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EUROPEAN FISHERIES FUND: Axis 4

Local Fisheries Development Strategy Template

To be completed by Lead Partner:

Lead Partner (Organisation name)	Comhairle nan Eilean Siar
Fisheries area	Outer Hebrides
Partnership name	Outer Hebrides Fisheries Local Action Group

Official use only:

Strategy number (serial number/code)	
Received (date)	
Approved (date)	

Form to be filled in and returned by e-mail or post to:

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1. Executive summary.

Basis of FLAG partnership

The FLAG Partnership represents stakeholder interest in the Outer Hebrides fisheries area from the fishing industry, local community, local authority, local development agency, tourism industry and the private sector. The partnership has a tightly focussed perspective but through the individual groups represented has access to, and influence from, an extensive variety of island stakeholders.

FLAG partners

Comhairle nan Eilean Siar
Outer Hebrides Inshore Fisheries Group
Outer Hebrides LEADER Local Action Group
Outer Hebrides Tourism Industry Association
Highlands and Islands Enterprise
Namara Projects

The Fisheries Area and its principal distinguishing features

The Outer Hebrides Fisheries Area is defined using the Comhairle nan Eilean Siar Local Authority area which is co-terminus with many other organisations including the Outer Hebrides Inshore Fisheries Group. Although the population of the islands is concentrated in Lewis (71%) small fishing communities are spread across all the islands from the Butt of Lewis to Barra. Larger centres of activity are located in Stornoway (Lewis), Kallin (North Uist) and Ardveinish (Barra) with some of the most fisheries dependent areas in Scotland in the Uists and Barra.

Main challenges and opportunities identified

Challenges

Ageing fishing industry structure (both in terms of participants and infrastructure)
Peripherality . geographical and governance - at the margins of influencing decision makers .
European Commission, UK Government, Scottish Government
High fuel costs; static shellfish prices
Reliance on small range of shellfish species landings
Sparsity of population
Declining but ageing population
Outmigration of young people
Lack of new entrants to industry; difficult to progress through industry

Opportunities

Stock enhancement facility improving stock but also creating tourism/service opportunity . e.g. lobster hatchery
Added value facilities . e.g. live storage, small scale co-operative ice production
Small scale niche tourism development through infrastructure development/improvement
Development of new or diversified businesses in marine related sectors (e.g. seaweed, renewables) or alternative market areas (e.g. wildlife tourism, other service provision)

Overall theme or focus of the strategy and why it is appropriate

From the consultation and analysis findings it is clear that scope exists to develop the Outer Hebrides fisheries area from both a fishing perspective and wider community perspective.

Development of fisheries infrastructure, support for value added processes, information, training and network development will all contribute to increasing the competitiveness of the fisheries area, develop new products and markets and increase coastal community capacity

Development of infrastructure and promotion of alternative marine activities will also support wider community aspirations and encourage business, community and social enterprise diversification into tourism and other related opportunities.

Global objective

To strengthen the Outer Hebrides FLAG area by supporting actions which lead to: 5 businesses supported and 20 training days undertaken to increase competitiveness of area; 5 added value processes introduced; 5 fisheries/tourism infrastructure projects or businesses created or diversified; and 2 good practice exchanges undertaken by 2015.

