

European Fisheries Fund Evaluation Report for the North Norfolk Fisheries Local Action Group



Produced by Future Environomics LLP



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Introduction

The North Norfolk Fisheries Local Action Group (NNFLAG) was established to locally manage and administer Axis 4 of the European Fisheries Fund (EFF) scheme starting in 2011. Over the period leading up to 2011 stakeholders worked tirelessly together to establish the North Norfolk FLAG covering the coastline between Thornham and Caister on Sea. It was the wish of the newly formed FLAG that this initiative should deliver an integrated programme of mutually beneficial actions to support what is needed for the sustainable and profitable development of the sector. This could only happen through community adaptation and improving the resilience of the industry to the predicted future impacts of managing stocks and supporting ecosystems through to the development of new markets diversification and smarter working.

The local Fishing Industry has largely operated as one of deeply traditional family businesses. It has not had a strong history of collaboration between the many area based representative Societies and Associations dispersed along the coast. This made it difficult to develop a consensus on what was needed for the fisheries industry during the development of the EFF programme submission. The European Fisheries Fund (EFF) administered by the Marine Management Organisation (MMO) in England presented the first tangible opportunity to work together to benefit the wider industry and associated sectors.

A successful submission for £1.26m of funding (50% EFF matched by 50% Defra monies) was coordinated by Robin Smith, Economic Development Officer and colleagues at North Norfolk District Council building on the working relationships developed to provide a Shellfish processing facility on the Quay at Wells- next- the Sea. The FLAG scheme was initially managed and administered by the North Norfolk Business Forum (NNBF) with this role provided by NNDC from July 2014, when capacity and resource issues at NNBF prevented their continued involvement.

The programme successfully developed 24 projects submissions totalling £1,747,279 drawing down £1,057,812 of EFF/Defra funding allocation. This evaluation will focus on and address a range of issues, actions and outcomes from the FLAG Programme over the period 2012-15 that will provide the current FLAG Board with an in-depth assessment of the governance, management, objectives, delivery and outcomes from the Programme. The study will provide the evidence required to assess the value of the North Norfolk FLAG Programme for both the lead Programme sponsor (North Norfolk District Council) and the FLAG Board, the north Norfolk Fishery and the range of organisations and businesses that have played a part in developing and delivering the Programme. Equally important to the future of the fisheries sector is the requirement to address the opportunities and limitations of the next European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF) 2014-20 and the prospects for the North Norfolk FLAG partnership over the next 5 years and beyond.



Evaluation purpose and methodology

The North Norfolk Fisheries Local Action Group (FLAG) has agreed to commission this Evaluation of the current European Fisheries Fund Axis 4 (FLAG) initiative for the North Norfolk area. The commission sets out the objectives and need for this Evaluation to address a range of issues, actions and outcomes from the FLAG Programme over the period 2012-15 to provide the current FLAG Board with an in-depth assessment of the governance, management, objectives, delivery and outcomes from the Programme.

The study should provide the evidence required to assess the value of the North Norfolk FLAG Programme for both the lead Programme sponsor (North Norfolk District Council) and the FLAG Board, the north Norfolk Fishery and the range of organisations and businesses that have played a part in developing and delivering the Programme. Equally important to the future of the fisheries sector is the requirement to address the opportunities and limitations of the next European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF) 2014-20 and the prospects for the North Norfolk FLAG partnership over the next 5 years remaining and beyond. The EMFF assessment will consider the value of the Programme to the North Norfolk area and the possible arrangements and options that may be appropriate to deliver the Programme. The Programme management options may include an assessment of the Community Led Local Development (CLLD) model and how the future EMFF programme could be supported via this approach.

Methodology

This evaluation is designed to coordinate with, but not duplicate, the national evaluation of the FLAG Programme UK commissioned by Defra and carried out by ICF International. In effect The ICF International Evaluation was to be an ex-post evaluation of FLAGs in the 2007 to 2013 European Fisheries Fund (EFF) funding period which will feed lessons into the development of the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF) 2014-20, and specifically the Community-Led Local Development (CLLD) actions. Three task-based objectives were identified in order to achieve this:

- Conduct a process evaluation around the establishment and running of the FLAGs.
- Conduct an impact and economic evaluation of the projects undertaken by FLAGs and how these support the achievement of the agreed Local Development Strategies (LDSs).
- Provide costed recommendations on future approaches to data collection and evaluation of FLAG-funded projects under EMFF and how this could be integrated across the organisations to help inform Defra decision making during development of the Operational Programme and delivery of the EMFF scheme

In addition to this, the lessons learnt from the project are to be drawn together into a short Article that can be used to inform and improve future evaluations of a similar nature.

The Methodology of the North Norfolk FLAG Evaluation has involved development and completion of two questionnaires: one for applicants and one for wider stakeholders participating in the FLAG development and delivery, including present and past NNFLAG members and providers of NNFLAG scheme Management and Administration. The stakeholder questionnaire was completed via telephone and face to face interviews. It was hoped that through this approach we could identify the nuances and issues that a form filling exercise would not have ascertained.



As part of the interview process stakeholders considered how effectively the NNFLAG had met the primary and secondary objectives utilising the method of awarding scores rated 1 through 5 where 1 indicated strong agreement, 2 agreement, 3 neither agree nor disagree, 4 disagree and 5 strongly disagree. This would prove to be especially important as many if not all the actors involved in the development of the scheme are no longer around or perhaps willing to discuss their early experiences.

Analysis of outputs and outcomes was also carried out to ascertain how effectively the NNFLAG scheme had delivered on both national and local objectives. Recommendations were developed that reflected the findings and experience of the scheme development delivery and looking forward to the forthcoming European Maritime Fisheries Fund (EMFF) replacing EFF for the period 2014-20.



Recommendations for EMFF arising from NNFLAG Evaluation Process

1. Local Accountability and programme management

- a. The NNFLAG application process should contain clear qualifying criteria and SMART objectives linking outputs and outcomes directly to the stated aspirations of the scheme.
- b. Consideration should be given to establishing an industry mentoring scheme to aid new applicants to the EMFF programme.
- c. Greater use should be made of the NNFLAG newsletter and email bulletins in promoting an understanding and an awareness of the development and successful delivery of the Programme.

2. Funding availability and partnership support

- a. A delegated grant scheme for awards up to £10k should be considered, that could be made available to the NNFLAG as part of a more rapid and accountable element of EMFF.
- b. Consideration should be given to providing additional funding, or loans to support the application process, or to facilitate cash flow during delivery and claim procedures.
- c. Consideration should be given by Defra to in-kind contributions as a costed item for eligible match funding provision as for Heritage Lottery Grants.
- d. Commitment to fund major schemes should be sought and assured prior to development of final local strategy being written under EMFF?

3. FLAG's co-operation and wider partnership engagement

- a. If the role of the NNFLAG is to be extended beyond that of Grant Administration as supported by the current NNFLAG members then consideration should be given to an additional role of NNFLAG Coordinator/Development Manager.
- b. Co-ordination and cooperation under Community Led Local Development (CLLD) approach should be made at the earliest opportunity with other related European grant schemes.
- c. The operational area of the NNFLAG should not be extended as part of the delivery of a future EMFF Programme.
- d. Potential EMFF projects for NNFLAG should be better developed through liaison with Farnet best practice network and other UK FLAGs.

4. Capacity and facilitation to deliver EMFF

- a. Commitment of sufficient resources should be made by NNDC and NNFLAG partner organisations to facilitate the robust development, delivery and Management and Administration of a future EMFF scheme.
- b. A programme of Training and support for all NNFLAG members, Management and Administration roles should be provided by the MMO as an integral part of the development and delivery of the EMFF



6. EMFF development of key priorities locally

- a. Development of any future scheme must build on the successful engagement with the local fishing societies and associations supported through NNFLAG to be better able to deliver projects and activities that have achievable outputs and outcomes linked to EMFF priorities.
- b. Much of the NNFLAG Local Development Strategy remains relevant and would form a solid basis of any future scheme.
- c. Measures to address the pressures and constraints expressed as part of the evaluation process should be addressed through relevant measures as an integral part of the EMFF scheme.
 - i. Possible designation of fishing area as Marine Conservation Zone and therefore possible constraints on fishing.
 - ii. Potential increased regulations
 - iii. Decreasing stocks
 - iv. Potential impact of off-shore wind farms and restrictions in fishing areas
 - v. Impact of foreign competition and cheap produce
 - vi. Environmental lobbying
 - vii. Ecological, financial, coastal process related changes & age related
- d. Research and Development to better understand and provide benefit for the fisheries and related industries should be a priority for the EMFF scheme.
- e. The role of the NNFLAG as a Focus and/or Forum for the local Fishing Industry should be supported irrespective of a successful EMFF application

7. MMO/DEFRA and relationship/co-operation with FLAG Board under EMFF

- a. NNFLAG should work more closely with Defra and other English FLAG areas to ensure lessons learnt from the current Programme are considered and agreed arrangements are in place for a future EMFF scheme.
- b. NNFLAG should work with other FLAG areas to lobby for enhanced delegated powers in the delivery of an EMFF Programme.
- c. If local FLAG groups are not awarded enhanced delegated powers, then NNFLAG should work with other FLAG areas to lobby for better resources and enhanced capacity to be provided to the MMO as an accountable body for EMFF.
- d. A clear MMO staff structure, responsibilities and accountabilities should be produced as part of the EMFF development and delivery to improve communication and understanding of the Managing Authority roles and services.
- e. Local representation on and improved communication with the FLAG Board should be provided by the MMO through a designated contact to actively facilitate the effective and efficient operation and delivery of a future EMFF scheme including the claims and evaluation process.

European Fisheries Fund (EFF) and North Norfolk Fisheries

The European Fisheries Fund EFF

The EFF across the European Union (EU) budget was €4,304 million for the period from 2007-13 (European Commission, 2008). These monies were divided between EU Member States according to the size of their fisheries sector, the number of people employed in the sector and the adjustments considered necessary for the fishing industry.

The EFF 2007-2013 Programme's aim was to help the fishing industry to become more sustainable and to remain profitable. As a whole the UK was allocated almost €138 million through the EFF, which was around £111 million, or 3.2 % of the total EU EFF budget.

The EFF has four priority areas, or AXES 1-4:

- Axis 1 Measures for the adaptation of the fleet
- Axis 2 Aquaculture, inland fishing
- Axis 3 Processing and marketing of fishery and aquaculture products
- Axis 4 Measures of collective benefit to the industry; and sustainable development of fisheries areas.

A fifth AXIS funded the initial Technical Assistance (TA) required to deliver the programme.

A split between each of the UK administrations had also been agreed; Scotland nearly €55m (£39m), England just over €48m (nearly £34m), Northern Ireland just over €18m (nearly £13m), and Wales just over €17m (nearly £12m).

The Programme was developed to address the issues above within the UK fishing industry comprising the three main areas of fisheries activities in the UK which are comprised of the Catching Fleet, Aquaculture and Processing:

Industry picture:

Extracts from UK Operating Programme (OP)

Total Gross Value Added - UK level - € million (%)

2006 figures

Fishing 471 (0.04%)

Fish Farming 358 (0.03%)

Production of Fish Products 621 (0.05%)

Total 1,450 (0.13%)

Total employment average during 2006 - UK level - Thousands

Whole economy 8 23,696

Of which:

Fishing 7 (0.03%)

Fish Farming 3 (0.01%)

Production of Fish Products 17 (0.07%)

Total 27 (0.11%)

UK Trade in fish and fish products

Imports 2,815 (18%)



Exports 1,385 (4%)

Trade balance - 1,430 tonnes

The UK catching Fleet

The UK fishing fleet is diverse, reflecting the wide range of fishing opportunities. The UK fishes over 100 EU designated quota species as well as a wide range of non-quota species.

In 2013, the UK fishing industry had 6,399 fishing vessels compared with 7,096 in 2003, a reduction of 10 per cent. The fleet in 2013 comprised 5,036 10 metre and under vessels and 1,363 over 10 metre vessels. There were around 12,150 fishermen in 2013, down 7 per cent since 2003. Of these, around 5,600 were based in England, 730 in Wales, 5,000 in Scotland and 810 in Northern Ireland. Part-time fishermen accounted for 15 per cent of the total, down 7 percentage points over the last ten years. In 2013, UK vessels landed 624 thousand tonnes of sea fish (including shellfish) into the UK and abroad with a value of £718 million. This represents a 1 per cent decrease in quantity and a 7 per cent decrease in value compared with 2012. Falls in average prices have been seen across all species groups

UK SEA FISHERIES STATISTICS 2013 MMO

Aquaculture

The relative importance of the aquaculture sector varies around the UK. For example, nearly all of the UK farmed salmon is produced in Scotland and the vast majority of farmed mussels are produced in Wales.

