



FLAG
NORTH EAST

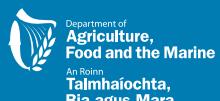
Fisheries Local Action Group Local Development Strategy 2016





This is an edited version of the full FLAG North East Local Development Strategy produced to inform potential project applicants of the themes and priorities contained therein. The full text of all FLAG strategies and their appendices may be found on www.bim.ie. E & O E.

The development of this Local Development Strategy by FLAG North East was facilitated through the provision of preparatory support as part of Ireland's European Maritime and Fisheries Fund Operational Programme 2014-2020, co-funded by the Exchequer and European Union. This Strategy was 100% funded under that Programme. This Strategy covers the period of the Programme and is intended to guide FLAG North East in prioritising, selecting and supporting projects with EMFF funds in its FLAG territory.



EUROPEAN UNION

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1 The Definition of the Strategy Area

1.1 Introduction

This section describes the FLAG area and sets out confirmation that the FLAG area meets the criteria set out in the Ireland Seafood Development Programme 2014-2020 (Section 5.1.2).

1.2 Description of the FLAG Area

The FLAG North East area comprises the coastal zones of Counties Louth, Meath and Finglas. In order to provide a snapshot of the nature of this area the 31 District Electoral Divisions have been used to provide aggregate statistics. The area of operation will typically be the 10 km coastal strip however should projects further inland positively impact the coastal strip they will be considered on a case by case basis.

The FLAG North East has a relatively strong urban structure with 77% of electoral divisions falling into the aggregate urban category of over 1,500 inhabitants. In the three Counties, the most densely populated zones are located in the coastal regions.

1.2.1 Map of the FLAG Area

Figure 1:1: Map of FLAG North East area



1.3 Confirmation of Compliance of FLAG Area

Confirmation of compliance of the FLAG North East with the following criteria was addressed by the FLAG selection committee.

Table 1.1: FLAG Area – Compliance with Criteria¹

Criteria ²	Compliant (✓ / X)
The area proposed must have at least one boundary comprising the coastline	✓
The area must have a significant level of employment in fisheries or aquaculture	✓
The population of Coastal Electoral Districts for proposed area must be over 70,000	✓
The area must have a minimum of 150 vessels in all fleet segments of the fleet register and preferably not more than 400	✓
The area proposed must have no more than one National Fisheries Harbour Centre	✓

1.4 Coherent Sub-Areas

As part of the development of the strategy the differing needs and priorities of differing areas of the FLAG were considered.

The differing needs of areas were identified through the socio-economic review, the needs identified were further explored through meetings with key stakeholders representing differing areas of the FLAG as well as public consultations in 5 areas. The needs and priorities of the areas were identified through this process and there was found to be little need to establish a coherent sub-area as part of the FLAG strategy but rather any varying needs have been acknowledged and addressed as part of the main strategy.

¹ In accordance with Article 33 of Common Provisions Regulation 1303/2013 – December 2013.

2 ANALYSIS OF THE DEVELOPMENT NEEDS

2.1 Introduction

This section sets out the summary of the analysis of the development needs and potential of the FLAG Area. This includes an analysis of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. It has been developed based on desk-based research along with consultation findings.

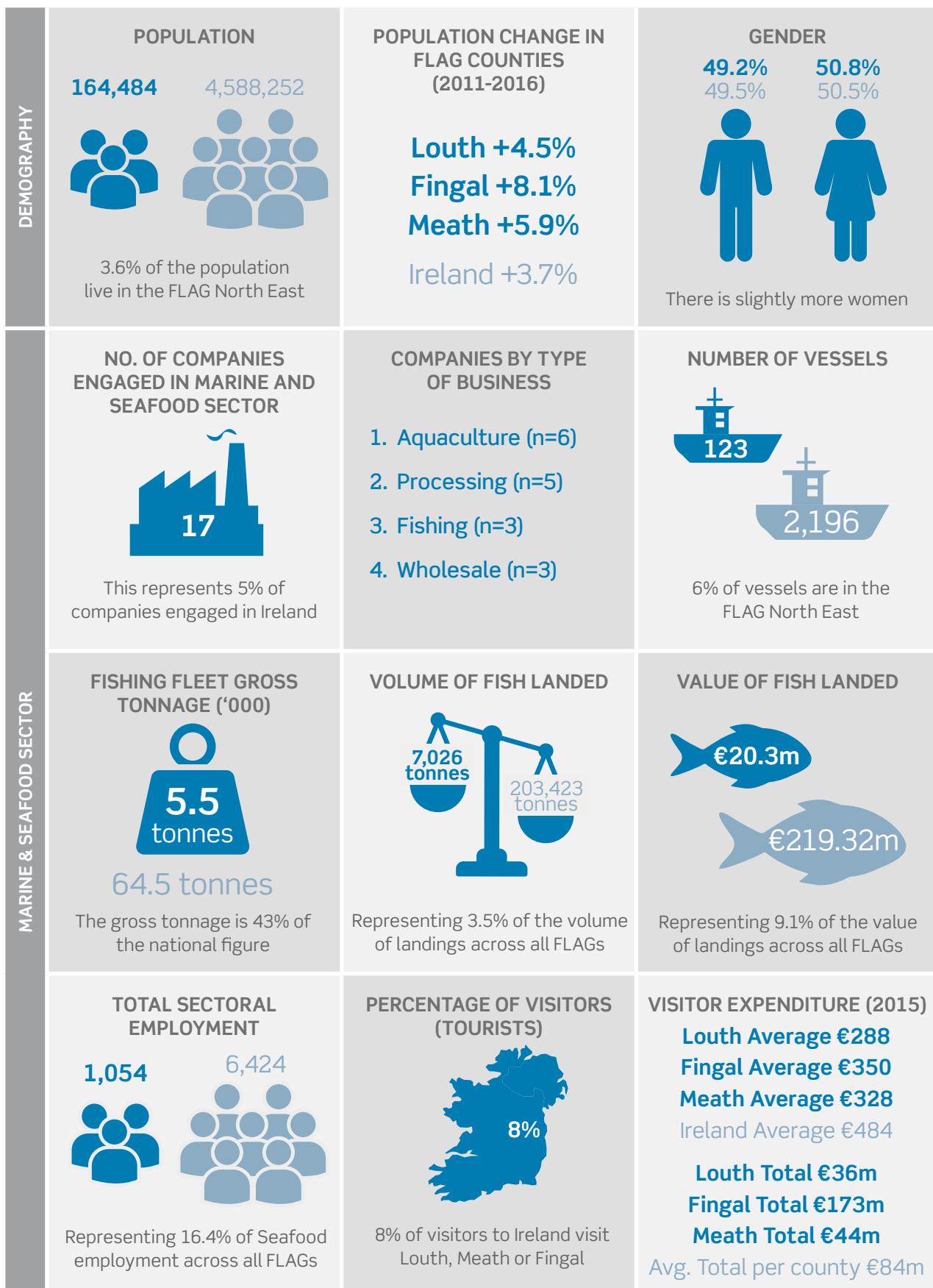
2.2 Summary of Socio-Economic Review

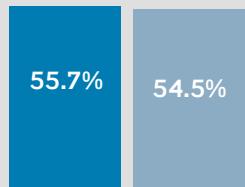
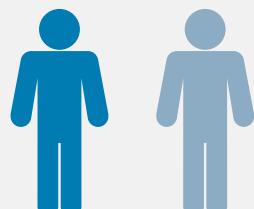
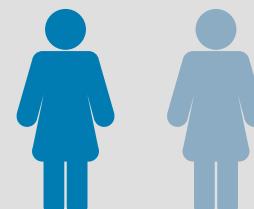
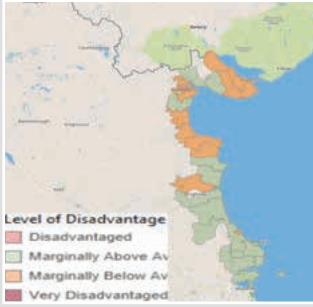
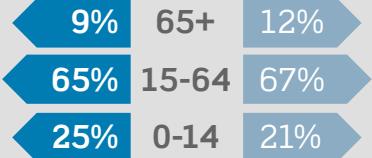
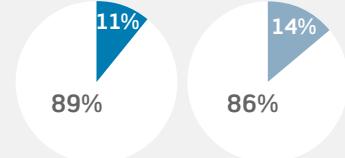
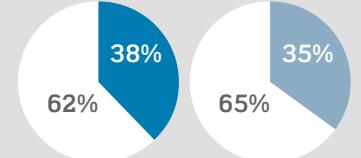
This section summarises the key findings of the desk-based socio-economic review. The salient points to note from the review are outlined below:

- There is a significantly lower older population (over-65) in the FLAG North East area (9.4% of the population) than other FLAGs (12.6% overall) and across Ireland (11.7%). However, there is a significantly larger proportion of persons aged under 15 in the FLAG North East (25.2%) in comparison to Ireland (21.3%). Almost one in three workers in the Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing sector are over the age of 65, compared to 25% across all sectors suggesting potential longer term supply issues.
- The FLAG North East has a slightly higher rate of owner occupancy (74.3% with regard to non-vacant homes) compared to the Irish average (69.8%) and also a. The FLAG North East (46.1%) has a significantly greater proportion of owner occupancy rates with mortgages than all FLAGs (36.4%) and Ireland (35.4%). The FLAG North East has a smaller private rented sector (15.2%) than all FLAGs (15.5%) and Ireland overall (18.5%).
- 10.2% of the population identify from other nations which is higher than the FLAG average and Ireland overall. The trend in the data from the previous census shows that there has been a steady increase in the number of people in the FLAG area from other Nationalities outside Ireland and the UK. This suggests a steadily increasing level of immigration into the FLAG North East Area which may present opportunities for the region.
- The FLAG North East (1.6%) has a lower proportion of persons with no formal education completed compared to than all FLAGs (1.7%). However, there is a greater proportion of persons with no formal education based on the national figure (1.4%); the prevalence of third-level education as highest level of educational attainment is more prevalent within the FLAG North East area (38.0%) compared to the national figure (34.9%).
- PACEC estimates for Q1 2016 highlight unemployment within the FLAG North East (8.5%) to be marginally higher than the national average (8.3%). Economic inactivity is considerably lower within the FLAG North East, as well as inability to work due to ill health (4.1% in FLAG North East against 4.4% in Ireland).
- Deprivation is relatively prevalent in the FLAG North East (48% of EDs lower than the national average). The proportion of electoral divisions above the national average or affluent was 53%.
- Ownership levels of fishing vessels within the FLAG North East are the lowest across all FLAG areas with 0.7 owners per 1,000 persons. In terms of tonnage however the FLAG North East has a higher gross tonnage than the South West, West and North West FLAGs, despite having fewer vessels, furthermore the FLAG North East has a higher tonnage per 1,000 persons than the North West FLAG; an area with four times the ownership levels of the FLAG North East highlighting the larger vessels owned in this area.
- The FLAG North East has the lowest number of firms per million persons across all categories of fishing related industries.
- Four of these top 20 ports in Ireland are found in the FLAG North East region making up 3% of the overall catch at these top 20 ports and 7% of the value with Howth being the largest of these ports landing 4,481 tonnes at a value of €10,753. The three Furthermore, across these 20 ports the three with the highest value per tonne of landings are Clogherhead, Balbriggan and Skerries; all of which three of these ports are located in the FLAG North East.

