



FLAG
NORTH WEST

Fisheries Local Action Group Local Development Strategy 2016





This is an edited version of the full FLAG North West 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 West 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 West in prioritising, selecting and supporting projects with EMFF funds in its FLAG territory.



EUROPEAN UNION

This measure is part-financed by the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund

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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 West area comprises the coastal zones of County Mayo, County Sligo and County Leitrim. In order to provide a snapshot of the nature of this area the 69 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 region has a population of 71,675 persons, consisting of predominantly coastal rural structure with just twelve settlements falling into the aggregate urban area category of over 1,500 inhabitants.

Fishing and tourism activities are prominent within the coastal towns of Westport, Ballina and Sligo whilst areas such as Achill Island, Erris, Mullaghmore, Enniscrone and Louisburgh have a shorter five month tourism season, driven by holiday and rental homes in the areas.

There are 219 licenced registered fishing vessels in the area, with 60% of these predominately day boats under eight metres. The main fisheries are brown crab and lobster, with further activity in scallop, razor and oyster dredging. Typically, fishermen in the area are over 50 years old, but the industry is exhibiting some signs of younger persons getting involved with vessel ownership. There are approximately 150 FTEs in the fishing industry, and a further ten processing companies in the region that have 200 FTEs in total.

The aquaculture industry in the FLAG NW is mainly oysters based in Clew Bay, Achill, Killala with some salmon farming in Clare Island, and mussels in Clew Bay. It is estimated there are approximately 100 FTEs in the region, with 4,800 tonnes of production (2015), and 29 production units with sales of €20 million.

1.2.1 Map of the FLAG Area

Figure 1.1: Map of FLAG North West area



Source: PACEC 2016.

1.3 Confirmation of Compliance of FLAG Area

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

Table 1.1: FLAG Area – Compliance with Criteria

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

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 including a number of coastal islands. 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.

2 ANALYSIS OF THE DEVELOPMENT NEEDS

2.1 Introduction

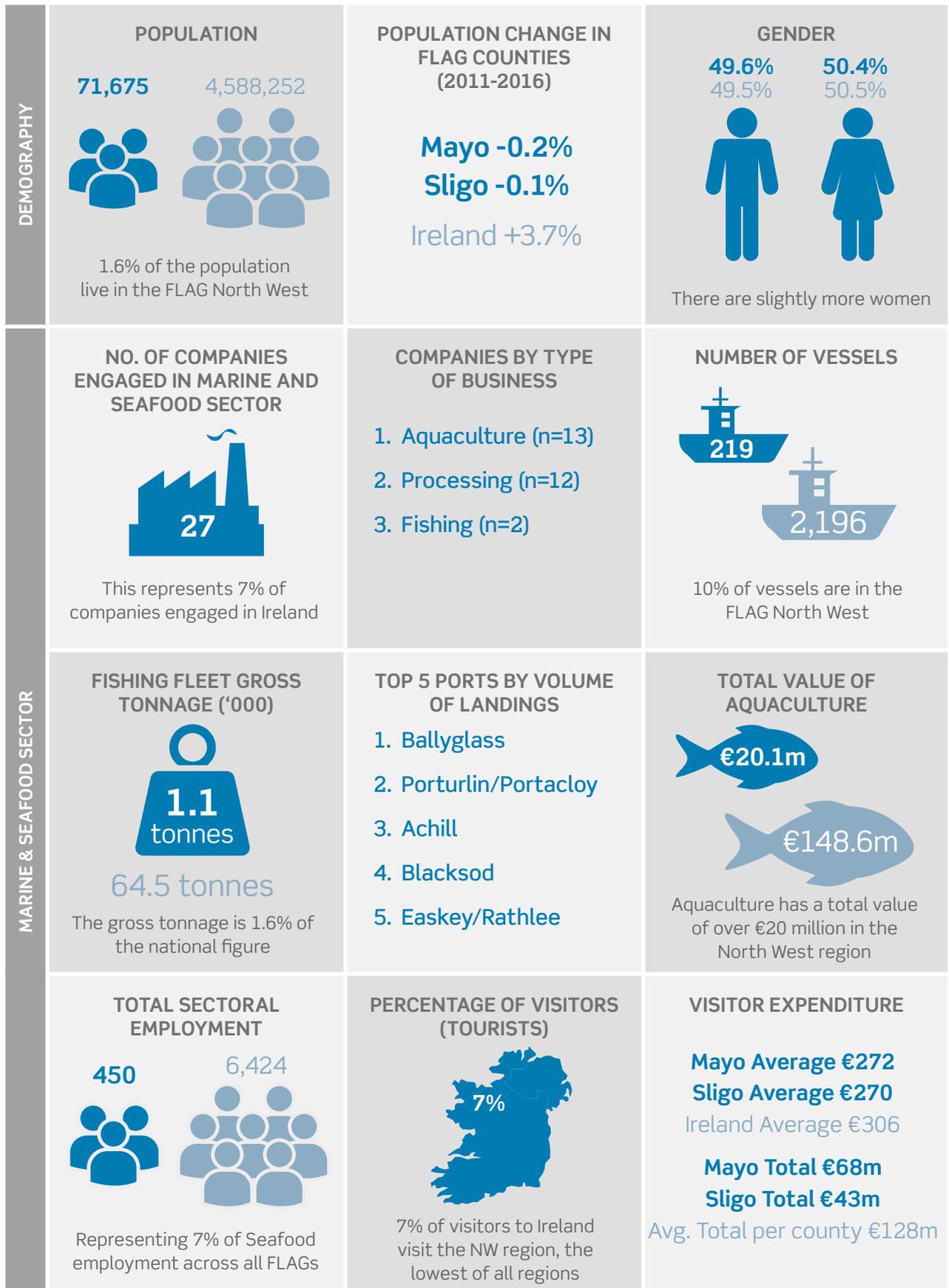
This section sets out the summary of the analysis of the development needs and potential of the FLAG Area. This includes an analysis of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. It has been developed based on desk-based research along with consultation findings.

