

BIM EMFAF Work Programme Project Report 2023

BENEFICIARY:	Bord Iascaigh Mhara
PROJECT REFERENCE NUMBER:	23/SPIS/DIS-BG011-BR061
NAME OF PROJECT:	Innovation Process
IMPLEMENTATION PERIOD:	1 st January to 31 st December 2023

Project Scope

The Innovation Process was a continuation of the EMFAF 2022 work plan to utilise specific expertise including market information, third level research, and the latest technology developments to have highly informed data to build a full supply chain business model. The outputs will include innovative business cases on specific issues that can be utilised by industry to commercialise and build added value within their companies, removing guess work, and supporting the industry to monetize on added value opportunities and thus improving international competitive advantage.

The project was undertaken in partnership with other agencies including Bord Bia, Teagasc, Enterprise Ireland, third level institutions, industry groups, and specific technology providers. This network approach ensured that the latest technology, IP, and market insights are available to enable best international competitive position derived from an innovation culture within the sector.

Business innovation supports empowers seafood processors to make informed decisions, optimize operations, and identify market opportunities. By providing access to data analysis tools, can help them understand consumer trends, forecast demand, and improve resource allocation. This support can enhance competitiveness, leading to job creation and increased productivity. Additionally, by leveraging business innovation intelligence, companies can adapt to changing market conditions, reducing the risk of failure.

The focus of Innovation Process was on enabling problem solving and providing insights that allows the seafood sector to look at things from a different perspective, regardless of whether they are developing a new product, refreshing business strategy, or finding an original way to stay ahead of the competition. Technologies and markets are evolving fast, so supporting the Irish seafood businesses to become smart, agile, and more efficient to remain competitive or to at least acknowledge these changes, was supported by an overarching innovation process and framework.

Objectives

The Innovation Process objective was to supporting business decision making for the seafood sector. To achieve this business development, a multi facet approach was used to achieve the following objectives:

- Support to industry on 24 client-led technical projects, 20 client-led market projects, and 10 client-led viability projects.
- Understand the innovation capability within the industry.
- Develop innovation tools to support seafood processors understand and meet sustainability requirements of their key buyers at retail and foodservice.



- Investigate sustainable retail packaging that permits extended shelf-life for exported fresh products.
- Investigate green financing, its application to seafood processors and adoption requirements as part of the sustainability agenda.
- Research the delivery of functional seafood communication concepts for fish mongers to build on consumer demands for health and wellbeing to drive seafood consumption as part of the health agenda.
- Research digital technologies aligned to seafood quality and tracking to build the seafood processors digital transformation requirement to meet growing trend in international buyer demands.
- Seafood Innovation Framework and process demonstrated to seafood companies through Innovation Workshops to support the sector with commercially relevant innovation process to ensure improved commercial implementations.

Outcomes

- Support was given to industry on 28 client-led technical projects, 35 client-led market projects, and 27 client-led viability projects. This supports clients with on-going business innovation specific to their business needs.
- Report on innovation capability within the seafood and SME industry which identified key challenges which require a strategic government approach to support business skills and capability for the seafood sector.
- Developed innovation tools to support seafood processors understand and meet sustainability requirements of their key buyers at retail and foodservice. This enabled seafood processors better understand and meet their customers' needs in relation to meeting sustainability requirements of their customer.
- Report on sustainable retail packaging that permits extended shelf-life for exported fresh products. This enabled seafood processors make informed decisions on material application to become more sustainable in relation to packaging.
- Information document on green financing, its application to seafood processors and adoption requirements as part of the sustainability agenda. This is a document on how seafood processors may avail of cheaper financing for future projects.
- Piloted trials of functional seafood communication concepts for fish mongers to build on consumer demands for health and wellbeing to drive seafood consumption as part of the health agenda. This project has had very positive feedback from the retail sector on how its supporting communication with consumers on the benefit of seafood and moving beyond a price discussion.
- Industry workshop on digital technologies aligned to seafood quality and tracking to build the seafood processors digital transformation requirement to meet growing trend in international buyer demands. Several processors have taken further steps to consider a digital system for their own business and it is expected that it will see investment in the coming years by industry.
- Seafood Innovation Framework and process demonstrated to two seafood companies through Innovation Workshops to support the sector with a commercially relevant innovation process to ensure improved commercial implementations. This was highly valued by the participants and supported them with building their innovation capability and skill set.



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Summary of Project Spend

Summary of Spend	
Total Approved Costs	€335,000
Total Eligible Expenditure	€308,058
EMFAF Eligible Expenditure	€154,029
Exchequer	€154,029

Report by: Paul Ward

Date: January 2024



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