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ACRONYMS

AIR	Annual Implementation Report
CFP	Common Fisheries Policy
CI	Context Indicator
CLLD	Community-led Local Development
COM	European Commission
CPR	Common Provision Regulation
DCF	Data Collection Framework
DG	Directorate General
EMFF	European Maritime and Fisheries Funds
EI	Evaluation Indicator
EP	Evaluation Plan
ESC	Evaluation Steering Group
ESIF	European Structural and Investment Funds
EP	Evaluation Plan
FAME SU	Fisheries and Aquaculture Monitoring and Evaluation Support Unit under the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF)
GT	Gross tonnage
IB	Intermediate body
ICES	International Council for the Exploration of the Sea
IMP	Integrated Maritime Policy
IMS	Integrated Marine Systems
JRC	Joint Research Centre
KEQ	Key Evaluation Question
kW	Kilowatt
MA	Managing Authorities
MC	Monitoring Committee
MPA	Marine Protected Area
MSFD	Marine Strategy Framework Directive
MS	Member State
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OI	Output Indicator
OP	Operational Programme
PO	Producer Organisation
RI	Result Indicator
SFC	Electronic exchange of information on shared Fund management between Member States and the European Commission
SO	Specific Objective
STECF	Scientific, Technical and Economic Committee on Fisheries
SWOT	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats
ToR	Terms of reference
UP	Union Priority

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

This working paper on the evaluation of European Maritime and Fisheries Funds (EMFF) programmes was written to fill an information gap and promote common standards in EMFF evaluations.

According to Article 56 of the Common Provisions Regulation[1] (CPR), Managing Authorities (MAs) *"shall ensure that evaluations, including evaluations to assess effectiveness, efficiency and impact, are carried out for each programme on the basis of the evaluation plan and that each evaluation is subject to appropriate follow-up in accordance with the Fund-specific rules."*

In preparation for this working paper, the Fisheries and Aquaculture Monitoring and Evaluation Support Unit (FAME SU) conducted a needs assessment. The results showed a clear demand for a working paper that contributes to a common understanding of the main aspects of the evaluation process. It revealed that:

- some Member States (MSs) have started EMFF evaluations;
- there is no systematic approach among MSs to the questions asked in EMFF evaluations;
- some MSs need clarification and support in their evaluations;
- Some Evaluation Plans (EPs) currently included in the Operational Programmes (OPs) do not give MAs adequate guidance.

Different approaches to EMFF evaluations will cause difficulties for future EU-wide ex-post evaluations, whose usefulness depends on the degree to which national EMFF evaluation results are comparable. This working paper is intended to help standardise and improve the quality of future evaluations.

1.2 Who this working paper is for

This working paper is designed for MAs and for the experts who evaluate EMFF programmes. It focuses on evaluations during the programme implementation phase. The working paper supports MAs and evaluators in preparing the evaluation, contracting experts, and guiding the evaluation process. It takes into account existing evaluation guides and papers developed by other Directorates General (DGs) and external sources (see Annex 1).

The working paper supports MAs in:

- specifying the evaluation in terms of:
  - processes for different types of evaluations;
  - key evaluation questions (KEQs);
  - criteria and terms of reference (ToR);
  - methodology and data requirements;
  - timelines;
  - communication; and
  - resources.
- maintaining quality, consistency and completeness of both the process and its outcome.

1.3 Structure of this working paper

The complete working paper on EMFF evaluation comprises:

- the working paper itself (this document); and
- the EMFF evaluation toolbox.

The working paper supports MAs in preparing process and impact evaluations (see Section 3 below). It explains the main steps in preparing an evaluation, with references to the EMFF evaluation toolbox.

The **EMFF evaluation working paper** has five sections:

- **Section 1** is the introduction.
- **Section 2** supports the preparation phase with:
  - a **checklist** of the main aspects to consider when planning an evaluation;
  - a **timeline** for different evaluations; and
  - an outline **roadmap**.