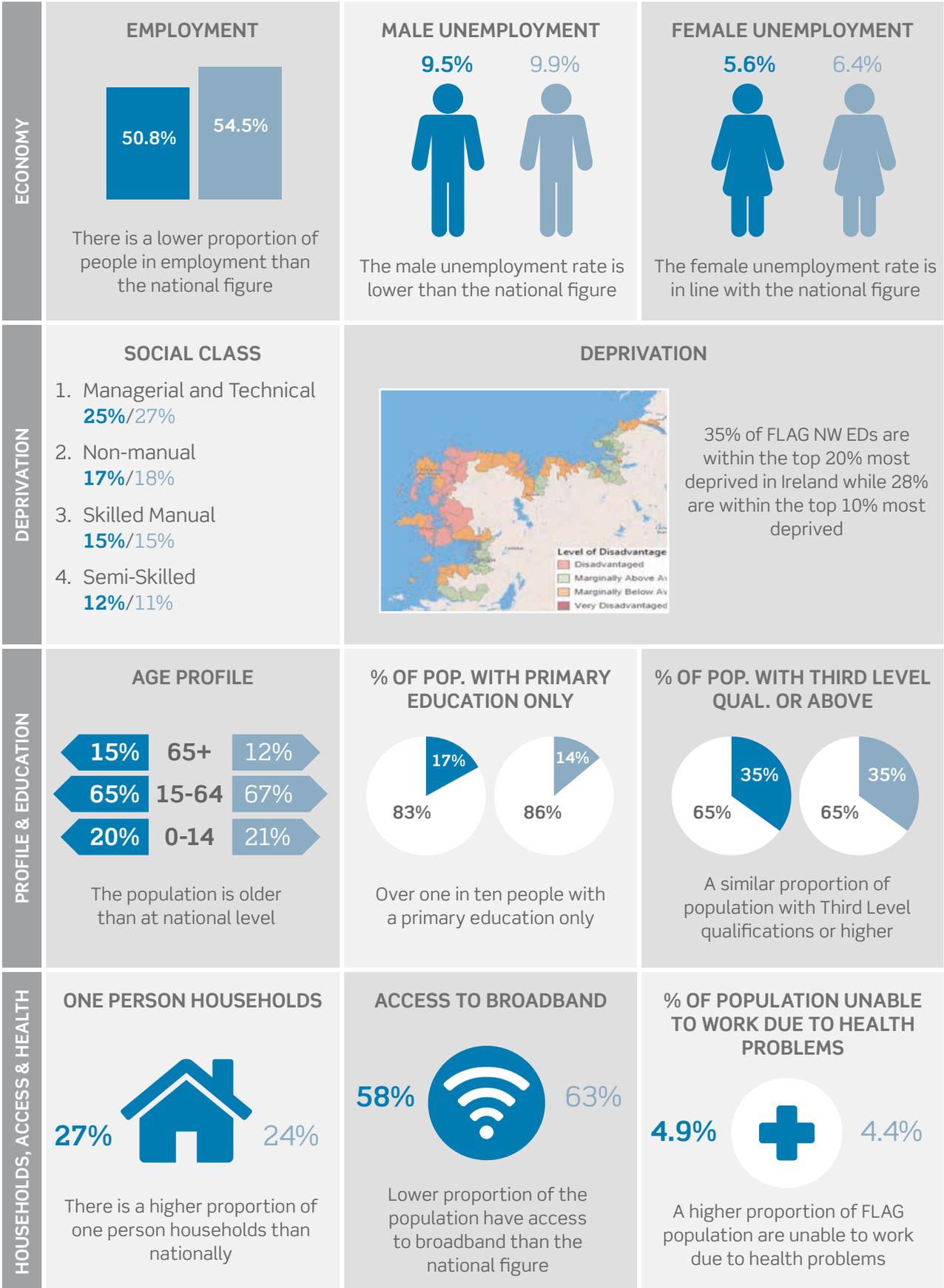
2.2 Summary of Socio-Economic Review

- There is a significantly older population (over-65) in the FLAG North West area (14.9% of the population) than other FLAGs (12.6% overall) and across Ireland (11.7%), resulting in age dependency and public services implications for the communities. Additionally, there is a smaller proportion of persons aged under 15 in the FLAG North West (19.5%) in comparison to Ireland (21.3%).
- The FLAG North West has a higher rate of owner occupancy (71.7%) compared to the Irish average (69.8%).
- The FLAG North West has the higher proportion of those identifying as Irish (89.9%) across the seven FLAGs (average of 89.2%). There is a strong sense of cultural awareness within the area as 45.5% of residents can speak Irish, with three times as many persons likely to use it within daily life particularly in Gaeltacht areas.
- With regard to education attainment, there is a higher proportion of FLAG North West residents with no formal qualifications (2.0%) compared to other FLAGs (1.7%) and the national figure (1.4%). Those with third level qualifications are broadly the same proportion (34.7%) than the average FLAG level (35.8%) and Ireland overall (34.8%).
- PACEC estimates for Q1 2016 highlight unemployment within the FLAG North West (8.0%) is marginally lower than the national average (8.3%). Economic inactivity is also higher within the FLAG North West.
- Deprivation is highly prevalent in the FLAG North West zone (62% of EDs lower than the national average) which could present a disincentive to migration into the area and this could be a factor in the decrease in population.
- The FLAG North West area has the 2nd lowest percentage of owners (10.0%) of fishing vessels out of all FLAGs.
- The fishing industry in the FLAG North West area is not as substantial in the area compared to other FLAG regions.
- The FLAG North West's fishing activity is heavily concentrated within Killala Bay (Killala Port and Harbour) and Sligo Bay. However, none of the ports in the FLAG North West do not feature in the top 20 ports in Ireland.
- 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.
- There are significant tourism opportunities for the area due to the scenic landscape and initiatives such as the Wild Atlantic Way route.
- Information is not available at a FLAG level regarding exporting and innovation, 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)





2.4 Overview of the Consultation Process

The FLAG North West recognises the importance of the active engagement and participation of Mayo and Sligo citizens in the sustainable development of their coastal communities and the opportunity for them to input meaningfully into the design, development and implementation of the FLAG North West Strategy.

In keeping with the Community Led Local Development (CLLD) approach of FLAG, the FLAG Board undertook a comprehensive consultation process at a local level to ensure the local development strategy was informed by the active engagement and participation of those directly involved in fishing and aquaculture, those involved in the development and maintenance of coastal communities, those involved in marine tourism and promoting coastal areas and many others. The table below sets out the consultation activity undertaken by PACEC on behalf of the FLAG Board.

Table 2.1 Overview of the Consultation Process

Consultation Activity
Public Meetings
5 public meetings carried out in the FLAG North West region (Westport, Belmullet, Achill, Killala and Sligo). Over the 5 public meetings there were 74 attendees. Representation of the attendees in the FLAG North West was: <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Representatives from local authorities made up 9% of attendees;● Economic and social partners made up 43% of attendees;● Other relevant bodies that represent civil society made up 48% of attendees.
Meetings with Relevant Stakeholders
As part of a strategy development process, interviews were held with a range of key stakeholders including those from the statutory sector as well as industry representatives.

2.4.1 Inclusive Process that involved 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 Co-ordinating and Consulting with a range of sectors

A multi-sectoral approach was adopted by PACEC to ensure that both the exploration of needs from key stakeholder's perspectives and the development of multi-sectoral responses. 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, stakeholders 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 were held in the early evening in order to accommodate those who may be at sea and unable to attend 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.

In particular meetings and consultation events were held on islands and specific travel and meeting arrangements were made to ensure that these important areas of the FLAG were included in the process.

In addition to this, when a FLAG area included a Gaeltacht area, efforts were made to ensure that the meetings were conducted in Irish, or that an Irish interpreter was present to ensure that their views were also taken on board.

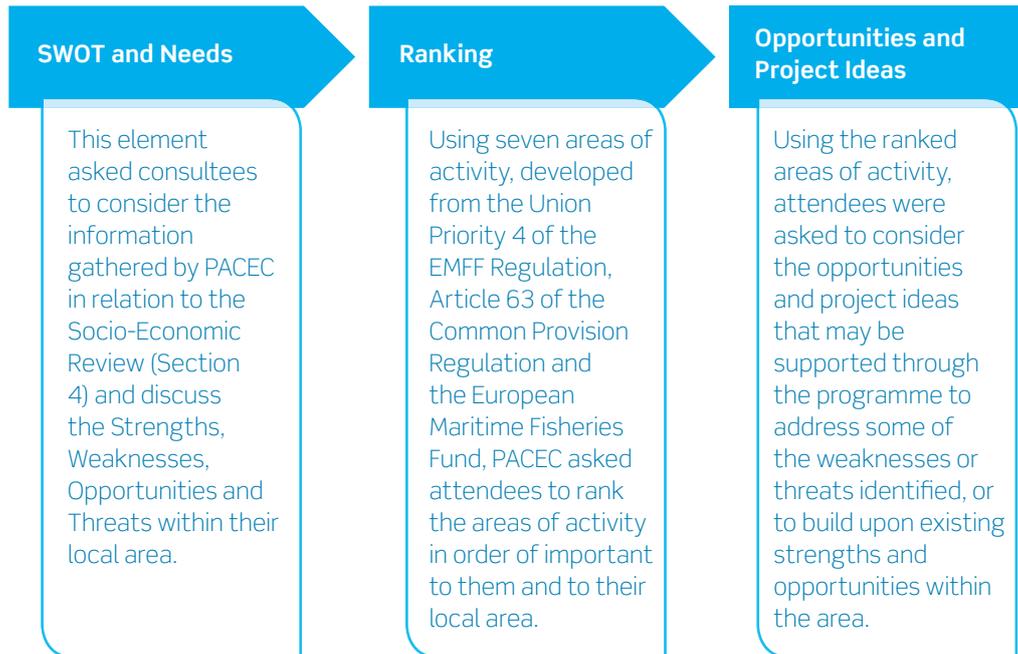
2.5 Feedback from Consultation Process

2.5.1 Introduction and Methodology

Four public meetings and drop-in sessions for one-to-one meetings were held in September 2016, to provide information on the local strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats; the area needs; ranking of areas of activity eligible under the FLAG programme; and the opportunity to provide and scope potential project ideas which may be compatible with the aims of the programme.

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

Figure 2.1: Consultation Methodology



Source: PACEC, 2016

Each public and one-to-one meeting provided the strategy development process within further local information. A summary of the information gathered through the public consultation process is included within the following sections.

2.5.2 SWOT Analysis from Consultation Exercise

The consultation exercise undertaken included a discussion of the needs of the local area and through this a SWOT analysis was developed. PACEC have augmented it with stakeholder input from the public consultation meetings and meetings with the FLAG Board.