In 2006 there were 431 fish and shellfish farming businesses in the UK, directly employing some 3,000 people with a total industry turnover in 2006 of some €744m. The main finfish species farmed are salmon (132,000 tonnes produced in 2006) and rainbow trout (13,000 tonnes). There is limited production of other species, such as carp, brown trout, turbot, halibut, cod and Arctic char. There are also emerging species such as tilapia, barramundi, bass and bream.

Processing

The UK aquaculture (finfish and shellfish) industry in 2012 employed 3,231 people and produced over 205,000 tonnes valued at over £0.59 billion at first sale. The UK remains a leading aquaculture producer within the European Union (1st by value, 3rd by production tonnage). Atlantic salmon production in Scotland continues to dominate UK aquaculture harvest tonnage and value.

Trout production in 2012 in all home nations was below previous peaks, with long-term declines apparent in Wales and Northern Ireland. England and Scotland remain the main producers of rainbow trout. Only Scotland reports production of sea-water grown rainbow trout, where the decline in production from freshwater has been partially offset by increased production from seawater. In 2012, finfish farms produced 8,709 tonnes in England and 453 tonnes in Wales, the bulk of this production being rainbow trout.

In England, 823 staff were employed in finfish farms and 100 were employed in Wales, with the trout sector being the largest employer. In 2012, there were 247 authorised finfish enterprises (businesses) in England and 31 in Wales. The vast majority were small, employing less than 5 staff.

The total harvest was 27,360 tonnes with an estimated value of £33.2 million. Wales produced the highest tonnage of the UK nations, although the English industry had a higher value (due to higher unit price of Pacific oysters). The UK industry is dominated by mussels and Pacific oyster (95% and 4% of tonnage respectively; 82% and 15% of imputed value). In 2012, 248 shellfish enterprises employed 705 staff across the UK (Table 15). Within England and Wales, the number of enterprises remained static in 2012, whereas employment increased by 35 to 292

Aquaculture statistics for the UK, with a focus on England and Wales 2012 CEFAS



The Industry Picture in North Norfolk

At a local level results from recent research project findings commissioned by the NNFLAG to better understand the local industry and its interactions with the built and natural environment show that in 2013 a total of over 1261 tonnes of catch was landed across the NNFLAG area with a value of almost £1.5m by 54 boats of less than 10 metres and 7 over 10 metres. The most important species by weight and value were: brown shrimp *Crangon crangon*, brown crab *Cancer pagurus*, common lobster *Homarus gammarus* and common whelk *Buccinum undatum*.

In 2013 however, two or more of these four species accounted for more than 99% of the landed weight, and more than 98% of catch value at Brancaster, Wells, Blakeney, Cromer and Winterton and more than 97% of the landed weight, and more than 96% of value at Sheringham. Over 98% of total catch volume across the area is made using pots and traps with Wells landing almost 75% of the total area catch by weight.

There is seasonal variation in the species composition of the commercial catch. The main fishing season for crab commences around late March to early April with peak landings in May and June before dropping off through to late September/early October (Jessop et al. 2013). The Lobster season tends to follow closely behind the crab season starting in mid-May/ June, peaking in June/July before dropping off through the autumn and into winter (Jessop et al. 2013). The shrimp fishery is in operation all year round although landings of brown shrimp are greatest between August and December (Green et al. 2011). Whelks are fished all year round and are important in winter as they can be targeted when the yield of other fisheries is reduced (Lawler & Vause 2009).



Background and Development of NNFLAG bid

In February 2010 an Expression of Interest set out a project that was the culmination of several years' work. Over the preceding years a partnership of organisations had been working together to improve port facilities at Wells Next the Sea. A strong group was formed and for the first time saw fishermen working much more closely with the local authority. A bond of trust laid the backcloth for the initiation of the project paving the way for the proposal for a Cluster Action Group for the fisheries sector.

By joining together, the Cluster Action Group would develop a strategy and deliver an action plan which would maintain and sustain the industry. A collaboratively managed, shared and controlled environment would meet the long term vision of Fisheries 2027 for a sustainable fishery. This publication by the UK Coalition Government in 2007 outlined their aims to

- explain the changes in fisheries and fisheries management over the past thirty years and
- what we are now trying to achieve;
- set out the balance we will strike between economic, social and environmental priorities;
- clarify, through nine vision statements, the elements of sustainability;
- identify the roles and responsibilities of different stakeholders in achieving sustainability;
- summarise the economic, social and environmental benefits and costs of delivering the vision.

Initially the total proposed budget for the North Norfolk Fisheries Cluster Group was £180k over the remaining three years of the EFF programme. The initial aims of the Cluster Group, established as one of three administered through the North Norfolk Business Forum, others being Agriculture and Tourism Cluster Groups, were outlined in the original Expression of Interest submitted to the MMO in July 2010 and were to:

- Strengthen the competitiveness of the Norfolk Coast fisheries.
- Build the capacity of the industry to anticipate and respond to economic and environmental 'shocks'
- Enhance and develop the brand of the North Norfolk Coast fisheries, raising the profile of local, sustainably sourced produce to the retailer and consumer.
- Strengthen the 'voice' of the fisheries industry in related decision making processes thus enabling it to influence policy, planning and implementation at all levels.
- Explore diversification activities of the industry and identify ways to strengthen the link fisheries has to the tourism offer of the North Norfolk Coast.
- Promote the sharing of best practice and networking within the industry sector locally and as the cluster develops both regionally, nationally and internationally.
- Provide opportunities for skills development and retraining of those employed in the industry such as in business planning and development, eco-tourism, marketing and communications etc.
- Identify, develop and deliver tangible solutions to local issues such as processing and storage facilities.
- Monitor and facilitate the sustainable management of the marine and coastal environments through scientific research and conservation measures.
- Create a sustainable business plan and management group for the new North Norfolk Shellfish Handling Facility on Wells quay.

A number of consultation events were held across the proposed NNFLAG area that ultimately led to the 6 thematic areas of activity proposed under the EFF scheme, namely:

Competitiveness, Markets and Investments, Skills Development, Infrastructure, Environment and Sustainability all delivered under the Management and Administration of the Fisheries and Community Engagement Programme (FCEP).



“FCEP was a critical and central component to drive and steer the successful delivery of FLAG project over the life of the scheme. This programme or project had been created to be directly owned by the FLAG as the underpinning resource that would harness the strengths of all the stakeholders. It would create the necessary dynamic within the partnership to produce the required level of energy in order to sustain commitment to drive projects through to their successful conclusion.”

NNFLAG Summary Document 1

This model had been used effectively by NNDC over the previous ten years, enabling the communities in North Norfolk to successfully deliver more than £30 million worth of investment to projects jointly owned by public, private and third sector stakeholders. Detailed outputs were developed and proposed and can be found in the series of Complements that were submitted as part of the final submission.

The overall aim of the FLAG programme strategy was to contribute to a sustainable future for the North Norfolk fishery through a broad range of interventions over the next three years. Specifically, the FLAG's goals stated in Summary Document 1 of NNFLAG Programme were to:

- Support existing fishery businesses in accessing funds and advice to improve their business performance and ability to adapt to a number of future industry challenges.
- Boost entrants - individuals and businesses - to the industry to ensure that the fishery can continue to operate in the long-term.
- Provide new infrastructure around the FLAG area, much of which will be linked closely with the major local tourism industry, to ensure that fishery visitor levels and revenue generation opportunities remain high moving forward.
- Ensure that the environment is not impacted adversely by the actions of the fishery and provide robust proof of this for media and public dissemination.

Finally, an additional aim was to provide a voice for the North Norfolk fishery which would influence policy at a regional and national level while demonstrating the strong reputation of the fishery and highlighting its impressive heritage.

Initially stemming from those 6 delivery areas 24 projects overall have now been approved and supported by the Programme, drawing down £1,057,812 of the initial allocation of £1.26m. The initial programme submission deadline was twice extended to a final deadline of November 31st 2014 with the delivery phase to be completed by December 31st 2015.

The monetary value of combined EFF/MMO funding together with matched local funding stands at £1,747,279. Part of the study will assess the value of those commitments that have been made on behalf of the North Norfolk Fishery and what this commitment has meant to the sector now and in the long term.

Given the stated importance of the FLAG Programme to the local area and the value of the actions that have been supported, it is necessary to understand how effective the whole FLAG Programme effort has been moving forward and therefore how beneficial this Programme will be for the local area and the future prospects for the fisheries sector over the next 5 – 10 years.

Management and Administration

- *Opportunities to learn from other grant schemes were not taken that would have helped in EFF programme management and delivery*

Quotes obtained from the Evaluation process in this format have been placed throughout the report .

The initial design for the Management and Administration (M&A) of the scheme was based around the Fisheries and Communities Engagement Programme (FCEP). This approach evolved from the work to establish a Shellfish Processing Plan on the Quay at Wells Next the Sea. It was evident that a 'Partnership' approach was necessary to secure the on-going engagement of the fishing industry and to build on the trust established through this project. What appeared to be a complicated solution to the management and administration was based around the concept of partnership and community engagement consistent with the new government at the time's localism policy.

- *NNDC have played a vital role taking on the Programme administration and providing the local input*
- *MMO have a poor reputation and this has discouraged others from applying*
- *Latter running of the scheme has been good along with scheme promotion examples of good practice have been the apprenticeship scheme with Net to Plate engaging with school children*

The government sought a more collaborative approach between those preparing proposals and government departments. This particular Fisheries Community Engagement Programme (FCEP) would help to ensure a more inclusive way of setting local priorities and seizing opportunities. The cooperation provided by the FCEP envisaged greater collaboration between the fishing community sector, related businesses, energy companies, local government agencies and Marine Management Organisation (MMO). It was through this approach that the North Norfolk FLAG was designed to demonstrate that individual projects and the overarching programme added value to the fishing industry on the local economy.

The key target for the EFF scheme Axis 4 measure was that no more than 10% of the allocated sum was spent on Management and Administration. Exactly what constituted the M&A contribution had been a widely discussed element (between the MMO and local delivery partnerships). Specifically, around understanding that the 10% target was from the total allocation (£1.26m North Norfolk FLAG approved Programme total) and was not related to eligible spend for the programme, as clearly stated within the Operational Programme. As a percentage of eligible spend this would have provided difficulties for FLAGs that had not met their spend forecasts even though they had incurred the costs of M&A endeavouring to do so. At 10% of the allocation rate this support provided the sum of £126,000 as a total M and A funding support amount for the full Programme period.

This grant award was subsequently matched by contributions from local organisations amounting to £75,000 giving an overall budget of £201,000. As a Partnership contribution to the operation of the FLAG the FCEP element of the local Axis 4 programme had provided the financial support to engage the North Norfolk Business Forum in delivering the M & A for the North Norfolk FLAG.

The North Norfolk Business Forum (NNBF) was supported by the District council and was deemed to have sufficient experience resources and expertise to provide the necessary management and administration. Even though well supported NNBF proved not to have sufficient financial resilience to administer a retrospective grant scheme. At the beginning of 2014 difficulties were experienced due to the retrospective nature of payment and grant claim procedures.

Due to the short term nature of the funding arrangements and consequent contracts for the Animator and Administrator along with what was considered insufficient programme management it was decided by the NNFLAG to ask the District Council to assume the FLAG Programme Management role.

In June 2014, NNDC formally agreed with the MMO to assume the FLAG programme management roles and responsibilities and consequently all contracts were transferred to the District on the proviso that 100% of the remaining FCEP budget amounting to around £56k was made available to the District Council until the conclusion of the programme in December 2015.

Marine Management Organisation Support and Engagement

The delivery of the EFF programme in England was commissioned by Defra through the newly formed Marine Management Organisation (MMO in 2009). As Accountable Body for the scheme they worked with local interests and authorities in 6 locations in Hastings, North Devon, Cornwall, Cumbria, Holderness and North Norfolk (Fisheries Local Action Groups) as local delivery agents. In Scotland the Accountable Body role was taken by the local authorities and in Wales a hybrid approach was taken.

- *We need to promote the scheme better and explain the benefits to the fishing industry along with improving the business savvy of local fishermen*
- *We would like to see the whole process less complicated and easier for the fishing applicant ... Could make the whole process more locally accountable and we feel the MMO has work to regain the mutual trust of local fishermen.*
- *Communication between MMO and NNFLAG could have been better with increased speed in processing applications and claims. This needs to be balanced by a need to provide accountability for the spend of public monies, especially with recent fraudulent claims being made to the scheme. the scheme is now heading in the right direction*
- *The scheme needs greater local accountability.*

Without the input into the evaluation process of those involved in the early development of the programme it has proved difficult to ascertain the level of support and engagement during this period. However, undertaking the stakeholder survey as part of the NNFLAG Evaluation, it is evident that this was a period from which lessons could also be learnt.

