



FISHERIES TASKFORCE SUBMISSION

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ILDN nominee

The Irish Local Development Network: Fisheries Taskforce Submission

The Irish Local Development Network would like to thank Minister McConalogue and the Taskforce for the opportunity to make this written submission:

I have the opportunity of drafting this submission from a unique position of having been a fisherman for 22 years, owning a whitefish trawler, being mate on a mackerel RSW Tank vessel, being a founder member of Foyle Fisherman's Co-op, on the Board of BIM and CEO of a Local Development Company. This submission is drafted to support and add value to what is outlined in Our Rural Future under the Marine Sector "ensuring the viability of the fishing sector is crucial to supporting the economic sustainability of the Coastal and island communities who depend on it". While the Taskforce has tended to focus on the Brexit Adjustment Reserve, ILDN will make the case for a multi-fund approach incorporating the principals of Community Led Local Development. The BAR in Article 5 (5) clearly states that other Union programmes and instruments can support eligible activities under BAR Article 5 (1) ILDN will make the case for National funding together with EU funding working together in a co-ordinated multi-fund approach to ensure the survival and future building of coastal communities. ILDN also call for an implementation group answerable to The Minister to be formed to ensure delivery of the Taskforce recommendations.

The resilience of the fishing industry and our Coastal community makes this a tremendous privilege.

About ILDN

The Irish Local Development Network CLG (ILDN) is the representative body for Ireland's Local Development Companies (LDCs). These 49 not-for-profit groups are building inclusive, vibrant communities and better life chances for people in every part of Ireland. They assist communities and disadvantaged persons/groups with personal development and well-being, social inclusion, employment training and placement, enterprise and social enterprise, community development, environment and climate action.

With 2,100 employees on the ground, supporting 15,000 community groups and 170,000 individuals through €300million of programmes each year, the ILDN membership is the largest Community Development/Anti-Poverty Network in the State. Programmes include LEADER, Social Inclusion Community Activation Programme (SICAP), Local Employment Service, Jobs Clubs, Back to Work Enterprise Allowance, Tús, Rural Social Scheme, social enterprise, Rural Recreation, Walks Scheme, health, mental health and social prescribing, environmental management, and climate action.

Issues for the Fishing Communities

The effects of Brexit on fishing communities is the latest in a long line of challenges which threaten the survival of many fishing communities. ILDN acknowledges and supports whatever difficult decisions are taken by the Fishing representatives in relation to burden sharing , tie-ups, decommissions etc.

(i) Burden Sharing

Fishing representatives have prioritised Burden Sharing as their number 1 priority. The E.U. prides itself on solidarity between member states. This is seen in the roll out of COVID Vaccine where all countries have made sure each member state has equal access to the vaccine. This same solidarity should be implemented and the issue of the cut in quota arising from Brexit, with each member state having their share cut equally. Anything less is a lessening of the values of the Union and a damaging precedent to set for future crisis.

(ii) Retention of the largest sustainable fleet, processing sector and support industry

Like others in the Taskforce, ILDN support the retention of the largest sustainable fleet, processing sector and support industry possible. ILDN believe ensuring the prosperity of our coastal communities requires all resources at the disposal of the State to be used in a co-ordinated way. There is real fear for the future among our fishing communities. One has only to read recent months editions of the Fishing Press to know that trust between the fishing communities and Government is at an all-time low. Community Led Local Development has a central role in the task of rebuilding trust and building capacity to take up future opportunities for coastal communities.

Community Led Local Development Background and Opportunities

The LEADER approach was introduced because of the failure of traditional top down policies to address problems faced by many rural areas in Europe. LEADER the original iteration of CLLD is a local development method engaging local actors in the design and delivery of strategies, decision making and resource allocation for the development of their rural area's. It was introduced in 15 economically disadvantaged areas in Ireland (217 in Europe) in 1991 by the then Irish Commissioner for Agriculture Ray Mc Sharry. And has now 2800 Local Action Groups though out Europe

What makes LEADER different is its 7 features:

- 1) Bottom up Approach
- 2) Area based Approach
- 3) Local Partnership

- 4) An integrated and multi sectoral strategy
- 5) Networking
- 6) Innovation
- 7) Co-operation

LEADER has played a catalytic role in the development of rural Europe. The LEADER approach was mainstreamed to become part of the Common Agriculture Policy and continues to be seen as a great success. As a result of the successful community led local development approaches facilitated under LEADER, the LEADER approach also became available in the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF) European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and the European Social Fund (ESF). The approach for this wider application became known as Community Led Local Development CLLD.