Table 2.2: SWOT Analysis – North West Fisheries Local Action Group

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The area has considerable experience amongst those involved in fishing and aquaculture, with many lifelong skills embedded within the local community; ● There is a strong sense of collectiveness and community spirit within the area, and people are considered co-operative, active, and entrepreneurial; ● There is a well-established tradition of boating heritage, building, history and story-telling; ● The area has a clean image, with a strong maritime culture. Within most areas, access to the water is considered straightforward, and there are therefore opportunities for new businesses to take advantage of. ● The area benefits from the recent development of the Wild Atlantic Way route, with regard to tourism infrastructure, visits and stays; ● The region offers considerable tourism opportunities, both land and marine, including within Mayo (Great Western Greenway, Keem Bay & Beach, Croagh Patrick, the National Museum of Ireland, Belleek Castle Museum, and Erris Head Loop Walk) and Sligo (Rosses Point, Mullaghmore Coast, Yeats' Grave, and Coney Island); ● There are also a number of annual festivals and events, focused on a fisheries, aquaculture or marine theme e.g. the Achill Seafood Festival ● There are also a number of activity based operators, including at least a dozen bike and boat hire, and boat tour and water sport businesses in Mayo, and sixteen in Sligo; ● The area is well regarded for its fishing catch, crab and lobster, high quality salmon, oyster and mussel products on the national and international level; ● There are signs of growth and emerging activity within diversification into seaweed based products and processes; ● There is a well-established research community within the area, with the Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology (Castlebar), and IT Sligo. This community links into the local community and supports local businesses and research and development activity e.g. the GMIT Innovation in Business Centre & IT Sligo Innovation Centre. ● There is a strong sense of cultural awareness within the area as 45.5% of residents speak Irish (and contains a Gaeltacht area), compared to 40.6% nationally; ● Unemployment within the FLAG North West (8.0%) is lower than the national average (8.3%). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● There are structural workforce weaknesses within the Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing sector, as a high proportion of workforce sector are aged 60+ (34.9% compared to 25.1% across all sectors) ● There is a high proportion of the population in the FLAG North West area that are economically inactive (for example, 16.1% of residents are retired compared to 12.7% nationally) ● There is a smaller proportion of persons aged under 15 in the FLAG North West (19.5%) in comparison to the national figure (21.3%), highlighting a higher age-dependency ratio. ● The consultations also indicated a potential lack of interest and/or awareness by younger people in the sea and the marine, which may need nurture and encouraged. ● The proportion of persons with third-level qualifications is lower (34.7%) than the average FLAG level (35.8%) and marginally lower than Ireland overall (34.8%) ● There are issues with the lack of integration and co-operation between tourism providers and fishery interests with regard to harbour/pier/marina access. The inability for dual licensing of boats is also considered a weakness. ● Access to suitable processing facilities, and use of traditional ice plant facilities are prohibitive to small business activity. ● Coastal communities attain the majority of their income through tourism and fishing and aquaculture in the summer months; seasonality therefore is a weakness, particularly with regard to the need for stable weather and climate conditions; ● Many of the harbours and piers are considered not suitable for either multi-purpose usage, or lack suitable health and safety requirements or facilities and amenities e.g. power points, bathroom and changing facilities. This is considered restrictive for tourism usage. ● For many communities, distance from markets, training and employment centres constrains the development of new skills and business. ● Physical and telecommunications infrastructure can be restrictive; ● Lack of clarity and information for tourists and locals regarding information boards on the local area/point of interest; ● A lack of local funding opportunities and ability to match-fund is also seen as a weakness for the growth of community organisations and projects; ● The area is considered adversely affected by the depreciation of local stocks (particularly crab and lobster), and the impact of regulatory policies with regard to salmon restriction and aquaculture licencing. ● Much of the area is deemed protected under the Special Area of Conservation; this provides difficulties in undertaking physical works and projects.

Opportunities

- There are significant tourism opportunities for the area due to the scenic landscape and initiatives such as the Wild Atlantic Way and The Blue Way; these might include expansion of boat trips, marine activities e.g. kayaking, canoeing, sailing as well as promotion of related assets e.g. aquarium or exhibition centres such as the Achill Experience;
- There are considerable training and apprenticeship opportunities, particularly to promote awareness and encourage younger persons into the sector;
- The fishing and aquaculture industry in the area is substantial and provides significant employment opportunities due to the existing infrastructure in the area to support the industry;
- There exists both inland and at sea fisheries resources of value both as a recreational outlet for local people and as a highly valuable tourism attraction;
- There are opportunities to grow and expand current festivals within the area, focused upon seafood, the marine, and associated activities;
- There are a number of historical and physical assets which, if developed, could provide an enhanced sense of activity, history preservation, and tourism footfall e.g. within Raghly, Killala, and Mullaghmore.
- There are opportunities for community groups to develop their own community shared assets and local plans, in order to improve community relations and development over coming years, as well as undertake locally focused activities such as beach cleanups, story-telling and promoting their area to tourists;
- There are a number of local schools and activity groups, keen to work together to promote youth awareness of the marine and encourage cross-partnership between marine leisure, fishing and aquaculture industry, and tourism.
- Exploration into offshore development of marine energy may offer an opportunity for local energy generation which is environmentally friendly and cost-efficient for local individuals and businesses; and
- There is an extensive range of scenery and history to the area, as well as uncaptured stories within the community about the area's cultural heritage. There are opportunities to capture these through information boards, videos, audio recording, book publication, and shared knowledge events through local colleges e.g. GMIT/IT Sligo/libraries and schools.

Threats

- There is a significantly older population (over-65) in the FLAG North West area (14.9% of the population) than other FLAGs (12.6% overall) and across Ireland (11.7%), resulting in age dependency and public services implications for the communities, as well as potential for loss of sectoral knowledge;
- Attracting younger people into the industry, particularly given the lack of young workers in the Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing sector (only 12% aged under 35). This provides a risk of a 'missing generation' in some areas, with younger people likely to emigrate, resulting in the loss of skills in an area;
- The industry is viewed by some locally as being within decline, which may reduce attractiveness of employment and opportunities within the sector e.g. declining stocks, regulation and quotas.
- A number of the small harbours are falling into disrepair, resulting in permanent loss or increasing repair bills over time;
- The cost of running a tourism event or festival can be prohibitive for some community groups e.g. insurance, staffing, regulation, and promotion;
- Coastal communities without diversification may be overexposed to macroeconomic conditions or regulations beyond their control e.g. quotas, fall in commodity prices, and the UK exit from the European Union
- Without action, there is a risk of loss of knowledge transfer and sharing of history and culture within the area
- 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 of Areas of Activity

The key element of the consultation exercise was the ranking of the Areas of Activity in order of important 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 2.3: Ranking of Areas of Activities

'Area of Activity'	Ranking within Public Consultations
Adding value to fishery and aquaculture products	3rd (28 people within the public consultations identified this as a 'Top 3' priority)
Creating / Maintaining jobs in coastal areas	1st (51 people within the public consultations identified this as a 'Top 3' priority)
Promoting Innovation in Fisheries & Aquaculture and supporting Diversification inside & outside commercial fisheries	4th (21 people within the public consultations identified this as a 'Top 3' priority)
Lifelong Learning and attracting young people in Fisheries and Aquaculture Areas	2nd (34 people within the public consultations identified this as a 'Top 3' priority).
Promoting the environmental assets of the fisheries and aquaculture areas and mitigation of climate change	7th (4 people within the public consultations identified this as a 'Top 3' priority)
Promoting social well-being and cultural heritage in fisheries and aquaculture areas	5th (18 people within the public consultations identified this as a 'Top 3' priority)
Strengthening the role and governance of fisheries communities in local development	6th (8 people within the public consultations identified this as a 'Top 3' priority)

Source: PACEC (2016)

Table 3:4 indicates that across all of the consultation activity:

- Job creation and maintenance was identified as the highest ranked priority area;
- Lifelong learning and attracting young people was identified as the next most important area;
- Supporting innovation and diversification and adding value to fisheries and aquaculture products were identified as the 3rd and 4th most important areas for the FLAG, and consultees raised their respective importance for generating job creation and maintenance;
- Promoting social well-being and cultural heritage and strengthening the role and governance were identified as the 5th and 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.

