannot be challenged.

EUMOFA is also coherent with other Commission's initiatives aiming at improving market transparency like for example, market observatories for agriculture products or market observatories for energy prices.

EU Added Value

One added value component of EUMOFA is to streamline different data sources of interest in relation to the EU market for fisheries and aquaculture products (*inter alia* national sources, FAO, Eurostat) and to harmonise and publish these data under standardised formats. In the absence of EUMOFA, concerned stakeholders could obtain similar data, but the costs for identifying, collecting and standardising data from different sources would be probably high and not accessible to all operators of the supply chain, often fragmented and small businesses as far as fisheries and aquaculture sector is concerned.

The main EUMOFA added value, according to its users, is to provide detailed analysis at EU and global levels of market for fisheries and aquaculture products. Analysis detailed in EUMOFA publications clearly go beyond mere descriptions of statistical series.

The involvement of the Commission in an observatory can also be considered as beneficial as public bodies are sometimes seen as more objective and credible than private bodies when pursuing this activity. Public bodies may assure better access to information for all market participants involved in the value chain and promote an open, stable and standardised framework for the collection and presentation of data. The involvement of the Commission also ensures that the needs of all Member States are addressed.

In conclusion, EU involvement in EUMOFA achieves benefits beyond what could be achieved at national levels.

3.5.6. Key findings

Lessons learnt

- Being the main implementing tool of CMO article 42 on market intelligence, and representing 96% of annual commitments under EMFF article 90, EUMOFA evaluation overlaps to a large extent with market intelligence evaluation.
- Through streamlining and harmonisation of data on market for fisheries and aquaculture products and though detailed analysis of market situations and trends, EUMOFA contributes to deliver most of the EU commitments as regards market transparency.

⁶⁷ The EU Fish Market, 2017 edition.

⁶⁸ The 12 Member States concerned represented 86% of total EU household expenditures on fish products according to EUMOFA

- According to users, EUMOFA is effective in delivering information on the markets for fisheries and aquaculture products. EUMOFA also compares favourably with other Commission-led observatory in terms of accessibility and of content. EUMOFA users include a large range of stakeholders in public administrations and in the private sector. Satisfying the needs of all stakeholders as appropriate will one of the main challenge ahead for EUMOFA over the second part of the EMFF programming period.
- The value for money of EUMOFA cannot be assessed due to the intangible nature of the benefits it intends to deliver. However, the Commission selected an implementing solution that offered the best value for money through competitive procurement process while keeping transaction costs at a minimum. Also, the cost of EUMOFA can be regarded as fairly small compared to the value of the markets it focuses on.
- The involvement of the Commission in EUMOFA supports greater achievements than could be obtained by Member States at national level with respect to market transparency at EU and global levels.

Identification of influencing factors

- A key influencing factor influencing the achievements of EUMOFA as from the data of application of the EMFF Regulation was its earlier developments as a preparatory action beginning in 2010. During the EUMOFA pilot phase, data sources could be identified and streamlined, harmonisation procedures defined, needs for market analysis defined and substantial work for IT development implemented to have an operational dedicated website.

Commission's decision to delegate almost entirely EUMOFA implementation to a single contractor through a renewable service contract increased the efficiency of the process by reducing transaction costs and administrative burden stemming from multiple procurements.

4. OPEN PUBLIC CONSULTATION

The Public consultation on the *interim evaluation of the direct management under the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF)* was launched on 28th May 2018 and will stay open until 3rd September 2018.

As the consultation closes after the submission of this Report, the analysis provided here only takes into account the responses received up to and until 24th July 2014.

4.1. OPC questionnaire

Objective of the consultation

The consultation related to the current evaluation study, naming the of the interim evaluation as “to assess performance of and fine-tune the implementation of the direct management component of the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF) for the current programming period 2014-2020”.

Target group

The OPC survey targeted all of the stakeholder groups affected by the interventions under the EMFF namely: public authorities, industry, researchers and civil society. For instance, spatial planning itself will benefit business and the public authorities that set them up will be able to judge whether the measures financed here helped set them up.

Survey questionnaire

Interim evaluation of direct management part of the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund

Fields marked with * are mandatory.

Introduction

The aim of the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF) is to support the implementation of the EU's Integrated Maritime Policy and Common Fisheries Policy. 90% of the Fund is managed autonomously by national authorities. However, just over 10%, €647,275,400 in total over the seven years 2014-2020, has been earmarked for measures managed directly by the services of the European Commission and the Executive Agency for Small and Medium Enterprises. Approximately 100 contracts under this direct management part of the programme are signed each year.

This Public Consultation has been launched to support the ongoing Interim evaluation of the implementation of the direct management component of the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF). The evaluation aims to determine how well the objectives have been met by considering their relevance, effectiveness, efficiency (including an assessment of the potential for regulatory simplification and burden reduction), coherence and EU added value. You are invited to contribute to this evaluation by replying to the questionnaire below.

Identification

Your personal details (name and e-mail) may be used to contact you regarding this consultation; in particular to check that the summary of the outcome of the consultation reflects your views.

***1. Name** [_____]

***2. Email** [_____]

***3. Where are you based?** [_____]

***4. Are you replying on behalf of an organisation or as an individual?**

- As part of an organisation
- As an individual

5. Do you consent to the European Commission publishing your replies?

(if first answer in 4. selected)

- Yes, include my name and organisation name (I consent to the publication of all information in my contribution in whole or in part, including my name and the organisation name. I declare that nothing within my response is unlawful or would infringe the rights of any third party in a manner that would prevent publication).
- Yes, include only organisation name I consent to the publication of all information in my contribution in whole or in part, including my organisation's name but not my name, and I declare that nothing within my response is unlawful or would infringe the rights of any third party in a manner that would prevent publication).
- Only anonymously (I consent to the publication of any information in my contribution in whole or in part (which may include quotes or opinions I express) provided that I remain anonymous. I declare that nothing within my response is unlawful or would infringe the rights of any third party in a manner that would prevent publication).

***6. What organisation? [_____]**

***7. Is your organisation registered under the EU transparency register? If you do not know you can search the register. You may register [here](#) if not already registered.**

- yes
- no

8. What is your identification number in transparency register? [_____]

9. Do you consent to the European Commission publishing your replies?

(if second answer in 4. selected)

- Yes include my name (I consent to the publication of all information in my contribution in whole or in part, including my name. I declare that nothing within my response is unlawful or would infringe the rights of any third party in a manner that would prevent publication).
- Only anonymously (I consent to the publication of any information in my contribution in whole or in part (which may include quotes or opinions I express) provided that I remain anonymous. I declare that nothing within my response is unlawful or would infringe the rights of any third party in a manner that would prevent publication).

***10. You are replying based on your knowledge of maritime affairs and fisheries as part of:**

- the private sector
- a public authority
- academia and research
- civil society (individuals, non-governmental organisations, environmental groups (etc))

11. Can you give more information about your background? (optional question)

(if second answer in 4. selected)

[_____]

***12. What are your main interests (more than one reply accepted)**

- Fisheries
- other blue economy sectors (includes tourism, oil and gas, renewable energy, shipping, ports, shipbuilding, aquaculture)
- marine resources and environment
- none of these

***13. What is your interest? 20 character(s) maximum**

(If "other" chosen in Q12)

[_____]

***14. What aspects of fisheries concern you? (more than one answer allowed)**

(If "fisheries" chosen in Q12)

- Finish
- Processing
- Wholesale
- Retail
- Other

15. Please specify (optional) 50 character(s) maximum

(If "other" chosen in Q14)

[]

***16. Which part of blue economy interests you? (more than one answer allowed)**

(If "blue economy" chosen in Q12)

- bioeconomy (living resources)
- tourism
- shipbuilding
- non-living resources
- transport
- renewable energy
- generic technology
- coastal engineering
- other

17. Please specify (optional) 50 character(s) maximum

(If "other" chosen in Q16)

[]

***18. What aspects of marine resources and environment concern you? (more than one answer allowed)**

(If "marine resources and environment" chosen in Q12)

- conservation of commercial species
- management of protected areas
- spatial planning
- coastal protection
- environmental reporting
- impact assessments
- other

19. Please specify (optional) 50 character(s) maximum

(If "other" chosen in Q16)

[]

***20. Have you or your organisation received funding from the direct management part of European Maritime and Fisheries Fund?**

- Yes
- No
- don't know

Effectiveness

21. How much have these actions contributed to the stronger maritime economy, better protection of marine resources or a more joined-up approach to maritime policies?

	significantly to a stronger maritime economy	significantly to better protection of marine resources	significantly to more joined-up approach to maritime policy	to a stronger maritime economy to some extent	better protection of marine resources to some extent	to more joined-up approach to maritime policies to some extent	not at all	no opinion
*contributions to international organisations								
*creation of digital sea bed maps								
*events to share knowledge between stakeholders								
*information tools and vessel chartering to support fisheries control and enforcement								
*observatory for fishery and aquaculture products								
*projects to facilitate cross-border spatial planning								
*projects to improve information flow between maritime authorities								
*scientific advice for fisheries								
*studies to help authorities meet requirements of Marine Strategy Framework Directive								
*studies to improve knowledge of Blue Growth								
*support to Advisory Councils								
*support to regional fisheries management organisations								

22. Do you have any comments on how these actions could be improved to increase their usefulness? [_____]

Relevance

23. How relevant to the needs of the blue economy and the marine environment were the following measures that were supported by the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund?

	essential	very useful	of some use	not necessary	no opinion
*creation of digital sea bed maps					
*events to share knowledge between stakeholders					
*projects to facilitate cross-border spatial planning					
*projects to improve information flow between maritime authorities					
*studies to help authorities meet requirements of Marine Strategy Framework Directive					
*studies to improve knowledge of Blue Growth					

24. Please explain your scoring (optional question) [_____]

25. How relevant were the following measures to the economically, environmentally and socially sustainable use of fisheries resources?

	essential	very useful	of some use	not necessary	no opinion
*contributions to international organisations					
*observatory for fishery and aquaculture products					
*scientific advice for fisheries					
*support to Advisory Councils					
* support to information technology and chartering vessels					
*support to regional fisheries management organisations					

26. Please explain your scoring (optional question) [_____]

Coherence

27. How coherent were measures undertaken with other EU policies?

	completely complementary	complementary but could be better coordinated	overlapping	contradictory	unrelated	no opinion
*energy policy						
*environmental policy						
*industrial policy						

*regional policy						
*research policy						
*space policy						
*transport policy						

28. Please explain your scoring or include other remarks (optional question) [_____]

EU Added value

29. In your opinion, what is the EU added-value of the activities undertaken under the direct management component of the EMFF?

	adds to work done at national level	best done at EU level	could be done at national level	would be better through bilateral or multilateral agreements	no opinion
*contributions to international organisations					
*creation of digital sea bed maps					
*events to share knowledge between stakeholders					
*information tools and vessel chartering to support fisheries control and enforcement					
*observatory for fishery and aquaculture products					
*projects to facilitate cross-border spatial planning					
*projects to improve information flow between maritime authorities					
*scientific advice for fisheries					
*studies to help authorities meet requirements of Marine Strategy Framework Directive					
*studies to improve knowledge of Blue Growth					
*support to Advisory Councils					
*support to regional fisheries management organisations					

30. Please provide any more comments on EU added value? (optional) [_____]

Efficiency

(question only for those who have participated in actions supported by the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund)

31. How efficient were the actions that you participated in?

	yes	partly	no	no opinion
*could results have been achieved with fewer resources?				
*was the administrative burden in participating in the actions proportionate?				

