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REPORT FROM THE COMMISSION

SIXTH ANNUAL REPORT ON IMPLEMENTATION OF THE EUROPEAN FISHERIES FUND (2012)

{SWD(2013) 533 final}

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REPORT FROM THE COMMISSION

SIXTH ANNUAL REPORT ON IMPLEMENTATION OF THE EUROPEAN FISHERIES FUND (2012)

1. INTRODUCTION

The present report responds to the requirement under Article 68 of the European Fisheries Fund[1] (EFF) that the Commission reports each year to the European Parliament, to the Council, to the European Economic and Social Committee and to the Committee of the Regions on the actual implementation of the EFF during the preceding year. It is based on an examination and assessment by the Commission of the Member States' annual reports and on other available information.

This report is divided into two main parts. The first part presents an overall assessment of EFF implementation by the Member States and by the Commission during 2012. It also considers the relevant trends on the basis of the data provided by the Member States in response to the requests for information made by the Commission pursuant to Article 40 of the EFF[2] implementing regulation.

The second part provides a more detailed assessment of the implementation of key measures in the different priority axes of the EFF. For axis 1 it focuses on permanent cessation (EFF article 23), temporary cessation (EFF Article 24), investments on board fishing vessels and selectivity (EFF Article 25) commonly referred to as vessel modernisation. While it deals only with aquaculture and processing for axis 2, and with pilot projects (EFF Article 41) for axis 3, it deals with all the measures for the sustainable development of fisheries areas under axis 4.

2. OVERAL ASSESSMENT OF EFF IMPLEMENTATION

The present report is completed by a Commission Staff Working Document which uses information from the Member States' annual implementation reports to document EFF implementation with detailed information on financial execution[3] in each Member State.

Data collected from the Member States allow a comparison of the uptake of the EFF at two points in time: 31 July 2012 and 31 May 2013[4]. This provides useful information on trends

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1 Art. 68 of Council Regulation (EC) No 1198/2006 of 27 July 2006 on the European Fisheries Fund, OJ L 223, 15.08.2006

2 Commission regulation (EC) No 498/2007 of 26 March 2007 OJ L120, 10.05.2007.

3 Table I. Financial execution in convergence regions
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4 Due to problems with data quality in a few Member States (Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland), data used for May 2013 are actually those of May 2012.

and patterns in the implementation of the EFF since 2007, particularly in terms of commitments

2.1. Financial implementation by Member States

Certified interim payments sent by Member States by the end of December 2012 amounted to 41.4% (EUR 1 776 515 076) of the overall EFF allocation; this represents an increase of 49.6% (EUR 588 789 657) relative to December 2011.

On 31 July 2012 EFF commitments amounted to EUR 2.42 billion (56.31% of the total EFF allocation). This amounts to an average of EUR 440.36 million/year since 2007.

From 31 July 2012 to 31 May 2013, commitments increased by EUR 476 million (an 8% increase relative to the annual average), to EUR 2.898 billion (67.37% of the total EFF allocation). This amounts to an increase of 20% over a ten month period, indicating a significant acceleration in implementation. This acceleration is largely due to timing (with the end of the programming period in sight) but could also in part be explained by the top-up for countries subject to financial adjustment programmes (cf. section 2.3. below).

The public national contribution up to 31 July 2012 amounted to EUR 1.58 billion (EUR 287.27 million per year). The same figure for 31 May 2013 was EUR 1.729 billion, which represents an increase of EUR 149 million in ten months. Compared to the annual average this figure also shows a slowing down of national expenditure which is consistent with the fiscal consolidation period many Member States are going through.

2.2. Main areas of intervention for the EFF

The table below shows the five most important measures (in terms of commitments per measure) in July 2012 and May 2013.