A new NNFLAG team assumed responsibility for delivery early in 2014 with NNDC assuming Programme Management role in June 2014. In October 2014 NNFLAG encouraged Defra and other FLAGs to convene a meeting of all the FLAG areas with the MMO and Defra at hand to discuss current relationships, Programme operational difficulties and future delivery. The discussion also focused attention on strategic and operational improvements that could be made to the forthcoming EMFF Programme This took place in October and NNFLAG provided feedback and recommendations to the scheme as contained in Appendix 4. A number of difficulties were identified and suggestions how they could be addressed in any future programme.

NNFLAG acted as Delivery Agent for the Programme with MMO acting as Accountable Body. However, there was some concern developing from the ongoing delivery issues around this relationship that some organisations felt was leading to a lack of empowerment at a local level which was not reflected in the Axis 4 aims and objectives. These concerns in turn led to feelings of mistrust at a local level and frustrations with the decision making process. Frequent changes in personnel at MMO led to ever changing points of contact therefore personal working

relationships were difficult to establish and maintain. Interpretation of qualifying criteria for grants, it was felt by both prospective applicants and the FLAG Board, were not consistent. Time taken for the decision making process was too long leading to frustrations and lost opportunities for applicants.

Insufficient training and support was provided to local FLAG personnel throughout the scheme and this should be a priority for any future scheme both at inception and throughout the whole delivery period.



Communication with MMO and between other FLAG areas

The MMO sent a local representative to the NNFLAG meetings however their brief was to act as the eyes and ears of the MMO at a local level. They were not to provide any influence on decisions and in practice did not inform the FLAG of any procedural issues. This was at odds with many other Defra programmes and led to many questioning the value of having a local MMO official attend meetings at all. On many occasions knowledge of the procedures and operations of the scheme would have proved invaluable during FLAG meetings and facilitating local operational aspects of the scheme. In reality all enquires had to be steered through the MMO in Newcastle with all the inherent difficulties mentioned above leading to operational delays and frustration.

- *NNDC did not realise the scale and complications involved in delivering such a scheme and it would not have progressed without the NNBF.*
- *Lots of applicants put off by the retrospective nature of the grant scheme and the large amount of red tape and administration required to achieve success*

With the NNFLAG new team in place in early 2014 efforts were made to contact other FLAG areas in order to build a network of knowledge and support, as it was felt that there was not such a network in place to disseminate and discuss information and operational issues and develop resolutions and improvements in delivery. Communication with the MMO was effective on a day to day basis, however good practice and learning from other FLAG areas was not forthcoming and indeed feedback from the MMO implied that all communication between FLAGs should be steered through and by the MMO. It seemed that unilateral communication between FLAGs was actively discouraged. From the assessment undertaken prior to the Workshop held by the MMO in 2014 this would have been supported at a local level had the MMO provided such a communication network. However, this was never provided and on at least two occasion's requests made by the NNFLAG to ensure other FLAGs were aware of operational issues were not implemented. As previously stated in the Evaluation this element is one that should undergo robust review as part of the national evaluation process.

Early evidence recorded on behalf of the NNFLAG Board (in preparation for the November 2014 meeting with Defra/MMO) showed the need for greater support and training for local delivery teams as well as greater understanding for those administrating the scheme in Newcastle. For many other grant schemes, the networking aspect of delivery is essential to ensure experience and good practice is shared. This should be provided by the Accountable Body and made available to all local delivery teams. During the delivery period it was apparent that networking across the FLAG family was at best not encouraged and this led to a lack of awareness of issues and more importantly the solutions to those issues.

- *The decision part way through to only consider applications from multiple beneficiaries was taken which also damaged the reputation of the scheme in many eyes*
- *MMO showed a lack of understanding of a niche industry and demonstrated little aptitude for customer service*
- *NNDC should be applauded for managing the NNFLAG*

Project development and application process

- *Everyone had the opportunity to apply and should have taken it.*

Application process

For many fishermen administration is regarded as a necessary evil and as has been said on a number of occasions in NNFLAG meetings ‘fishermen just want to go out on the sea and catch fish’. However, should they wish to secure financial support then application forms have to be completed and submitted. The role of Animator and the Administrator was to facilitate this process. However, despite being requested by prospective applicants on a number of occasions, it would not have been appropriate (within the roles and responsibilities for these posts) for them to complete the application on their behalf. It became apparent that a number of fishermen lack the necessary IT skills to complete this task and enhanced administrative support should be made available to assist with this task in future.

- *The relationships developed between the delivery team and the applicant was damaged by the MMO responses, delays in responding and claim processing*
- *Early administration did not help with examples of information and paperwork not being available for consideration before the meeting*

Opinions arising from the evaluation process concluded that for many the prospect of making the application was simply too onerous resulting in what may have been a good project not taken forward. It has been suggested that a more streamline and simple application process is put in place for smaller grant awards to encourage those to come forward. For example, it would also be helpful if a delegated grant scheme with a simplified application process was made to the FLAG areas for applications up to £5k or £10k to help those come forward.

Applicant Questionnaire Findings

- *Happy how the scheme had ended up however the application process needs addressing in any future scheme*

For the purpose of understanding the detail of NNFLAG applicant’s views on the Flag Programme a questionnaire was created and sent to all 24 successful applicants to the scheme. The questionnaire presented a series of statements designed to reveal all aspects of their experience. Responses were requested using a grading system of 1 through 5, where 1 was strongly disagree to 5 strongly agreed with a statement. An additional option to state that questions were not applicable was offered as well.

A summary of their replies and a selection of comments have been recorded below.

| Statement 1 – strongly disagree: 2 - disagree: 3 - neither agree nor disagree: 4 agree: 5 strongly agree | Average |
|---|---------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I have experience of previous grant applications for funding to this or other schemes | 4.3 |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The objectives and qualifying criteria of the NNFLAG/EFF scheme were clear and easy to understand | 3.3 |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The NNFLAG/EFF funding was vital for the success of my project | 4.3 |

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> I had no difficulty providing the match funding for my project | 2.5 |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> My project was submitted in Click here to enter a date. and the NNFLAG Animator was helpful and supportive throughout the application process | 4.3 |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> My project was submitted in (.....insert date)and the NNFLAG Support Team was helpful during the application and claim process | 3.5 |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> NNFLAG feedback was accurate and helpful in making my application | 3.5 |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> MMO responses were clear and helpful | 2.5 |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> I clearly understood the difference between the role and responsibilities of the NNFLAG and MMO | 3.5 |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The time taken between application and Offer Letter did not impact upon proposed delivery | 2.3 |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> I am/was able to meet my Offer Letter conditions | 4.0 |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The NNFLAG/EFF claim process is/was clear and easy to follow | 3.5 |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> I regularly view NNFLAG newsletters or other promotional material | 2.5 |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> I have a greater understanding of the North Norfolk fishing industry through my involvement with the NNFLAG | 3.8 |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> I would be interested in working with others to develop fisheries related projects | 4.0 |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> I would be interested in being part of any working groups established to develop a future fisheries funding scheme | 3.5 |
| <p>What changes would you suggest in the application and claim processes of any future scheme?</p> <p>The North Norfolk Flag needs to be able to make a decision on the funding without having to refer to the MMO on each individual claim. If the FLAG were to be given a sum of money and manage it and then justify funding decisions after it would work much better.</p> <p>Lead in times are difficult to manage</p> <p>Improve the speed of decision making from receipt of application to offer letter. Generally, all projects will incur some level of spend prior to approval, there should be some process whereby, if successful, a project can reclaim some of this spend or alternatively be able to claim it as part of any match funding.</p> <p>FASTER DECISION BY MMO AND PAYMENT OF CLAIM BY MMO MUCH QUICKER</p> | |
| <p>How important is the fishing industry to the residents and visitors of the North Norfolk Coast and why?</p> <p>Vital to the area. Lack of local manufacturing jobs and also backs up local tourism trade.</p> <p>Critical to the micro economy of the area</p> | |

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| <p>The fishing industry is extremely important to both residents and visitors alike. It is vital to the local economy as it provides jobs and income for people as well as providing an attraction for tourists in its own right and it forms part of the culture and history of the area and the lives of the local residents</p> | |
| <p>What pressures or constraints do you think the North Norfolk fishing industry will face over the next 10 years?</p> <p>Possible designation of fishing area as Marine Conservation Zone and therefore possible constraints on fishing.</p> <p>Potential increased regulations</p> <p>Decreasing stocks</p> <p>Potential impact of off-shore wind farms and restrictions in fishing areas</p> <p>Impact of foreign competition and cheap produce</p> <p>Environmental lobbying</p> <p>Ecological, financial, coastal process related changes & age related</p> | |
| <p>Would you like to keep informed of NNFLAG activities and funding opportunities? If so, please tick your preferred method and contact details:</p> <p>email</p> | |
| <p>Any other comments:</p> <p>FLAG has been a very successful intervention for the fishing fraternity as a whole, but they are mistrustful of governance and administration</p> | |

Match Funding

The match funding requirement for the scheme depended upon which Axes the application was made under. Under Axes 1 through to 3 the match funding requirement for the applicant was 60%. Under Axis 4 however the match fund requirement was 40%. The final rate was made as a decision by the North Norfolk FLAG. However, the exemptions made on occasion for projects which delivered overall benefit to the FLAG area. An example of this approach was for the North Norfolk Fisheries Research projects that were funded at 100% given their results and outcomes would benefit the whole industry and covered the three following areas:

Potential impacts of fishing gear on protected features on the North Norfolk Coast, Crab and lobster sustainability report and The effects of offshore wind farms on the North Norfolk flag area

Contrary to the guideline 60/40 match funding split outlined above knowledge was gained through cross FLAG discussions that one of the English FLAG areas had been able to negotiate a higher rate of intervention at up to 75%. This rate was negotiated on the basis that most of the infrastructure in the area was publicly owned and would

therefore not attract sufficient private sector match funding that would not allow them to meet the 60% target intervention rate.

From the analysis of returned questionnaires, the acquisition of match funding did not present a problem to most applicants. Match funding was obtained from a range of sources. These included personal loans, self-finance, or support gained from members of associations and societies and in some cases that funding has been derived from other grant schemes. For the other larger infrastructure schemes match funding has been derived from the public sector. However, this has had to receive Committee approval to proceed. For the EFF, operating as a retrospective grant fund it would be easy to conclude that if an applicant can support the whole cost of a project until a claim can be made then why is support necessary? However, for many this is the only opportunity for funding support and therefore applicants have made whatever arrangements for match funding necessary. Throughout the local Programme period it has been noted that severe difficulties have arisen when applicants have incurred the whole costs only to experience delays in claim processing and payment from the MMO. In one FLAG area over a 7-month delay was experienced in receiving M & A payments, necessitating the local authority stepping in to prevent the FLAG administration ceasing operation.

One element of match funding that was not clear at the outset was the issue of 'in-kind' contributions. For other funding schemes such as Heritage Lottery funding there is a specific allowance rate for various forms of voluntary and in-kind contribution. However, for the FLAG Programme this issue caused confusion from the outset. It became clear that in-kind contributions were only considered as part of the overall project sum, but not an eligible element, and therefore could not be directly grant aided.

Guidance from MMO stated:

If an applicant organisation or beneficiary uses staff time to support a project and there is an actual cost to that applicant organisation or beneficiary this is an actual cost and not an in-kind cost. These costs can be used as match funding.

If an applicant organisation or beneficiary uses volunteer time to support a project and there is no actual cost to the applicant organisation or beneficiary this is an in-kind cost. These costs cannot be used as match funding

If a project obtains equipment or services which would normally be chargeable but are provided free to the project the following rules apply.

- *The equivalent value of the item cannot be used as match funding for the project.*
- *The difference between the full cost of the item and the reduced rate offered to the project cannot be used as match funding.*

For many social and collaborative projects this presented difficulties in reaching the 60/40% targets for applications.

Animator roles and responsibilities

The role of the Facilitator or Animator stemmed from a system that was put in operation during the later stage of the Financial Instrument for Fisheries Guidance (FIFG) scheme, the preceding scheme to the EFF and is reflected in the Defra/EU funded LEADER Programme that is now in its 4th Programme period. In the Operational Programme for the EFF Programme the role of the animator is detailed as follows:

- To provide a locally available resource to a fisheries community supported by a Fisheries Local Action Group (FLAG) focussing on the sustainable development of the area defined in the by the FLAG.