1 Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013

- **Section 3** describes the underlying principle of the **evaluation fiches**.
- **Section 4** focuses on **methodologies** for different types of evaluations.
- **Section 5** discusses **terms of reference** (ToR) and suggests numbers of man-days for resource planning.

The **EMFF evaluation toolbox** works as a reference for the EMFF evaluation working paper. It contains:

1. process evaluation fiches
2. effectiveness evaluation (Specific Objective/measure level) fiches
3. impact evaluation (UP level) fiches
4. list of methodologies
5. relevant regulations
6. intervention logic.

This working paper provides different tools for various types and sizes of EMFF OPs, focusing respectively on different Union Priorities (UPs) and different budgets. OPs with large budgets, for instance, can use more sophisticated methodologies. OPs with small budgets should focus on the most important measures and use only those methodologies that provide the best value. Depending on the type of OP, the MA should be flexible in deciding:

1. how many evaluations should be conducted during the programming phase;
2. which kinds of measures should be evaluated; and
3. whether qualitative surveys, interviews etc. are feasible in the evaluation process.

The working paper and the toolbox are designed to support MAs throughout the evaluation process. Table 1 shows which sections of the working paper support which steps in the evaluation process, and where the toolbox can be used as a reference.

Table 1: Overview of how to use the EMFF evaluation working paper and toolbox

Evaluation process	Working paper	Toolbox	Comments
Preparing the evaluation process	Section 2.1: Checklist Section 2.2: Timing of the evaluation Section 2.3: Roadmap		Depends on the timing and level of OP implementation Process evaluation should come before impact evaluation
Evaluating purpose and context	Section 2.1: Checklist		Decide what should be evaluated
Deciding on the thematic focus of the evaluation Defining the type of evaluation	Section 2.1: Checklist Section 2.2: Timing of the evaluation		Depends on the budget allocated to each measure Depends on the level of OP implementation
Defining evaluation questions, judgment criteria, and evaluation indicators	Section 2.2: Timing of the evaluation Section 3: Evaluation questions	• Process evaluation • Effectiveness evaluation at Specific Objective/ measure level • Impact evaluation at UP level	Depends on timing and size of the programme
Deciding on available resources	Section 4: Methodology	• Methodology table	Depends on timing and size of the programme, and the budget for evaluation
Choosing methodologies related to specific evaluation questions and topics	Section 4: Methodology mapping	• Methodology table	Depends on the budget for evaluation Depends on the available data
Defining the expertise needed		• Methodology table	Depends on the type and the focus of the evaluations
Developing the ToR	Section 5: Terms of reference	• Process evaluation • Effectiveness evaluation at SO/measure level • Impact evaluation at UP level • Methodology table	The relevant part of the toolbox could be attached to the ToR

Source: FAME SU 2017

2. PREPARATION

2.1 Checklist

The preparation phase is most important in saving time and costs during later stages. For this purpose, a simple checklist (Table 2, below) helps to focus on the objective and scope of the evaluation.

Table 2: Checklist for preparing an evaluation

Preparation steps	Content
Purpose of the evaluation	Make sure you know what you can achieve through this evaluation and that you meet everyone's requirements: • define the purpose of the evaluation; • define the target groups for the evaluation results. Decide where evaluation can help your programme, for example: • determine what has been achieved by the UPs, SOs and measures; • describe the achievements; • support the development of the programme; • provide a basis for decision-making; • enable a learning process; • increase accountability; • ensure improvement next time; • assess the final impact of the programme.[2] • The evaluation preparation needs to consider: • if the required evaluation outputs are measurable and achievable; • if the evaluation results are relevant, and for whom; • if the evaluation is taking place at the right time during the programme period.
Monitoring	Infosys[3] for gathering and analysing data can be used to collect information for both evaluation and monitoring. • **Evaluation** is a process that takes place before, during and after an activity. It looks at factors such as the quality of the content, the delivery process, and the impact of the OP. • **Monitoring** is about counting things and keeping activity on track. Numbers – of events, of participants, of operations – are monitoring data. Monitoring data may need to be evaluated to ensure that the sources from which they derive are adequately robust.
Scope evaluation	The amount of evaluation should be in proportion to the size of the programme. In deciding where to focus your evaluation efforts, consider: • To what extent has the programme already been implemented? • What is the budget for evaluation? • How relevant are certain measures? • What are the intended outcomes of the evaluation? • Who will see the results? • How significant is your activity likely to be in shaping future processes or programmes?[4]
Resources	Use methodologies and types of evaluation that are proportionate to the size of the programme and/or the focus of the evaluation.
Reporting	Make sure you meet everyone's needs: • reporting to the MC; • Annual Implementation Report; • reporting to the wider public.
In-house or independent	Evaluations shall be carried out by internal or external experts who are functionally independent of the authorities responsible for programme implementation (EC 1303/2013 Article 54).
Confidentiality	Make sure you comply with research ethics and the legal frameworks regarding data protection.

