



Workshop Background Paper

**Implementing the European
Fisheries Fund**

Opportunities at Member State level

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1 Background

In June 2006 the Council adopted the highly debated European Fisheries Fund (EFF). The EFF, with a budget of approximately 3.8 billion will replace the current Financial Instrument for Fisheries Guidance (FIFG) and will run for the next seven years (2007-2013). Although 'sustainability' is supposed to be at the heart of the EFF, it is the Member States who decide on the priorities for spending through their national Operational Programmes (NOPs). In this respect NGOs and civil society have a vital role in ensuring that EU public money does not support unsustainable fisheries practices leading to further deteriorating of our precious nature heritage but on the contrary that the funds are contributing to protection and enhancement of the environment and its natural resources. And hence, to the sustainability of the fisheries sector.

The FIFG was established in the early 1990s to improve the competitiveness of the fisheries sector through financial support of the fishing industry. The EFF, like the FIFG, is to play a dual role; firstly in adding value to resource exploitation by helping to adjust the structures of the production sector and CFP monitoring tools, and secondly in maintaining cohesion of populations and areas dependent on fishing. Compared to FIFG, the EFF regulation puts much more emphasis on the sustainability and protection of the environment and natural resources and quality of life of fisheries communities. It is estimated that approximately three quarters of the overall financial allocation under the Fund will be earmarked for the so called "least-favoured regions" in the new Member States, and that criteria will be laid down for defining the eligible areas.¹ For other regions, the funding will be divided between the Member States according to the size of the fishery sector, the number of people working in the sector and the adjustments considered necessary for fisheries and the continuity of measures in hand.

The adoption of the EFF was not uncontested. One of the major issues of discussions was whether or not to allow the use of EFF funds for building of new vessels as well as for the purchase of new engines. One of the obvious criticisms from environmental interests has been and continues to be how the Commission and other stakeholders will be able to ensure that capacity does not increase as a result of engines being replaced, or vessels purchased within the EU fleet.² While the final EFF includes a number of measures, that might increase fishing capacity in the EU, the EFF also provides measures which can support sustainable development of fisheries and marine areas. As none of the measures in the EFF is compulsory, it is up to each Member State to choose their national priorities and measures which will be funded. As a result, the impact of the EFF now in place is mainly determined by the Member States and their national plans and programs. The objective of this briefing is to raise awareness among NGOs about the role and importance of the EFF and to support them in

¹ To that end, the identification of priority regions and areas at Community level should be based on the common system of classification of the regions, established by Regulation (EC) No 1059/2003 of the European Parliament and the Council of 26 May 2003.

² See for instance Joint NGO position paper on the EFF Proposal, online available at: http://assets.panda.org/downloads/20060515_ngo_position_eff.pdf.

participating and influencing the national programming processes. In particular the brief seeks to:

- assist NGOs to better understand the programming procedure,
- highlight the measures benefiting sustainable development of the marine environment and nature conservation eligible under the EFF, and
- outline the steps aimed at making sure that these measures are included in national programming documents.

2 Funding Opportunities from an Environmental Perspective

The EFF provides substantial opportunities for the European Fisheries Sector. From an environmental perspective it is essential, that Member States take the opportunity to allocate funding available under the EFF that promote sustainable fisheries, enhance biodiversity and nature conservation. This is even more important as the final EFF does also include measures, such as vessel modernization and installation of new engines, which are likely to increase pressure on already depleted fish stocks. Against this background funding for so-called sustainable projects, will not only enhance the marine environment, but will also guarantee that the funding available is not spent on environmentally harmful activities and projects. The following paragraphs demonstrate along the EFF's five priority axis key environmentally measures that are eligible for finance.

2.1 Priority Axis 1: measures for the adaptation of the community fleet

Priority Axis 1 comprises measures for the adaptation of the community fleet, ranging from aid to fishermen which are affected by national decommissioning schemes to financing of vessel and equipment modernisation. For instance the fund may contribute to the financing of equipment and modernisation works:

- for reducing the impact of fishing on non-commercial species;
- for reducing the impact of fishing on ecosystems and the sea bottom; as well as
- new gear which is more selective and meets recognised criteria and practices which go beyond existing legal requirements.

Through Priority Axis 1, the Fund may also contribute to the financing of socio-economic measures for fishers. These involve for instance the diversification of activities with a view to promoting multiple jobs for fishers or schemes for retraining in occupations outside sea fishing or. Priority Axis 1 might also include one-off payments to overcome specific investment and/or technical barriers, for instance the purchase of acoustic devices or selective gear.