Measures through which the strategy is addressed

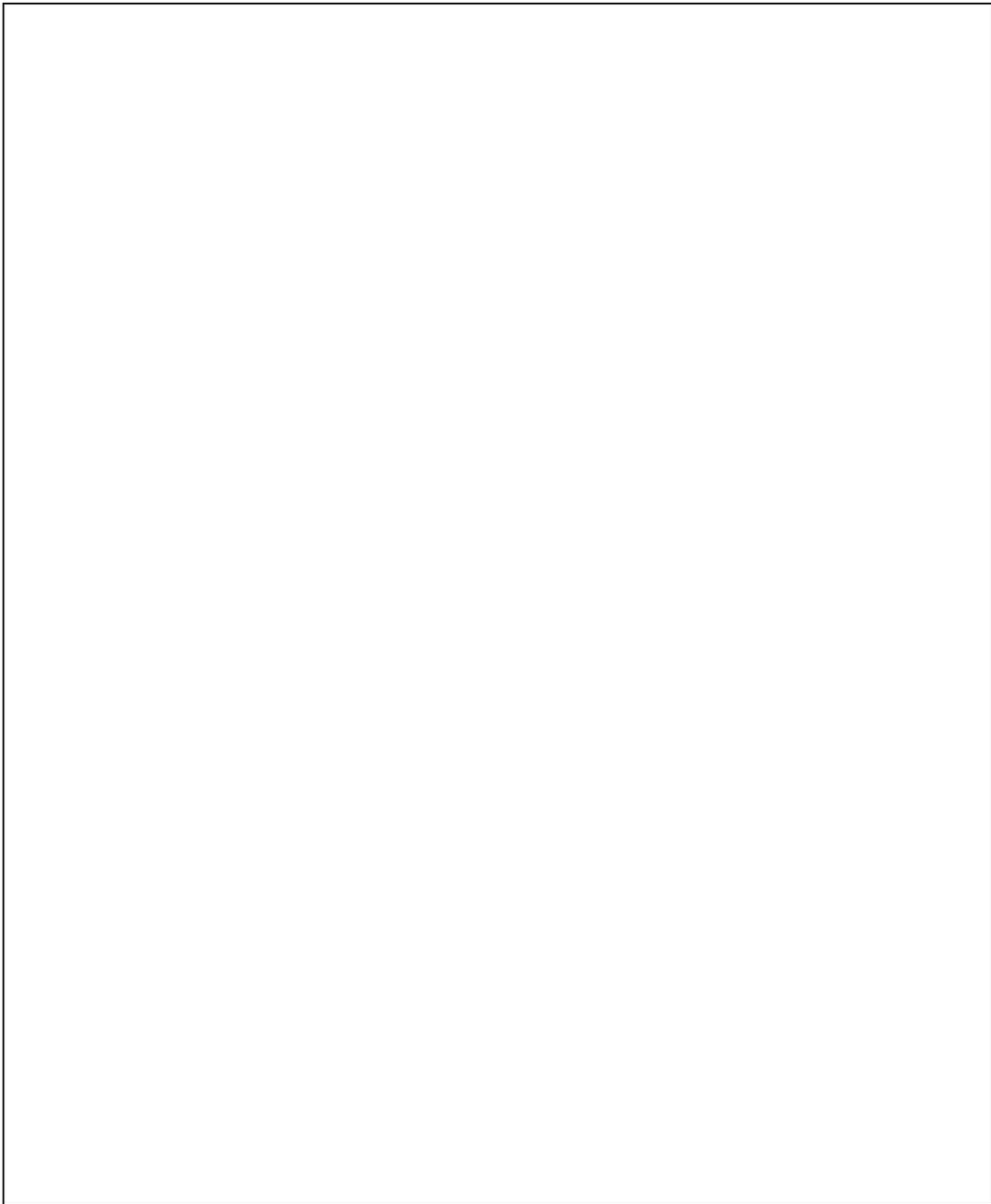
1. Strengthening the competitiveness of fisheries areas
2. Development of added value activities to fisheries products
3. Supporting small fisheries and tourism related infrastructure and services for the benefit of small fisheries communities
4. Promoting regional, national and international co-operation among groups in fisheries areas, mainly through networking and disseminating best practice

Overall total and balance of resources

	Project Costs £	%	EFF Funding £	%
Measure 1	92,000	17	55,000	24
Measure 2	133,000	25	50,000	21
Measure 3	255,000	49	97,000	42
Measure 4	20,000	4	12,000	5
Administration	25,000	5	19,000	8
Total	525,000		233,000	

What is hoped to be achieved

It is hoped that fisheries communities will identify and successfully complete projects which secure their long term future, contribute to increasing the competitiveness of the fisheries area, develop new products and markets and increase coastal community capacity. In addition development of alternative marine activities will also support wider community aspirations and encourage business, community and social enterprise diversification into tourism and other related opportunities.



2. Summarised description of the area.

FLAG Partnership Details

The FLAG Partnership represents stakeholder interest in the fisheries area from the fishing industry, local community, local authority, local development agency, tourism industry and the private sector. The partnership has a tightly focussed perspective but through the individual groups represented has access to, and influence from, an extensive variety of island stakeholders.

