



# COFASP

ERA-net

Deliverable 4.24

Deliverable title: Improving the influence of the EMFF through cooperation of the countries

Due date of deliverable: [40]

Actual submission date: [44]

Name of lead beneficiary: Timo Halonen, Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, Finland

Contributors: Dennis Lisbjerg, COFASP

Dissemination level:

<b>PU</b>	Public (must be available on the website)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<b>PP</b>	Restricted to other programme participants (including the Commission Services)	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>RE</b>	Restricted to a group specified below by the consortium (including the Commission Services)	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>CO</b>	Confidential, only for members of the consortium (including the Commission Services)	<input type="checkbox"/>

Specified group (if applicable):

[Name]

## Table of Contents

<b>1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>2. EUROPEAN MARITIME AND FISHERIES FUND IN A NUTSHELL.....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>3. WORKSHOP .....</b>	<b>7</b>
3.1. SET-UP OF THE WORKSHOP .....	7
3.2. OUTCOME OF THE WORKSHOP .....	8
<b>4. CONCLUSIONS AND ACHIEVEMENTS.....</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>ANNEX I.....</b>	<b>13</b>

## 1. Executive summary

---

The European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF) is the main financing instrument in the fisheries sector for 2014-2020, with a total EU budget of EUR 8.7 billion. The EMFF supports the development of the fisheries sector in multiple ways, including direct support to the investments of the fisheries sector, facilitation of innovation, research and environmental projects. Furthermore, the EMFF finances the implementation of the EU's Common Fisheries Policy (CFP), including data collection and fisheries control.

Ten member states (DK, EE, FI, HU, IE, LT, LV, NL, PL and SE) and the European Commission (DG MARE and COFASP ERA-NET) met for a workshop in Estonia to discuss how to improve the influence of the European Maritime Fisheries Fund (EMFF) through cooperation both in the implementation and at the project level.

The conclusion was that there is a strong will between the Member States to increase cooperation in the implementation of the national programmes. Cooperation at the project level was recognised as very promising, but due to the delay of the implementation of the fund the discussions primarily focused on the implementation issues. When the national EMFF programmes are fully up and running the prospects for cooperation are good, also at the project level, and there is a great deal of potential in the EMFF to implement joint activities in support of the Common Fisheries Policy.

*The main conclusions of the workshop were:*

1. Regular and informal face-to-face meetings to be continued in Brussels during the EMFF meetings as well as annually in other Member States;
2. Building and launching the EMFF Learning Network digital platform for Managing Authorities of the EMFF following the example of the Agriculture Learning Network;
3. Establishing a subgroup for the EMFF under BALTFISH at the expert level to discuss the mapping of needs, selection and priorities with a view to cooperation at the regional level.
3. Launching a questionnaire to map potential cooperation themes and projects under direct and shared management in order to find joint cooperation needs and to recognize the possible themes and projects of common interest for the Member States;
4. Report on the progress of cooperation activities at the Commission's EMFF expert group meetings.

*The following concrete actions have been taken after the workshop:*

1. A second meeting was organized in Warsaw, Poland in June 2016 and a third one will be in Ireland in the spring of 2017.
2. The digital platform was established in 2015 and is already being used by various EMFF experts and countries.
3. A specific subgroup for the EMFF under the Baltfish was established in order to stimulate cooperation in EMFF activities in the Baltic Sea region.

