



A new European Maritime and Fisheries Fund



On 2 December 2011, the European Commission proposed a new European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF) for the period 2014-2020. The new fund will replace the existing European Fisheries Fund and a number of other instruments.

The Axis 4 approach will be an enhanced feature of the new fund, which will aim to help fishermen in the transition towards sustainable fishing and support coastal communities in the diversification of their economies. In its proposal, the Commission notes that,

“encouraging bottom-up initiatives have so far produced excellent results in areas connected to fishing, such as processing, catering or tourism. The EMFF will reinforce this kind of community-led innovation.” A total EMFF budget of € 6.5 billion is proposed for the period 2014 to 2020.

In the 2014-2020 period, FLAGs may also benefit from the coordination of other EU funding sources for “community-led local development”, such as the rural, regional and social funds. FLAGs will, in principle, be able to combine these funds to support two main types of strategy: those that focus on fisheries; and broader strategies directed at the diversification of fisheries areas. The nature of the partnerships will have to reflect both the type of strategy and the area but, in all cases, there will be a requirement for a “significant representation of fisheries and aquaculture sectors”, while at the same time ensuring that no single interest group has a majority.

[More details...](#)

Managing the transition to a new funding period



In the context of the publication of the Commission’s proposals for a new maritime and fisheries fund, the next meeting of Axis 4 managing authorities (MAs) will focus on managing the Axis 4 transition to the new funding period. It will look in particular at how best to ensure continuity and avoid implementation delays for MAs and FLAGs. There will also be a discussion on developing information on Axis 4 projects and on how best to maintain the momentum generated by the recent Sustainable Futures for Fisheries Areas conference. The meeting will take place over two days in mid-February 2012.

[More details...](#)

Ireland on course to select six FLAGs



Although Axis 4 progress in Ireland has been affected by the economic crisis, progress is now being made and the intention is to form six FLAGs, based on existing coastal Leader LAGs. The six FLAGs will have a combined budget of around €1.7m for the period to 2015. A meeting was held with the LAGs involved on 2 November 2011 and it is expected that the FLAGs would be approved by the end of 2011. FLAGs will then be given a period of several months to develop their local development strategies, which should be approved by mid-2012.

New FLAGs approved in Italy



A series of technical meetings were held in different Italian regions during the autumn of 2011, in order to progress the selection of FLAGs. The first five Italian FLAGs have now been approved; two in Abruzzo, two in Marche and one on Sardinia. The other Italian regions are also making progress: in Calabria and Puglia the selection process was expected to be completed by the end of December 2011 (with about 12 new FLAGs), while Sicilia, Campania, Lazio, Toscana, Emilia Romagna, Liguria, Veneto and Friuli Venezia Giulia aim to have their groups operational by June 2012.

Exploring opportunities in the environmental sector



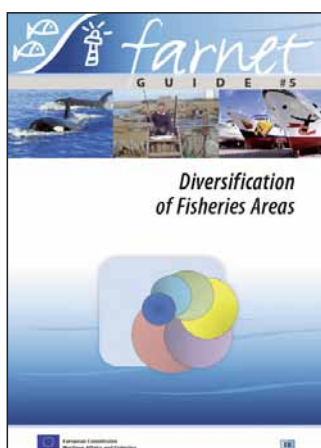
In the coming months, FARNET will focus specific attention on exploring opportunities in the environmental sector. Methodologies, knowledge, project examples and other information will be gathered in order to assess how FLAGs can promote economic activities and achieve sustainable growth by utilising local environmental assets. Outputs of this exercise will include publications, such as a thematic guide, and a transnational FLAG seminar, which will take place in early June 2012. If you are involved in or know about a local project that might enrich this exercise, please contact the FARNET Support Unit at: info@farnet.eu

Danish FLAGs meet coastal fishermen



Danish FLAGs, coastal fishermen, scientists and representatives of other organisations participated in a special seminar in Aalborg on 12 October, to discuss future challenges for coastal fisheries and to develop opportunities for mutual cooperation. The seminar took place during the international fishing exhibition, "DanFish International". Quotas and the ongoing structural developments in fisheries present important challenges for coastal fishermen, and innovation and product development are seen as necessary parts of the response. FLAG projects involving investment in small ports and product development, such as in seaweed production, were presented in order to highlight areas of potential.