The FLAG Partners and Area Representation

FLAG Partners, Skills and Resources - Annex 1

Fisheries Area

The Outer Hebrides Fisheries Area is defined using the Comhairle nan Eilean Siar Local Authority area which is co-terminus with many other organisations including the Outer Hebrides Inshore Fisheries Group. Although the population of the islands is concentrated in Lewis (71%) small fishing communities are spread across all the islands from the Butt of Lewis to Barra. Larger centres of activity are located in Stornoway (Lewis), Kallin (North Uist) and Ardvėnish (Barra) with some of the most fisheries dependent areas in Scotland in the Uists and Barra.

Social, Economic and Environmental Context

Economic prosperity and structure

For the Outer Hebrides the most recent estimate of Gross Value Added specific to the area estimates a per head of population figure which is 67% of the UK average. It is also lower than that estimated for the Highlands and Islands area (75%) or Scotland (98%).

Much of the economic and social activity is generated from within the islands but it relies heavily on connections with the mainland for essential supplies and export of goods. In 2007 public administration, education and health together employed 43% of the Outer Hebrides population with the next largest sector of distribution, hotels and restaurants accounting for 19%.

In 2001 employment in the fisheries sector in the Outer Hebrides was 5.8% compared to 0.3% for Scotland. This included local variations including Uig and Bernera 18.2%, South Uist 9.1%, South Lochs 14.8%, North Uist 8.9% and Barra and Vatersay 8.7%.

Overall, sea fisheries employment in the Outer Hebrides decreased from 652 individuals in 2001 to 477 in 2009, a fall of 27%.

Population sparsity and decline

In terms of peripherality one of the key challenges for the area is its sparsity of population. The Outer Hebrides has a population density of 8.6 people per km² compared to the Scottish average of 64.8 and the UK figure of 242.4. There is an ongoing population decline in the Outer Hebrides with a drop of 42% recorded over the last century (1901-2001), a decline of 2.2% over the last decade (2000-2010) and a further decline of 14% projected over the next 20 years (2004-2024). (The General Register Office for Scotland)

Ageing population and youth out-migration

The Outer Hebrides Migration Study Report (2007) predicts that population levels will remain around 26,500 although it will not be a sustainable population as the proportion of children, working age adults and females of child-bearing age are all projected to decline. The out-migration in the younger age range of 15-29 has proved to be a major factor towards population decline in the area. Future projections predict that by 2024 31% of the Outer Hebrides population will be over the age of 65 (this figure was 23% in 2004)

Fishing Community Challenges

Concentration of effort

Shellfish account for virtually all landings by value into the Outer Hebrides. This trend is likely to continue as there is little white fish entitlement owned in the area and current white fish by-catch rules, agreed as part of West of Scotland cod recovery measures, prohibits a targeted white fish fishery inside the French line.

Industry infrastructure and participant age profile

Static shellfish prices over the last 15 years, coupled with much higher operating costs have lead to an unfavourable age profile of the larger class of vessels and their owners. The shellfish processing sector, throughout the area, is dependent on over 10m vessels for their raw material. Government funded decommissioning schemes has resulted in a gradual downsizing of the fleet, with the majority of vessels now being under 10m in length

Average age profile of vessels and skippers for over 10m categories in the Outer Hebrides:

	Vessel Age	Skipper Age
Static Gear	25	44
Scallop	25	45
Stornoway Trawl	38	45
Barra Trawl	30	44

Increasing costs

Fuel costs are significantly higher in the Outer Hebrides compared to mainland ports and this has a disproportionate impact on the profitability of the local fleet. A project to investigate the use of hydrogen aboard fishing vessels, to reduce fuel costs, is currently being researched at Lews Castle College.

Accreditation

The North Minch nephrops trawl fishery is the only Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) accredited trawl fishery of that species. This has opened up new marketing opportunities in Europe with positive responses coming from major buyers. Accreditation for other shellfish species within the area is being considered to ensure that suppliers retain access to the main multiples.