CLLD will continue to be supported by EU funds in the period 2021-2027. Local strategies can, if Ireland opts into the model, be supported by 4 funds, the EAFRD, the EMFF, the European Regional Development Fund and the European Social Fund (ESF). Only in Agriculture (LEADER) is there a minimum CLLD contribution.

FLAG, Fisheries Local Action Group is the CLLD model within the EMFF. It defines the coastal zone as within 10km of the coast. These same areas are also fully covered by the LEADER Programme (Appendix 1) and The LEADER Food Initiative (Appendix 2)

BAR & CLLD – The EU Framework for Implementation

CLLD acts at European level as a multi -fund approach. That is that by joining different funding programmes and instruments you can achieve greater results.

The BAR Regulation is written within this CLLD multi fund framework.

Article 5. Eligibility

in paragraph 1 it lays out the eligible criteria and in Article 5(5) it states measures eligible under paragraph 1 may receive support from other Union Programmes and instruments. In paragraph 1 areas include:

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- (a) measures to assist businesses and local communities adversely affected by the withdrawal.
- (b) measures to support the most affected economic sectors.
- (c) measures to support business and local communities dependent on fishing activities in the United Kingdom waters.

- (d) measures to support employment including through short-time work schemes, reskilling and training in affected sectors.
- (g) measures for communication, information and awareness-raising of citizens and businesses about changes stemming from the withdrawal to their rights and obligations.

BAR funding in Article 5(5) endorses the CLLD model.

Funding should be made available for FLAG through the marine allocation within BAR and LEADER through the Agriculture and Rural Development allocations within BAR.

Expanding the Multi-fund / CLLD approach

ILDN have been tasked within the Terms of Reference of the Taskforce to help identify jobs and economic activity in coastal communities depending on fishing. Identifying a structure to enable identifiable opportunities to be delivered is a critical first step. By creating a structure where Nationally coastal communities are prioritised and using (piloting) a multi-fund CLLD approach to both National and European funds we could help together with the Fishing and Aquaculture industry achieve our common goal of sustaining coastal communities.

Coastal communities need to be at the forefront of a new economy emerging as outlined in the Recovery and Resilience Facility (“A recovery plan for Europe”). This €750 billion plan asks countries to set out a coherent package of projects, reforms and investments in six policy areas:

- the green transition
- digital transformation
- smart, sustainable and inclusive growth and jobs
- social and territorial cohesion
- health and resilience
- policies for the next generation, including education and skills

In the European context as well as the EAFRD, EMFF, ERDF and ESF together with BAR and the Recovery and Resilience Fund among others Ireland should look at using its exchequer funded programmes within the Rural Regeneration Fund, Shared Island Fund, Town and Village Renewal, among others as the EU co-financing element This approach would create the largest urban, rural and coastal recovery fund for community led regeneration in the history of the state at a time when locally led recovery will be more important than ever.

Reprioritising Fishing Communities

The European Union is of great benefit to a small open economy like Ireland. The EU membership enjoys a higher rate of support in Ireland than any other E.U. State.

Ireland has National Priorities and the Fishing Industry and our seas which represent 90% of our Island nation at crunch times is ignored.

The EU benefit has been paid for in large measure by the opportunity lost in fishing by coastal communities adjacent to our 7500 km of coastline. The Irish fishing industry was growing at a rate of 25% per year pre Ireland joining the EEC. The natural growth of the sector was curtailed with our entry to the Community. Quota implications have had and continue to have far reaching affects which seem at odds with European Regional policy goals.

The Taskforce primary responsibility to elevate the worst effects of the Brexit Fishing deal through burden sharing and other measures agreed by the fishing industry. The review of the Common Fishery Policy needs to be made a National priority the Taskforce must also examine the range of supports many of which are outlined in the work of the Local Development Companies in appendix 3 and how these supports can be strengthened to support coastal communities to raise awareness, facilitate engagement and build capacity to participate in development opportunities.

Priorities

- 1 The adaptation of a CLLD//Multi fund approach to ensure coastal communities' benefit from all available EU and State supports. A model is outlined in diagram below.
- 2 The opening up of training facilities in National Fishery Schools to all marine based training requirements
- 3 The establishment of an Implementation Body answerable to the Minister to ensure that delivery of the Task Force recommendations
- 4 Explore ways of strengthening democratic structures and democratic participation for coastal areas. Given the dispersed nature of Coastal Communities there is a distinct lack of an exclusively representative voice for Coastal Communities. Structures should be explored to bring together coastal representation where possible by means of a National Coastal Local Authority Assembly. Organisations operating in Coastal Communities should be encouraged to become nominating bodies to Seanad Éireann in order to maximise Coastal representation in the Oireachtas.
- 5 Develop Coastal Zone Management centres within coastal communities as part of a Green transition.