31 July 2012	31 May 2013
Permanent cessation (19.61%)	Processing (17.41%)
Aquaculture (12.98%)	Permanent cessation (17.25%)
Processing (12.79%)	Aquaculture (14.83%)
Fishing ports (10.89%)	Fishing ports (11.46%)
Temporary cessation (7.67%)	Temporary cessation (7.40%)

This table shows a significant reshuffling of EFF commitments. In the first half of 2013, fleet measures such as permanent and temporary cessation have decreased in importance compared to EFF supported investments processing. Permanent cessation decreased by almost 4% and temporary cessation also slowed down. Aquaculture remains also very important. It is also worth noting the modest acceleration of commitments in the field of Axis 4 (7.2% of commitments), which could indicate that it is starting to catch up after a slow start. The importance of commitments in infrastructure projects (fishing ports) remains stable.

This also confirms a concentration trend for EFF commitments. By 31 July 2012, the 5 most important measures represented 63.96% of the total commitments. By 31 May 2013 they represented 68.86%, a 6.88% increase.

The table below shows the evolution of the relative importance of total commitments per priority axis, with a substantial acceleration in Axis 2 commitments due to increased commitments in support of aquaculture and processing:

Priority Axis	31 July 2012	31 May 2013	Evolution
Axis 1	33.05%	30.42%	▼
Axis 2	28.96%	32.64%	▲
Axis 3	27.59%	27.38%	▼
Axis 4	7.1%	7.2%	▲
Axis 5	3.29%	2.42%	▼

The table below shows the relationship per priority axis between commitments and planned expenditure for the programming period. By 31 July 2012, Axis 1 was the most advanced. By 31 May 2013, Axis 2 has become more significant. The acceleration of expenditure in Axis 2 measures (+21 percentage points) is significantly above EFF uptake on the whole. Axis 3 shows a significant increase too. Data for Axis 4, confirms a positive evolution. However, it is still significantly below EFF uptake as a whole, even if the gap is reduced.

Priority Axis	31 July 2012	31 May 2013	Evolution (percentage points)
Axis 1	67.24%	74.36%	∆
Axis 2	56.6%	77.47%	▲▲▲
Axis 3	57.8%	67.31%	▲
Axis 4	28%	44.60%	▲▲
Axis 5	44.04%	44.60%	▬

2.3. Modification of the EFF regulation

In April 2012, the EFF regulation was amended in order to allow for the implementation of certain financial provisions for those Member States experiencing or likely to experience serious difficulties with respect to their financial stability[5]. In line with this modification, Portugal requested an increased amount corresponding to 10 percentage points above the co-financed rate applicable to each priority axis (top-up), for the newly declared expenditure for the interim payments. The Commission accepted this request and made one payment of EFF

[5] Council Regulation (EU) No 387/2012 [OJ L 129, 16.5.2012] amending Council Regulation (EC) No 1198/2006 on the European Fisheries Fund

top-up with the last payment of 2012 for an amount of EUR 3 886 540.26 for Convergence regions and an amount of EUR 545 056.63 for non-convergence regions. Following a similar request to apply the new provisions, Greece received a cumulative additional amount of EUR 8 481 762.10, out of which EUR 8 069 045.80 correspond to Convergence regions and EUR 412 716.30 to non-convergence regions. Romania also requested the application of an increased amount corresponding to 10 percentage points above the co-financed rate for the newly declared expenditure for the interim payments. However, the interim payments were not executed during 2012.

2.4. Follow-up to the European Court of Auditors Special Report

The follow-up of the European Court of Auditors (ECA) report[6] on the measures covered by Article 25(2) of the EFF included a guidance note sent by the Commission to Member States in December 2011 on the interpretation of Article 25(2) making a distinction between investments that do not increase the ability of the vessels to catch fish and those that do so. On the basis of this note, Member States reviewed all projects and most of them have now decertified ineligible expenditure. Moreover, where necessary, Member States revised the relevant selection criteria in order to ensure that all investments on board fishing vessels are subject to an ex ante evaluation. This was completed by a declaration by the beneficiary certifying that the project would not contribute to increasing the ability of the vessel to catch fish and a statement from the intermediate body responsible (sometimes involving an independent expert) to ensure that the planned investment did not increase the ability of the vessel to catch fish.