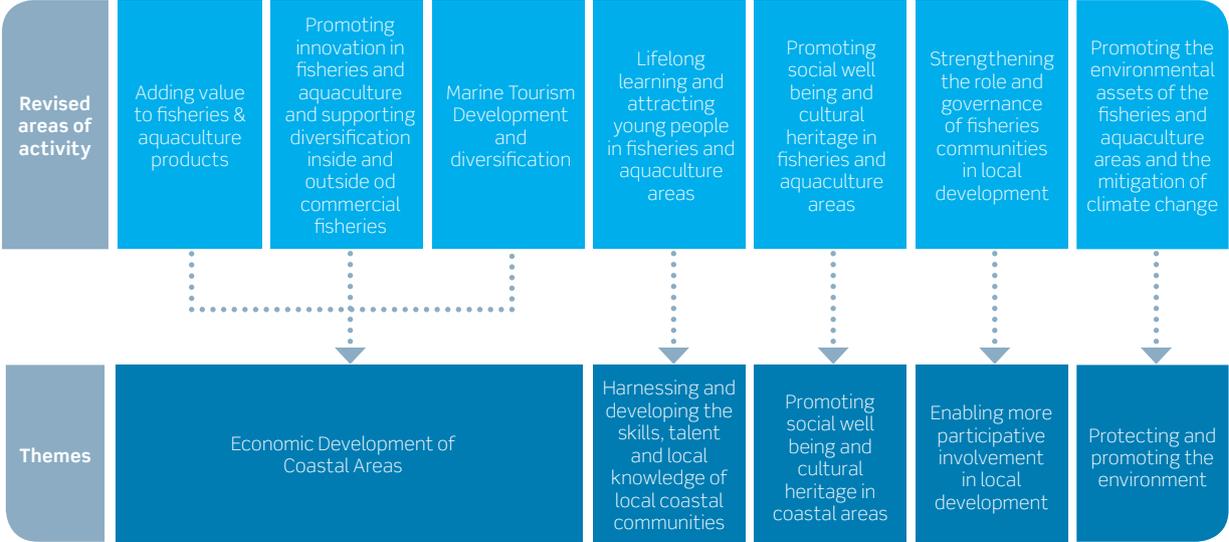
Figure 2.2: Refinement of the Areas of Activity



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 2.3: Areas of Activity to Themes



Source: PACEC, 2016

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.

Whilst the tables below set out all of the project concepts / needs identified through the consultation the FLAG Board have assessed this feedback and have identified areas that are ineligible for FLAG support or better supported through other programmes or funding streams. Therefore, not all of the areas detailed below have been progressed in to the intervention logic for the strategy.

Table 2.5: Economic Development of Coastal Areas

Economic Development of Coastal Areas

Adding Value to Fisheries and Aquaculture

The FLAG NW produces an abundance of fisheries and aquaculture products, and has a particularly substantial aquaculture industry primarily located in Clew Bay, Killala and Achill Island. BIM and SDA estimates show that the local industry is worth in excess of €19 million² with over 140 people employed, and that the county produces around 4,660 tonnes of high quality organic salmon, mussels, pacific and native oysters. There is also strong crab, lobster and mackerel fishery activity in North Mayo and within the islands.

In order to help support and facilitate added value and improved economic activity, the following needs were identified:

- Adding value through local processing
 - 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;
 - Need to consider alternative processing i.e. improving existing products through existing traditional processing e.g. purification, filleting, salting, drying, and smoking etc.
 - Need for provision of processing support with regard to processing units
 - Potential for tourism and educational opportunities with regard to processing methods above e.g. undertaking filleting workshops;
- Adding value through improved infrastructure
 - 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)
- Adding value through development of new and improved market products
 - Need to develop new products for local market consumption, as well as tap into new export markets particularly in Asia and Middle East; including product development, marketing, promotion and distribution
- Adding value through improved product offering
 - Need to promote local produce further through: improving the appearance, marketing and packaging of local products; highlighting local attributes of the area; potential for shared approach within a region; using official quality labels and symbols (e.g. Protected Designation of Origin, protected Geographical Indication and Traditional Specialty Guaranteed); using eco-labelling and organic labelling; 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.

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. Some of the needs identified in relation to this include:

- Support for business diversification and development
 - Need to encourage entrepreneurship and business startup through support pilot projects and seed funding for idea exploration through feasibility study and business case development;
 - Need to provide appropriate space to encourage business development e.g. incubation units / hubs / innovation space;
 - Need to provide and support on-going mentoring and networking between local people and agencies that can provide soft support (e.g. training), as well as the sharing of ideas on the local area, market, and people
 - Need to support diversification into new areas such as marine tourism, heritage, arts and crafts etc.
 - Need to explore renewable energy and seaweed biomass opportunities.

2 <http://www.bim.ie/media-centre/press-releases/content,98894,en.html>

Economic Development of Coastal Areas

Marine Tourism

Tourism is vitally important to the economy of County Mayo and County Sligo with the accommodation and hospitality sector providing a key driver of employment. County Mayo has 44 registered hotels, 11 guesthouses, 94 B&Bs, 170 self-catering properties, and over 450 caravan pitches; and County Sligo has 14 registered hotels, 3 guesthouses, 39 B&Bs, 66 self-catering properties, and 265 caravan pitches (Failte Ireland: 2015)

Tourism also delivers substantial social and community benefits, as a significant number of tourism businesses in County Mayo and Sligo are micro-enterprises with a small number of full-time/part-time/seasonal employees, and are embedded within the coastal communities. Some of the key needs in relation to marine tourism included:

- Developing the tourism offering
 - Need for support for the development of marine tourism and water based activities, walks, and cycling trails;
 - Need for support for in-door marine based activities including development of educational and cultural facilities e.g. aquarium, local boat exhibitions;
 - Need for support for the development of heritage trails, seafood trails and cultural information;
 - Need for support for exploring the development of eco-tourism and wildlife tourism including bird watching, whale and dolphin tours, seals and other marine species;
 - Need for support for seafood festivals and coastal community festivals;
 - Need to encourage people to stay in the region rather than day-trippers who travel back to main towns and cities for accommodation, through extending visitor days out within the area.
 - Need for digitalisation of tourism providers e.g. support with websites, e-commerce and interactive tourism
- Enhancing the Tourism Infrastructure
 - Need for support for signage and information boards to enhance existing tourism offerings, and to promote awareness and understanding of the culture and history of the area;
 - Need to support improvement to marine infrastructure e.g. pier to improve safety and facilities and issues regarding shared usage for tourism and fishing/aquaculture;
 - Need for improvements to marine infrastructure in relation to pontoons and marines 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, including the development of a local approach to animation and marketing of products e.g. shared tourism days-out, and linkage between activities e.g. boat trip to islands, bike hire, provision of food and accommodation etc in one package;
 - Support for the development of new marketing including feasibility studies and training;
 - 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 and restaurants.

Table 2.6: Harnessing the Skills, Talent and Knowledge of Local Coastal Communities

Harnessing and Developing the Skills, Talent and Knowledge of Local Coastal Communities

Developing Skills in Local Coastal Communities

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 as 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. Within Mayo and Sligo, there are also strong established centres for learning with regard to Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology (GMIT) and IT Sligo, and Mayo, Sligo and Leitrim ETB.

There are therefore extensive opportunities to extract and share learning and skills within the community, and some of the needs in relation to this include:

- Developing Skills in Fisheries and Aquaculture Areas
 - Need to support those involved in fishing and aquaculture in training and upskilling (with regard to practical skills, business, marketing, and management);
 - Need to support those involved in fishing and aquaculture in advanced training and courses (with regard to niche or specific courses linked to extraction, processing, and operations);
 - Need to support the development of basic skills and awareness (particularly for younger people, tourists, and newcomers to the industry)
- Promoting the knowledge and experience present in local coastal areas
 - Need to support the exchange of knowledge between older and young generations
 - Need to ensure that information on coastal heritage is not lost to young generations.

Attracting Young People to Fisheries and Coastal Areas

Like many rural and peripheral locations, coastal areas struggle to attract young people who wish to remain, work and live in the area. Partly this is due to a lack of employment opportunities with many leaving for education and not returning, however many young people are 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:

- Introducing young people to the marine environment early
 - 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
 - Need to support young people through grants for taking courses in marine sector skills;
 - Need to support young people through grants for marine based activities e.g. sailing, kayaking and rowing;
 - Working with existing organisations e.g. schools, Marine Institute, Institutes of Technology;
 - Need to encourage the development of apprenticeships for young people seeking to gain employment in the fisheries and aquaculture sectors; and
 - Need to support young entrepreneurs who have business ideas for coastal areas.