2.2 Priority Axis 2: Aquaculture, processing and marketing of fishery and aquaculture products

Priority Axis 2 regards Aquaculture, processing and marketing of fishery and aquaculture products. Through this axis the fund may assist in granting compensation for the use of aquaculture production methods helping to protect and improve the

environment and to conserve nature, notably for:

- protection and enhancement of the environment, natural resources, genetic diversity etc;
- implementation of aquaculture methods substantially reducing negative impact or enhancing positive effects on the environment
- sustainable aquaculture compatible with specific environmental constraints resulting from the designation of Natura 2000 areas;
- Compensation for the costs of locating units in or near Natura 2000 sites.

The introduction of aqua-environmental measures marks a significant change in fisheries aid, for the first time linking aid to public service provision. Not only coastal aquaculture sites, but also land-locked fish ponds, prevalent in the accession countries where fish-farm units are frequently also Special Protection Areas (SPAs) under the Birds Directive, are eligible for funding. Activities under this axis might be the implementation of Environmental Impact assessments (EIA) of aquaculture projects.

2.3 Priority Axis 3: Measures of collective interest

Priority axis 3 regards measures of collective interest. These are measures which help to meet the objectives of the common fisheries policy with a broader scope than measures normally undertaken by private enterprises. Measures and actions eligible for funding include:

- collective actions and measures to protect and develop flora and fauna, including:
 - Better management of resources
 - Selective fishing methods and gears
 - Removal of lost fishing gears
 - Improvement of working conditions and safety
 - Improvement of quality and food safety
 - Development of new training methods
 - Promotion of partnership between scientists and operators
 - Promotion of equal opportunities
- protection and enhancement of the environment in the Natura 2000;
- promotion of products using methods with low environmental impact;
- labelling and certification of product caught or farmed using environmental friendly methods;
- pilot projects aiming at developing and testing methods to improve selectivity, reduce by-catches, discards or the impact on the environment, in particular the sea bottom.

There is potential for ongoing payments to increase the profitability of more sustainable

practices, such as the use of traditional, static fishing gear, by providing additional and ongoing income. Payments could also be used to support the establishment of new product markets that reward environmentally sensitive production methods. Labelling includes the funding for MSC certification schemes, while under pilot projects, various types of activities can be funded, including data collection and monitoring if they contribute to the objectives of the project.

2.4 Priority Axis 4: Sustainable development of fishing areas

This axis arguably represents the most radical departure from the FIFG (the existing fisheries funding regulation) by introducing an integrated and territorial approach that places fisheries firmly within a local development context. In so doing, it effectively mainstreams the bottom-up approach and community focus of LEADER and PESCA within the main fund. There is potential through this Axis to promote:

- restructuring and redirecting economic activities;
- strengthening the competitiveness of the fisheries areas;
- restructuring , redirecting and diversifying economic activities, for instance by promoting ecotourism;
- adding value to fisheries products;
- small fisheries and tourism infrastructure and services;
- improvement and protection of the coastal and marine environment;
- protecting and enhancing the natural and architectural heritage in fisheries areas;
- restore production damaged by disasters;
- inter-regional and trans-national cooperation of actors;
- capacity building to prepare local development strategies; and
- running costs of Groups.

2.5 Priority axis 5: technical assistance

Through priority axis 5 the EFF may finance the preparatory, monitoring, administrative and technical support, evaluation and audit measures necessary for its implementation. Actions include:

- measures to disseminate information, networking, raise awareness, promote cooperation and exchange experiences throughout the Community;
- the installation, operation and interconnection of computerised systems for management, monitoring, inspection and evaluation;
- the establishment of transnational and Community networks of actors in the sustainable development of fisheries areas with a view to encouraging the exchange of experience and best practice

Activities under priority Axis 5 are for instance, better information provision – including

research and monitoring of the impact of fishing and farming activities on the marine environment, in order to support improved fisheries management. Other work might include the mapping and development of inventories of fishing areas and impacts, including those relating to Natura 2000 sites, as well as monitoring and data collection relating to the range of fisheries impacts on Natura 2000 Sites. These activities could take the form of one-off projects, or ongoing running costs associated with the establishment of monitoring and research facilities and the provision of monitoring services, for example. Information does not have to be limited to scientific research, however, but could include the exchange of experience and good practice, information on potential production and market outlets, consumer preferences, etc....