- Typically, across each electoral district, approximately 39.1% of respondents were Irish speaking. In addition, Portmarnock North and Holmpatrick had the largest proportion of respondents who spoke Irish (49.1% and 47.7% respectively). The lowest figures in the FLAG region were reported in Dundalk Urban and Drummullagh, both with proportions lower than 35%.
- Information is not available at a FLAG level regarding exporting, however the points below summarise the general picture.
 - The overall value of Irish seafood exports was €564 million in 2015. The largest Irish seafood export by value is pelagic (€204m, 36%), followed by crustaceans (€113m, 20%), freshwater fish (€85m, 15%), molluscs (€82m, 15%), whitefish (€53m, 9%) and fish meat and oil (€26m, 5%). Sectorally, shellfish led the way – rising 12% to €195 million; followed by salmon – where exports increased to an impressive €75 million; and whitefish – where exports grew by 7% to €53 million. The only decline in 2015 was seen in pelagics, where exports fell 7% to €204 million as a result of falling trade and market prices.
 - 70% of the seafood industry exports are as a bulk commodity, it is anticipated that this needs to be reduced to 50% by 2025 to meet increasing market demands, with seafood demand expected to increase by 50% by 2030.
 - Looking at aquaculture specifically, France remains the main market for Irish oysters accounting for over 76% of all exports, however this has decreased by 10% in 2015 identifying the need for oyster producers to diversify outside the French market. France and The Netherlands are the primary markets for rope mussels with demand from The Netherlands increasing as processors there have developed techniques for handling and packaging of rope mussels.
 - Over two thirds of Irish seafood exports in 2015 were to EU countries (€388m, 69%), while just under a fifth of exports were to Nigeria and North Africa (€98m, 17%), (€47m, 8%) were to Asia which is seen as an expanding export market for certain species and the remaining €31m was to Non-EU countries (6%).

2.3 Summary - Infographic (■ FLAG ■ National)



ECONOMY	<h3>EMPLOYMENT</h3>  <p>There is a lower proportion of people in employment than the national figure</p>	<h3>MALE UNEMPLOYMENT</h3>  <p>The male unemployment rate is lower than the national figure</p>	<h3>FEMALE UNEMPLOYMENT</h3>  <p>The female unemployment rate is in line with the national figure</p>
DEPRIVATION	<h3>SOCIAL CLASS</h3> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Managerial and Technical 30%/27% Non-manual 18%/18% Skilled Manual 15%/15% Semi-Skilled 10%/11% 	<h3>DEPRIVATION</h3>  <p>9% of FLAG North East EDs are within the top 20% most deprived in Ireland while 6% are within the top 10% most deprived</p>	
PROFILE & EDUCATION	<h3>AGE PROFILE</h3>  <p>The population is in line with the national statistics</p>	<h3>% OF POP. WITH PRIMARY EDUCATION ONLY</h3>  <p>Over one in ten people with a primary education only</p>	<h3>% OF POP. WITH THIRD LEVEL QUAL. OR ABOVE</h3>  <p>Higher portion of population with Third Level qualifications or higher</p>
HOUSEHOLDS, ACCESS & HEALTH	<h3>ONE PERSON HOUSEHOLDS</h3>  <p>There is a lower proportion of one person households than nationally</p>	<h3>ACCESS TO BROADBAND</h3>  <p>Higher proportion of the population have access to broadband than the national figure</p>	<h3>% OF POPULATION UNABLE TO WORK DUE TO HEALTH PROBLEMS</h3>  <p>A lower proportion of FLAG population are unable to work due to health problems</p>

2.4 Overview of the Consultation Process

Community Led Local Decision-making, which is a cornerstone of the LEADER bottom-up methodology for the last 20 years, enables local people to direct, design and implement appropriate local development strategy for their own area. Actions are designed from community-proposed ideas to aggregate and develop the community's economic, social and environmental resources rather than simply compensate for its problems.

Bottom-up consultation is essential at all stages of the programme's development, from planning, developing the Local Development Strategy (LDS), promotion of programme, animation, delivery of actions, assessment and evaluation of activities. Local and community consultation has formed the basis of determining all identified need in this Fisheries Local Development Strategy and will continue to form the basis for programme implementation.

The table below sets out the consultation activity undertaken by PACEC on behalf of the FLAG Board.

Table 2.1: Overview of the Consultation Process²

Details	
Number of events	5 public meetings and a 'drop-in' session for fishermen in the FLAG North East region.
Location of events	Dun Laoghaire, Howth, Dundalk, Skerries, Balbriggan and Clogherhead
Attendance at events	Over the 5 public meetings there were approximately 35 attendees.
Representation at events	Representation in the FLAG North East was made up from a number of groups: <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Representatives from local authorities made up 21% of attendees;● Economic and social partners made up 55% of attendees;● Other relevant bodies that represent civil society made up 24% of attendees.
Stakeholder Meetings	As part of a strategy development process, interviews were held with a range of key stakeholders ³ including those from the statutory sector as well as industry representatives.

The format of the community consultation events was participatory in nature to promote meaningful engagement and to ensure the active participation of the local community in identifying the challenges and opportunities present in their local areas.

2.4.1 Inclusive Process that involved key stakeholders

All consultation events were promoted and well publicised to raise awareness of the process amongst all key stakeholders. The meetings held were publicised locally using a variety of different means including advertisements in local and trade press, notices on local and regional radio, signage and posters and word of mouth. The inclusive nature of these events can be witnessed from the diverse representation amongst the attendees.

2.4.2 Multi-Sector Approach that involves co-ordination with relevant sectors

The consultation processes directly engaged with various sectoral groups covering a very broad remit of different population cohorts, activity and geographic areas of coverage. The different sectoral group interests were captured from a combination of the public consultation events, stakeholder meetings and telephone consultations.

2.4.3 Specific Methodologies for engaging with more difficult to reach groups

A number of specific methodologies were adopted to ensure the engagement of more difficult to reach groups. The meetings held early evening in order to accommodate those who may be at sea and unable to attend

² LEADER Companies, Local Authorities, Community and Industry Representatives. Other stakeholders attended the public consultation workshops.

meetings during the day. Sessions were run in local areas in order to avoid the need for consultees to travel long distances and this was important in ensuring that more remote, peripheral and isolated communities were afforded the opportunity to actively participate in the preparation of the Local Development Strategy.

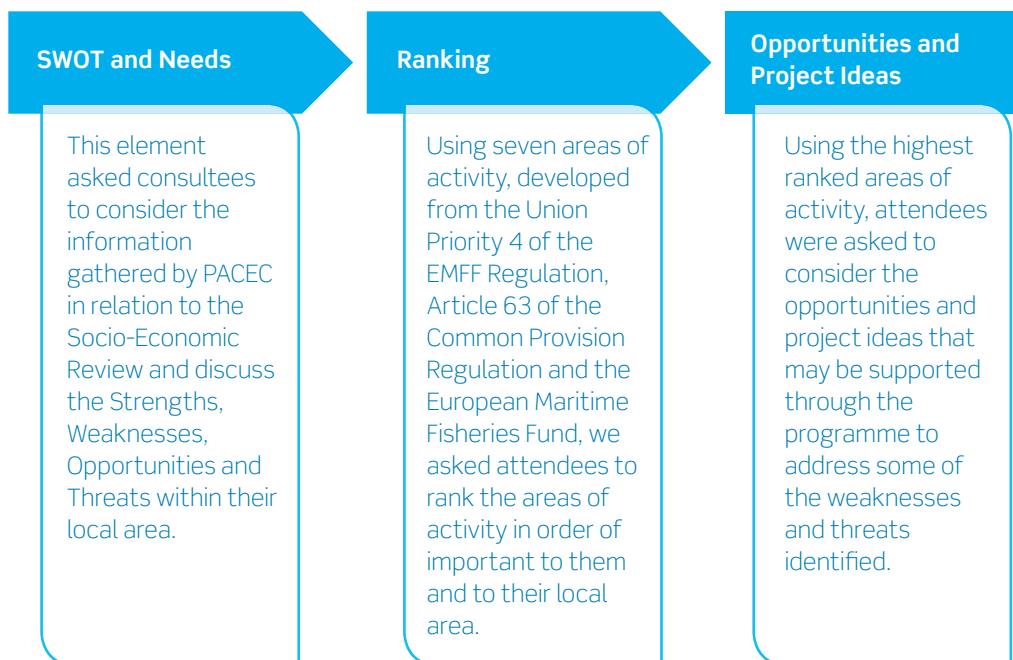
2.5 Key Findings from the Consultation Process

2.5.1 Introduction and Methodology

The public consultation and the engagement with local stakeholders is the most important element in the development of the strategy. Given this the meetings were designed such that pertinent information, that would clearly inform the strategy, was collected at each.

The engagement had three main components which are described in the diagram below.

Figure 2.1: Consultation Methodology



Source: PACEC, 2016

The outworking was a bank of information which we have used to inform the development of the strategy in constant liaison with the FLAG North East Board. A summary of the information gathered through the public consultation process is included in the sections that follow.

2.5.2 SWOT Analysis

The key findings of the public consultation were classified as strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats and through this a SWOT analysis was developed for the FLAG North East area. The key findings from this analysis are presented in Figure 2.2.

