

EMFF OPERATIONAL PROGRAMME

CCI	2014SK14MFOP001
Title	Fisheries Operational Programme 2014–2020
Version	1.2
First year	2014
Last year	2020
Eligible from	01-Jan-2014
Eligible to	31-Dec-2023
EC decision number	
EC decision date	

1. PREPARATION OF THE OPERATIONAL PROGRAMME AND INVOLVEMENT OF PARTNERS

1.1 Preparation of the Operational Programme and involvement of partners

Under Article 18 of the EMFF Regulation, i.e. Regulation (EU) No 508/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council on the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund and repealing Council Regulations (EC) No 2328/2003, (EC) No 861/2006, (EC) No 1198/2006 and (EC) No 791/2007 and Regulation (EU) No 1255/2011 of the European Parliament and of the Council, a Member State is obliged to draw up a single operational programme to implement the Union priorities for fisheries, which are to be co-financed by the EMFF under precisely defined provisions.

In accordance with the Proposal for the Structure of Operating Programmes for the Multiannual Financial Framework for the European Structural and Investment Funds for the 2014–2020 programming period, approved by the Slovak Government in Resolution No 139 of 20 March 2013, and the Government's Resolution No 481 of 24 September 2014 approving the draft Fisheries Operational Programme at national level, the Managing Authority is the Slovak Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development.

When drawing up their operational programmes Member States must apply the *partnership principle* in accordance with Article 5 of the Common Provisions Regulation, i.e. Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council laying down common provisions on the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund, the Cohesion Fund, the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development and the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund and laying down general provisions on the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund, the Cohesion Fund and the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund and repealing Council Regulation (EC) No 1083/2006.

In drafting the Fisheries Operational Programme account was taken of Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) No 240/2014 on the European code of conduct on partnership in the framework of the European Structural and Investment Funds (ESI Funds), especially when identifying partners, ensuring their active participation and providing access to the information required.

- *Selecting partners*

In line with Article 5 of the Common Provisions Regulation, a working group for the preparation of the Fisheries Operational Programme was set up in February 2013, while applying the partnership principle and taking into account the principle of proportionality and the planned use of support from the EMFF. The working group has 21 members, representing the relevant state authorities, economic and social partners (including trade unions and professional associations), institutions active in environmental protection, education, vocational education and advisory services, and non-governmental organisations. Annex 1 lists the partners involved in the working group.

The selection of partners was made in compliance with the European code of conduct, taking the following factors into account:

- positive experience from cooperation on the Monitoring Committee for the Fisheries Operational Programme for the Slovak Republic 2007–2013 – all organisations represented on the Monitoring Committee were approached when nominating members for the working group in January 2013;
- the Commission’s recommendations on partnership in the Position Paper on the development of the Partnership Agreement in the Slovak Republic for the years 2014–2020, concerning the greater representation of environmental organisations, and accordingly two institutions active in environmental protection, namely the State Nature Conservancy of the Slovak Republic and Agro-ekofórum, were added to the list of organisations invited to join the working group;
- the current status of umbrella organisations for fish farmers and processors in Slovakia;
- the recommendations for effective implementation and management that were made in the ongoing evaluation of the Fisheries Operational Programme for the Slovak Republic 2007–2013.
- *Involving partners in drafting the Fisheries Operational Programme (tasks, communication)*

Members of the working group actively contributed to drafting the Fisheries Operational Programme, making comments, recommendations and contributions for the following tasks:

- producing a SWOT analysis and identifying sector needs;
- defining and selecting Union priorities and specific objectives;
- defining programme indicators;
- allocating budget funds;
- implementing horizontal principles in line with Articles 7 and 8 of the Common Provisions Regulation;
- the composition of the Monitoring Committee.

Between 12 February 2013 and 3 July 2014 the working group met four times.

Outside sessions of the working group, communication with members was in electronic form. The group’s members regularly received documents relating to the drafting of the Operational Programme, primarily for information, and documents requiring the working group to offer opinions and provide follow-up consultation.

Table 1 in Annex 9 presents a chronological overview of the documents sent to members of the working group.

The Managing Authority’s other activities to map the situation in the aquaculture and fish processing sector for drafting the Fisheries Operational Programme were:

- **February 2013:** A questionnaire for fish farmers supported under the Fisheries Operational Programme for the Slovak Republic 2007–2013, mapping the situation in the aquaculture sector and its potential development. The information gathered was used to analyse the sector’s present situation, and in the SWOT analysis.

- **February 2014:** Questionnaires – one for fish farmers with licences for commercial fish farming and one for entities with no history of business in aquaculture. These questionnaires were aimed at ascertaining potential beneficiaries’ investment needs for a realistic definition of expected outputs.
- **April 2014:** A questionnaire for enterprises processing fishery and aquaculture products who had been supported under the Fisheries Operational Programme for the Slovak Republic 2007–2013, aimed at ascertaining potential beneficiaries’ investment needs for a realistic definition of expected outputs.

In view of the inclusion of new measures in the Fisheries Operational Programme concerning data collection and control and enforcement, the Managing Authority consulted options for implementing these measures with the relevant partners in the working group, specifically the State Veterinary and Food Administration, which was defined as the eligible beneficiary for control and enforcement measures, and the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (which coordinates the collecting of data), which is the eligible beneficiary for data collection measures, and organisations collecting statistical data on the aquaculture and fish processing sector were also consulted.

- ***Results of consultation on the SWOT analysis***

As part of consultation on the SWOT analysis, options for supporting aquaculture providing environmental services in line with Article 54(1) of the EMFF Regulation were discussed. Here the partners put forward the following requests:

- coordinating fish production with nature protection requirements to ensure the positive status of populations of aquatic animal species and animal species living near water, including protected species and their habitats in compliance with EU legislation (this concerns Natura 2000 payments and support for extensive farming) – this request was made by Agro-ekofórum;
- devising and implementing a national plan to protect and develop the gene pool of selected fish species, co-financed from national and EU funds – this request was made by the Slovak Fish Farmers Association.

Results of consultation:

1. In the analysis of the sector’s present situation, the restrictions on fish farming in Natura 2000 protected areas were defined as a weakness for the sustainable development of aquaculture, and Natura 2000 payments were subsequently included under specific needs concerning the environment.

At the Managing Authority’s request one of the partners, the State Nature Conservancy of the Slovak Republic, arranged for a map to be produced showing potential overlaps between individual fish farming facilities and Natura 2000 areas, in order to identify the facilities concerned and determine potential beneficiaries (orientational overlaps were based on GIS coordinates).

The Managing Authority then sent a questionnaire to the facilities with licences for fish farming that had been identified as potentially farming in Natura 2000 areas. The questionnaire was aimed at finding out whether fish farmers were interested in implementing

aquaculture methods compatible with environmental requirements in Natura 2000 areas in the 2014–2020 programming period.

Of the ten facilities contacted only two responded, both of which were members of the working group. At the time the specific conditions for this support were not available, nor was the amount and method for calculating compensation for extra costs / loss of income known, so the facilities that did respond to the questionnaire were unable to have any opinion on the matter.

Subsequently the Slovak Ornithological Society/BirdLife Slovakia (a member of the Agroekofórum platform) presented a proposal for measures to maintain and improve the situation in avian assemblages and biodiversity, drawn up in collaboration with the State Nature Conservancy. The proposal included a description of the problem in terms of bird protection and improving the ecological status of fish ponds in selected Natura 2000 areas.

This proposal was distributed to the working group's members and discussed at one of its sessions. Representatives of the sector (the Slovak Fish Farmers Association, the Slovak Anglers Union, the Slovak Agriculture and Food Chamber) and academia were strongly opposed to the proposed measures.

The Managing Authority suggested that this support should not be included in the Fisheries Operational Programme, given the opinion of the partners and the following factors:

- the absence of expert studies defining aquaculture methods compatible with environmental needs, which are subject to specific requirements for farming in Natura 2000 areas in Slovakia, and the calculation of compensation;
- the limited base of potential beneficiaries and the greater administrative costs and workload resulting from the implementation of direct subsidies (the management and control system is different than the system for standard investment measures);
- fish farming facilities and fish ponds are not registered in the Land Parcel Identification System, which features digital orthophoto maps (currently used for the Rural Development Programme), and it is therefore impossible to determine any overlap with Natura 2000 areas, which means that the measures cannot be verified or checked;
- the need to focus support and prioritise core measures given the limited funds available under the Fisheries Operational Programme;
- the lessons of the 2007–2013 programming period concerning the unsuccessful implementation of measures in which potential beneficiaries had expressed no interest.

The Managing Authority suggested that avian assemblages could be taken into account as part of productive investments into aquaculture (e.g. defining the conditions for ecological mud removal methods, restricting the construction of new fish farming facilities and fish ponds in permanent grassland, wetlands, etc.) and, if aquaculture businesses seek to diversify revenues, e.g. by supporting investments related to birdwatching.

2. In the SWOT analysis, the request made by farmers to devise and implement a national plan to protect and develop the gene pool of selected fish species was included under specific needs for the sustainable development of aquaculture.

The Slovak Fish Farmers Association requested that opportunities be sought to draw funds to protect the gene pool of selected fish species under the Fisheries Operational Programme by means of compensatory payments. It also argued that the gene pool is one of the most valuable aquaculture resources in Slovakia, and the farming of fry contributes to maintaining the biodiversity of the ichthyofauna in natural waters, lakes and reservoirs. The association therefore proposed that a model be devised for payments as compensation for the costs related to breeding broodstock or fry for selected fish species; these payments would be provided to farmers as part of an environmental service: enhancing the biodiversity of the ichthyofauna in Slovak waters.

To substantiate the reasons for this support, the Managing Authority asked the Ministry of the Environment's representative to assess the current situation in this field and provide any analyses and studies available.

The Ministry of the Environment produced the Revised National Strategy for the Protection of Biodiversity up to 2020, which the Government approved in Resolution No 12 of 8 January 2014. The strategy seeks to create the conditions to maintain biodiversity and promote the sustainable use of ecosystem functions with the aim of reviving degraded ecosystems and halting the decline in biodiversity in Slovakia. The strategy includes several objectives and measures for water management in Slovakia, and for aquaculture, while taking into account the objectives of the Water Framework Directive[1], the Water Plan of the Slovak Republic [2] and the Common Fisheries Policy.

The Slovak Fish Farmers Association expressed its interest in participating in the implementation of measures to preserve the biodiversity of grayling living in natural waters, in line with the strategy.

As the strategy lists restocking as a suitable measure for conserving fish stocks in the wild, which under the EMFF Regulation is ineligible expenditure (unless explicitly provided for as a conservation measure by a Union legal act, or in the case of experimental restocking), this type of support cannot be implemented under the Fisheries Operational Programme.

3. Agro-ekofórum's proposal to include support for extensive and traditional forms of aquaculture via aqua-environmental schemes was not accepted as a specific need for the sustainable development of aquaculture, as this form of support is not in line with the objectives of the National Strategic Plan.

- ***Summary and evaluation of the main comments on the SWOT analysis from members of the working group*** (see Table 2 in Annex 9)

The SWOT analysis was subsequently the subject of an ex-ante evaluation, and was amended on the basis of recommendations by independent evaluators (see part 1.2).

- ***Measures to facilitate partners' involvement and active participation***

To support involving partners in drafting the Fisheries Operational Programme, the Managing Authority used technical assistance funds from the 2007–2013 programming period for the organisational arrangements for the working group's sessions.

The partnership principle will subsequently be applied in the process of implementing, monitoring and evaluating the Fisheries Operational Programme, via partners being members of the Monitoring Committee. The composition of the Monitoring Committee, the principles for its work and ways of involving partners in specific aspects of the implementation of the Fisheries Operational Programme will take full account of the rules set out in the Common Provisions Regulation and the European code of conduct.

To promote the partners' active participation and involvement in implementing, monitoring and evaluating the Fisheries Operational Programme, the Managing Authority plans to refund the costs of travel, and if necessary accommodation, for partners representing organisations based outside the location of the Monitoring Committee's sessions.

- ***Taking into account the horizontal principles referred to in Articles 7 and 8 of the Common Provisions Regulation in the preparatory phase of the Fisheries Operational Programme***

The horizontal principle of equality between men and women and non-discrimination was taken into account when setting up the working group. The organisations approached were not influenced by any restrictive or discriminatory tendencies when nominating representatives. In this process the Managing Authority also sought to ensure the balanced representation of men and women (ten men and seven women), given the nature of the sector.

For the preparatory phase of the Fisheries Operational Programme the Managing Authority worked closely with the relevant coordinators for the horizontal principles, discussing potential areas for their application given the focus of the Fisheries Operational Programme. Their comments were taken into account when drafting the Fisheries Operational Programme.

[1] Directive 2000/60/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 October 2000 establishing a framework for Community action in the field of water policy:

http://www.vuvh.sk/rsv2/download/02_Dokumenty/01_Dokumenty_Legislativa_EU_suvisiac_a_s_RSV/2000_60_ES_SK_RSV.pdf

[2][https://lt.justice.gov.sk/\(S\(2asj2h554fwq2v55hwjbaw45\)\)/Attachment/Vodny%20Plan%20SR_doc.pdf?instEID=191&attEID=18833&docEID=97866&matEID=2226&langEID=1&tStamp=20091214134730310](https://lt.justice.gov.sk/(S(2asj2h554fwq2v55hwjbaw45))/Attachment/Vodny%20Plan%20SR_doc.pdf?instEID=191&attEID=18833&docEID=97866&matEID=2226&langEID=1&tStamp=20091214134730310)

1.2 Outcome of the ex-ante evaluation

1.2.1 Description of the ex-ante evaluation process

The ex-ante evaluation of the Fisheries Operational Programme was performed by a team of independent evaluators, in line with the “Guidelines for the Ex-Ante Evaluation of 2014–2020 EMFF OPs”, updated March 2014, DG MARE.

The evaluation process was split into three stages, and the output from each stage was a report that presented the results and recommendations for the Fisheries Operational Programme:

- **Stage 1:** An evaluation of the SWOT analysis and the needs identified – output: interim report 1

In stage 1 the “Draft Fisheries Operational Programme, version II, June 2013” was evaluated. The evaluator looked at the baseline values for context indicators, assessed the coherence and completeness of the SWOT analysis and of the needs to be addressed by EMFF interventions. The evaluator presented the findings and recommendations from the evaluation of the SWOT analysis and the needs identified at regular working meetings with the Managing Authority and at a session of the working group on 25 September 2013.

In this stage the Strategic Environmental Assessment experts gave their opinion on the environmental issues that should be tackled according to the SWOT analysis, the depth of the assessment, and the satisfying of the data and information requirements that need to be taken into account for the Strategic Environmental Assessment.

- **Stage 2:** An evaluation of the intervention logic, budgets, targets and the performance framework – output: interim report 2

In this stage the evaluator assessed the link between the programme strategy and the needs identified, the targets and the choice of measures to achieve the targets for the indicators. The evaluator also commented on the Operational Programme’s anticipated contribution to the targets of the Europe 2020 strategy, the intervention logic in relation to the needs identified, coherence, the consistency between expected outputs and results, the allocation of budgetary resources, the relevancy and clarity of the indicators, and whether the values proposed for performance objectives and intermediate targets were realistic. The evaluator helped to refine the Operational Programme by making recommendations at regular working meetings with the Managing Authority and representatives of the fisheries sector.

In this stage the Strategic Environmental Assessment experts gave their opinion on the potential environmental impact of the selected objectives, Union priorities, and the measures and actions under the proposed Fisheries Operational Programme as a whole.

- **Stage 3:** An evaluation of governance, management and implementation systems (and the final programme document) – output: a final report with an ex-ante evaluation of the entire Fisheries Operational Programme.

In stage 3 the subject of the assessment was the governance, management and implementation system for the Operational Programme and a final evaluation of the programme document resulting from the first stages of the process. The evaluator presented the conclusions and

recommendations from the ex-ante evaluation at a session of the working group on 3 July 2014.

On 12 August 2014 there was a public discussion of the report on the evaluation of the strategy document. This discussion did not raise any requests for the strategy document to be amended.

The Managing Authority took account of the outputs from Strategic Environmental Assessment when designing the procedures to implement the Operational Programme.