2.5. Audit of the implementation of the fuel regulation

The audit of the implementation of the fuel regulation (Council Regulation (EC) No 744/2008) suggested the existence of shortcomings in the national management and control systems. The Commission ensured that these shortcomings were duly analysed by the responsible national authorities. Where necessary, the means put in place at national level to check the eligibility of measures were strengthened, in particular as regards proper verification of number of days at sea in the framework of permanent cessations or means to check that vessels remain inactive during temporary cessation periods. Moreover, the method used to check compliance with specific requirements of the regulation such as those laid down in art 12.3 of Regulation 744/2008 and related to the requirement that energy costs had to represent at least 30% of the production costs, was scrutinised by the Commission and revised by the MS where necessary.

2.6. Budget implementation by the Commission

In terms of annual commitments, in 2012 15.5% (EUR 667 529 520) of the total appropriations for 2007-2013 (EUR 4 292 990 279) were committed, of which EUR 507 543 231 for Convergence and EUR 159 986 289 for non-convergence regions. In terms of payments in 2012, 11.1% (EUR 474 988 271.6) of the total appropriations were paid, of which 74.6% for convergence (EUR 354 196 149,01) and 25.4% for non-convergence regions (EUR 120 792 122,59). These payments were made in the form of interim payments. Detailed information is provided in annex 1 and in the accompanying Staff Working Document.

[6] Special Report No. 12/2011 "Have EU Measures Contributed To Adapting the Capacity of the Fishing Fleets to Available Fishing Opportunities"

2.7. Use of Technical Assistance by the Member States

In 2012, 21 Member States committed amounts under the Technical Assistance budget (Axis 5). The MS with the larger amounts committed were: The Netherlands (58.3% of the EFF funds allocated to Axis 5), Slovenia (51.6%), the UK (51.2%), Portugal (38%), Poland (15.75%) and Spain (10.9%). Actions financed included strengthening administrative capacity, IT development, publicity and information, as well as supporting the management and implementation of the Operational Programmes.

2.8. Use of Technical Assistance by the Commission

In 2012 the Commission used EUR 2 892 347.69 of the technical assistance budget on the following items:

2.8.1. Information technology

The Commission committed EUR 463 330.89 for computer equipment and services related to the maintenance and development of Commission's information systems necessary for EFF implementation.

2.8.2. Support Unit for the European Fisheries Areas Network (FARNET)

EUR 1 890 841.80 were committed for the FARNET Support Unit. In 2012, FARNET continued to play a major role in facilitating the implementation of Axis 4 of the EFF through methodological and thematic support to Managing Authorities and Fisheries Local Action Groups. Two transnational seminars were organised: one in June, on green growth in fisheries areas in Olhão (Portugal), and another one in November, in Quiberon (France), on preparing Fisheries Local Action Groups for the successor initiative of Axis 4 (community-led local development under the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund). Publications included two technical dossiers and two magazines on the same topics. FARNET contributed to the visibility of Axis 4 through its website, including an account on a social network, the collection of good practice project examples and a regular newsletter.

2.8.3. Conferences

In November 2012, the Commission organised a conference on aquaculture (EUR 49 505.67) in La Coruña (Spain).

2.8.4. Communication activities

The Commission committed EUR 38 870.45 in order to produce a video clip on EFF Axis 4 projects, available on the EUROPA website.

2.8.5. Studies

In 2012 the Commission committed EUR 449 799.00 in order to contract a study on "Retrospective Evaluation of Scrapping and Temporary Cessation Measures in the EFF".

2.8.6. Non-permanent staff

The Commission committed EUR 850 000 for the salaries of non-permanent staff involved in the implementation of the EFF, in particular in order to ensure proper coverage of EU official languages.

2.9. Coordination of the EFF with the structural funds and the European Agricultural Fund of Rural Development (EAFRD)

The Operational Programmes show that all Member States are aware of the need to ensure consistency and coordination in EFF implementation with the Structural Funds, as well as with the EAFRD. The OPs provide information about the systems set up (or being set up) in the Member States in order to avoid overlapping, as requested by Article 6 of the EFF Regulation. Member States Annual Implementation Reports do not refer to fundamental problems of coordination.

