

## **BULLETIN: FISHERIES WORKING GROUP – 26 MAY 2021**

### **MARINE FUND SCOTLAND**

#### **1 Reason for report**

1.1 To inform FWG members

#### **2 Recommendation**

2.1 **It is recommended that members note this report**

#### **3 Discussion**

3.1 On 20 March 2021, the new Marine Fund Scotland (MFS) was launched as the replacement for EMFF, the EU scheme which committed over £96M to fisheries and maritime interests in Scotland since opening in 2016. The first phase of MFS has a budget of £14M. All phase 1 projects must be completed by 31 March 2022, leaving very little time for applicants to prepare applications, deliver outcomes and draw down grant support in full by the deadline. Marine Scotland opened MFS by inviting prospective applicants to complete and submit a brief Expression of Interest (EoI) form, following which applicants with projects best matching the scheme's three main pillars were then invited to submit a formal application.

<https://www.gov.scot/policies/marine-and-fisheries-grants/>

3.2 The three main pillars are described as 'clearly identified **Activities**, that will deliver measurable **Outcomes**, that in turn support agreed **Priorities** for Scotland's marine economy. The **Priorities** are as follows:

- Delivering a low carbon blue economy which contributes to our climate change targets and helps sustain and enhance the natural capital in Scotland's seas.
- Contributing to an innovative, globally competitive, sustainable blue economy with quality jobs and fair work for its participants.
- Fair and inclusive growth that maximises opportunities for people and communities in Scotland.

3.3 Three primary **Outcomes** are set out, respectively public good, supply chain and marketing and thirdly sectoral and community benefit. Details as follows:

##### **Primary Outcome 1: Overarching/public good**

- Supporting collaboration, partnerships, knowledge and technical expertise which enable better decision making, regulation, science and innovation.
- Enhancing the marine environment, including quality, reputation and marine products.
- Reductions in emissions and support for the drive to net zero.
- Removal of waste
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## Primary Outcome 2 - Supply chain/marketing

- Fairer and greener supply chains.
- Developing direct selling and new and existing markets which deliver sustainable economic benefits.
- Matching processing/supply chain capacity with landings/production capacity

## Primary Outcome 3 - Sectoral/Community

- Development and delivery of training including safety and sectoral training.
- Promoting fair work and opportunities for new entrants to the seafood and marine sectors.
- Improving marine infrastructure.
- Diversification projects which enhance the marine tourism, sea fisheries and/or aquaculture sectors, which may include projects delivered within or by coastal communities which deliver benefits to those communities.
- Improving resilience and capability, including that of communities, supply chains and businesses

- 3.4 Given the extended interregnum between the closure of EMFF to new applications and the opening of MFS, it had been expected that the new fund would be substantially oversubscribed. However as large businesses are excluded from applying to MFS phase 1 (for all but collaborative projects - which by their very nature tend to take longer to deliver) the expectation is that the very tight time frame may present difficulties in committing and spending the full allocation by 31 March 2022.
- 3.5 It is to be hoped that future phases of MFS will be multi-year programmes to facilitate strategic investments and that UK State Aid rules will allow larger businesses to apply. Members will be kept posted on MFS.

## 4 Scheme of Governance

Fisheries Working Group is able to consider this item in terms of its remit to provide a focus to enable issues and concerns across the wider fisheries sector in Aberdeenshire to be addressed.

## 5 Implications and Risk

Subject	Yes	No	N/A
Financial		x	
Staffing		x	
Equalities		x	
Fairer Scotland		x	
Town Centre First		x	
Sustainability		x	
Children & Young People's Rights and Wellbeing		x	

**Paul Macari**  
Interim Head of Economic Development and Protective Services