Figure 2.2: SWOT

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Significantly larger proportion of persons aged under 15 in the FLAG North East (25.2%) in comparison to Ireland (21.3%). ● The FLAG North East (1.6%) has a lower proportion of persons with no formal education completed than all FLAGs (1.7%). ● The FLAG North East (46.1%) has a significantly greater proportion of owner occupancy rates with mortgages than all FLAGs (36.4%) and Ireland (35.4%). ● Economic inactivity is considerably lower within the FLAG North East, as well as inability to work due to ill health (4.1% in FLAG North East against 4.4% in Ireland) ● There is a strong sense of cultural awareness within the area as 39.1% of residents speak Irish ● Four of these top 20 ports in Ireland are found in the FLAG North East region making up 3% of the overall catch at these top 20 ports and 7% of the value; ● The prevalence of third-level education as highest level of educational attainment is more prevalent within the FLAG North East area (38.0%) compared to the national figure (34.9%). ● Tourism is the major industry in the area ● Rich maritime heritage in the area which the local communities want to share ● Good public transport available e.g. DART ● Village atmosphere, walks, restaurants ● Good community development groups in some areas developing projects for the community ● Skerries Sea Tours, Sailing Club, Paddle Board etc. show there is potential for marine activities ● Small towns all along the coast - more than just working harbours & Marinas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Unemployment within the FLAG North East (8.5%) to be marginally higher than the national average (8.3%). ● Ownership levels within the FLAG North East are the lowest across all FLAG areas with 0.7 owners per 1,000 persons. ● Deprivation is relatively prevalent in the FLAG North East (48% of EDs lower than the national average). ● High proportion of workforce in the Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing sector are aged 65+ (34.9% compared to 25.1% across all sectors) ● The FLAG North East has the lowest number of firms per million persons across all categories of fishing related industries ● No electricity in some of the harbours in the area ● No bins provided for rubbish in some areas, resulting in litter making the area look less attractive ● Lack of entertainment facilities in some areas which reduces the appeal of those areas to both residents and visitors ● Water quality can be an issue in some parts of the FLAG area ● No / very limited accommodation in most areas which results in the North East being a “day trip” location ● Too many broken / unused boats taking up space ● Nowhere for storage of gear in some harbours ● Tidal harbour - making it difficult for visiting boats to arrive

Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● There are significant tourism opportunities for the area due to the scenic landscape ● The seafood industry in the FLAG North East area is substantial and provides significant employment opportunities due to the existing infrastructure in the area to support the industry ● The large proportion of the population aged under 15 provides an opportunity for new employment coming through which could help to diversify employment opportunities ● Potential to develop a Marina in some harbours which could lead to increased visitors ● New hotel could be coming to the area providing the opportunity for visitors to stay longer ● DART connectivity will be happening throughout the FLAG area ● Local island tours offer the opportunity to expand the current tourism offering ● Water sports opportunities - infrastructure is there in some places which could be utilised for water sports ● Seafood - no fish shops currently in some towns / villages but there is a demand for these ● New harbour committee set up in Howth which will hopefully drive growth in the harbour area ● Beaches in the area provide opportunities to expand the tourism offering if marketing is improved 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Lack of young workers in the Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing sector (only 12% aged under 35) ● The working age population in the FLAG North East area is smaller than the average for other FLAG areas and Ireland (63% compared to 67% nationally) which can limit economic growth in the area No local supply opportunities - fishermen aren't selling to local restaurants / shops ● Can't sell local product currently due to a lack of purification systems in the local area which reduces supply chain opportunities ● Lack of financial support for small fishery businesses and a lack of mentoring or advice ● Lack of infrastructure can limit the potential of added value for fishermen and also for tourism related activities. ● The industry is viewed by some locally as being within decline, which may reduce attractiveness of employment and opportunities within the sector ● A number of the small harbours are falling into disrepair leading to higher maintenance and operating costs; ● Environmental designations and Special Area of Conservation status seen as being restrictive to economic development; ● Licencing and restrictions on dual-licencing are a threat to smaller operators in their ability to diversify ● Health and safety regulations must be viewed as an essential cost of operation, or else there is the risk of loss of life/injury. ● Global warming, beach and water pollution and coastal erosion are all threats to the physical infrastructure and way of life.

2.5.3 Ranking

The key element of the consultation exercise was the ranking of the Areas of Activity in order of importance and priority for the FLAG. The table below details the out workings of this process including the overall assessment of the ranking of areas based on feedback from the consultation process.

Table 2.2: Ranking of Areas of Activities

Area of Activity	Overall Ranking
1. Adding Value to Fishery and Aquaculture Products	3
2. Job Creation/Maintenance	1
3. Supporting Innovation and Diversification	2
4. Lifelong Learning & Attracting Young People	4
5. Promoting Environmental Assets	7
6. Promoting Social Wellbeing and Cultural Heritage	4
7. Strengthening Role and Governance	6

Source: PACEC, 2016

Table 2.2 indicates that across all of the consultation activity:

- Job creation and maintenance was identified as the highest ranked priority area;
- Adding value to fisheries and aquaculture products and supporting innovation and diversification were identified as the 2nd and 3rd most important areas for the FLAG;
- Lifelong learning and attracting young people and promoting social well-being and cultural heritage were identified as the joint 4th most important area;
- Strengthening the role and governance were identified as the 6th most important areas; and
- Promoting environmental assets was identified as the least important area for the FLAG board.

After the consultation exercise and taking into account feedback from the consultation meetings the areas of activity were refined and remodelled to better reflect the framework of activities. The main change in the framework is that 'creating and maintain jobs in coastal areas' was seen as an overarching goal and that all of the other Areas of Activity could contribute to. In addition, another area was added in relation to the development of marine tourism and diversification. The outcome of this process is displayed below.

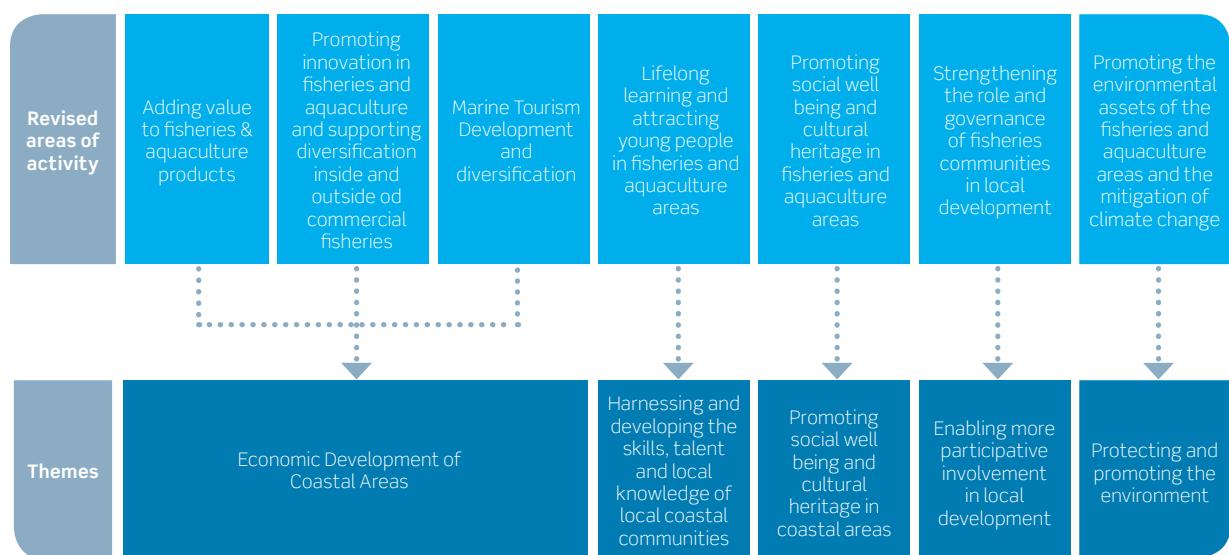
Figure 2.3: Refinement of the Areas of Activity



Source: PACEC, 2016

Continuing the development of the framework it was acknowledged that some of the areas above were overlapping and could be grouped together to streamline the focus of the strategy to be developed. PACEC, in consultation with the FLAG Board, developed five themes for which the prioritised areas of activity would fit. The breakdown of these themes is detailed in figure 2.3.

Figure 2.4: Areas of Activity to Themes



Source: PACEC, 2016

The five themes detailed above are the bedrock on which the strategy is built. All of the proceeding sections of the strategy use the themes detailed.

2.5.4 Project Ideas / Opportunities

The final element of the consultation work considered the opportunities and project ideas that attendees had in relation to the areas of activity. Using the themes detailed above we have included the tables below a summary of the key needs and project concepts against each theme.

Table 2.3: Economic Development of Coastal Areas

Economic Development of Coastal Areas	
Adding Value to Fisheries and Aquaculture	
	Throughout the consultation period, the following needs were identified:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Adding value through improved infrastructure <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Need for improved landing facilities at smaller piers and harbours e.g. (cranes / hoists for removing catch from boats more quickly, storage facilities and ice to ensure product remains fresh, equipment for boats to allow catch to be frozen at sea) - In addition, there was a need for basic amenities such as electricity, water, toilets and showers in the harbours in order to assist fishermen. ● Adding value through local processing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Need to develop and encourage local processing of fisheries and aquaculture products so that the full value of the product is retained in the local economy - this includes project concepts such as on-site crab clawing and lobster tanks; - Need to consider alternative processing i.e. improving existing products through existing traditional processing e.g. filleting, salting, drying, smoking etc. or through new processes; - Need to consider the development of processing units for product testing and development at a local level; and - Need to develop new products for local market and for new export markets particularly in Asia and Middle East. 	

Economic Development of Coastal Areas

- Adding value through improved product offering
 - Need to promote local produce further through: improving the appearance, marketing and packaging of local products; using official quality labels and symbols (e.g. Traditional Specialty Guaranteed); using eco-labelling and organic labelling; exploring new supply chains and improving local supply chains; improved collaboration with local restaurants and shops in the FLAG area; research and feasibility studies on new methods..

Diversification and Innovation

Limited availability of jobs in coastal areas is a major issue resulting in lack of employment, underemployment and leading to decline and contraction of coastal areas. Key to the rejuvenation of coastal areas is the creation of new enterprises through diversification and innovation.

The FLAG North East has an abundance of potential for tourism activities to be developed in the area e.g. watersports and boat trips. Based on the feedback received, there is a high degree of footfall throughout the FLAG area however there is a lack of activities for the visitors.

Some of the needs identified in relation to this include:

- Support for business diversification and development
- Need to encourage entrepreneurship and business startup through idea exploration in terms of new products or innovative methods, through feasibility study and business case development;
- Need to provide and support on-going mentoring for local people and agencies that can provide soft support (e.g. training to assist fishermen in applying for funding)
- Need to support diversification into new areas such as marine tourism, heritage and arts as numerous opportunities have been identified through the public consultation

Marine Tourism

Tourism is one of the drivers of the North East economy and a key driver of employment in the local area, particularly for younger people. Tourism also delivers substantial social and community benefits, as a significant number of tourism businesses in the FLAG North East area are micro-enterprises that are embedded in rural and coastal communities. Some of the key needs in relation to marine tourism included:

- Developing the tourism offering
 - The critical need identified was a lack of signage and marketing across the whole of the FLAG North East area. This is vital to develop heritage trails, seafood trails and cultural information and build on current initiatives such as the Ancient East trail;
 - Need to support seafood festivals and coastal community festivals - a number of these events happen throughout the FLAG area each year;
 - There is a lack of accommodation across the FLAG area which is pushing the area towards being a day trip destination as opposed to a multi-day holiday destination.
- Enhancing the Tourism Infrastructure
 - The key need is for support for signage and information boards to enhance existing tourism offerings
 - Need for support improvement to marine infrastructure e.g. pier to improve safety and facilities for tourists and fishermen and to solve issues regarding shared usage for tourism and fishing/aquaculture;
 - Need for improvements to marine infrastructure in relation to pontoons and marinas and ensuring that access to water is safe and accessible for all including those with disabilities;
- Marketing and Promoting the Tourism Offering
 - Support for the animation and marketing of tourism products;
 - Support for the development of networks and clusters to encourage local tourism business to work more closely together and also work with other local businesses e.g. hotels, restaurants and local shops.