Spatial constraints

The draft for Scotland's National Marine Plan states there is a presumption in favour of development in the marine environment. A variety of sectors have an interest in this marine environment such as inshore fishing, aquaculture, marine renewables, tourism and nature conservation with an increasing challenge to ensure that solutions are sought to resolve issues for enterprises/sectors sharing the same resource.

3. Community and stakeholder engagement.

Steering Group formation

Representatives from:
Comhairle nan Eilean Siar
Western Isles Fishermen's Association
Highlands and Islands Enterprise

Requirement to focus closely on strategy development which promotes projects to deliver programme aims and also recognises the bureaucratic and administrative requirements of programme delivery.

Stakeholder Focus Group meeting (LEADER)

Representatives from:
Comhairle nan Eilean Siar
Voluntary Action Barra and Vatersay
Older People's Partnership
Cothrom . Community Training and Development Organisation
Highlands and Islands Enterprise
Scottish Environment and Rural Services . Scottish Natural Heritage
Western Isles Fishermen's Association

Issues raised:

Some island communities more dependent on fishing activity than others . some areas have better potential for business diversification than others

Community benefit from new fisheries development would be directed at more marginal, less populated island areas

Added value processing in three areas (Ardevenish, Barra; Kallin, Grimsay; Stornoway, Lewis) . significant impact on communities if processing activity ceases . important to secure and develop in other areas

Alternative fisheries area employment should be promoted through community, social as well as economic diversification and be developed by community groups and social enterprises in addition to businesses

Potential to develop small scale complimentary infrastructure facilities which make fisheries areas more competitive and which promote tourism activity

Stakeholder Focus Group meeting (Western Isles Fishermen's Association)

20 representatives covering catching (static and mobile gear) and processing sectors

Issues raised:

Development of alternative, non quota fisheries important for sustaining marginal communities

Opportunity to pilot small scale, low impact inshore pelagic fishing through community quota purchase and lease

Limited opportunity to diversify activity and promote multiple employment in areas outwith fisheries sector . short seasonal demand (tourism) or alternative industries not sufficiently developed (renewables)

Assistance required to implement catch/data recording

Study visits to investigate good practice; stock regeneration; linking product to market to consumer

Lack of influence in environmental designation process and impact on industry

From Steering Group and Focus Group meetings it was felt that with the number and dispersion of fisheries communities across the islands, focussing the programme on the fisheries sector, and through that on fisheries communities, offered the most effective method of maximising programme impact across as many areas as possible.

SWOT identification

Strengths

Population size and geographical spread of communities
Islands in the midst of some of the richest fisheries resources in Europe
High quality product
Sense of local identity and community throughout the islands

Weaknesses

Ageing fishing industry structure (both in terms of participants and infrastructure)
Peripherality . geographical and governance - at the margins of influencing decision makers .
European Commission, UK Government, Scottish Government
High fuel costs; static shellfish prices
Reliance on small range of shellfish species landings
Sparsity of population
Declining but ageing population
Outmigration of young people
Lack of new entrants to industry; difficult to progress through industry

Opportunities

Stock enhancement facility improving stock but also creating tourism/service opportunity . e.g. lobster hatchery
Added value facilities . e.g. live storage, small scale co-operative ice production, seaweed processing
Small scale niche tourism development through infrastructure development/improvement
Other developing sectors - marine related (e.g. seaweed, renewables) or alternative market areas (e.g. wildlife tourism, other service provision)

Threats

Spatial constraints - development of other industries in the marine environment with loss of fishing grounds . e.g. aquaculture, marine renewables, marine tourism, nature conservation
Impact of future environmental designations
Reliance on export markets

SWOT analysis

Implications of Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats for the fisheries area and community and basis for prioritisation of actions and resources

Analysis of Strengths

With a high quality product and access to some of the richest fisheries in Europe maintaining product quality from catch to market is essential. Sustainable management of existing fisheries promoted through accreditation is one way of achieving this. In addition developing appropriate catch handling and storage facilities will maintain quality and add value to the product. Improved communication and networking support will link communities across the islands and foster good practice development

Analysis of Weaknesses

With fishing activity reliance on a small range of shellfish species it is important to sustainably develop range of alternative employment and business opportunities
Ageing industry participant profile indicates opportunity to promote new industry entrant programme based on capacity building through knowledge and skills development and identification of market opportunities

Analysis of Opportunities

Infrastructure development to assist fisheries areas with fisheries, tourism and alternative business opportunity models.