3 Key Member State Processes for EFF Implementation

In line with the subsidiarity principle, Member States play a key role in the implementation of structural funds. This holds also true for the EFF, where Member States themselves have the main responsibility for selecting and implementing the fund according to their national or regional priorities. As a result, Member States have the opportunity to avoid an environmentally detrimental use of funds, such as funding for engine replacement, but can make use of the EFF to promote economically, socially and environmentally sustainable development of the fisheries sector. In order to use the EFF money to support their fisheries sector, Member States are obliged to draft their national programming documents for Fisheries, which are similar to the Rural Development Plans for Agriculture. There are two types of programming documents which are being prepared at a national level for Fisheries namely, the National Strategic Plan and the National Operational Programmes. In order to give the Member States more technical details and guidelines how to prepare their programming documents, the Commission is in the process of preparing an Implementing regulation for the EFF and so called Vade mecum

3.1 National Strategic Plans

As their names suggest, NSPs are national plans that present an overall strategic vision with regard to the medium term development policy of the fisheries and aquaculture sector in the Member States. They should identify the most relevant elements of the CFP to the Member States fisheries and aquaculture sectors, and focus on the prioritised interventions. NSPs are broader than the CFP alone however, and should relate equally to other specific aspects not covered by the CFP, such as environment, regional planning, employment, and the interactions between fishing and other aspects of maritime affairs. Among others NSPs should contain a description of the situation in the fisheries sector, general objectives and national priorities, and an estimate of the resources needed.

Member States are required to adopt NSPs. The proposed EFF Regulation sets out the required process of developing and adopting the NSPs and the required contents/structure. Accordingly, NSPs should be developed 'following an appropriate consultation with the partners'. Article 8 itself only requires Member States to 'organise a consultation on the national strategic plan, according to the modalities that it considers most appropriate'. This means that Member States are under little obligation

to open up the NSP development process and work with stakeholders.

It should be noted that the Commission does not play any role in scrutinising the NSPs. Rather, NSPs should be the ‘subject of a dialogue between the Member State and the Commission’. Nonetheless, the Commission prepared non-binding guidelines for Member States outlining the objectives and content of the NSP, to ensure at least some consistency amongst the Member States. The importance of the NSP stems from its link to the Operational Programme.

3.2 National Operational Programme

NOPs are national plans developed by the Member States, in much the same way as the NSPs. However, they are much more specific and focused. Based on the NSPs, they set out how the Member States will operationalise the EFF funds, and so set the framework for implementing the policies and priorities to be co-financed by the EFF. Therefore, NSPs should contain a synthesis of the situation of relevant policy areas, a description and justification of the priority axes chosen, for each priority axis its specific targets, a summary description of principal measures, and financial and implementation provisions. No activity should not be funded under the EFF unless it is included in the NOP.

The proposed EFF Regulation contains more detailed requirements for the development of the NOPs than for the NSPs. In particular, Member States are required to undertake ‘close consultations’ with the partners detailed in the Partnership Article (Article 8). This article goes on to say that these partners ‘shall cover the preparation, financing, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the operational programmes’.

The Commission appraises the proposed NOPs to ensure they contribute to the EFF objectives, which include the protection and the enhancement of the environment and natural resources in relation to fisheries.

3.3 State of current NSPs and NOPs

Given that NOPs have to be consistent with the NSPs, most Member States have already started with the drafting process some time ago. More specific, most Member States have already progressed quite far or even ended their consultation process. For instance, Poland finished its NSP and approved it by Parliament to provide it with more political weight³; the United Kingdom closed the consultation process on its NSP⁴, and Germany has its NSP almost finished. In fact, according to informal sources, most Member States have only been waiting for the final approval of the EFF, before making last adjustments in their NSPs. The NSPs must be submitted at the latest when Member States submit the operational programme.

There is little information with regard to the progress of the NOPs within Member States, but as this document is more dependent on the actual EFF text and its final provisions, Member States have been more hesitant in drafting the NOP until the final

³ The adoption through parliament is not required under the EFF Regulation.

⁴ See <http://www.defra.gov.uk/corporate/consult/fish%2Dstrategy>.

agreement on the EFF. As a result, a larger number of Member states are still in the process of drafting their NOPS. The NOPS shall be submitted as proposals as soon as possible, as it may take over six months to have them adopted by Commission Decision if they fall short of requirements.