1.2.2 Overview of the recommendations of the ex-ante evaluators and brief description of how they have been addressed

Topic	Recommendation	How the recommendation was addressed, or why it was not taken into account
1 – SWOT analysis, needs assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Supplement weaknesses and reformulate opportunities to present a structured overview of external opportunities under Union priority 2 – Supplement weaknesses under Union priority 5 – Reformulate the needs identified and define them at the level of the specific objectives – Supplement the description and evaluation of needs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Weaknesses under Union priority 2 were extended to include low financial returns, limited diversification, the poor technical condition of facilities, the high sediment content in fish ponds, the low level of innovation, the harm caused by protected predators and the absence of farms in systems with closed water circulation; low returns are defined as a threat, and the harm was added as a weakness – Weaknesses under Union priority 5 were extended to include the low level of innovation to mitigate the negative impacts of climate change, adapting to climate change and environmental protection; failure to use aquaculture products in domestic processing enterprises, other than limited ambulant fish processing, which is related

Topic	Recommendation	How the recommendation was addressed, or why it was not taken into account
		<p>to direct sales under Union priority 2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Opportunities were reformulated – Needs were reformulated and their evaluation was included in the Operational Programme as an annex
<p>2 – Construction of the intervention logic, including the contribution to the EU 2020, the internal coherence of the proposed programme and its relationship with other relevant instruments, the establishment of quantified targets and milestones and the distribution of budgetary resources</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – In the introduction add the link between the strategy and the most important findings from the SWOT analysis, the needs identified and the programme targets – In the description of specific objective 3.2 list the controls that will be supported under Article 76 – In the description of specific objective 5.1 include the form of communication, e.g. a promotional campaign 	<p>Chapter 3.1 Description of the strategy was supplemented in line with the recommendations</p> <p>When drafting the Operational Programme the ex-ante evaluator worked with the Managing Authority to set targets for the indicators based on the development of the context indicators and the information provided by beneficiaries in their grant applications. Based on this, the ex-ante evaluator reported that the targets for the indicators were realistic and based on previous experience.</p>
<p>3 – Consistency with the Common Strategic Framework, the Partnership Agreement, the relevant country specific recommendations adopted in accordance with Article 121(2) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union and where appropriate at national level, the</p>	<p>The Operational Programme is fully consistent with Slovakia's Partnership Agreement and appropriately supplements other relevant programmes under the ESI Funds. The Operational Programme does not assess coherence with the EU Strategy for the Danube Region; we recommend paying at least some attention to the Danube Strategy.</p>	<p>Chapter 3.4.2 Complementarity and coordination arrangements with other ESI Funds and other relevant Union and national funding instruments of the EMFF was supplemented in line with the recommendation.</p>

Topic	Recommendation	How the recommendation was addressed, or why it was not taken into account
National Reform Programme		
4 – Rationale for the forms of support proposed in the programme (Article 66 of the Common Provisions Regulation)	No recommendations	
5 – Human resources and administrative capacity and the management of the programme	The Operational Programme includes more measures, and more projects are anticipated (implementing the programme in line with the specific objectives will increase the number of projects), and it will be necessary to monitor project sustainability, the involvement of the Central Coordination Authority in programme monitoring, etc. This all means that human resources for managing and implementing the programme will have to be strengthened at the Managing Authority and the Intermediate Body.	The Managing Authority will take this recommendation into account when designing the management and control system.
6 – Procedures for monitoring the programme and collecting the data necessary to carry out evaluations	Do not include in the Operational Programme the indicators “Number of full-time jobs created” and “Number of full-time jobs maintained” for measures under Processing of fishery and aquaculture products (Article 69). Based on experience from the 2007–2013 programming period, it will be necessary to define a way of quantifying the indicators “Change in the volume of aquaculture production (tonnes)” and “Change in the value of aquaculture production (EUR thousand)” so that when there are	The Managing Authority amended the indicators for measures under Processing of fishery and aquaculture products (Article 69) as recommended. The Managing Authority will take this recommendation into account when designing the monitoring system.

Topic	Recommendation	How the recommendation was addressed, or why it was not taken into account
	multiple applicants a change in the production of one beneficiary is not counted several times, and when quantifying changes in production account should be taken of the multi-annual production cycle for fish farming.	
7 – Measures to promote equal opportunities between men and women, prevent discrimination and promote sustainable development	No recommendations	
8 – Measures to reduce the administrative burden on beneficiaries	No recommendations	
9 – Requirements for Strategic Environmental Assessment	The Strategic Environmental Assessment process did not result in any requirements of the amending/supplementing of the Operational Programme. The conclusions from the process raised requirements to monitor the programme’s environmental impacts via a proposed set of environmental indicators as part of the final opinion comprising Annex 11 to the Operational Programme.	The Strategic Environmental Assessment recommendations will be taken into account in the process of implementing the Operational Programme. The selection of indicators will be made in line with the nature of the activities supported, and will be developed in detail in the methodologies. The selected indicators will be part of the overall monitoring system for the Operational Programme.

2. SWOT AND IDENTIFICATION OF NEEDS

2.1 SWOT analysis and identification of needs

Union priority	2 – Fostering environmentally sustainable, resource efficient, innovative, competitive and knowledge based aquaculture
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Strengths

- Suitable natural conditions for the development of aquaculture
- The existence of functional and productive fish farming facilities [1] and fish ponds [2]
- Traditional fish production in rearing facilities with sustainable production of healthy food and support for biodiversity
- Legislative framework for using broodstock (fry) exclusively from controlled farms, the production of quality fry and their sale for stocking in natural waters
- Free use of waters

[1] For the purposes of the Fisheries Operational Programme, a fish farming facility is a technological facility such as an incubator, channel, canal, silo, nursery, cage or other similar facility intended for commercial farming, predominantly of salmonid fish species.

[2] For the purposes of the Fisheries Operational Programme, a fish pond is a controlled pond or artificial lake with a natural bottom used for commercial farming, predominantly of lowland fish species, which can be entirely drained; it features a dam, inlets and outlets and other devices.

Weaknesses

- The poor technical condition of fish farming facilities and the high sediment content in fish ponds
- Low returns on investments into fish farming facilities and fish ponds (low revenues from aquaculture) due to the seasonal nature of fish production
- Limited diversification of business activities in aquaculture enterprises
- Low level of innovation to mitigate the negative impacts of climate change, adapting to climate change and environmental protection
- No special legislation to stimulate the aquaculture sector and ensure its optimal development
- No applied research and development in aquaculture
- Low participation in lifelong learning and low employment for graduates from educational institutions with fishery-related subjects
- High proportion of physical work
- Uneven distribution and the lack of any concentration of fish farms that would instigate the creating of Community-Led Local Development (CLLD)

Opportunities

- Improving the position of aquaculture enterprises on the market for domestic production by modernising and expanding fish farming facilities and fish ponds
- Improving the competitiveness of aquaculture enterprises by developing complementary business activities related to aquaculture
- Mitigating the impact of climate change on aquaculture by introducing innovations
- Introducing recirculation systems for fish farming
- Developing local markets – supplying fresh fish for market throughout the year
- Introducing new or novel aquaculture fish species and fish products
- Introducing breeding farms for rainbow trout and common carp
- Strengthening fish pond functions unrelated to production
- Involving aquaculture enterprises in the LEADER (*Liaison Entre Actions de Développement de l'Économie Rurale*) mechanism

Threats

- Limited volume of suitable water resources and their reduced capacity due to climate change
- Pressure from other sectors of the economy for alternative uses of waters
- Harm caused by protected fish-eating predators
- The introduction of new fish diseases and the spread of existing ones
- The introduction and spread of non-indigenous and invasive fish species
- Restrictions on fish farming in Natura 2000 protected areas

Identification of needs on the basis of the SWOT analysis

- The sustainable development of aquaculture and increasing production via the qualitative and quantitative development and protection of fish farming facilities and fish ponds, while maintaining the welfare of the fish farmed and respecting the principles of environmental protection
- The diversification of revenues for aquaculture enterprises and increasing added value in aquaculture

SWOT analysis: consistency with the Multi-annual National Strategic Plan for aquaculture

The SWOT analysis for the Fisheries Operational Programme is consistent with the analysis under the National Strategic Plan. The needs identified in the SWOT analysis fully reflect the priorities defined in the National Strategic Plan for the successful development of aquaculture up to 2020, which are aimed at ensuring:

- a sustainable, competitive and environmentally friendly aquaculture sector assisted by innovation;

- the increased domestic production of lowland and salmonid species, up to a level of 80 % self-sufficiency for Slovakia;
- the more effective use of existing operations;
- the development of new operations to achieve self-sufficiency for Slovakia;
- an increase in the number of enterprises working in aquaculture with the aim of improving competitiveness and the quality of products and processing;
- the continuation of the sustainable quality of production while achieving high standards for fish health and welfare and consumer protection.

SWOT analysis: consistency with progress to achieve good environmental status through the development and implementation of the Marine Strategy Framework Directive

Not applicable.

Specific needs concerning jobs, the environment, climate change mitigation and adaptation and promotion of innovation

- Introducing innovative technologies and processes in farms to allow the efficient use of resources, ensuring the sustainable development of aquaculture and increasing production while complying with environmental protection

Union priority	3 – Fostering the implementation of the Common Fisheries Policy (CFP)
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Strengths

- The strengthening of administrative capacities for the fish farming agenda

Weaknesses

- Incomplete data on fish farming; shortcomings in the value of this data and the coordinating of its collection
- High expenses for equipment and performing controls in line with Council Regulation (EC) No 1224/2009 establishing a Community control system for ensuring compliance with the rules of the common fisheries policy (the Control Regulation) and Council Regulation (EC) No 1005/2008 establishing a Community system to prevent, deter and eliminate illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing (the IUU Regulation)

Opportunities

- The efficient management of fish farming using properly processed and verified data and information

- The creating of a culture of compliance with the rules of the Common Fisheries Policy, which would contribute to sustainable growth
- The provision of the information acquired to the fish farming sector

Threats

- Limited data sources, and the associated risk of distortions
- Greater administrative demands on farmers, processors and authorities

Identification of needs on the basis of the SWOT analysis

- Ensuring the collection, management and provision of data on the aquaculture sector and processing sector, including data relating to the environment, in line with the multi-annual programme under Regulation (EU) No 1380/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council on the Common Fisheries Policy
- Performing controls to a high standard, thereby ensuring compliance with CFP rules and the sustainable use of living aquatic resources

SWOT analysis: consistency with the Multi-annual National Strategic Plan for aquaculture

Not relevant.

SWOT analysis: consistency with progress to achieve good environmental status through the development and implementation of the Marine Strategy Framework Directive

Not applicable.

Specific needs concerning jobs, the environment, climate change mitigation and adaptation and promotion of innovation

- Ensuring the collection, management and provision of data on the aquaculture sector and processing sector, including data relating to the environment, in line with the multi-annual programme under Regulation (EU) No 1380/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council on the Common Fisheries Policy
- Performing controls to a high standard, thereby ensuring compliance with CFP rules and the sustainable use of living aquatic resources

Strengths

- The quality of fish products; systematic veterinary controls of farms and processing capacities
- Sufficient processing capacities satisfying present EU norms

Weaknesses

- Inadequate promotion of aquaculture products
- Low domestic fish consumption
- Narrow range of fish products
- Absence of producers' organisations in the aquaculture sector
- Aquaculture production is not used in domestic processing enterprises
- Low level of innovation to mitigate the negative impacts of climate change, adapting to climate change and environmental protection

Opportunities

- Acquiring protection for geographical indications and designations of origin for aquaculture products
- Fish – a healthy foodstuff with high nutritional value
- Promoting the products of sustainable aquaculture
- Entering new markets
- Setting up producers' organisations in the aquaculture sector

Threats

- Low interest among consumers in aquaculture and fishery products
- Competitive pricing for imported aquaculture and fishery products

Identification of needs on the basis of the SWOT analysis

- Increasing the added value of processed products while complying with environmental protection
- Promoting the products of sustainable aquaculture
- Entering new markets and improving the conditions for marketing aquaculture and fishery products

SWOT analysis: consistency with the Multi-annual National Strategic Plan for aquaculture

Not relevant.

SWOT analysis: consistency with the progress to achieve good environmental status through the development and implementation of the Marine Strategy Framework Directive

Not applicable.

Specific needs concerning jobs, the environment, climate change mitigation and adaptation and promotion of innovation

- Increasing the added value of processed products while complying with environmental protection (reducing the energy requirements of the production process; waste management; introducing innovative processing technologies and processes)

2.2 Context indicators presenting the initial situation

Union priority	2 – Fostering environmentally sustainable, resource efficient, innovative, competitive and knowledge based aquaculture
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Context indicator presenting the initial situation	Baseline year	Value	Measurement unit	Source of information	Comment / Justification
2.1 – Volume of aquaculture production	2013	1 085.00	tonnes	Slovak Office Statistical	
2.2 – Value of aquaculture production	2013	3 164.00	thousand euros	Slovak Office Statistical	
2.3 – Net profit	2013	0.00	thousand euros	-	The Slovak Republic does not have official data for setting a baseline. This indicator will be monitored from 2016 onwards as part of a statistical survey by the Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic.
2.4 – Volume of production: organic aquaculture	2013	0.00	tonnes	Not relevant for Slovakia	
2.5 – Volume of production: recirculation system	2014	483.00	tonnes	Slovak Office Statistical	The value for this indicator is the annual production of rainbow trout farmed in recirculation systems in Slovakia.
2.6.a – Number of employed (full-time) including male and female	2013	403.00	FTE	Slovak Office Statistical	
2.6.b – Number of employed (full-time) female	2013	86.00	FTE	Slovak Office Statistical	
2.7 – Number of fish ponds used for commercial fish farming	2013	485.00	n	Slovak Office Statistical	
2.8 – Number of fish farming facilities used for commercial fish farming	2013	1 447.00	n	Slovak Office Statistical	

Union priority	3 – Fostering the implementation of the CFP
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Context indicator presenting the initial situation	Baseline year	Value	Measurement unit	Source information of	Comment / Justification
3.A.1 – Total number of serious infringements in the Member State in the last seven years	2013	1.00	number	State Veterinary and Food Administration	In the last seven years the Slovak control authorities identified one serious infringement as part of a control performed in compliance with the IUU Regulation (a catch certificate was signed by an unauthorised authority).
3.A.2 – Landings subject to physical control	2013	0.00	%	-	Not relevant for Slovakia
3.A.3.a – Existing resources available for control: Control vessels and aircrafts available	2013	0.00	number	-	Not relevant for Slovakia
3.A.3.b – Existing resources available for control – Number of employees (FTE)	2013	80.00	FTE	State Veterinary and Food Administration	
3.A.3.c – Existing resources available for control: Budgetary allocation (evolution in last five years)	2013	53.60	thousand euros	State Veterinary and Food Administration	
3.A.3.d – Existing resources available for control: Vessels equipped with ERS and/or VMS	2013	0.00	number	-	Not relevant for Slovakia
3.B.1 – Data Collection Measures: Fulfilment of data calls under DCF	2013	0.00	%	-	As a landlocked country Slovakia will only be obliged to proceed in line with the DCF after 2016.

Union priority	5 – Fostering marketing and processing
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Context indicator presenting the initial situation	Baseline year	Value	Measurement unit	Source information of	Comment Justification /
5.1.a – Number of POs	2013	0.00	number	-	N/A
5.1.b – Number of associations of POs	2013	0.00	number	-	N/A
5.1.c – Number of IBOs	2013	0.00	number	-	N/A
5.1.d – Number of producers or operators per PO	2013	0.00	number	-	N/A
5.1.e – Number of producers or operators per association of POs	2013	0.00	number	-	N/A
5.1.f – Number of producers or operators per IBO	2013	0.00	number	-	N/A
5.1.h – % of producers or operators who are members of an association of POs	2013	0.00	%	-	N/A
5.1.i – % of producers or operators who are members of IBO	2013	0.00	%	-	N/A
5.2.a – Annual value of turnover of EU marketed production	2013	0.00	thousand euros	-	N/A
5.2.b – % of production placed on the market (value) by POs	2013	0.00	%	-	N/A
5.2.c – % of production placed on the market (value) by association of POs	2013	0.00	%	-	N/A
5.2.d – % of production placed on the market (value) by IBOs	2013	0.00	%	-	N/A

Context indicator presenting the initial situation	Baseline year	Value	Measurement unit	Source information of	Comment Justification /
5.2.e – % of production placed on the market (volume) by POs	2013	0.00	%	-	N/A
5.2.f – % of production placed on the market (volume) by association of POs	2013	0.00	%	-	N/A
5.2.g – % of production placed on the market (volume) by IBOs	2013	0.00	%	-	N/A
5.3 – Volume of production: processing fishery and aquaculture products	2013	5 535.00	tonnes	Radela, s.r.o.	
5.4 – Value of production: processing fishery and aquaculture products	2013	27 382.00	thousand euros	Radela, s.r.o.	
5.5 – Per capita consumption of fish and fish products	2013	5.00	kg p.a.	Slovak Statistical Office	
5.6.a – Number of permanent employees in processing (men and women)	2013	629.00	n	Radela, s.r.o.	
5.6.b – Number of permanent employees in processing (women)	2013	369.00	n	Radela, s.r.o.	

3. DESCRIPTION OF THE STRATEGY

3.1 Description of the strategy for the Operational Programme

The strategy for the Fisheries Operational Programme has been designed in compliance with the EMFF Regulation, which promotes activities in line with EU priorities for the sustainable development of fisheries and aquaculture, complementing the Common Agricultural Policy and the cohesion policy implemented through the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund and the Cohesion Fund.

The strategy is a response to the weaknesses and opportunities identified by the SWOT analysis, while also taking the strengths into account. It respects the principle of proportionality as it applies to the sector's size and absorption capacity, and its development needs as defined at national level. The strategic selection of interventions was based on experience from the 2007–2013 programming period, the budget for the Operational Programme and the need to concentrate support to make efficient use of resources from the ESI Funds, especially by achieving synergy and complementarity in rural development.

The strategy was formulated in line with the National Strategic Plan (Slovak Government Resolution No 340/2013 of 3 July 2013), national documents defining needs for the sustainable development of aquaculture, the Commission's Position Paper and the Partnership Agreement.

The global objective for the Fisheries Operational Programme is to *foster a sustainable and competitive aquaculture and fish processing sector based on innovation, the efficient use of resources, environmental protection and compliance with the Common Fisheries Policy.*

This global objective is consistent with Union priorities 2, 3 and 5, which can be achieved through the specific objectives selected to meet the needs identified. These specific objectives will be achieved through a set of measures and activities (see Annex 7 – Intervention Logic).