Table 2.4: Harnessing the Skills, Talent and Knowledge of Local Coastal Communities

Harnessing and Developing the Skills, Talent and Knowledge of Local Coastal Communities
<p>Developing Skills in Local Coastal Communities</p> <p>Those involved in fishing and aquaculture are, by the nature of the industry, highly skilled with regard to marine life, eco-systems and bio-toxins as well practical skills such as navigation, boat management etc. However, the fishing and aquaculture community also have significant knowledge of heritage and historic events which have happened in coastal areas. Some of the needs in relation to this included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Developing Skills in Fisheries and Aquaculture Areas<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Need to support those involved in fishing and aquaculture in training and upskilling;- Need to support the development of basic skills- Need to provide assistance for fishermen in terms of applying for funding and raising awareness of the opportunities available to them● Promoting the knowledge and experience present in local coastal areas<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Need to support the exchange of knowledge between older and young generations to ensure that this local history is not lost
<p>Attracting Young People to Fisheries and Coastal Areas</p> <p>Like many rural and peripheral locations, coastal areas struggle to retain young people in the local area. Partly this is due to a lack of employment opportunities with many leaving for education and not returning, however many young people are actually not aware of the opportunities within local coastal areas that may be an attraction and encouragement for them to return. Some of the needs identified included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Introducing young people to the marine environment early<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Need to support the development of educational resources to enable children and young people to explore and learn about the marine environment;- Need to support the development of information on the career opportunities related to the marine sector (e.g. fishing, aquaculture, tourism, scientific roles i.e. marine biologist etc.)- Need to support existing infrastructure which invites and encourages young people to interact and learn about the marine sector.● Supporting young people training in marine sectors<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Need to support young people through grants for taking courses in marine sector skills- Need to encourage the development of apprenticeships for young people seeking to gain employment in the fisheries and aquaculture sectors;- Need to support young entrepreneurs who have business ideas for coastal areas.

Table 2.5: Promoting Social Well-Being and Cultural Heritage in Coastal Areas

Promoting Social Well-Being and Cultural Heritage in Coastal Areas
Improving Social Well-Being in Coastal Communities
Issues related to social isolation and access to service came up during the consultation process. In particular there were issues raised in relation isolation amongst older single men in coastal areas as well as access to services for fishing families. Some of the needs highlighted included:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Lack of services in coastal communities<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Support for the development and sustainability of existing coastal community assets;- Targeted initiatives to address isolation such as fishermen living alone e.g. Men's Sheds type initiatives;- Supported needed for vulnerable people in coastal communities;- Need to develop services linked to the coast e.g. coastal walks which are accessible, community health and well-being projects.● Promotion and Development of Coastal Cultural Heritage<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Support for historical events and exhibitions in relation to coastal heritage- Support for the development of heritage centres- Support for research into local history- Support for festival and other activities to promote seafood and the marine;- Support for information boards and signage in relation to points of interest- Development of coastal heritage trails.

Table 2.6: Enabling more Participative Involvement in the Governance of Fisheries

Enabling more Participative Involvement in the Governance of Fisheries
Throughout the consultation events there was a strong sense of disconnect between authorities and decision makers and local fisheries and aquaculture. In particular there was a need to improve the capacity of local fisheries to better govern themselves and to be involved in decision making.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Improving the capacity of local fishing and aquaculture organisations<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Need to improve the co-operation and networking being local fisheries;- Need to improve the capacity in local fisheries through training in relation to good governance and group management- Need to improve the training and support offered to local fisheries organisations.- Need to improve the networking and consultation between local actors and authorities and agencies.

Table 2.7: Protecting and Promoting the Environment

Protecting and Promoting the Environment
<p>The North East is one of the most scenic, if underrated, parts of Ireland and boasts many natural areas of outstanding beauty. This provides both opportunities and issues for the local area. Whilst there are opportunities to promote and exploit these areas as attractions for tourists there are challenges in relation to the protection and maintenance of these regions as well. Some of the needs identified include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Promoting the Natural Environment<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Need to improve the offering exploiting the natural environment through information, wildlife tours, walking routes etc.- Need to improve the access to and safety of existing sites to enable more people to enjoy them without damaging the environment● Protection the Environment<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Need to raise awareness of bio-diversity in coastal areas- Need to protect inland water courses such as rivers and lake which fall into the FLAG areas;- Need to protect coastal areas from floods and storms;- Need to invest in community based conservation trails.

2.6 Summary

This chapter presents all of the desk based and consultation data collected which will form the basis of the strategy going forward. The socio-economic review considered the data and statistical evidence in relation to the FLAG region. In addition, the consultation work including the public consultation and stakeholder meetings collected the views of c. 45 people (approximately 35 in public meetings and 10 stakeholder meetings) in relation to the challenges, weakness and strengthens of the region, their priorities for the FLAG Programme and the project ideas that they had.

Using this information, the next chapter of the strategy now considers the overall prioritisation of areas to be supported under the FLAG North East Programme based on a number of components. The intervention logic is then progressed with the development of objectives and actions.

3 STRATEGY AND OBJECTIVES

3.1 Introduction

The following section uses the findings from the needs analysis and from a prioritisation exercise conducted during the public consultations to develop a set of strategic objectives to guide the strategy.

3.2 Consistency with the Overarching Strategy set out in the Operational Programme

As per section 5.1.1 of the Seafood Development Programme Operational Programme this strategy has been developed to be consistent with the overarching strategy set out in the operational programme. In particular, the strategy has been developed to meet the requirements that the evaluation committee will assess the strategy against.

More over the strategy has been developed recognising the aims of the overarching strategy in relation to Union Priority 4, namely in relation to the employment created and maintained, and will seek through all actions to promote these outcomes so as they may be achieved by 2023.

3.3 Level of Change Required

The FLAG North East Region is has a strong history of fishing and aquaculture and a having a strong coastal community. This is being threatened by a number of issues including:

- A decline in fisheries;
- Population migration away from coastal areas to urban centres for opportunities in education and employment; and
- An aging population.

However, there are also areas which are once again promoting coastal areas these include tourism, the revival of food tourism and artisan products and crafts.

The FLAG North East Programme aims to support fishing dependent coastal communities. The programme aims to support the development of coastal areas by supporting the fishing and aquaculture industry as well as coastal community groups to upskill, diversify, innovate regenerate and exploit the opportunities that are available.

The overall aim of the strategy is to see the rejuvenation of coastal communities.

3.4 Prioritisation of Identified Areas of Activity

3.4.1 Introduction

The process for prioritising the areas of activity was an iterative one ensuring that all views elicited were heard and that relevant internal and external documents were objectively examined. During the public consultation, attendees were asked to prioritise seven areas of activity which were derived from the EMFF Operational Programme. From these seven areas of activity, five key themes have been developed which reflect the results of that prioritisation exercise. It was also evident from this process that the local knowledge on the ground and in all the relevant organisations and agencies was consistent with the comprehensive statistical information available and analysed.

The FLAG Board were heavily involved in the prioritisation, receiving all information from the public consultation meetings and having workshops with the consultants.

3.4.2 Prioritisation

The following section considers the prioritisation of the areas of activity which were developed from the following sources:

- Union Priority 4 of the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund Regulations;
- Article 63 of the Common Provision Regulation; and
- The Ireland Seafood Development Programme Priorities.

The prioritisation exercise was carried out by examining the following four criteria:

- Strength of support for the need (using information from ranking exercises carried out within the public meetings);
- Strength of the evidence of need (using information gathered through the socio-economic review of the FLAG Region);
- Fit with the Seafood Development Programme 2014-2020 - Union Priority 4; and
- Opportunities/Project Pipeline.

Each of these criteria were assigned a weighting and a score between 1 and 5. The details of the scoring are included in the table below.

Table 3.1: Scoring Methodology

Criteria	Weighting		Scoring Rationale
	Weighting	Rationale	
Strength of support for the need	25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● This weighting reflects the importance attributed to the information provided through the public engagement. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● A stronger score will be awarded for this criteria if the findings from the public consultation have highlighted this area of activity as a key priority.
Strength of evidence of the need	30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● This criterion has been awarded the highest weighting as it is based on the socio-economic review of the FLAG region which supports the need for intervention under certain areas of activity. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● A stronger score will be awarded for this criteria if the findings from the socio-economic review have highlighted this area of activity as a key priority.
Fit with Seafood Development Strategy 2014-2020	20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Given that the areas of activity are derived from the EMFF Regulations all of them fit with the SDP to a certain degree. This criterion has been allocated the lowest weighting for this reason. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● A stronger score will be awarded for this criteria if the area of activity fits with the priorities and objectives of the Seafood Development Programme. The highest score is awarded to those which will directly contribute to UP4.
Opportunities/Project Pipeline	25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The project pipeline is an indication of the opportunities that the FLAG will have to spend money on projects under a particular area of activity. Therefore, a weighting of 25 has been attributed to this criterion. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● A stronger score will be awarded for this criteria if through the stakeholder engagement a larger pipeline of potential projects has been identified.

Source: PACEC, 2016

The prioritisation of the areas of activity has led to the following outcome.

Table 3.2: Summary of Prioritisation

Area of Activity	Score	Ranking
Adding value to fisheries and aquaculture products	375	3rd
Creating and maintaining jobs in coastal areas	475	1st
Promoting innovation in fisheries and aquaculture and supporting diversification inside and outside commercial fisheries	400	2nd
Lifelong learning and attracting young people in fisheries and aquaculture areas	350	4th
Promoting the environmental assets of the fisheries and aquaculture areas and mitigation of climate change	225	7th
Promoting social well-being and cultural heritage in fisheries and aquaculture areas	275	5th
Strengthening the role and governance of fisheries communities in local development	250	6th

Source: PACEC, 2016

The prioritisation exercise has established a ranking for all of the seven areas of activity. This is broadly in line with the findings from the consultation exercise.

Whilst there is no requirement for the strategy to contain all of these areas, the FLAG Board have considered this and have decided to pursue all areas, however the prioritisation will be taken into account when it comes to the allocation of the funding. In addition, the FLAG Board considered that the interlinkages between adding value, job creation and maintenance and innovation and diversification meant that these would work best in co-ordination and therefore collected them under one thematic heading of Economic Development in Coastal Areas.

In consultation with the FLAG Board it was agreed that the strategy would pursue the five thematic areas as detailed in Figure 3.3. The next sections of this Chapter set out the development of the intervention logic.

3.5 Intervention Logic of the FLAG North East Strategy

3.5.1 Components of the Intervention Logic

The intervention logic for the FLAG North East Strategy sets out the layers of the programme. The table below sets out a description of each element of the intervention logic.

The components of the intervention logic have been developed using the latest guidance from FARNET “Results Orientated Community Led Local Development”³.

Table 3.3: Components of the Intervention Logic

Component	Description
Vision	The vision describes the overall goal of the entire programme. This is a high level, often qualitative metric.
Area of Activity	The areas of activity are the areas which the FLAG programme can legally support and are based on the EMFF and Common Provision Regulation documents as well as the Irish Seafood Development Programme.
Theme	The theme in this instance sets out a group of areas of activity which are similar in nature and which can lead or support the achievement of joint goals.
Objective	The objectives are high level outcomes which intervention under a particular theme aims to achieve. These are often macro-level and qualitative.

³ <https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/fpfis/cms/farnet/publications/guides>

Component	Description
Action	The actions are the direct supports that will be provided to applicants in order to enable them to complete project which will contribute to the achievement of the earlier components of the intervention logic.
Output	The outputs describe the tangible impact of the programme and are often specific to individual projects. These are quantified and used to assess the performance of the programme overall.

