

FLAG Factsheet: Outer Hebrides Fisheries Local Action Group

Country: UK

Region: Scotland

Area: Outer Hebrides

Code: UK 206

Operational: 2007-2013 and 2014-2020 programming period



AREA

Description of the area and its main challenges

The Outer Hebrides is a chain of more than 100 islands and skerries¹ located about 70 kilometres north west of mainland Scotland, of which 15 are inhabited. The Outer Hebrides Fisheries Area is defined using the Comhairle nan Eilean Siar Local Authority area which has the same boundaries as many other organisations including the Outer Hebrides Inshore Fisheries Group. Although the population of the islands is concentrated in Lewis (71%) **small fishing communities** are spread across all the islands from the Butt of Lewis to Barra.

Larger centres of activity including **value added processing** are located in Stornoway (Lewis), Kallin (North Uist) and Ardveinish (Barra) with some of the most **fisheries dependent areas** in Scotland in the Uists and Barra.

The main challenges include an **ageing fishing industry structure** (both in terms of participants and infrastructure), fuel costs (in particular as a result of the remoteness of the islands) and static shellfish prices.

A further challenge is **geographic and governance peripherality** (i.e. decisions are made remotely in manner which fails to understand their impact and effect on island communities). In addition there is an **over reliance on a small range of shellfish species landings**, sparsity of population and a declining and **ageing population**. The area also suffers from a loss of young people from the islands and a lack of new entrants to industry.

However, the islands increasingly benefit from a growing tourism sector and is a popular destination particularly for **marine tourism**.

Population: 27,684

Population Density [Inhabitants/ km²]: 9

Surface area [/km²]: 3,070

Coastal or inland: Coastal

Protected areas: The Outer Hebrides has 59 protected areas in or related to the marine environment – the areas protect features such as breeding/foraging seabirds and waders, reefs and sandbanks, intertidal mudflats and sandflats and large shallow inlets and bays. Examples of these are:

13 Special Area of Conservation (SAC) with qualifying marine and coastal features e.g. St Kilda SAC, Monach Isles SAC

10 Special Protection Area (SPA) with qualifying species which have links to the marine environment e.g. Shiant Isles SPA, St Kilda SPA

32 Special Site of Scientific Interest (SSSI) with biological features that are intertidal or have a link with the marine environment e.g. Flannan Islands SSSI, Loch nam Madadh SSSI

3 Ramsar (Wetlands of International Importance) sites with features relevant to the marine environment e.g. North Uist Machair and Islands

1 Marine Protected Area (MPA) with qualifying species which have a link to the marine environment i.e Monach Isles

Total employment in fisheries:

1. **Fishing:** 330

¹ Small rocky islands

2. **Aquaculture:** 217

3. **Processing:** 215

Women employment in fisheries: 116

STRATEGY

Short summary of the FLAG strategy

The main objectives of the strategy are to increase fisheries area employment and competitiveness, develop alternative employment, increase onshore added value activity and increase younger industry participant career progression. Specifically the strategy will support the development of **sustainable fisheries management plans** (including data collection on stock assessment and effort and accreditation), strengthen **onshore added value and supply chain development, encourage alternative fisheries community business opportunities and infrastructure development** and build small fisheries communities capacity to drive their own change.

Importance of the following objectives for your strategy

Objective	Priority (1 is low, 5 is very high)	% of the budget allocated to them in the strategy
Adding value, creating jobs, and promoting innovation along the fisheries chain	5	40
Supporting diversification	5	40
Enhancing and capitalising on the environmental assets	2	5
Promoting social well being and cultural heritage	1	0
Strengthening the role of fisheries communities in local development	4	15

Project examples and ideas

- Stock assessment of potential diversified fishery (razor clams)
- Development of integrated package of support for new entrants to fishing sector and career progression (deck hand to skipper qualification)
- Introduction of added value shellfish depuration facility
- Diversification of seaweed processing into liquid extract fertilizer for gardening and crops
- Development of high quality tourism yacht charter business
- Development of boat repair yard and year round boat maintenance and storage
- Strategic marine tourism infrastructure development

Calls for projects

The FLAG will have an estimated three deadlines per year for project application and assessment.

Thematic expertise and cooperation

Building on long standing historic maritime and cultural links between the islands and the mainland the possibility of joint and inter territorial co-operative projects with FLAGs in the Highland area (linking Lewis with the Ullapool

and Wester Ross area, Harris and North Uist with Skye and Kyle of Lochalsh areas) and Argyll and Bute area (linking South Uist, Eriskay and Barra with the Tiree, Coll and Oban areas) will be explored and promoted.

Type of cooperation projects foreseen

Transnational: Increasing fisheries community capacity to develop environmental designation management plans – at present environmental designations are centrally imposed on communities with nominal consultation and in a manner which might fail to understand the impact and effect of those designations on communities. It is essential that powers are devolved to local island communities in order to place them in the core of designation processes and to ensure that fisheries communities play an integral part in local management and control of that designation.

Budget available for cooperation [€]: 20,000

PARTNERSHIP

Lead partner or Responsible Legal Entity

Comhairle nan Eilean Siar (Local Authority)

Other key actors/organisations in the partnership

- Outer Hebrides Tourism
- Federation of Small Businesses
- Namara Aquaculture
- Outer Hebrides Inshore Fisheries Group
- Western Isles Fishermens Association
- Association of Scottish Shellfish Growers
- Storas Uibhist
- Highlands and Islands Enterprise
- Scottish Natural Heritage
- Macduff Shellfish

% of public actors (on the decision-making body): 36

% of fisheries actors: 45

% of other (non-fisheries) private / NGO sector actors: 19

% of environmental actors: 9

Number of individuals/organisations in partnership/ general assembly: 11

Number of individuals on main decision-making body/ board: 11

Links with LEADER or other CLLD groups:

Which of the following is true for your FLAG? (please reply yes/no and complete or specify any details:	Yes /No
FLAG territory is the same as (or overlaps with) one or several CLLD territory/territories. FLAG has same territory as Outer Hebrides LAG	Yes
FLAG shares its legal structure with a Leader LAG/CLLD group. FLAG has same legal structure as Outer Hebrides LAG	Yes
FLAG shares certain (how many?) board members with a Leader LAG/CLLD group	Yes

<i>FLAG has 6 members who are also Outer Hebrides LAG members</i>	
FLAG and LAG have a common local development strategy (with separate sections for EMFF/ EAFRD/ other ESI funds)	Yes
FLAG coordinates its work informally with nearby Leader LAG(s) – how? Both FLAG and LAG Managers are hosted by Comhairle nan Eilean Siar	Yes
FLAG has formal cooperation with Leader or other CLLD groups other? FLAG has formal co-operation with Outer Hebrides LAG as the LAG provides administrative assistance for the FLAG	No

Budget information (exchange rate used 0.77838 euro to pound)

Total public budget allocated to the FLAG for 2014-2020 [€]:678 332 (£528 000)

EMFF [€]: 508 749 (£396 000)

Member State co-financing [€]: 169 583 (£132 000)

Source of co-financing: National – Scottish Government

Multi-funding: The Outer Hebrides FLAG and LEADER LAG operate under an integrated Local Development Strategy at a high level with separate decision making bodies for EMFF and LEADER. All animation and administration costs are covered by the 'lead fund' EAFRD. Further details are unconfirmed at this stage.

Contact information

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Number of contracted staff in FLAG [FTE]: 0.5

Language information

Language	Basic level	Intermediate level	Good level
English			X