Union priority 2 *Fostering environmentally sustainable, resource efficient, innovative, competitive and knowledge based aquaculture*

Specific objective 2.2 *Enhancement of the competitiveness and viability of aquaculture enterprises, including improvement of safety or working conditions, in particular in SMEs*

Measure 2.2.1 *Productive investments in aquaculture – Article 48(1)(a), (c), (d), (f), (g) and (h)*

Specific objective 2.3 *Protection and restoration of aquatic biodiversity and enhancement of ecosystems related to aquaculture and promotion of resource efficient aquaculture*

Measure 2.3.1 *Productive investments in aquaculture – Article 48(1)(e) and (j)*

Union priority 3 *Fostering the implementation of the Common Fisheries Policy*

Specific objective 3.1 *The improvement and supply of scientific knowledge and collection and management of data*

<i>Measure 3.1.1</i>	<i>Data collection – Article 77(2)(a) and (e)</i>
<i>Specific objective 3.2</i>	<i>Support for monitoring, control and enforcement, enhancing institutional capacity and an efficient public administration without increasing the administrative burden</i>
<i>Measure 3.2.1</i>	<i>Control and enforcement – Article 76(2)(c), (g), (h) and (j)</i>
Union priority 5	Fostering marketing and processing
<i>Specific objective 5.1</i>	<i>Improved market organisation for fishery and aquaculture products</i>
<i>Measure 5.1.1</i>	<i>Marketing measures – Article 68(1)(b) and (g)</i>
<i>Specific objective 5.2</i>	<i>Encouragement of investment in the processing and marketing sectors</i>
<i>Measure 5.2.1</i>	<i>Processing of fishery and aquaculture products</i>

Achieving the objectives of the Fisheries Operational Programme will be monitored using the mandatory common context and result indicators, including programme-specific indicators defined by the Managing Authority (beyond the common indicators), listed in parts 2.2 and 3.2.

Why these specific objectives were chosen:

Specific objective 2.2 tackles the need for sustainable and competitive aquaculture, increasing production and protection while maintaining fish welfare, in line with environmental requirements and the need for diversification in aquaculture.

In line with the National Strategic Plan, to achieve more efficient and rationalised production processes support must be directed into **innovative investments to modernise existing fish farming facilities and fish ponds**, specifically by developing and acquiring the missing technology, infrastructure and other production facilities – Article 48(1)(c). To increase production and achieve self-sufficiency it is necessary to **develop new fish farming facilities** – Article 48(1)(a) – while respecting the specific conditions in Natura 2000 areas (e.g. restricting their construction in permanent grassland, wetlands and marshland, which are important nesting grounds for certain species, and are protected in these areas). The development of new fish farming facilities by enterprises entering the sector will be conditional on the submitting of a business plan, and if the investment costs are in excess of EUR 50 000 this must be accompanied by a feasibility study demonstrating the product's positive and sustainable market prospects.

In aquaculture it is essential to support **mud removal** in bodies of water used for commercial fish farming, and if necessary to **purchase equipment preventing the depositing of sediments**, in order to improve conditions and increase the productivity of fish ponds while respecting environmental concerns – Article 48(1)(g) – by stipulating the conditions for ecological mud removal methods while e.g. adequately protecting littoral vegetation. Where riverbeds and banks are altered by human activity, it is necessary to remedy the consequences of

revitalisation measures in line with environmental concerns and, especially for farms in Natura 2000 areas, to proceed in accordance with Act No 543/2002 on nature and landscape protection, as amended.

The Revised National Strategy for the Protection of Biodiversity up to 2020 (Government Resolution No 12 of 8 January 2014) sets a number of important objectives for sustainable aquaculture development that should eliminate negative environmental impacts so that there is no deterioration in the protection of species and habitats in sites where fish and other aquatic animals are farmed. In addition the Blueprint for the Development of Agriculture in the Slovak Republic 2013–2020 (Government Resolution No 357 of 3 July 2013) defines a need for equilibrium between protecting fish-eating predators and fish farming, and it is therefore desirable to look at ***appropriate and ecological forms of protection from these predators***, e.g. by investing in equipment that will not result in avian mortality, including rare species – Article 48(1)(d).

To make production more efficient it is important to support complementary forms of revenue so that aquaculture enterprises do not depend on seasonal production, thereby mitigating the risk of lost revenue from their main business activity, i.e. promoting ***diversification*** – Article 48(1)(h). Support for complementary activities (fishing tourism, environmental aquaculture services, aquaculture education activities) and ***investments contributing to added value through promoting direct sales*** at the operations supported – Article 48(1)(f) – also meet the need identified in the Blueprint, with positive impacts on rural development.

The above support for the strategy reflects the Commission’s recommendations in its Position Paper.

It follows from the nature of the activities planned for specific objective 2.2 that not all of the supported projects will increase production. The total public funds (EUR 11.5 million) earmarked for measure 2.2.1 will also be used to support investments that improve productivity by reducing production costs without increasing fish production (modernising existing fish farming facilities and fish ponds, building and procuring any technology, infrastructure and other production facilities required, remedying the consequences of revitalisation measures, etc.).

Specific objective 2.3 tackles the need for innovative technologies and processes in farms for resource efficient and sustainable aquaculture, increasing production while protecting the environment.

In line with the aforementioned Blueprint it is also necessary to support environmentally friendly aquaculture investments with lower demands on water sources.

To achieve these ends it is necessary to ***introduce environmentally friendly farming methods that contribute to efficient resource use*** – Article 48(1)(e) – and to promote farming technologies such as ***recirculation systems*** that minimise water use – Article 48(1)(j).

With reference to investments in Natura 2000 areas, under the Nature and Landscape Protection Act natural and legal persons whose activities affect ecosystems or their components are obliged to implement – at their own expense – measures to avoid and limit any damage or destruction. These measures will be approved by the national nature protection

authority. They include e.g. measures allowing animals to migrate in sites on migration routes, measures to prevent non-indigenous species escaping into the world, the construction of small islands, etc.

Slovakia also plans to use the Fisheries Operational Programme to contribute to compensation measures, i.e. additional investments directly related to the main investment supported. This is in line with Article 48(1)(e): **investments reducing the negative impact or enhancing the positive effects on the environment and increasing resource efficiency**. The programme will support projects where an impact assessment shows that they will not have negative impacts on the integrity of a protected area and its protection targets.

Specific objective 3.1 tackles the absence of the efficient coordination of data collection in the aquaculture and fish processing sector and the insufficient utility of this data.

To achieve the objectives of the Common Fisheries Policy it will be necessary to extend the statistical survey and ensure the systematic monitoring of the sector based on accurate, reliable and promptly collected data and the efficient management of the sector using quality data, while also ensuring the harmonisation, accessibility and protection of this data in line with a multi-annual national programme for the collection, management and use of data.

The Fisheries Operational Programme will finance a national programme (after 2016) designed in line with the revised multi-annual Community programme. It will support **investments to coordinate the collection, management and use of data** – Article 77(2)(a) – and **the participation of a national correspondent in work visits to Member States related to data collection and the organising of national, international and regional coordination meetings** – Article 77(2)(e). Eligible costs are elaborated in more detail in part 13.1.

Specific objective 3.2 will tackle the need for performing control to a high standard, thereby ensuring compliance with the Common Fisheries Policy.

Here Slovakia is focusing on performing control activities and enforcing requirements in line with the Union priorities for enforcement and control, which concern **catch certification** for importation and exportation of fishery and aquaculture products in line with Chapter III of the IUU Regulation and **traceability, including labelling** to ensure reliable information for consumers in line with Article 58 of the Control Regulation and Article 67(6) of Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) No 404/2011.

For better and more effective traceability of fishery and aquaculture products it is necessary to support **technological systems** – Article 76(2)(c) – and **use innovative tracing tools such as genetic analysis** and other control technologies for the sector – Article 76(2)(g). It is also necessary to organise **training for staff** responsible for control activities – Article 76(2)(h), including **raising awareness of the need to fight illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing and implementing the Common Fisheries Policy rules** – Article 76(2)(j).

Specific objective 5.1 tackles the inadequate promotion of fishery and aquaculture products, and the need to find new markets and improve the conditions for marketing these products.

The inadequate promotion of fishery and aquaculture products has a negative impact on the entire aquaculture and processing sector. Related to this is the low consumption of fish in

Slovakia, 5 kg per person per year (Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic, 2013), which is due to the weak tradition of fish consumption and the relative expense of fish and fish products. The solution is an ambitious and intensive ***promotional campaign*** aimed at potential consumers and the general public, promoting sustainable aquaculture products – Article 68(1)(g) – in line with the recommendations in the Commission’s Position Paper on raising consumers’ awareness.

Support for ***finding new markets*** – Article 68(1)(b) – is important for making use of the existing surplus processing capacities. This will allow fish farmers with quality products to become established on markets both inside and outside the Community and strengthen their position on these markets.

Specific objective 5.2 tackles the need to increase the added value of processing products while protecting the environment.

Present processing capacities are sufficient for Slovakia’s needs. Nevertheless it is essential to enhance existing processors’ competitiveness by introducing innovative processes and technologies, i.e. modernisation. The total public funds of EUR 4.38 million allocated to measure 5.2.1 should be used to support ***investments to improve safety, hygiene, health and working conditions*** – Article 69(1)(b) – and ***investments contributing to energy savings and reducing environmental impacts, including waste treatment*** – Article 69(1)(a); they should also help achieve objectives in mitigating climate change. These investments are not expected to increase the volume of products processed.

Based on the SWOT analysis it is desirable to look at the more efficient use of processing capacities by ***extending the product range to include products with higher added value*** – Article 69(1)(f) – and increasing the proportion of domestic aquaculture products, which could have a positive impact on processing volumes.

The Managing Authority will ensure that the Fisheries Operational Programme is implemented in line with the applicable Community and national environmental legislation. The conditions concerning environmental protection for investments will be covered in detail in the methodological handbook for applicants/beneficiaries.

The Fisheries Operational Programme’s contribution to the Europe 2020 strategy

Thematic Objective 3: Enhancing the competitiveness of small and medium-sized enterprises, the agricultural sector (for the EAFRD) and the fisheries and aquaculture sector (for the EMFF)

The programme will contribute to Thematic Objective 3 by implementing the measures for Union priorities 2 (Article 48) and 5 (Articles 68 and 69).

Expected outcome: enhancing the competitiveness of domestic aquaculture and processing products, improving product quality and added value, more efficient and rationalised production processes, and the creating and developing of local markets for direct sales of aquaculture products. These investments will indirectly contribute to promoting employment and rural tourism. Promoting sustainable aquaculture products is expected to have a positive impact on fish consumption in Slovakia.

Thematic Objective 6: Protecting the environment and promoting resource efficiency

The programme will contribute to Thematic Objective 6 by supporting activities under the measures for Union priorities 2 (Article 48) and 3 (Articles 76 and 77).

Expected outcome: increased aquaculture production in recirculation systems and improving the collection of meaningful data, including implementing the EU system for control, inspection and enforcement in line with the Common Fisheries Policy.

Supporting the introduction of innovative processes, technologies and equipment in aquaculture and processing (other than support for scientific research) will contribute to smart growth.

Support for investments contributing to the aquaculture and fish processing sector's viability and competitiveness while ensuring its environmental sustainability will contribute to sustainable growth.

Support for rural activities such as building new fish farming facilities and diversifying aquaculture activities will indirectly promote employment and improve the quality of rural life, creating room for inclusive growth.

3.2 Specific objectives and result indicators

Union priority	2 – Fostering environmentally sustainable, resource efficient, innovative, competitive and knowledge based aquaculture
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Specific objective	2 – Enhancement of the competitiveness and viability of aquaculture enterprises, including improvement of safety or working conditions, in particular in SMEs		
Result indicator	Target value for 2023	Measurement unit	Not applicable
2.1 – Change in volume of aquaculture production	300.00000	tonnes	
2.2 – Change in value of aquaculture production	900.00000	thousand euros	
2.3 – Change in net profit	200.00000	thousand euros	
2.8 – Number of full-time jobs created	10.00000	n	
2.9 – Number of full-time jobs maintained	50.00000	n	
2.10 – Change in the number of fish ponds used for commercial fish farming	8.00000	n	
2.11 – Change in the number of fish farming facilities used for commercial fish farming	50.00000	n	

Specific objective	3 – Protection and restoration of aquatic biodiversity and enhancement of ecosystems related to aquaculture and promotion of resource efficient aquaculture		
Result indicator	Target value for 2023	Measurement unit	Not applicable
2.4 – Change in the volume of production: organic aquaculture		tonnes	✓
2.5 – Change in the volume of production: recirculation system	150.00000	tonnes	
2.6 – Change in the volume of aquaculture production certified under voluntary sustainability schemes		tonnes	✓
2.7 – Aquaculture farms providing environmental services		number	✓

Union priority	3 – Fostering the implementation of the CFP
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Specific objective	1 – Improvement and supply of scientific knowledge and collection and management of data		
Result indicator	Target value for 2023	Measurement unit	Not applicable
3.B.1 – Increase in the percentage of fulfilment of data calls	100.00000	%	

Specific objective	2 – Provision of support for monitoring, control and enforcement, enhancing institutional capacity and the efficiency of public administration without increasing the administrative burden		
Result indicator	Target value for 2023	Measurement unit	Not applicable
3.A.1 – Number of serious infringements detected	3.00000	number	
3.A.2 – Landings that have been the subject to physical control		%	✓

Union priority	5 – Fostering marketing and processing
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Specific objective	1 – Improvement of market organisation for fishery and aquaculture products		
Result indicator	Target value for 2023	Measurement unit	Not applicable
5.1.a – Change in value of first sales in POs		thousand euros	✓
5.1.b – Change in volume of first sales in POs		tonnes	✓
5.1.c – Change in value of first sales in non-POs		thousand euros	✓
5.1.d – Change in volume of first sales in non-POs		tonnes	✓
5.2 – Change in the per capita consumption of fish and fish products	1.00000	kg	

Specific objective	2 – Encouragement of investment in the processing and marketing sectors		
Result indicator	Target value for 2023	Measurement unit	Not applicable
5.1.a – Change in value of first sales in POs		thousand euros	✓
5.1.b – Change in volume of first sales in POs		tonnes	✓
5.1.c – Change in value of first sales in non-POs		thousand euros	✓
5.1.d – Change in volume of first sales in non-POs		tonnes	✓
5.3 – Change in the volume of production: processing fishery and aquaculture products	50.00000	tonnes	
5.4 – Change in the value of production: processing fishery and aquaculture products	200.00000	thousand euros	

3.3 Relevant measures and output indicators

Union priority	2 – Fostering environmentally sustainable, resource efficient, innovative, competitive and knowledge based aquaculture
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Specific objective	2 – Enhancement of the competitiveness and viability of aquaculture enterprises, including improvement of safety or working conditions, in particular in SMEs			
EMFF measure	Output indicator	Target value for 2023	Measurement unit	Include in the Performance Framework
01 – Article 48(1)(a) to (d) and (f) to (h) Productive investments in aquaculture	2.2 – Number of projects for productive investments in aquaculture	60.00	Number	✓

Justification for the combination of the EMFF measures (supported by the ex-ante evaluation and the SWOT analysis)

A combination of measures is not used at the specific objective level.

Specific objective	3 – Protection and restoration of aquatic biodiversity and enhancement of ecosystems related to aquaculture and promotion of resource efficient aquaculture			
EMFF measure	Output indicator	Target value for 2023	Measurement unit	Include in the Performance Framework
02 – Article 48(1)(e), (i) and (j) Productive investments in aquaculture – resource efficiency, reducing usage of water and chemicals, recirculation systems minimising water use	2.2 – Number of projects for productive investments in aquaculture	5.00	Number	

Justification for the combination of the EMFF measures (supported by the ex-ante evaluation and the SWOT analysis)

A combination of measures is not used at the specific objective level.

Union priority	3 – Fostering the implementation of the CFP
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Specific objective	1 – Improvement and supply of scientific knowledge and collection and management of data			
EMFF measure	Output indicator	Target value for 2023	Measurement unit	Include in the Performance Framework
01 – Article 77 Data collection	3.2 – Number of projects supporting the collection, management and use of data	2.00	Number	✓

Justification for the combination of the EMFF measures (supported by the ex-ante evaluation and the SWOT analysis)

A combination of measures is not used at the specific objective level.

Specific objective	2 – Provision of support for monitoring, control and enforcement, enhancing institutional capacity and the efficiency of public administration without increasing the administrative burden			
EMFF measure	Output indicator	Target value for 2023	Measurement unit	Include in the Performance Framework
01 – Article 76 Control and enforcement	3.1 – Number of projects implementing the Union’s control, inspection and enforcement system	2.00	Number	✓

Justification for the combination of the EMFF measures (supported by the ex-ante evaluation and the SWOT analysis)

A combination of measures is not used at the specific objective level.

Union priority	5 – Fostering marketing and processing
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Specific objective	1 – Improvement of market organisation for fishery and aquaculture products			
EMFF measure	Output indicator	Target value for 2023	Measurement unit	Include in the Performance Framework
03 – Article 68 Marketing measures	5.2 – Number of projects for marketing measures and storage aid	5.00	Number	

Justification for the combination of the EMFF measures (supported by the ex-ante evaluation and the SWOT analysis)

A combination of measures is not used at the specific objective level.

Specific objective	2 – Encouraging investment in the processing and marketing sectors			
EMFF measure	Output indicator	Target value for 2023	Measurement unit	Include in the Performance Framework
01 – Article 69 Processing of fishery and aquaculture products	5.3 – Number of projects for processing	20.00	Number	✓

Justification for the combination of the EMFF measures (supported by the ex-ante evaluation and the SWOT analysis)

A combination of measures is not used at the specific objective level.

3.4 Description of the programme’s complementarity with other ESI Funds

3.4.1 Complementarity and coordination arrangements with other ESI Funds and other relevant Union and national funding instruments of the EMFF

Regarding potential complementarity and synergy between the Fisheries Operational Programme and programmes co-financed from other ESI Funds, by supporting activities under the Fisheries Operational Programme aimed at improving the competitiveness of SMEs, EMFF resources will be used in a way that complements resources from the European

Agricultural Fund for Rural Development and the European Regional Development Fund to achieve Thematic Objective 3.