## 2. European Maritime and Fisheries Fund in a nutshell

---

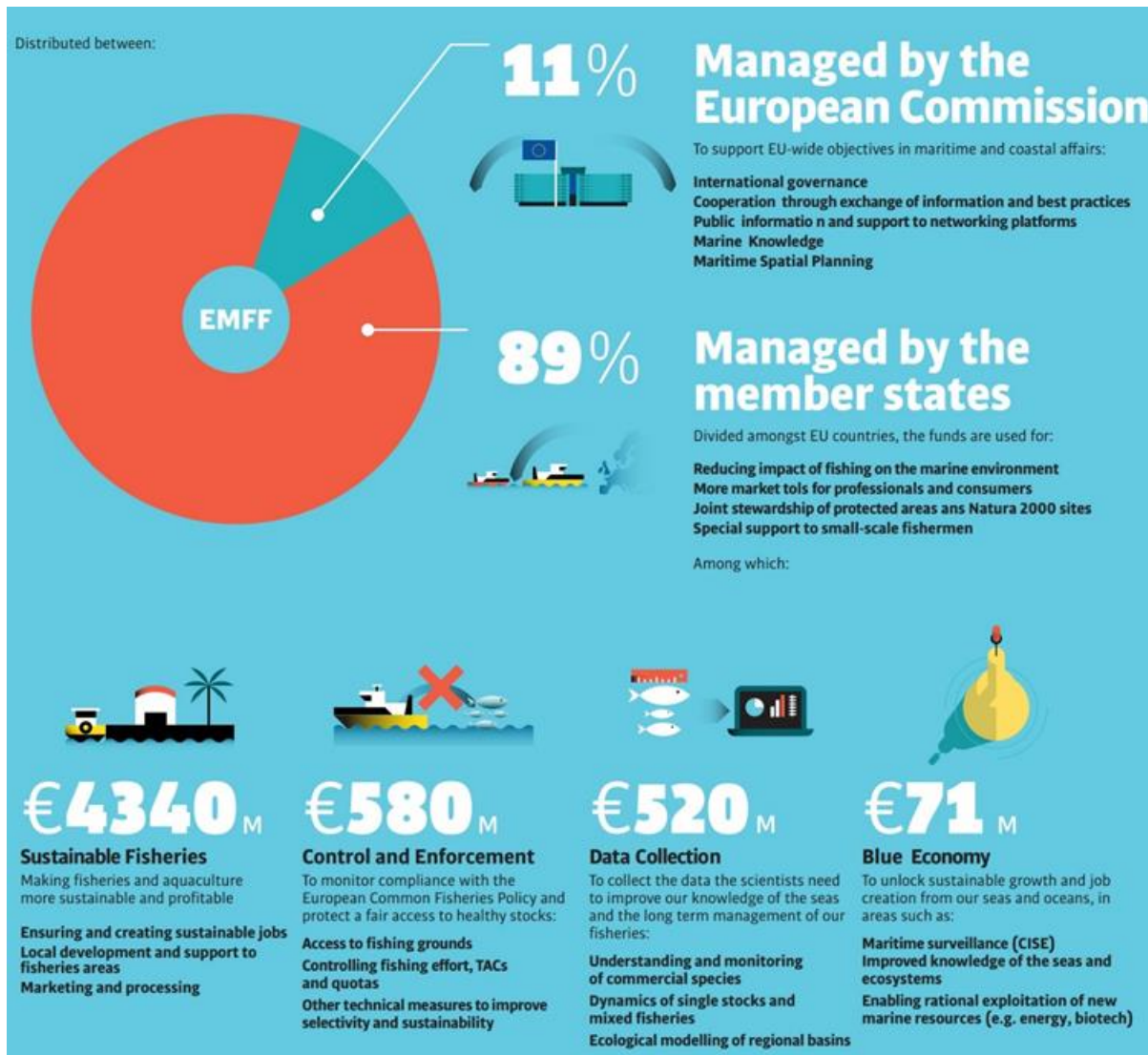
The European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF) is the fund for the EU's maritime and fisheries policies for 2014-2020. It is one of the five European Structural and Investment (ESI) Funds which complement each other and seek to promote a growth- and job-based recovery in Europe.

The implementation of the EMFF is divided into two blocks. The resources allocated under “direct management” are managed exclusively by the European Commission. This part of the fund focuses on international governance, marine knowledge and maritime spatial planning. The other part is managed by the Member States under “shared management”. Each country is allocated a share of the total EU budget, based on the size of its fishing, aquaculture and fish processing industry (in terms of employment, production and share of small scale fisheries)<sup>1</sup>. Each Member State contributes to the co-financing and draws up the operational programmes explaining how the total public budget will be spent in accordance with their regional needs. The national authorities and the European Commission have a joint responsibility for the implementation of these operational programmes under shared management.

