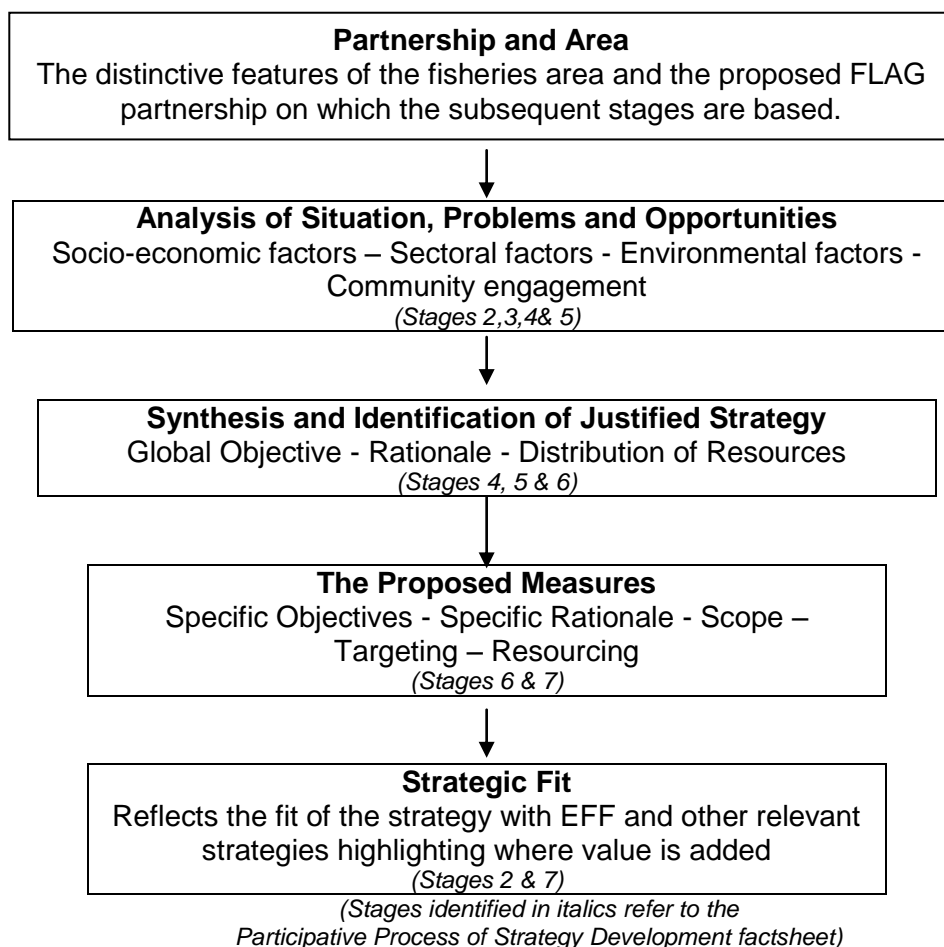


Territorial Development Strategy: Key Features

The purpose of this factsheet is to provide guidance on good practice approaches to the preparation of a Fisheries Local Action Group (FLAG) strategy. It forms part of a suite of complementary guidance notes and where relevant cross references are identified. This factsheet focuses on the structure and content of the strategy and complements the factsheets on participative approaches to strategy development and preparing an operational plan for the FLAG and delivery of the strategy. The approach outlined is consistent with EC guidelines on Project Cycle Management and the Logical Framework approach.¹

Preparing a strategy is not a case of following or filling in a template, there is no one model. This guide may cover elements of factual information required in different documents in some Member States e.g. the sections on partnership or area. Similarly there will be different approaches to operational plans which may be incorporated or stand alone (we address these in a separate factsheet). What is vital is that the strategy should demonstrate that there is a consistent flow of logic established through the document linking the analysis of the area, its needs and opportunities, the priorities to be addressed, the objectives, the resources and proposed delivery measures and the complementarity and demarcation with other strategies and policies affecting the area. The structure of this factsheet provides such a logical structure as illustrated in the diagram below, this is cross referenced to the relevant stages in the 'Participative Process of Strategy Development' factsheet.



¹ http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/multimedia/publications/publications/manuals-tools/t101_en.htm

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

It is useful to provide a summary of your document at the front to enable people to quickly understand the main points. Two or three pages long, this section should lay out clearly the main points of the strategy, this should include:

- the basis of your Partnership.
- the Area and its principal distinguishing features.
- the main challenges and opportunities identified.
- the overall theme or focus of the strategy and why it is appropriate.
- the global objective.
- the measures through which the strategy is addressed.
- the overall total and balance of resources.
- what it is hoped to achieve.