- Stimulating, directing, and supporting the fishing community towards the successful commissioning of projects that can be delivered utilising the European Fisheries Fund (EFF) Axis 4 Programme while ensuring that these potential projects fall within the scope and the agreed priorities of the EFF Regulation and the FLAG strategy.
- To provide on-going advice and technical support to project applicants, with specific reference to FLAG objectives, application processes, project planning, project finances and match funding.
- To have a working knowledge of the Axis 4 FLAG delivery process, ensuring that the agreed end to end processes are followed and having an understanding of wider EFF to ensure potential applications are maximised in the scheme as a whole
- To provide support to on-going projects from application to completion ensuring a high success rate at each stage of the process.
- To provide timely written progress reports relating to the project including information regarding the financial spend and forecasting.
- To provide written and verbal feedback to the FLAG hierarchy as required

The early days of the scheme presented a steep learning curve for both local and national agencies and inevitable difficulties arose through differing interpretations of the expected roles and responsibilities and the criteria of qualification for EFF support. At a local level the North Norfolk Business Forum was finding difficulties in bank-rolling the M & A for the scheme and consequently fulfilling the commitment to provide Programme Management.

- *Stakeholder view that MMO engagement should be increased at a national level leaving local involvement as it is as locally.... there is much for local representatives to do other than FLAG operations*

Changes in personnel occurred late in 2013 with the Animator leaving the post and in consequence Programme Management in some disarray. The NNFLAG Scheme Administrator made very commendable efforts to keep the programme running as best they could until a regime of programme management was put in place early in 2014.

It is clear that improved training and support should have been available during the development and early delivery of the scheme for Animators and Programme Managers alike. During the later stages of the programme frequent changes in personnel at the MMO prevented the establishment of an effective working relationship and led to changes in interpretation of applications and consequent delays and frustrations.

Although the objectives of the NNFLAG from the outset were much wider, the effective role of the NNFLAG became that of a grant awarding body only. Consequently, the role of the Animator was focused on those activities associated with solely encouraging and assisting applications.

In some other FLAG areas, especially Hastings, the role of the FLAG and that of the Animator was not only to encourage and assist with applications, but to act as a focus for the fishing industry and provide the representative voice that it wanted. Financial constraints meant that this was not possible until recently as the application window finally closed in November with only one project still to be determined at the point of assimilating this evaluation in April

After the changes in personnel early in 2014 the role of Animator was to work with the Administrator under a hybrid Project Management and Animation role to do what was necessary to ensure the programme continued until new programme management could be arranged. On two occasions the Animator had to apply for their own Project Amendment to MMO for funding to allow the role to continue.

The time allocation was limited to 25 hours per week for this role until June when the time allocation was reduced further to 20 hours per week, however even with new Programme Management in place this was not sufficient to process the applications and not all time necessary was able to be claimed. Due to further financial constraints the time allocation was further reduced to 10 hours per week from December 2014 until the end of the programme in December 2015. In the author's opinion this is clearly insufficient to provide the necessary functions of the Animator with subsequent Project Administration and therefore the financial and time allocation in future programmes should be increased.

Indications are that the M & A support for the forthcoming EMFF will be at least 22% so this should allow a sufficient increase in support of this vital role in developing and supporting high quality applications that will benefit the local industry in the short and long term

Claim process

The Claim process was considered too onerous for some however the forms and processes were necessary to ensure financial probity and accountability for both the local and national teams. Support has been available throughout the delivery period from the Programme Management team and this has greatly helped many through this process.

Great difficulties have arisen for some applicants, including during the period where programme management was provided by NNBF, where too much time was taken between claim submission to and payment by the MMO. It was evident that despite warnings from other FLAG areas the MMO had not allocated sufficient resource to this aspect of EFF management and that this should be reviewed as part of the national evaluation process. For some applicants this led to severe financial constraints and in one case nearly brought about the collapse of the organisation delivering the project.

If the EMFF scheme is to provide the desired impact across the FLAG areas and the trust of applicants developed so that they feel confident that their own commitment is matched by that of the Managing Authority, then the processes and infrastructure needs to be in place for this to happen. It is anticipated that this will be one of the recommendations from the Defra commissioned evaluation process due to report in August 2015

Outputs and Outcomes

- *FLAG still relevant however needs more discussion to reach those not engaged through the existing scheme and out to other applicants.*
- *Has played a vital role in encouraging fisheries support for the continuity of the scheme during period of doubt over its future*
- *The NNFLAG has helped the industry locally and raised its profile and awareness. without it the industry would have progressed more slowly with perhaps a move towards decline*

What were the experiences of those involved in the delivery of the NNFLAG scheme?

Results summary of Stakeholder Questionnaire

Comments received through the stakeholder interviews are distributed throughout this report to demonstrate the views expressed relevant to the various sections and issues

A number of factors came into play from the outset at a local and national scale that presented many difficulties in the early stages of the scheme. From the inception stage, those involved at a local level have experienced a rapid learning curve and many frustrations have coloured their opinions of the scheme. For some, these experiences have led them to question the overall value and benefit of the scheme to the local fishing industry. At a national level, frequent changes in personnel, changes in the understanding of the criteria for qualification, increasing the understanding of the schemes management and its implications are all areas where those experiences will have to be improved for the continued engagement of many currently involved.

In order to ascertain some of the difficulties and issues arising out of the development and delivery of the programme the questionnaire process for stakeholders was carried out through telephone interviews. It was hoped that through this approach we could identify the nuances and issues that a form filling exercise would not have ascertained. As part of the interview process stakeholders considered how effectively the NNFLAG had met the primary and secondary objectives utilising the scoring method of awarding scores rated 1 through 5 where 1 indicated strong agreement, 2 agreement, 3 neither agree nor disagree, 4 disagree and 5 strongly disagree.

The results from stakeholder perceptions of how successfully the NNFLAG objectives had been met were as follows:

| Stakeholders 1 strongly agree, 2 agree, 3 neither agree or disagree, 4 disagree, 5 strongly disagree | Average | Range |
|---|---------|--------|
| Primary Objective | | |
| Increased local sector profitability | 2.9 | 2 to 4 |
| Sustained local sector employment | 2.8 | 2 to 4 |
| Increased local sector influence on policy and improved profile at national and regional level | 2.1 | 2 to 4 |
| Identify opportunities for local sector diversification | 3.0 | 2 to 4 |
| Sustained monitoring and protection of the natural environment within the FLAG area both in the sea and on land | 2.9 | 2 to 4 |
| Secondary Objective | | |
| Provide voice for the North Norfolk fishery at local, regional, national and | 1.8 | 1 to 3 |

| | | |
|----------------------|--|--|
| international levels | | |
|----------------------|--|--|

It is clear that even though analysis of the project outputs and assessment shows that all objectives have been met to some degree, albeit in many cases by only one or two projects, the overall perception is that the scheme has not successfully met its primary objectives with agreement that it has met its secondary objective. Clearly not a ringing endorsement from those stakeholders involved however much of the success of the scheme has proved to be the more intangible aspects, increasingly recognised by those involved such as:

- Providing a mechanism where local fishing Societies and Associations are brought together to benefit the industry as a whole
- Developing a forum where local fishing related issues can be discussed and solutions agreed
- Providing a single point of contact for the local fishing industry for those wishing to engage it
- Providing a strong cohesive voice for North Norfolk Fishing industry

In an attempt to ascertain how effectively the primary and secondary objectives had been met, an analysis of the application submissions and their assessments was made. Through this analysis it has been possible to identify both the local (blue heading below) and wider EFF objectives (Grey headings below) of each application:

For the EU Objectives being met by projects:

| Obj 1 | Obj 2 | Obj 3 | Obj 4 | Obj 5 | Obj 6 | Obj 7 | Obj 8 |
|---|---|---|------------------------------------|---|--|---|--|
| Strengthening the competitiveness of the fisheries area the | Restructuring and redirecting economic activities | Diversifying activities through the promotion of multiple employment for fisheries through the creation of additional jobs outside the fisheries sector | Adding value to fisheries products | Supporting small fisheries and tourism-related infrastructure and services for the benefit of small fishing communities | Protecting the environment in fisheries areas to maintain its attractiveness, regenerating and developing coastal hamlets and villages with fisheries activities and protecting and enhancing the natural architectural heritage | Re-establishing the production potential in the fisheries sector when damaged by natural or industrial disasters. | Promoting inter-regional and transnational co-operation among groups in fisheries areas, mainly through networking and disseminating best practice |



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| Project Ref. | Business/Applicant Name | Project Title/Description | Total eligible costs (£) | Intervention Rate (%) | EFF Grant (£) | NATIONAL EFF SCHEME OBJECTIVES | | | | | | | |
|--|---|--|--------------------------|-----------------------|---------------|--------------------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| | | | | | | OBJ 1 | OBJ 2 | OBJ 3 | OBJ 4 | OBJ 5 | OBJ 6 | OBJ 7 | OBJ 8 |
| NNF0010 | Blakeney Harbour Boatmen's Association | Lighted harbour buoys | £27,220.73 | 60.00% | £ 16,332.44 | | | | | | | | |
| Reduce the number of rescue turn outs by at least 70% - Increase the safety of the harbour for a minimum of 400 users by providing 6 buoys with identifying numbers on them to allow visitors, fishermen and safety services to be able to identify a specific location to safety services in the harbour system - Reduce disturbance to wintering and breeding birds through decreasing the chance of boats entering sensitive areas - Produce a report to the FLAG detailing the successes of the project with particular focus on the safety aspect of the new buoy system and the reduction in coast guard call outs for the year ending December 2015. | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| NNF0004 | Brancaster Commons Committee (National Trust) | Equipment purchase – navigation buoys (Brancaster Staithe Harbour) | £ 10,115.40 | 60.00% | £ 6,069.24 | | | | | | | | |
| Provide marker buoys and lights for safer Brancaster harbour | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| NNF0012 | Crab & Lobster Festival | Crab & Lobster Festival 2014 | £ 15,278.76 | 91.70% | £ 14,011.00 | | | | | | | | |
| Provision of seating for food demonstrations to enable an increase in the viewing public of 60% - Provision of generators for adequate power to the food demo truck, heritage village and live lobster and crab tank with an aim to increase footfall of 60% - Overall footfall of 30,000 over the festival weekend | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| NNF0005 | Cromer and Sheringham Art | Festival - COAST 2012 | £ 27,800.00 | 21.60% | £ 6,004.80 | | | | | | | | |
| Plan and deliver the Coast festival over 70 quality events in Cromer & Sheringham over an 8 day period from Saturday 27 October –Saturday 3 November 2012. - Festival event to be publicised by distributing 20,000 leaflets via local publications, use of website, local press and radio to generate a footfall of up to 14,000 visitors during the 8 days. - Engage up to 30 young people in the community by holding the Fishy Tales event in association with Sheringham Little theatre. - Offer feedback by way of a report to the FLAG detailing the events that took place, successes and any lessons learned and potential for next year's event by 31 January 2013 | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| NNF0033 | Jim Lingwood | Replacement Outboard Engine | £ 4,332.50 | 40.00% | £ 1,733.00 | | | | | | | | |
| Annual service and maintenance savings of £250.00 post engine installation - Annual fuel savings of £350.00 post engine installation - Increased safety and confidence at sea through the installation of a new engine | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| NNF0035 | Jonas Seafoods | Jonas Cooling/Dehumidifier Plant | £ 13,859.00 | 40.00% | £ 5,543.60 | | | | | | | | |
| Better working environment for staff - Improved product quality due to better cooling of product - Improved product quality due to minimisation of product contamination from condensation within factory - Better hygiene practice within factory and therefore better chance of satisfying requirements of larger customers | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| NNF0044 | National Trust | Footpath restoration Morston | £51,800.45 | 60% | £30,742.28 | | | | | | | | |
| Deliver 300 meters of upgraded footpath surface that will facilitate access for local fishermen and boat owners to access their moorings and also for use by visitors to the area. - Support the socio-economic importance of the area for visitors through improving experience as a high quality visitor destination - Deliver a footpath with a life expectancy of over 15 years to be used by 50,000 people each year | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| NNF0023 | North Norfolk Business Forum | Sediment Analysis Project | £ 1,133.00 | 100.00% | £ 1,133.00 | | | | | | | | |
| To establish the cause of the major silting problem currently affecting Blakeney harbour. | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| NNF0008 | North Norfolk Business Forum | Business Directory | £ 40,827.00 | 60.82% | £ 24,832.00 | | | | | | | | |
| Compile and develop a Business directory database providing comprehensive accurate and up to date information which will have entries for over 8,000 businesses. - Promote the benefits of the business directory to the FLAG members and realise 50 searches per month after 6 months of the go live date | | | | | | | | | | | | | |