Source: UK Research Council, 2002[5] adapted by FAME SU 2017

2 UK Economic and Social Research Council, 2012, http://www.esrc.ac.uk/research/impact-toolkit/developing-a-communications-and-impact-strategy/step-by-step-guide/setting-objectives/

3 EC 508/2014 Article 97(1)(a) requires "relevant cumulative data on operations"

4 UK Economic and Social Research Council, 2017, http://www.esrc.ac.uk/research/impact-toolkit/developing-a-communications-and-impact-strategy/measuring-success/the-evaluation-process/

5 UK Economic and Social Research Council, 2002, Evaluation: Practical Guidelines A guide for evaluating public engagement activities

2.2 Timing of evaluations

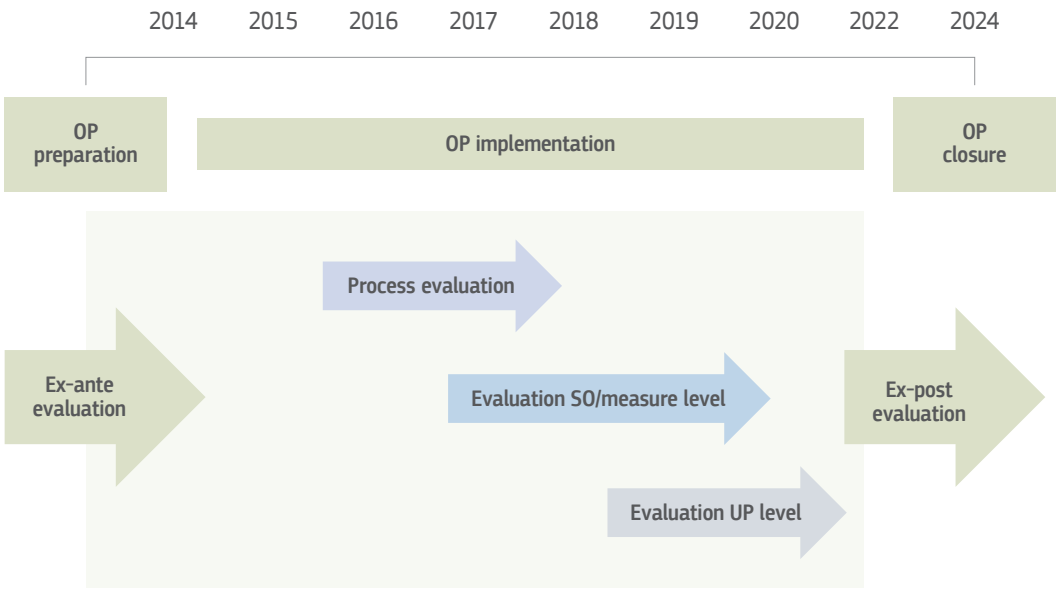
Different types of evaluations have different timings in the EMFF OP implementation cycle. Table 3 and Figure 1, below, indicate the sequence and approximate timing of different types of evaluations.