- 6 Ensure full engagement of industry and community in Digital Transformation, Development of Digital hubs and remote working opportunities for our coastal communities.
- 7 It should be recommended that Chapter 10 of “Our Rural Future” supporting the sustainability of our Islands and Coastal Communities should be amended to include coastal communities in recommendation:
 - 135: Publish a new 10-year cross-Departmental Policy for Island Development and associated Action Plans to ensure delivery of the policy, covering areas such as housing, health, energy, utilities, waste management, climate change, education, digital connectivity, employment, infrastructure and transport
 - 136: Progress vital infrastructure development for our island communities
 - 137: Establish a forum for ongoing dialogue between Local Authorities, relevant policy Departments and island communities.
 - 139: Explore the potential for community-based enterprise hubs on islands not under the remit of Údarás na Gaeltachta
- 8 By supporting employment, through re-training, re-skilling, and employment support programmes (RSS, TUS and CE schemes) BAR and other initiatives could facilitate the development of targeted and sector specific responses.
- 9 BAR funding for CLLD approach, LEADER / FLAG given the mirroring of the LEADER and FLAG footprints across Ireland both CLLD initiatives focus on the priorities in collaboration and cooperation with stakeholders, partners and coastal communities. Best practices in sustaining coastal communities should be explained in accordance with the cooperation principals underpinning CLLD.
- 10 The Fishing Co-ops – we fully support the need for a viable and sustainable future for the fishing co-ops - with a focus on clean and green quality premium catch - the Irish quality mark – processing, filleting, packaging, labelling, branding, and marketing for supermarkets, wholesalers, and fresh fish markets. This will require infrastructure, IT, and equipment investment for large and small groups as well as waste repurposing – such as bio-digestors or tidal current generators.
- 11 Sea Boundaries between UK and Ireland around Northern Ireland – too many examples of missed opportunities of EU funding, development and other opportunities in aquaculture, marine leisure and tourism, and other commercial opportunities due to there being no resolution to boundary claims within both loughs. It is important for the UK and Irish governments to resume negotiations on drawing boundary lines or escalate the dispute to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea arbitration mechanism.
- 12 Marine Leisure and Tourism - Increase pontoon capacity to accommodate marine leisure and cruising capacity. Align with the Failte Ireland’s programme of establishing facilities around the coast to encourage more participation in marine leisure activities. Consider independent of onshore services like power and water that are self-sufficient for use in remote / environmentally sensitive areas.

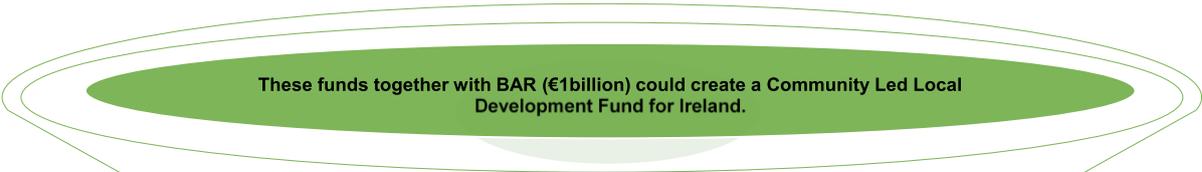
- 13 Dual licensing of fishing/passenger boats – where all safety and regulatory concerns can be met allow fishing boats to be used as passenger boats without any diminution of safety standards and to increase opportunities for under-employed fishermen whilst boosting local tourism offering. It would also create opportunities to “rest” inshore fishing grounds whilst boats earn a wage by other means.
- 14 County Development Plans – all Economic and Development plans should be future proofed to accommodate future opportunities arising from marine sector activities. Marine tourism, maritime eco-tourism, offshore services, marine leisure, and tourism industries cannot develop without proper, accessible shore infrastructure being available.
- 15 Consolidation and updating of existing maritime legislation on the statute books – thorough review, adapt and make ‘fit for purpose’.
- 16 Align the fishing vessel survey work - reconciliation and recognition of the various EU, Irish and UK Codes must be addressed as a matter of urgency by the MSO to prevent bureaucratic delays to the finishing off these boats to protect the Irish boatbuilding industry.
- 17 Offshore Energy opportunities - review best fit to Irish Coastline of bottom-fixed wind generators and/or floating windfarms and wave and tidal current generation with opportunities for coastal communities in R&D, testing, training facilities and shore infrastructure.