FLAG PARTNERSHIP DETAILS

The purpose of describing the partnership here is to set the contextual background to the strategy, this is essential as the FLAG partnership is fundamental to the development and delivery of the strategy. If these details are provided elsewhere you should simply summarise this here and refer to the other document.

Background

The local partnership is one of the key defining characteristics of the Axis 4 approach. You should describe the background to the FLAG, its origins and the basis upon which it has been formed. The process through which the FLAG was established should be described including any stakeholder and community consultation undertaken.

The LAG Partners and Area Representation

The membership of the FLAG should be identified demonstrating that EFF and domestic criteria have been met. It should be clearly demonstrated that the membership is proportionate to the makeup of the fisheries area and that key stakeholders are involved. Full details may be provided as an annex.

In describing your partnership it is useful to identify what skills and resources partners can contribute, this allows you to profile any needs and gaps which the FLAG can meet through training or external expertise. It is useful to do this early in the development process.

DEFINITION OF THE FISHERIES AREA

The focus on the fisheries area is central to Axis 4 and differentiates it from the rest of the EFF. Your strategy should therefore concisely define and describe the target fisheries area and any key distinguishing features, clearly explaining why it is an appropriate area upon which to base your strategy. Focus and clarity is important here, this is a key element of your strategy's justification.

The EFF Regulation is quite clear that FLAG boundaries need not follow administrative boundaries. There are however benefits in defining the area using the local administrative areas. The main reason for doing so here is driven by consideration of the levels at which key data sets are presented so that you can most accurately describe your area and its situation. A useful approach is therefore to build from the smallest such units to the largest which are relevant, ideally this should be supported by a map.

The aim is to provide a realistic description of the area and how it functions, again this should address any specific criteria the managing authority requires and the EFF eligibility criteria in terms of population density, dependency on fisheries and the presence of small fisheries communities.

SOCIAL, ECONOMIC AND ENVIRONMENTAL CONTEXT

The strategy should present an analysis or diagnosis of the social, economic and environmental context of the fisheries area with the implications drawn out. This can be undertaken by members of the group or through contracted experts. The analysis should be modest in scope and should be pitched at a level consistent with Axis 4, its focus and the extent of its potential achievement. The information and data presented should therefore be specific and relevant and tightly focused on the local fisheries area.

This part of the analysis should mainly make use of secondary sources, published statistics identifying baseline and trend data. You should also identify relevant reports and studies. At this stage it is important to consider the fit of your strategy with provisions of other locally relevant strategies and programmes and how you will complement or add to these. These may also provide useful data and analysis or may identify useful sources. There may be some problems of spatial fit of some data sets for some fisheries areas, you may need to consider undertaking some bespoke research which may or may not be supported by your managing authority.

Key socio-economic data sets you should access relate to:

- Resident population and its profile
- Number of jobs in the area
- Employment by sector and by gender, full time and part time
- Skills and qualifications
- Unemployment
- Enterprise, the business base, numbers and sizes
- Infrastructure and access to services
- Deprivation and disadvantage

The strategy should also provide environmental baseline data and analysis relevant to the fisheries area including any designations and should identify environmental assets that may be relevant to the strategy.

In each case you should pick out and highlight any specific dimensions relating to fisheries, the area and sector. From this analysis you should identify those key challenges and opportunities facing the fisheries area which the FLAG will consider in refining the strategy.

COMMUNITY AND STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

As a bottom up process the expectation is that the community and stakeholders will be involved in driving forward the development of the FLAG and its strategy from the outset, guidance on the approach to this is provided in the 'Participative Approaches to Strategy Development Factsheet'. The FLAG should set out the basis of its community and stakeholder consultation evidencing this bottom up involvement by explaining what was done, how the community was involved and the extent of their involvement. Your strategy should summarise the findings from consultation with stakeholders and the wider community. This should include the findings from the working groups etc. Normally there would be two main and clearly linked elements to this:

- their perceptions of the strengths, assets, needs and opportunities facing the area, (either forming part of the SWOT analysis process or feeding in where this is a separate stage); and
- their perceptions on the focus and balance of the strategy, the measures and how it will be delivered.

A key facet which should emerge here is the perspective from which the strategy is approached or addressed e.g. the extent to which the strategy is focused primarily on the fisheries sector and through that on the fisheries community, or vice versa, or whether the approach is primarily from the social, economic or environmental perspective.