Table 3: Type of evaluations – three aspects

Ex-ante evaluation	The *ex-ante* evaluation covers both the process and the impact of the EMFF OP. It creates a foundation for all the evaluations that follow. It is finalised when the OP is approved.
Process evaluation	The process evaluation focuses on how the OP is implemented, and especially on ways to improve this. Ideally, the process evaluation is done in two stages during the EMFF programming period. The second evaluation should assess the effect of the changes recommended and implemented as a result of the first. Process evaluation may also be useful in informing the next spending programme after 2020.
Evaluation at SO/ measure level: effectiveness and efficiency	The evaluation at SO/measure level addresses the effectiveness and efficiency of the OP implementation. This evaluation should be done when a significant number of operations have been finalised. Different measures might have different time frames; the FAME SU working paper Definitions of EMFF Common Indicators has more information about the time frame of result indicators.
Impact evaluation at UP level	The evaluation at UP level addresses the impact of the EMFF OP at the sector level. This kind of evaluation can only be conducted when the OP implementation is already well advanced and substantial results are visible. The recommended timing for the impact evaluation at UP level is late in the programme lifetime, or even after the OP has been finalised.
Ex-post evaluation	The *ex-post* evaluation of the EMFF is carried out by the Commission in cooperation with MSs (EMFF Regulation, Article 117). *Ex-post* evaluations examine the effectiveness and efficiency of the ESIF and their contributions to the Union strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth. The MS in question is expected to supply the Commission with robust information and judgments as required, and to work with the *ex-post* evaluators through interviews, focus groups, etc.