The total EU budget of the EMFF for 2014-2020 is EUR 5.75 billion and the national co-financing (including technical assistance) is EUR 2.24 billion, thus creating, under shared management, a public support fund of EUR 7.99 billion. In addition, the European Commission manages, under direct management, a budget of EUR 698 million. The Commission's infographic shows how these funds are distributed and spent:

---

<sup>1</sup> See Art. 16 of the EMFF for the objective criteria for financial distribution



Source: European Commission (DGMARE), 2015

There are six priorities within the EMFF:

1. Environmentally sustainable, resource efficient, competitive fisheries which are more selective, produce less discards, and do less damage to marine ecosystems. EMFF support under this priority will thus focus on innovation and added value that can make the fisheries sector economically viable and resilient to external shocks and to competition from third countries;
2. Environmentally sustainable, resource efficient, competitive aquaculture to make this industry green, economically viable and competitive, while providing EU consumers with healthy and highly nutritional products;
3. Fostering the implementation of the CFP through the collection and management of data to improve scientific knowledge and through support to monitoring, control and enforcement of fisheries legislations;
4. Increasing employment and territorial cohesion through the promotion of economic growth and social inclusion in coastal and inland communities depending on fishing;

5. Fostering marketing and processing through improved market organisation for fishery and aquaculture products and through improved processing and marketing sectors in particular in Outermost Regions;

6. Fostering the implementation of the Integrated Maritime Policy.

The measures under the fund have a strong focus on innovation in order to promote the development of new products and processes. It also focuses on initiatives that benefit various sectors across the board but cannot be accomplished by any single sector-based policy or a single Member State, such as maritime spatial planning or maritime data storage and management. The EMFF promotes social cohesion and job creation in fisheries-dependent communities, while also supporting new forms of aquaculture with high potential for innovation and growth, including off-shore and non-food aquaculture.

More information on the EMFF at ([http://ec.europa.eu/fisheries/cfp/emff/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/fisheries/cfp/emff/index_en.htm)).

## 3. Workshop

---

### 3.1. Set-up of the workshop

The COFASP case study brought together experts from the Managing Authorities of ten Member States (DK, EE, FI, HU, IE, LT, LV, NL, PL and SE) as well as four observers from the European Commission (DG MARE) and COFASP ERA-NET. In addition, quite a few other Member States expressed their interest in participating in the future but due to the administrative work load at the time could not attend the workshop in Tallinn. The moderator and rapporteur of the case study workshop was Mr Timo Halonen.

The key objectives were to:

- explore how the national EMFF operational programmes are linked to the EMFF under direct management as well as to other research and innovation funding initiatives such as ERA-NETs
- discuss how cooperation between the Member States can improve and influence the effectiveness of the EMFF
- assess to what extent the Managing Authorities or national actors are interested in international cooperation
- highlight possible risks or problems in the cooperation
- discuss how the existing cooperation initiatives or platforms could be utilized

The agenda of the meeting consisted of three keynote speeches and two group work sessions (Annex I). The first keynote speakers were Ms Simkje Kruiderink and Ms Pascale Colson from the European Commission. They discussed the opportunities for and possible restrictions on cooperation between the Member States in the implementation of the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF) and the existing cooperation initiatives in other sectors and their objectives.

The second keynote speech was by Mr Dennis Lisbjerg from COFASP, who gave a presentation on how the cooperation between countries works in practice in research funding networks. Last, Mr Hans van EK and Mathijs van de Waardt from The Netherlands Enterprise Agency presented a case example of how the cooperation in administration works in practice in other sectors and how the Agriculture Learning Network of EU Paying Agencies works.

After the keynote session, the participants were divided into three groups. The first group work session focused on the mapping of will and potential for the cooperation. The concrete questions were: 1. Can cooperation between the Member States improve and influence the effectiveness of the EMFF? What could be the concrete results of the cooperation? 2. Are Managing Authorities or national actors interested in international cooperation activities? 3. What could be the possible risks or problems in cooperation activities? 4. Can the existing cooperation initiatives or platforms be utilized?

The second day started with an introduction given by Mr H. Hooglander. He presented the Netherlands' past practical experiences on cooperation projects and concerns regarding the EMFF. This was followed by the second group work session with the aim "From ideas to concrete actions". The concrete questions were: 1. How the cooperation could work in practice - at the project level and between the Managing Authorities? What are the possible focus areas or concrete project ideas? What kinds of platforms are needed? 2. How should the cooperation under the



EMFF be enhanced – what could be the concrete steps? 3. How can the possible risks or problems be managed?