3. ASSESSMENT OF EFF IMPLEMENTATION PER AXIS

3.1. Axis 1 – Adaptation of the EU fishing fleet

The latest data from EU Member States published in the 2013 Annual Economic Report of the EU fleets indicates that the EU fleet landed 4.7 million tonnes of seafood in 2011, worth EUR 6.3 billion. The EU fishing fleet landed less in quantity in 2011 relative to 2010 but generated a higher value. The EU fishing fleet continued its consolidation and its slow economic recovery initiated in the last few years. Despite this, around 45% of the fleet segments were estimated to have recorded losses leaving room for further adjustment[7].

While days at sea deployed by the EU fleet increased almost 8% between 2008-2011, total fuel consumption decreased by 7.7% over the same period, suggesting that the EU fleet is becoming more fuel-efficient, looking for ways to reduce fuel consumption to mitigate the impact of rising fuel prices such as the adaptation of fishing behaviour and changing of fishing gears.

In 2011 the total number of fishermen employed in the EU fleet decreased by 6% relative to 2010, and in contrast the average salary increased by 8%. There are high levels of part time jobs depending on the MS and fleet segment, with a particular incidence on small scale coastal fleets.

Anecdotal evidence in the economic report suggests that several measures funded under the EFF, such as pilot projects, certification schemes and changes to less fuel intensive fishing gear have contributed to the improvement of the economic performance of several fleets.

Small-scale coastal fleets: Generally speaking, small scale coastal fleets are performing better than fleets composed of larger vessels. Small scale coastal fleets accounted for over 40% of total employment, and even if they represent just 6% of the total Gross Tonnage and landings by weight, they accounted for 15% of the landed value and for 20% of the net profits and gross value added (GVA). Compared to the rest of the fleets they generated the highest GVA, as well as gross and net profits as a percentage of income.

[7] Information corroborated by the Note on the "Profitability of the EU fishing fleet" produced by the Joint Research Centre for the European Parliament – IB/B/PECH/IC/2013-087 – July 2013

This positive trend is confirmed by the findings of a recent socio-economic study which analysed coastal areas in Galicia, Scotland, Brittany and Sicily[8]. The picture that emerges is that small scale coastal fleets are generally speaking profitable. As jobs are often part-time (meaning that fishing is not the only source of income for the family), small scale coastal fleets are also quite resilient to economic difficulties. In terms of size, these fleets are stable, although some are increasing in size. This increase can be explained by statistical adjustments in some cases, but also by the replacement of larger vessels by smaller ones, consuming less fuel and fishing less (or not all) regulated stocks. The return to fisheries of local people who left fishing for jobs in other sectors (e.g. construction, catering) before the economic crisis contributes also to this trend.

3.1.1. Permanent cessation (EFF Art. 23)

The EFF includes measures to adapt the EU fishing fleet, including public support for the permanent or temporary cessation of fishing activities. As of 31 July 2012, a total of 3 692 permanent cessation operations were underway. Some EUR 475 million of EFF money had been committed (EUR 128 657 per operation). The national public contribution amounted to a further EUR 364.44 million (EUR 98 711 per operation). Total public cost per operation was EUR 227 368. By 31 May 2013 however, the number of permanent cessation operations had increased by 9.1% to 4 026. They amount to 3 977 scrapping operations (98.78%) and 49 reassignments outside fishing (1.22%). Permanent cessation for the creation of artificial reefs has not been used so far.

In terms of commitments, EUR 486 million of EFF money were committed to scrapping (EUR 122 233 per operation). The national contribution amounted to a further EUR 329.9 million (EUR 82 957 per operation). The total public cost was EUR 205 190. Comparing the two, it appears that the average public cost of scrapping is reducing.