Supporting investments in environmental protection and efficient resource usage will ensure complementarity between the EMFF, the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development, the European Regional Development Fund and the Cohesion Fund for Thematic Objective 6.

In Slovakia the mechanism for coordinating the ESI Funds with other support instruments will be covered by suitable measures introduced by the Central Coordination Authority at programme and project level, in line with the Partnership Agreement. As the Managing Authority, the Slovak Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development is responsible for the efficient and effective implementation of the Fisheries Operational Programme in coordination with programmes co-financed under the ESI Funds, including other support instruments.

Preparations for the Fisheries Operational Programme were coordinated with the other ESI Funds at bilateral meetings and consultations with the relevant Managing Authorities where opportunities for complementarity and synergy were identified, above all with the Rural Development Programme (co-financed under the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development) and the Environmental Quality Operational Programme (co-financed under the European Regional Development Fund and the Cohesion Fund). Future coordination between the individual Managing Authorities will be in compliance with the measures defined in the Partnership Agreement, and within the Monitoring Committees for the relevant programmes.

To ensure the efficient use of the ESI Funds it will be necessary to coordinate support with the Rural Development Programme, especially when improving the competitiveness of SMEs. The Fisheries Operational Programme significantly complements the Rural Development Programme's strategy to maintain and create job opportunities in rural areas by supporting the modernisation and restructuring of sectors and diversification, and in its efforts to improve the competitiveness of rural enterprises. Through the diversification of aquaculture activities, micro and small aquaculture enterprises can contribute to achieving the Rural Development Programme's targets to improve the quality of life in rural areas and develop rural tourism. A combination of activities co-financed from the EMFF and the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development will extend potential alternative sources of revenue for fish farmers (micro and small enterprises). Using the resources of the EMFF and the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development in a complementary way will significantly improve the competitiveness of SMEs in both sectors. Given the close ties between the two programmes, several cases have been identified where support overlaps.

Demarcation lines between the Fisheries Operational Programme and the Rural Development Programme:

1. Productive investments in aquaculture can include support for diversifying aquaculture activities to introduce additional forms of revenue directly related to aquaculture – for example fishing tourism, providing environmental services in aquaculture (e.g. supporting investments related to birdwatching) and aquaculture education activities. Eligible beneficiaries are:

- SMEs, as defined in Commission Recommendation 2003/361/EC, operating in aquaculture;
- Other enterprises operating in aquaculture that do not come under the definition of SMEs in Commission Recommendation 2003/361/EC.

As part of its support for investments in creating and developing non-agricultural activities, the Rural Development Programme can support activities related to rural tourism and agritourism, and the provision of services for target groups – children, the elderly, the disabled, as well as the processing and marketing of products beyond agriculture and the food industry (where processing inputs and outputs do not come under Annex I to the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union), including the selling of produce unrelated to agriculture, forestry or aquaculture, and the sale of own products (including establishing mobile retail sites) and products from other agricultural, forestry and aquaculture enterprises in order to stimulate economic development in a particular area. Eligible beneficiaries also include natural and legal persons (micro and small enterprises, as defined in Commission Recommendation 2003/361/EC, in rural areas) operating in commercial fish farming and aquaculture.

To avoid any overlapping of support for micro and small aquaculture enterprises, the following **demarcation line** has been drawn for the activities supported:

Fisheries Operational Programme: support for alternative forms of revenue related to aquaculture

Rural Development Programme: support for alternative forms of revenue unrelated to aquaculture

2. Investments into processing fishery and aquaculture products are supported under the Fisheries Operational Programme. Eligible beneficiaries are SMEs, as defined in Commission Recommendation 2003/361/EC, that process fishery and aquaculture products.

The Rural Development Programme supports investments into the processing, marketing and/or developing of agricultural products covered by Annex I to the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (other than fish products). Eligible beneficiaries are natural and legal persons that process primary agricultural produce and foodstuffs (other than fish products).

To avoid any duplicate financing of investments into the processing of fishery and aquaculture products listed in Annex I to the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, there is a **demarcation line** for the Rural Development Programme at the activity level that excludes the processing of fish products. This exclusion is also reflected at the beneficiary level.

Concerning national needs in safeguarding biodiversity, through its investments into developing aquaculture with positive environmental impacts the Fisheries Operational Programme complements the relevant interventions under the Environmental Quality Operational Programme, specifically activities under Investment priority 6(b) where the objective is to connect water courses and remove barriers in them in order to promote biodiversity and ecosystem services. This elimination of hydromorphological factors will

especially benefit aquaculture farms on the water courses affected. Both operational programmes also contribute to achieving the targets for the Revised National Strategy for the Protection of Biodiversity up to 2020, aimed at protecting aquatic and water-dependent habitats and species in the interests of achieving a good environmental status for aquatic ecosystems by 2020, and using water in the developing and regulating of aquaculture in a way that does not negatively impact aquatic species, habitats and ecosystems.

Synergy between the Fisheries Operational Programme and activities supported under Investment priority 6(d) of the Environmental Quality Operational Programme will be achieved for protected areas, as under the Fisheries Operational Programme activities will be directed towards developing aquaculture with minimal negative environmental impacts, and under the Environmental Quality Operational Programme the protection of these areas will be covered in documents on environmental care.

As the Fisheries Operational Programme is aimed at investments reducing negative environmental impacts from the development of aquaculture, support will not overlap with the Environmental Quality Operational Programme.

EMFF funds will be used in way that complements other EU instruments and national support at the level of Thematic Objectives 3 and 6 under the Partnership Agreement.

The situation is similar for programmes co-financed from the ESI Funds under Objective 2 – European Territorial Cooperation, specifically in the EU Strategy for the Danube Region, where complementarity with EMFF funds has been identified at the level of the relevant Thematic Objectives, but without any risk of overlapping support and duplicate financing.

3.4.2 Main actions planned to reduce the administrative burden

To reduce the administrative burden, barriers at the applicants/beneficiaries level must be identified and removed.

In the Fisheries Operational Programme potential reductions in the administrative burden have been identified in the following areas:

1. Submitting individual forms by applicants/beneficiaries:

Measure: consolidate forms and make them clearer; use formats that simplify work for applicants/beneficiaries.

Implementation: ongoing after the Fisheries Operational Programme is approved (from the first call onwards).

2. Submitting mandatory annexes by applicants/beneficiaries:

Measure: as far as possible exchange relevant information held by state authorities on applicants/beneficiaries and projects via direct two-way communication, rather than requesting this information from the applicants/beneficiaries. Introduce a system for submitting mandatory annexes in two phases (mandatory annexes submitted with grant

applications; mandatory annexes submitted after grant applications have been approved), minimising the administrative and financial demands in the first phase.

Implementation: ongoing after the Fisheries Operational Programme is approved (from the first call onwards).

3. Information systems:

Measure: rebuild the existing information systems in the context of e-Cohesion, which allows a substantial reduction in the administrative burden and workload for the applicant, beneficiary and provider, and also in audit and control.

Implementation: 1 January 2016 onwards.

4. Public procurement:

Measure: publish specimen documents for public procurement at the Office for Public Procurement in a user-friendly online environment in order to disseminate examples of good practice in public procurement.

Implementation: 1 July 2015 onwards.

5. Amendment proceedings:

Measure: introduce uniform, clear and effective rules for amendment proceedings, facilitating an optimum response to a change in the conditions for project implementation.

Implementation: 1 January 2015 onwards.

The areas identified are in line with the measures proposed under the Partnership Agreement. For the Fisheries Operational Programme they will be implemented on the basis of the proportionality principle, and also taking into account the individual competences of the organisations involved in implementing the programme.

3.5 Information on the macro-regional or sea-basin strategies (where relevant)

Not applicable.

4. REQUIREMENTS CONCERNING SPECIFIC EMFF MEASURES

4.1 Description of the specific needs of Natura 2000 areas and the contribution of the programme to the establishment of a coherent network of fish stock recovery areas as laid out in Article 8 of the CFP Regulation

In the 2014–2020 programming period there are no plans to implement aqua-environmental measures related to restrictions on fish farming in Natura 2000 areas, which was the outcome of the consultations with partners that are covered in more detail in part 1.1 of the Fisheries Operational Programme.

Ensuring an environmentally friendly approach with minimal negative impacts while respecting the Natura 2000 network is described in Chapter 3 of the Fisheries Operational Programme under specific objectives 2.2 and 2.3.

4.2 Description of the action plan for the development, competitiveness and sustainability of small-scale coastal fishing

Not applicable.

4.3 Description of the method for the calculation of simplified costs in accordance with Article 67(1)(b) to (d) of the Common Provisions Regulation

Not applicable.

4.4 Description of the method for the calculation of additional costs or income foregone in accordance with Article 97

Not applicable.

4.5 Description of the method for the calculation of compensation according to relevant criteria identified for each of the activities deployed under Articles 38(1), 53, 54, 55 and 70

Not applicable.

4.6 As regards the measures for the permanent cessation of fishing activities under Article 33, such description shall include the targets and measures to be taken for the reduction of the fishing capacity in accordance with Article 22 of the CFP Regulation. A description of the method for the calculation of the premium to be granted under Articles 33 and 34 shall also be included

Not applicable.

4.7 Mutual funds for adverse climatic events and environment incidents

Not applicable.

4.8 Description of the use of technical assistance

4.8.1 Technical assistance at the initiative of the Member State

Technical assistance will be used in line with Article 59 of the Common Provisions Regulation with the aim of:

- supporting the efficient management of the Fisheries Operational Programme, including financial management by involving the Certifying Authority;
- promoting the programme through appropriate information activities and publicity;
- developing effective and efficient monitoring systems for the programme;
- obtaining the necessary supporting studies and expert opinions;
- arranging for support to be evaluated;
- organising the effective and efficient functioning of the audit and control system through the Audit Authority and cooperating organisations.

To achieve these ends, technical assistance will primarily be used for activities focusing on:

1. *Supporting and enhancing the expertise of administrative capacities; training and sharing experience*

The proper management and implementation of the Fisheries Operational Programme requires motivated, ethical, effective and competent administrative capacities for eligible beneficiaries involved in implementing the programme, in line with Annex 7.

Proposed activities:

1. introducing a fair motivation system for remuneration based on evaluations of employees' performance and the quality of their work;
2. internal and external staff training and sharing experience at national and international level (seminars, training, attachments, domestic and international work travel, etc.).

2. *Supporting and developing the technical infrastructure and equipment*

The efficient management and implementation of the Fisheries Operational Programme must also be ensured by means of a communication and technical infrastructure for the efficient collecting, processing and providing of information. Material and technical equipment should ensure appropriate working conditions for eligible beneficiaries' staff, in line with Annex 7 of the programme.

Proposed activities:

1. obtaining and operating ICT systems, databases and software support;
2. material and technical arrangements for processes concerning preparation, management, monitoring, evaluation, information, communication and dealing with

complaints in line with the Common Provisions Regulation and the control and audit of the Fisheries Operational Programme; support for improving the work environment and working conditions and making procedures more efficient.

3. *Support activities for processes concerning preparation, management, monitoring, evaluation, information, communication, control and audit for the Fisheries Operational Programme*

Support activities aimed at supporting the implementation of individual processes in preparation, management, monitoring, evaluation, information, communication, control and audit, including support for implementing processes related to the previous and subsequent programming periods, seek to complement the eligible beneficiaries' internal capacities and processes in line with Annex 7 of the programme.

Proposed activities:

1. internal and external expert services and activities related to preparation, management, monitoring, evaluation, information, communication and dealing with complaints in line with the Common Provisions Regulation and the control and audit of the Fisheries Operational Programme;
2. activities related to the 2007–2013 programming period;
3. activities related to preparations for the next programming period after 2020.

4.8.2 Establishment of national networks

Not applicable.

5. SPECIFIC INFORMATION ON INTEGRATED TERRITORIAL DEVELOPMENT

5.1 Information on the implementation of Community-Led Local Development (CLLD)

5.1.1 A description of the strategy for CLLD

Not applicable.

Reasons for not including CLLD in the Fisheries Operational Programme:

- Fish farming facilities are not evenly distributed throughout Slovakia. Their locations are determined largely by the climate and by the fish species farmed. Aquaculture in Slovakia can be split into two distinct groups/areas: the farming of lowland fish species and the farming of salmonid species; the latter are farmed mainly in northern and central Slovakia, while the largest fishpond systems for lowland fish species are located in the southern part of eastern and western Slovakia, where the climate is more favourable.
- Concentrating support for fish farmers in certain locations under CLLD would be contrary to Slovakia's objectives to ensure the sustainable development of aquaculture and improve its competitiveness. This objective can be realistically achieved, with maximum impact, through national support, rather than support in restricted areas.
- For some enterprises fish farming is a secondary activity, and their primary activity is agriculture. These enterprises are eligible beneficiaries under the LEADER (*Liaison Entre Actions de Développement de l'Économie Rurale*) mechanism, which is supported by the Rural Development Programme.
- The prioritising of support given the funds available for the Fisheries Operational Programme.

5.1.2 A list of criteria applied for selecting the fisheries areas

Not applicable.

5.1.3 A list of selection criteria for local development strategies

Not applicable.

5.1.4 A clear description of the respective roles of the FLAGs, the managing authority or designated body for all implementation tasks relating to the strategy

Not applicable.

5.1.5 Information on advance payments to FLAGs

Not applicable.

5.2 Information on integrated territorial investments

	EMFF measures covered
	Article 77 Data collection
	Article 68 Marketing measures
	Article 48(1)(a) to (d) and (f) to (h) Productive investments in aquaculture
	Article 76 Control and enforcement
	Article 69 Processing of fishery and aquaculture products
	Article 48(1)(e), (i) and (j) Productive investments in aquaculture – resource efficiency, reducing usage of water and chemicals, recirculation systems minimising water use

Indicative financial allocation from EMFF: EUR 0.00

6. FULFILMENT OF EX-ANTE CONDITIONALITIES

6.1 Identification of applicable ex-ante conditionalities and assessment of their fulfilment

6.1.1 Applicable EMFF specific ex-ante conditionalities

Ex-ante conditionality	Union priorities to which conditionality applies	Fulfilled
2 – The establishment of a multi-annual national strategic plan on aquaculture, as referred to in Article 34 of Regulation (EU) No 1380/2013, by 2014	2	Yes
4 – Administrative capacity: administrative capacity is available to comply with the implementation of a Union control, inspection and enforcement system as provided for in Article 36 of Regulation (EU) No 1380/2013 and further specified in Regulation (EC) No 1224/2009	3	Yes

6.1.1 Criteria and assessment of their fulfilment

Ex-ante conditionality	Criterion	Fulfilled	Reference	Explanation
2 – The establishment of a multi-annual national strategic plan on aquaculture, as referred to in Article 34 of Regulation (EU) No 1380/2013, by 2014	1 – The multi-annual national strategic plan on aquaculture is transmitted to the Commission at the latest by the day of transmission of the operational programme	Yes	Resolution No 340/2013 of 3 July 2013, in which the Slovak Government approved the National Strategic Plan: http://www.rokovania.sk/Rokovanie.aspx/BodRokovaniaDetail?idMaterial=22567	The National Strategic Plan was submitted to the Commission on 17 September 2013.
2 – The establishment of a multi-annual national strategic plan on aquaculture, as referred to in Article 34 of Regulation (EU) No 1380/2013, by 2014	2 – The operational programme includes information on complementarities with the multi-annual national strategic plan on aquaculture	Yes	Information on complementarity with the National Strategic Plan is presented in Chapter 2.1 of the Fisheries Operational Programme under the headings “SWOT analysis consistency with the Multi-annual National Strategic Plan for aquaculture”.	The Fisheries Operational Programme includes information on complementarity with the National Strategic Plan in compliance with Annex I to Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) No 771/2014 of 14 July 2014 laying down rules pursuant to Regulation (EU) No 508/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council on

				the EMFF, concerning the model for operational programmes.
4 – Administrative capacity: administrative capacity is available to comply with the implementation of a Union control, inspection and enforcement system as provided for in Article 36 of Regulation (EU) No 1380/2013 and further specified in Regulation (EC) No 1224/2009	1 – A description of the administrative capacity to prepare and implement the section of the operational programme pertaining to the 2014–2020 national control financing programme as referred to in Article 18(1)(o)	Yes	Information on the administrative capacity for control activities is presented in Chapter 12 of the Fisheries Operational Programme. Information on actions envisaged to achieve the fulfilment of the general ex-ante conditionalities for public procurement is presented in part 6.2.2 of the programme.	The State Veterinary and Food Administration, which is responsible for control activities in line with the Union priorities for enforcement and control, has sufficient administrative capacity.
4 – Administrative capacity: administrative capacity is available to comply with the implementation of a Union control, inspection and enforcement system as provided for in Article 36 of Regulation (EU) No 1380/2013 and further specified in Regulation (EC) No 1224/2009	2 – A description of the administrative capacity to prepare and implement the national control action programme for multi-annual plans, as provided for in Article 46 of Regulation (EC) No 1224/2009	Yes	Not relevant for Slovakia	
4 – Administrative capacity: administrative capacity is available to comply with the implementation of a Union control, inspection and enforcement system as provided for in Article 36 of Regulation (EU) No 1380/2013 and further specified in Regulation (EC) No 1224/2009	3 – A description of the administrative capacity to prepare and implement a common control programme that may be developed with other Member States, as provided for in Article 94 of Regulation (EC) No 1224/2009	Yes	Not relevant for Slovakia	
4 – Administrative capacity: administrative capacity is available to comply with the implementation of a Union	4 – A description of the administrative capacity to prepare and implement the specific control and inspection	Yes	Not relevant for Slovakia	

control, inspection and enforcement system as provided for in Article 36 of Regulation (EU) No 1380/2013 and further specified in Regulation (EC) No 1224/2009	programmes, as provided for in Article 95 of Regulation (EC) No 1224/2009			
4 – Administrative capacity: administrative capacity is available to comply with the implementation of a Union control, inspection and enforcement system as provided for in Article 36 of Regulation (EU) No 1380/2013 and further specified in Regulation (EC) No 1224/2009	5 – A description of the administrative capacity to apply a system of effective, proportionate and dissuasive sanctions for serious infringements, as provided for in Article 90 of Regulation (EC) No 1224/2009	Yes	Not relevant for Slovakia	
4 – Administrative capacity: administrative capacity is available to comply with the implementation of a Union control, inspection and enforcement system as provided for in Article 36 of Regulation (EU) No 1380/2013 and further specified in Regulation (EC) No 1224/2009	6 – A description of the administrative capacity to apply the point system for serious infringements, as provided for in Article 92 of Regulation (EC) No 1224/2009	Yes	Not relevant for Slovakia	

6.1.2 Applicable general ex-ante conditionalities and assessment of their fulfilment

The applicable general ex-ante conditionalities for the EMFF are as follows:

- ***The existence of regulations for the effective application of EU environmental protection legislation concerning Environmental Impact Assessment and Strategic Environmental Assessment***

Union priority relating to the applicable conditionalities: 2

Fulfilment of the ex-ante conditionalities: PARTIAL

- ***The existence of regulations for the effective application of EU legislation on public procurement***

Union priorities relating to the applicable conditionalities: 2, 3, 5 and technical assistance

Fulfilment of the ex-ante conditionalities: NO

- ***The existence of a statistical basis to assess the effectiveness and impact of programmes – the existence of system of indicators that are essential for selecting***

measures that can contribute most effectively to achieving the desired results, allowing progress in achieving these results to be monitored and the impact assessed

Union priorities relating to the applicable conditionalities: 2, 3, 5

Fulfilment of the ex-ante conditionalities: YES

An evaluation of the fulfilment of the general ex-ante conditionalities is included in part 2.3 of the Partnership Agreement. Fulfilling the general conditionalities for statistics systems and indicators for the EMFF is covered by a framework for data collection in aquaculture and the processing sector, and by a system for monitoring and evaluating the EMFF, which defines common indicators.