Source: PACEC, 2016

The remainder of Chapter 4 sets out the components above for the FLAG North East Strategy.

3.5.2 Strategy Vision

The FLAG North East will have a sustainable economy through the capitalisation of existing, and newly created opportunities.

3.5.3 Objectives and Supporting Actions

3.5.3.1 Introduction to Indicators

An indicator is a tool that defines, measures and values progress in the implementation of the local strategy. This information will help the FLAG to determine whether and to what extent the objectives are being reached and to review and update the local strategy⁴. There are a number of different types of indicators including impact⁵, result and output indicators. The types most relevant to the FLAG programme are:

- Result Indicators – these measure products or services delivered as a consequence of implementing a set of activities. These have been defined as per the overall Seafood Development Programme 2014-2020.
- Output Indicators – these measure the immediate tangible product of support. These have been defined for each objective and action of the FLAG Local Development Strategy.

3.5.3.2 Result Indicators

Result indicators measure the products or services delivered as a consequence of implementing the set of actions that are outlined in this strategy. The FLAG Programme is funded under Union Priority four of the Irish Seafood Development Programme and therefore must report against a set of targets at both the mid-point of the programme (2019) and the ex-post evaluation (2023). All FLAGs must contribute to these overall objectives and therefore they are standard across all FLAG Regions. The value of the indicators however are dependent on the allocations to each FLAG region and therefore these vary between FLAG Regions.

The two overarching targets that the FLAG programme must achieve are in relation to FTE jobs created and maintained. Since these specific result indicators are cross-cutting rather than tied to any specific theme or action, they have been included as result indicators.

⁴ FARNET Factsheet 2 - Results Orientated CLLD in Fisheries Areas – Selecting the Indicators and Setting Targets.

⁵ these measure the effect of the intervention on the wider environment and its contribution to wider policy objectives

Table 3.4: Indicator Tables – Programme Level Result Indicators

Programme level indicators: €1,384,000 across the lifetime of the programme *assume that Theme 1 – Economic Development makes the largest contribution so indicators based on this allocation of 77.8% of the programme budget (i.e. €1,076,444)						
Action	Financial Allocation	Indicator(s)	Measurement Unit	Milestone (2019)	Target (2023)	Estimated Cost per Job
1. FTE Jobs created	€1,076,444	# of FTE Jobs created	#	9	19	€55,000
1. FTE jobs maintained	€1,076,444	# of FTE jobs maintained	#	24	48	€22,300

These are complemented by output indicators across all of the themes for the FLAG North East.

3.5.3.3 Objectives, Actions and Output Indicators

The following tables set out the detail of the intervention logic for the strategy. This includes the indicators which will be used to measure the output of the FLAG North East Programme. In particular, these contain two target values as follows:

- Milestone (2019) - this sets out the proportion of the final target value that is expected to be achieved by the mid-point of the programme in 2019. This will be used to measure the success of the programme during the mid-term review of the overall FLAG Programme and the whole EMFF Programme for Ireland; and
- Target (2023) - this sets out the final value of the target to be achieved throughout the lifetime of the programme. This is the value that will be used to measure the level of success the programme has been able to achieve overall and will be used for the official programme reporting and evaluation.

Table 3.5: Theme 1, Objective 1

Theme 1 - Economic Development of Coastal Areas (77.8% of FLAG Programme, €1,076,444)					
Objective 1 - To assist local fishermen and small businesses to develop added value projects (€322,933)					
Rationale for the Objective					
The economy of the FLAG North East can be sustained through adding further value to the fishing and aquaculture activities currently being undertaken in the area. The public consultation identified a number of potential projects which could be funded under this objective which would create and maintain employment in the area. There are also synergies to be exploited between the local fishermen and the local fish shops and restaurants which are in the supply chain.					
Action	Description	Financial Allocation € (%)	Indicator(s)	Milestone (2019)	Target (2023)
1. Assist fishermen and local businesses with small-scale added value projects	Actions to support the development of new products and processes for adding further value to fish caught. This will typically be small-scale projects such as lobster tanks or purification systems	€96,880 (30%)	# of businesses supported	2	4
2. Improving product packaging, appearance and marketing	Support for improving the appearance, marketing and packaging of local products; using official quality labels and symbols to promote added value of the product exploring new supply chains and improving local supply chains; improved collaboration with partners and actors in the supply chain; research and feasibility studies on market demand, shelf life, catchment areas etc. Investment in quality labels should only be approved if it relates to value add activities (not protected geographical indications)	€32,293 (10%)	# of businesses supported	1	2
3. Improving pier and harbour infrastructure in order to improve working conditions	Support to improve landing facilities at smaller piers and harbours e.g. (cranes / hoists for removing catch from boats more quickly, storage facilities and ice to ensure product remains fresh). Further to this, a number of harbours have been identified as not having basic services such as water, electricity and toilets/shower facilities.	€193,760 (60%)	# of marine infrastructure improvements	4	6

Table 3.6: Theme 1, Objective 2

Theme 1 - Economic Development of Coastal Areas (77.8% of FLAG Programme, €1,076,444)					
Objective 2 - Improve tourism offering in the area to encourage longer stays (€592,044)					
Rationale for the Objective					
Tourism is a key part of the North East economy and through the public consultation a number of potential projects were identified. The area has been identified as a daytrip location but in order to increase expenditure in the area, new projects are needed to improve the overall tourism offering.					
Action	Description	Financial Allocation € (%)	Indicator(s)	Milestone (2019)	Target (2023)
4. Marine tourism infrastructure	Support for: piers to improve safety and facilities and issues regarding shared usage for tourism and fishing/ aquaculture; pontoons and marines and ensuring that access to water is safe and accessible for all including those with disabilities.	€355,227 (60%)	# of marine infrastructure improvements	5	8
5. Developing the Tourism Offering to move away from a daytrip location	Support to develop the tourism offering including water based activities such as a “blue-way”, walks, cycling trails such as the green-way, heritage trails such as the Ancient East or seafood trails, eco-tourism and wildlife tourism including bird watching, seals and other marine species; seafood festivals and coastal community festivals. In addition to the “activity tourism”, it was suggested that projects such as restaurants and local fish shops around the harbour can be limited in some areas and these would add to the attraction of harbours.	€177,613 (30%)	# of marine leisure / tourism activities supported	5	9
6. Marketing and Selling the North East	One of the key aspects lacking from the tourism market in the North East is a uniform marketing campaign for the FLAG NE area. A marketing plan which stretches across the three counties would tie the area together and could encourage longer trips by encouraging visitors to go to a number of destinations along the coast.	€59,204 (10%)	# of marine leisure / tourism activities supported	2	5

Table 3.7: Theme 1, Objective 3

Theme 1 - Economic Development of Coastal Areas (77.8% of FLAG Programme, €1,076,444)					
Objective 3 - To support fishermen which have ideas for diversification (€161,467)					
Rationale for the Objective					
In order to improve the sustainability of jobs in the fisheries and aquaculture sector in the face of challenges such as quotas, it is important that fishermen which have ideas for diversification, whether this is into other parts of the supply chain (e.g. restaurants or processing) or into a new sector such as tourism. This objective is separate from the other two objectives under this theme as it is intended specifically for fishermen to develop these projects.					
Action	Description	Financial Allocation € (%)	Indicator(s)	Milestone (2019)	Target (2023)
7. Diversification into other areas in the supply chain including processing, shops or restaurants	This action will support fishermen who have ambitions of either branching out to processing activities or further down the supply chain such as fish shops or restaurants. It is likely though that any projects which are shops or restaurants will include some aspect of processing.	€96,880 (60%)	# of businesses supported	3	8
8. Diversification into tourism related activities	This action will assist fishermen that have ideas for tourism projects in the area. A number of projects were identified during the public consultation which could fall into this category.	€64,587 (40%)	# of businesses supported	2	5

Table 3.8: Theme 2, Objective 1

Theme 2 - Harnessing and Developing the Skills and Knowledge of the Local Coastal Community (8.3% of FLAG Programme, €115,333)					
Objective 1 - To help fishermen develop their skills and capacity for diversification (€57,667)					
Rationale for the Objective					
Those involved in fishing and aquaculture are, by the nature of the industry, highly skilled with regard to marine life, eco-systems and bio-toxins as well practical skills such as navigation, boat management etc. However, the fishing and aquaculture community also have significant knowledge of heritage and historic events which have happened in coastal areas.					
Action	Description	Financial Allocation €	Indicator(s)	Milestone (2019)	Target (2023)
9. Developing Skills in Fisheries and Aquaculture Areas	Support for those involved in fishing and aquaculture to partake in: training and upskilling; advanced training and specialist courses; and the development and sharing of basic marine skills in line with the Leech Report. Training supported by the FLAG should complement / not duplicate training already provided by BIM.	€34,600 (60%)	# of participants on training courses	10	20

Theme 2 - Harnessing and Developing the Skills and Knowledge of the Local Coastal Community (8.3% of FLAG Programme, €115,333)					
10. Knowledge Transfer in Coastal Areas	Supporting the exchange of knowledge between older and young generations and ensuring that information on coastal heritage is not lost to young generations.	€11,533 (20%)	# of educational / information schemes	1	2
11. Developing the capacity of fishermen for diversification and innovation	This action will help to support fishermen which are considering diversifying into a new area. The support would include business start-up training and legal advice in line with the Leech Report. Training supported by the FLAG should complement / not duplicate training already provided by BIM.	€11,533 (20%)	# of participants on training courses	0	2

Table 3.9: Theme 2, Objective 2

Theme 2 - Harnessing and Developing the Skills and Knowledge of the Local Coastal Community (8.3% of FLAG Programme, €115,333)					
Objective 2 - To increase knowledge of potential employment opportunities in fisheries and aquaculture among young people (€57,667)					
Rationale for the Objective					
Action	Description	Financial Allocation € (%)	Indicator(s)	Milestone (2019)	Target (2023)
12. Educating young people about the marine environment	Support for the development of educational resources to enable children and young people to explore and learn about the marine environment and support for the development of information on the career opportunities related to the marine sector.	€23,067 (40%)	# of projects supported to promote local fishing heritage, knowledge and culture	1	2
13. Provide training for young people wishing to enter the fisheries and aquaculture sector	Support for young people through grants for taking courses in marine sector skills, to encourage the development of apprenticeships for young people seeking to gain employment in the fisheries and aquaculture sectors and to support young entrepreneurs who have business ideas for coastal areas in line with the Leech Report. Training supported by the FLAG should complement / not duplicate training already provided by BIM.	€34,600 (60%)	# of participants on training courses	10	20

Table 3.10: Theme 3, Objective 1

Theme 3 - Promoting Social Well-Being and Coastal Cultural Heritage (8.3% of FLAG Programme, €115,333)					
Objective 1 - To improve social wellbeing in coastal areas (€69,200)					
Rationale for the Objective					
Action	Description	Financial Allocation € (%)	Indicator(s)	Milestone (2019)	Target (2023)
14. Improving access to services in coastal areas	Support for the development and sustainability of existing coastal community assets including: targeted initiatives to address isolation such as fishermen living alone e.g. Men's Sheds type initiatives; supports for vulnerable people in coastal communities and services linked to the coast e.g. coastal walks which are accessible, community health and well-being projects.	€69,200 (100%)	# of projects which improve quality of life or social well-being	1	2