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|---|-----------------------------------|---|--------------|--------|--------------|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| NNF0003 | North Norfolk District Council | Fisheries, Communities & Engagement Programme | £ 201,400.00 | 62.68% | £ 126,000.00 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Increased local sector profitability - Sustained local sector employment - Increased local sector influence on policy and improved profile at national and regional level - Identify opportunities for local sector diversification - Sustained monitoring and protection of the natural environment within the FLAG area both in the sea and on land - | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| NNF0018 | North Norfolk Fishermen's Society | Equipment purchase – Personal Locator Beacons | £ 7,358.40 | 80.00% | £ 5,886.72 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| To provide every fisherman in the NNFS area with a Personal Location Beacon (PLB).- Positive PR benefits for the applicant, FLAG, Marine Management Organisation (MMO) and the European Fishery Funds (EFF) scheme - To improve safety at sea and ensure that assistance in emergency situations is accelerated. - To provide a report to North Norfolk FLAG, by 30 August 2013 detailing PLB take up by NNFS members and detail, where possible, any incidents where PLB's have been activated. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| NNF0031 | North Norfolk Fishermen's Society | Beach Tractors | £ 13,450.00 | 60.00% | £ 8,070.00 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Safety and operation of North Norfolk Fishermen's Society members | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| NNF 0037 | North Norfolk District Council | Sheringham Gangway Refurbishment | £136,753.79 | 71.00% | £96,753.79 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Ensure the sustainability of the local fleet of 20 fishermen - Ensure the link with local processing businesses by maintaining the catch of 120,000 kg per annum - Increased sustainability by providing improved fisheries and tourist related facilities by making it more attractive place for members of the industry | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| NNF0036 | NWES | World of Work (Net2Plate Initiative) | £ | 73.20% | £ 136,085.10 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 3125 secondary school students across all age groups engaged in the Net 2 Plate project. - Each year group to have age specific activities and events which help students to understand the journey from fish being caught by local fishermen and ending up on a consumer's plate - 20 fisheries sector linked business involved in apprenticeship schemes for students as part of the project. - The delivery of a showcase event highlighting the work of the scheme to local politicians, residents and media. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| NNF0022 | Prince's Trust | Apprenticeship Scheme | £ 62,475.00 | 60.00% | £ 37,480.44 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Create the opportunities for 36 16-25 year olds in the North Norfolk FLAG area to attend the 3 week training course by 31 March 2015 - 75% of course attendees moving to a positive outcome - 50% of course attendees moving into employment - 33% of course attendees taking up progression mentoring | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| NNF0016 | Rescue Wooden Boats | Visitor Centre - linking with future Heritage & Visitor Centre project | £ 14,892.00 | 67.04% | £ | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 3000 visitors in each of 2014 and 2015 who can learn about fishing heritage and boat building in North Norfolk - Volunteer opportunities for 40 local people to be involved in the work of the centre and to learn more about the fishing heritage of the area - 300 children in 2014 and 600 children in 2015 offered free visits which will provide curriculum linked educational opportunities enabling them to learn about fishing, fishing and life boating lives, boatbuilding and the crafts, skills and technologies involved on land and afloat | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| NNF 0034 | Richard Matthews | Seafood Bar | £94,682.00 | 60% | £56,81 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| start up a new business - increase turnover - improve operating margins - employ up to 2 people - restore a heritage building to functional use | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| NNF0007 | Wells Carnival Limited | Wells Carnival 2012 - food & craft fair with cookery theatre to promote fish & fishing industry | £ 4,350.86 | 49.60% | £ | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| To promote the local fishing community and businesses, encourage sales growth to local outlets by holding cookery demonstrations featuring locally caught seafood with a Seafood cookery theatre held on 31 July 2012. - The theatre event to be publicised with carnival brochure, posters, use of websites, local press and radio to generate a footfall of up to 14,000 - Offer feedback to North Norfolk FLAG board by way of a report with details of the event covering the positives and any lessons learned by 30 September 2012 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| NNF0039 | UEA | Seabed and Coastline Monitoring Projects (at least three | £41,358.00 | 100% | £41,35 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Produce an independent assessment of the sustainability of the North Norfolk Fisheries sector in relation to the issues that are arising from the management of the sensitive coastal inshore ecology - Create an evidence base for the future planning of strategies to develop awareness and good practice as far as the management of the coastal inshore ecology. Reports to be Sustainability and the North Norfolk Crab and Lobster Fisheries, The Potential Impacts of Fishing Gear on Protected Features on the North Norfolk Coast and Review of potential impacts of offshore wind farms on North Norfolk Fisheries | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| NNF0014 | Wells Maltings Trust | Fishing, Heritage & Visitor Centre | £ 100,608.69 | 55.24% | £ | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |



| | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|------|------------------|-------------|-----|-------------|--|--|--|--|--|
| Annual visitor figures to reach 15,000 within the first year of opening - Provide volunteering opportunities, work experience and apprenticeships for 100 local people - Provide an educational attraction highlighting the work of the local fishery to 4,000 families within the first year of opening | | | | | | | | | | |
| NNF0041 | NNDC | Cromer West Prom | £400,000.00 | 50% | £200,000.00 | | | | | |
| An increase in the number of visitors to the West Prom and participating in interpretation related to the fisheries sector. Currently most visitors congregate around the Pier and the East Prom (from where the fishermen launch); a narrative link needs to be made between the fishing activity and consumption of the catch) - An increase in the volume of sales of local seafood through increased marketing, promotion and the provision of facilities for consumption and retail - An increase in the number of educational visits to the West Prom to participate in learning related to the coastal environment and fisheries sector / fisheries heritage - An increase in the number of community activities and events linked to the fisheries community - 611sq metres of fisheries related business space created - 20 fisheries (and related businesses) businesses engaged in promoting their products to new markets - £200,000 public match funding invested in fisheries business space - 20,000 tourists attracted to west prom fisheries activities - £200,000 value of projected annual sales to local area as a direct result of new business/events space created - 5 events supported that relate to fisheries sector | | | | | | | | | | |



For local NNNFLAG objectives in blue:

| NNFLAG Obj 1 | NNFLAG Obj 2 | NNFLAG Obj 3 | NNFLAG Obj 4 | NNFLAG Obj 5 | NNFLAG Obj 6 |
|-----------------|------------------------|----------------|--------------|----------------|--|
| Competitiveness | Markets and Investment | Infrastructure | Environment | Sustainability | Fisheries Community Engagement Programme |

| Project Ref. | Business/Applicant | Project Title/Description | Total eligible costs (£) | Intervention Rate (%) | EFF Grant (£) | NNFLAG LOCAL | | | | | |
|--|---|--|--------------------------|-----------------------|---------------|--------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| | | | | | | Obj 1 | Obj 2 | Obj 3 | Obj 4 | Obj 5 | Obj 6 |
| NNF0010 | Blakeney Harbour Boatmen's | Lighted harbour buoys | £27,220.73 | 60.00% | £ 16,332.44 | | | | | | |
| Reduce the number of rescue turn outs by at least 70% - Increase the safety of the harbour for a minimum of 400 users by providing 6 buoys with identifying numbers on them to allow visitors, fishermen and safety services to be able to identify a specific location to safety services in the harbour system - Reduce disturbance to wintering and breeding birds through decreasing the chance of boats entering sensitive areas - Produce a report to the FLAG detailing the successes of the project with particular focus on the safety aspect of the new buoy system and the reduction in coast guard call outs for the year ending December 2015. | | | | | | | | | | | |
| NNF0004 | Brancaster Commons Committee (National) | Equipment purchase – navigation buoys (Brancaster) | £ | 60.00% | £ 6,069.24 | | | | | | |
| Provide marker buoys and lights for safer Brancaster harbour | | | | | | | | | | | |
| NNF0012 | Crab & Lobster Festival | Crab & Lobster Festival 2014 | £ 15,278.76 | 91.70% | £ 14,011.00 | | | | | | |
| Provision of seating for food demonstrations to enable an increase in the viewing public of 60% - Provision of generators for adequate power to the food demo truck, heritage village and live lobster and crab tank with an aim to increase footfall of 60% - Overall footfall of 30,000 over the festival weekend | | | | | | | | | | | |
| NNF0005 | Cromer and Sheringham Art | Festival - COAST 2012 | £ | 21.60% | £ 6,004.80 | | | | | | |
| Plan and deliver the Coast festival over 70 quality events in Cromer & Sheringham over an 8 day period from Saturday 27 October –Saturday 3 November 2012. - Festival event to be publicised by distributing 20,000 leaflets via local publications, use of website, local press and radio to generate a footfall of up to 14,000 visitors during the 8 days. - Engage up to 30 young people in the community by holding the Fishy Tales event in association with Sheringham Little theatre. - Offer feedback by way of a report to the FLAG detailing the events that took place, successes and any lessons learned and potential for next year's event by 31 January 2013 | | | | | | | | | | | |
| NNF0033 | Jim Lingwood | Replacement Outboard Engine | £ | 40.00% | £ 1,733.00 | | | | | | |
| Annual service and maintenance savings of £250.00 post engine installation - Annual fuel savings of £350.00 post engine installation - Increased safety and confidence at sea through the installation of a new engine | | | | | | | | | | | |
| NNF0035 | Jonas Seafood | Cooling/Dehumidifier Plant | £ | 40.00% | £ 5,543.60 | | | | | | |
| Better working environment for staff - Improved product quality due to better cooling of product - Improved product quality due to minimisation of product contamination from condensation within factory - Better hygiene practice within factory and therefore better chance of satisfying requirements of larger customers | | | | | | | | | | | |
| NNF0044 | National Trust | Footpath restoration Morston | £51,800.45 | 60% | £30,742.28 | | | | | | |
| Deliver 300 meters of upgraded footpath surface that will facilitate access for local fishermen and boat owners to access their moorings and also for use by visitors to the area. - Support the socio-economic importance of the area for visitors through improving experience as a high quality visitor destination - Deliver a footpath with a life expectancy of over 15 years to be used by 50,000 people each year | | | | | | | | | | | |
| NNF0023 | North Norfolk Business | Sediment Analysis Project | £ | 100.00% | £ 1,133.00 | | | | | | |



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|--|--------------------------------|---|-------------|--------|--------------|--|--|--|--|
| To establish the cause of the major silting problem currently affecting Blakeney harbour. | | | | | | | | | |
| NNF0008 | North Norfolk Business | Business Directory | £ | 60.82% | £ 24,832.00 | | | | |
| Compile and develop a Business directory database providing comprehensive accurate and up to date information which will have entries for over 8,000 businesses. - Promote the benefits of the business directory to the FLAG members and realise 50 searches per month after 6 months of the go live date | | | | | | | | | |
| NNF0003 | North Norfolk District Council | Fisheries, Communities & Engagement | £ | 62.68% | £ 126,000.00 | | | | |
| Increased local sector profitability - Sustained local sector employment - Increased local sector influence on policy and improved profile at national and regional level - Identify opportunities for local sector diversification - Sustained monitoring and protection of the natural environment within the FLAG area both in the sea and on land - | | | | | | | | | |
| NNF0018 | North Norfolk Fishermen's | Equipment purchase – Personal Locator | £ | 80.00% | £ 5,886.72 | | | | |
| To provide every fisherman in the NNFS area with a Personal Location Beacon (PLB). - Positive PR benefits for the applicant, FLAG, Marine Management Organisation (MMO) and the European Fishery Funds (EFF) scheme - To improve safety at sea and ensure that assistance in emergency situations is accelerated. | | | | | | | | | |
| NNF0031 | North Norfolk Fishermen's | Beach Tractors | £ | 60.00% | £ 8,070.00 | | | | |
| Safety and operation of North Norfolk Fishermen's Society members | | | | | | | | | |
| NNF 0037 | North Norfolk District Council | Sheringham Gangway Refurbishment | £136,753.79 | 71.00% | £96,753.79 | | | | |
| Ensure the sustainability of the local fleet of 20 fishermen - Ensure the link with local processing businesses by maintaining the catch of 120,000 kg per annum - Increased sustainability by providing improved fisheries and tourist related facilities by making it more attractive place for members of the industry | | | | | | | | | |
| NNF0036 | NWES | World of Work (Net2Plate Initiative) | £ | 73.20% | £ 136,085.10 | | | | |
| 3125 secondary school students across all age groups engaged in the Net 2 Plate project. - Each year group to have age specific activities and events which help students to understand the journey from fish being caught by local fishermen and ending up on a consumer's plate - 20 fisheries sector linked business involved in apprenticeship schemes for students as part of the project. - The delivery of a showcase event highlighting the work of the scheme to local politicians, residents and media. | | | | | | | | | |
| NNF0022 | Prince's Trust | Apprenticeship Scheme | £ | 60.00% | £ 37,480.44 | | | | |
| Create the opportunities for 36 16-25 year olds in the North Norfolk FLAG area to attend the 3 week training course by 31 March 2015 - 75% of course attendees moving to a positive outcome - 50% of course attendees moving into employment - 33% of course attendees taking up progression mentoring | | | | | | | | | |
| NNF0016 | Rescue Wooden Boats | Visitor Centre - linking with future Heritage & Visitor | £ 14,892.00 | 67.4 % | £ 9,984.00 | | | | |
| 3000 visitors in each of 2014 and 2015 who can learn about fishing heritage and boat building in North Norfolk - Volunteer opportunities for 40 local people to be involved in the work of the centre and to learn more about the fishing heritage of the area - 300 children in 2014 and 600 children in 2015 offered free visits which will provide curriculum linked educational opportunities enabling them to learn about fishing, fishing and life boating lives, boatbuilding and the crafts, skills and technologies involved on land and afloat | | | | | | | | | |
| NNF 0034 | Richard Matthews | Seafood Bar | £94,682.00 | 60% | £56,810.00 | | | | |
| start up a new business - increase turnover - improve operating margins - employ up to 2 people - restore a heritage building to functional use | | | | | | | | | |
| NNF0007 | Wells Carnival Limited | Wells Carnival 2012 - food & craft fair with cookery theatre to promote fish & fishing industry | £4,350.86 | 49.60% | £ 2,158.20 | | | | |
| To promote the local fishing community and businesses, encourage sales growth to local outlets by holding cookery demonstrations featuring locally caught seafood with a Seafood cookery theatre held on 31 July 2012. - The theatre event to be publicised with carnival brochure, posters, use of websites, local press and radio to generate a footfall of up to 14,000 - Offer feedback to North Norfolk FLAG board by way of a report with details of the event covering the positives and any lessons learned by 30 September 2012 | | | | | | | | | |
| NNF0039 | UEA | Seabed and Coastline Monitoring Projects (at least three | £41,358.00 | 100% | £41,358.00 | | | | |