32. Please explain your answer (optional) [_____]

Other remarks

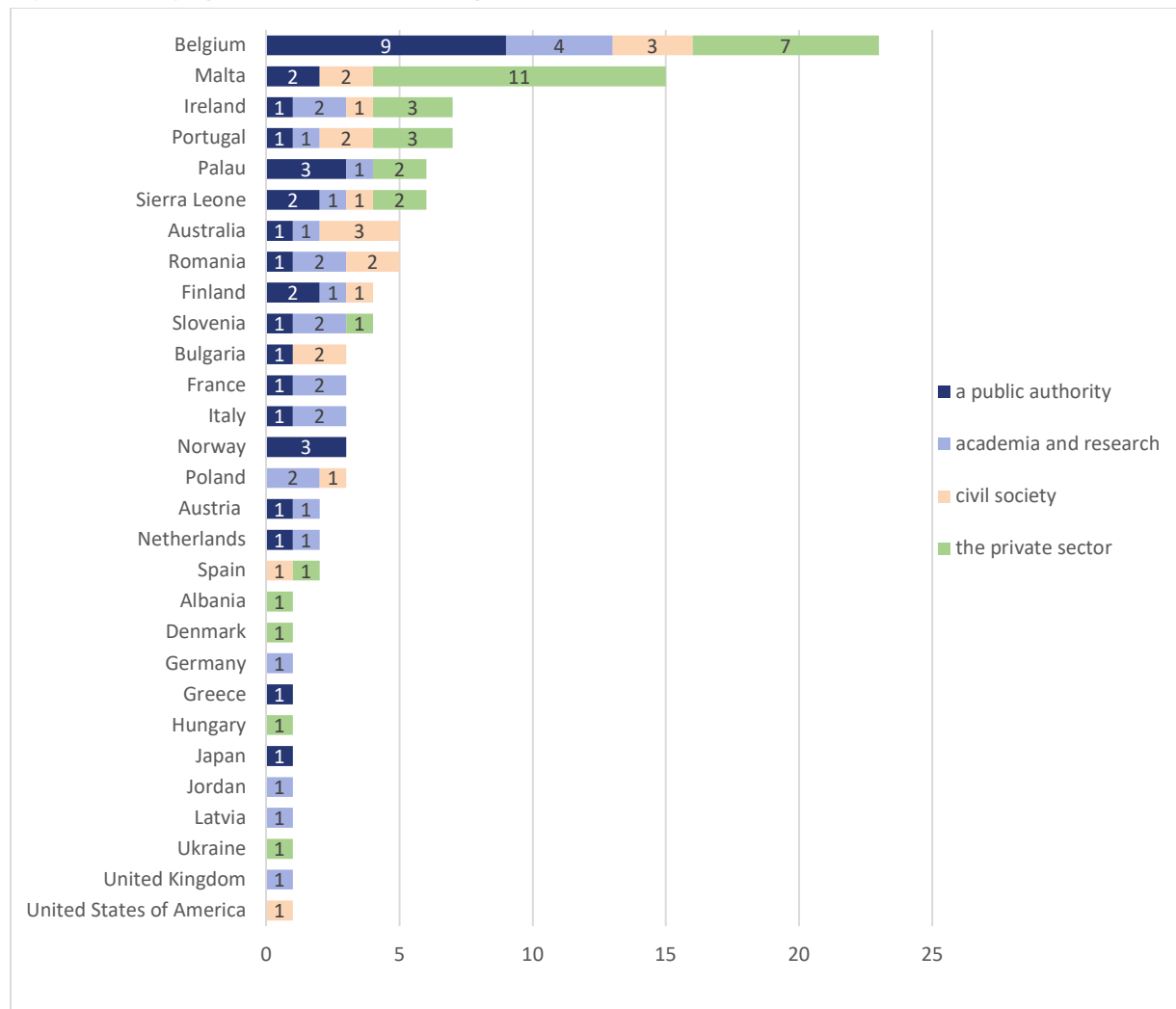
33. Please add any other information that you feel to be relevant (optional question) [_____]

34. Upload any additional information

4.2. Partial results of the Open Public Consultations

4.2.1. Respondents' profiles

Figure 10: Geographical location of the respondents



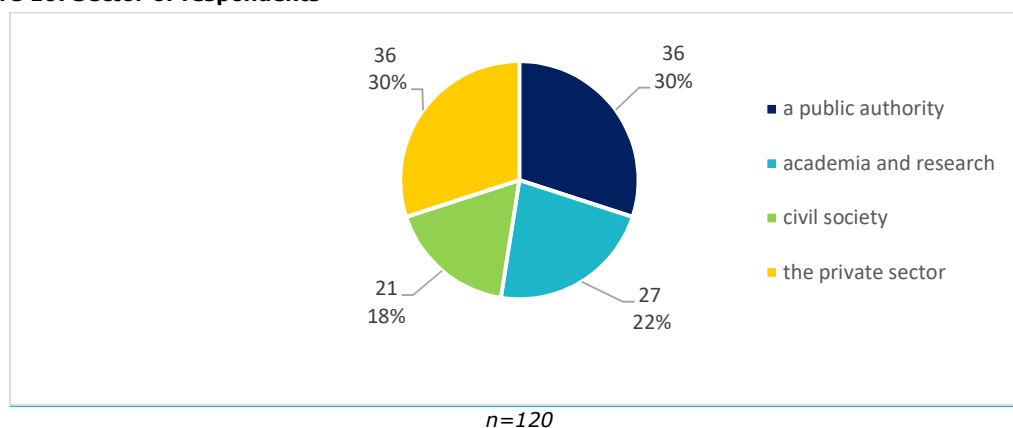
The respondents to the Open Public Consultations (OPC) were located in 29 countries. Most of the respondents were located in the EU Member States (21 MSs). Geographical locations

of respondents from outside of the EU included Palau, Sierra Leone, Australia, Norway, Albania, Japan, Jordan and United States of America.⁶⁹

Out of all the MSs, most respondents (23) were located in Belgium, followed by Malta (15), Ireland and Portugal (both 7), Romania (5), Finland and Slovenia (4), Bulgaria, France, Italy and Poland (3) and Austria, Netherlands and Spain. There were single respondents from Denmark, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Latvia and United Kingdom. Out of the countries outside the EU, Palau and Sierra Leone had the most respondents: 6 per each country.

With regards to the sector of respondents, Belgium had the public sector as well as academia and research sector mostly represented (9 and 4 respondents respectively). Both Australia and Belgium had the most numerous civil society respondents, 3 per each country, whereas in Malta has the most private sector respondents.

Figure 10: Sector of respondents



The respondents were asked to state the sector based on which they are replying on maritime affairs and fisheries issues. The public authorities and the private sector are equally represented, as shown in Figure 10, with 36 respondents each, whereas civil society is the least represented sector (21 respondents).

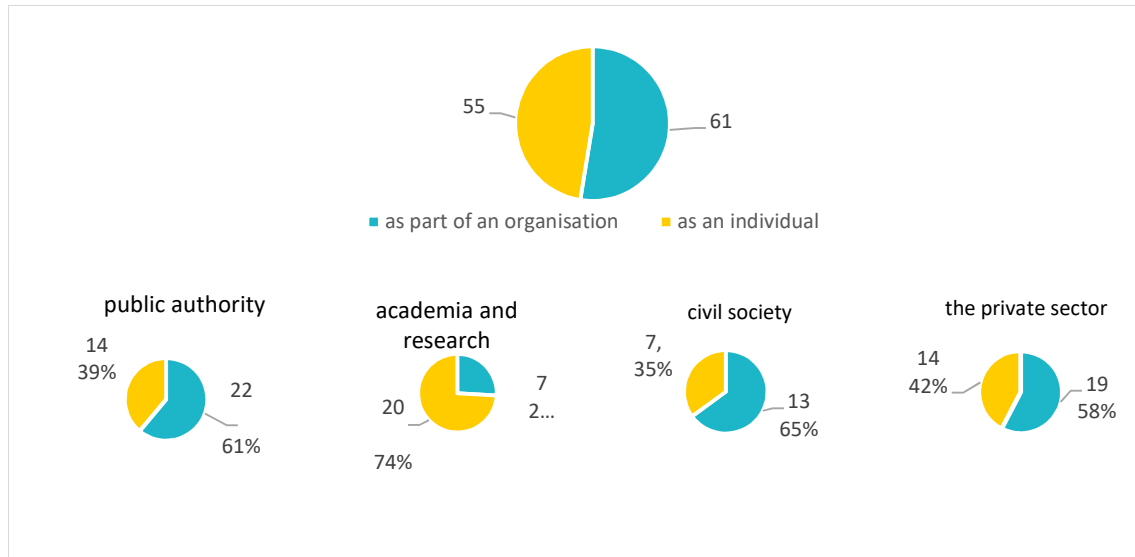
The background of the respondents is diversified ranging from researchers in marine ecology and fisheries sciences, marine and fisheries scientists to EU environmental policy officers, projects coordinators, specialists in environmental law and maritime administrative law.

The respondents to the survey were then asked to state if they are replying on behalf of an organisation or as an individual. Predominantly, the respondents replied as an individual, as shown in

⁶⁹ Geographical distribution of respondents is based on their declarations only (mandatory question).

Figure 11 overleaf.

Figure 11: The position of the respondents

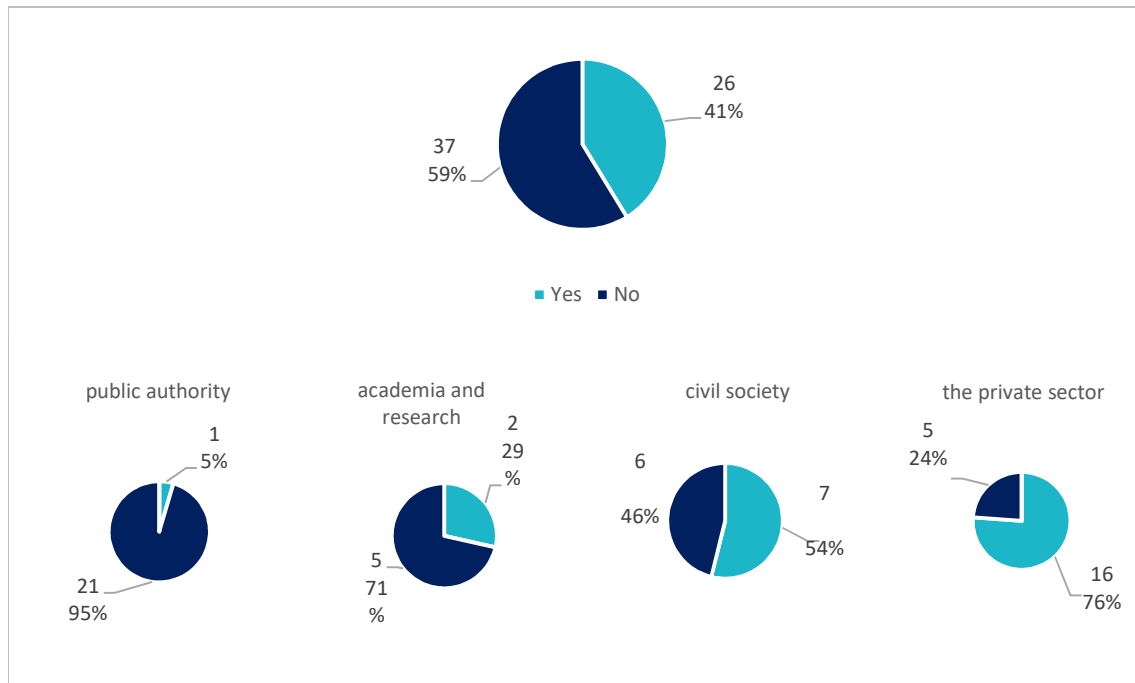


n=116

In the public sector, civil society sector and private sector most respondents replied as part of an organisation. Only in the academia and research sector, respondents replied as an individual.

The respondents were next asked to state if their organisation is registered under the EU transparency register. Over half of them revealed not having their organisation registered, as shown in Figure 12.