Table 3.11: Theme 3, Objective 2

Theme 3 - Promoting Social Well-Being and Coastal Cultural Heritage (8.3% of FLAG Programme, €115,333)					
Objective 2 - To promote & share the unique cultural heritage of the North East (€46,133)					
Rationale for the Objective					
Action	Description	Financial Allocation € (%)	Indicator(s)	Milestone (2019)	Target (2023)
15. Ensuring the survival of coastal heritage	Support for: maritime museums, historical events and exhibitions in relation to coastal heritage; the development of heritage centres; research into local history; festivals and other activities to promote seafood and the marine; information boards and signage in relation to points of interest and of coastal heritage trails.	€46,133 (100%)	# of projects supported to promote local fishing heritage, knowledge and culture	2	3

Table 3.12: Theme 4, Objective 1

Theme 4 - Enabling more Participative Involvement in the Governance of Fisheries (2.8% of FLAG Programme, €38,444)					
Objective 1 - To improve the capacity of fisheries communities in relation to self-governance (€26,911)					
Rationale for the Objective					
There was a need to improve the capacity of local fisheries to better govern themselves and to be involved in decision making. Support under this objective aims to provide local fishing and aquaculture groups with the skills and training required to enable better local governance.					
Action	Description	Financial Allocation € (%)	Indicator(s)	Milestone (2019)	Target (2023)
16. Capacity Building in Fisheries and Aquaculture Organisations	Support for: capacity building in local fisheries through training in relation to good governance and group management and training and support offered to local fisheries organisations, in line with the Leech Report. Training supported by the FLAG should complement / not duplicate training already provided by BIM ⁶ or available through the Inshore Fisheries Scheme or the Regional / National Inshore Fisheries Forums.	€26,911 (100%)	# of community/ user groups with enhanced capacity	1	3

Table 3.13: Theme 4, Objective 2

Theme 4 - Enabling more Participative Involvement in the Governance of Fisheries (2.8% of FLAG Programme, €38,444)					
Objective 2 - To improve co-operation between fisheries communities and other community groups (€11,533)					
Rationale for the Objective					
There was a strong sense of disconnect between authorities and decision makers, local fisheries and aquaculture and local community groups. Support under this objective aims to improve the linkages and networking between local groups and decision makers.					
Action	Description	Financial Allocation € (%)	Indicator(s)	Milestone (2019)	Target (2023)
17. Developing the voice of fisheries and aquaculture	Support to: improve the co-operation and networking being local fisheries and improve the networking and consultation between local actors and authorities and agencies	€11,533 (100%)	# of community/ user groups established	0	1

6 An overview of training and support schemes offered by BIM can be found in the Appendices.

Table 3.14: Theme 5, Objective 1

Theme 5 - Protecting and Promoting the Environment, (2.8% of FLAG Programme, €38,444)					
Objective 1 - To support the promotion and protection of environmental assets (€19,222)					
Rationale for the Objective					
The FLAG North East area is a scenic part of Ireland however it does not receive the same level of marketing as other parts of Ireland. The scenery boasts many natural areas of outstanding beauty. There are considerable opportunities to promote and use the natural environment to assist in economic growth particularly in the tourism sector.					
Action	Description	Financial Allocation € (%)	Indicator(s)	Milestone (2019)	Target (2023)
18. Promoting the Natural Environment	Support for: improving the offering exploiting the natural environment through information, wildlife tours, “green-way” cycle routes, walking routes and improving the access to and safety of existing sites to enable more people to enjoy them without damaging the environment.	€19,222 (100%)	# of projects supported to enhance environmental conservation, awareness and protection	1	2

Table 3.15: Theme 5, Objective 2

Theme 5 - Protecting and Promoting the Environment, (2.8% of FLAG Programme €38,444)					
Objective 2 - To support measures which aim to mitigate against climate change (€19,222)					
Rationale for the Objective					
Whilst there are opportunities to promote and exploit these areas as attractions for tourists there are challenges in relation to the protection and maintenance of these regions as well. Support under this objective aims to support measures aimed at mitigating against the effects of climate change.					
Action	Description	Financial Allocation € (%)	Indicator(s)	Milestone (2019)	Target (2023)
19. Protecting the Environment	Support for: raising awareness of bio-diversity in coastal areas; protecting inland water courses such as rivers and lake which fall into the FLAG areas; protecting coastal areas from floods and storms; investing in community based conservation trails.	€19,222 (100%)	# of projects supported to enhance environmental conservation, awareness and protection	1	2

Table 3.15: Cross-Cutting Theme - Networking and Co-Operation

Cross-Cutting Theme - Networking and Co-Operation - €50,000					
Rationale for the Objective					
Action	Description	Financial Allocation €	Indicator(s)	Milestone (2019)	Target (2023)
	To support networking and co-operation between FLAGs at a regional, national and international level	€50,000 (100%)	n/a	n/a	n/a

4 COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE STRATEGY

4.1 Introduction

This section sets out an overview of community involvement in the development of this strategy including details of public consultation events held (location, attendance at each and the sectors represented) as well as information on stakeholder consultation undertaken to inform the strategy.

This details the number, organisations and categorisation of all of those consulted with in the development of the strategy.

4.2 Overview of Public Consultation Events

The table below sets out the overview of the public consultation events held

Table 4.1: Consultation Events

Stakeholders to be Involved ⁷	Details
Preliminary interviews with key stakeholders	As part of a strategy development process, interviews were held with a range of key stakeholders ⁸ including those from the statutory sector as well as industry representatives. In addition, consultees taking part in the FLAG Board focus group indicated their satisfaction with the consultations undertaken as part of the strategy development process.
Public meetings ⁹	As part of the consultation process during the development of the strategy, public meetings were held in 5 locations and a 'drop-in' session within the FLAG Region ¹⁰ . These locations were distributed across the FLAG Region, including remote locations to ensure that all coastal communities and stakeholders had the opportunity to participate (see map). Approximately 35 people attended these 5 meetings.

7 FARNET GUIDE #1 - A Start-Up Guide for Fisheries Local Action Groups (FLAGS) - Stakeholders.

8 Fingal County Council; Howth Tourism; Howth Harbour Master; Morgans Fish; Razorfish Association; Louth Leader; Local Elected Representatives; Louth County Council.

9 Public meetings should be held to inform the local community and to consult on the strategy development and building of partnership. A series of public information meetings will be held in the FLAG Regions to ensure that all parts of the area have the opportunity to participate. FARNET GUIDE #1 - A Start-Up Guide for Fisheries Local Action Groups (FLAGS).

10 Dun Laoghaire, Howth, Dundalk, Skerries, Balbriggan and Clogherhead.

4.3 Categories of Stakeholders

The table below categorises the stakeholder who have fed into the strategy, this includes both those who attended public consultation events and those consulted with separately either in individual meetings or telephone consultations. The categories are based on those identified in the Common Provisions Regulation (Article 9).

Table 4.2: Representation from Categories of Stakeholders

Category of Stakeholder	Number attending public meetings	Key stakeholder meetings
Competent regional, local, urban and other public authorities	6 (21%)	4 (50%)
Economic and social partners	16 (55%)	3 (38%)
Other relevant bodies representing civil society, including environmental partners, non-governmental organisations and bodies responsible for promoting social inclusion, gender equality and non-discrimination, including, where appropriate, the umbrella organisations of such authorities and bodies.	7 (24%)	1 (13%)

Source: PACEC 2016

Public engagement is, by its nature, non-discriminatory, in that anyone is welcome to attend. In developing the strategy there are no specific requirements set out in European or national legislation in relation to the proportion of stakeholders to be involved from each category. However, in the interests of facilitating a bottom-up approach it is accepted that good practice is to ensure that those representing civic society and economic and social partners provide the majority of the input and that those representing regional and public authorities should have a lesser role in the development of the strategy.

The table above shows that this has been achieved with 80%+ of those participating in the consultation representing economic and social partners and other relevant bodies representing civic society. Whilst this is no measure of the quality of the input, it does demonstrate that the strategy has been developed from the bottom up.

5 ACTION PLAN

5.1 Introduction

This section sets out the Action Plan for FLAG North East demonstrating how the objectives of the strategy are translated into actions. This builds on the work conducted through the public workshop events and the meetings with the FLAG Board and BIM.

Table 5.1: FLAG North East Action Plan - 2016/17

Action	Responsibility	Dec '16	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Overarching Activities														
FLAG Board Meeting	FLAG Board	X		X						X				X
Decide Dates for Calls	BIM Centrally/FLAG Board	X												
Training														
Skills Training e.g. Governance / Conflict of Interest	FLAG Board/ BIM Centrally	X	X	X										
Assessing Applications Training	FLAG Board/ BIM Centrally		X	X	X									
Monitoring and Evaluation Training	FLAG Board/ BIM Centrally			X	X	X								
PR / Animation / Communication Training	FLAG Board/ BIM Centrally	X	X	X										
PR / Animation / Communication														
PR / Communication	FLAG Board		X		X		X		X		X			X
Animation / Public Workshops	FLAG Board		X		X		X		X		X			X
Initiation of Call														
Call Publicity/Animation	BIM / FLAG Board	X	X	X			X			X				X
Open Call	BIM / FLAG Board			X			X			X				X
Close Call	BIM / FLAG Board				X		X			X				X
Assessment Process														
Assessment Against Eligibility Criteria	BIM				X			X		X				X
Assessment Against Criteria	FLAG Technical & Investment Committee					X			X		X			X
Recommendations approved/rejected	FLAG Board					X			X		X			X
Issue Rejection Letters	FLAG Board via BIM					X			X		X			X
Issue LoOs	BIM					X			X		X			X
Monitoring & Evaluation														
Project monitoring	BIM / FLAG Board									X				X
Post Project Evaluation	BIM / FLAG Board										X			X
Strategy Review	FLAG Board / BIM											X		X

Table 5.2: FLAG North East Action Plan - 2018 - 2022

Action	Responsibility	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Overarching Activities													
FLAG Board Meeting	FLAG Board	X											X
Decide Dates for Calls	BIM Centrally/FLAG Board	X											
PR / Animation / Communication													
PR / Communication	FLAG Board	X											X
Animation / Public Workshops	FLAG Board	X											X
Initiation of Call													
Call Publicity//Animation	BIM / FLAG Board	X	X										X
Open Call	BIM / FLAG Board		X										X
Close Call	BIM / FLAG Board		X										X
Assessment Process													
Assessment Against Eligibility Criteria	BIM					X							X
Assessment Against Criteria	FLAG Technical & Investment Committee					X							X
Recommendations approved/rejected	FLAG Board					X							X
Issue Rejection Letters	FLAG Board via BIM					X							X
Issue LoOs	BIM					X							X
Monitoring & Evaluation													
Project monitoring	BIM / FLAG Board						X						X
Post Project Evaluation	BIM / FLAG Board												X
Strategy Review	FLAG Board / BIM												X
Networking and Co-Operation													
Co-operation	FLAG Board												X
Networking	FLAG Board												X

6 FINANCIAL PLAN

6.1 Total budget

The overall allocation for the FLAG Programme across all seven FLAG Regions is €12m. This is considerably greater than the total investment (direct and indirect) delivered to coastal communities by the previous FLAG previous programme, an approximately eight-fold increase. The previous programme made over €1.5 million available via direct and indirect investment over the period 2012-2015.