Table 2.7: 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 to isolation amongst older persons in coastal areas, mental health, as well as access to services for fishing families. Some of the needs highlighted included:

- Lack of services in coastal communities
 - Support for the development and sustainability of existing coastal community assets;
 - Support needed for vulnerable people in coastal communities including need for safe access to infrastructure; and
 - 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
 - Support for historical events and exhibitions in relation to coastal heritage;
 - Support for the development of heritage centres e.g. boat building; and
 - Support for research into local history, and support for dissemination and publishing of findings;
 - Support for festivals and other activities to promote seafood and the marine;
 - Support for information boards and signage in relation to points of interest; and
 - Development of coastal heritage trails .

Table 2.8: 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 and influential within local decision making.

- Improving the capacity of local fishing and aquaculture organisations
 - Need to improve the co-operation and networking between local fisheries and aquaculture groups;
 - 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.
 - Promotion of the FLAG as a representative group providing a voice for local coastal communities.

Table 2.9: Protecting and Promoting the Environment

Protecting and Promoting the Environment

Counties Mayo and Sligo offer many natural areas of outstanding beauty and have a rich coastal landscape including islands, cliffs, beaches and clean water. 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:

- Promoting the Natural Environment
 - 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
 - Need to promote the archaeological heritage of the area - particularly neolithic sites in Sligo, and the early Christian remains on the islands of Clare, Inish Murray, Inishkeas, Achill, Inisturk, and Cahir.
- Protecting the Environment
 - Need to raise awareness of bio-diversity in coastal areas;
 - Need to invest in community based conservation trails; and
 - Need to provide education regarding mitigation of climate change.

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 over 100 people 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 West 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 using the findings from a prioritisation exercise during the public consultations develops 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 West Region has a well-established fishing and aquaculture sector, and is recognised for its strong sense of coastal communities. This is being threatened by a number of issues including:

- A decline in fisheries, in addition to the external view that the sector is in decline thereby putting young people off joining the sector;
- Population migration away from coastal and rural areas to urban centres for opportunities in education and employment; and
- An aging population and the associated social and economic challenges this brings for small communities.

However, there are clear opportunities to support the innovation, diversification and enhancement of coastal areas including innovative development within the seafood sector, building upon the local tourism product e.g. tapping into the Wild Atlantic Way initiative, and supporting the creation and development of businesses providing artisan products.

The FLAG North West Programme aims to support fishing and aquaculture 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; and to enable local people to deliver projects which will enhance their area.

The overall aim of the strategy therefore is to support in the rejuvenation of Mayo and Sligo coastal communities.

3.4 Prioritisation of Identified Areas of Activity

3.4.1 Introduction

The process for prioritising the areas of activity ensured that a wide range of views were heard and recorded. It is also evident from this process that the local public knowledge and from the relevant organisations and agencies was consistent with the comprehensive statistical information available and analysed within Section 2.

The FLAG Board were heavily involved in the prioritisation, both prior to and following the public consultation meetings and supported in the identification of which areas of activity might be best applicable and offer best possible value for money from the FLAG programme funding,

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: Summary of Scoring Methodology

Criteria	Weighting		Scoring Rationale
	Weighting	Rationale	
Strength of support for the need	25	This weighting reflects the importance attributed to the information provided through the public engagement.	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	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.	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	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.	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	The project pipeline is an indication of the opportunities that the FLAG will have to spend money on a projects under a particular area of activity. Therefore, a weighting of 25 has been attributed to this criterion.	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

In Table 3.2, each of the seven areas of activity has been assessed and score against each of the four criterion. This has provided a total weighted score which will determine the overall ranking of the areas of activity.

Table 3.2: Summary of Prioritisation

Area of Activity	Total Weighted Score	Rank
Creating and maintaining jobs in coastal areas	500	1
Lifelong learning and attracting young people in fisheries and aquaculture areas	475	2
Adding value to fisheries and aquaculture products	400	3
Promoting innovation in fisheries and aquaculture and supporting diversification inside and outside commercial fisheries	350	4
Promoting social well-being and cultural heritage in fisheries and aquaculture areas	300	5=
Strengthening the role and governance of fisheries communities in local development	300	5=
Promoting the environmental assets of the fisheries and aquaculture areas and mitigation of climate change	250	7

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.

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. The next sections of this Chapter set out the development of the intervention logic.

3.5 Intervention Logic of the FLAG North West Strategy

3.5.1 Components of the Intervention Logic

The intervention logic for the FLAG North West 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.

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

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.
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.
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.
Objective	The objectives are high level outcomes which intervention under a particular theme aims to achieve. These are often macro-level and qualitative.
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 this Chapter sets out the components above for the FLAG North West Strategy.

3.5.2 Strategic Vision

The FLAG North West area will have a resilient and growing fishery and aquaculture dependent communities with strong sense of area's rich maritime, culture and heritage.

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 4 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.

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

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.

Table 3.4: Indicator Tables – Programme Level Result Indicators

Programme level indicators: Total Programme Budget €1,324,500						
Assuming budget of €756,857 for Theme 1: Economic Development, across the lifetime of the programme						
Action	Financial Allocation	Indicator(s)	Measurement Unit	Milestone (2019)	Target (2023)	Estimated Cost per Job
FTE Jobs created	€756,857	# of FTE Jobs created	#	6	13	€55,000
FTE jobs maintained	€756,857	# of FTE jobs maintained	#	15	33	€22,300

These are complemented by output indicators across all of the themes for the FLAG North West. The indicators for each of the actions were selected from the indicator lists developed using the European Commission guidance on EMFF Indicators⁶ and supporting documentation from FARNET⁷.

3.5.4 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 West 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..

6 [1] <https://datacollection.jrc.ec.europa.eu/dd/indicators/emff> & <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:02014R1014-20140928&from=EN>

7 [2] https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/fpfis/cms/farnet/files/documents/FARNET-G11_Results-oriented-CLLD_EN.pdf

Table 3.5: Theme 1 - Economic Development of Coastal Areas

Theme 1 - Economic Development of Coastal Areas (57% of FLAG Programme, €756,857)					
Objective 1 - To support the enhancement and development of fisheries and aquaculture (40% of Objective 1, €302,743)					
Rationale for the Objective:					
Fisheries and Aquaculture is a fundamentally important industry to the local economy and therefore the development of this industry could lead to improved economic conditions for those working within the industry, their families and the wider coastal community.					
Action	Description	Financial Allocation € (%)	Indicator(s)	Milestone (2019)	Target (2023)
1. Supporting micro-enterprise product development, improved quality and marketing, and research and development	Actions to support the development of new products and businesses including market testing; support for improving the appearance, marketing and packaging of local products; support with e-commerce;; improved collaboration with partners and actors in the supply chain; research on market demand, shelf life, catchment areas etc; and support for feasibility studies and research projects into marine related topics identified as having potential for economic benefit and job creation; and support to develop and encourage local artisan processing, new processing facilities, development and upgrading of current facilities; and support for existing companies to adopt or use processing technologies, including within the blue growth / maritime sector.	€121,097 (40%)	# of businesses supported	3	6
			# of new products	2	6
2. Improving pier and harbour infrastructure for fishing and aquaculture	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), and enhancement of marine infrastructure for multi-sectoral use e.g. Support for pontoons ensuring that access to water is safe and accessible for all including those with disabilities. Support for projects which can improve energy efficiency/use of clean and green natural resources within pier and harbour infrastructure.	€181,646 (60%)	# of marine infrastructure improvements	1	5

Table 3.6: Theme 1 - Economic Development of Coastal Areas

Theme 1 - Economic Development of Coastal Areas (57% of FLAG Programme, €756,857)					
Objective 2 - To develop and enhance the marine tourism product in the North West region (40% of Objective 1, €302,743)					
Rationale for the Objective:					
As a considerable growth sector for the area, and having a particularly strong impact on coastal areas the development and enhancement of the marine tourism product is recognised as a key area for targeted support.					
Action	Description	Financial Allocation € (%)	Indicator(s)	Milestone (2019)	Target (2023)
3. Developing & Promoting the North West Region's Tourism Offering	Support to develop marine tourism and water based activities, walks, cycling trails, heritage trails seafood trails, examination or implementation of Blue Way scheme eco-tourism and wildlife tourism including bird watching, whale and dolphin tours, seals and other marine species; seafood festivals and maritime events ⁸ and coastal community festivals; Support for the development of new start-up marine tourism businesses/activities including capital equipment, promotion, and business support; and support to develop tourism assets accessible within poor weather condition including heritage centres, museums, exhibitions and festivals. Support to be provided to marine / coastal themed tourism events or activities which 'extend' the tourism season within the local area beyond traditional local events e.g. encouraging increased visitor footfall and expenditure between September - May annually.	€211,920 (70%)	# of marine leisure/ tourism activities supported # of seafood/ marine festivals or events supported	6	14
4. Communicating and selling the coastal tourism product, and providing event support	Support for the animation and marketing and digitisation of tourism products, development of new marketing including networks and clusters to encourage local tourism business to work more closely together and also work with other local businesses e.g. hotels and restaurants; and development of joint packages e.g. fishing holidays. Projects with synergies alongside the Wild Atlantic Way or which improve connections with the Islands are particularly welcome.	€90,823 (30%)	# of marine leisure/ tourism activities supported	5	10

8 The FLAG North West intends to place a financial cap upon the amount of funding it may provide to festivals and events (excluding shared capital equipment). This is expected to hold at €500 for single day events, and up to €1,000 for multi-day events.