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| | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|----------------------|------------------------------------|---|-------------|--------|-------------|--|--|--|--|
| Produce an independent assessment of the sustainability of the North Norfolk Fisheries sector in relation to the issues that are arising from the management of the sensitive coastal inshore ecology - Create an evidence base for the future planning of strategies to develop awareness and good practice as far as the management of the coastal inshore ecology. Reports to be Sustainability and the North Norfolk Crab and Lobster Fisheries, The Potential Impacts of Fishing Gear on Protected Features on the North Norfolk Coast and Review of potential impacts of offshore wind farms on North Norfolk Fisheries | | | | | | | | | | |
| NNF0014 | Wells Maltings Trust | Fishing, Heritage & Visitor Centre | £ | 100,608.69 | 55.24% | £ 55,608.70 | | | | |
| Annual visitor figures to reach 15,000 within the first year of opening - Provide volunteering opportunities, work experience and apprenticeships for 100 local people - Provide an educational attraction highlighting the work of the local fishery to 4,000 families within the first year of opening | | | | | | | | | | |
| NNF0041 | NNDC | Cromer West Prom | | £400,000.00 | 50% | £200,000.00 | | | | |
| An increase in the number of visitors to the West Prom and participating in interpretation related to the fisheries sector. Currently most visitors congregate around the Pier and the East Prom (from where the fishermen launch); a narrative link needs to be made between the fishing activity and consumption of the catch) - An increase in the volume of sales of local seafood through increased marketing, promotion and the provision of facilities for consumption and retail - An increase in the number of educational visits to the West Prom to participate in learning related to the coastal environment and fisheries sector / fisheries heritage - An increase in the number of community activities and events linked to the fisheries community - 611sq metres of fisheries related business space created - 20 fisheries (and related businesses) businesses engaged in promoting their products to new markets - £200,000 public match funding invested in fisheries business space - 20,000 tourists attracted to west prom fisheries activities - £200,000 value of projected annual sales to local area as a direct result of new business/events space created - 5 events supported that relate to fisheries sector | | | | | | | | | | |



It is evident from the assessment above, that even with such a wide range of projects, they all deliver on one or more objectives at an EU and local level. Outputs and outcomes range from those of direct and immediate benefit to the industry such as engine replacements, processing equipment. However, many of the projects will have a longer term benefit to the industry, such as the Net2Plate project carried out by NWES World of Work where:

3125 secondary school students across all age groups engaged in the Net 2 Plate project. - Each year group to have age specific activities and events which help students to understand the journey from fish being caught by local fishermen and ending up on a consumer's plate - 20 fisheries sector linked business involved in apprenticeship schemes for students as part of the project. - The delivery of a showcase event highlighting the work of the scheme to local politicians, residents and media

Also projects such as that carried out by the Prince's Trust with outputs as follows:

Create the opportunities for thirty-six 16-25 year olds in the North Norfolk FLAG area to attend the 3 week training course by 31 March 2015 - 75% of course attendees moving to a positive outcome - 50% of course attendees moving into employment - 33% of course attendees taking up progression mentoring

- NNFLAG has helped to provide infrastructure and has brought the associations and societies along the NORTH Norfolk Coast together to act with greater cooperation.*
- Need to counter the negative perceptions of the existing scheme and demonstrate the various benefits that the scheme has brought to the local fishing industry...*
- The NNFLAG has provided a network for communications between organisations that otherwise may not have communicated...*

An early outcome from this analysis was to identify the need to ensure any future application process clearly links the proposed outputs and outcomes back to the original objectives. The objectives for a future scheme must therefore be SMART (**S**pecific, **M**easurable, **A**chievable, **R**ealistic and **T**imetabled). This will facilitate a more robust evaluation process and hopefully provide the necessary evidence that will demonstrate the short and long term benefits to the industry of future projects.

The evaluation process has proved somewhat difficult because the listed outputs and outcomes were not directly linked back to the objectives as well as changes that have been made to the application form in the latter period of the Programme to simplify the process for applicants. However, one must consider this as a snapshot across the whole delivery of the NNFLAG scheme as delivery is on-going until 31st December 2015 and that outcomes will benefit the area beyond the end of the delivery period. Indeed, throughout the scheme, one of the key difficulties has been to encourage stakeholders and the wider fishing industry that the benefits to the area and industry may not be immediately evident and that time is needed for those benefits to be realised.

For such projects as the Prince's Trust the achievement of these outputs and outcomes would be both immediate and long term. It is hoped that those not going straight into the industry from attending a training course may consider this an option at a later date having gained an understanding and awareness of the opportunities within the fishing industry through the course.

- The NNFLAG has provided a strong voice at a local level bringing people together and has ensured that at a local level the FLAG is taken seriously...*



- What worked well.. given fishing a voice... raised awareness of fishing needs... brought organisation together that otherwise would not have done so... given greater confidence to the local fishing industry ... learnt new skills and created greater engagement*
- Good examples include: knowledge sharing between groups and individuals.. collaboration between area based fishing societies and associations*

The above analysis demonstrates that throughout the 21 approved and 3 remaining projects infrastructure at both a local (10 projects) and national level (as part of the overall objective: supporting small fisheries and tourism related infrastructure and services for the benefit of small fishing communities) was the most popular objective taken forward. (16 projects).

- The programme is still relevant with more potential to benefit the fishing industry into the future.*
- Fears that what started as a dispersed group of interests will once again disperse without a common cause and interest... opportunities provided through OWF will require a sustained effort through a FLAG partnership*
- Opportunities to take forward important research and development project were not taken early enough that would have helped develop future projects and inform the industry*



Lessons Learnt and Future Programmes

- *Involvement with the NNFLAG has changed my life and made me even more determined to see the industry flourish and have a more sustainable future.*

European Maritime Fisheries Fund (EMFF)

The aspirations and objectives of the NNFLAG Local Development Strategy still hold true and every effort has been made to achieve those objective within the constraints imposed by a variety of factors, be them at a local or national level.

Considerable effort was placed in outlining deliverable projects within the 6 key areas of activity: Competitiveness, Markets and Investments, Skill Development, Infrastructure, Environment and Sustainability. Although the 24 successful projects have been shown to deliver across all main and secondary objectives clearly much remains to be done with much of the planned delivery remaining relevant to the forthcoming EMFF scheme

The forthcoming EMFF is still to be finalised in the UK with the Operational Programme (OP) yet to be confirmed. The latest understanding is that the scheme will be open to Expression of Interest (EOI) in autumn 2015 with either a single or two stage application process yet to be agree.

However, from those Operational Programmes that have been 'signed off' at EU level we can draw some conclusions as to the likely shape of the programme and potential opportunities for the NNFLAG area.

The European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF) is the new fund for the EU's maritime and fisheries policy for 2014-2020, and is the successor to the European Fisheries Fund (EFF). It aims to:

- Help fishermen in the transition to sustainable fishing and to adjust to the requirements of the reformed Common Fisheries Policy (CFP);
- Support the development of sustainable aquaculture;
- Support coastal communities in diversifying their economies;
- Finance projects that delivery economic growth and improve quality of life for coastal communities;
- Deliver on European Blue Growth and the Atlantic Strategy;
- Make it easier to access financing;
- Allow Member States to carry out effective data collection and enforcement programmes as required under the CFP.

A consultation process of the current scheme was undertaken concluding in May 2014 and the outcomes from that are yet to be published.

- *Consensus was that from first promotion, the programme has not demonstrated the benefits to the fishing industry even though the long term legacy will provide considerable benefit.*
- *Retailers and catering outlets could be more involved along with buyers with increased promotion.*



- *Even recognising this was a new scheme the MMO have not performed well. Feeling amongst the fishermen stakeholders that the NNFLAG have not been trusted with making decisions and their integrity has been questioned*



A key tenet of the forthcoming scheme is that the delivery of EMFF should be coordinated with the other schemes forming the European Structural and Investment (ESI) Funds. The other main funds are:

- The European Regional Development Fund;
- The European Social Fund;
- The European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development.

The Department for Business, Innovation and Skills is leading on the development of the UK Partnership Agreement. This will set out how we intend to link up our strategies for implementing the different funds to ensure that the UK has a coherent programme that will feed into the wider EU priorities for regional development, cohesion and growth.

UK administrations are seeking to align the use of ESI Funds where appropriate. On one hand, fisheries and aquaculture businesses, and Fisheries Local Action Groups (FLAGs), will be encouraged to consider the support which may be available from the funds, in addition to EMFF. Links will be encouraged with LEADER (RDPE) delivery across the North Norfolk area. This will entail coordinating delivery with three LEADER LAG areas of Wensum and Coast Local Development Strategy, West Norfolk Local Development Strategy and The Broads Local Development Strategy.

- *additional areas of activity to include moving towards more sustainable operations, research activities relevant to the fishing industry*
- *Would rather see the NNFLAG do a fewer number of things well rather than extend the schemes reach and spread its activities and influence too thinly... better to focus on doing things well*
- *Should look to provide joint marketing and tailored business advice through any new programmes*
- *Without the FLAG support the fishing industry would have carried on as they were...the fishing industry has not enjoyed the same support as the farming sector and would have continued with disjointed approaches to the increasing pressures that the industry is now facing*

Conclusions reached through the survey process were that the current area of the NNFLAG is sufficient for any forthcoming scheme. It was felt that it was better to focus on a recognised area with the resources available rather than spread the activities too thinly across a wider area. To this end there are no suggestions/desire to extend the NNFLAG area into the Waveney Valley LAG area to the south or further to the west.

How the EMFF is approached in other EU FLAGs

Although the North Norfolk FLAG is one of only six national FLAG areas in England, across Europe there is a well-established network of 300 FLAG areas that the NNFLAG is part of. The network of EU FLAGs is administered by European Fisheries Areas Network (FARNET) and brings together all fisheries areas supported by priority Axis 4 of the European Fisheries Fund (EFF). Through information exchange and a dedicated support unit, this network aims to assist the different stakeholders involved in the sustainable development of fisheries areas at local, regional, national and European level.

Through this network many examples of good practice have been collated for the current programme and Q and A sections keep FLAGs up to date with the current picture. The network website is available at:

<https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/fpfis/cms/farnet/>



As yet, it is unclear what approach Defra will take with the forthcoming scheme, uncertainty remains over the timing and nature of the scheme, even the numbers of FLAGs that would be considered for inclusion. In addition to the 6 existing English FLAG areas it was proposed in previous discussions that up to 10 would be considered for the EMFF scheme however at the time of writing 6 to 8 FLAG areas are most likely with a potential budget of around £1m for each. The main UK focus will be tied to that of the UK government targeting jobs and economic growth.