6.2 Description of the actions to be taken, the bodies responsible and the timetable for their implementation

6.2.1 Actions envisaged to achieve the fulfilment of the EMFF specific ex-ante conditionalities

Ex-ante conditionality	Criterion	Actions to be taken	Deadline	Bodies responsible for fulfilment
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6.2.2 Actions envisaged to achieve the fulfilment of the general ex-ante conditionalities

The evaluation of the status of **fulfilment of the action plans at 31 March 2015**, with the failure to fulfil the ex-ante conditionalities for public procurement and the partial fulfilment of the ex-ante conditionalities for effective application of EU environmental protection legislation, is as follows:

Public procurement

Actions envisaged for unfulfilled criterion 1:

- The adopting of a new Public Procurement Act transposing Directives 2014/23/EU, 2014/24/EU and 2014/25/EU
- Securing an electronic system for public procurement in line with the relevant EU legislation
- Greater support from Office for Public Procurement for organisations controlling public procurement through an Agreement on Cooperation: **unfulfilled** (new deadline: 30 April 2015)
- Introducing a risk analysis for public procurement controls performed by the Managing Authority: **fulfilled**
- Drawing up specimen documents used in the public procurement process and making them available to beneficiaries
- Drawing up control lists for control by the Managing Authority: **fulfilled**

- Producing uniform rules and requirements for public procurement and requirements for the documentation of public procurement
- Introducing the mandatory ex-ante control of documentation by the Managing Authority and a control of public procurement before signing an agreement with a successful applicant: **fulfilled**
- Introducing cooperation between the Managing Authority and the Antimonopoly Office under an Agreement on Cooperation: **unfulfilled** (new deadline: 30 April 2015)
- Introducing price maps, benchmarks and limits for evaluating economy: **unfulfilled** (new deadline: 30 April 2015)
- Resolving the issue of conflicts of interest
- Resolving insufficient economic competition and strengthening cooperation between control organisations and the Antimonopoly Office: **unfulfilled** (new deadline: 30 April 2015)
- Discriminatory tendering conditions: several of the measures listed above are aimed at identifying and eliminating discriminatory tendering conditions
- Evaluating the effectiveness of measures for criteria 1–4

Actions envisaged for unfulfilled criterion 2:

- In Slovakia the awarding of contracts that are not subject to the EU directives on public procurement (contracts below the limit) is covered by the Public Procurement Act. The procedures for these contracts are based on the fundamental principles for public procurement listed in the EU directives, and this ensures transparent public procurement procedures for contracts that do not come under the EU public procurement directives.

Actions envisaged for unfulfilled criterion 3:

- Organising training in administrative control procedures for public procurement and the shortcomings most frequently identified in public procurement controls
- Introducing a uniform staff training system as part of the ESI Funds Management and Control System: **unfulfilled** (new deadline: 30 June 2015)
- Using the existing forms of publishing and disseminating information on the shortcomings identified in public procurement controls in the 2014–2020 programming period
- Setting up a Coordination Committee for cooperation on public procurement: **unfulfilled** (new deadline: 30 April 2015)

Actions envisaged for unfulfilled criterion 4:

- Strengthening cooperation between the Office for Public Procurement and the Antimonopoly Office, including technical assistance to secure these bodies' administrative capacities

The environment

Actions envisaged for unfulfilled criterion 1:

- The amendment of Act No 24/2006 on Environmental Impact Assessment, amending certain laws, as amended: **fulfilled**
- Guidance for the relevant bodies in assessing impacts in the interim period (until the new legislation is passed and comes into effect): **fulfilled**
- Introducing measures to support the implementation of the EIA Directive: **fulfilled**

Actions envisaged for unfulfilled criterion 2:

- Training reflecting the legislative amendments: **unfulfilled** (new deadline: during 2015)

7. DESCRIPTION OF THE PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK

7.1 Table: Performance framework

Union priority	2 – Fostering environmentally sustainable, resource efficient, innovative, competitive and knowledge based aquaculture
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Indicator and measurement unit, where appropriate	Milestone for 2018	Targets for 2023
Financial indicator	3 800 000.00	11 518 200.00
2.2 – Number of projects for productive investments in aquaculture	20.00	60.00

Union priority	3 – Fostering the implementation of the CFP
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Indicator and measurement unit, where appropriate	Milestone for 2018	Targets for 2023
Financial indicator	290 000.00	1 652 778.00
3.1 – Number of projects implementing the Union's control, inspections and enforcement system	1.00	2.00
3.2 – Number of projects supporting the collection, management and use of data	1.00	2.00

Union priority	5 – Fostering marketing and processing
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Indicator and measurement unit, where appropriate	Milestone for 2018	Targets for 2023
Financial indicator	1 750 000.00	4 375 160.00
5.3 – Number of projects for processing	8.00	20.00

7.2 Table: justification for the choice of output indicators to be included in the performance framework

Union priority	2 – Fostering environmentally sustainable, resource efficient, innovative, competitive and knowledge based aquaculture
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<p>Rationale for the selection of output indicators included in the performance framework, including an explanation of the share of financial allocation represented by operations that will produce the outputs, as well the method applied to calculate the share, which must exceed 50 % of the financial allocation to the priority</p>	<p>The selected indicator relates to operations contributing to Thematic Objective 3, supported in line with Article 48(1)(a), (c), (d), (f), (g) and (h) as part of the “Productive investments in aquaculture” measure.</p> <p>Total public funds allocated to Union priority 2 are EUR 12 542 040, of which the EMFF accounts for EUR 9 406 530 (the ratio of public and private funds is a maximum of 50 % public funds and a minimum of 50 % private funds). Public funds totalling EUR 11 518 200 (of which EMFF: EUR 8 638 650) were allocated to the aforementioned operations, representing 91.8 % of the funds allocated to Union priority 2. When calculating this allocation the following factors were taken into account:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – the results of a questionnaire to determine the level and number of investments planned by present and new aquaculture enterprises in the 2014–2020 programming period; – the proportion of funds allocated to similar operations in the 2007–2013
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	<p>programming period, and experience from implementing a similar measure;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – the extending of activities.
<p>Data or evidence used to estimate the value of milestones and targets and the calculation method (e.g. unit costs, benchmarks, standard or past rate of implementation, expert advice, conclusions of ex-ante evaluation)</p>	<p>The estimated value of the objective took account of the results of the aforementioned questionnaire survey (the number of projects planned, the level of investment and the average project price), the implementation of a similar measure in the 2007–2013 programming period, reducing the time limit for project implementation from three to two years after signing a contract with the beneficiary, including the ineligibility of retrospective projects in the 2014–2020 programming period.</p> <p>Estimating the value of the target was based on the results of the implementation of the operational programme for the 2007–2013 programming period.</p> <p>The values for the output indicator’s target and objective show the number of fully implemented operations, i.e. operations and projects where all activities leading to outputs and results were implemented, but not all payments may have yet been made.</p>
<p>Information on how the methodology and mechanisms to ensure consistency in the functioning of the performance framework have been applied in line with the provisions of the Partnership Agreement</p>	<p>The selection of indicators for the needs of the performance framework and an estimate of the values of the targets and objectives were made on the basis of an analysis in compliance with the methodology ensuring the uniform functioning of the performance framework set out in the Partnership Agreement.</p> <p>This analysis comprised the following steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – a selection of indicators from a predefined list for the needs of a common monitoring and evaluation framework for the EMFF; – defining the value of the objective for 2023 based on experience from the 2007–2013 programming period and information on future investments which the Managing Authority ascertained from its questionnaire survey;

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – the selection of a suitable indicator to set the target, including an analysis of the type of activities with regard to their potential to produce an output by 2018; – an estimate of the value of the target, based on the forecast progress of implementation while taking into account experience from the 2007–2013 programming period and the results of the questionnaire survey.
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Union priority	3 – Fostering the implementation of the CFP
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<p>Rationale for the selection of output indicators included in the performance framework, including an explanation of the share of financial allocation represented by operations that will produce the outputs, as well the method applied to calculate the share, which must exceed 50 % of the financial allocation to the priority</p>	<p>In view of the budget approved by the EMFF for the individual Union priority 3 measures “Data collection” and “Control and enforcement”, where each measure accounts for 50 % of the total for Union priority 3, the performance framework includes output indicators for both measures. Monitoring the outputs for both indicators will provide more comprehensive information on the progress made in achieving the targets for this Union priority.</p> <p>Total public funds allocated for Union priority 3 are EUR 1 652 778 (of which EMFF: EUR 1 400 000).</p> <p>Total public funds allocated to the “Control and enforcement” measure are EUR 777 778 (of which EMFF: EUR 700 000 – approved under Article 13(3) of the EMFF Regulation).</p> <p>Total public funds allocated to the “Data collection” measure are EUR 875 000 EUR (of which EMFF: EUR 700 000 – approved under Article 13(4) of the EMFF Regulation).</p> <p>In both cases 100 % of the co-financing is from public funds.</p>
<p>Data or evidence used to estimate the value of milestones and targets and the calculation method (e.g. unit costs, benchmarks, standard or past rate of implementation,</p>	<p>For the “Control and enforcement” measure two national projects are planned and will be implemented over the duration of the Fisheries Operational Programme’s eligibility</p>

<p>expert advice, conclusions of ex-ante evaluation)</p>	<p>period, i.e. all activities under these projects will not be terminated in 2018, so the value of the target is a key step in implementation, i.e. by 2018 it is planned to contract one project under this measure.</p> <p>For the “Data collection” measure two national projects are planned for the 2014–2020 programming period, but this will be after the amending of legislation governing the multi-annual Community framework in line with Council Regulation (EC) No 199/2008. The value of the target is a key step in implementation, i.e. by 2018 it is planned to contract one project under this measure.</p> <p>The values for the target and objective for the output indicator show the number of fully implemented operations, i.e. operations and projects where all activities leading to outputs and results were implemented, but not all payments may have yet been made.</p>
<p>Information on how the methodology and mechanisms to ensure consistency in the functioning of the performance framework have been applied in line with the provisions of the Partnership Agreement</p>	<p>The selection of indicators for the needs of the performance framework and an estimate of the values of the intermediate targets and objectives were made on the basis of an analysis in compliance with the methodology ensuring the uniform functioning of the performance framework set out in the Partnership Agreement.</p> <p>This analysis comprised the following steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – a selection of suitable indicators from a predefined list for the needs of a common monitoring and evaluation framework for the EMFF; – defining the values of the objectives for 2023 based on the nature of the supported activities and the planned method for implementing the measures; – a selection of suitable indicators to set the targets, including an analysis of the type of activities with regard to their potential to produce an output by 2018; – an estimate of the value of the target based on the forecast progress of implementation.

Union priority	5 – Fostering marketing and processing
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<p>Rationale for the selection of output indicators included in the performance framework, including an explanation of the share of financial allocation represented by operations that will produce the outputs, as well the method applied to calculate the share, which must exceed 50 % of the financial allocation to the priority</p>	<p>The selected output indicator – Number of projects for processing (n) – concerns the key measure under this Union priority, namely “Processing of fishery and aquaculture products”.</p> <p>Total public funds for Union priority 5 are EUR 5 388 493 (of which EMFF: EUR 4 041 370). The budget for this measure is EUR 4 388 494, of which EMFF: EUR 3 291 370 (the ratio of public and private funds is a maximum of 50 % public funds and a minimum of 50 % private funds), representing 81.4 % of the total allocation for this Union priority.</p> <p>When calculating the allocation for this measure the following factors were taken into account:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – the results of a questionnaire survey; – the proportion of funds allocated to similar operations in the 2007–2013 programming period, and experience from implementing this measure.
<p>Data or evidence used to estimate the value of milestones and targets and the calculation method (e.g. unit costs, benchmarks, standard or past rate of implementation, expert advice, conclusions of ex-ante evaluation)</p>	<p>The estimated value of the objective took account of the results of the aforementioned questionnaire survey (the number of projects planned, the level of investment and the average project price), the implementation of a similar measure in the 2007–2013 programming period, reducing the time limit for project implementation from three to two years after signing a contract with the beneficiary, and the conditions for retrospective projects.</p> <p>Estimating the value of the target was based on the results of the implementation of the operational programme for the 2007–2013 programming period.</p> <p>The values for the output indicator’s target and objective show the number of fully</p>

	<p>implemented operations, i.e. operations and projects where all activities leading to outputs and results were implemented but not all payments may have yet been made.</p>
<p>Information on how the methodology and mechanisms to ensure consistency in the functioning of the performance framework have been applied in line with the provisions of the Partnership Agreement</p>	<p>The selection of indicators for the needs of the performance framework and an estimate of the values of the intermediate targets and objectives were made on the basis of an analysis in compliance with the methodology ensuring the uniform functioning of the performance framework set out in the Partnership Agreement.</p> <p>This analysis comprised the following steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – a selection of indicators from a predefined list for the needs of a common monitoring and evaluation framework for the EMFF; – defining the value of the objective for 2023 based on experience from the 2007–2013 programming period and information on future investments which the Managing Authority ascertained from its questionnaire survey of the fishery and aquaculture product processing sector (the number of projects planned, the level of investment and the average project price); – the selection of a suitable indicator to set the target, including an analysis of the type of activities with regard to their potential to produce an output by 2018; – an estimate of the value of the target based on the forecast progress of implementation while taking into account experience from the 2007–2013 programming period and the results of the questionnaire survey.

8. FINANCING PLAN

8.1 Total EMFF contribution planned for each year (EUR)

Year	EMFF main allocation	EMFF performance reserve
2014	0.00	0.00
2015	4 093 643.00	261 296.00
2016	2 078 642.00	132 679.00
2017	2 112 332.00	134 830.00
2018	2 161 484.00	137 967.00
2019	2 176 264.00	138 910.00
2020	2 215 535.00	141 418.00
Total	14 837 900.00	947 100.00

8.2 EMFF contribution and co-financing rate for Union priorities, technical assistance and other support (EUR)

Union priority	Measure under the Union priority	Total support			Main allocation (total funding less performance reserve)		Performance reserve		Performance reserve amount as proportion of total Union support
		EMFF contribution (performance reserve included)	National counterpart (performance reserve included)	EMFF co-financing rate	EMFF support	National counterpart	EMFF Performance reserve	National counterpart	
		a	b	$c = a / (a + b) * 100$	$d = a - f$	$e = b - g$	f	$g = b * (f / a)$	
2 – Fostering environmentally sustainable, resource efficient, innovative, competitive and knowledge based aquaculture	–	9 406 530.00	3 135 510.00	75.00 %	8 799 312.00	2 933 104.00	607 218.00	202 406.00	6.46 %
3 – Fostering the implementation of the CFP	1 – the improvement and supply of scientific knowledge and collection and management of data (Article 13(4) of the EMFF)	700 000.00	175 000.00	80.00 %	651 000.00	162 750.00	49 000.00	12 250.00	7.00 %
3 – Fostering the implementation of the CFP	2 – the support to monitoring, control and enforcement, enhancing institutional capacity and an efficient public administration without increasing the administrative burden (Article 76(2)(a) to (d) and (f) to (l)) (Article 13(3) of the EMFF)	700 000.00	77 778.00	90.00 %	651 000.00	72 334.00	49 000.00	5 444.00	
3 – Fostering the implementation of the CFP	3 – the support to monitoring, control and enforcement, enhancing institutional capacity and an efficient public administration without increasing the administrative burden (Article 76(2)(e)) (Article 13(3) of the EMFF)								
5 – Fostering marketing and processing	1 – Storage aid (Article 67) (Article 13(6) of the EMFF)								5.99 %
5 – Fostering marketing and processing	2 – Compensation for outermost regions (Article 70) (Article 13(5) of the EMFF)								
5 – Fostering marketing and processing	3 – Financial allocation for the rest of the Union priority 5 (Article 13(2) of the EMFF Regulation)	4 041 370.00	1 347 124.00	75.00 %	3 799 488.00	1 266 497.00	241 882.00	80 627.00	
7 – Technical assistance	–	937 100.00	312 367.00	75.00 %	937 100.00	312 367.00	0.00	0.00	0.00 %
Total		15 785 000.00	5 047 779.00	75.77 %	14 837 900.00	4 747 052.00	947 100.00	300 727.00	6.00 %

8.3 EMFF contribution to the thematic objectives of the ESI funds

Thematic objective	EMFF contribution (EUR)
03 – Enhancing the competitiveness of small and medium-sized enterprises, the agricultural sector (for the EAFRD) and the fisheries and aquaculture sector (for the EMFF)	12 680 020.00
06 – Preserving and protecting the environment and promoting resource efficiency	2 167 880.00

9. HORIZONTAL PRINCIPLES

9.1 Description of the actions to take into account the principles set out in Articles 5, 7 and 8 of the Common Provisions Regulation

9.1.1 Promotion of equality between men and women and non-discrimination

Equality between men and women is one of the European Union's fundamental values. It is enshrined in the Lisbon Treaty, which recognises the rights, freedoms and principles set out in the legally binding Charter of Fundamental Rights. When drafting and implementing EU legislation the European Union and its Member States must respect the rights set out in the Charter.