Figure 12: Registration under the EU transparency register

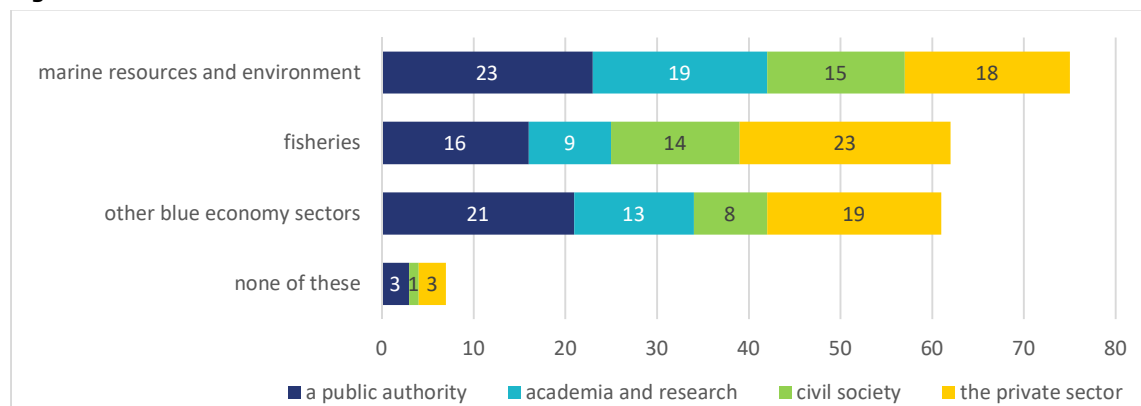


n=63

Public authorities are least likely to be registered, followed by academia and research sector, whereas the private sector and civil society have an elevated level of registration under the EU transparency register.

The respondents were then asked to choose their main interests. It appears that marine resources and environment represent an important level of interest for all four sectors.

Figure 13: Main interests



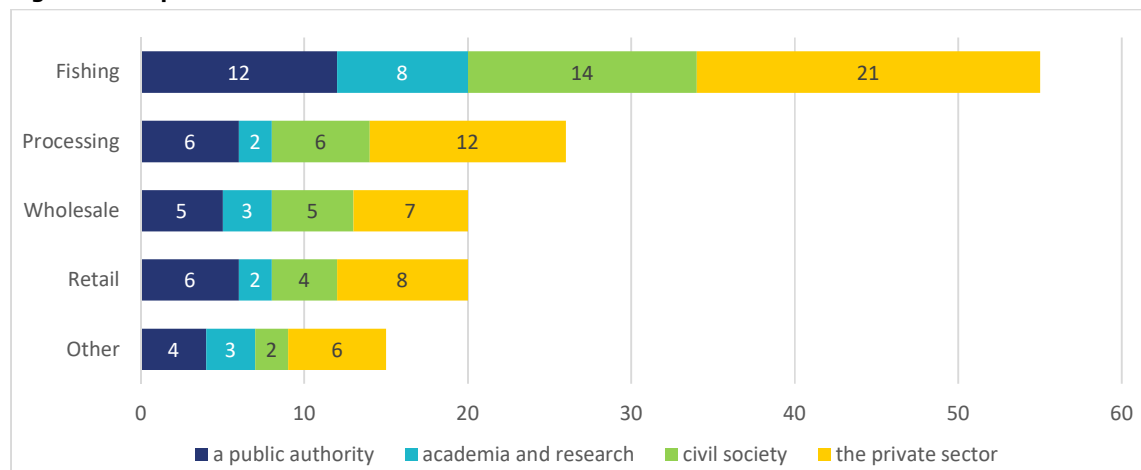
n=120

As shown in Figure 13, the public authorities also showed interest in other blue economy sectors, whereas the civil society presented the least interest in this area. The private sector is mostly interested in fisheries, whereas the academia and research preferred the marine resources and environment.

Apart from the three main sectors, a small number of respondents presented different interests, such as inland aquaculture, security maritime and freshwater aquaculture.

Representatives of all four sectors, predominantly the private sector, chose fishing as their main interest out of the fisheries industry, as shown in Figure 14.

Figure 14: Aspects of fisheries

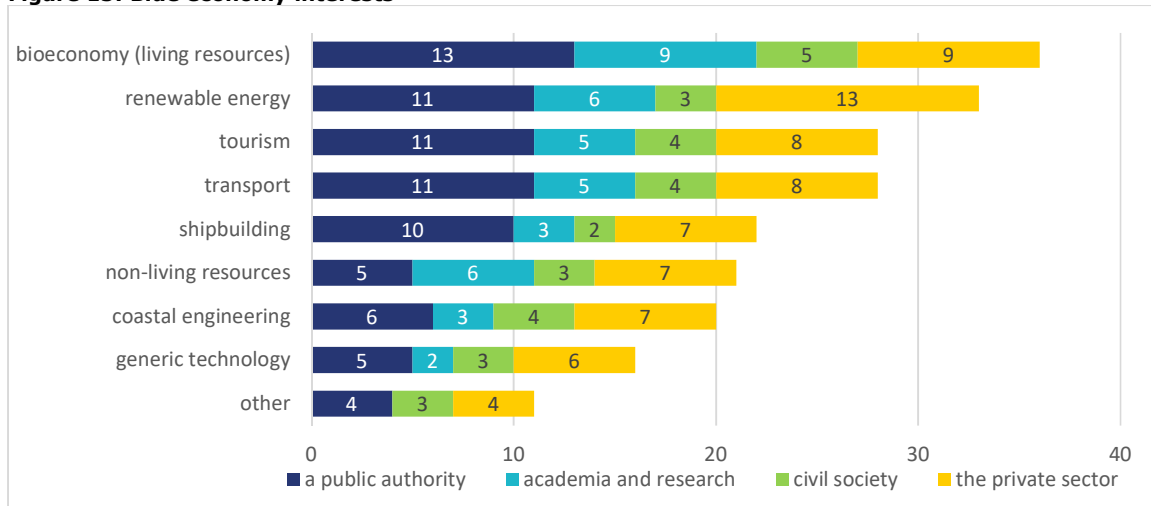


n=65

Representatives of public authorities and civil society shared the same interest in processing and wholesale. Apart from the fishing aspect, respondents from academia and research sector showed low interest in all the other aspects of fisheries, whereas the respondents from the civil society showed little interest in retail.

Other aspects of fisheries that concerned the respondents are fisheries control, fisheries heritage and maritime culture, sustainable fishing, shellfish farming and inland fish production.

Figure 15: Blue economy interests



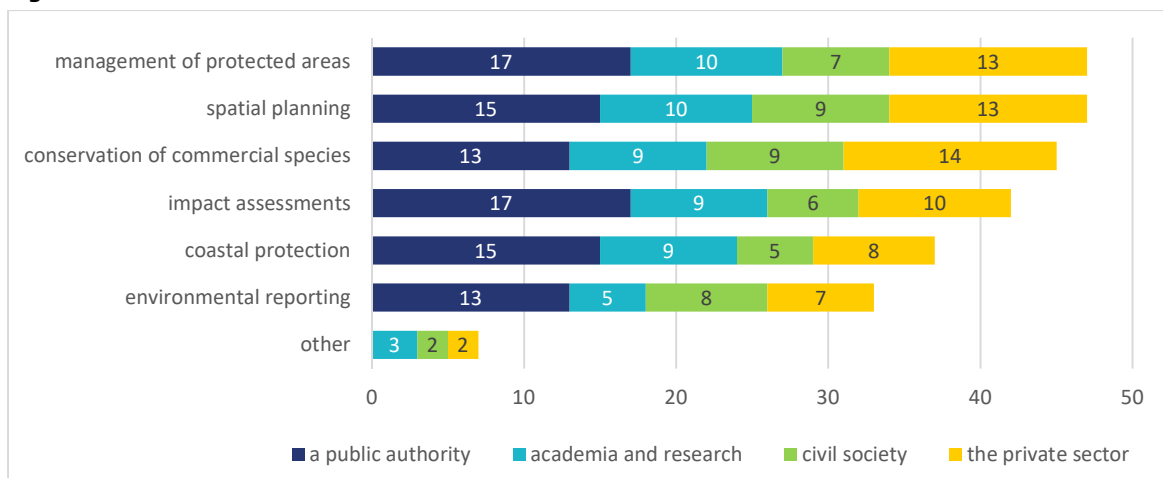
n=64

As shown in Figure 16, the bioeconomy aspect of blue economy represented a high interest for all four sectors, particularly for public authorities, academia and research sector and civil society, whereas the private sector presented more interest in renewable energy.

The respondents presented the least interest in the generic technology aspect. It appears that tourist and transport was equally interesting for all the four sectors.

Other aspects of the blue economy that concerned the respondents are coast guard cooperation, maritime surveillance, maritime education, maritime transport, marine microbiomics and industrial biotechnology.

Figure 16: Marine resources and environment



n=78

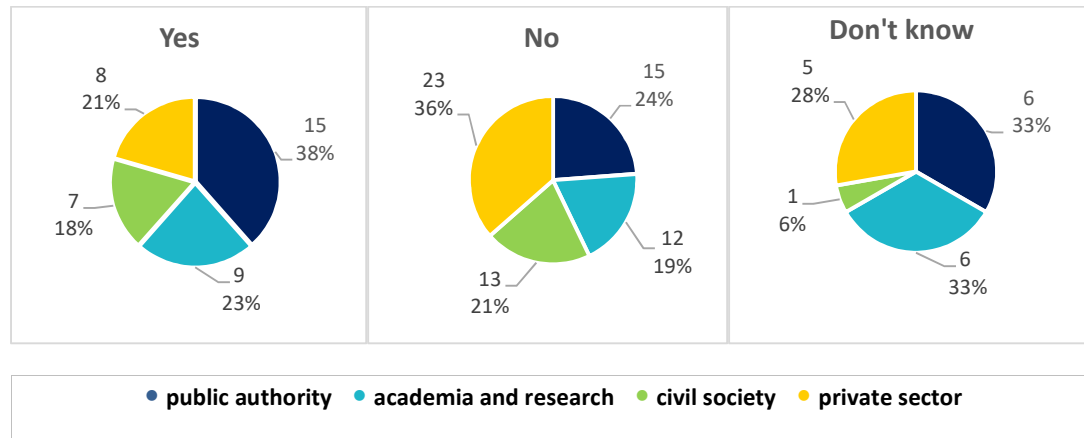
The respondents from public authorities stated an elevated interest in all the aspects of marine resources and environment, particularly for management of protected area and impact assessments. Also, academia and research sector representatives showed a high interest in almost all the aspects, apart from environmental reporting.

For the civil society and the private sector, the spatial planning and conservation of commercial species were the most important aspects.

Other aspects of interest, preponderantly for the civil society, are sea pollution and conservation of Endangered, Threatened and Protected (ETP) species caught as bycatch. It appears that academia and research sector present an interest in marine geology.

As shown in Figure 17, every sector receives direct funding from the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund. The public authorities are most likely to have received it, but on the other side, the academia and research sector is the least likely to have received it.