Table 3.7: Theme 1 - Economic Development of Coastal Areas

Theme 1 - Economic Development of Coastal Areas (57% of FLAG Programme, €756,857)					
Objective 3 - To encourage diversification and innovation in coastal areas (20% of Objective 1, €151,371)					
Rationale for the Objective					
The rejuvenation and redevelopment of coastal areas is a key component driving creation of new enterprises through diversification and innovation, including within blue growth.					
Action	Description	Financial Allocation € (%)	Indicator(s)	Milestone (2019)	Target (2023)
5. Promoting Diversification and Entrepreneurial Activity	Support to: encourage entrepreneurship and business startup through support through pilot projects and seed funding for idea exploration through feasibility study and business case development; provide and support on-going mentoring and networking between local people and agencies that can provide soft support (e.g. training); for product testing, marketing and branding; diversification into new areas such as marine tourism, heritage, arts and crafts and renewable energy and seaweed biomass products.	€90,823 (60%)	# of businesses supported	3	8
6. Promoting Innovation and Knowledge Exchange	Support to provide appropriate space to encourage business developed e.g. incubation units / hubs / innovation space, as well as meeting space (physical or digital) for knowledge exchange and sharing of skills and information (assumed likely to relate to fit out and access, as opposed to new build given the budget available).	€60,549 (40%)	# of businesses supported	1	3

Table 3.8: Theme 2 - Harnessing and Developing the Skills and Knowledge of the Local Coastal Community

Theme 2 - Harnessing and Developing the Skills and Knowledge of the Local Coastal Community (14.3% of FLAG Programme, €189,214)					
Objective 1 - To promote and develop the skills of those in coastal areas (60% of Theme 2, €113,529)					
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. Support under this area will promote the sharing of this knowledge.					
Action	Description	Financial Allocation € (%)	Indicator(s)	Milestone (2019)	Target (2023)
7. 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.	€56,764 (50%)	# of participants on training courses (and, where appropriate, # of participants getting an accreditation)	25	55
8. Providing Support for Training and 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. Support for formal mentoring and networking schemes, including support for initial setup cost support, facilitation and promotion costs with capacity to be undertaken by local education and training provider.	€56,764 (50%)	# of informational schemes	5	11

Table 3.9: Theme 2 - Harnessing and Developing the Skills and Knowledge of the Local Coastal Community

Theme 2 - Harnessing and Developing the Skills and Knowledge of the Local Coastal Community (14.3% of FLAG Programme, €189,214)					
Objective 2 - To encourage, develop and share the knowledge of fisheries and aquaculture amongst young people (40% of Theme 2, €75,686)					
Rationale for the Objective:					
Like many rural and peripheral locations, coastal areas struggle to attract young people who wish to remain, work and live in the area. Partly this is due to a lack of employment opportunities with many leaving for education and not returning, however many young people are not aware of the opportunities within local coastal areas that many be an attraction and encouragement for them to return.					
Action	Description	Financial Allocation € (%)	Indicator(s)	Milestone (2019)	Target (2023)
9. Marine Environment and Education	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.	€37,843 (50%)	# of educational/informational schemes	4	8
10. Young People Training in Marine Sectors and Promoting awareness within schools and colleges	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; to support young entrepreneurs who have business ideas for coastal areas; and to help regatta communities with development of events and equipment to improve awareness. This should be in line with the Leech Report. Training supported by the FLAG should complement / not duplicate training already provided by BIM.	€37,843 (50%)	# of participants on training courses (and, where appropriate, # of participants getting an accreditation)	15	35

Table 3.10: Theme 3 - Promoting Social Well-Being and Coastal Cultural Heritage

Theme 3 - Promoting Social Well-Being and Coastal Cultural Heritage (14.3% of FLAG Programme, €189,214)					
Objective 1 - To improve social wellbeing in coastal areas and To promote & share the rich cultural heritage of fisheries and aquaculture areas to make it accessible to all (100%, €189,214)					
Rationale for the Objective					
Access to services and issues of social isolation are important and often under reported issues impact on the social wellbeing of coastal communities. Support under this objective seeks to support and improve the quality of life and social wellbeing of coastal residents.					
Action	Description	Financial Allocation € (%)	Indicator(s)	Milestone (2019)	Target (2023)
11. 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.	€37,843 (20%)	# of projects which improve quality of life or social well-being	1	2
12. Ensuring the sharing and continuation of coastal heritage including Improved signage and Development and Expansion of Coastal Trails Network	Support for development and installation of signage and information boards to highlight area background e.g. safety, litter, points of interest etc; and support for provision of trail creation, signage, and promotion Support for: 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.	€150,371 (80%)	# of projects to promote local heritage, knowledge and culture	6	16

Table 3.11: Theme 4 - Enabling more Participative Involvement in the Governance of Fisheries

Theme 4 - Enabling more Participative Involvement in the Governance of Fisheries (8.6% of FLAG Programme, €113,529)					
Objective 1 - To improve the capacity of fisheries communities in relation to better self-governance, and To improve the networking and linkages between fisheries communities (100% of Theme 4, €113,529)					
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)
13. 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; improve community understanding of industry standards, regulations, funding opportunities, procurement, rights and obligations. Training supported by the FLAG should complement / not duplicate training already provided by BIM or available through the Inshore Fisheries Scheme or the Regional / National Inshore Fisheries Forums. Support for Establishing User Groups and Community Fora through grant funding for initial setup, meeting and purpose consultations, and support in identifying related structures to support the aims of the community group.	€90,823 (80%)	# of community/ user groups with enhanced capacity	8	20
14. Developing the voice of fisheries and aquaculture	Support to: improve the co-operation and networking within local fisheries and improve the networking, consultation and partnership between local actors and authorities and agencies.	€22,706 (20%)	# of community/ user groups with enhanced voice	2	5

Table 3.12: Theme 5 - Protecting and Promoting the Environment

Theme 5 - Protecting and Promoting the Environment (5.7% of FLAG Programme, €75,686)					
Objective 1 - To support the promotion and protection of environmental assets (€75,686)					
Rationale for the Objective					
<p>The area 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. 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 protect the environmental assets of County Mayo and Sligo.</p>					
Action	Description	Financial Allocation € (%)	Indicator(s)	Milestone (2019)	Target (2023)
15. Promoting & Protecting the Natural Environment	<p>Support for: improving the offering of the natural environment through information, wildlife tours, walking routes and improving the access to and safety of existing sites to enable more people to enjoy them without damaging the environment. This action includes support for exploration of natural asset opportunities including feasibility studies.</p> <p>Support for: raising awareness of bio-diversity in coastal areas; investing in community based conservation trails; community clean-up equipment.</p>	€75,686 (100%)	# of environmental based/ research projects and # of projects supported to enhance environmental conservation, awareness and protection	5	12

Table 3.13: Cross-Cutting Theme - Networking and Co-Operation (€50,000)

Cross-Cutting Theme - Networking and Co-Operation - €50,000					
Rationale for the Objective:					
<p>The budget for this FLAG includes a provision of €50,000 over the lifetime of the programme for networking and co-operation with other FLAGs nationally and internationally, including the ability to contribute funding to multi-territorial projects where there is a mutual benefit for the involved FLAGs e.g. sharing of best practice, ability to foster a relationship with a comparable European FLAG area and promote trading, learning and knowledge exchange, or to learn from other projects supported by FLAGs across member states.</p>					
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 ⁹	Details
Preliminary interviews with key stakeholders ¹⁰	As part of a strategy development process, interviews were held with a range of key stakeholders ¹¹ 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 ¹²	<p>As part of the consultation process during the development of the strategy, public meetings were held in 5 locations within the FLAG Region¹³. These locations were distributed across the FLAG Region, including remote locations (in proximity to islands and rural areas) to ensure that all coastal communities and stakeholders had the opportunity to participate (see map). A total of 74 people attended these 5 meetings.</p> 

9 FARNET GUIDE #1 – A Start-Up Guide for Fisheries Local Action Groups (FLAGs) – Stakeholders.

10 Interviews should be arranged with key stakeholders and informants in the area and / or other relevant organisations - FARNET GUIDE #1 – A Start-Up Guide for Fisheries Local Action Groups (FLAGs).