Based on the outcome of the groups' works, preliminary conclusions were presented and discussed. At the end, the workshop formulated and adopted conclusions and recommendations for future work (Annex I).

After the workshop the recommendations were circulated to all Member States and the European Commission. The outcome of the workshop was also reported at the EMFF expert group meeting in Brussels.



Picture 1. Participants of the workshop.

### 3.2. Outcome of the workshop

#### 3.2.1. General interest in the cooperation

Based on the two days of discussions the participants concluded, in general, that deeper and more efficient cooperation could significantly increase the quality of the implementation and lead to better use of public funds within the EMFF. All participants expressed their willingness to deepen the cooperation.

It was recognized that improved cooperation will lead to a decrease of error rates as well as increase the dissemination of knowledge and good practices between the Member States. The cooperation will reduce the time and resources spent on implementation questions and interpretation issues and may also improve the dialogue between the Member States and the Commission (DGMARE).



### 3.2.1. Cooperation structures

In the context of the EMFF, or its predecessor fund the EFF, there have been no formal or informal cooperation structures between the Member States. This is why there has been relatively little cooperation between the Member States, and it has mainly been bilateral or ad hoc by nature.

In other sectors or policy areas there are many cooperation structures in place which facilitate collaboration between countries and other key players. Before the workshop five different cooperation models were identified and they were shortly described in order to stimulate the discussions on how the existing cooperation activities or platforms could be utilized. Table 1 describes some examples from regional development, implementation of CAP (Common Agriculture Policy), R&D work and regional fisheries management. Based on this pre-assessment, the Agriculture Learning Network was considered to have the potential to provide the highest benefit to the EMFF Member States that wish to cooperate. Therefore, this was selected for a keynote presentation at the workshop.

Table 1. Benchmarked cooperation activities and platforms

Network Platforms	IQ Net	Rural Networks	Agriculture learning Network	BALTFISH	SCAR-FISH
DG formality who	REGIO Formal Coalition of the willing	ENRD Formal	AGRI Informal Coalition of the willing	MARE Formal Baltic MS	RTD Formal All MS + observers
Who	network of regional and national partners across the EU; mostly managing authorities	196 members: MA, NGO's, LAG's, Research insitutes, local/regional actors, EU organizations	Directors of paying agencies and Coordinating bodies from MS	Eight EU member states bordering the Baltic Sea (fisheries directors) and representatives of the European Commission as well as representatives from organisations such as BSRAC, ICES and HELCOM (forum).	The Standing Committee on Agricultural Research (SCAR) agreed on the establishment of a policy-driven strategic group with the objectives to advise the Commission and Member States on research policies and research themes in order to better coordinate and direct these activities in support of the revised Common Fisheries Policy.
Members	14 MS	196 members: MA, NGO's, LAG's, Research insitutes, local/regional actors, EU organizations	9 MS at start, now all MS	8 MSs	37 (of which all EU)
Observers	?	no	none	EC + NGO's etc	<a href="https://ec.europa.eu/research/agriculture/scar/pdf/scar_fish_members.pdf">https://ec.europa.eu/research/agriculture/scar/pdf/scar_fish_members.pdf</a> 4 of which Dg RTD and DG MARE
Objective	To improve the quality of Structural Funds programme management through exchange of experience and share good practice on specific themes relating to the design, delivery, management and evaluation of the Structural Funds programmes.	strategic, operational and thematic work	Initiate, coordinate and improve informal and practical cooperation bt EU paying agencies, coordinating bodies and EC institutions	The Baltic Sea Fisheries Forum (BALTFISH) is a regional body providing a platform for discussion on important fisheries issues in the Baltic Sea. BALTFISH is based on the regionalisation of the EU Common Fisheries Policy as referred to in the Basic Regulation and its main objective is to promote cooperation among fisheries administrations and other key stakeholders in developing sustainable fisheries in the Baltic Sea region.	enhances cooperation, coordination, and information exchange between the Member States using four main activities: 1) policy advice 2) developing process and 3) research agendas and 4) mapping research capacity
How	Briefing papers are prepared by EPRC as the basis for discussion at each meeting, (1) comparative experience from across the EU (regular progress updates on the programmes) and (2) thematic papers as well as a (3) yearly bulletin	see website (huge).	Focus on concrete implementation (best practices, solutions), developing alternative regulation text proposals linking these to relevant conferences and EU discussions/non-papers	functions on two levels: a high-level group (HLG) and a forum seminar level	see website
eg	Results-orientation in 2014-20 programmes in terms of project generation and selection approaches; youth unemployment; the performance turn in EU Cohesion policy; innovation and 'Smart Specialisation' in Cohesion policy programmes; and the use of financial instruments in Cohesion policy programmes. <a href="#">the European Policies Research Centre (EPRC) at the University of Strathclyde in Glasgow.</a>	see website (huge).	provide a flexible and concreet responses to dev in the new CAP (simplification, reduction impl costs, control, admin) wrote non-papers and gave presentations at EU conferences	agreeing on the content of other flak	see website
Managed by (secr)	<a href="#">the European Policies Research Centre (EPRC) at the University of Strathclyde in Glasgow.</a>	ENRD	NL : implementing agency RVO	Rotates 1x year (in july)	DGRTD
Meetings / Conferences	2x year in dif MS	Lots depending on level	(1) 2x year at director level in Brussels (2) informal expert meetings with DG AGRI and learning experts (3) 2-4 informal learning network steering group meetings with DG AGRI a year	Regular	2x year
Organization			simple	simple	
Chairman Since	on a rotation basis. 1996	No start of rural dev work of EC	Permanent = UK 2009	Rotates 1x year (in july)	Rotates 2012
Website	<a href="http://www.eprc.strath.ac.uk/iqnet/default.php">http://www.eprc.strath.ac.uk/iqnet/default.php</a>	<a href="https://enrd.ec.europa.eu/en/general-info/whos-who">https://enrd.ec.europa.eu/en/general-info/whos-who</a>	<a href="https://learningnetwork.pleio.nl/register">https://learningnetwork.pleio.nl/register</a>	<a href="http://helcom.fi/action-areas/fisheries/management/baltfish">http://helcom.fi/action-areas/fisheries/management/baltfish</a>	<a href="https://ec.europa.eu/research/scar/index.cfm?pg=home">https://ec.europa.eu/research/scar/index.cfm?pg=home</a>