It is important to note that the EFF Regulation requires the NOPS to cover the entire financing period, but allows a re-examination ‘where a major difficulty has arisen in implementation or if there have been significant strategic changes’. With apparently stronger wording in relation to the NSPs, ‘a revision shall take into account annual reports, the annual examinations and the interim evaluation ... and important changes to the common fisheries policy’. As a result, there are also opportunities to influence the NOPS after they have been approved by the Commission.

Key dates in the process of developing the NSPs and NOPS currently read as follows:

Action	Date
Member States submit NSPs	At latest when submitting NOPS
Member States submit NOPS	As soon as possible, latest by 31 December 2006
Commission may request Member States to amend NOPS	Within two months of NOP submission
Commission approve NOPS	Up to four months after submission of agreed NOP
NOPS begin	1 January 2007

4 How to Influence EFF Funding in your Country

The EFF provides great opportunities for stakeholders, including diverse groups such as fishing communities, environmental NGOs, retailers and academics, to promote economically, socially and environmentally sustainable development in the European fisheries sector. Engaging in the debate and potentially influencing the national processes and outcomes are best achieved through liaison with national administrations, responsible for developing national strategic plans. This should be done in all cases to, minimally, get a sense for:

1. the current state of play within individual Member States on both the development of national strategic plans and subsequent operational programmes; and
2. which areas are still open for negotiation, as well as identify opportunities to influence/advocate wise use of EFF from an environmental perspective.

As mentioned before, the process will likely be more advanced in some Member States than it will be in others. However, in any case, this guidance should help to identify where your efforts may be best placed over the next few months. In general, your government should be open for your input and help concerning the development of the

NSP and in particular the NOP. However, EFF Article 8, the so called partnership article, asks for involvement of all appropriate bodies in the programming process, referring to “competent regional, local and other public authorities, the economic and social partners, and other appropriate bodies”, but does not specifically mention environmental NGOs. However, as Article 8 also states the obligation to take into account “the need to promote equality between men and women and sustainable development through the integration of environmental protection and enhancement”, it should be clear that environmental NGOs fall under appropriate bodies.

Steps to influence the programming process

1. Try to find out who is the key person in charge for developing your country’s NSP and OP (in most cases it will be someone from the Ministry of Agriculture or Ministry of Fisheries which, in some countries, is combined with the Ministry of Environment).
2. Contact the person in charge and ask for the draft NSP and NOP. You might also ask if any impact assessment (strategic impact assessment of environmental impact assessment) has been carried out and is available for your information. Depending on your capacity you can contact him/her either by phone or, if you feel it is appropriate for you, to arrange a meeting.
3. Ask for a timeline and how your government is planning to involve stakeholders in the process. If there is no official consultation process, you should contact us. We will provide you for instance with template letters to be sent to your Ministry to ask for an open consultation process.
4. Investigate whether the key environmental measures are taken up in the NSP/OP. In particular, look if the NOP pays sufficient attention to sustainable initiatives and axes, such as priority axis 2, 3 and 4.
5. Provide the authority with your input and information, taking into account your country’s situation and priorities. The examples mentioned above in chapter 2 are prepared for the EFF generally. You should choose the measures which are most relevant for your country and give greatest emphasis to those which reflect your environmental priorities.
6. Lobby for the “good” measures to make sure they are included in your country’s NOP. It depends on your capacity and national situation what lobby techniques you will use. However ask at least for feedback on how your input has been taken into consideration.
7. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you need any further information, advice, arguments or documents. Also, if you have information to share, such as best practices etc. please let us know.
8. Provide us with feedback on what is your government doing. If you think that either the process or content of the programming documents in your

country are going the wrong way, please let us know about that, so that we can inform the Commission before the NOP is adopted.

Remember that the Member States NSPs and NOPs will ultimately decide how EFF funds are spent on fishing for the next seven years. Therefore, it is important to try and influence this process now. Also, as it is largely up to countries how they spend their allocation from the EFF, it is up to 'stakeholders' to try and (a) get the best deal for nature conservation out of each country's spending plans; (b) steer countries away from spending EFF money in ways that will damage marine and freshwater ecosystems.