11 Mulranny Pier Users Group; Fishermen; Curraun Fisheries; Bellacrogher Boat Club; Inishturk Community Club; Croagh Patrick Seafoods; Seirbhisi Curam; Comhar Dien Chachain Teo; Cumharchumann Forbartha Ionad Deirbhle Teo; Cumann na mBadaoi Fod Dubh; Udaras na Gaeltachta; IRD (LEADER) North Mayo West Sligo Ltd; Eithna's by the Sea; IT Sligo.

12 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).

13 Westport, Belmullet, Achill, Killala and Sligo.

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	4 (9%)	2 (14%)
Economic and social partners	19 (43%)	6 (43%)
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.	21 (48%)	6 (43%)

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 over 90% 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 & Action Plan for the FLAG North West

This section sets out the Action Plan for FLAG North West 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 West 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								
Monitoring and Evaluation Training	FLAG Board/ BIM Centrally						X	X						
PR / Animation / Communication Training	FLAG Board/ BIM Centrally		X	X	X									
PR / Animation / Communication														
PR / Communication	FLAG Board		X			X			X			X		
Animation / Public Workshops	FLAG Board		X			X			X			X		
Initiation of Call														
Call Publicity/Animation	BIM / FLAG Board		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		
Assessment Against Criteria	FLAG Technical & Investment Committee					X			X			X		
Recommendations approved/rejected	FLAG Board					X			X			X		
Issue Rejection Letters	FLAG Board via BIM					X			X			X		
Issue LoOs	BIM						X			X			X	
Monitoring & Evaluation														
Project monitoring	BIM / FLAG Board							X						X
Post Project Evaluation	BIM / FLAG Board													X
Strategy Review	FLAG Board / BIM												X	X

Table 5.2: FLAG North West 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			X				X	
Decide Dates for Calls	BIM Centrally/FLAG Board	X											
PR / Animation / Communication													
PR / Communication	FLAG Board	X			X			X			X		
Animation / Public Workshops	FLAG Board	X			X			X			X		
Initiation of Call													
Call Publicity/Animation	BIM / FLAG Board	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		
Assessment Against Criteria	FLAG Technical & Investment Committee				X			X			X		
Recommendations approved/rejected	FLAG Board				X			X			X		
Issue Rejection Letters	FLAG Board via BIM				X			X			X		
Issue LoOs	BIM					X			X			X	
Monitoring & Evaluation													
Project monitoring	BIM / FLAG Board						X						X
Post Project Evaluation	BIM / FLAG Board												X
Strategy Review	FLAG Board / BIM											X	X
Networking and Co-Operation													
Co-operation	FLAG Board				X							X	
Networking	FLAG Board				X							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 West is €1.50m, 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 West.

The proposed budget reflects the Board's investment strategy based on information available at the time of developing the strategy and appropriate use of FLAG funds to address identified needs.

The FLAG Board will keep the budget, funds committed and funds spent under regular review. It will also take into account demand for funding and project pipeline as well as external factors which emerge in the FLAG area over the course of the FLAG programme. Based on this information, the FLAG Board will consider the need to transfer funds between themes, objectives and actions as required and in such situations, will put forward a proposed reallocation supported by a robust rationale to BIM Head Office for approval.

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	€113,529	€189,214	€189,214	€151,371	€113,529	€756,857
Theme 2: Harnessing and Developing the Skills and Knowledge of the Local Coastal Community	€37,843	€37,843	€37,843	€37,843	€37,843	€189,214
Theme 3: Promoting Social Well-Being and Coastal Cultural Heritage	€37,843	€37,843	€37,843	€37,843	€37,843	€189,214
Theme 4: Enabling more participative involvement in the governance of fisheries	€28,382	€28,382	€28,382	€28,382	€28,382	€113,529
Theme 5: Protecting and Promoting the Environment	€15,137	€18,921	€18,921	€15,137	€7,569	€75,000
Cross Cutting Theme: Networking & Co-Operation	€10,000	€10,000	€10,000	€10,000	€10,000	€50,000
Sub-Total	€ 242,734	€ 322,204	€ 322,204	€ 269,234	€ 218,136	€1,374,500
Overall Admin Costs	€ 25,100	€ 25,100	€ 25,100	€ 25,100	€ 25,100	€125,500
Total	€ 267,834	€ 347,304	€ 347,304	€ 294,324	€ 243,236	€1,500,000

6.4 Project Spend by Theme, Objective and Year

Table 6.2 considers project spend in more detail setting out the budget by theme and objective across the programme period.

Table 6.2: Implementation of Operations / Projects under the LDS

	2017 (€)	2018 (€)	2019 (€)	2020 (€)	2021 (€)	Total (€)
Implementation of Operations / Projects under the LDS						
Theme 1 Economic Development of Coastal Areas						
Objective 1: To support the enhance and development of fisheries and aquaculture	€45,411	€75,686	€75,686	€60,549	€45,411	€302,743
Objective 2: To further develop and enhance the marine tourism product in the North West	€45,411	€75,686	€75,686	€60,549	€45,411	€302,743
Objective 3: To encourage diversification and innovation within coastal areas	€22,706	€37,843	€37,843	€30,274	€22,706	€151,371
Sub-Total	€113,529	€189,214	€189,214	€151,371	€113,529	€756,857
Objective 1: To promote and develop the skills of those in the North West's coastal communities	€22,706	€22,706	€22,706	€22,706	€22,706	€113,529
Objective 2: To encourage, develop and share the knowledge of fisheries and aquaculture among young people	€15,137	€15,137	€15,137	€15,137	€15,137	€75,686
Sub-Total	€37,843	€37,843	€37,843	€37,843	€37,843	€189,214
Objective 1: To improve social wellbeing in coastal areas, and to promote and share the rich cultural heritage of the area	€37,843	€37,843	€37,843	€37,843	€37,843	€189,214
Sub-Total	€37,843	€37,843	€37,843	€37,843	€37,843	€189,214
Objective 1: To improve the capacity of fisheries communities in relation to better self-governance & To improve the networking and linkages between communities	€28,382	€28,382	€28,382	€28,382	€28,382	€113,529
Sub-Total	€28,382	€28,382	€28,382	€28,382	€28,382	€113,529
Objective 1: To support the promotion and protection of environmental assets	€15,137	€18,921	€18,921	€15,137	€7,569	€75,686
Sub-Total	€15,137	€18,921	€18,921	€15,137	€7,569	€75,686
To support networking and co-operation between FLAGs at a regional, national and international level	€10,000	€10,000	€10,000	€10,000	€10,000	€50,000
Sub-Total	€10,000	€10,000	€10,000	€10,000	€10,000	€50,000
Total	€242,734	€322,204	€322,204	€269,224	€218,136	€1,374,500

6.5 Administration Spend

Another important element of the budget is the administration spend. At present this is set at a maximum of 12.5 % 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 (€)
FLAG Administration and Animation Costs						
Communication/ Publicity / Advertising ¹⁴	€ 3,600	€ 3,600	€ 3,600	€ 3,600	€ 3,600	€ 18,000
Meeting Facilitation ¹⁵	€ 3,000	€ 3,000	€ 3,000	€ 3,000	€ 3,000	€ 15,000
Travel & Subsistence ¹⁶	€ 6,000	€ 6,000	€ 6,000	€ 6,000	€ 6,000	€ 30,000
Buying in service/person ¹⁷	€ 3,000	€ 3,000	€ 3,000	€ 3,000	€ 3,000	€ 15,000
Labour Replacement Costs ¹⁸	€ 9,500	€ 9,500	€ 9,500	€ 9,500	€ 9,500	€ 47,500
Total	€ 25,100	€ 125,500				

14 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.

15 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.

16 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.

17 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.

18 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.

6.6 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 € 600,000 ¹⁹.

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.