The allocation for FLAG North East is €1.56m, this is across the 6 years that the programme will be operational (i.e. from 2017 -2022). The tables in this section profile budget for the FLAG North East.

6.2 Rationale for Spend

The use of the financial resources in relation to the proposed actions have been robustly justified through:

- A bottom-up process seeking feedback and input from local stakeholders;
- A robust review of socio-economic data.

The evidence collected in this way has been used to build and shape the objectives, actions and outputs for the programme. The budgetary allocation across each areas has also been determined by taking into account:

- The need for the type of intervention;
- The indicative project pipeline;
- The anticipated size and scale of projects to be supported (i.e. infrastructure projects attributed more given capital and large nature compared to perhaps training which requires less investment).

6.3 Allocation of total budget between Project and Administration Spend

Table 6.1 profiles the FLAG budget by project (i.e. grant aid for projects) and administration (i.e. supporting the operation of the programme) spend by year.

Table 6.1: Summary Sheet

	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	Total
Implementation of Operations / Projects under the LDS						
Theme 1 - Economic Development of Coastal Areas	€161,467	€269,111	€269,111	€269,111	€107,644	€1,076,444
Theme 2 - Harnessing and Developing the Skills and Knowledge of the Local Coastal Community	€28,833	€28,833	€28,833	€17,300	€11,533	€115,333
Theme 3 - Promoting Social Well-Being and Coastal Cultural Heritage	€23,067	€23,067	€23,067	€23,067	€23,067	€115,333
Theme 4 - Enabling more Participative Involvement in the Governance of Fisheries	€7,689	€7,689	€7,689	€7,689	€7,689	€38,444
Theme 5 - Protecting and Promoting the Environment	€7,689	€7,689	€7,689	€7,689	€7,689	€38,444
Sub-Total	€228,744	€336,389	€336,389	€324,856	€157,622	€1,384,000
FLAG Administration and Animation Costs						
Networking & Co-operation	€10,000	€10,000	€10,000	€10,000	€10,000	€50,000
Overall Admin Costs	€25,200	€25,200	€25,200	€25,200	€25,200	€126,000
Total	€263,944	€371,589	€371,589	€360,056	€192,822	€1,560,000

Table 6.2: Implementation of Operations / Projects under the LDS

	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	Total
Theme 1 Economic Development of Coastal Areas						
Objective 1: To assist local fishermen and small businesses to develop added value projects	€48,440	€80,733	€80,733	€80,733	€32,293	€322,933
Objective 2: Improve tourism offering in the area to encourage longer stays	€88,807	€148,011	€148,011	€148,011	€59,204	€592,044
Objective 3: To support fishermen which have ideas for diversification	€24,220	€40,367	€40,367	€40,367	€16,147	€161,467
Sub-Total	€161,467	€269,111	€269,111	€269,111	€107,644	€1,076,444
Theme 2 Harnessing and Developing the Skills and Knowledge of the Local Coastal Community						
Objective 1: To help fishermen develop their skills and capacity for diversification	€14,417	€14,417	€14,417	€8,650	€5,767	€57,667
Objective 2: To increase knowledge of potential employment opportunities in fisheries and aquaculture among young people	€14,417	€14,417	€14,417	€8,650	€5,767	€57,667
Sub-Total	€28,833	€28,833	€28,833	€17,300	€11,533	€115,333
Theme 3 Promoting Social Well-Being and Coastal Cultural Heritage						
Objective 1: To improve social wellbeing in coastal areas	€13,840	€13,840	€13,840	€13,840	€13,840	€69,200
Objective 2: To promote & share the unique cultural heritage of fisheries and aquaculture areas	€9,227	€9,227	€9,227	€9,227	€9,227	€46,133
Sub-Total	€23,067	€23,067	€23,067	€23,067	€23,067	€115,333
Theme 4 Enabling more Participative Involvement in the Governance of Fisheries						
Objective 1: To improve the capacity of fisheries communities in relation to self-governance	€5,382	€5,382	€5,382	€5,382	€5,382	€26,911
Objective 2: To improve co-operation between fisheries communities and other community groups	€2,307	€2,307	€2,307	€2,307	€2,307	€11,533
Sub-Total	€7,689	€7,689	€7,689	€7,689	€7,689	€38,444
Theme 5 Protecting and Promoting the Environment						
Objective 1: To support the promotion and protection of environmental assets	€3,844	€3,844	€3,844	€3,844	€3,844	€19,222
Objective 2: To support measures which aim to mitigate against climate change	€3,844	€3,844	€3,844	€3,844	€3,844	€19,222
Sub-Total	€7,689	€7,689	€7,689	€7,689	€7,689	€38,444
Total	€228,744	€336,389	€336,389	€324,856	€157,622	€1,384,000

6.4 Administration Spend

Another important element of the budget is the administration spend. At present this is set at a maximum of 10 % of the grant aid spend across the programme period. This will be used to cover necessary administration to support the FLAG to deliver on its role. This includes communication / PR, evaluation, monitoring, buying in services, travel and subsistence for FLAG board members, networking and co-operation, etc.

Article 35 of the Common Provisions Regulation states what can be supported under the Administration budget.

“Support from the ESI Funds concerned for community-led local development shall cover:

- (d) running costs linked to the management of the implementation of the community-led local development strategy consisting of operating costs, personnel costs, training cost, costs linked to public relations, financial costs as well as the costs linked to monitoring and evaluation of that strategy as referred to in point (g) of Article 34(3);
- (e) animation of the community-led local development strategy in order to facilitate exchange between stakeholders to provide information and to promote the strategy and to support potential beneficiaries with a view to developing operations and preparing applications.
- Support for running costs and animation as referred to in points (d) and (e) of paragraph 1 shall not exceed 25 % of the total public expenditure incurred.”

The breakdown of administration spend is detailed in Table 6.3.

Table 6.3: Administration and Animation Costs

	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	Total
Communication / Publicity / Advertising ¹¹	€3,700	€3,700	€3,700	€3,700	€3,700	€18,500
Monitoring & Evaluation ¹²	€3,000	€3,000	€3,000	€3,000	€3,000	€15,000
Travel & Subsistence ¹³	€6,000	€6,000	€6,000	€6,000	€6,000	€30,000
Buying in service/person ¹⁴	€3,000	€3,000	€3,000	€3,000	€3,000	€15,000
Labour Replacement Costs ¹⁵	€9,500	€9,500	€9,500	€9,500	€9,500	€47,500
Total	€25,200	€25,500	€25,200	€25,200	€25,200	€126,000

11 Budget for communication, publicity and advertising is based on the acknowledgement that all common activity in relation to this (i.e. communication, publicity and advertising that is common to all FLAGS) will be covered centrally by BIM. The FLAG Board have remit to conduct their own individual activity in relation to this area and a budget has been set. The FLAG anticipates expenditure of approximately €3,000 per annum for communication, publicity and marketing; this may include printing informational materials, local news and radio advertising, signposting calls for applications, photography, content creation for the website, and events to showcase successful projects.

12 Includes allowance for meeting room hire, refreshments and one meal allowance for Board members in attendance. This is anticipated to cost approximately €300 per meeting, subject to attendance. This is capped at €3,000 per annum.

13 The rates paid for all travel and subsistence costs are based on the following rates: 0.3125c per km, lunch – up to €15, Dinner – up to €30 and overnight accommodation costs of up to €70. Mileage expenses will be payable in full to all board members attending FLAG Board meetings excluding those who can re-coup mileage expenses through their own organisation or employer. The Travel and Subsistence budget is based upon six FLAG Board meetings per year, and includes provisions that travel, hotels and accommodation may be reflected within this budget line where appropriate for meetings external to the regular board meetings.

14 The FLAG cannot legally hire a member of staff; however, it has the right to commission an individual(s) on a consultancy basis to support with the administration of the FLAG. This budget assumes such a commission may take place for approx. 10 days per annum at €300 per day. This is capped at €3,000 per annum.

15 Labour Replacement Costs have been agreed at a National FLAG Level to be an important part of the administration expenditure to ensure continued engagement with the FLAG Programme. Labour Replacement costs will be paid to voluntary board members, who, through attendance at a FLAG Board meeting, lose their normal income (i.e. this Labour Replacement Cost is specifically for those involved in the fisheries, aquaculture and in some specific instances other marine industries.) The LRC is payable to a maximum of €200 per day assuming that a full 8 hour day has been completed. In addition the payment is not payable if - FLAG Board meetings are not held during the day or they are held on a day when board members would not normally be working or earning an income. In these instances when LRC is not payable members are still eligible for travel and subsistence payments. In line with similar structures (RIFF), the Board will reserve budget for payment of approximately nine members for five meetings (i.e. up to 45 payments of this kind per annum, totalling to €9,500 per annum).

In comparison, the previous (pilot) programme incurred admin spend of around €165K across 6 FLAGs (which equates to around 11% of the previous programme budget of €1.5m). This included strategy development costs, T&S, Networking events costs, advertising for project calls, etc. However the current programme is of a larger scale and is split across 7 rather than 6 FLAGs.

6.5 Mobilisation of Other Resources

An important element of the FLAG programme is the imperative to mobilise other resources both financial and human.

Financial resources: This is facilitated by grant aid intensity rates which vary by type of applicant as outlined in the table below.

Table 6.4: Grant Aid Intensity Rates

	Beneficiary	Project Type	Maximum support rate %	Maximum Aid per project	Total Investment
1	Public bodies e.g. State agencies or Local Authorities	Public good projects	100%	€200,000	€200,000
2	Community Groups (non commercial) and Registered Charities	All	80%	€200,000	€200,000
3	SSCF vessels owners or collective thereof	Investment ashore adding value directly related to SSCF fisheries	80%	€80,000	€100,000
4	Collectives and co-operatives	Related to seafood	60%	€100,000	€166,666
5	Seafood & Marine Enterprises* (incl. sole traders)	Related to seafood or marine sector and diversification	50%	€100,000	€200,000
6	Enterprises* & sole traders outside seafood sector	All	40%	€50,000	€125,000
7	FLAG	All	100%	€100,000	€100,000

*Micro-enterprise means a person(s) carrying on a business, including but not limited to sole traders, partnerships, limited companies and cooperatives, and having less than 25 employees (FTE) and turnover of less than €5 million per annum.