The EC produced a working programme, the Strategy for equality between women and men 2010–2015, where the Commission undertakes to promote this principle in all of its policies. This strategy highlights the benefits of gender equality for economic growth and supports the implementation of gender equality. Implementing equality between men and women is a key objective for programmes under the ESI Funds for 2014–2020, in line with the Europe 2020 strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth.

Equal opportunities is a broader strategic objective for the EU that applies to all groups in society. Promoting fundamental human rights, non-discrimination and equal opportunities is one of the fundamental principles applied in the European Union.

The primary objective for the non-discrimination horizontal priority is to remove the barriers that lead to isolation and exclude people from public, political, social and working life on the basis of social categories such as sex, gender, race, ethnicity, faith or religion, sexual orientation, disability, etc. This horizontal priority also seeks to eliminate and prevent discrimination based on these factors. A special approach is required for disabled persons, ensuring access for them (e.g. barrier-free architecture).

At national level analytical, evaluative, strategic and legislative activities to implement the non-discrimination horizontal priority, and equality between men and women, are covered by the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family of the Slovak Republic, which is also responsible for defining the conditions for providing aid to organise the application of these horizontal principles and monitor compliance.

The horizontal priority of equality between men and women is also applied in the Fisheries Operational Programme, although programme activities are not directly aimed at supporting countervailing measures. Likewise the non-discrimination horizontal priority is applied in the Fisheries Operational Programme even though programme activities are not directly aimed at supporting disadvantaged groups and introducing countervailing measures. Applying this principle in the Fisheries Operational Programme consists principally in ensuring the conditions are in place for equal access for all, so that no one is excluded on the basis of gender, age, race, ethnicity, disability, etc.

The Fisheries Operational Programme will also support projects where a secondary output will be the creating of new jobs while respecting the principle of equality between men and women and eliminating horizontal gender segregation on the labour market, and also respecting the principle of non-discrimination; these projects will be in line with the principle,

or will directly contribute to achieving the aims of the principle. To promote the effective implementation of the horizontal priorities of equality between men and women and non-discrimination, these principles will be included among the conditions for granting aid set out in the call for grant applications, and will be defined in detail in the relevant management documentation for the Fisheries Operational Programme.

At project level the implementing of the aforementioned horizontal priorities as conditions for granting aid will be checked during the project selection process, and the process for monitoring the fulfilment of these horizontal priorities will be achieved at project level by means of monitoring reports that will include outputs with information on the horizontal priorities, as well as on-the-spot checks of project implementation and subsequent evaluations of the contribution towards the horizontal priorities' objectives. The Managing Authority for the Fisheries Operational Programme will submit information on the contribution towards these objectives to the body responsible for implementing the relevant horizontal priorities.

9.1.2 Sustainable development

The primary objective for the sustainable development horizontal priority is to ensure environmentally, economically and socially sustainable growth. This definition corresponds fully to the priorities for the Europe 2020 strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth.

Specific objectives and targets for the sustainable development horizontal priority

1. Strengthening the environmental aspect of development (Strengthening sustainable growth)

The environmental aspect will operate on the principle that “*the polluter pays*”.

Targets:

- support for the transition to a low-carbon economy in all sectors;
- support for adapting to climate change, avoiding and managing risks;
- environmental protection and support for efficient resource usage;
- support for sustainable transport and removing barriers in key network infrastructures.

Under the Fisheries Operational Programme the environmental aspect will be covered by activities relating to data collection, control and enforcement as part of supporting the implementation of the Common Fisheries Policy; these activities will contribute to the target concerning environmental protection and support for efficient resource usage. Investments aimed at improving the competitiveness of SMEs in aquaculture and processing, with an environmentally friendly approach, correspond primarily to the developing of economic growth and secondarily to support for environmental growth in the aquaculture and processing sector.

The Fisheries Operational Programme takes into account the relevant measures outlined in the priority action framework for financing Natura 2000 in Slovakia for the 2014–2020 programming period, submitted to the Commission in compliance with Article 8 of Council Directive 92/43/EEC of 21 May 1992 on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild

fauna and flora, through activities supported under Article 48 of the EMFF Regulation that contribute to sustainable aquaculture, the preventing of negative environmental impacts, the protecting of birdlife and improving the condition of habitats.

2. Strengthening the economic aspect of development (Strengthening smart growth)

Targets:

- strengthening research, technological development and innovation;
- improving access to information and communications technology and improving their usage and quality;
- improving the competitiveness of SMEs;
- investing into education, skills and lifelong learning;
- strengthening institutional capacities and efficiency in public administration.

The economic aspect of the Fisheries Operational Programme consists in support for investments as part of the measures Productive investments in aquaculture, Processing of fishery and aquaculture products and Marketing measures, which will make a synergic contribution to improving the competitiveness of SMEs.

Promoting sustainable aquaculture and its products can significantly influence the demand for healthy foodstuffs, and fishery and aquaculture producers and processors should react flexibly to this with a suitable range of quality products as a result of this targeted support.

3. Strengthening the social aspect of development (Strengthening inclusive growth)

Targets:

- support for employment and labour mobility;
- support for social inclusion and the fight against poverty.

The Fisheries Operational Programme contributes indirectly to strengthening the social aspect of development through investments leading to greater competitiveness for SMEs. This particularly concerns support for diversifying revenues from aquaculture and modernising existing fish farming facilities and fish ponds and building new ones. The primary objective for these investments is to promote economic growth. As the majority of farms are in rural areas, through such investments the Fisheries Operational Programme also contributes to supporting rural employment.

At national level the Government Office of the Slovak Republic will cover analytical, evaluative, strategic and methodological activities to implement the sustainable development horizontal priority.

The sustainable development horizontal priority is directly integrated in the Fisheries Operational Programme, as starting with the preparation of the programme it will be incorporated in the process of selecting, evaluating and monitoring projects. For the effective application of the principle the process for evaluating and selecting grant applications will define a disqualification criterion; i.e. the programme will only support those projects which take this horizontal priority into account or directly contribute to its implementation.

Monitoring the fulfilment of this horizontal priority will be secured at project level by monitoring reports and on-the-spot checks of project implementation, and subsequently by evaluating the contribution to the horizontal priority's targets. The Managing Authority will regularly inform the Government Office, as the body responsible for implementing the sustainable development horizontal priority, of the fulfilment of the principle by evaluating monitoring reports and on-the-spot checks at regular intervals, and also by means of annual reports on the implementation of the Fisheries Operational Programme. To ensure the efficient and effective implementation of the sustainable development horizontal priority, the relevant institutional coordinator is represented in the working group for the preparation of the Fisheries Operational Programme and will subsequently be a member of the Monitoring Committee. This coordinator will be responsible for defining the conditions for providing support related to the application of the sustainable development horizontal priority and the method for checking it, which will be mandatory for the Managing Authority. The coordinator will also arrange for education and training activities in sustainable development for organisations involved in implementing the EMFF, the relevant socioeconomic partners and those evaluating grant applications.

In line with the partnership principles the relevant civil society institutions promoting sustainable development will be involved in the process of preparing, monitoring and evaluating programmes. For projects financed from the EMFF green public procurement will be applied in order to reduce negative impacts in the climate, air pollution and other aspects of the environment, and to promote energy efficiency.[1]

[1] <http://www.rokovania.sk/File.aspx/ViewDocumentHtml/Mater-Dokum-141217?prefixFile=m>

9.2 Indication of the indicative amount of support to be used for climate change objectives

EMFF measures contributing to climate change objectives	Coefficient %
01 – Article 77 Data collection	0.00
03 – Article 68 Marketing measures	0.00
01 – Article 48(1)(a) to (d) and (f) to (h) Productive investments in aquaculture	0.00
01 – Article 76 Control and enforcement	0.00
01 – Article 69 Processing of fishery and aquaculture products	40.00
02 – Article 48(1)(e), (i) and (j) Productive investments in aquaculture – resource efficiency, reducing usage of water and chemicals, recirculation systems minimising water use	0.00

The indicative EMFF contribution (EUR)	Share of the total EMFF allocation to the operational programme (%)
1 316 548.00	8.34 %

10. EVALUATION PLAN

Objectives and purpose of the Evaluation Plan

The Evaluation Plan seeks to ensure that evaluation activities are adequate and appropriate, and to allocate adequate resources (personnel and finance) to implement them. These activities should above all provide:

- the information required to manage and implement the Fisheries Operational Programme;
- information to draw up the extended annual reports on the programme's implementation in 2017 and 2019 in compliance with Article 50 of the Common Provisions Regulation;
- information on the programme's impact on fulfilling the targets of the EU strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth,
- information on achieving results, including proof of the contribution of each Union priority to its objectives.

The Evaluation Plan should ensure that the data required for evaluation purposes is available at the stipulated time and in the required format. Individual provisions in the Evaluation Plan will guarantee that the necessary evaluation will be planned appropriately and on schedule, and approved, and can be implemented in an adequate scope and quality.

Evaluation activities will depend on the progress made in the operational programme. The results of evaluation will be reported in the annual reports on the programme's implementation for 2014–2022, and in a report on evaluation activities and results for a given calendar year.

In 2017 and 2019 attention will have to be paid to the greater responsibilities concerning the producing of the reports, which must be more extensive. There will be particular emphasis on evaluating the progress made towards the objectives of the Europe 2020 strategy.

The entire evaluation period will conclude with an evaluation performed by the European Commission in 2024.

Each aspect of the Evaluation Plan must take into account the proportionality principle relating to the size of the Fisheries Operational Programme and its financial allocation, as well as the potential administrative burden.

Governance and coordination

The system is designed to fulfil the aforementioned objectives in monitoring and evaluating the Fisheries Operational Programme. It is based on the Common Provisions Regulation and the EMFF Regulation, and on the experience gained in the previous period. The system comprises the Managing Authority, the Intermediate Body, the Monitoring Committee, the European Commission, the Central Coordination Authority, the general public, the Working Group for Evaluating the Fisheries Operational Programme, external organisations, other departments, evaluators and data providers.

The roles and responsibilities of the key participants in the monitoring and evaluation system are as follows:

Managing Authority

The Managing Authority is responsible for the functioning and management of the monitoring and evaluation system, and for the quality of the results provided at the required time, and for publishing these results.

As part of its monitoring role, the Managing Authority is responsible for the electronic system for recording, storing, reporting and notifying data on the Fisheries Operational Programme and its implementation. It will use the ITMS2014+ system.

The Managing Authority monitors the quality of the programme's implementation through indicators for financing, outputs and results, and it gives the Monitoring Committee the information and documents required to monitor the progress made in implementing the programme and meeting its targets. The Managing Authority is responsible for producing an Evaluation Plan that corresponds to the monitoring and evaluation system, and it will organise evaluation activities throughout the 2014–2020 programming period on the basis of this Evaluation Plan. Under Article 56 of the Common Provisions Regulation, at least once during the programming period there will be an evaluation to assess how the Fisheries Operational Programme has contributed to the objectives for each Union priority. This requirement is included in the extended annual reports on programme implementation in 2017 and 2019, and in the follow-up evaluation. The Managing Authority is also responsible for presenting each evaluation by the Monitoring Committee for review and then submitting it to the European Commission, and for making the evaluation reports available on its website.

Besides the above responsibilities under the Regulations, the Managing Authority chairs the Working Group for Evaluating the Fisheries Operational Programme, arranges for the public procurement of evaluation services, and organises cooperation between participants in the monitoring and evaluation system. The Managing Authority is responsible for discussing the results of evaluations with internal and external participants in the monitoring and evaluation system, and with the general public.

Intermediate Body (Agricultural Paying Agency)

The Intermediate Body plays an important role in the monitoring and evaluation system. As in the 2007–2013 programming period, in the 2014–2020 programming period the Intermediate Body will collect data at project level from applicants (via grant applications), monitoring reports, payment requests, on-the-spot checks and its own findings. It will enter and update this data in the ITMS2014+ system.

Monitoring Committee

The Monitoring Committee controls the implementation of the programme and the progress made in achieving its objectives. It takes into account the financial data and the common indicators for the programme, including changes in the indicators for results and the progress made in achieving the quantifiable objectives and targets set in the performance framework. The Monitoring Committee assesses and approves annual reports on the implementation of

the Fisheries Operational Programme before they are sent to the European Commission, and it monitors all evaluation activities and outputs related to the Evaluation Plan, and it may make recommendations to the Managing Authority on programme implementation and evaluation. The Monitoring Committee then monitors the work done in response to its recommendations.

The Monitoring Committee's composition and activities are defined in part 11.3.

European Commission

The European Commission, which administers EU programmes, receives aggregate information on the monitoring and evaluation process directly from the Managing Authority. The Commission's role is to evaluate reports and information on fulfilling objectives, and to monitor the situation on the basis of the available information and indicators. The Commission will make recommendations and if necessary issue cautions, which will be based on analysing reports on the programme's implementation. It is responsible for performing a follow-up evaluation in collaboration with the Member State.

General public

The evaluation reports will be made available to the general public through communication channels. The public will therefore have access to information on the operational programme and its implementation, which will raise awareness and create opportunities for the exchange of information and opinions.

Working Group for Evaluating the Fisheries Operational Programme

To strengthen evaluation procedures the Managing Authority will set up a Working Group for Evaluating the Fisheries Operational Programme. The Working Group facilitates consultation between participants in the monitoring and evaluation system, contributes to the adopting and management of monitoring and evaluation procedures, and helps ensure that monitoring and evaluation are relevant to the operational programme's needs. Members of the Working Group can contribute their skills and experience and help ensure that data, information and important contacts are available to the evaluators.

The Working Group will be convened by the Managing Authority, and will comprise representatives from the Managing Authority, Intermediate Body, Central Coordination Authority and experts from the sector.

External organisations

These are organisations that are the main sources of data for the Working Group for Evaluating the Fisheries Operational Programme, the Managing Authority and the entire monitoring and evaluation process. They include associations, agencies, educational institutions and other institutions that hold key information on fisheries for the evaluation process. Information collected by external organisations will help ascertain how far objectives have been met, and can therefore provide an overview of the operational programme and its implementation.

These external organisations primarily include the Slovak Fish Farmers Association, the Slovak Anglers Union, the Slovak Ornithological Society, the State Nature Conservancy of

the Slovak Republic, the Slovak University of Agriculture in Nitra, the Combined Secondary School in Ivanka pri Dunaji, the State Veterinary and Food Administration and the Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic.

When collecting data on the aquaculture and fish processing sector the Managing Authority will also work closely with the national correspondent, who will be responsible for coordinating the collection of data in line with the national programme for the collection, management and use of data.

Central Coordination Authority

The Central Coordination Authority works to coordinate the management of the ESI Funds. As part of this the Central Coordination Authority works with the Managing Authority on implementation, monitoring and evaluation, and on the producing of reports and information. The Managing Authority sends the Central Coordination Authority an annual report on the implementation of the Fisheries Operational Programme. The Managing Authority also submits to the Central Coordination Authority information on the programme for a progress report, which the Central Coordination Authority produces in line with Article 52 of the Common Provisions Regulation, and other information on the implementation of the programme to fulfil the Central Coordination Authority's work in coordinating the management of the ESI Funds, and its responsibilities concerning the producing of reports and information on the implementation of the ESI Funds. A representative of the Managing Authority is a member of the Working Group for Evaluation at the Central Coordination Authority level.

Other departments

These cover other ministries cooperating in the monitoring and evaluation process, especially in view of the horizontal priorities, the economic aspects and the protecting of individual aspects of the environment.

Beneficiaries

Beneficiaries under the Fisheries Operational Programme are directly involved in the monitoring and evaluation process in two ways. Firstly individual beneficiaries are obliged to provide information concerning monitoring and evaluation (in grant applications, monitoring reports and various evaluation surveys and questionnaires). The second way of involving beneficiaries is via their professional associations, which are important partners and are members of the Monitoring Committee.