Figure 17: Funding received

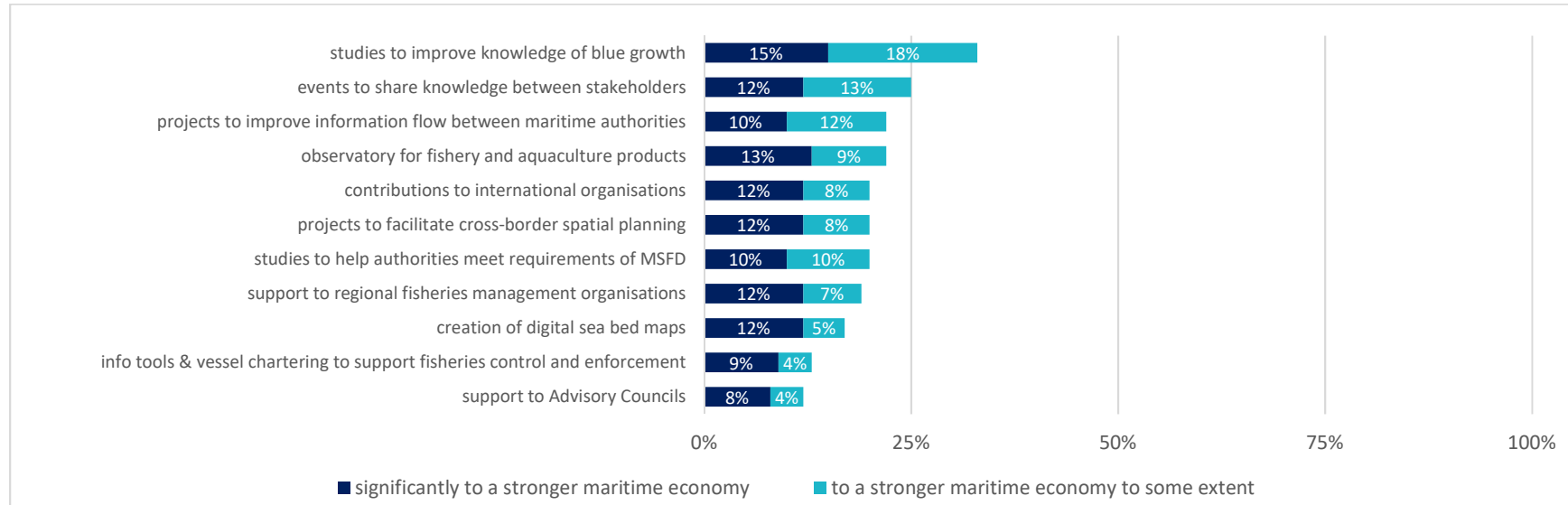


n=120

4.2.2. Effectiveness

Figures on the next pages demonstrate respondents' feedback on how much have the actions contributed to the stronger maritime economy, better protection of marine resources or a more joined-up approach to maritime policies. The figures present only the percentages of respondents who believed particular actions contributed "strongly" and "to some extent" to a given field. A separate figure demonstrates the percentages of respondents who believed that the actions did not contribute to the fields at all.

Figure 18: Actions contributing to a stronger maritime economy



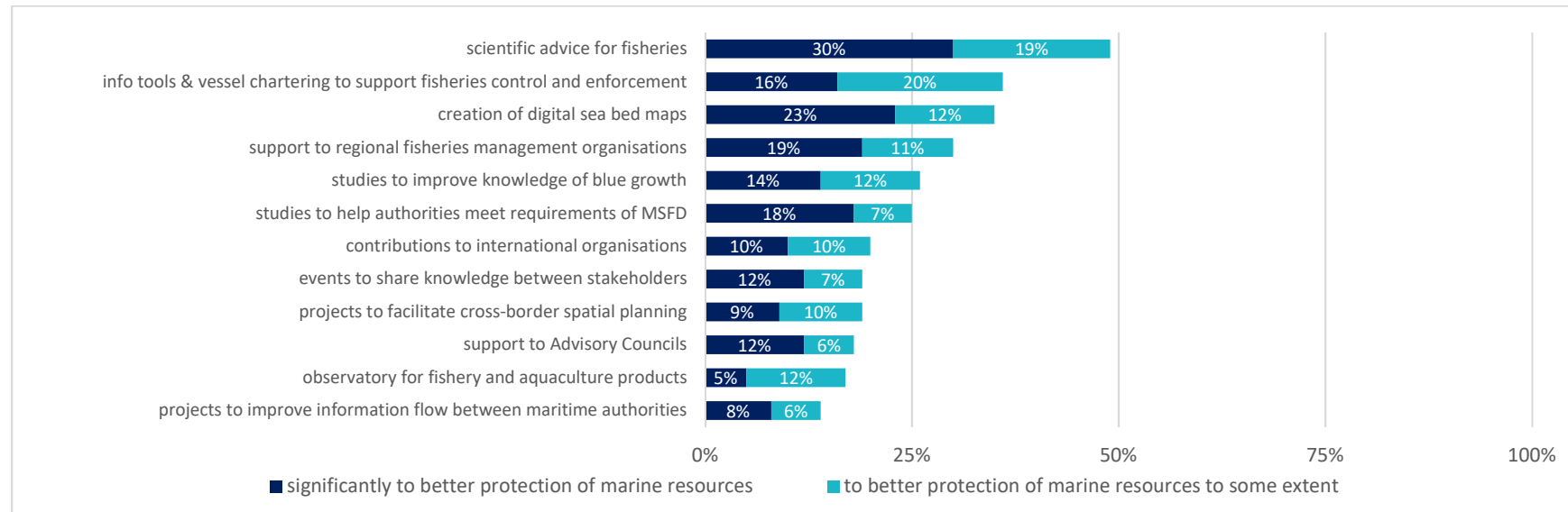
n=120

One third of the respondents decided that studies to improve knowledge of blue growth economy contribute to a stronger maritime economy. When discounting the respondents who indicated 'no opinion' to this question, 38% of respondents believe the studies to improve knowledge of blue growth contributed at least to some extent. Applying the same logic (discounting 'no opinion' choices), 28% of respondents believe that the events to share knowledge between stakeholders contributed to maritime economy 'strongly' or 'to some extent'.

The observatory for fishery and aquaculture products is considered to contribute significantly to a stronger maritime economy, being voted by 20% of the respondents, after discounting 'no opinion' answers.

The actions contributing the least to this aspect are the information tools and vessel chartering to support fisheries control and enforcement, and the support to Advisory Council, with 18% and 17% respectively (discounting the respondents who indicated 'no opinion').

Figure 19: Actions contributing to better protection of marine resources



n=120

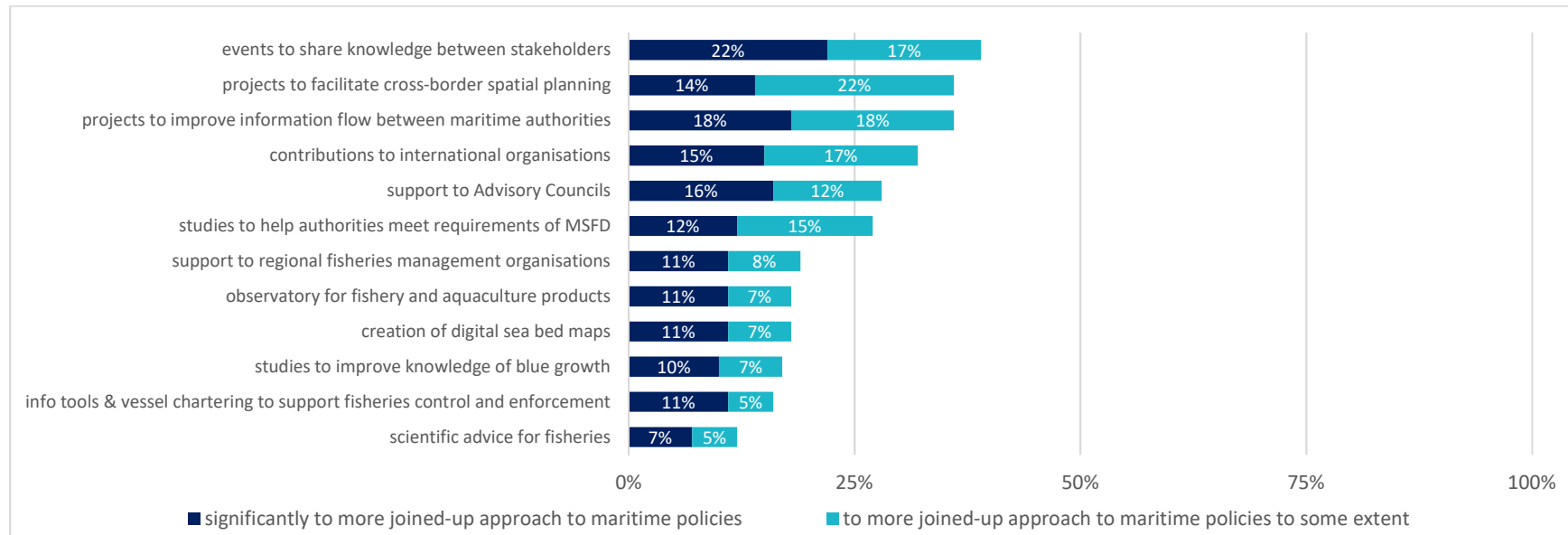
Almost 50% of the respondents considered that scientific advice for fisheries contributes 'significantly' or 'to some extent' to a better protection of marine resources. When discounting 'no opinion' answers to this question, 63% of respondents believe the scientific advice for fisheries contributed to better protection of marine sources ('significantly' or 'to some extent'). Applying the same logic (discounting 'no opinion' choices) 50% of respondents believe that information tools and vessel charter contributed to a better protection of marine resources.

The creation of digital sea bed maps was considered by 30% of the respondents as 'significantly' contributing to the protection of marine resources, after discounting the respondents who indicated 'no opinion'.

More than a quarter of the respondents considered that actions such as information tools and vessel chartering, creation of digital sea bed maps, support to regional fisheries management organisation, studies to improve knowledge of blue growth and studies to help authorities meet requirements of MSFD contributed to the protection of marine resources, as shown in Figure 19.

Projects to improve information flow between maritime authorities are considered contributing least to marine resources.

Figure 20: Actions contributing to more joined-up approach to maritime policies



n=120

Almost a quarter of the respondents considered events to share knowledge between stakeholders as 'significantly' contributing to a more joined up approach to a more joined-up approach to maritime policies, whereas 17% of them considered it contributes 'to some extent'. When discounting 'no option' answers, 25% of respondents believe that such events contributed 'significantly' and 19% that they contributed 'to some extent' to a more joined-up approach to maritime policies.

Projects to facilitate cross-border spatial planning is considered to contribute to the maritime policies, but only 14% of the respondents believe they brings a 'significant' contribution. When discounting 'no opinion' respondents, this group increases to 18%. Applying the same logic (discounting 'no opinion' choices), 45% of the respondents find this action contributing, both, 'significantly' or 'to some extent' to a more joined-up approach to maritime policies.

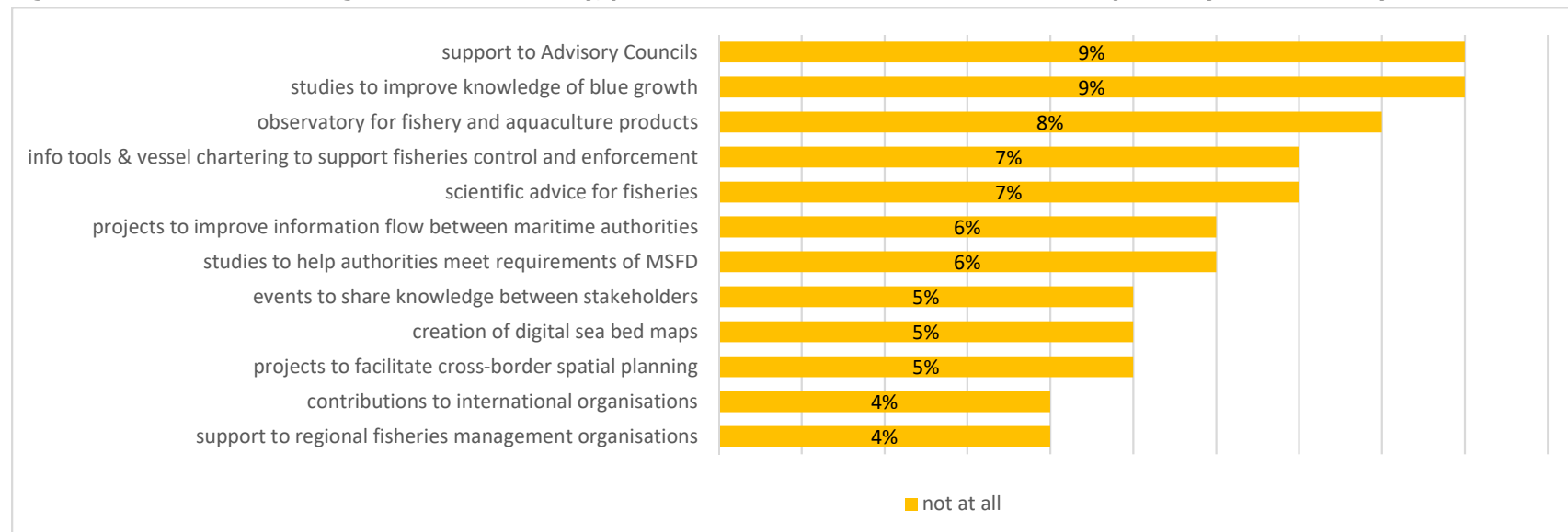
Scientific advice for fisheries is considered contributing least to a more joined-up approach to maritime policies. When discounting those who indicated 'no opinion' to this question, 15% of the respondents believe it contributed 'significantly' or 'to some extent' to a more joined-up approach to maritime policies.