For FLAGs wishing to apply for EMFF funding, potential areas of cross delivery of EMFF and Community Led Local Development (CLLD) could be for the following broad objectives:

- A. Adding value, creating jobs, attracting young people and promoting innovation at all stages of the supply chain of fisheries and aquaculture products.
- B. Supporting diversification inside and outside commercial fisheries, lifelong learning, and jobs creation in fisheries and aquaculture areas.
- C. Enhancing and capitalising on the environmental assets of fisheries and aquaculture areas, including operations to mitigate climate change.
- D. Promoting social well-being and cultural heritage, including fisheries, aquaculture and maritime heritage.
- E. Strengthening the role of fisheries communities in local development and in the governance of local fisheries resources and maritime activities

FARNET serve the EU FLAG communities and have produced a number of helpful publications and conferences. Sailing Towards 2020 Axis 4 in Action was a conference held in March 2015, organised by the European Commission's Directorate General for Fisheries and Maritime Affairs (DG MARE), together with the Fisheries Areas Network (FARNET), involved FLAGs, EFF Managing Authorities and other stakeholders to look back at the achievements of Axis 4 since 2007 and explore the new challenges and opportunities of the 2014 - 2020 period.

The report from the conference highlighted examples of good and innovative practice from the over 9500 projects delivering 8,000 jobs and sustaining over 12,000 jobs that have been delivered through the EFF scheme across Europe. Project examples were themed as follows:

- Shortening supply chains;
- Adding value locally to fisheries products;
- Enhancing the environment;
- Improving the image of fisheries;
- Linking fisheries with tourism;
- Developing new activities from fisheries;
- Making fisheries areas attractive; and
- Investing in people.

At the end of 2014 Defra indicated that they may take an 'at own risk' approach to the EMFF scheme and issue guidance and encourage Expressions of Interest (EOI) for the scheme before EU approval of the Operational Programme. To date this has yet to be confirmed.



The local issues to be addressed arising as a legacy of the current scheme.

As part of the questionnaire process a number of questions were asked that would help determine what stakeholders and applicants felt were the key issues yet to be addressed. The key question was:

What pressures or constraints do you think the North Norfolk fishing industry will face over the next 10 years?

Possible designation of fishing area as Marine Conservation Area and therefore possible constraints on fishing.

Potential increased regulations

Decreasing stocks

Potential impact of off shore wind farms and restrictions in fishing areas

Impact of foreign competition and cheap produce

Environmental lobbying

Ecological, financial, coastal process related changes & age related

These issues should form the backbone of future EMFF delivery in North Norfolk and other sources of funding should be sought if measures to address these issues are not included in the EMFF scheme.

Benefits of the NNFLAG beyond EFF/EMFF administration

The Evaluation process has examined the tangible outputs and outcomes of the scheme and shown the wide range of direct benefits in both the short and long term to the fishing industry of North Norfolk. However, as with the administration of all funding schemes it is often the benefits beyond access to funding that are the longest lasting.

- *NNFLAG has operated as a grant awarding body and had missed opportunities to consider some of the wider issues and pressures that the industry faces... it has only recently started to operate in this way and would like to see this aspect developed in any new scheme*

In the development of the scheme it was clearly evident that the fishing industry lacked a common voice and was represented by numerous and varied Societies and Associations that had developed over many years. However as with many traditional industries those involved operated very independently, even within their own Societies and Associations and this was reflected in the lack of collaborative working across their boundaries in the early days of the FLAG.

Various political, social, environmental and economic issues, threats and opportunities have arisen over the lifetime of the NNFLAG that have demonstrated the considerable benefits of working together through a representative Partnership or Organisation such as the NNFLAG. Indeed, many NNFLAG members have sat around the table with other Societies and Associations for the very first time. The fact that they remain around the table after their experiences with the EFF scheme is not only testament to their fortitude, but a recognition that the NNFLAG has a value and function beyond that of grant administration as a Forum and Focus for the local industry.



On a number of occasions, the NNFLAG had made representations to various public and quasi-public authorities and related organisations regarding a range of issues giving a collective view of NNFLAG members. It is strongly felt by members that this lends a great deal of recognition and weight to their opinions that individually they would not enjoy.

- *Other priorities for forthcoming schemes... greater engagement with Offshore Wind Farms industry... better collaboration between interest groups... needs to better engage with marine planning, dredging industry and other marine developments*
- *Opportunities to be taken in any future scheme should include the need to make the industry more sustainable... guaranteed market for catch landed and a clearing house for local markets*
- *Would like to see greater engagement with local eateries and accommodation providers promotion of local fisheries produce... greater fisheries engagement and on the ground delivery more effective and relevant research.. greater tourism links... improved sustainability of the industry... need for projects to consider waste products from fishing industry such as rope ends, containers etc. that often pollute the marine environment...*

Recent meetings of the NNFLAG have provided further evidence that this Forum/Focus is one that the industry recognises the benefit of and enthusiastically supports. It is a key function that should be included within the EMFF scheme lending strength and credibility to the local industry.





Conclusions

The award of £1.26m of EFF funding has brought many direct and indirect benefits to the fishing industry of the North Norfolk Coast. Due to the nature of the scheme it has been difficult to quantify in great detail what those benefits have been and when they will be realised. However, through this evaluation of the scheme it is evident that there are significant tangible and intangible benefits that have, or will emerge for the North Norfolk coastal area.

24 projects have now been approved and supported by the scheme, committing £1,056,471 (84%) of the initial allocation of £1.26m. The NNFLAG team raised the percentage commitment from 27% to the final 91% in the last 8 months building a considerable momentum for the Programme. The monetary value of combined EFF/MMO funding together with matched local funding commitment stands at £1,746,468

Despite initial reservations and frustrations with the scheme the industry representatives and other stakeholders have expressed a desire for continued support for the industry to be sought and for the operation of the NNFLAG to continue. Even without an EMFF scheme there is much support for the NNFLAG to continue as a Forum and focus for the local industry. However, it is hoped that the EMFF scheme is secured and this function forms a key part of it.

North Norfolk FLAG Primary and Secondary objectives have been at least partially met with much remaining to be achieved. A great deal of the initial NNFLAG Local Delivery Strategy (LDS) remains as relevant today as it did at submission in 2011 and the engagement and support of the industry is growing as recognition of both tangible and intangible benefits spreads across the area.

Much should be learnt at a national level from the delivery of the EFF and other similar grant schemes and measures put in place to ensure the difficulties endured during the early period are not repeated in the forthcoming scheme. It is hoped that this experience and learning forms a key part of the EMFF Operational Programme currently in negotiation between Defra and the EU.

The chance to pursue continued socio-economic and environmental benefits for the local fisheries and associated industry through the EMFF and other scheme should be taken at the earliest opportunity.

A history of independent thinking and operation has been the great strength of the North Norfolk Fishing Industry and served it well over hundreds of years. It is now evident that this strength can be further developed through a more collaborative approach in addressing the many current and future constraints and threats to the industry and in realising the many opportunities that may lie ahead.

The engagement and delivery achieved through the EFF scheme has been both wide ranging and cross sector based. The opportunity to further develop the industry and its benefits across the North Norfolk Coast through the EMFF scheme should be taken.



Appendices

Appendix 1 Feedback from applicants

Analysis of responses:

1. I have experience of previous grant applications for funding to this or other schemes:

Average: 4.3

This would suggest that most of the respondents had experience of applying for previous grant schemes however due to low level of respondents this cannot be taken that the local fishing industry is familiar or actively engaged with the process. Most of the respondents appeared familiar with the administration of grant applications and project monitoring. Whereas the level of response from the fishermen applicants to the scheme for whatever reason was low. As has been stated fishermen want to catch fish and anything that keep them away from that objective is considered with caution. Help in making and administering the application and claim process is vital to the success of any future scheme.

2. The objectives and qualifying criteria of the NNFLAG/EFF scheme were clear and easy to understand

Average 3.3

Qualifying criteria need to be clearly communicated in any future scheme in order for easy assessment of a project's suitability in order to prevent wasted effort for prospective applicants

3. The NNFLAG/EFF funding was vital for the success of my project

Average: 4.3

The additional funding was very important to achieving project success and very much worth undergoing the application process to the extent that many if not all the project would not have gone ahead without the funding being available.

4. I had no difficulty providing the match funding for my project

Average: 2.5

As previously stated the match funding did not present insurmountable problems for most applicants. In reality the applicant has to underwrite the whole project cost until the claim can be made that discouraged some early applicants. Discussions with stakeholders involved in the early stages concluded that this issue along with the decision by the FLAG not to consider single applicant submissions for a period dissuaded any from making a potentially successful application. However, the levels of grant presented the opportunity for support that would otherwise not be available

5. My project was submitted in [Click here to enter a date](#) and the NNFLAG Animator was helpful and supportive throughout the application process

6. My project was submitted in (.....insert date) and the NNFLAG Support Team was helpful during the application and claim process



The request to specify the date for application was designed to determine if there were any discernible differences between the periods when NNBF and NNDC providing the Management and Administration of the scheme. Unfortunately, the only responses were from projects during the post NNBF Programme Management period, so no comparison can be drawn from this element of the evaluation process. The stakeholders' responses were more detailed and covered the whole period of the late development of the scheme along with the whole delivery period. From this questionnaire result it is evident that comparisons were able to be drawn.



7. NNFLAG feedback was accurate and helpful in making my application

Average: 3.5

At a local level the support was helpful and assisted with the application process

8. MMO responses were clear and helpful

Average 2.5

This would indicate that improvements should be made to ensure improved clarity of response is needed to help process applications effectively

9. I clearly understood the difference between the role and responsibilities of the NNFLAG and MMO

Average 3.5

The relationship between the two organisations should be made clearer with the NNFLAG currently acting as a delivery agent for the MMO who are the accountable body. Recommendations for greater local autonomy in decision making may provide greater clarity

10. The time taken between application and Offer Letter did not impact upon proposed delivery

Average 2.3

In a number of cases the time span between application and Offer letter constrained the opportunity to make appropriate or timely purchases of products or services, disadvantaging the applicant in some cases

11. I am/was able to meet my Offer Letter conditions

Average 4.0

This is to be expected as it forms an integral part of the application assessment both locally and at the MMO, however it will be monitored as part of the on-going support by the NNFLAG team and for at least 10% of NNFLAG applicants will form part of the MMO monitoring requirement

12. The NNFLAG/EFF claim process is/was clear and easy to follow

Average 3.5

Room for improvement in provision of claimant information and processing

13. I regularly view NNFLAG newsletters or other promotional material

Average 2.5

Production and distribution of this important media for informing the local population and industry needs to be improved

14. I have a greater understanding of the North Norfolk fishing industry through my involvement with the NNFLAG

Average 3.8



The application process has helped develop awareness and understanding of the local industry but more should be done

15. I would be interested in working with others to develop fisheries related projects

Average 4.0

Although many have found the process difficult and time consuming these respondents have retained a desire for involvement in future projects

16. I would be interested in being part of any working groups established to develop a future fisheries funding scheme

Average 3.5

Potentially important input into the design of future schemes could be gained from current applicants

What changes would you suggest in the application and claim processes of any future scheme?

The North Norfolk Flag needs to be able to make a decision on the funding without having to refer to the MMO on each individual claim. If the FLAG were to be given a sum of money and manage it and then justify funding decisions after it would work much better.

Lead in times are difficult to manage

Improve the speed of decision making from receipt of application to offer letter. Generally, all projects will incur some level of spend prior to approval, there should be some process whereby, if successful, a project can reclaim some of this spend or alternatively be able to claim it as part of any match funding.

FASTER DECISIONS BY THE MMO AND PAYMENT OF CLAIMS BY MMO MUCH QUICKER

How important is the fishing industry to the residents and visitors of the North Norfolk Coast and why?

Vital to the area. Lack of local manufacturing jobs and also backs up local tourism trade.

Critical to the micro economy of the area

The fishing industry is extremely important to both residents and visitors alike. It is vital to the local economy as it provides jobs and income for people as well as providing an attraction for tourists in its own right and it forms part of the culture and history of the area and the lives of the local residents

What pressures or constraints do you think the North Norfolk fishing industry will face over the next 10 years?

Possible designation of fishing area as Marine Conservation Area and therefore possible constraints on fishing.

Potential increased regulations

Decreasing stocks

Potential impact of off shore wind farms and restrictions in fishing areas

Impact of foreign competition and cheap produce

Environmental lobbying



Ecological, financial, coastal process related changes & age related

Would you like to keep informed of NNFLAG activities and funding opportunities? If so, please tick your preferred method and contact details:

Email

Any other comments:

FLAG has been a very successful intervention for the fishing fraternity as a whole but they are mistrustful of governance and administration



Appendix 2

Did Defra learn the lessons from the previous scheme: Financial Instrument for Fisheries Guidance (FIFG)?

