



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

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**REGULATORY SCRUTINY BOARD OPINION**

**Proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund and repealing Regulation (EU) No 508/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council**

{COM(2018) 390}

{SWD(2018) 295}



EUROPEAN COMMISSION  
Regulatory Scrutiny Board

Brussels,  
Ares(2018)

## Opinion

**Title: Impact Assessment - MFF Programme / European Maritime and Fisheries Fund for the period 2021-2027**

**Overall opinion: POSITIVE**

(version of 14 March 2018)\*

### (A) Context

The Commission plans to propose a new multiannual financial framework (MFF) for EU spending. The MFF will set an overall budget envelope and allocate funds across main headings. The process involves important choices about implementation.

MFF-related impact assessment reports should focus on those changes and policy choices that the MFF proposal leaves open. On account of proportionality, the impact assessment template has been adjusted for this purpose. The reports should explain programmes' structures and priorities, and options for service delivery. The reports should draw lessons from experience to date, explain what challenges successor programmes will face, and explain how they would deliver on objectives, e.g. simplification, greater flexibility or better performance. Impact assessments should also explain how future monitoring and evaluation would work.

The present impact assessment report explores ways of adjusting the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF) in the context of the new MFF. The EMFF is one of the European Structural and Investment Funds. It helps fishermen to adopt sustainable fishing practices. It also provides support for coastal communities to diversify their economies. It finances projects aiming to boost jobs and improve quality of life along European coasts. The fund is a mechanism for implementing the Common Fisheries Policy, promoting food security and an innovative and sustainable blue economy. It also supports global commitments in relation to international ocean governance, and security of international maritime space. For 2014-2020, the allocation for the EMFF is EUR 6.4 bn.

The main challenges to achieving the fund's objectives relate to exploiting Europe's untapped blue economy potential, protecting food chains and addressing security and safety threats. This MFF Impact Assessment analyses various ways to address these challenges.

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\* Note that this opinion concerns a draft impact assessment report which may differ from the one adopted.

### **(B) Main considerations**

**The Board understands that the policy intention is primarily to ensure continuity of the existing programme.**

**The Board gives a positive opinion, with a recommendation to further improve the report with respect to the following key aspects:**

- (1) The report does not sufficiently explain how the new performance-based management will work for the Fund. The selection of indicators does not provide a solid base to move in this direction.**
- (2) The report does not propose an interim evaluation, even though this is standard practice for other funds.**

### **(C) Further considerations and recommendations for improvement**

(1) The report should strengthen the case for applying a results-based approach and the related monitoring needs. The report should define more clearly the areas in which a results-based approach will be applied and explain how this will work in practice. It should indicate more clearly the compulsory and optional features of the programmes, and the possible new or revised conditionality/eligibility criteria. It could develop further the result indicators, provide a description of each of them, and explain how they would contribute to the objective of simplification of the monitoring system. The report could better reflect the risks, strengths, and shortcomings regarding data collection and the analysis on e.g. availability, suitability for measuring results and causality. Developing further the intervention logic would also support the case for a result-based approach.

(2) The report could provide a clearer picture of the current EMFF and the planned changes. The report could explain to what extent the issues and main challenges identified relate to evaluation findings and stakeholders' views. It could also explain how the general and specific objectives and the possible distribution of funding differ from the design of the Fund for the current period 2014-2020. It could also specify the final set of delivery mechanisms.

(3) The report should expand further on the evaluation system. The report should justify the absence of a timely interim evaluation and explain what evidence would be available at the time of revising the EMFF in the next programming period.

The Board notes that this impact assessment will eventually be complemented with specific budgetary arrangements and may be substantially amended in line with the final policy choices of the Commission's MFF proposal.

*Some more technical comments have been transmitted directly to the author DG.*

### **(D) RSB scrutiny process**

**Without prejudice to the complements and amendments to the report to be introduced as a result of the policy choices of the MFF proposal, the lead DG shall ensure that the recommendations of the Board are taken into account prior to**

<b>launching the interservice consultation.</b>	
Full title	MFF Programme / European Maritime and Fisheries Fund
Reference number	MFF
Date of RSB meeting	11 March 2018