Retrospective evaluation of fishing permanent cessation measures

A recent study[9] on fishing permanent and temporary cessation measures in the EFF, and the financial instrument for fisheries guidance, analysed fleet measures in a sample of 9 MS[10]. Preliminary results show that 2 managing authorities consider that scrapping is both ineffective and inefficient in aligning capacity and resources, particularly when compared to transferable fishing concessions [11]. Another 5 managing authorities[12] consider that scrapping is an effective, but largely inefficient, way of reducing quickly fishing capacity –measured in terms of Gross Tonnage and kilo Watt. The same authorities surveyed/interviewed for the study consider, however, that there is no clear

8 Socio-economic Dimensions of EU fisheries. Report commissioned by the European Commission, MRAG, August 2013.

9 Retrospective Evaluation of Scrapping and Temporary Cessation Measures in the EFF, MRAG report commissioned by the European Commission, Final Report, forthcoming November 2013

10 Denmark, Estonia, Spain, France, Italy, Poland, Portugal, Sweden and UK

11 Denmark and the UK

12 Estonia, France, Poland, Portugal and Sweden,

link between reductions of capacity and the state of fishing resources.

The study also largely confirms that scrapping has been used as a means to improve economic efficiency and, in many cases, to modernise fleets[13]. It also indicates that most authorities interviewed/surveyed consider that there could be less need for scrapping in the future as the restructuring of fleets is mostly complete by now.

Individual beneficiaries were also interviewed. Many of them have indicated that they would have continued fishing if there had been no public scrapping. However, their motivation to scrap had nothing to do with the status of stocks, rather ir, was mainly related to the lack of profitability of their business and/or to factors like having reached retirement age, etc.

The study also reveals that a significant number (22%) of those who received public support to scrap their fishing vessels actually re-invested the scrapping premiums in the fishing sector either via the modernisation of another of their vessels, or in buying another vessel (there are examples in 7 out of 9 national case studies) or in another area of the fishing industry. This raises questions about the efficiency and effectiveness of current scrapping programmes in balancing fleets and resources.

Finally, the study shows that, at least in the sample of Member States analysed, small scale coastal fleets have generally not been targeted by scrapping programmes.

3.1.2. Temporary cessation (EFF Art. 24)

As for temporary cessation, by 31 July 2012, the EFF was supporting 47 885 operations (57% of the total number of operations). Public support per operation was nevertheless small, EUR 6 369 (EUR 3 881.5 from the EFF and EUR 2 487.5 from national public funds). By 31 May 2013, the number of operations was 54 826 (54.31% of the total number of operations - 100 935). Public support per operation remained basically unchanged EUR 6 397 (EUR 3 914 EFF and EUR 2 484 national public).

Retrospective evaluation of fishing temporary cessation measures

The above mentioned retrospective evaluation found that the impacts of temporary cessation were primarily economic (including some evidence about maintaining jobs in the short term), rather than environmental, in nature. The study also concluded that although temporary cessation schemes had been implemented due compulsory stops to fishing activity, the public funding had been more useful in rendering the measures politically acceptable than in actually reducing the amount of fishing.

3.1.3. Investments on board fishing vessels and selectivity (EFF Art. 25)

Despite the uncertainties surrounding the follow-up of the December 2011 ECA report (see Section 2.4 above) regarding the implementation of EFF Art. 25, EFF commitments for investments on board fishing vessels and selectivity (often referred to as modernisations) amounted to 8.7% of the total by July 2012 and close to 11% by May 2013 (11 341 operations), an increase of close to 25% over a ten month period.

13 Over the last 5 years, the average age of fleets has increased by just less than 2 years, which indicates that scrapping (with or without public support) slows down the ageing of fleets.

Of particular interest for their contribution to the promotion of fishing selectivity and climate change mitigation are:

– **Engine replacements** - by 31 May 2013, the EFF supported 1 065 engine replacement operations representing 1.28% of the total 83 000 EU fishing vessels;

– **Fishing gear replacements** - by 31 May 2013, there were 316 operations supported by the EFF (0.5% of all operations supported by the EFF).

The leverage effect of these two measures is quite high (EUR 1 of EFF funding generates around EUR 4 of national funding, most of it private). As the average total cost per operation is quite modest (EUR 24 000 for an engine and EUR 11 000 for a gear), it is relatively easy to achieve high leverage effects.