The respondents motivated their choices, saying that more thematic meetings for stakeholders of each country need to be organised, including seminars and workshops, mainly because marine areas are different between Member States and policies should be considered based on marine morphological needs.

Other respondents mentioned that EMFF projects should be prolonged from 2 years to 3 years, as a third year would enable much more to be developed, implemented and evaluated.

Additionally, the construction and popularisation of databases including those from surface to deep sea environment will provide basis for integrated existing sporadic data. Also, international cooperation is considered essential in this industry

Figure 21: Actions contributing to maritime economy, protection of marine resources and maritime policies (all four sectors)



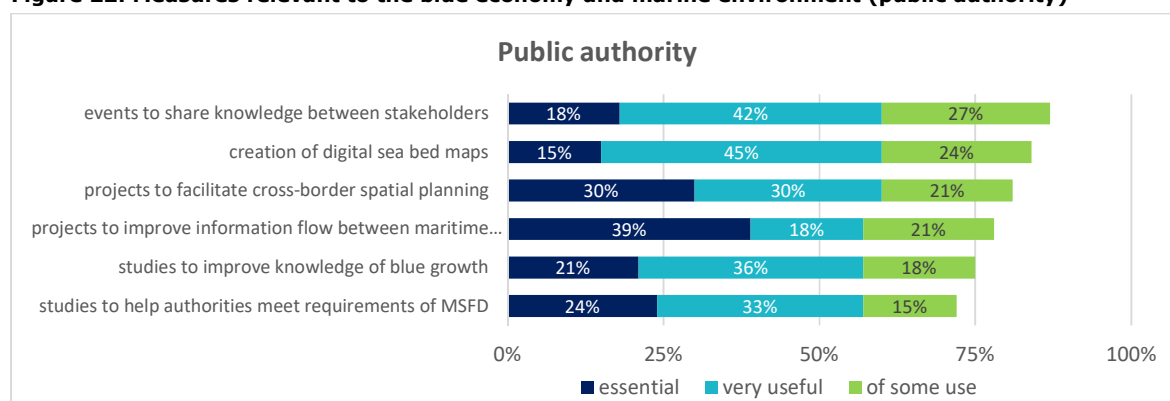
n=120

As shown in Figure 21, 9% of the respondents considered that the support to Advisory Councils and studies to improve knowledge of blue growth do not contribute at all to the maritime economy, protection of marine resources and maritime policies, followed closely by the observatory for fishery and aquaculture products. When discounting 'no opinion' answers, the number of those respondents increases slightly to 10.5%.

A very small proportion of the respondents, 4% (or 5% when excluding 'no opinion' responses), also considered that contributions to international organisations and support to regional fisheries management organisations do not bring any contribution either.

4.2.3. Relevance

Figure 22: Measures relevant to the blue economy and marine environment (public authority)

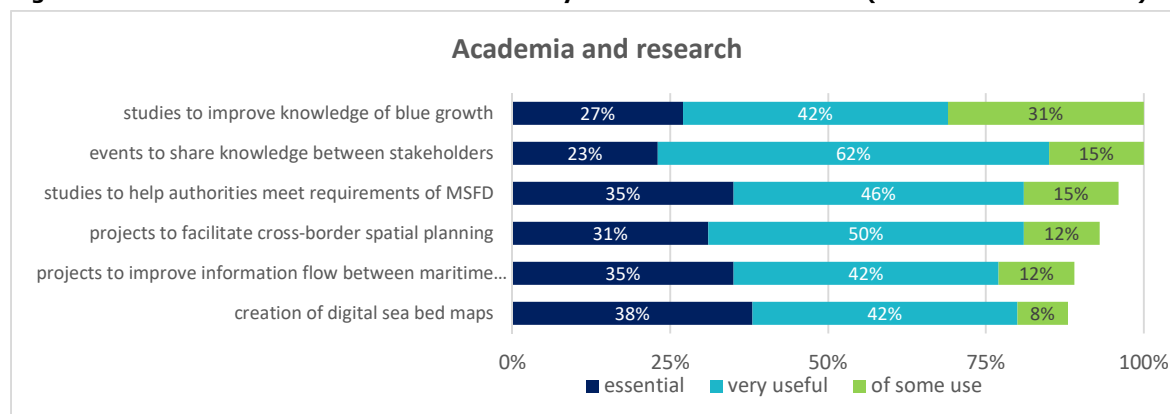


n=36

The respondents from public sector consider the projects to improve information flow as being the most essential to the relevance of blue economy and marine environment, followed by projects to facilitate cross-border spatial planning, as shown in Figure 22. When discounting 'no opinion' answers to this question, the projects to improve information flow are considered 'essential' by 49% of respondents and the projects to facilitate cross-border spatial planning by 36.5%.

Generally, more than half of the respondents considered all the measure 'essential' or 'very useful' to the relevancy of blue economy and marine environment.

Figure 23: Measures relevant to the blue economy and marine environment (academia and research)



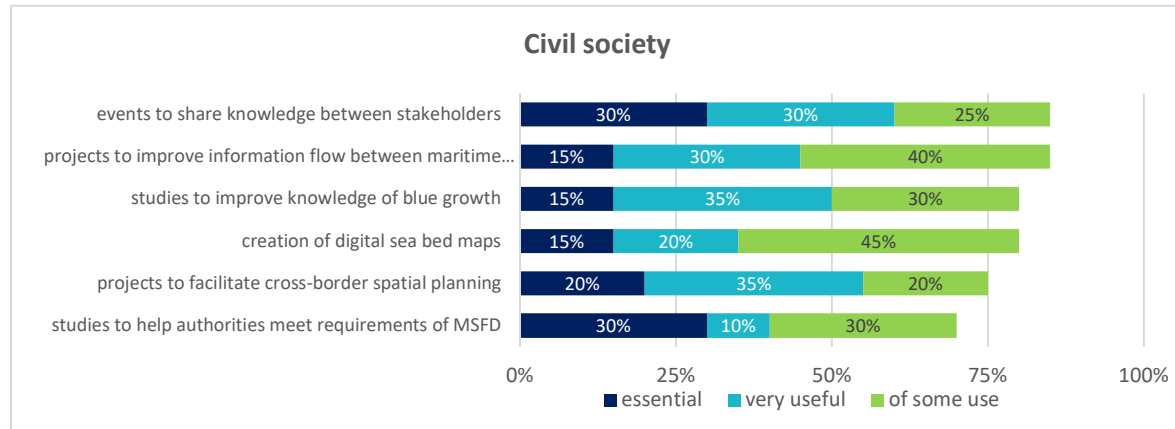
n=27

38% of respondents from the academia and research sector considered the creation of digital sea bed maps as being essential to the relevancy of blue economy and marine environment. When discounting 'no opinion' answers, 46% of the respondents consider the creation of digital sea bed maps 'essential' and 51% consider this measure 'very useful'. Events to share knowledge between stakeholders on, the other hand, received the highest aggregated score of 'essential' and 'very useful' answers.

As shown in Figure 23, 35% of the respondents consider studies to help authorities meet requirements and projects to improve information flow 'essential' to the blue economy and marine environment. When discounting 'no opinion' responses, the number increases to 37% in case of project to help authorities meet requirements and 43% in case of projects to improve information flow.

More than 75% of the respondents considered all the measures 'essential' or 'very useful', as shown in Figure 23.

Figure 24: Measures relevant to the blue economy and marine environment (civil society)



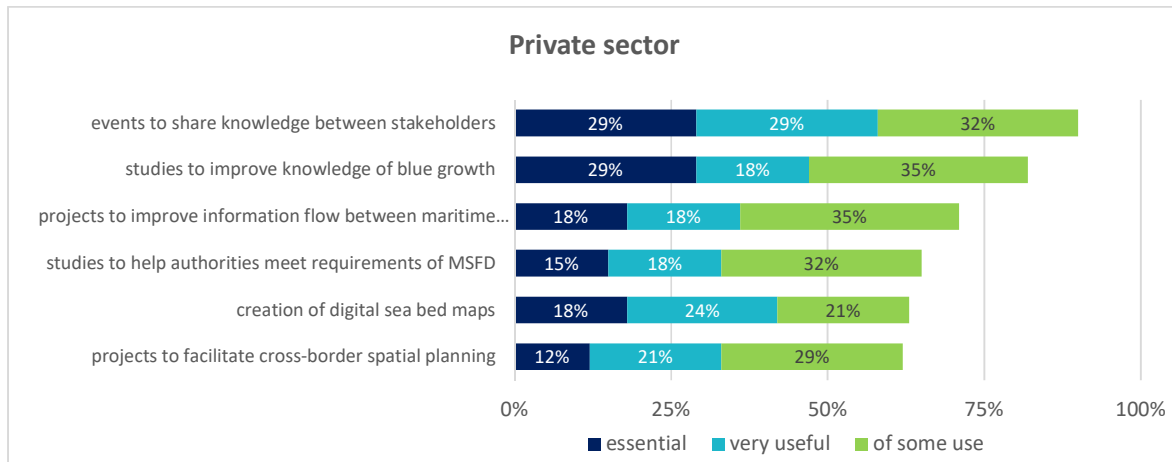
n=21

30% of civil society respondents considered measures such as events to share knowledge between stakeholders and studies to help authorities meet requirements of MSFD as being 'essential' to the relevance of blue economy and marine environment. When discounting the respondents who indicated 'no opinion' to this question, 31% consider the events to share knowledge between stakeholders and 35% the studies to help authorities meet requirements of MSFD 'essential'.

As shown in Figure 24, studies to improve knowledge of blue growth and projects to facilitate cross-border spatial planning are considered by 35% of the respondents 'very useful' to the blue economy and marine environment. When discounting 'no opinion' answers, 43% of respondents consider both the studies to improve knowledge of blue growth and the projects to facilitate cross-border spatial planning 'very useful'.

The creation of digital sea bed maps is considered by 45% of the respondents as only being 'of some use', followed by projects to improve information flow, with 40% of the respondents. When discounting 'no opinion' answers, 53% consider the creation of digital beds and 50% the projects to improve information flow 'of some use'.

Figure 25: Measures relevant to the blue economy and marine environment (private sector)



n=36

Respondents from the private sector considered events to share knowledge between stakeholders and studies to improve knowledge of blue growth as being 'essential' to the relevancy of the blue economy and marine environment (29%). When discounting the respondents who indicated 'no opinion' to this question, 31% of them consider the events to share knowledge between stakeholders and 34% the studies to improve knowledge of blue growth 'essential'.

Projects to facilitate cross-border special planning are considered the least essential with only 12% (15% when discounting 'no opinion' answers) of the respondents assessing them 'essential'.

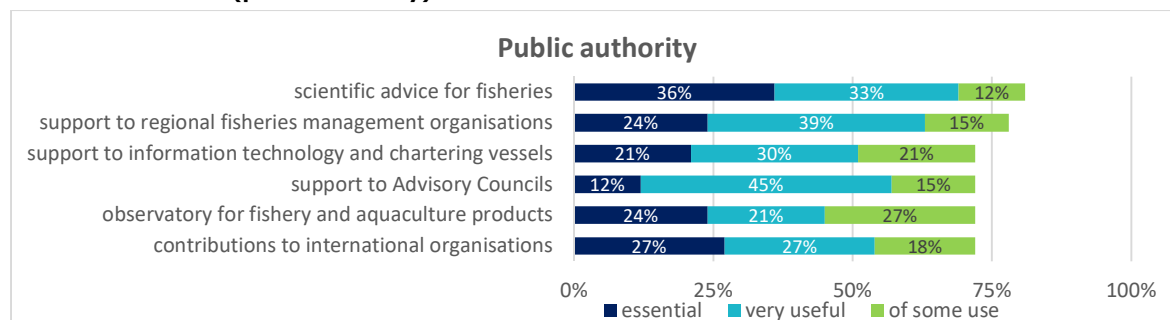
More than a quarter of the respondents considered all the measures as being 'essential' or 'very useful'.