¹⁹ 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 West
Primary Contact Details	Contact Name: Declan Nee Website: TBC Role: FLAG Co-ordinator Email: nee@bim.ie Phone Number: +353 (0) 95 44973 & + 353 (0) 97 20915 Mobile: +353 (0) 087 221 1503
Date of FLAG Establishment	December 2016
Legal Structure	The Fisheries Local Action Group is the North West 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 Regulation²⁰ 508/2014 and Article 32 (2) (b) of the Common Provisions Regulation²¹, 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 Sector²² and a minimum of 60% representation from the fishing, seafood, coastal communities sector²³. The balance of organisational representation will be retained throughout the replacement/ rotation process.

20 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)."

21 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;"

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

23 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% female²⁴. In the previous FLAG programme, the aspiration was to ensure that at least 30% of committee members²⁵ 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 Networks²⁶ (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 West has 15 members, and is representative of a wide range of sectors and areas. The table below sets out the current membership of the FLAG North West.

24 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)

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

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

Table 7.2: FLAG Members - Experience

Organisation	Member	Sector ²⁷	Area	Experience
Cumann Iascairi Chos Costa Iorraís	Eamon Dixon	Private	Fishing	Eamon is a former FLAG NW Board member, and he sits on the board of Responsible Irish Fish (RIF) and a number of State consultative groups for inshore vessels. He is also Chairman of NW RIFF and represents the NW on NIFF.
NW RIFF	Micheal Kelly	Private	Fishing	Micheal was nominated to represent the fishermen of Sligo as they have no representative group. He is a fisherman from Easky, and has represented the North West on several inshore committees at national level.
NW RIFF / Erris Lobster Restocking and Conservation Association	William Walker	Private	Fishing	William is Chairman of the Erris Lobster Restocking and Conservation Association which has 20 members who are all Licensed and registered. William has years of experience in campaigning on local and national issues in Inshore Fishing, and is a member of NW RIFF.
NW RIFF	David Downes	Private	Fishing	David is owner of a licensed registered Fishing vessel. He leads up an ad hoc group of fishermen from the north Sligo area. He is a seasoned campaigner on behalf of Inshore Fishermen. He is also a member of the Mullaghgrew Community who are involved in Community Development especially Marine related infrastructure.
Clew Bay Marine	Mary Gavin	Private	Fishing	Vice Chair of North West Board. Mary was nominated by the Clew Bay Marine community which is not a representative group but came together to nominate representation from the area to the FLAG. Mary has skippered her own Angling Boat for Sea Fishing over the last 35 years. Mary is from Clynish Island in Clew Bay and has a strong Fishing/Angling background she has represented Ireland as a Female Sea Angler.
Clew Bay Oyster Co-op	Sean O'Grady	Private	Aquaculture	Sean is an Oyster Farmer, Fisherman and recently set up his own Fish Sales Business selling at local markets throughout South Mayo. Sean is chairman of the Clew Bay Oyster Co-op which was once a very valuable Wild Oyster Fishery but is in decline over the past 10 years. Sean is also an individual who commands great respect amongst his fellow oyster farmers, Clew Bay Fishermen and Clew Bay Oyster Co-op members.

²⁷ As per Article 5 of CPR: private sector (fisheries and/or aquaculture sectors), public sector, civil society.

Organisation	Member	Sector ²⁷	Area	Experience
West Mayo Fishermen's Co-op	Ger Hassett	Civil Society	Fishing Co-operative / Tourism Development	<p>Chair of North West Board was nominated by the West Mayo Fishermen's Co-op and selected at a meeting in Westport by a larger Clew Bay Fishing Community Group.</p> <p>Ger is a successful Businessman owning the Keem Bay Smoked Salmon Company; he also buys and sells whitefish to the hotel and restaurant trade. He is an owner of a small fishing vessel and is very popular amongst his Community and would be seen as an activist in Achill Community.</p>
Comhlacht Forbartha Áitiúil Acla (CFAA)	Terence Dever	Civil Society	Community Development, Business	<p>Terence Dever has been CEO of Comhlacht Forbartha Áitiúil Acla since 1996. He has spent over two decades lobbying for economic development for the parish of Achill, representing the parish at Regional, National and International levels. His objective is to improve the lives of people living in the parish, by creating sustainable employment and sourcing funding to improve infrastructure. He has a Masters in Rural Development and a Diploma in Irish. Terence was responsible for the delivery of the LEADER programme to the Parish of Achill and Tourmakeady for Meitheal Forbartha Na Gaeltachta. Terence and his team have launched the Achill Experience which is run through CFÁA. The experience is Achill's first visitor centre and Mayo's first Aquarium.</p>
Mayo Islands community	Caroline Healy	Civil Society	Community Development	<p>Caroline is the Development Co-coordinator for Cliara Development Company in Clare Island, Co Mayo. Background in Community Leadership and engagement. Caroline works with Local Fisheries Groups, Farming groups, enterprise and tourism groups to enhance Island living and promote Clare Island.</p>
Údarás na Gaeltachta	Sean O Coisteibhle	Public	Gaeltacht Development	<p>Sean is Public Relations Officer and former NWFLAG Board member. He has years of experience in all aspects of development in Gaeltacht area of Mayo, and Representing Udaras Belmullet.</p>
Mayo County Council	Mary Wrafter	Public	Council	<p>Community and Enterprise – Mayo County Council.</p>

Organisation	Member	Sector ²⁷	Area	Experience
Fáilte Ireland	Eva Dearie (Advisory to Board)	Public	Tourism	Eva is the Failte Ireland Wild Atlantic Way team manager. Eva is responsible for the delivery of the Wild Atlantic Way operational plans for the North Mayo, Sligo, Leitrim and South Donegal coast known as the Surf Coast and is based in Sligo town. Key responsibilities are the continuing development of tourism industry capabilities in marketing, sales and service excellence as well as supporting capital infrastructural plans and regional festivals.
South West Mayo Development Company	Sue O Toole	Civil Society	Enterprise Development	<p>Sue has worked in enterprise development sector for almost 20 years. During that time she has assisted with strategic planning, reporting requirements, audits and board oversight.</p> <p>Sue has managed an extensive portfolio of business Leader projects and helped hundreds of business people to realise their potential. This has been achieved through one to one advice, guidance and support to each client.</p>
Sligo IT	John Bartlett	Public	Environmental	<p>Dr. John Bartlett is Head of Research at the Institute of Technology, Sligo. He has been a local fisheries group representative on the Lough Leane Catchment Management Working Group for over 20 years. He is Director of the Contract Research Unit at IT Sligo.</p> <p>Recent research includes partnership in an INTERREG funded study into the use of marine algae for renewable fuels. Current research includes support for businesses working in the area of sustainable building technologies, public service systems innovation in the health area, and building research capacity in companies in the renewable energy area.</p>
Sligo Public Participation network (PPN)	Michael Kilcullen	Civil Society	Community Development	<p>Michael Kilcullen, from Enniscrone, studied Fish Farming and Aquaculture in Letterkenny RTC.</p> <p>Michael worked seasonally on a Local Salmon boat before moving on to buy his own Charter vessel and also purchased and licenced a commercial Lobster vessel from which he supplied Mackerel and Lobsters to local restaurants.</p> <p>Michael continues to run both vessels each season and in offseason collects periwinkles and seaweed for Family owned Seaweed Baths.</p>

The North West Board (as of January 2017) is awaiting full confirmation of its membership, but anticipates inclusion of a further community representative from the Mayo Public Participation Network.

In accordance with Regulation²⁸ in relation to Fisheries Local Action Groups (FLAGs) it is desirable that the FLAG Board has balanced representation from all relevant sectors and industries to broadly reflect the main focus of their strategy and the socioeconomic composition of the area. 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 6 representatives from the fisheries sector and 1 representative¹ 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 are 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.
- It is recognised that the FLAG Board does not have sufficient representation in terms of training. The FLAG Board are working, through the recruitment of new members, to address this issue, although it is noted that potential members must to be nominated by parent organisations and have a mandate to act on their behalf.

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 will be vital to the successful implementation of the FLAG programme. To equip and support Board members to effectively fulfil their role, a number of actions are planned:

- A training syllabus has been developed - this details a programme of relevant training which will be delivered to address the identified training needs of FLAG Board 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 implementation²⁹. 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 approach³⁰.

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.

28 REGULATION (EU) No 508/2014, Article 61.

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

30 Regulation (EI) 1303/2013 (CPR) - Article 32.

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 times³¹ 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 Partnerships³², 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.

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

32 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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