3.2. Priority Axis 2 – Aquaculture and processing

3.2.1. Aquaculture

Aquaculture production in the EU 28 (including Croatia) represented 1.3 million tonnes in 2011 (0.3% decrease from 2010) and a value of EUR 3.5 billion [14]. Although recent data suggests that the economic performance of firms in the aquaculture sector has improved, most jobs in the sector are part-time amounting to a total number of 80 000 people working in 14 000 firms of which 90% are microenterprises. Part-time is especially significant in the shellfish and freshwater subsectors.

The tables in Section 2 show that expenditure in aquaculture measures remains among the largest in terms of EFF commitments. As of 31 May 2013, EUR 429.9 million of EFF money had been committed to aquaculture. The EU contribution has leveraged EUR 183.4 million of national public contribution and a further EUR 537.8 million of private funding. In other words, one euro of EFF funding has had a leverage effect of EUR 1.68 of additional national funding, EUR 0.43 public and EUR 1.25 private.

Although recent trends show an increase in EFF support for investments in aquaculture, production has stagnated in the last decade. Today, 10% of EU seafood consumption comes from aquaculture, 25% from fisheries and 65% from imports from third countries (including both fisheries and aquaculture). Given that the gap between consumption and production from the catching sector has been steadily growing in the last years, aquaculture can help to fill this gap. The Commission estimates that an increase of 1% in consumption from EU aquaculture could help create between 3 and 4 000 full-time jobs.

For these reasons, the Commission proposed, through the reform of the Common Fisheries Policy, to promote aquaculture through an open method of coordination. The latter does not create new obligations and does not modify the existing legal framework. It is based on the adoption of Strategic Guidelines by the Commission, to assist Member States in the preparation of their Multiannual National Strategic Plans taking into consideration their respective starting conditions, challenges and potential.

The Guidelines[15] adopted by the Commission following consultations with stakeholders throughout 2012, identify four main challenges to sustainable growth in the sector: 1)

[14] Data from draft Economic Report on aquaculture 2013 by the Scientific Technical and Economic Committee for Fisheries, including data on nurseries and hatcheries

[15] Strategic Guidelines for the sustainable development of EU aquaculture COM(2013)229

identifying the main bottlenecks to growth; 2) improving integrated spatial planning; 3) increasing competitiveness of the sector, including a more effective use of EU funding; 4) better exploitation of competitive advantages.

3.2.2. Processing

The fish processing sector in the EU includes more than 3 500 firms with fish processing as their main activity, accounting for about EUR 23 billion of turnover.

The tables in Section 2 show that EFF support for the processing industry is the largest in terms of EFF commitments. As of 31 May 2013, EUR 504.6 million of EFF support had been committed to processing. The EFF contribution has leveraged EUR 264.88 million of national public contribution and a further EUR 1.003 billion of private funding. In other words, EUR 1 of EFF support has a leverage effect of EUR 2.51 of additional national funding, EUR 0.52 public national and EUR 2 private.

A total of 4 903 operations have received EFF support with an average public support per operation of circa EUR 361 686. Approximately 1 892 of these operations relate to the extension or modernisation of existing facilities (EUR 68 619 of EFF support per operation), 1 289 to construction of new facilities (EUR 173 428), 739 to modernisation of marketing establishments (EUR 36 578) and 173 to construction of new marketing establishments (EUR 104 452).

3.3. Axis 3 – Pilot projects (EFF Art. 41)

In the period 2007-2012, the EFF supported 453 operations fostering innovation. The modest number of operations supported (0.53% of total EFF operations) can be explained by the relatively high public cost per operation, which is among the highest in the EFF (EUR 273 819 of which EUR 141 042 EFF and EUR 132 774 public national). The total cost per operation is EUR 334 327[16], of which EUR 60 486 is private funding.

More recent data do not show very significant change. The number of operations increased by 13% to 504 (0.49% of the total). The leverage effect is also relatively low. EUR 1 of EFF committed money raised EUR 1.37 of national funding, of which a mere EUR 0.43 is private funding (EUR 0.94 public national). The leverage effect is quite weak,–particularly the private part-, compared to the one in aquaculture and processing. These figures show that innovation is costly and represents a risk for private operators, which does not lead to short-term gains. The need therefore for public financing in this area is therefore much greater.