Definitions wrt thresholds between processing and aquaculture schemes to be confirmed following further discussion

Source: FLAG Grant Rates Final - BIM 14 November 2016

These rates mean that for most applications other resources, finance and human, will need to be mobilised to see the successful completion of the project. This in turn will ensure that the FLAG programme will leverage in additional private investment into the region. It is important to note that in all cases match funding cannot come from another European Funding Programme (i.e. LEADER cannot match fund FLAG) or from statutory monies (i.e. council cannot match fund a FLAG project). However, match funding can be private monies including bank loans and other private funding mechanisms; however the private match funding must be secured at the time of application. Given the variable grant rates available it is difficult to estimate the value of the additional private investment that could be generated by the programme. However, PACEC estimate that this will be in the region of €702k¹⁶.

Human Resources: There is also significant scope for the mobilisation of human resources both those involved in the project application (i.e. volunteers involved in community groups and initiatives) as well as FLAG board members. The time invested by voluntary FLAG Board members is not insignificant. Whilst this will depend on the number of meetings, calls for applications and application received as well as other Board member duties including PR, monitoring and evaluation, it is expected to be in the region of 10-15 days per board member per year across the life-span of the programme.

16 This is calculated on the assumption that the majority of those apply under Theme 1: Economic Development of Coastal Area will be applying for the 50%, 60% or 80% grant rates; that those applying under Themes 2 - 4 will be applying under the 60% or 100% grant rates.

7 THE FISHERIES LOCAL ACTION GROUP

7.1 Organisation Details

Table 7.1: Organisation Details

Element	Detail
Organisation Details	Fisheries Local Action Group North East
Primary Contact Details	Contact Name: Paul Downes Website: TBC Role: FLAG Co-ordinator Email: downes@bim.ie Phone Number: +353 (0) 1 214 4100 Mobile: +353 (0) 87 117 1449
Date of FLAG Establishment	December 2016
Legal Structure	The Fisheries Local Action Group is the North East Fisheries Local Action Group with Bord Iascaigh Mhara fulfilling the role of Financial Partner and Implementation Partner.

7.2 FLAG Composition and Decision Making

7.2.1 Basis for FLAG Membership

Number of Members: At any given time, it is expected that overall board membership will not be less than ten and not more than seventeen members, but may evolve to ensure that there is democratic accountability across the programme area.

Sectoral Representation: The FLAG comprises public and private partners from the defined geographical areas and includes representatives from different sectors of the local economy/ community that reflect the main focus of the strategy and the socio-economic composition of the area through a balanced representation of the main stakeholders, including private sector, public sector and civil society and ensure a significant representation of the fisheries and/or aquaculture sectors. In keeping with Article 58 of the EMFF Regulation¹⁷ 508/2014 and Article 32 (2) (b) of the Common Provisions Regulation¹⁸, it is important that no single interest group has more than 49% of the voting rights in the decision-making. It is recommended that membership of the FLAG should have a maximum of 40% representation from the Statutory/Public Sector¹⁹ and a minimum of 60% representation from the fishing, seafood, coastal communities sector²⁰. The balance of organisational representation will be retained throughout the replacement/ rotation process.

¹⁷ Article 58 of the EMFF Regulation 508/2014: "Community-led local development should be implemented through a bottom-up approach by local partnerships that are composed of representatives of the public, private and civil society sectors and that reflect correctly the local society. Those local actors are best placed to draw up and implement multisectoral community-led local development strategies to meet the needs of their local fisheries area. It is important to ensure that no single interest group has more than 49 % of the voting rights in the decision-making bodies of Fisheries local action groups (FLAGs)."

¹⁸ Article 32 (2) (b) of the CPR 1303/2013: "2. Community-led local development shall be: (b) led by local action groups composed of representatives of public and private local socio-economic interests, in which, at the decision-making level neither public authorities, as defined in accordance with national rules, nor any single interest group represents more than 49 % of the voting rights;"

¹⁹ These are likely to include County Councils including LEOs, Education and Training Boards, LEADER LAGs, Fáilte Ireland, and Enterprise Ireland, among others deemed as statutory.

²⁰ This can include representatives or individuals within the fishery, aquaculture or processing sectors; as well as representatives from the community and voluntary sector.

Gender Balance: An aspiration of BIM is for the gender balance on FLAG boards to be at least 40% female²¹. In the previous FLAG programme, the aspiration was to ensure that at least 30% of committee members²² were female and whilst some met this requirement, not all did. Ideally, during the lifetime of the strategy, if at any stage the gender balance does not reflect at least 40% female, the FLAG Board will actively try to recruit suitably qualified female volunteers. To help to achieve this, all nominating bodies will, in future, be asked to nominate two candidates, one male and one female, to the FLAG for any vacant position; in addition, assistance will be sought from respective Public Participation Networks²³ (PPN) in identifying appropriate female candidates for any relevant vacancy on the FLAG. This commitment to gender balance will also apply to relevant sub-committees.

Declaration of Interests: All FLAG members will, on appointment, declare their employment status, all business interests and community and voluntary involvement which might involve a conflict of interest or might materially influence the FLAG member in relation to the performance of their duties.

Term of membership: The FLAG Board members will commit to implementing the objectives of the FLAG Local Development Strategy, and will act as a focal point for consultations, implementation and delivery, and promotion of the FLAG. To ensure continuity, appointed members shall remain in place until the end of the current programme.

Annual Review of Membership: The FLAG shall carry out an annual internal review of the membership to account for any change to FLAG objectives or actions, where this is appropriate e.g. where the strategic need for member organisations has been satisfied or new member organisations are required to meet a specific Local Development Strategy need or member organisations are not attending on a regular basis.'

7.2.2 Experience and Expertise of FLAG Members

The FLAG North East has 8 members, and is representative of a wide range of sectors and areas. The table below sets out the current membership of the FLAG.

21 Consistent with approach in LEADER Local Development Strategies and reflects aspirations in government policy on gender parity e.g.: Towards Gender Parity in Decision-Making in Ireland – An Initiative of the National Women's Strategy 2007-2016 (2013)

22 <http://www.bim.ie/media/bim/content/newsandevents/START%20UP%20GUIDE%20FOR%20FISHERIES%20LOCAL%20ACTION%20GROUPS.pdf>)

23 Public Participation Networks are the chosen method for recruiting community representatives to the FLAG Board.

Table 7.2: FLAG Members - Experience

Organisation	Member	Sector ²⁴	Area	Experience
Clogherhead Fishermen's Co-op.	Paul Boyd	Private	Whitefish/prawns	
Added value sector nominations	Lenny Clifford	Private	Business/Seafood added value	
Public Participation Network	Garret O'Brien	Public	Community	
Irish Environmental Network	Johnny Woodlock	Civic Society	Environment	
Fingal Co. Council	David Prior	Public	Local Authority	
Louth Leader Partnership	Mary O'Neill	Public	LEADER	
Louth Meath ETB	Sadie Ward McDermott	Public	Training	
Loughs Agency	Barry Fox	Public	Sustainable Fisheries Development/promotion Carlingford Lough	

The North East Board (as of January 2017) is awaiting full confirmation of its membership, but anticipates inclusion of a further representatives from: North East Regional Inshore Fisheries Forum RIFF and Irish Shellfish Association – Oysters/Mussels.

In accordance with good practice in relation to Community Led Local Development (CLLD) it is desirable that the FLAG Board has representation from all relevant sectors and industries in line with the anticipated activity. At the time of writing the FLAG Board are still working to fill some gaps in the skills, experience and expertise on the FLAG Board. In particular the following issues are noted:

- The FLAG has 5 representatives from the fisheries sector and 1 representative from the aquaculture sector. It is recognised that these proportions are not reflective of the sectors in the FLAG region. The FLAG Board are working, through the recruitment of new members, to address this issue, although it is noted that membership from these sectors does need to be nominated by parent organisations and have a mandate to act on their behalf.
- While the FLAG does not have a tourism representative sitting on the Board, the FLAG Board recognise the importance of this sector as well as the need for input from tourism representatives in project scoring and decision making. In instances where expertise is required in relation to tourism the FLAG Boards have put in place a mechanism for accessing tourism expertise by which tourism representatives (e.g. Fáilte Ireland) will make written submissions to information / feedback requests from the FLAG Board. This mechanism will ensure that tourism is adequately represented as part of the FLAG Board.

24 As per Article 5 of CPR: private sector (fisheries and/or aquaculture sectors), public sector, civil society.

In addition, it is recognised that the FLAG Board members have a greater role to play in the implementation of the 2014-2020 FLAG Programme and that capacity building training and actions will be vital to this success of the programme. In addressing this a number of actions are planned:

- A training syllabus has been developed which contains details of the training needs of FLAG Board members this will result in dedicated training being provided for members; and
- BIM intend to host at least 2 national networking events annually, this will provide an opportunity for networking and the sharing of good practice amongst the Irish FLAGs which in turn will help develop the capacity of board members.

7.2.3 Decision Making Structure and Procedures

The FLAG Board is representative of a wide range of sectors and areas thus providing for effective and accountable decision making. As the core decision-makers, members of the FLAG Board are responsible for the proposal of a community-led local development strategy and are responsible for its implementation²⁵. This means that they are key in fulfilling the financial, strategic, policy and promotion remit of the FLAG, with support at the administrative level by DAFM and BIM. This will enable the FLAG to deliver the LDS from the bottom-up, consistent with the CLLD approach²⁶.

The FLAG will adhere to all required local, national, and European guidance and requirements within decision making, and will fully support principles of human rights, equality and social justice.

The FLAG has a review and decision making role with regard to the implementation of individual, community, and social benefit projects. The FLAG will operate in accordance with relevant FLAG programme operating rules, as set out within the Procedures Manual.

It is expected that decisions will be made on a consensus basis, and where this is not possible, votes will be cast in accordance with the Committee Standing Orders. Decision-making procedures will be representative, and that no sector may have more than 49% of voting rights at any such times²⁷ to protect accountability. The FLAG Board will be assisted by the implementing partners in its capacity to make recommendations for decision-making and provision of awards.

Ultimately, the FLAG Board will recommend projects for funding subject to final confirmation by BIM.

BIM also plays a role in the project selection process at the eligibility check stage which is final in the absence of further information or clarification which might allow such a decision to be appealed.

7.2.4 Frequency of FLAG Meetings

The number of meetings to be held by the FLAG depends on a number of factors including how many calls there will be per year and how often the board need to meet for assessing projects, monitoring and evaluation purposes. In addition there may be different cycles of meetings with the whole FLAG Board meeting a different number of times per year to any sub-groups or sub-committees established.

Guidance from FARNET, Managing Effective Partnerships²⁸, suggests that from experience that FLAG Boards should be between four and five times a year, depending on the number of project applications submitted. Making a calendar of meetings well in advance helps to ensure good attendance at meetings as it is often difficult to arrange meetings at short notice for a large number of busy people.

In line with governance good practice, minutes should be recorded and circulated in advance of each subsequent meeting.

25 Regulation (EU) 508/2014 (EMFF) - Article 61.

26 Regulation (EI) 1303/2013 (CPR) - Article 32

27 Regulation (EU) 1303/2013, Common Provisions Regulation - Article 32 and also Regulation (EU) 508/2014, European Maritime and Fisheries Fund Regulation - Article 58

28 FARNET Guide 4 - Steps for Success - Managing Effective Partnerships https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/fpfis/cms/farnet/files/documents/EN_GUIDE_4_4-16.pdf

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