

FLAG Cooperation in Poland

Introduction

Cooperation activities are not mandatory in the Polish EMFF programme, but FLAGs are encouraged to undertake them. Cooperation is considered as a good way to **facilitate learning** by FLAGs and to contribute to achieving their strategic objectives, which strongly prioritise **job creation**, both within and outside the fisheries sector. In the previous period many Polish FLAGs already proved eager to learn from FLAGs in other Member States and to share their experience with them.

The national legislation on cooperation envisages that FLAGs can undertake cooperation projects within all five objectives mentioned in Art. 63 of the EMFF regulation (i.e. adding value to fisheries products; diversification; environmental activities; social wellbeing and cultural heritage; and increasing the role of fisheries communities in local governance). The objectives and indicators of the cooperation projects must correspond closely to the objectives and indicators of the local strategies of the participating FLAGs.

Each FLAG can decide how much budget they will allocate to cooperation projects, but this amount cannot exceed 5% of its total budget. This means that on average the Polish FLAGs have up to approximately **€80 000** to spend on cooperation activities.

The implementation of a cooperation project cannot exceed 18 months in Poland.

Number of FLAGs in Poland: 36

Organising Cooperation

- Cooperation is the responsibility of each FLAG, and only FLAG can implement cooperation projects. FLAGs allocate budget to cooperation from their strategy, identify partners and develop cooperation projects, which are then submitted to the regional Intermediate Body (IB) for approval.
- The regional intermediate body (IB) checks the cooperation projects for eligibility and conformity with the national legislation
- Cooperation projects can be presented to the regional IB at any time and the assessment is carried out on an on-going basis.

Possible Partners

- Only FLAGs can implement cooperation projects
- Polish FLAGs can cooperate with partners in Poland and countries within the EU only.
- Polish FLAGs can cooperate with partners from CLLD groups funded by all ESI Funds and/or with other CLLD-type public-private partnerships.

Eligibility and Financing Rules

- The national co-financing in Poland is provided at the same time as the EU funding. Advance payments are possible.
- Aid intensity (contribution from EMFF and national co-financing) can reach up to 95% of project eligible costs.
- Preparatory support is available within each cooperation project budget. Up to 10% of the project budget can be used to cover administrative costs, including coordination and preparatory activities such as meetings and travels.
- A list of non-eligible costs has been developed by the MA (these are mainly items such as the purchase of used equipment or land, leasing, depreciation, renovation of religious buildings).

For any further information or assistance for cooperation in Poland

Those interested in seeking cooperation partners in Poland can contact Jolanta Perkowska Jolanta.Perkowska@mgm.gov.pl or Anna Wasilewska Anna.Wasilewska@mgm.gov.pl from the National Managing Authority, which provides networking support to FLAGS.