5 Annex: Project Examples

5.1 Labelling line caught bass and mackerel, U.K.

The South West Handline Fishermen's Association (UK) has set up a labelling scheme for line caught bass. The label (which is attached to the gills) demonstrates that the fish is locally caught using low impact methods. The scheme was funded from the proceeds of labels sold to the Association's members, although the past FIFG could potentially be used to set up the scheme as long as there is no explicit reference to a geographical area on the label. FIFG funding had also been secured to maintain the accreditation of the mackerel fishery by the Marine Stewardship Council. For instance, Hastings Dover sole, mackerel and herring – two fisheries based in Hastings (SE England) are being assessed for certification by the Marine Stewardship Council as well-managed fisheries. Funding for the assessment had been secured under the 'product promotion' measure of FIFG, which supported assessment towards environmental standards and eco-labelling schemes.⁵

5.2 Sustainable fisheries development, Denmark

The Fisheries Development Programme's objective is to develop a basis for fisheries where bycatch and discard of fish for consumption and ecological impact is documented and reduced to a minimum by the application of best possible technology and management practice. The programme is comprised of four elements:

1. Development of new catch and fishing methods, enabling improved selectivity in terms of size and species.
2. Development of new instruments for fisheries management (e.g. fishing days, real-time closure and reopening of hot spots) to optimise the utilisation of the Danish fishing quota, including reduction of discard.
3. Development of a codex for sustainable fishery, including definition within the fishing sector of a sustainable fishery and acceptance by the sector of sustainable management.
4. Definition and description of the ecological sustainability of the fishery, including quantification of the direct and fleet specific effect of the fisheries on target and by-catch species as well as documentation of the effect of using new and selective fishing technologies.

These elements are targeted at the development of improved fishing and management methods to ensure that utilisation of the allocated marine resources is optimal in relation to the composition of the fishing fleet as well as sustainable fisheries development.

The Fisheries Development Programme was developed by the Danish Ministry of Food, Agriculture in cooperation with the Danish Directorate for Food, Fisheries, and Agriculture and with input from various Danish institutions and NGOs. In fact, the

⁵ Further information at: <http://www.linecaught.org.uk/index.html>.

Programme provides a good example of how NGOs can play an important role in programme and project development: WWF-Denmark was crucial in initiating and developing the programme, and now sits on the programme steering committee. The project received approximately 2 Million Euro through the FIGF.

5.3 Invest in Fish – Sustainable Fisheries Management, United Kingdom

A three year project, led by WWF-UK, the National Federation of Fishermen's Organisations and the retailer Marks & Spencer, aimed to provide a long term strategy for managing fishing fleets and the wider marine environment on a regional basis (SW England), while taking important local characteristics into account. The initiative involves three years of consultation, evaluation, expert opinions and deliberations. The final strategy will be decided by ten members of the project steering group, each representing a major stakeholder group within the fish industry (fish catching industry, angling and sport fishing industry, processors, retailers, environmental agencies and governmental and non-governmental statutory agencies). FIGF funding was awarded by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (UK) to support the work. It is feasible that similar projects could be developed for other regions, to support regional or local management planning processes.⁶

5.4 Fishermen's maps

Coastal fishermen have immense knowledge of the estuarine and marine environment. Not only is knowledge precisely referenced over space and time, and regularly updated, but this information is also multi-dimensional, linking fish presence and abundance to habitats and other environmental features. However, this information generally lacks standardised coding or archiving, often with information kept on written logs. In 2002, the Harwich Haven authority sponsored a project to develop a fisheries ecosystem description and monitoring strategy with local fishermen. The project involved the production of three thematic maps for the September 2002 – August 2003 fishing season, with different degrees of interpretation and synthesis. The maps identify fishing grounds, seasonal changes in lobster distribution and seasonal distribution of juvenile, adult and spawning Dover soles. The authority has also sponsored the collection of weekly fishing logs of species and habitat data. Fishermen's maps present valuable knowledge to inform marine spatial planning of human activities in the coastal zone. A time series of such maps is particularly important for other sectors, given that spawning grounds and nursery beds are not necessarily spatially stable from year to year. This type of activity also allows more efficient use to be made of fishing boats and fishing trips, while reinforcing relationships between managers and fishermen.⁷

5.5 Seabed mapping for fisheries and nature conservation

Within the context of the Irish National Development Plan, an EU funded project aimed

⁶ More information about the project can be found on its homepage at

<http://www.investinfish.org> or

<http://assets.panda.org/downloads/eufundingforenvironmentweb.pdf>, p. 93.