Support for businesses to maintain and increase on-island product value through care of catch, introduction or extension of processing capability

Development of new or diversified businesses in growing sectors - marine related (e.g. seaweed, renewables) or alternative market areas (e.g. wildlife tourism, other service provision)

Analysis of Threats

Opportunity to capacity build fisheries area community knowledge and understanding of influences in marine environment and provide a voice for local stakeholders to influence overall marine stewardship

Marketing opportunity to develop local, regional and national markets through local Outer Hebrides identity

4. Description of main issues and overall objectives.

Conclusions from consultation and analysis findings

Following consultation with key stakeholders and a strategy workshop with WIFA, which covers the whole of the Outer Hebrides, and analysis findings it is clear that scope exists to develop the Outer Hebrides fisheries area from both a fishing perspective and wider community perspective.

Development of fisheries infrastructure, support for value added processes, information, training and network development will all contribute to increasing the competitiveness of the fisheries area, develop new products and markets and increase coastal community capacity

Development of infrastructure and promotion of alternative marine activities will also support wider community aspirations and encourage business, community and social enterprise diversification into tourism and other related opportunities.

Outer Hebrides FLAG Global Objective

To strengthen the Outer Hebrides FLAG area by supporting actions which lead to: 5 added value processes being introduced; 5 infrastructure developments undertaken; 5 tourism infrastructure or businesses created or diversified; 20 training places undertaken; and 2 good practice exchanges undertaken by 2015.

Rationale for strategy

This objective flows from the consultation and analysis findings and will utilise the following measures to implement the strategy:

- strengthening the competitiveness of fisheries areas
- adding value to fisheries products
- supporting small fisheries and tourism related infrastructure and services for the benefit of small fisheries communities
- promoting inter-regional and trans-national co-operation among groups in fisheries areas, mainly through networking and disseminating best practice

5 Specific objectives and proposed measures.

Description of proposed measure

Support for strengthening the competitiveness of the fisheries areas

Specific Objective

To improve the competitiveness of the FLAG area through actions which lead to the development of 5 additional or alternative enterprises in the Outer Hebrides

Rationale

By developing additional or alternative enterprises this measure will broaden economic and employment opportunities available to communities in the FLAG area.

Scope of action

Actions considered for support to include development of either new, diversified marine product markets (e.g. co-operative bait supply, seaweed cutting) or alternative market areas (e.g. tourism, renewable energy, ancillary services) which support new or growing sectors/industries in the islands; marketing, skills development and training; stock data information collection/recording

Complementarity and demarcation

Complementarity with:

Outer Hebrides Inshore Fisheries Group objectives on identifying alternatives to fishing effort;
Comhairle nan Eilean Siar objective of supporting the economic and social regeneration through delivery of projects in innovation, traditional industries and community regeneration
Highlands and Islands Enterprise objective of strengthening communities and fragile areas

Target beneficiaries

Individuals/companies/organisations in fishing communities, engaged within or outwith existing fishing activity

Integration of environmental sustainability

Successful projects will be required to sustain high quality natural resources and environment, minimise any environmental impact and address any significant project waste, packaging, waste disposal, recycling and climate change impacts

Integration of innovation

Priority will be given to projects which identify or adopt new approaches to existing market failures and demonstrate a desirable form of innovation. Lessons learned from successful projects will be publicised and provide a template for other developments.

Resources and weighting

Anticipated project costs £92,000

Projected EFF funding £55,000 . 24%

Description of proposed measure

Development of added value activities to fisheries products

Specific Objective

To improve added value activities in the FLAG area through actions which lead to the development of five added value projects or processes by 2015.

Rationale

By supporting added value products/processes projects will increase the value of product landed in the islands and retain greater value of that product in the islands supporting communities in the process.

Scope of action

Actions considered for support to include small scale co-operative projects adding value to caught product (e.g. live storage, ice production and storage) and larger scale onshore processing aimed at increasing consumer demand, developing niche markets, modernisation and improved production/processing standards, new quality and value enhancements for fisheries products; skills development and training.