The strategy should therefore summarise:

- the strengths, assets, needs and opportunities perceived.
- the extent to which consultees were in agreement with the proposed focus, any priority themes and the proposed measures/actions
- consultees' perceptions on the extent to which there is already development activity of the type proposed the scope for additional or complementary action.
- any early opportunities for intervention that have been identified, useful quick wins to establish the FLAG.

THE SWOT

Your strategy should contain a high quality SWOT analysis based on the definition of the area, the socio economic and environmental context, the review of documents and policies, the community and stakeholder consultations and any expert knowledge or input. The key element of the SWOT is the analysis. This should not be merely a list of the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats, this does not contribute to the justification of the strategy. The SWOT must show an analysis of the implications for the fisheries area and community of these factors and provide a basis for prioritisation of actions and resources. It is a pivotal element connecting the evidence base, the community engagement and the proposed programme. Guidance on conducting an effective SWOT is provided at page 64 of the EC Project Management Cycle guidance².

DERIVATION OF STRATEGY, MAIN OBJECTIVES AND RATIONALE

The fisheries area strategy should clearly be seen to flow from the combination of the analysis and consultation findings. You should present a short synthesis of the conclusions from the analysis and consultations and from this draw out the agreed central focus and global or overarching objective of the strategy. This global objective should encapsulate what the fisheries area strategy seeks to achieve and should be stated in SMART terms, i.e.

- Specific – clearly stating what the project will address and by what means.
- Measurable – containing a basis for measurement and a quantified target.
- Achievable – technically attainable given the scope of action proposed.
- Realistic – attainable given the resources provided, the time allowed, size of target group, etc.
- Timebound – incorporating the date by which the targets should be achieved.

The following represents an example of such a global objective which is presented in SMART terms.

² http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/multimedia/publications/publications/manuals-tools/t101_en.htm

'By 2015, to strengthen innovation and adaptability in businesses within the FLAG area, through actions leading to 10 new processes or products being introduced, 200 individuals successfully gaining and implementing new skills and 100 gross jobs being created or safeguarded'.

Present a clear rationale for the strategy - what it proposes to do and why it is appropriate – justifying through the analysis and consultation findings. Identify in overview the measures through which the strategy will be implemented explaining how this represents a coherent response to the central theme and overall objective i.e. that it is internally consistent.

CONSISTENCY AND DEMARCATION OF THE STRATEGY WITHIN THE POLICY CONTEXT

As noted in the section above on the social, economic and environmental context it is vital to ensure that you have taken appropriate account of the external consistency of your strategy with other local policies, strategies and interventions. Achieving best fit with the range of other interventions will help ensure best value for your own efforts and resources. This will also help avoid duplication and overlap thus complementing or adding value where possible. You should demonstrate how this is to be achieved in practice; this is often most clearly illustrated by using a table. This section may be equally effectively provided in the overall analysis, here or at the end of the strategy.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES AND MEASURES

From your analysis and consultations you will have derived proposals for the actions or groups of actions you wish to achieve your overall objective through. These need to be described in your strategy, we will refer to these here as measures. For each of these measures in your fisheries strategy you should produce a factsheet to a common format containing the following elements and further demonstrating the internal consistency of the strategy.

Specific Objectives

Objectives specified in line with SMART principles encapsulating what the measure proposes to do should be provided and should contribute to the global objective. An example of such an objective at this level which links to the global objective example would be:

'By 2015, to improve the economic performance of the FLAG area through actions leading to 340 participants that successfully ended a training activity, 200 gross jobs created or safeguarded and 2000 of additional tourist bed nights.'

Rationale

A justified rationale for the measure and its contribution to the strategy overall should be provided. This should demonstrate the logic behind your proposals by drawing on the evidence from your analyses and the consultation findings, as appropriate.

Scope of Action

The range of actions that will be considered for support under the measure should be identified here. In doing so you should check the relevant national EFF programme documents to ensure the consistency and eligibility of what is proposed.

Complementarity and Demarcation

Any scope for complementarity between this measure and other initiatives should be outlined briefly. This includes internal complementarity within the strategy and your EFF programme and externally with other programmes or initiatives. You should also specify any additional measure specific actions required to ensure clear demarcation of activities supported.

Target Beneficiaries

The measure text should identify the groups that are intended to benefit from the projects supported. This should include reference to any target or priority groups identified through the development of the strategy.