EU Structural Funding Ireland 2021 -2027						
Social Fund 451 million	Regional Development Fund 351 Million	Territorial Coop inc Peace Plus 260 million	Just Transition Fund 77 million	Fisheries Fund 142 million	Rural Development Fund 2.25 billion	Recovery and Resilience Fund 853 million

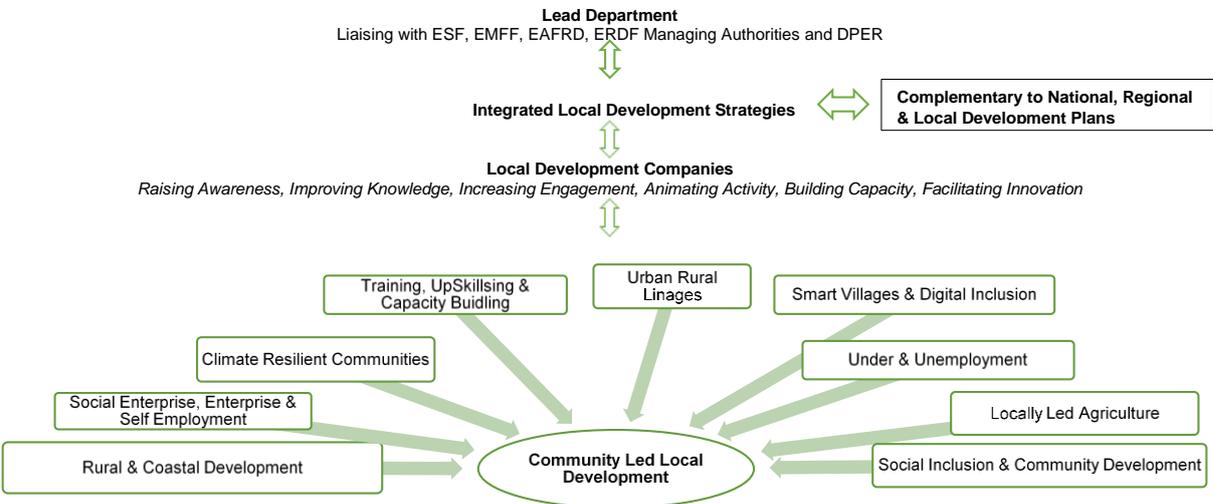
Ireland EU Partnership Agreement

•2021-2027 covering activites of all operational programmes

ESF	ERDF	Cooperation	Just Transtion	EMFF	EAFRD	RRF
• Ireland Operational Programme						



Community Recovery Fund



Communities Benefit
 through an integrated, streamlined, multi annual funded approach to
 supporting implementation of locally led solutions for social,
 environmental and economic recovery

Appendix 1:

LEADER - Three Themes

Theme 1 - Economic Development, Enterprise Development & Job Creation

- Rural Tourism
- Enterprise Development
- Rural Towns
- Broadband

Theme 2 - Social Inclusion

- Basic services targeted at hard-to-reach communities
- Rural Youth

Theme 3 - Rural Environment

- Protection and Sustainable use of Water Resources
- Protection and Improvement of Local Biodiversity
- Development of Renewable Energy

The success of LEADER in rural areas led other ESI Funds in the 2007-2013 period. It successfully transferred to the European Fisheries Fund (EMFF from 2014).

In line with a commitment in the Programme for Government, the Transitional LEADER Programme will bridge a gap between the wind-up of the current 2014-2020 LEADER Programme and the start of the next EU programme, which is not likely to commence until 2023 due to delays at EU level.

LEADER Transitional Programme - The key features:

The Transitional LEADER Programme should seek to address the challenges facing rural Ireland in the coming period and to complement the forthcoming Rural Development Policy which will place an emphasis on job creation, remote working, and maximising the potential of broadband in rural communities

- An initial allocation of €20 million will be available under the Transitional Programme to cover both new projects and the administration costs of the Local Action Groups who deliver the programme.