In the group sessions the participants concluded that the cooperation should take place at the expert level of the Managing Authorities as a major share of the issues dealt with by the Managing Authorities are common and non-political. The group decided to invite experts from the Managing Authorities of other countries and have regular and informal face-to-face meetings in Brussels, before or during the EMFF meetings, as well as annually in other Member States.

Secondly, the workshop saw great opportunities to increase cooperation at the regional level by introducing subgroups under regional fisheries forums. This was considered particularly important as regionalization is a new key element in the new Common Fisheries Policy (CFP). The workshop wished to explore this possibility in the Baltic Sea area by establishing a subgroup

under BALTFISH, which could act as a pilot for other regional fisheries groups to be set up in the future. The Baltic group should share their experiences with other Managing Authorities wishing to develop similar subgroups in their regions.

After reviewing the formal and informal cooperation models applied in other sectors at the workshop, the Member States present decided that light administrative structures and informal communication would be the best suited to the EMFF, and that following the example of the Agriculture Learning Network platform would be the most promising. A pilot project entitled “EMFF Learning Network” was launched to carry out this work. An IT tool for the Managing Authorities following the example of Agriculture Learning Network would be built for the EMFF.

### ***3.2.1. Cooperation at the project level***

During the workshop it became clear that at the start of the EMFF national programmes the uncertainties relating to interpretation and building of the national legal framework were the highest priorities in the Member States. This was clearly reflected in the discussions. However, when the EMFF is fully up and running in all Member States, the great potential of joint activities in the EMFF financing and implementing was highlighted as this could lead to even better implementation of the Common Fisheries Policy.

The workshop recognized many potential cooperation themes where project-level cooperation could enhance the impact of the fund while also avoiding double work or financing. It was agreed that the Member States’ needs and willingness should be explored more in depth. The participants agreed to launch a questionnaire to map potential cooperation themes and projects under direct and shared management and, thus, to find joint cooperation needs and to recognize the possible themes and projects of common interest for the Member States

From the technical and risk assessment point of view, the workshop recognized two main restrictions in the financing of joint actions. First, the funds of the different Member States cannot be mixed and, second, the costs of the projects should never give rise to double financing. Mechanisms must be put in place to ensure that joint projects do not lead to higher error rates. It was recommended that joint actions should be financed as a “sub-projects” so that each Member States would manage and finance only the actions carried out in its territory. However, it was noted that the financing of synchronous actions would be challenging because of different national legal frameworks and timelines as well as different procedures in project selection in each Member State.