Integration of Environmental Sustainability

All EU-funded Programmes are expected to mainstream the Commission's policy on environmental sustainability. Integrating environmental sustainability in FLAG area strategies is important because of EU and domestic legislation and because of the dependence of fisheries communities and economies on a high quality natural resource and environment. Each measure text should explain the specific relevance of environmental sustainability and how this might be achieved.

Integration of Innovation

Stimulating innovation is one of the core principles of EFF Axis 4. The focus on innovation is founded on the belief that doing "more of the same" is unlikely to enable fisheries areas to reach their full potential and that new solutions to existing problems should be sought. Experience of LEADER and other area based initiatives shows that innovation is often poorly understood, it may be conflated with risk of failure rather than an understanding that in seeking new solutions or approaches some projects inevitably will fail to some extent and that this should be allowed for.

Examples of forms of innovation which commonly emerge include:

- the way a project is developed or managed.
- who is involved in the project and how they are involved.
- how the project is resourced.
- how the results or lessons are identified, used, disseminated or communicated.
- how the project becomes self sustaining.
- how the project links to other initiatives.

You should include a statement as to how this will be addressed in each measure e.g. by giving priority to projects which clearly demonstrate some desirable form of innovation.

Resources and Weighting

The indicative allocation of EFF funding for the measure should be provided broken down in monetary terms and as a proportion of the total EFF resources for the fisheries area strategy. The basis of this allocation should be explained by reference to your analysis and intervention logic.

Results and Outcomes

The types and scale of outcomes anticipated from the measure should be identified. This is normally done by identifying appropriate performance indicators and setting quantified targets, these should be proportionate to the scale of resources devoted to the measure. It may be helpful to think in terms of a hierarchy of effects for the measure i.e. what outcome you wish to achieve, the results you wish to achieve and the outputs sought. Logically these effects will relate directly to your SMART objectives. For example in relation to a training initiative:

- the outcome sought could be the number of individuals who are more employable or have their employment safeguarded through greater adaptability;
- the result would be the number successfully completing the training course and gaining a qualification or implementing new skills in the workplace; and

- the output would be the number of training days taken up by individuals.

You should identify appropriate indicators from the suite specified in your national programme. You may also include performance indicators that reflect the specific theme or focus of your strategy and / or local priorities, although it is essential that these are well defined, practical and limited in number of indicators.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

All EU funding is required to mainstream the Commission's policy on Equal Opportunities, which is also reflected in Member State legislation. This is important, not just in upholding citizens' rights, but also in ensuring that all available talents and abilities are harnessed. A pragmatic approach here is to adopt a suitable equal opportunities policy from one of the partners cross checking this against the FLAG strategy and amending to demonstrate how this will be implemented operationally. The policy may be attached as an annex.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

In addition to your measure texts your strategy should set out the environmental sustainability principles to which your FLAG is committed and outline how these will be implemented and monitored.

INNOVATION

The important overarching strategic principle is the search for innovation, encouraging new, forward looking and entrepreneurial approaches and solutions and therefore in addition to reference in the measure factsheets your strategy should outline your overall approach. In doing so it is important to consider the fit between innovation, co-operation and networking. Transferring best practice, sharing and learning from others allows access to a huge range of experience and innovation.

CO-OPERATION AND NETWORKING

Article 44 of the ERF makes provision for two Actions in Axis 4, Action 1: specific measures dedicated to transnational and interregional co-operation and Action 2: networking between groups. Provision is also made for national and EC level networks.

You should consider the different forms of co-operation, formal and informal, all of which can offer very significant benefits. Although the formal focus is very much on joint projects less formal approaches such as peer support and mentoring are vital areas of co-operation through networking. In embarking on the development of a FLAG and a local strategy you are not alone; you are joining a community. How can you make use of or contribute to this to develop your group and joint projects or initiatives or to share or transfer knowledge and experience?

Your strategy should set out your proposed approach, how you will develop it and what you wish to achieve for your FLAG.

COMMUNICATIONS AND PUBLICITY

The operational programme in each Member State must include information and publicity measures. It is important that your strategy sets out how you will contribute to this through the delivery of your local strategy. This has three main purposes:

- engaging, informing and involving the area's population will play a part in helping to ensure the accessibility of the FLAG.
- reporting development and achievements will help to establish the reputation of the FLAG and Axis 4, helping to maintain the commitment of partners and participants.
- demonstrating the added value of the Programme, the European and domestic funding and involvement.