3.4. Axis 4 – Sustainable development of fisheries areas

The implementation of Axis 4 progressed substantially in 2012. By the end of December all of the 21 MS which had opted to implement Axis 4 had selected their fisheries local actions groups. The number of groups thus selected had risen to 303 (an increase of 83 compared to the end of 2011). The development and selection of projects has also advanced considerably with 2 756 projects selected by the end of 2012,, compared to 1 625 at the end of 2011.

[16] The cost per operation is significantly above that of a permanent cessation operation, around the same of a processing operation and below that of fishing ports (EUR 475 500) and of reassignments (EUR 490 000) –which are the two most expensive ones.

Progress in commitments is also substantial, with the number of operations increasing from 2 732 on 31 July 2012 to 4 704 by 31 May 2013, a 72% increase in 10 months[17].

A number of in-depth case studies carried out by the FARNET Support Unit has shown that FLAGs have played a major role in bringing fisheries communities together and increasing their influence by giving them an entry point into decision-making. Many projects have contributed to increasing income and safeguarding jobs by strengthening the position of fishermen in the supply chain - so that more of the value added can be retained locally - and in the local economy - by facilitating integration between actors and sectors. Axis 4 has also helped to create job opportunities for local people in fisheries areas by promoting entrepreneurship and innovation and harnessing the potential of blue growth and coastal development. FLAGs have also played an important role in mobilising local resources and in helping to access other funding sources.

The Commission will launch a study in 2013 to examine the first concrete results of Axis 4 and its effectiveness in dealing with the challenges facing fishing communities.

In 2013 the challenge is for Member States to make the necessary arrangements to ensure the continuity of local partnerships between the 2007-2013 and the 2014-20 programming periods.

[17] This increase in number is the fastest of all EFF axes, however, progress is far more modest in terms of certified amounts.

4. FINANCIAL EXECUTION OF THE EFF BY THE COMMISSION IN CONVERGENCE AND NON-CONVERGENCE REGIONS

Country		Decided[18] a	Committed b	Paid c	% (b) / (a)	% (c) / (a)
Belgique-Belgïe	Period 2007-2013	26 261 648.00	21 694 722.00	15 856 227.33	82.61%	60.38 %
	Financial year: 2012	4 412 449.00	4 488 923.00	4 612 318.33		
Republic of Bulgaria	Period 2007-2013	75 876 747.00	61 059 315.00	24 502 673.70	80.47%	32.29 %
	Financial year: 2012	13 084 212.00	13 951 819.00	8 876 800.51		
Czech Republic	Period 2007-2013	27 106 675.00	22 710 961.00	19 509 468.35	83.78%	71.97 %
	Financial year: 2012	4 043 811.00	4 218 249.00	4 751 403.43		
Danmark	Period 2007-2013	133 675 169.00	113 425 745.00	81 116 203.18	84.85%	60.68 %
	Financial year: 2012	19 463 114.00	19 852 376.00	15 682 178.48		
Deutschland	Period 2007-2013	149 121 176.00	123 796 571.30	66 340 414.55	83.02%	44.49 %
	Financial year: 2012	22 443 794.00	22 615 496.00	5 985 395.64		
Eesti	Period 2007-2013	84 568 039.00	69 079 907.00	42 228 804.18	81.69%	49.93 %