Source: UK Economic and Social Research Council, 2017[6] adapted by FAME SU 2017

Figure 1: Timeline of different evaluations in the EMFF OP period 2014–2020



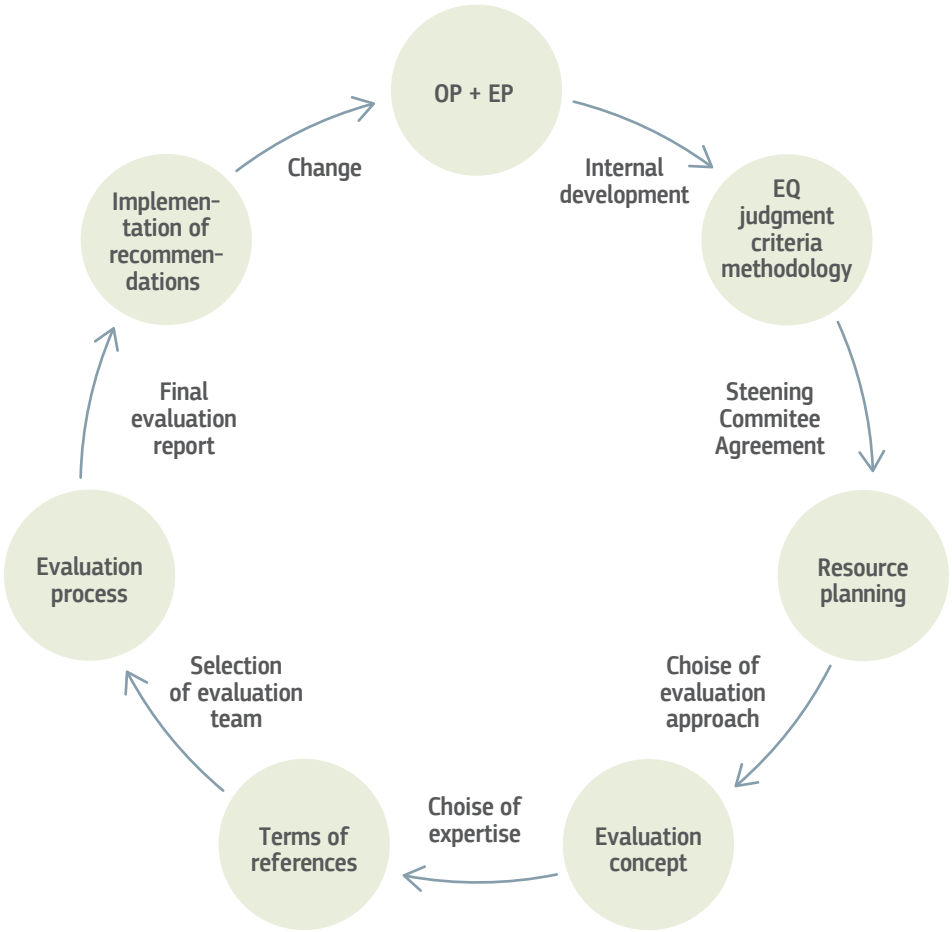
Source: FAME SU 2017

6 http://www.esrc.ac.uk/research/impact-toolkit/developing-a-communications-and-impact-strategy/measuring-success/the-evaluation-process/

2.3 Life cycle and roadmap

The evaluation life cycle (Figure 2) covers the whole programme period, starting with the preparation of the OP, including the first EP and the ex-ante evaluation.

Figure 2: Evaluation life cycle



Source: FAME SU 2017

The roadmap (Table 4, below) follows the evaluation life cycle. It outlines the timing and preparations needed to complete the evaluations during the EMFF period, and acknowledges the different types of evaluations required at different stages of the OP implementation.

Table 4: Roadmap

Activity	Expected output	Communication/ bodies involved	Duration	Milestones	Risks
Setup of evaluation steering group with MC members, experts and other stakeholders	Evaluation steering group	MC[7]	1 month	Evaluation steering group meeting	
Evaluation purpose and context	Outline of the evaluation purpose and context Decision on purpose and context agreed by the MC	Implementing bodies MA Evaluation experts FAME SU	1–2 months		Different understandings of the purpose of evaluations Delay in the decision-making process Underestimating the work involved in the evaluation process
Decision on the thematic focus (UP, measures) of the evaluation Definition of type of evaluation (process evaluation, efficiency, effectiveness evaluation, impact evaluation)	Decision on the scope of the evaluation agreed by the MC				
Definition/selection of evaluation questions, judgment criteria Evaluation indicators	Evaluation concept first draft				
Decision on available resources	Resource plan				
Indication of methodologies related to different evaluation questions and evaluation topics. (optional) Definition of sources	Evaluation concept final	MA, Evaluation steering group	1 month	Evaluation steering group discussion	Delay in the decision-making process
Definition of expertise needed	Expert profile (formal and experience-based)	MA	2 months	Steering group discussion	Resources and content of the terms of references do not match Expertise is not explicitly outlined or not available Lack of capacity Lack of adequate evaluation applications.
Development of the ToR	ToR based on the evaluation concept	MA Evaluation steering group Procurement department			
Selection process of applications a/ choice internal / external b/ launching a tendering procedure in case external is selected. Not applicable if internal evaluation	Approved process and criteria Evaluation contract Decision on evaluation expert team	MA Evaluation steering group Procurement department	3 months		

7 The monitoring committee may make observations to the MA about the implementation and evaluation of the programme, including actions related to reducing the administrative burden on beneficiaries. The monitoring committee shall monitor actions taken as a result of its observations.

Activity	Expected output	Communication/ bodies involved	Duration	Milestones	Risks
Start of the evaluation process	Kick off meeting minutes	MA Evaluation experts	1 month	Kick-off meeting	Delayed start of the evaluation process
Provision of data	Set of Infosys data and SFC2014 data, Audit 480/2014	Evaluation experts Implementing bodies			Lack of available data
Delivery of inception report	Inception report submitted one month after kick-off meeting and subsequently approved Identification of data gaps and data collection strategy	Evaluation experts		Inception report approval	Misunderstanding/ disagreement over outcomes of the evaluation Delays in reporting Inadequate EQs Inadequate evaluation methodology Lack of response to surveys
Support of evaluation activities (permissions, data availability) Participation in evaluation methodologies (focus groups, interviews, surveys).	Participation in the evaluation	Evaluation steering group Evaluation experts	6–20 months		
Delivery of interim report	Evaluation experts should provide an interim report for discussion in the steering group	Evaluation steering group Evaluation experts	2 months	Interim report approval	
Delivery of draft final report	Draft final report	Evaluation experts Evaluation steering group	6 months		
Delivery of final report	Final report	Evaluation experts Evaluation steering group	2 months	Final report MC approval Publication of the evaluation report	
Implementation of process evaluation recommendations	Process change	Evaluation steering group Evaluation experts	Ongoing	Process change implemented	Lack of capacity, lack of resources Delay in decision-making process
Implementation of content-related recommendations	Submission of changed OP	Evaluation steering group Evaluation experts EC		OP changed	
Dissemination					