Complementarity and demarcation

Complementarity with HIE objectives on supporting large and small growth businesses and strengthening communities in fragile areas.

Target beneficiaries

Fishing, processing and co-operative businesses

Integration of environmental sustainability

With high quality natural resources and environment, projects will be expected to sustain those resources whilst addressing any waste, packaging, waste disposal, recycling and climate change impacts

Integration of innovation

Priority will be given to projects which develop added value products/processes and demonstrate a desirable form of innovation. The development of lessons learned will be used to provide a template for other value added projects.

Resources and weighting

Anticipated project costs £133,000

Projected EFF funding £50,000 . 21% of overall EFF total

Description of proposed measure

Supporting small fisheries and tourism related infrastructure and services for the benefit of small fisheries communities

Specific Objective

To improve the competitiveness of the FLAG area through actions which lead to the development of 5 tourism infrastructure or businesses created or diversified by 2015

Rationale

Developing tourism infrastructure/business creation or diversification will diversify economic activity in fisheries areas helping communities to develop alternative economic and social opportunities and sustain employment for fishing areas in decline.

Scope of action

Actions considered for support to include capital investment in infrastructure, facilities and businesses which build on the Outer Hebrides marine environment and wildlife, quality local produce, outdoor activities and natural and cultural heritage; skills development and training

Complementarity and demarcation

Complementarity with Outer Hebrides Community Planning Partnership outcomes (thriving economies within the Outer Hebrides) and Outer Hebrides Area Tourism Partnership Visitor Plan (tourism provides a stable economic platform for business growth)

Target beneficiaries

Individuals especially younger people and fishing communities

Integration of environmental sustainability

Successful projects will require to mitigate environmental impact and demonstrate measures to properly manage to target and disperse visitors throughout the area while protecting sensitive locations

Integration of innovation

Priority will be given to projects which develop new infrastructure or services and demonstrate a desirable form of innovation. The development of lessons learned will be used to provide a template for other value added projects.

Resources and weighting

Anticipated project costs £253,000

Projected EFF funding £95,000 . 41% of overall EFF total

Description of proposed measure

Promoting regional, national and international co-operation among groups in fisheries areas, mainly through networking and disseminating best practice

Specific Objective

To improve the capacity of the FLAG area to address fishing, community and society issues through actions which lead to undertaking 2 good practice exchange by 2015.

Rationale

To build local community capacity to identify, understand and address local issues and constraints and give an opportunity to develop fisheries area community knowledge and understanding of influences in marine environment and provide a voice for local stakeholders to influence overall marine stewardship

Scope of action

Actions considered for support to include exchange visits between other Scottish, UK, EU or international fisheries communities to develop skills exchange and good practice

Complementarity and demarcation

Complementarity with LEADER objectives on community capacity development; clear and separate beneficiary and funding identification required

Target beneficiaries

Fishing communities especially younger people

Integration of environmental sustainability

Good practice, capacity building exchanges to be based on sustainable development principles

Integration of innovation

Projects which demonstrate proposals to integrate lessons learned from good practice exchange into fisheries areas on a sustainable development basis will be prioritised

Resources and weighting

Anticipated project costs £20,000

Projected EFF funding £13,000 . 6% of overall EFF total

6. Outcomes to be achieved.

1. Strengthening the competitiveness of fisheries areas

Outcome	Employment created/safeguarded through strengthening the competitiveness of fisheries area	5 fte
	Individuals employed or have employment safeguarded through training undertaken	10
Result	Increase in turnover as a result of strengthening the competitiveness of fisheries area	10%
	Individuals successfully completing training/implementing new skills	10
Output	Number of businesses supported	5
	Training days taken up by individuals	20

2. Development of added value activities to fisheries products

Outcome	Employment created/safeguarded through added value project or processes	5 fte
Result	Increase in turnover as a result of value added project or processes	10%
Output	Number of added value projects or processes developed by 2015.	5

4. Supporting small fisheries and tourism related infrastructure and services for the benefit of small fisheries communities