To justify their scoring respondents stated that facilitating the marine monitoring and observation efforts is essential. They also argued that achieving good environmental status is futile if a pure economic growth narrative is followed rather than precautionary approach, with sound scientific knowledge and assessments.

Other respondents mentioned the essentiality of improving the information flow between maritime authorities. This measure can help avoid duplication of various categories obtained from the surveillance systems and local data base. It has also been added that the cross-border spatial planning is a 'must do' for every MS in order to enhance the Blue Growth in EU maritime domain.

Respondents also added that Member States should take more into consideration the recommendations from the EU, concluding that 'the power of the EU is far too little enforcing in this respect'.

Figure 26: Measures relevant to the economically, environmentally and socially sustainable use of fisheries resources (public authority)

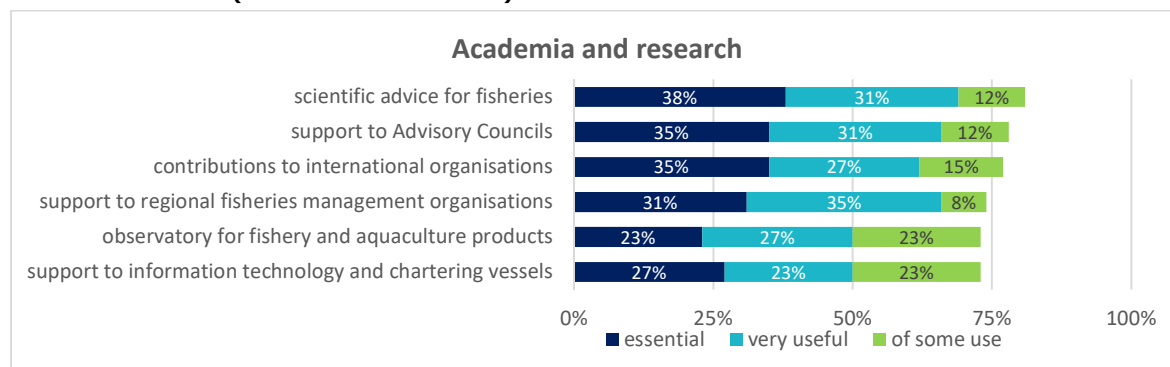


n=36

More than a half of the respondents from the public sector considered all the measures as being 'essential' or 'very useful' to the economically, environmentally and socially sustainable use of fisheries resources.

36% of the respondents considered the scientific advice for fisheries as being 'essential' in the sustainable use of fisheries resources (44% when discounting 'no opinion' answers). The second answer most frequently selected as 'essential' was contributions to international organisations (27%; or 37.5% when discounting 'no opinion' choices).

Figure 27: Measures relevant to the economically, environmentally and socially sustainable use of fisheries resources (academia and research)

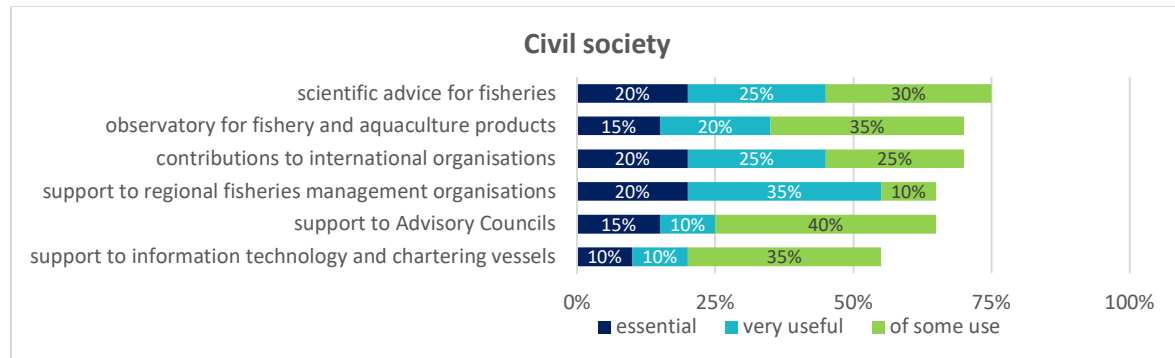


n=27

The respondents from academia and research sector considered the scientific advice for fisheries, the support to Advisory Councils and contributions to international organisations as being 'essential' to the use of fisheries resources, as shown in Figure 27. When discounting the respondents, who indicated 'no opinion' to this question, the numbers are 47%, 45%, 45% respectively.

Generally, all the measures were considered 'essential' or 'very useful' by at least a half of the respondents.

Figure 28: Measures relevant to the economically, environmentally and socially sustainable use of fisheries resources (civil society)

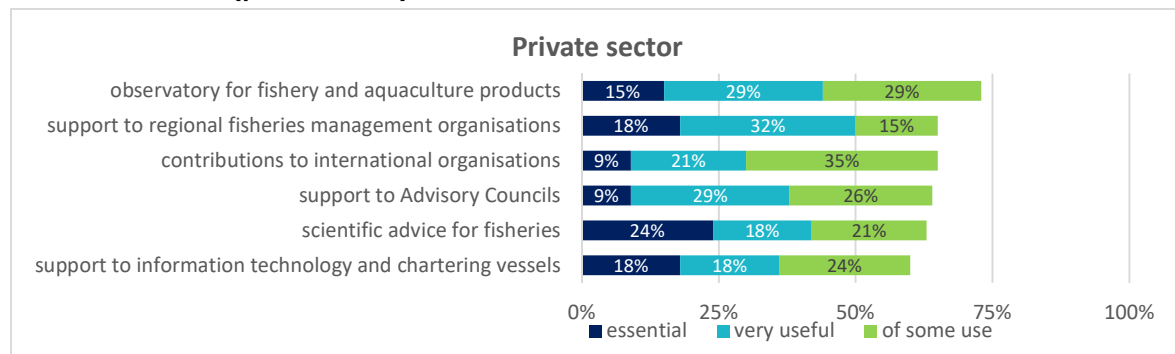


n=21

20% of the respondents from the civil society considered scientific advice for fisheries, contributions to international organisations and support to regional fisheries management organisations as 'essential' measures to the sustainable use of fisheries resources (or 24-25% when discounting 'no opinion' choices).

A considerable proportion of the respondents, 40% (50% when discounting 'no opinion' choices), believed the support for Advisory Councils is only of some use and 35% of them considered the same for the observatory for fishery and aquaculture products (47% when discounting 'no opinion' choices) and for the support to information technology and chartering vessels (50% when discounting 'no opinion' choices).

Figure 29: Measures relevant to the economically, environmentally and socially sustainable use of fisheries resources (private sector)



n=36

A quarter of private sector respondents considered scientific advice for fisheries as 'essential', whereas 21% of them considered it only 'of some use'. When discounting the respondents who indicated 'no opinion' to this question, 35% consider the scientific advice for fisheries 'essential' and 31% 'of some use'.

The support to regional fisheries management organisations is considered by 32% of the respondents (45% when discounting 'no opinion' choices) as being 'very useful', and 18% (or 25% when discounting 'no opinion' choices) of them consider it 'essential'.

35% of the respondents believe that the contributions to international organisations are only 'of some use' (49% when discounting 'no opinion' choices), followed by the observatory for fishery and aquaculture products assessed the same by 29% of the respondents (37% when discounting 'no opinion' choices).

The respondents justified their choices by arguing that the contribution to international organisations as an opportunity to create synergies between the MSs.

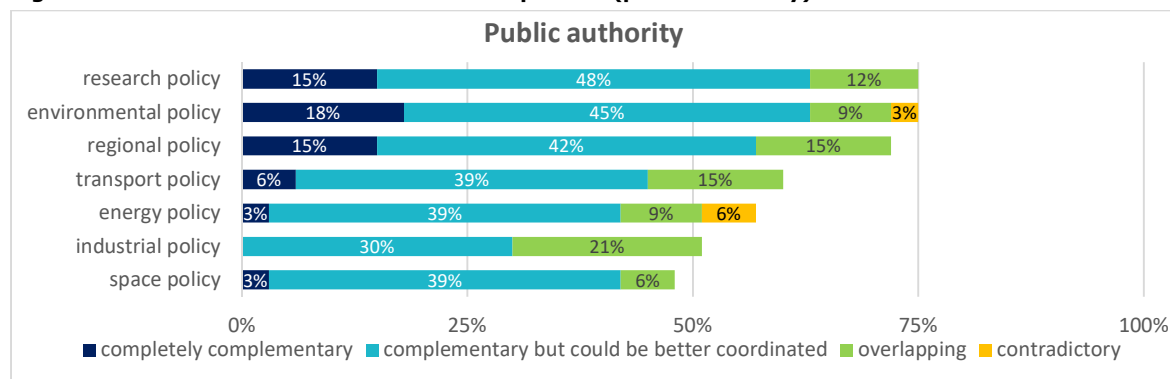
Respondents also claimed that DG MARE should listen more to the Advisory Councils, as they are not delivering due to the lack of unanimity and therefore no decisions are taken.

Also, the respondents shared their views regarding the EMFF funds support. Accordingly, the funds deserve prominent attention because only with the research the correct sustainability of the sector can be guaranteed in terms of politics and science as a selectivity of resources and their exploitation.

One respondent criticised the scientific advice studies, having in some cases contradictory terms and premises, which can lead to conflict of interests at the regional level.

4.2.4. Coherence

Figure 30: Measures undertaken with the EU policies (public authority)



n=36

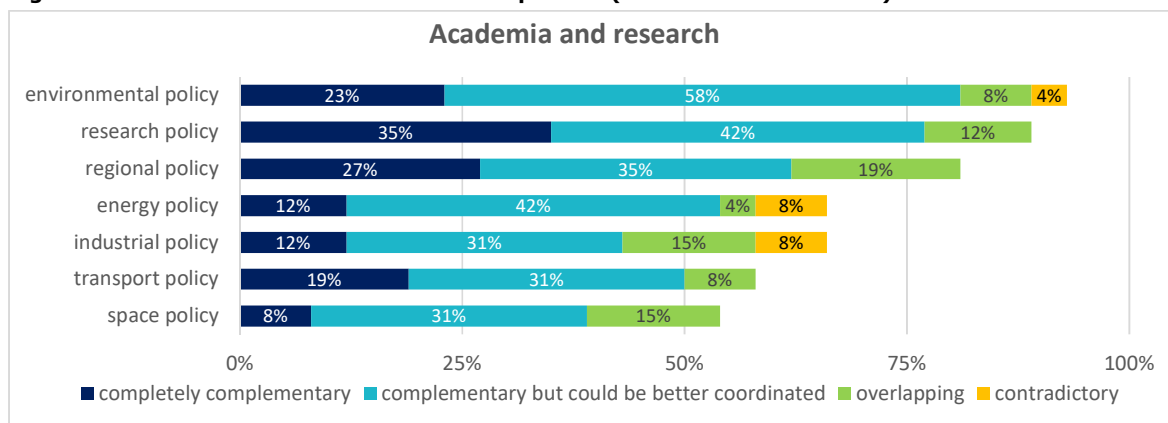
The respondents were then asked how coherent the measures were undertaken with the other EU policies. 18% of the public sector considered that the environmental policy was 'completely coherent' and 15% of the respondents agreed that research and regional policy were 'completely coherent'. When discounting the respondents, who indicated 'no opinion' to this question, 24% selected 'completely coherent' for the environmental policy and 20% for the research policy and 21% for the regional policy.