As for using EMFF funding in the joint ERA-NET calls, it was concluded that it is possible to finance the joint projects from EMFF in case of the current ERA-NET model. However, the coming COFUND and ERA-NET+ models seems to be challenging since Commission funding is so-called “top-up” funding, there is a risk of mixing different EU funds and the audit trail of costs is also difficult to manage.

## 4. Conclusions and achievements

---

Deeper and more efficient cooperation may enhance the quality of implementation and lead to better use of public money within the EMFF. Improved cooperation in practice would lead to a decrease in error rates and increase the dissemination of knowledge and good practices between the Member States

Uncertainties relating to interpretation and building the national legal framework are high priorities at present. Once the EMFF national programmes are up and running, there are good prospects for cooperation and a great deal of potential in the EMFF to implement joint activities in support of the Common Fisheries Policy.

*The main conclusions of the workshop were:*

1. Regular and informal face-to-face meetings to be continued in Brussels during the EMFF meetings as well as annually in other Member States
2. Building and launching the EMFF Learning Network digital platform for Managing Authorities of the EMFF following the example of Agriculture Learning Network;
3. Establishing a subgroup for the EMFF under BALTFISH at the expert level to discuss the mapping of needs, selection and priorities with a view to cooperation at the regional level.
4. Launching a questionnaire to map potential cooperation themes and projects under direct and shared management in order to find joint cooperation needs and to recognize the possible themes and projects of common interest for the Member States;
5. Report on the progress of cooperation activities at the Commission EMFF expert group meetings.

*The following concrete actions have been taken after the workshop:*

1. A second meeting was organized in Warsaw, Poland in June 2016 and a third one is being planned in Ireland in 2017. The Commission has been invited as an observer but declined to attend the workshop in Poland. The conclusions of all the workshops will be shared with all Member States at the EMFF expert group.
2. The digital platform was established in 2015 and it is being used by various EMFF experts.
3. A specific subgroup for the EMFF under the Baltfish was established in order to stimulate cooperation in EMFF activities in the Baltic Sea region.

## Annex I

---

Workshop on the  
**Collaboration of the implementation of the European Maritime and  
 Fisheries Fund (EMFF)**  
DAY 1 (24<sup>th</sup> of September)

11.00 – 12.00	Lunch
12.00 – 12.10	Opening of the workshop by the Director General Mr, Ain Soome from Estonian Ministry of Rural Affairs
12.10 – 12.15	Introduction to the aims of the workshop by the Chairman, Mr Timo Halonen
12.15 – 13.30	<p>Keynote speeches</p> <p><b>Ms Simkje Kruidenink</b> and <b>Ms Pascale Colson</b> from the European Commission:  <i>The possibilities and possible restrictions of cooperation between Member States in the implementation of European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF) and existing cooperation initiatives in other sectors and their objectives</i></p> <p><b>Mr Dennis Lisbjerg</b> from COFASP: <i>How the cooperation between Member States works in practice in research funding networks? Case example: COFASP - coordination of the research in fisheries, aquaculture and sea food processing</i></p> <p><b>Mr Hans van EK</b> and <b>Mathijs van de Waardt</b> from The Netherlands Enterprise Agency: <i>How the cooperation in administration works in practice in other sectors? Case example: learning Network of Agri Directors of EU Paying Agencies</i></p>
13.30 – 14.00	Introduction to the group works and coffee
14.00 – 16.00	<p>Group work 1: “Mapping the potential and will”</p> <p>Aim of the group work is to answer the following questions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <i>Can cooperation between the Member States improve and influence the effectiveness of the EMFF? What could be the concrete results be of cooperation?</i></li> <li>2. <i>Are Managing Authorities or national actors interested in international cooperation activities?</i></li> <li>3. <i>What could be the possible risks or problems in cooperation activities?</i></li> <li>4. <i>Can the existing cooperation initiatives or platforms be utilized?</i></li> </ol>
16.00-17.00	Summary of group works and summary of day 1