External evaluators

Evaluations of the Fisheries Operational Programme must be performed by evaluators who are professionally independent of the body responsible for implementing the programme. For evaluation purposes these evaluators receive data from the Managing Authority and the beneficiaries. In the evaluation process evaluators work with the Working Group for Evaluating the Fisheries Operational Programme; they present the evaluation methodologies and provide intermediate outputs from evaluation. For the Managing Authority the evaluators

provide information on the outputs from evaluation, and present individual evaluation reports in line with the evaluation schedule.

Evaluation topics and activities

Evaluation should answer the following questions:

Suitability: Do the activities supported correspond to the most important needs identified in the Fisheries Operational Programme?

Effectiveness and fulfilment: To what extent have the programme's objectives been achieved?

Efficiency: Have maximal results been achieved for the resources invested (the financial resources allocated to the Fisheries Operational Programme, human resources and the related costs of implementing the programme)?

Impact: To what extent have the supported activities contributed to desirable changes under the Fisheries Operational Programme?

The main evaluation topics are based on the structure of the Fisheries Operational Programme and the intervention logic. Other topics will be proposed as necessary in the course of the 2014–2020 programming period.

Evaluation topics:

- The programme's impact on aquaculture production;
- The programme's impact on the competitiveness of aquaculture and processing enterprises;
- The programme's impact on efficient resource usage;
- The programme's impact on the consumption of fish and fish products;
- The programme's impact on implementing the Common Fisheries Policy.

Evaluation tasks:

- Monitoring the development of trends and analysing the context;
- Evaluating the programme's impacts and their contribution to the objectives of the Common Fisheries Policy;
- Evaluating the results of projects supported under the programme and their contribution towards the programme's specific objectives and Union priorities;
- Monitoring progress in the programme's implementation with reference to the stipulated output indicators;
- Evaluating the programme's contribution to the Partnership Agreement and the Europe 2020 strategy, including the Thematic Objectives and the horizontal priorities.

In the 2014–2020 programming period evaluation will be in parallel with the implementation of the Fisheries Operational Programme and will involve a variety of evaluation activities. The Managing Authority is responsible for securing the necessary resources for evaluation,

and for designing data collection procedures. Data should include values for the stipulated indicators, which will help answer the evaluation questions. Evaluation activities are divided into two groups:

Evaluation activities relating to preparations for evaluation, consisting of:

- drafting the evaluation questions;
- reviewing the indicators;
- drafting descriptions for indicators added beyond the common indicators;
- activities related to providing the necessary data for the indicators (according to their descriptions), identifying additional types of data and verifying information sources.

For evaluation purposes the following information and data sources are important:

- monitoring data, including data on programme results obtained from beneficiaries' monitoring reports;
- disaggregated data collected from unsupported potential beneficiaries or a representative sample from periodic reviews;
- regularly collected specific data from various institutions relating to priorities and scope;
- statistical data used for a context analysis;
- assessing potential approaches to evaluating results and impacts;
- resolving any problems identified in obtaining data;
- preparing terms of reference and implementing public procurement for evaluators.

Evaluation activities performed during the 2014–2020 programming period:

Evaluation activities performed by the **Managing Authority** and the **Intermediate Body**:

- evaluating the results achieved towards the Fisheries Operational Programme's objectives, the contribution to the objectives of the Common Fisheries Policy and the Europe 2020 strategy, assessing project results and impacts, cross-cutting objectives, the common principles for programmes under the ESI Funds, responding to evaluation questions, drafting conclusions and recommendations, using the results of evaluation to improve the design and implementation of the Fisheries Operational Programme (managed by the Managing Authority and performed by the evaluator);
- filing reports and publishing the results of evaluation (Managing Authority).

Evaluation activities that should be performed by the **evaluator**:

- preparing and implementing suitable and compact evaluation methodologies;
- collecting, processing and analysing important information in line with the selected evaluation methods and evaluating programme outputs, results and impacts;
- analysing the Fisheries Operational Programme's contribution to the main objectives of the Common Fisheries Policy, the Europe 2020 strategy, the Partnership Agreement, the National Strategic Plan and the horizontal priorities;
- responding to evaluation questions;

- providing conclusions and recommendations concerning the design and implementation of the Fisheries Operational Programme.

The above evaluation activities will be included in the annual reports on the implementation of the Fisheries Operational Programme. Detailed information on the evaluation activities must be included in the two extended reports on the implementation of the Fisheries Operational Programme to be submitted in 2017 and 2019. The content of the reports on the programme's implementation is defined in Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) No 1362/2014.

Data and information strategy

For the 2014–2020 programming period ITMS2014+ is the main instrument for monitoring the use of financial support from EU funds (other than the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development). ITMS2014+ will be created by converting ITMS II to meet the requirements defined in EU and Slovak legislation and the management documentation for the relevant organisations and authorities.

As a tool for collecting, transmitting, processing, storing and providing relevant information and data, ITMS2014+ is one of the key instruments that will substantially and positively influence the effective implementation of the ESI Funds. ITMS2014+ will serve all applicants and beneficiaries, state authorities, local administration, the organisations they fund and other organisations involved in preparation, administration, selection, control, audit and analysis (advanced statistical methods, management summaries, etc.), monitoring, evaluation and the finances provided from the ESI Funds.

The planned modification of the existing authentication processes in the ITMS will ensure they comply with the requirements and standards defined by the law on e-Government and the principles of e-Cohesion. Modifying the existing authentication module in the ITMS will ensure it is compliant with the e-Audit principle. It will also ensure the creating of the key conditions to implement the principles of only once encoding, e-Submission and e-Signature.

ITMS2014+ will cover the recording and storing of the monitoring data required for monitoring and evaluating the Fisheries Operational Programme, especially the information needed to monitor progress in achieving the stipulated targets and Union priorities.

The main (primary) data sources are grant applications and monitoring reports from beneficiaries. Monitoring reports yield data on individual project outputs and results. The Intermediate Body, in collaboration with the Managing Authority, is designing a format for monitoring reports in line with the common monitoring framework for the EMFF. The Intermediate Body enters monitoring data into the system, and is responsible for regularly updating this data.

Evaluators collect missing data (e.g. indirect effects of interventions, surveys of programme awareness, etc.) through questionnaire surveys.

Statistics from the Slovak Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development and the Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic are important secondary data sources.

Timeline

The complexity of the monitoring and evaluation system means that the timing of individual activities must be scheduled to meet the deadlines for submitting annual reports on implementing the Fisheries Operational Programme and information system reports in line with the applicable legislation.

Schedule:

- **Information system**

Deadline for submitting to the European Commission: **31 March each year.**

- **Annual reports on the implementation of the Fisheries Operational Programme**
(extended annual reports submitted in 2017 and 2019)

Deadline for submitting to the European Commission: 31 May each year, starting in 2016.

Specific requirements for evaluating CLLD

Not applicable.

Communication

The results of evaluation can only be used and implemented if they are presented to the target groups at the right time. For this reason an important part of planning evaluation activities is designing an appropriate communication strategy for these results.

To design a communication strategy, the following strategy components must be defined:

- **The role of the Managing Authority (Who):** responsible for designing and implementing the communication strategy for the results of evaluation. The Managing Authority may be assisted by the Working Group for Evaluating the Fisheries Operational Programme.
- **Target group (For Whom):** other than those participating in the monitoring and evaluation system (Managing Authority, Intermediate Body, Monitoring Committee, Working Group for Evaluating the Fisheries Operational Programme), the target groups include policymakers and the general public.
- **Information needs (What):** the individual target groups identified need a variety of information from the results of monitoring and evaluation for their specific needs. The target groups' information needs must be defined at the start of planning evaluation activities to guarantee that the information required is available to the individual target groups at the required time.
- **Timing (When):** when planning information needs for the target groups it is important to link the planned evaluation activities to the schedule for policymaking.

- **Communication channels (How):** after identifying the main target groups and information needs it is important to define the main information channels for communicating with various recipients of this information. As a minimum all evaluation reports should be published on the Managing Authority's website.

The communication strategy needs to be regularly monitored and controlled.

Internal and external communication flows:

1. *Informing the general public and civil society*

All evaluation studies and reports will be published on the website of the Slovak Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development:

<http://www.mpsr.sk>

2. *Information and discussions with relevant actors in the Fisheries Operational Programme*

The Working Group for Evaluating the Fisheries Operational Programme, the European Commission and the Monitoring Committee will be familiarised with all evaluation studies and reports; the results of evaluation will be sent directly to them, and in this forum the results will be an important topic for discussing the programme's future direction.

3. *Discussing, using and implementing the results of evaluation by organisations with decision-making powers under the Fisheries Operational Programme*

Under the evaluation system the results of evaluation will be presented to relevant actors in the Fisheries Operational Programme and real political opportunities to implement individual decisions will be discussed.

Resources

Financial resources

The majority of monitoring and evaluation activities, including the information system, will be financed from technical assistance for the Fisheries Operational Programme.

Administrative capacities

At the Managing Authority the Rural Development and Direct Payments Section is responsible for managing and therefore also evaluating the Fisheries Operational Programme. Coordinating evaluation, ensuring all the evaluation processes and procedures required are in place, and disseminating the results is the responsibility of the Fisheries Operational Programme Department.

The Intermediate Body has allocated administrative capacities in its Monitoring Department to cover the collecting and processing of monitoring data.

In addition to the Intermediate Body external evaluation contractors will provide administrative capacities in line with the monitoring and evaluation activities identified.

Data

The Intermediate Body will collect the data needed to evaluate and monitor the programme from grant applications, mandatory monitoring reports from beneficiaries, payment authorisations and on-the-spot checks.

IT system

The ITMS2014+ information system will be used to collect, transmit, process, store and provide relevant information and data.

Building monitoring and evaluation capacities

As part of capacity building there are plans to train staff from the Managing Authority and the Intermediate Body in monitoring and evaluation.

11. PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTING ARRANGEMENTS

11.1 Identification of authorities and intermediate bodies

Authority/body	Name of the authority/body	Email
Managing Authority	Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development of the Slovak Republic	martin.barbaric@land.gov.sk
Certifying Authority	Ministry of Finance of the Slovak Republic	antonia.mayerova@mfsr.sk
Audit Authority	Ministry of Finance of the Slovak Republic	iveta.turcanova@mfsr.sk
Intermediate Body of the Managing Authority	Agricultural Paying Agency	lubomir.partika@apa.sk

11.2 Description of the monitoring and evaluation procedures

In view of the result-oriented approach for the ESI funds in the 2014–2020 programming period, the EMFF monitoring and evaluation system is integrated into a common system to improve the quality of the information and evaluation provided while reducing the administrative burden.

The Fisheries Operational Programme monitoring system

The purpose of the monitoring system is to monitor whether the stipulated outputs have been achieved, and whether the result indicators have been fulfilled. A comprehensive and effective monitoring system is not only important for monitoring programme implementation, but is also the basis of successful evaluation.

The Fisheries Operational Programme monitoring system has the following components:

- ***Data collection***

Data collected and monitored for the Fisheries Operational Programme can be split into two categories:

- by type: context, result, output and financial indicators,
- by aggregation level: indicators at the level of project, measure, Union priority and operational programme.

The Managing Authority will ensure the collection of mandatory data (information system) under the Commission Implementing Regulations for the EMFF, and will use primary and secondary data sources.

The collecting of primary data will be via grant applications at the project approval stage (the baseline) and mandatory monitoring reports from beneficiaries. Questionnaires will be used for specific surveys. Secondary data will be taken from statistics provided by the Slovak Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development and the Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic.

The quality of the data processed will be checked using the four-eyes principle. In monitoring the Fisheries Operational Programme particular attention will be paid to achieving the values set for performance framework indicators, i.e. targets at 31 December 2018 and objectives at 31 December 2023.

- ***Data storage***

The ITMS2014+ electronic information system will be used to record, store and manage key information on projects and beneficiaries under the Fisheries Operational Programme. It will be created by converting the present system, ITMS II, to satisfy the principles for e-Cohesion listed in the Common Provisions Regulation and the requirements of Act No 305/2013 on the exercise of public authorities' powers in electronic form, amending certain laws, which is the general legislation for the exercise of public power by electronic means.

A precondition for creating an efficient system for exchanging information and data between providers, beneficiaries and other organisations involved in implementing the ESI Funds, exclusively in electronic form, is to integrate ITMS2014+ with other information systems used in the public administration. Integrating them will reduce the administrative and time demands on participants, and improve the consistency and validity of the data.

Electronic data exchange through ITMS2014+ is planned to be fully functional by 31 December 2015, in line with the e-Cohesion requirement.

Annex 4 – Fisheries Operational Programme management and control systems – contains more detailed information on ITMS2014+.

- ***Submitting reports***

The Managing Authority will provide the European Commission with all the information required to measure the results of the EMFF via the:

- ***Information system*** – a report submitted to the European Commission by 31 March each year, with a summary of key information structured according to Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) No 1242/2014 of 20 November 2014;
- ***Annual report on the implementation of the Fisheries Operational Programme*** submitted by 31 May each year, starting in 2016, structured according to Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) No 1362/2014 of 18 December 2014.

Evaluation system for the Fisheries Operational Programme

The main objective in evaluating the Fisheries Operational Programme is to improve the quality of the programme's design and implementation, and to evaluate its economy,

efficiency, effectiveness, utility and impact. The fundamental principles for evaluation are proportionality, independence, partnership and transparency.

Evaluation is conducted as ex-ante, ongoing and ex-post evaluation.

Ex-ante evaluation is an integral part of the preparation process for the Fisheries Operational Programme. Its recommendations and conclusions are set out in part 1.2.

Ongoing evaluation is performed in line with the programme's Evaluation Plan (see chapter 10).

Ex-post evaluation is performed by European Commission in collaboration with the Slovak Republic, and will be conducted after the 2014–2020 programming period has ended, and by 31 December 2024 at the latest.

11.3 General composition of the Monitoring Committee

Monitoring the Fisheries Operational Programme will be performed by the Managing Authority and Monitoring Committee. Monitoring consists in reviewing the quality of the programme's implementation using monitoring indicators (financial, output and result indicators).

The Monitoring Committee will be set up in compliance with Article 47(1) of the Common Provisions Regulation. It is expected that the Monitoring Committee will be composed of members of the working group for the preparation of the Fisheries Operational Programme. Membership of the committee, adhering to the partnership principle and the principles of representativeness and the equal representation of all parties concerned, will include representatives of the organisations involved in implementing the Fisheries Operational Programme (Managing Authority, Agricultural Paying Agency, Certifying Authority), a representative of the Central Coordination Authority as the body responsible for coordinating the management of the ESI Funds, economic and social partners, representatives of the state administration, professional associations and trade unions, and non-governmental organisations. For the efficient and effective application of the horizontal priorities, members of the Monitoring Committee and a representative of the Government Office will be responsible for the sustainable development horizontal priority, including a representative from the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family, who will be responsible for promoting equality between men and women and non-discrimination. Other members of the Monitoring Committee will be a representative of the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family, responsible for coordinating data collection, and a representative of the State Veterinary and Food Administration, who will perform control activities in line with EU legislation. For the Monitoring Committee adapting to climate change and/or mitigating its effects will be covered by a representative of the Ministry of the Environment. Equality between men and women will be promoted when setting up the Monitoring Committee. The European Commission will attend sessions of the Monitoring Committee in an advisory capacity. Representatives of the Audit Authority (the Ministry of Finance) and the Agricultural Paying Agency, as well as a representative of the Central Coordination Authority, will act as observers.

The Monitoring Committee will be chaired by a representative of the Managing Authority. The Monitoring Committee's functions will be defined in more detail in a statute that will be approved, together with the rules of procedure, at its first session.

The Monitoring Committee will review the effectiveness and quality of the implementation of the Fisheries Operational Programme in line with Article 49 of the Common Provisions Regulation and Article 114 of the EMFF Regulation.

The Monitoring Committee's administrative work will be covered by its secretariat, which will be represented by the Fisheries Operational Programme Department at the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development. Details of its functions and responsibilities will be defined in the Monitoring Committee's statute. The secretariat's key duties will include:

- producing draft agendas for sessions of the Monitoring Committee;
- producing and distributing invitations, agendas for discussion and documents;
- drafting minutes from sessions;
- promotional work (informing the public about the Fisheries Operational Programme and its results).

Partners listed according to competences:

- economic and social partners

The *Slovak Agriculture and Food Chamber* is an autonomous, non-governmental, public service institution whose mission is to promote its members' legitimate common interests in the creating of economic and social policy, participate in its implementation, and support and protect its members' business activities in the interests of developing and promoting agriculture and the food industry in Slovakia. Membership of the Slovak Agriculture and Food Chamber is voluntary and covers both natural and legal persons who are engaged in business activities in agriculture and the food industry, and in biological, technical and business services for these sectors, and also autonomous organisations in the agriculture sector and other organisations.

The *Slovak Fish Farmers Association* is a professional association, recognised by the Ministry of Agriculture and Regional Development, for farmers of freshwater fish, be they enterprises or representatives of education for the Slovak fisheries sector. The production of its members represents the larger part of lowland and salmonid species farmed in Slovakia. The Slovak Fish Farmers Association works with state administration bodies on areas concerning its members' activities. It represents, defends and promotes its members' interests and needs in relations with state and autonomous authorities and institutions at all levels, and with other natural and legal persons.

The *Slovak Anglers Union* is a voluntary association of Slovak citizens who have an active interest in developing and promoting fishing, and in the active enforcement of fishing legislation. Under Act No 83/1990 on the association of citizens, the Slovak Anglers Union is a voluntary association active in recreational fishing and aquatic ecology in Slovakia. It is also the only one of the dominant live fry producers in Slovakia that is used to implement stocking plans in line with Section 6 of Act No 139/2002 on fisheries, as amended. Catches

by members of the Slovak Anglers Union account for a significant proportion of Slovakia's total annual freshwater fish consumption.