Generally, for all the measures the most frequently selected assessment was 'complementary but could be better coordinated', as shown in Figure 30.

The measure considered to be overlapping by almost a quarter of the respondents is the industrial policy, followed by regional policy and transport policy.

6% of the respondents considered energy policy as contradictory (10% when discounting 'no opinion' choices) and the same goes for the environmental policy, where 3% (or 4% when discounting 'no opinion' choices) of the respondents considered it in contradiction to the other EU policies.

Figure 31: Measures undertaken with the EU policies (academia and research)



n=27

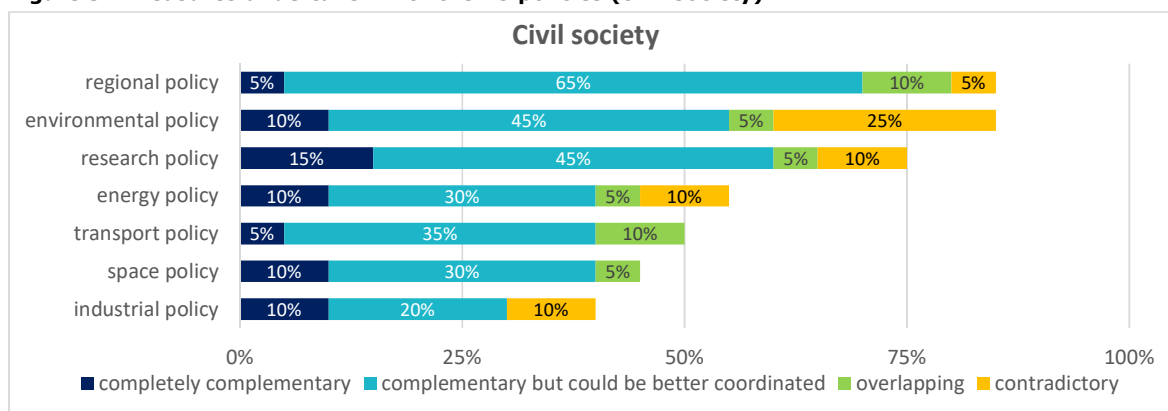
One third of the respondents from the academia and research sector considered research policy as being completely complementary to the other EU policies, followed by the regional policy, as shown in Figure 31. When discounting 'no opinion' choices, 40% of the respondents consider the research policy and 37% the regional policy 'completely complementary'.

More than half of the respondents considered the environmental policy as being complementary but could be better coordinated, 42% of the respondents considered the same about the research policy and the energy policy. When discounting 'no opinion' choices, 63% of the respondents assess that the environmental, 48% the research and 61% the energy policies are 'complementary but could be better coordinated'.

Only 8% of the respondents (13% when discounting 'no opinion' choices) considered the space policy as completely complementary, whereas 15% of them believed it is overlapping with the other EU policies (24% when discounting 'no opinion' choices).

Also, 8% of the respondents considered energy and industrial policy as being contradictory. Applying the same logic (discounting 'no opinion' choices), this number increases to 12%.

Figure 32: Measures undertaken with the EU policies (civil society)



n=21

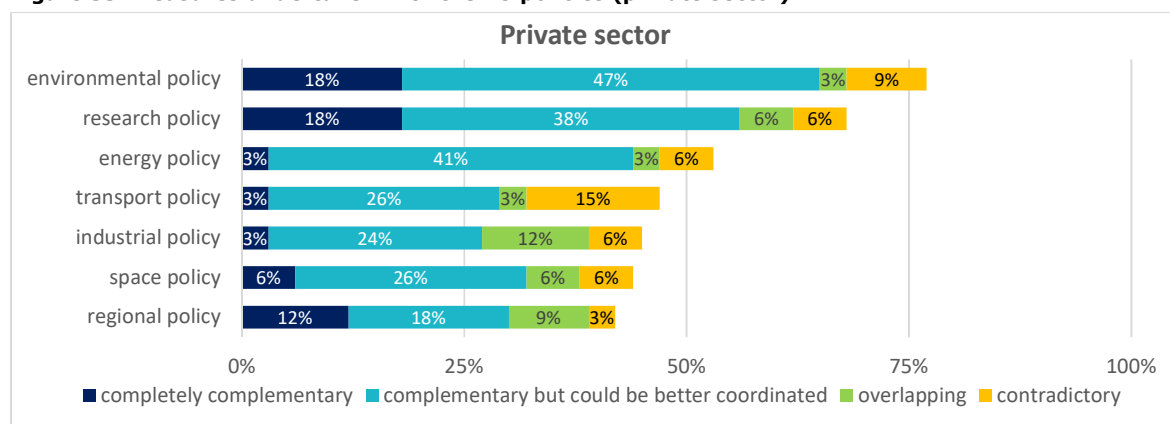
A proportion of 65% of the civil society respondents considered the regional policy as 'complementary but could be better coordinated' and only 5% of them considered it completely complementary. When discounting 'no opinion' answers, these groups amount to 68% and, equally, 5%.

45% of the respondents believed the environmental and research policies as complementary but again they could be better coordinated. When discounting 'no opinion' choices, this ratio increases to 50% for environmental policy and 59% for the research policy.

On the other hand, a quarter of the respondents considered the environmental policy as being contradictory to the other EU policies and 10% of the respondents considered the same for the research policy. When discounting 'no opinion' choices, 28% of respondents chooses the answer 'contradictory' for the environmental policy and 13% for the research policy.

Generally, only regional, environmental and research policies are considered by most of the respondents as being complementary.

Figure 33: Measures undertaken with the EU policies (private sector)



n=36

For 18% of the respondents from the private sector the environmental and research policies were considered as being completely complementary. When discounting 'no opinion' choices, this ratio is 23% for the environmental policy and 25% for the research policy.

Furthermore, 47% and 38% respectively consider environmental and research policy as 'complementary but could be better coordinated' (59% and 53% respectively when excluding 'no opinion' answers).

15% of the respondents considered the transport policy as being contradictory to the other EU policies (or 25% when discounting 'no opinion' choices) and 12% of them believed the industrial policy is overlapping (20% discounting 'no opinion' choices).

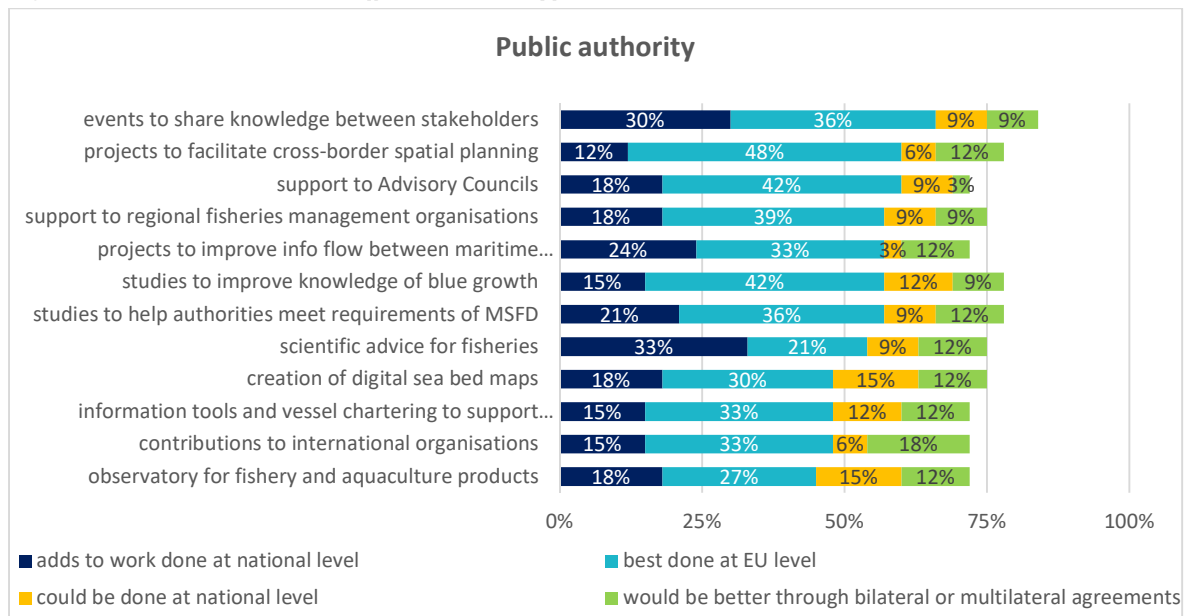
Respondents motivated their choice by saying that proper coordination between policies to limit or even avoid overlapping is essential and recommended.

Respondents also argued that other industrial activities have taken precedence over fishing (aggregate extraction, wind energy), as well as the protection of the environment, which is contradictory and that most scientific evidence is just ignored if it is inconvenient to commercial fishermen.

Additionally, respondents consider there should be a much better coordination between research policy, space policy, regional policy, energy policy and transport policy (e.g.: coordination in regional policy domain).

4.2.5. EU-added value

Figure 34: The EU-added value (public authority)



n=36

The respondents were then asked what the EU-added value is for the activities undertaken.

Almost one third of the respondents considered that events to share knowledge between stakeholders and scientific advice for fisheries add to work done at national level. When discounting 'no opinion' choices, 35% of the respondents share this assessment about events to share knowledge and 43% about scientific advice.

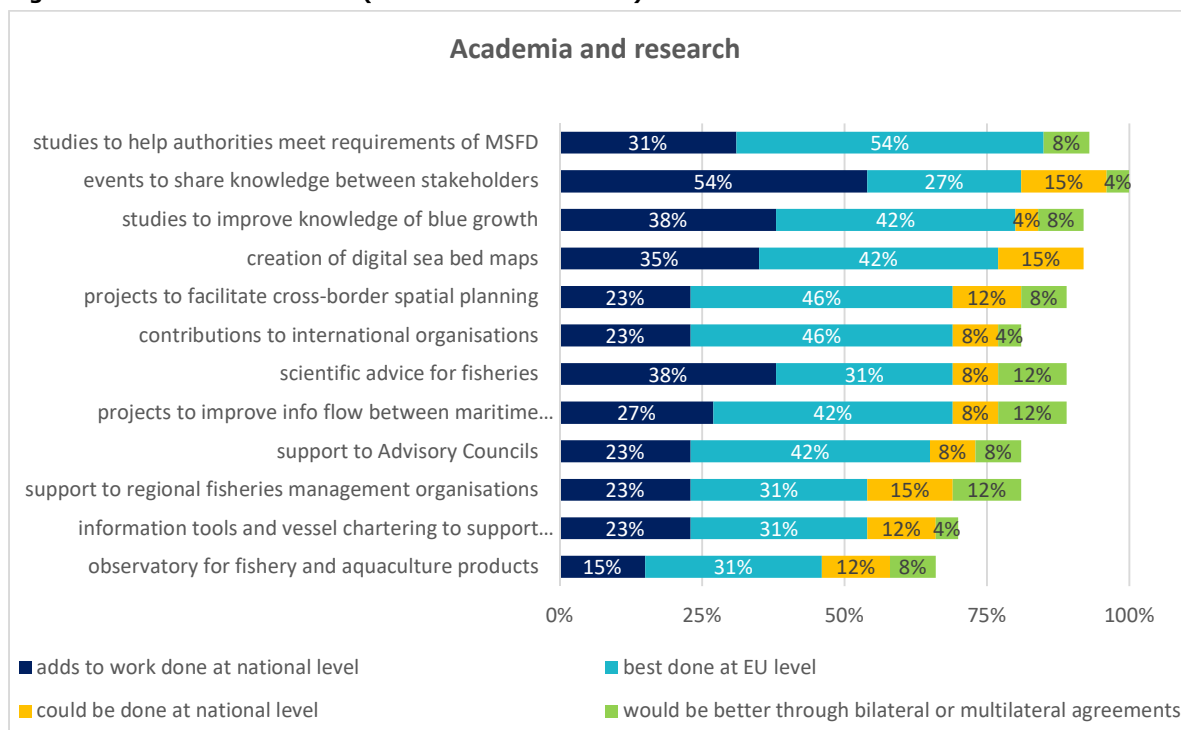
Projects to facilitate cross-border spatial planning were considered by 48% of the respondents at being best done at EU level, whereas only 12% of them considered it adds to work done at national level. When discounting 'no opinion' answers to this question, 61% of the respondents assess that projects to facilitate cross-border spatial planning are best done at EU level and 15% of them consider they add to work done at national level.