DAY 2 (25<sup>th</sup> of September)

09.15 – 09.30	Introduction to day 2 Mr H. Hooglander : “Past practical experiences in NL on cooperation projects and concerns regarding the EMFF”
09.30 - 11.30	Group work 2: “From ideas to concrete actions” Aim of the group work is to answer the following questions: 1. <i>How cooperation could work in practice - at project level and between the managing authorities (or other actors)? What are the possible focus areas or concrete project ideas? What kind of platforms are needed?</i> 2. <i>How should the cooperation under the EMFF be enhanced – what could be concrete steps?</i> 3. <i>How can the possible risks or problems be managed?</i>
11.30 - 12.30	<i>Lunch</i>
12.30 – 13.30	Summary of group works and discussion
13.30 – 14.00	Coffee
14.00 – 14.30	Presentation of the preliminary conclusions and recommendations for cooperation under the EMFF
14.30 – 15.00	Next steps

## Conclusions and recommendations of the workshop on improving the influence of the EMFF through cooperation

24th and 25th of September 2015  
Tallinn, Estonia

At the initiative of Finland and Estonia, experts from ten member states (DK, EE, FI, HU, IE, LT, LV, NL, PL, SE) as well four observers from the European Commission (DG MARE) and COFASP ERA-NET discussed how to improve the influence of the European Maritime Fisheries Fund (EMFF) through cooperation both at implementation level as well as at project level. The workshop was financed and supported, by an ERA-NET/Horizon 2020 project “Cooperation in Fisheries, Aquaculture and Seafood Processing” (COFASP) as synergies between the EMFF and COFASP were expected. COFASP's principal objective is to facilitate, through research and innovation, an effective and efficient implementation of the Common Fisheries Policy (CFP).

After two days of informal discussion the participants concluded that deeper and more efficient cooperation could increase significantly the quality of implementation and lead to better use of public money of the EMFF. Improved cooperation would lead in practice to decrease of error rates, increase the dissemination of knowledge and good practices between Member States, reduce the time and resources spent on the implementation questions and interpretation issues and to improve the dialogue between the Member States and the Commission.

After reviewing the formal and informal cooperation models used by Member States implementing other EU funds it was decided that a light administrative structure and informal communication would best suit to the EMFF and that the cooperation should take place at the expert level of the Managing Authorities as very large part of the issues that Managing Authorities deal with are common and non-political.

In order to improve cooperation the following steps were identified:

1. Continue to meet regularly and informally face-to-face in Brussels during the EMFF meetings as well as annually in other Member States;
2. Time (and resources) need to be reserved to Managing Authorities for cooperation activities;
3. Launch a pilot project “EMFF Learning Network” by building an IT tool for Managing Authorities of the EMFF following the example of Agriculture Learning Network. An



informal task force will be set-up with voluntary Managing Authorities to steer the development work;

4. Launch a questionnaire to map potential cooperation themes and projects under direct and shared management in order to find joint cooperation needs and to recognize the possible themes and projects of common interest of Member States;
5. Report in the EMFF expert group meetings the progress of cooperation activities;
6. Ensure that SCAR Fish and COFASP are aware of the conclusions and recommendations of the workshop as well as discuss with possible collaboration with the EMFF and these bodies;
7. Establish a sub group under BALTFISH at Managing Authority expert level to discuss mapping of needs, selection and priorities with a view to cooperation at regional level. In future other regional fisheries groups might develop a similar Managing Authority sub-group.

The Member States present requested the Commission to:

1. Share the interpretation questions and answers of the legal framework of Managing Authorities dealing with of the EMFF regulation to ensure transparency and a level playing field across Member States;
2. Ensure that the Managing Authorities are aware of the financing possibilities of direct management of the EMFF as well as that Member States are consulted in an early phase of the preparation of annual work plans;

The workshop was concluded by the Member States thanking COFASP for providing them with a platform to discuss the cooperation between Member States. COFASP stated that it was clear from the discussions that cooperation between Member States has lot of potential at the level of projects but that more urgent issues (interpretation uncertainties and building the national legal framework) have currently higher priority. Once these needs are dealt with and clarified there are clearly good prospects for cooperation and a great deal of potential in the EMFF to implement joint activities and thus support even better the implementation of the Common Fisheries Policy.