

EC Operational Programme for Poland: 2007-2013

POLAND - The European Commission has approved the Operational Programme for the Polish fisheries industry for the period 2007-2013.

The total eligible public expenditure of the programme amounts to around € 979 million, with EU assistance through the European Fisheries Fund (EFF) amounting to €734 million. The programme covers the whole territory of Poland, which falls in its entirety under the Convergence objective.

The purpose and aim of the EU investment

During the previous programming period (2004/2006), Poland benefited from over € 200 million of EU support under the Financial Instrument for Fisheries Guidance (FIFG). As a result, between 2005 and 2007, 404 fishing vessels engaged in Baltic Sea fisheries were withdrawn from the fleet and 92 fish processing enterprises were upgraded to meet EU production standards.

The new EU programme for 2007/2013 aims to support the development of a competitive, modern and dynamic Polish fisheries sector based on sustainable exploitation of resources, consolidate the structural socio-economic preconditions for a viable fisheries and aquaculture sector, while at the same time meeting the demands of both consumers and the food industry, and safeguarding, as far as possible, the income of fishers.

Priority axes

Priority 1: Adaptation of the EU fishing fleet

This priority axis aims at promoting profitable and sustainable fisheries in maritime areas. Measures are particularly targeted at permanent cessation of activity of fishing vessels, improvements to the energy efficiency of vessels and the selectivity of fishing gear, enhancing safety and working conditions on board, improving the quality of fish products, retraining and life-long learning for fishers, and facilitating the entry of young fishers into the sector. These goals shall be pursued through the Polish Baltic Fleet Restructuring Plan which will be implemented through a Fishing Effort Adjustment Plan. The Polish authorities are also envisaging the implementation of Fleet Adaptation Schemes in line with the provisions of Regulation (EC) n°744/2008 (fuel package).

Priority 2: Aquaculture, inland fishing, processing and marketing of fishery and aquaculture products

The main objectives of this priority axis are to (1) develop and modernise the aquaculture sector and adjust it to market prospects and expectations in a sustainable way; (2) diversify towards new species, (3) maintain a sustainable level of activity in inland fisheries, and (4) improve the processing and marketing of fisheries and aquaculture products in Poland.

Priority 3: Measures of common interest

The main objectives of this priority axis are to: (1) reinforce the port, fishing shelters and landing site facilities and the construction of infrastructure; (2) ensure a profitable and competitive fishing sector in the long term which takes into account the restructuring needs of the Polish fishing fleet as

part of it shifts from cod to pelagic fishing activities; (3) enhance the organisation of the sector, especially the market, but also to promote professional skills and innovation in the fisheries sector; (4) ensure the sustainable use of natural resources; (5) disseminate newly acquired knowledge concerning the fisheries sector; and, (6) promote fisheries products.

Priority 4: Sustainable development of fisheries areas

Taking into consideration the potentially decreasing importance of the Baltic fishery, and the opportunities for the development of inland fisheries production, actions will be undertaken at local level led by local communities in order to meet the challenges and maximise the new opportunities available. In this respect, EFF funding shall be used to support the implementation of local development strategies using a bottom-up approach. These strategies should aim at creating new job opportunities and improving the quality of life and attractiveness of the fishery-dependent areas. Cooperation between public authorities, organisations/bodies representing the fisheries sector, as well as between fisheries groups, shall also be improved.

Priority 5: Technical assistance

Technical assistance will be used to ensure effective implementation of the Operational Programme, including actions for its preparation, monitoring, evaluation and audit. The technical assistance will also support activities to ensure the effective implementation of the Common Fisheries Policy, as well as the restructuring and reinforcement of the Managing Authority of the Operational Programme and other control activities related to the enforcement of the CFP.