Within the Operating Programme submission Defra recognised the findings from the previous Financial Instrument for Fisheries Guidance (FIFG) funding scheme and in summary, the main lessons learned from the previous programming period were stated as:

- i) It is important to recognise, and make appropriate adjustments for the economic performance of the various fisheries sectors. The different measures under the FIFG schemes met with varying levels of success. For example, the level of uptake of vessel modernisation was low while the grant rate was 20% but did improve after the rate was increased to 40% which meant a lower level of private investment was required and therefore more likely to be forthcoming. Had the sector been more buoyant, that adjustment might not have been necessary;*
- ii) The level of grant has to be such that the private investment, where required, is forthcoming; we have learnt that raising the grant rates can improve uptake. Also in the Objective 1 areas, such as Cornwall and the Scottish Highlands and Islands, where a higher rate of grant was already available, and demand for grant support remained consistently high;*
- iii) Grant rates need to be set at appropriate levels to reflect need;*
- iv) Performance monitoring needs to be adequately resourced; and*
- v) Grant facilitators (Animators) and direct stakeholder input provide a valuable role in achieving the strategic aims of the programme as well as enhancing the delivery of it by promoting grants and assisting with applications*

It was hoped that these lessons would be learnt and bring about a successful EFF programme.

Other commitments were made such as:

'The facilitation arrangements will continue in England. In addition, further measures will be taken to help ensure sufficient uptake of grants including better information and publicity schemes, exchanges of good practice and improved communication between the four administrations, and simplification of the application procedures, including a review of application forms'

'The four administrations will work closely to ensure that no de-commitment of EFF funds occurs. This will be strengthened by improved communication with successful applicants. The lessons learned from publicity under the FIFG scheme will be used to better target the private sector, for example through monitoring how potential recipients heard about the scheme'.



Appendix 3

Themes and example Projects from the Sailing Towards 2020 Conference

■ Shortening Supply Chains

Fish all days: Fish from the boat and home delivery

Jammerbugt Boat Shop: fresh fish in the city centre

Loestamospescando.com: for online sales

Fish from the auction: commitments from local restaurants

O melhor peixe do mundo: short circuits and sustainability

■ Adding Value Locally

Quality fresh shrimp: extending product life span

Blue crab: new markets for live and processed seafood

Currican: artisanal canning and processing

SCIC Arrainetik: cooperative processing plant

Organic Carp: creating image awareness

Vianapesca: successful product placement

■ Enhancing the Environment

Telecapêche: Monitoring captures

Cap Roux: restricted fishing area

Nyköping river: managing a shared resource together

Seal-safe trap-nets: environmentally-friendly fishing gear

Increasing value, not captures: certifying sustainability

Aquamar: a new method of water purification

■ Improving the Image of Fisheries

Visiting Vega Fishing Port: guided tours and education

Local seafood promotion: festival, campaign and seminars

Gastronomy for chefs: training in fish dishes, Bulgarian training programme



Gastronomy for chefs: training in fish dishes, Polish training programme

Community Seafood Officer: connecting the fisheries sector

Legends of Kitka: a video game on fishing



■ Linking Fisheries with Tourism

Pesca-tourism: experiencing fishing and aquaculture

“Put ‘n’ Take”: a recreational fishery

Carp tourism: guided tours by carp experts

Wave Restaurant: set up by a fisherman

Fisherman’s B&B: accommodation in fishing family’s home

The millennium tuna route: packaging tourism assets

■ Developing New Activities from Fisheries

Fishing Gear Production: diversifying activities and markets

Diversifying Net-Mending: sport fishing accessories and handcraft shop

Boat Repair Workshop: supporting fishing and new boating activities

Sand Extraction and Transport: servicing shellfish production

■ Making Fishing Areas Attractive

Oiu Harbour renovation: making life and work attractive

Inis Lyre Slipway: sustainability of life on a small island

Home Harbour: a town where fishermen live, work and hope

Annan Harbour: crowd funding community infrastructure

■ Investing in People

Master-apprentice programme: supporting fishing start-ups for the young

Training Courses: getting young people into commercial sea fishing

Entrepreneurship: women role models

Entrepreneurship: business mentoring for the unemployed

J.F. Mexilhões: a new life as aquaculture producer



Appendix 4

NNFLAG feedback to MMO and Defra October 2014

Collation of responses to the EFF scheme from North Norfolk Fishing Local Action Group November 2014

At its last meeting the NNFLAG considered it important to obtain a representative view on the successes and failures of the current scheme and what its members viewed as improvements that should be brought to any future scheme to benefit the fishing industry of North Norfolk.

Three key questions were asked of each member and their responses are summarised below along with views expressed during the delivery of this scheme, with the actual responses in the following appendices.

1. *What do you consider have been the positive aspects of the FLAG Programme in North Norfolk 2011-14?*
2. *What do you consider have been the negative aspects of the FLAG Programme in North Norfolk 2011-14?*
3. *What do you consider could be improved for the future under a new FLAG based Programme?*

Positive aspects of the EFF scheme

The North Norfolk Area has a long history of fishing and related industries and is represented by a number of associations and societies. The NNFLAG programme under the chairmanship of a well-respected local fishing operator has brought many of these groups and communities together to communicate and work towards benefits for the fishing sector across the whole area. It has also provided a communication forum for other organisations with marine interests such as the conservation and coastal management organisations to garner views and opinions of the fishing industry and to highlight the current constraints and opportunities that they face. One concern has been that the NNFLAG has latterly focused on its role as a grant awarding body and has missed opportunities to become a representative forum for the fishing industry. The scheme has provided much needed financial support for the fishing and seafood processing sector and the communities that they serve.

Appendix 1

- *Forming a group of local fishing organisations and governmental organisations, working together towards a common aim.*



- *The opportunity to part-fund fishing-related projects to benefit the local industry.*
- *Chaired by a member of the local fishing industry, with high credibility.*
- *The most positive outcome of the FLAG Programme is the interaction of the previously disparate fishermen's societies,*
- *As well as support to the local community through financial benefits I also think that regular communication between those working on the coast and the fishing sector has provided useful information and platform for discussions of issues affecting the community. This has led to increased understanding of local concerns.*
- *previous grants from Flag have benefitted NNFS members (tractors and plbs) & helping to bring the local fishing community closer together*

Negative aspects of the scheme

There were a number of early difficulties both at a National Level and locally however it appeared as though a very top-down approach was taken to what was ostensibly a bottom-up scheme. Early frustrations were missed to utilise the learning and approach taken from many previous and current schemes such as the RDPE/LEADER scheme which was similarly designed to be a bottom-up locally delivered scheme. Early applications suffered from confusion over what elements were eligible under the scheme which in turn dissuaded some applicants to accessing the scheme further. Eligibility of what could be used as match and what constituted 'in-kind' funding caused problems for many applicants.

Locally it was felt that greater engagement with the fishing and related industries during the development phases would have helped to clearly define need and want for the industry. This would have led to more effective, coordinated and efficient delivery and will need to be a prominent consideration for any future programme

Overall the application process was very bureaucratic and did not encourage applications from many of the small operators, many of whom were not familiar with making grant applications. The many changes in personnel at MMO particularly during the latter stages meant that interpretation of application qualifying criteria differed leading to frustrations for the applicant and NNFLAG team as local managing body. It was felt that some MMO personnel did not have the 'wider perspective' necessary to meet the wider objectives of Axis 4 and focused solely on the financial and operational criteria, losing the spirit of the scheme.

As a result of poor clarity on many issues a number of down-stream problems arose that prevented the delivery of greater benefits to the local fishing industry through more effective communication development and delivery of projects along with greater coordination between them



Delays in processing applications and especially grant applications have burdened applicants and managing bodies unnecessarily. The very existence of some of the smaller applicants has been threatened by delays in cash flow along with presenting operational cash flow difficulties for the managing body.

Communication within and between the FLAG network and MMO has been very poor, typified by the non-disclosure of the extended application period from the end of June until the end November 2014. When requests for confirmation of such were made to the MMO the NNFLAG was pointed towards the MMO website which often contained indefinite statements.

Due to a number of local delivery issues it was felt that more effective oversight and reporting system will need to be in place for any future programme.



Appendix 2 Statements from NNFLAG members

- *MMO adopting a top-down approach to an ostensibly bottom-up programme. Much could have been learned from Leader/RDP but this opportunity was missed.*
- *MMO delays in funding approval.*
- *Confusion over the rules and what was/was not allowed to be funded.*
- *Total confusion over the match funding requirements.*
- *Ineffective oversight.*
- *The very negative aspect was the slow and bureaucratic delivery of funding for projects, thereby causing a reputational risk to the deliverers of the programme and the MMO.*
- *More training for MMO personnel.*
- *I feel that MMO and FLAG have not in general done the fishing industry any good,*
- *I think it was very disorganised to start with, particularly concerning the requirements of funding applications, and over time it became more about just processing these applications and losing sight of other areas which could have been touched on. There was also lost opportunities in research due to delays but having said this I can see there has been a lot of effort to start correcting these issues and I think that new direction will be important to maintain in the future.*
- *time delays on applications coming back from the MMO*
- *If you always do nothing you always get nothing.*

What do you consider could be improved for the future under a new FLAG based Programme?

Members of the NNFLAG would like to see a thorough evaluation of the current programme in order to inform and influence the delivery and management structure of any forthcoming schemes before any Delivery Strategies are drafted. There is much that can be learnt from other schemes such as the RDPE/LEADER scheme that had gone through a similar cycle but has applied the lessons learnt and should be used to inform the forthcoming scheme.

The delegation of authority and responsibility to the local delivery agents/FLAG bodies should be explored in order to streamline delivery and empower those agents to deliver what is needed at a local level. This occurs within schemes such as RDPE where local authorities provide the role of accountable body, working directly to Defra.



It has been apparent that the MMO has not been adequately resourced and this has led to delays in responses and claims along with constantly changing points of contact within the organization and differences in interpretations of the EFF framework. It is vital that any managing body of the forthcoming scheme be adequately resourced and trained, in addition to adequate training for the local FLAGs to allow them to operate as efficiently as possible.

Closely aligned with the issue above we would like to see more effective representation of the MMO EFF senior staff locally with sufficient awareness of any future scheme's framework and operation to provide a local point of contact at local level to help shape and influence delivery. In addition to inform local delivery a contemporary database of existing and proposed projects in all FLAG areas would be beneficial and could serve as a repository of best practice and lessons learnt that could be shared across existing and new FLAG areas.

A streamlined application process along with clearly defined qualifying project criteria, along with agreed match and in-kind funding criteria would be helpful at the outset. Perhaps consider a very 'light touch' application process for grant awards up to certain thresholds i.e. £10k

NNFLAG would like to see the role of the FLAG developed as a Forum and central point of contact for all fisheries related issues and for this to be supported through any future scheme.

Appendix 3

- *Spend more time working with the local fishing industry to identify their needs and wants during bid preparation.*
- *Greater transparency of process, rules and funding.*
- *The process for project approval could be improved, with the detailed documentation provided to the project committee prior to each meeting, as achieved towards the end of the current programme.*
- *A simplified local decision-making structure. We attempted a 2-tier committee system for the local FLAG group in the current programme (project committee and main committee, plus oversight) but found it too time-consuming.*
- *Ineffective MMO representative on the local group and confusion over their role (I believe they should be there to act as expert advisers on the programme rules)*
- *I think the new direction of travel, mentioned above, is very important for the FLAG. And to continue the discussion of the roles of organisations and individuals, which have already started, so that the fishing community gets the most out of the time they spend with the FLAG. From a Natural England point of view, the area is becoming increasingly busy with Marine Protected Areas, consultations and other work and the FLAG provides a vital platform for us in the local fishing community to discuss the upcoming issues such as MCZ and public consultations. It allows us to keep that community up to date with new information around our work and we would be keen to keep up this*



communication in the future. I also think there could be further progress into research, whether that is research on the needs of the fishing community or on the science of the fisheries, as there was less time spent on this than originally planned.

- *improvements could possibly include: a quicker application process, perhaps a more hassle free process for applicants*

Summary

Overall there is a need to ensure that in order to deliver the future Programme the Managing Authority need to be more responsive to local requirements both strategically and operationally and this is paramount. Building this in from the start and ensuring a sound Programme review process right from the start would certainly help. Shortening the communication chain coupled with tackling and simplifying the added bureaucracy of the application and decision making process for re-approving local decisions needs to be resolved, likewise issues on the delay for handling claims and payments (training and resource issues). Also need to ensure consistent and regular local engagement with FLAGs, including regular and sound communication of the EFF rules/guidelines/operational requirements that are consistent, clear and done on a regular basis (standard training prog's for all), as this hasn't helped over the last period. To summarise therefore, in future there will be a need to provide the right level of Programme Management resources, together with trained staff as well as local FLAG operatives/Boards, evaluate and improve communication and engagement channels with FLAGs and build in sound Programme review processes in order to make it all work.