- Funding for the Transitional Programme will be reviewed in 2021 when there is certainty regarding EU funding for the transitional period to 2023.
- Project approvals under the Transitional Programme will commence from 1st April 2021
- Funding will also be provided in 2021 to the Local Action Groups for the on-going management and delivery of projects still running under the 2014-2020 LEADER programme.
- A key focus of the Transitional Programme will be on building capacity within communities which have not received LEADER funding to date.
- The programme will also support job creation, foster and encourage entrepreneurship, and support projects which address the climate agenda, digital transformation and encourage rural communities to build on their existing strengths and assets.
- Under the Transitional Programme, the grant rate for enterprises and commercial projects will be increased from a maximum of 50% to a maximum of 75% to support enterprise development and job creation in rural areas.
- Supports to rural businesses seeking to reach new markets, expand, innovate and/or diversify in response to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and/or Brexit, with a particular emphasis on providing support to businesses in the food sector.
- Community based projects that seek to address the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Supports and capacity building for communities that have not previously received assistance under LEADER or other rural programmes, using the Transitional Programme for the LAGs and Implementing Partners to engage directly with new applicants to develop projects and enhance collaboration within communities.
- Support for new and innovative projects in the areas of climate change, environmental protection and the green economy.
- Maximising the potential of broadband and the digital economy in communities, including through skills development and building awareness and usage of available remote working facilities.
- Projects that develop the concept of the Smart Village initiative or Rural Economic Development Zones (REDZs)² which could serve as proof-of-concept for more substantial proposals in the context of the next EU-funded LEADER Programme.

Appendix 2:

LEADER Food Initiative

The €15 million LEADER Food Initiative, which is funded by the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine under the Rural Development Programme, will continue to support new and existing food and beverage producers in areas such as (1) market development, (2) competitiveness, and (3) innovation. A new call for applications will be launched in 2021,

following on from an initial €5m call in 2018, for which approvals have been issued. The maximum amount of funding permitted is €200,000 per project.

In 2021 there will be an increase in the maximum rate of aid from 50% to 75% in line with changes to LEADER generally. This decision ensures that continued funding will be available to assist small food producers to develop new food offerings, new routes to sell their produce, and to support the rural economy at this critical time.

APPENDIX 3

Local Development Companies in 2021

Local Development Companies (LDCs) are social and solidarity economy organisations working with and for communities across Ireland and are best placed to inform the recommendations of the Taskforce as well as become a conduit and vehicle for implementation, recovery, growth, and social innovation.

LDCs are led and governed by multi-sectoral partnerships that deliver community and rural development, labour market activation, social inclusion, climate action and social enterprise services at a local level across Ireland. There are now 49 across the Republic of Ireland that have been managing many programmes and initiatives including LEADER, SICAP (Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme), Rural Social Scheme (RSS), Job Club, Local Employment Services (LES), Community Employment (CE), TÚS and complimentary funds and initiatives under Peace IV, Interreg, Erasmus +, International Fund for Ireland (IFI), The Ireland Funds, to name a few. For example LEADER LAG represents the interests of all communities within each sub-regional area i.e. Community Led Local Development (CLLD) in action.

All LDCs have a foundation of equality, being inclusive and community led when supporting disadvantaged individuals and communities. All are not-for-profit, volunteer-led organisations providing a national service at a local level.

LDCs cover an extraordinary amount of ground, ranging from employer support, job creation and job seeking supports; to life-long-learning, education, re-skilling, and training; to growing the social economy, entrepreneurship, and youth entrepreneurship mindsets; to

underpinning farm and fishing sustainability and rural development; to family support, social inclusion, and health & wellbeing. And much more besides.

All LDCs promote and deliver supports and services for social inclusion, enterprise, rural and community development, to community and voluntary groups, social inclusion target groups, small businesses, farm and fishing families, children and young people, and potential entrepreneurs.

LDCs are animators, facilitators and co-designers that can adapt and respond with agility and innovation to the needs of the communities they support by developing innovative approaches to respond with agility to local needs. The work is driven by evidence with an increasing focus on prevention, early intervention, and collaboration while responding to a diverse range of social and economic challenges.



This development work is currently being done while cognisant of the many global and climate change issues and with reference to the Sustainable Development Goals in all practice. LDCs will continue to be an essential part of the tool kit for achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

With a strong track record in facilitating synergies across and between different policy areas LDCs welcome the emphasis that the Taskforces is placing on local communities that are adversely affected by the withdrawal. Investment can support the most affected economic sectors by enabling bottom-up development with the emphasis on social innovation and with a focus on emerging opportunities, community led local development and co-designing local

solutions. With appropriate resourcing LDCs will continue to do this as Ireland recovers from COVID-19, the impact of BREXIT and changing how we live and how we do business - across the political, health, economic, social, technological, environmental, and legal realms.

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