- partners active in environmental protection

The *State Nature Conservancy of the Slovak Republic* is a specialised organisation under the Ministry of the Environment that operates nationwide and focuses on nature and landscape protection, including the management of caves, and also on protecting wild fauna and flora, regulating the trade in them in line with the relevant Slovak legislation. It works with other specialised institutions covering environmental care and nature and landscape protection, speleology and related scientific disciplines, and with local authorities and local branches of the state administration, as well as scientific and academic institutions in Slovakia and other countries, partner organisations in other countries, and other organisations involved in the environment and speleology.

- non-governmental organisations

Agro-ekofórum (AEF) is a platform for twelve Slovak non-governmental organisations working on various issues in agriculture and forestry. AEF focuses on active participation in policymaking to promote sustainable agriculture and forestry, minimise negative impacts on the countryside, the environment, animals and people (farmers, workers, consumers), promote the diversification of rural activities, support food production at local level and the expansion of local consumer chains, and provide educational, advisory and training activities for sustainable agriculture.

- other partners affected by the implementation of the Fisheries Operational Programme

The *State Veterinary and Food Administration* is an organisation of the state administration under Act No 39/2007 on veterinary care, as amended, and it supervises the food sector in accordance with Act No 152/1995 on foodstuffs, as amended.

11.4 A summary description of the information and publicity measures to be carried out in accordance with Article 120

The Managing Authority, in compliance with the proportionality principle, will cover the obligatory promoting and raising awareness of the Fisheries Operational Programme.

For the purposes of promotion and raising awareness it will use the existing websites of the Managing Authority (the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development) and the Intermediate Body (the Agricultural Paying Agency) to present:

- information on the Fisheries Operational Programme and access to it;
- information for potential beneficiaries on the options and conditions for financing under the programme;
- promotional activities covering the EMFF's work and successes;
- a list of supported projects and examples of projects;
- information on the implementation of the Fisheries Operational Programme.

It will also use other above-the-line and below-the-line activities to promote and disseminate information, including the obligatory measures under Annex V to the EMFF Regulation.

Promotional and awareness-raising measures will be financed under technical assistance from the Fisheries Operational Programme.

In its annual reports on the programme's implementation, the Managing Authority will inform the Commission of its activities towards these ends, adhering to the required structure.

The duties of individual organisations involved in the management and control system are described in Annex 4 – Summary of Fisheries Operational Programme management and control systems.

Regarding the implementation of the new “Data Collection” measure in the 2014–2020 programming period, the management and control system for the Fisheries Operational Programme includes a description of the management framework for collecting, managing and using data, which should be set up after 2016, including the role of the national correspondent as a beneficiary (see Chapter 13).

12. INFORMATION ON THE BODIES RESPONSIBLE FOR IMPLEMENTING THE CONTROL, INSPECTION AND ENFORCEMENT SYSTEM

12.1 Bodies implementing the control, inspection and enforcement system

Name of the authority/body
State Veterinary and Food Administration of the Slovak Republic

12.2 Brief description of human and financial resources available for fisheries control, inspection and enforcement

The state administration bodies covering control, inspection and enforcement are the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, the State Veterinary and Food Administration and the regional veterinary and food administrations.

The catch certification scheme for importation and exportation of fishery and aquaculture products, and the traceability and labelling requirements under the IUU Regulation, the Control Regulation and Regulation (EU) No 1379/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council on the common organisation of the markets in fishery and aquaculture products, amending Council Regulations (EC) No 1184/2006 and (EC) No 1224/2009 and repealing Council Regulation (EC) No 104/2000, are the responsibility of the State Veterinary and Food Administration and the regional veterinary and food administrations.

The State Veterinary and Food Administration is financed from the budget of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development. It is headed by the Director General, an official veterinarian appointed and recalled by the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development. The Director General serves as the chief veterinarian, and answers directly to the Minister. The State Veterinary and Food Administration *controls, guides and coordinates* the arrangements for the catch certification scheme for importation and exportation of fishery and aquaculture products, and the traceability and labelling requirements.

The regional veterinary and food administrations are financed from the budget of the State Veterinary and Food Administration. There are 40 such regional administrations in Slovakia. Each regional administration is headed by a director, who is an official veterinarian appointed and recalled by the Director General of the State Veterinary and Food Administration. A regional director serves as the regional veterinarian in accordance with the Veterinary Care Act, as amended, and answers to the chief veterinarian. The regional veterinary and food administrations *control and enforce measures* in the arrangements for the catch certification scheme for importation and exportation of fishery and aquaculture products, including controlling compliance with the traceability and labelling requirements.

Human resources: Slovakia has 84 inspectors who are directly involved in management and control activities in this field.

Financial resources: the implementation of the IUU Regulation and the Control Regulation in Slovakia entail an increase in costs, and will be financed from the Slovak state budget (annual costs are calculated at EUR 137 000).

12.3 The major equipment available, in particular the number of vessels, aircraft and helicopters

Not applicable.

12.4 List of selected types of operations

Type of Operation	Description
(c) The development, purchase and installation of the components, including computer hardware and software, which are necessary to ensure the traceability of fishery and aquaculture products, as referred to in Article 58 of Regulation (EC) No 1224/2009	Applications server (1 item) to operate software to ensure the traceability and labelling of fishery and aquaculture products, and the catch certification scheme for importation and exportation of fishery and aquaculture products, with licences for the server (operating system and database). Local workstations with an operating system (45 items). Software to ensure the traceability and labelling of fishery and aquaculture products, and the catch certification scheme for importation and exportation of fishery and aquaculture products.
(g) The development of innovative control and monitoring systems and the implementation of pilot projects related to fisheries control, including fish DNA analysis or the development of websites related to control	Using traceability tools such as genetic analysis and other technologies to control fisheries, e.g. developing a website.
(h) Training and exchange programmes, including between Member States, of personnel responsible for the monitoring, control and surveillance of fisheries activities	Training and exchange programmes with other Member States for personnel responsible for implementing and performing activities related to control and enforcement, with the aim of improving vocational training.
(j) Initiatives, including seminars and media tools, aimed at enhancing awareness, among both fishermen and other players such as inspectors, public prosecutors and judges, as well as among the general public, of the need to fight illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing and of the implementation of Common Fisheries Policy rules	Raising awareness of the need to combat illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing and ensure compliance with the rules of the Common Fisheries Policy.

12.5 Link to priorities defined by the Commission

Union priorities in financing controls are as follows:

- Support for implementation and verification in Member States related to catch certificates, as specified in Article 12 of the IUU Regulation, which requires catch certificates for imports and landings of fish into the EU from third countries. Support the implementation of projects to combat illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing.
- Support for implementation in Member States, including landlocked Member States, related to the traceability requirement. This aspect is becoming increasingly important, especially if new regulations derived from regionalisation (e.g. various sizes for maintaining resources in various areas) increase the need to trace catches. This will also include supporting and controlling labelling systems to ensure that consumers are properly informed.

13. DATA COLLECTION

13.1 A general description of data collection activities envisaged in 2014–2020

1. Activities

Part A: 2014–2016

The collecting of data on fisheries and aquaculture in line with Regulation (EC) No 762/2008 of the European Parliament and of the Council on the submission by Member States of statistics on aquaculture and repealing Council Regulation (EC) No 788/96 is coordinated by the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development.

In compliance with Act No 540/2001 on state statistics, the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development performs a statistical survey in the aquaculture and fishery and aquaculture processing sector, which is governed by the State Statistical Surveys Programme published by the Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic, which under the aforementioned act is the central state authority for state statistics. This programme is compiled by the Statistical Office in collaboration with ministries and other state organisations, and it covers a three-year period. Statistical surveys by the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development are subject to the approval of the Statistical Council, which is governed by the President of the Statistical Office. Representatives of the individual ministries are members of the Statistical Council.

The Statistical Office ensures that the statistical survey is performed and data on aquaculture is processed; it obtains this data from the Annual Statement for the fish harvest. The purpose is to obtain information on fish harvested for market purposes and self-supply, and on fry production and stocking. The results of the survey are used for analysis, for the needs of the Statistical Office's information system, and to satisfy the requirements of the European Statistical System and international organisations.

For the processing of fishery and aquaculture products the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development performs a statistical survey via a quarterly statement on the processing of fishery and aquaculture products. The purpose of this statistical survey is to obtain information on the domestic market for the needs of developing the trade in fish products and to satisfy the requirements of the European Statistical System. The information obtained is processed by a commercial enterprise, Radela s.r.o. Bratislava, under a contract with the Ministry.

As a landlocked country, prior to 2016 the Slovak Republic is not obliged to produce a multi-annual national programme for the collection, management and use of biological, technical, environmental and socio-economic data in line with the multi-annual Community programme in accordance with Council Regulation (EC) No 199/2008 concerning the establishment of a Community framework for the collection, management and use of data in the fisheries sector and support for scientific advice regarding the Common Fisheries Policy.

Part B: After 2016

An amendment of Council Regulation (EC) No 199/2008 will result in a new multi-annual Community programme for the collection, management and use of data in line with the

Common Fisheries Policy. This programme will also include landlocked countries, which will be obliged to draw up and implement multi-annual national programmes that are subject to approval from the European Commission. After 2016 the Slovak Republic will use the Fisheries Operational Programme to finance the coordination and securing of the collection, management and use of data in line with the new EU legislation.

2. Main categories of eligible costs during the 2014–2020 programming period:

- Technical arrangements for the management, collection and processing of data;
- Expenses relating to administrative capacities (salaries), which include the national correspondent and the relevant staff of the authorities and external organisations involved in the national programme for the collection, management and use of data;
- Expenses relating to the preparation, production and implementation of the multi-annual national programme for the collection, management and use of data;
- The national correspondent's participation in Member States' working visits concerning data collection;
- Expenses relating to organising coordination meetings at national, international and regional level.

13.2 A description of data storage methods, data management and data use

1. After 2016 the collection, processing and management of data will remain the same, i.e. the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, as the authority responsible for the statistical survey on aquaculture and the processing of fishery and aquaculture products, will appoint the organisations responsible for collecting and processing data in line with the new EU legislation and the Slovak legislation covering the state statistical survey. These organisations will collect and process data in line with the multi-annual national programme, using their own software systems. The national correspondent will manage the processed data and arrange for it to be submitted to the European Commission in the form required and in compliance with the new EU legislation.

After 2016 the Slovak Republic will collect and process data on the aquaculture and fish processing sector in line with the needs of the new Community framework for the collection, management and use of data. The data obtained will be used to fulfil the objectives of the Common Fisheries Policy in the management and control of fisheries at EU level. Relevant high-quality data will help the Managing Authority to steer the implementation of the Fisheries Operational Programme and produce the documentation to apply the Common Fisheries Policy in the Slovak Republic.

The control and retention of the data collected will be in line with the requirements of the Common Fisheries Policy and Slovak legislation.

2. The current system for the statistical survey for aquaculture and processing fishery and aquaculture products in Slovakia is implemented in compliance with national and EU legislation. After 2016 it will be necessary to extend the range of data collected in line with the requirements of the revised Community framework for the collection, management and use of data. To improve the system's efficiency and the quality of the data collected for the

needs of managing and controlling the sector, when designing the new data collection system special emphasis will be placed on avoiding the duplicate surveying of data and improving cooperation between the responsible bodies at national level, and with reporting units, end users and other Member States.

3. Currently the provider (reporting unit) is responsible for the correctness and completeness of the data provided. A control of the data obtained is performed by the authorities/organisations that collect and process the data. The legislative requirement for data to be provided by reporting units in the aquaculture sector, under the State Statistical Act, has not been enforced through sanctions in the event that it is not fulfilled, and this is reflected in the dissatisfactory standard of this data. For this reason greater attention will be paid at national level to applying sanctions, which would help improve the quality, correctness and completeness of the data provided.

13.3 A description of how sound financial and administrative management in data collection will be achieved

To meet the needs of the revised multi-annual national programme for the collection, management and use of data, the function of national correspondent will be performed by the Animal Production Department at the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, which is organisationally independent of the departments working on the tasks of the Managing Authority and the Certifying Authority for the Fisheries Operational Programme. The key task for the national correspondent will be to ensure the national coordination of the collection and processing of data for the purposes of managing the aquaculture and fish processing sector, including socio-economic data. It will also serve as the contact point for exchanging information between the European Commission and Member States regarding the preparation and implementation of national programmes. Its other tasks will include:

Concerning the fulfilling of the objectives of the Common Fisheries Policy, it will implement tasks deriving from EU legislation:

- drawing up a multi-annual national programme for the collection, management and use of data in the Slovak Republic after 2016;
- organising national coordination meetings (once a year) with the authorities/organisations involved in the national programme;
- producing a report on the implementation of the national programme (annually).

For the Fisheries Operational Programme it will implement tasks as a beneficiary, which include:

- drawing up a national project for drawing funds under the “Data Collection” measure, including cooperation in the public procurement process;
- ensuring the implementation of the national project, i.e. submitting the national project to the Intermediate Body in response to a call, producing and submitting payment requests to the Intermediate Body, providing information for on-the-spot checks, etc.

Other tasks for the Fisheries Operational Programme:

- tasks relating to membership of the Monitoring Committee;
- producing information on data collection for annual reports on the Fisheries Operational Programme.

The services of the Slovak Statistical Office and external organisations with corresponding skills, which will be selected through a public procurement process, will be used to collect and process data under the national programme in order to ensure the quality of the data selected.

The necessary technical and administrative arrangements for the work of the national correspondent and the authorities and organisations involved in the national programme for the collection, management and use of data will be financed from the Fisheries Operational Programme as part of a national project, with the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development as the eligible beneficiary.

14. FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS

14.1 Description of the planned use of financial instruments

Not applicable.

The reasons for not using financial instruments under the Fisheries Operational Programme are presented in the Partnership Agreement, which was approved by the Commission on 20 June 2014.

The option of using financial instruments in the 2014–2020 programming period was the subject of consultations with the relevant partners, who preferred support to be provided as grants, primarily for the following reasons:

- the seasonal nature of production;
- the influence of external factors on the production process (the weather, sufficient water of adequate quality, disease, etc.);
- the risk in generating revenues to repay repayable financial assistance, given the nature of the activities supported under the Fisheries Operational Programme.

In view of the preceding, and taking into account the proportionality principle and the administrative burden, the Slovak Republic did not include the option of using financial instruments in the Fisheries Operational Programme, although the option of using them will remain open during the 2014–2020 programming period.

14.2 Selected EMFF measures to be implemented through the financial instruments

	EMFF Measure
	01 – Article 77 Data collection
	03 – Article 68 Marketing measures
	01 – Article 48(1)(a) to (d) and (f) to (h) Productive investments in aquaculture
	01 – Article 76 Control and enforcement
	01 – Article 69 Processing of fishery and aquaculture products
	02 – Article 48(1)(e), (i) and (j) Productive investments in aquaculture – resource efficiency, reducing usage of water and chemicals, recirculation systems minimising water use

14.3 Indicative amounts to be used through the financial instruments

EMFF total amount 2014–2020: EUR 0.00

Documents

Document title	Document type	Document date	Local reference	Commission reference	Files	Sent date	Sent By
Annex 2_ Ex-Ante Evaluation Report and Summary	Report from the ex-ante evaluation	23 April 2015		Ares(2015)2669634	Annex 2_ Ex-Ante Evaluation Report and Summary	25 June 2015	ndaubnzl
Annex 3_ Strategic Environmental Assessment Report	Report on Strategic Environmental Assessment	23 April 2015		Ares(2015)2669634	Annex 3_ Strategic Environmental Assessment Report	25 June 2015	ndaubnzl
Annex 7_ Intervention Logic	Supplementary information	25 June 2015		Ares(2015)2669634	Annex 7_ Intervention Logic	25 June 2015	ndaubnzl
Annex 4_ Summary of Fisheries Operational Programme management and control systems	Summary description of the management and control system	23 April 2015		Ares(2015)2669634	Annex 4_ Summary of Fisheries Operational Programme management and control systems	25 June 2015	ndaubnzl
Annex 1_List of partners consulted	List of partners consulted	23 April 2015		Ares(2015)2669634	Annex 1_List of partners consulted	25 June 2015	ndaubnzl
Annex 5_Analysis of the fisheries sector in Slovakia	Supplementary information	23 April 2015		Ares(2015)2669634	Annex 5_Analysis of the fisheries sector in Slovakia	25 June 2015	ndaubnzl
Annex 6_Needs Assessment	Supplementary information	23 April 2015		Ares(2015)2669634	Annex 6_Needs Assessment	25 June 2015	ndaubnzl

Document title	Document type	Document date	Local reference	Commission reference	Files	Sent date	Sent By
Annex 8_Aquaculture operations in Slovakia	Maps showing the size and location of the fisheries and aquaculture sectors, the location of main fishing harbours and aquaculture sites, and the location of protected areas (Integrated Coastal Zone Management, Marine Protected Areas, Natura 2000)	23 April 2015		Ares(2015)2669634	Annex 8_Aquaculture operations in Slovakia	25 June 2015	ndaubnzl
Annex 9_Tables	Supplementary information	23 April 2015		Ares(2015)2669634	Annex 9_Tables	25 June 2015	ndaubnzl
Annex 10_Abbreviations used	Supplementary information	23 April 2015		Ares(2015)2669634	Annex 10_Abbreviations used	25 June 2015	ndaubnzl
Annex 11_Strategic Environmental Assessment final opinion	Supplementary information	23 April 2015		Ares(2015)2669634	Annex 11_ Strategic Environmental Assessment final opinion	25 June 2015	ndaubnzl