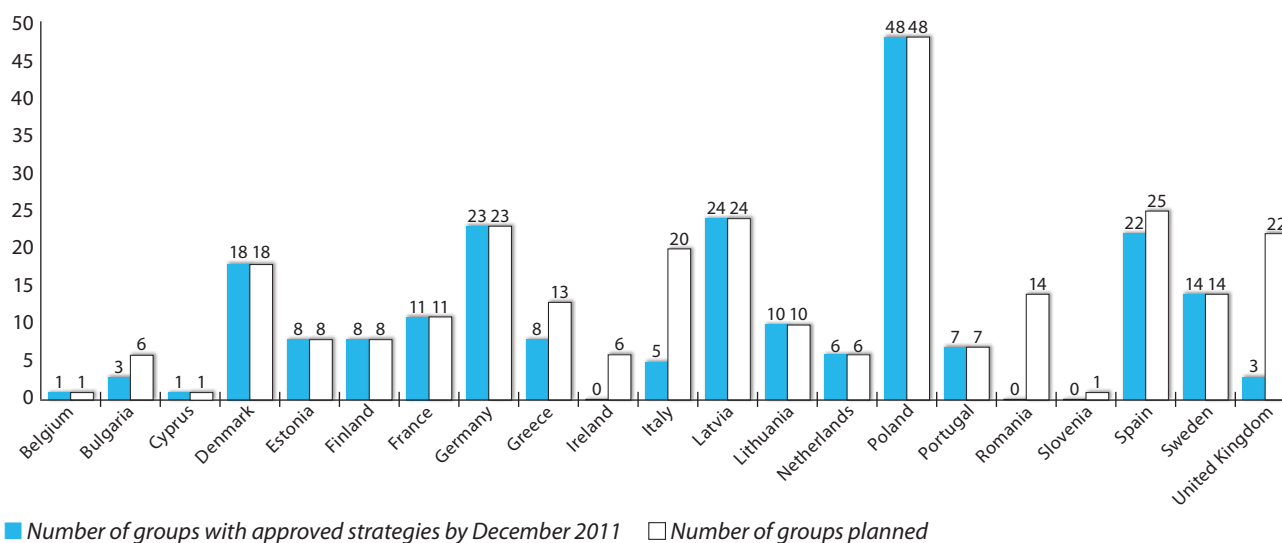
New FARNET guide to diversification



The FARNET Support Unit recently published a new guide on the Diversification of Fisheries Areas. The guide is specifically targeted at FLAGs that have included diversification as one of the objectives of their strategies, as well as potential beneficiaries wishing to implement diversification projects. It aims to address questions relating to: why, and how to, diversify fisheries areas. It includes an overview of different diversification options, as well as a range of examples of successful diversification projects. [More details..](#)

State of play: 220 FLAGs with approved strategies

By December 2011, there were a total of 220 FLAGs active in 18 Member States. Since the last update, five new FLAGs have been approved in Italy and three in England (with the three remaining English FLAGs expected to be approved early in 2012).



Forthcoming events and activities

February 2012	Axis 4 managing authority meeting	Brussels
June 2012	FARNET transnational seminar on opportunities in the environmental sector	Portugal

Other news

European Maritime Day 2012



Gothenburg has been designated as the host of the European Maritime Day for 2012. The annual two-day event, which will be held on 21-22 of May next year, provides an opportunity for maritime and coastal stakeholders to share experiences and discuss opportunities related to the seas and oceans and the challenges facing maritime regions and sectors. [More details...](#)

Send us your news

The FARNET newsletter is a resource for all those engaged in building a more sustainable future for Europe's fisheries areas. Please send us news and information on your activities which might be of interest to other groups or actors working in this field. Contact: info@farnet.eu

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