Only scientific advice for fisheries was considered by the respondents to add to work done at the national level, rather than EU level.

Also, 18% of the respondents (or 25% when discounting 'no opinion' choices) considered that contributions to international organisations would be better through bilateral or multilateral agreements.

Generally, all the measures were considered best done at EU level by the respondents from the public authorities ('best done at EU level' answers most frequently selected in all but one category).

Figure 27: The EU-added value (academia and research)



n=27

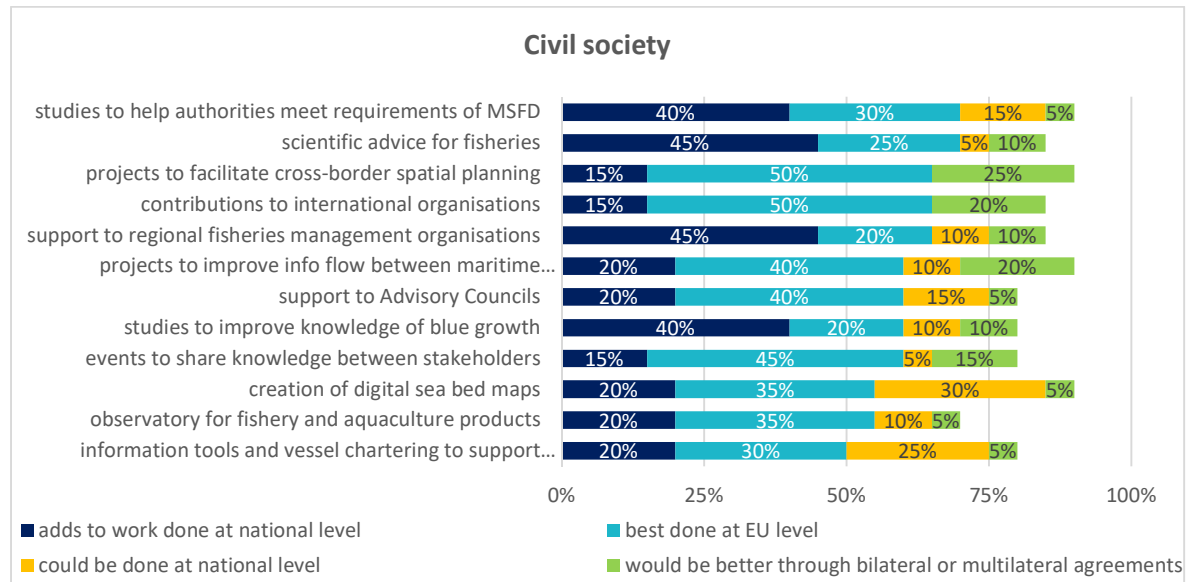
More than half of the respondents from the academia and research sector considered the events to share knowledge between stakeholders add to work done at national level, whereas only 27% of them believed to be best done at EU level (no respondent indicated 'no opinion' to this question).

On the contrary, the studies to help authorities meet requirements of MSFD were considered by 54% of the respondents to be best done at EU level, rather than adding to work done at national level. When discounting 'no opinion' choices to this question, 59% of the respondents consider that studies to help authorities are best done at EU level and 34% that they add to work done at national level.

12% of the respondents considered that measures such as scientific advice for fisheries, projects to improve information flow and support to regional fisheries management organisations to be done better through bilateral or multilateral agreements. When discounting 'no opinion' answers to this question, 14% of the respondents consider scientific advice and projects to improve information flow to be done better through bilateral or multilateral agreements. Applying the same logic (discounting the 'no opinion' choices), 15% of the respondents consider the support to regional fisheries management to be done better through bilateral or multilateral agreements.

But generally, all the other measures were considered by the respondents to be best done at EU level (most often selected answer within most of categories).

Figure 35: The EU-added value (civil society)



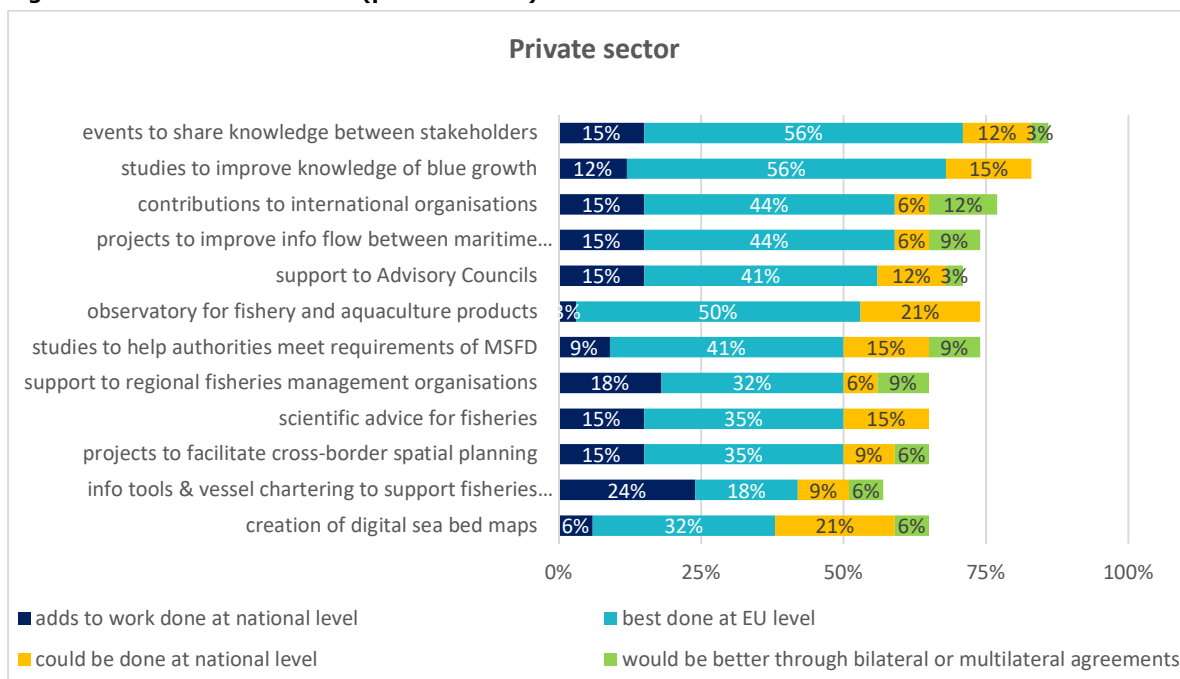
n=21

Respondents in the civil society sector considered in a proportion of 40% to 45% that measures such as scientific advice for fisheries, support to regional fisheries management organisations, studies to help authorities and studies to improve knowledge add to work done at national level. When discounting 'no opinion' answers to this question, 53% of the respondents assess that scientific advice for fisheries add to work done at national level and the same percentage applies to support to regional fisheries; 44% of respondents consider that studies to help authorities add to work done at national level and 50% of them consider the same about the studies to improve knowledge.

On the other hand, half of the respondents considered that projects to facilitate cross-border spatial planning and contributions to international organisation as being best done at EU level, but a quarter of them considered that these measures would be better through bilateral and multilateral agreements. When discounting 'no opinion' choices, 56% of the respondents consider that projects to facilitate cross-border spatial planning are being best done at EU level and 59% of them consider the same about the contributions to international organisations. Applying the same logic (discounting 'no opinion' choices), 28% of the respondents consider that projects to facilitate cross-border spatial planning would be better through bilateral and multilateral agreements and 24 % of them consider the same about contributions to international organisation.

Another quarter of the respondents considered that the creation of digital sea bed maps and the information tools and vessel chartering could be done at national level (one third when discounting 'no opinion' choices question).

Figure 36: The EU-added value (private sector)



n=36

The private sector respondents considered that most of the measures are best done at EU level, particularly the events to share knowledge between stakeholders, studies to improve knowledge of blue growth economy and observatory for fishery and aquaculture products, as shown in Figure 29. When discounting 'no opinion' choices, 66% of the respondents consider that events to share knowledge between stakeholders are best done at EU level and 68% consider the same about studies to improve knowledge of blue growth economy. Applying the same logic (discounting the 'no opinion' choices), 68% of the respondents consider that observatory for fishery and aquaculture products is best done at EU level.

A quarter of the respondents believed that information tools and vessel chartering add to work done at national level, followed by support to regional fisheries management organisations. When discounting 'no opinion' choices, 43% of the respondents assess that information tools and vessel chartering add to work done at national level. Applying the same logic (discounting the 'no opinion' choices), 28% of the respondents consider that support to regional fisheries management organisations also adds to work done at national level.

12% of the respondents (or 16% when discounting 'no opinion' responses) considered that contributions to international organisations would be better through bilateral or multilateral agreements.

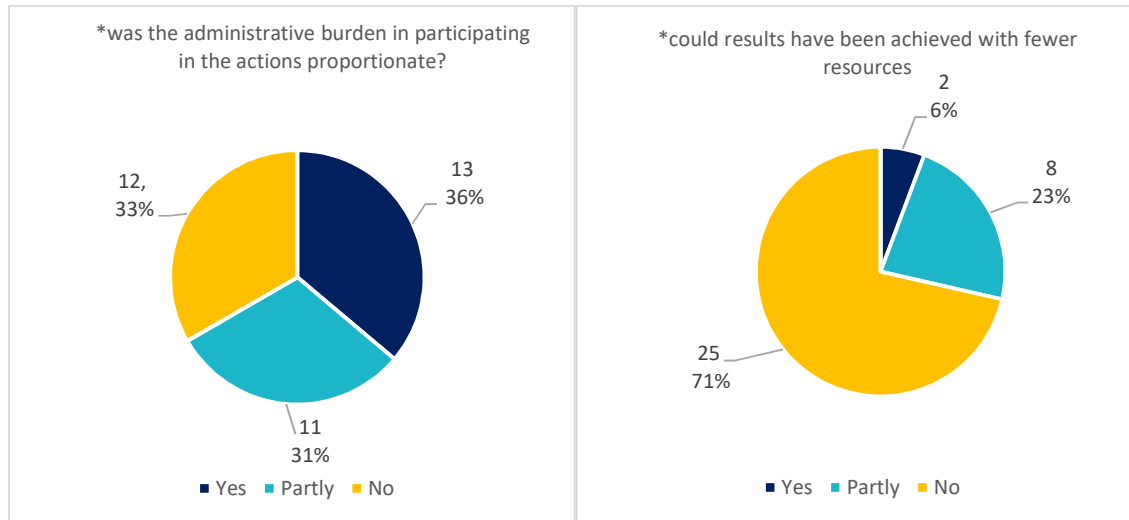
Respondents motivated their answer arguing that EMFF needs to be strengthened by three more measures: financing of the renewal of the fishing fleet with focus on experimental and environmental projects, post-Brexit funding to help coastal and especially fishing communities cope with the socio-economic impacts, provide more funding to port infrastructures related to fisheries activities.

Some respondents complained about the difficulty in engaging to projects done by the DG Maritime Affairs and Fisheries, but argued that over all the process is worthwhile, leaving a positive impact.

Other respondents argued that improvements need to be done for the inter-regional and international contributions for Maritime Policy for Blue Growth and Maritime Security.

4.2.6. Efficiency

Figure 37: Efficiency of the actions the respondents participated in



n=39

One third of the respondents considered that the administrative burden in participating in the actions was proportionate, whereas almost the same number of respondents considered it was not and that is was 'partly'.

71% of the respondents considered that the results could have not been achieved with fewer resources, whereas 23% of them believed that the results could have been achieved but only partly.

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