⁷ See: http://www.rspb.org.uk/Images/harnessingeuropeanfisheriesfund_tcm5-70114.pdf, p. 35.

to produce customised products for the fishing industry based on multibeam, geophysical, geological and assorted datasets collected as part of the National Seabed Survey. The products ultimately to be created will be in the form of computer based fishing charts with the capability for fishermen to overlay tow tracks with high resolution multibeam bathymetric data. This system is to reduce gear damage and loss in 'high risk' areas around undersea features along the continental shelf edge by identifying areas of hard ground or obstructions. It will also allow avoidance of highly sensitive marine ecosystems such as cold water coral reefs, thereby minimising environmental impact on the seabed. Ultimately the aim is to allow the creation of a relationship between marine geology and biological habitat characterisation to generate information for both the management and sustainable development of fisheries. The project is being taken forward by the Irish Sea Fisheries Board (BIM) and the Geological Survey of Ireland.⁸

5.6 Clyde Inshore Fishery, Scotland

WWF is part of a major new cross-sector partnership aimed at building a sustainable future for the Clyde inshore fishery. The first of its kind in Scotland, the project aims to facilitate a brighter future for Clyde fisheries by encouraging fishermen, scientists, and organisations concerned with the environment to work together to develop the local fishery in a sustainable way. The partnership brings together representatives from WWF Scotland, Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH), Seafish, Northern Ireland Fishermen's Federation (NIFF), Clyde and South West Static Gear Association (CSWSGA), the University Marine Biological Station Millport (UMBSM) and the Food and Drink Federation (FDF). Throughout the course of the project, the Group will undertake a number of key development and research activities. The main objectives include:

- a review of local fisheries, stocks, capture methods and a review of the environment in which the fisheries are carried out;
- promotion of a set of quality and environmental standards that the industry should work towards; and
- the development of a programme aimed at improving sustainability and reward in the supply chain to help with the long-term social and economic prosperity of Clyde fisheries.⁹

5.7 Regional Marketing, Wales - Cardigan Bay

In the past, FIGF funding was used to enable fishermen in Cardigan Bay (Wales) to market their own produce rather than exporting it. The move was part of a plan by Cardigan Bay Fishermen's Association (CBFA) to transform their inshore shellfishing industry. Members owning 44 vessels (<12m) at harbours along the coast of the Bay trawl for crabs, lobsters, prawns and whelks, which - before this project started - were mainly exported to France and Spain. With FIGF funding, the CBFA came together to

⁸ See http://www.rspb.org.uk/Images/harnessingeuropeanfisheriesfund_tcm5-70114.pdf, p. 35.

⁹ More information at: http://www.wwf.org.uk/news/scotland/n_0000001570.asp.

pack local catches and sell them to local restaurants, hotels and farmer's markets, instead of exporting them abroad. The commission applauded the scheme which had helped small communities of fishermen to cooperate and work together to boost their local economy and employment and to secure their own future. In the EFF, Axis 4 which mentions the local use of catches might provide funding opportunities for similar projects.

5.8 North Sea Commission Fisheries Partnership

The predecessor of the North Sea Regional Advisory Council – the North Sea Commission Fisheries Partnership – was set up to promote co-operation between scientists and fishers in monitoring and managing fisheries in the North sea. The Fisheries Partnership consisted of three phases: Phase one, establishing structures to make scientific advice on fish stocks more transparent and inclusive, and to make full use of the data held by fishers. Phase two, providing a pilot structure for advising on management measures. Phase three, defining and implementing a new structure for managing marine resources in the North Sea. Working groups were established to consider particular issues, conduct surveys and make recommendations for the project. The principal outcomes of the Fisheries Partnership were improved cross-sectoral exchanges of views between fishermen, scientists and other stakeholders including fishery managers, fish merchants and processors. Trans-national dialogue between fishermen from different countries around the North Sea was also promoted, and introducing peer review further developed scientific advice on the state of fish stocks.

The Partnership was established as a pilot project in 2000 by Aberdeenshire Council (Scotland) and the North Sea Commission, with initial funding provided by the PESCA community Initiative. In May 2002, part-funding for a further three years was obtained from the European Regional Development Fund under the Interreg IIIB Programme for the North Sea, a community initiative concerned with trans-national co-operation on spatial development.¹⁰

5.9 WWW Sources for further examples

- <http://assets.panda.org/downloads/eufundingforenvironmentweb.pdf>
- http://www.rspb.org.uk/Images/harnessingeuropeanfisheriesfund_tcm5-70114.pdf
- http://ec.europa.eu/comm/fisheries/news_corner/autres/conf260606/annex1_en.pdf
- <http://www.ieep.org.uk/projectMiniSites/fisheries/funding.php?PHPSESSID=da4e2ea796820db4c12d42afc5f80f3d>

¹⁰ See: http://www.rspb.org.uk/Images/harnessingeuropeanfisheriesfund_tcm5-70114.pdf, p. 37

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