Outcome	Employment created/safeguarded through infrastructure facility/service creation	5 fte
Result	Increase in economic activity from infrastructure facility/service creation	10%
Output	Number of small fisheries or tourism related infrastructure facilities / services undertaken	5

5. Promoting regional, national and international co-operation among groups in fisheries areas, mainly through networking and disseminating best practice

Outcome	Number of good practices adopted in host and exchange communities	2
Result	Number of good practices identified in host and exchange communities	2
Output	Number of good practice exchanges organised	2

7. Co-operation.

Proposed approach to co-operation

As indicated above it is intended to organise good practice exchanges on a national, UK, EC or international basis as identified by the FLAG and stakeholders. This will be based on the characteristics of any proposed area or community and the similarity of issues being faced by those communities with the Outer Hebrides FLAG area.

How this will develop

At an early stage of FLAG operation members will consult with stakeholders to identify particular high level issues facing fisheries communities, assess areas where similar issues have arisen and have successfully been addressed. This process will evolve as the FLAG develops.

What it will achieve

Specific intended achievements will be identified as part of the FLAG evolution process.

8. Communication.

Information and publicity measures through the delivery of the local strategy

Engaging, informing and involving the area's population to ensure the accessibility of the FLAG; reporting development and achievements; demonstrating added value of the strategy

Once the FLAG strategy is approved a series of public meeting information events will be arranged to launch the programme outlining its EC, Scottish and local aims and objectives. The meetings will be used to inform communities of the process to date, the strategy areas identified for development and the eligible measures and resources available to implement the strategy.

This will be complimented by a dedicated EFF Axis 4 information site on the main Comhairle nan Eilean Siar website which will be updated periodically with relevant information. This information will also be released through local newspaper, community newspaper and radio.

Updated information events will be continued on a periodic basis through dedicated public events but also by using existing agency and community group meetings and networks.

Project approval details with committed funding, including European and local funding partners, will be publicised through the same process and similarly, as projects develop and complete, project achievements and impacts will be highlighted.

FLAG PARTNERS, SKILLS AND RESOURCES

1. Comhairle nan Eilean Siar – Cllr Archie Campbell

Comhairle nan Eilean Siar is the local authority for the Outer Hebrides and provides a wide range of statutory and other services. Economic, community and rural development are high priorities and are supported through the Development Department.

The Comhairle is the lead agency on Community Planning and brings together the public, private sector, voluntary sector partners and the community to agree priorities on the planning and provision of services ensuring the most effective delivery of services and increase the benefits to the community.

Within The Comhairle the Development Department focuses on the regeneration and ongoing development of the economy and communities of the Outer Hebrides and also has a lead role in key strategic projects. It has successfully bid for and delivered major ERDF, ESF and EFF projects and is also the lead agency and secretariat for the Outer Hebrides LEADER Programme.

Cllr Campbell is Chair of Sustainable Development Committee in the Comhairle, Chair of the Outer Hebrides Inshore Fisheries Group and Chair of the LEADER Local Action Group

2. Highlands and Islands Enterprise – Archie Macdonald – Area Manager

Highlands and Islands Enterprise is the main economic and community development agency in the Outer Hebrides. It is also a key local partner assisting in large and small growth businesses and strengthening communities in fragile areas.

3. Outer Hebrides LEADER Local Action Group – Duncan Macinnes

The LEADER Local Action Group is a public, private and voluntary sector partnership established in March 2009 responsible for delivering the Outer Hebrides LEADER Local Development Strategy. It incorporated community led identification of local issues and priorities and brings local sector expertise and project assessment skills

4. Outer Hebrides Tourism Industry Association

Industry led organisation promoting, supporting and assisting tourism businesses and interests. It has island wide representation of tourism businesses and provides independent industry voice and a platform for implementation of local marketing initiatives and business development support

5. Outer Hebrides Inshore Fisheries Group

Industry led fisheries management partnership reflecting fishing, community and environmental interests responsible for implementing local inshore fisheries management. Island wide representation of fishing community interests along with other stakeholders with an interest in the marine environment

6. Namara Projects

Marine resource consultant with experience of aquaculture development; own business operator. Skills in aquaculture project development, assessment, delivery and funding