[18] The amounts for the period 2007-2013 take into account the decommitments

	Financial year: 2012	12 995 534.00	14 201 298.00	11 253 780.39		
Ireland	Period 2007-2013	42 266 603.00	34 916 400.00	33 467 120.83	82.61%	79.18 %
	Financial year: 2012	7 101 580.00	7 224 661.00	12 876 961.83		
Ellas	Period 2007-2013	207 832 237.00	178 811 400.00	94 864 163.39	86.04%	45.64 %
	Financial year: 2012	29 514 336.00	29 278 211.00	26 878 883.21		
España	Period 2007-2013	1 131 890 912.00	967 521 798.00	599 079 998.75	85.48%	52.93 %
	Financial year: 2012	162 654 289.00	163 526 782.00	194 609 146.09		
France	Period 2007-2013	215 686 616.00	182 921 534.31	97 093 626.69	84.81%	45.02 %
	Financial year: 2012	31 457 343.00	32 086 491.00	9 318 657.31		
Italia	Period 2007-2013	424 342 854.00	360 602 126.00	163 479 766.46	84.98%	38.53 %
	Financial year: 2012	61 620 807.00	62 672 067.00	0.00		
Cyprus	Period 2007-2013	19 724 418.00	16 736 518.00	15 480 209.52	84.85%	78.48 %
	Financial year: 2012	2 871 876.00	2 929 314.00	2 202 183.74		
Latvia	Period 2007-2013	125 015 563.00	102 564 209.00	86 400 450.19	82.04%	69.11 %
	Financial year: 2012	19 243 706.00	20 816 794.00	21 230 404.72		
Lietuva	Period 2007-2013	54 713 408.00	45 381 203.00	28 624 771.79	82.94%	52.32 %
	Financial year: 2012	8 161 553.00	8 671 254.00	5 503 907.88		

Luxembourg	Period 2007-2013	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00%	0.00%
	Financial year: 2012	0.00	0.00	0.00		
Hungary	Period 2007-2013	34 769 572.00	28 229 202.00	21 439 659.62	81.19%	61.66 %
	Financial year: 2012	5 952 501.00	6 241 343.00	8 574 577.79		
Malta	Period 2007-2013	8 372 329.00	6 727 108.00	2 862 430.91	80.35%	34.19 %
	Financial year: 2012	1 271 388.00	1 426 192.00	736 367.16		
Nederland	Period 2007-2013	48 578 417.00	41 219 646.00	21 203 569.09	84.85%	43.65 %
	Financial year: 2012	7 073 021.00	7 214 481.00	8 001 998.59		
Österreich	Period 2007-2013	5 259 318.00	4 469 039.00	4 374 761.67	84.97%	83.18 %
	Financial year: 2012	763 814.00	776 936.00	729 306.12		
Polska	Period 2007-2013	734 092 574.00	607 762 267.00	274 047 384.03	82.79%	37.33 %
	Financial year: 2012	121 944 858.00	124 084 618.00	63 019 617.70		
Portugal	Period 2007-2013	246 485 249.00	206 026 617.00	111 789 897.52	83.59%	45.35 %
	Financial year: 2012	35 759 773.00	36 332 633.00	28 194 561.04		
România	Period 2007-2013	230 645 644.00	162 928 626.01	32 299 988.49	70.64%	14.00 %
	Financial year: 2012	39 257 052.00	42 262 575.00	0.00		
Slovenija	Period 2007-2013	21 640 283.00	18 568 490.00	9 136 385.71	85.81%	42.22 %

	Financial year: 2012	3 515 536.00	3 298 585.00	3 384 733.19		
Slovensko	Period 2007-2013	13 123 309.00	10 467 782.13	5 170 176.35	79.76%	39.40 %
	Financial year: 2012	1 782 386.00	1 971 551.00	0.00		
Suomi-Finland	Period 2007-2013	39 448 827.00	33 473 027.00	22 341 700.84	84.85%	56.63 %
	Financial year: 2012	5 743 752.00	5 858 627.00	5 914 242.07		
Sverige	Period 2007-2013	54 664 803.00	46 384 052.00	24 999 874.53	84.85%	45.73 %
	Financial year: 2012	7 959 199.00	8 118 383.00	0.00		
United Kingdom	Period 2007-2013	137 827 889.00	114 117 078.00	51 946 750.84	82.80%	37.69 %
	Financial year: 2012	23 112 801.00	23 409 861.00	32 650 846.38		
Total	**Period 2007-2013**	**4 292 990 279.00**	**3 581 595 343.75**	**1 949 656 478.51**	**83.43%**	**45.41 %**
	Financial year: 2012	**653 204 485.00**	**667 529 520.00**	**474 988 271.60**		