Source FAME SU 2017

3. EVALUATION FICHES: UNDERLYING PRINCIPLES

The evaluation fiches provided in the toolbox are the core content of this working paper. There is a separate set of evaluation fiches for each of the three types of evaluations we propose:

- **Process** evaluation: covering the effectiveness and efficiency of partner involvement, OP implementation and communication;
- **Effectiveness** evaluation at SO/measure level, covering each of the EMFF articles;
- **Impact** evaluation at UP level: a simple fiche for each of the six UPs.

To accompany the fiches, we introduce a general approach to the evaluation of efficiency (Box 1, below) at SO/measure level. This general approach applies to each of the measures.

For each set of fiches we propose a general evaluation structure with four main aspects:

- key evaluation questions
- judgment criteria
- key points to consider
- evaluation indicators.

Key evaluation questions

Each set of fiches follows a systematic structure based on key evaluation questions (KEQs). These create a general orientation for the evaluation, and formulate what MAs and stakeholders want to know. An agreed set of KEQs makes it easier to decide what data to collect, how to analyse it, and how to report it. KEQs are not suitable questions for an interview or questionnaire.

KEQs are based on the stated EMFF objectives, UPs, and the SO of the EMFF OP. The types of KEQ depend on the type of evaluation (Table 5), and are independent of the programme budget.

Table 5: KEQs for different types of evaluations

Type of evaluation	KEQ
Process evaluation	How effectively was the programme managed and implemented?
	How efficiently was the programme managed and implemented?
Evaluation at SO/ measure level	How effective were EMFF operations/measures in achieving the OP objectives?
	How efficiently were EMFF measures implemented?
Evaluation at UP level	How effectively does the EMFF contribute to the evolution of the sector? How effectively does the EMFF contribute to the EU objectives?

Source: Fame SU 2017

The KEQs address the effectiveness and efficiency of the way the programme is managed, as well as its impact on the relevant sector. The toolbox provides separate sets of KEQs for evaluating process, effectiveness, and impact (Box 1).

Box 1: Glossary

Effectiveness	Effectiveness analysis considers how successful EU action has been in achieving the programme's objectives. The evaluation takes the form of an opinion on the progress made to date, and the role of EU action in delivering the observed changes. If the objectives (general, specific, operational) have not been achieved or things are not on track, an assessment should be made of the extent to which progress has fallen short of the target, what factors have influenced the lack of success, and which objectives can still be achieved on time, or how much delay can be accepted. The analysis should also try to identify whether any unexpected or unintended effects have occurred. (Better regulation p.57)
Efficiency	Efficiency considers the relationship between the resources used by an intervention and the changes generated by the intervention (which may be positive or negative). Differences in the way an intervention is approached and conducted can have a significant influence on the effects, making it interesting to consider whether other choices (e.g. as demonstrated in different MSs) have achieved the same benefits at less cost, or greater benefits at the same cost. (Better regulation p.57)
Impact	Impact covers all the changes that are expected to flow from the implementation and application of a given policy measure or intervention. Impacts may occur over different timescales, affect different actors, and be relevant at different levels (local, regional, national and EU). In an evaluation context, impact refers to the changes associated with a particular intervention and which occur over the longer term (Better regulation p.89).

Source: Better Regulation COM 2015[8]

Judgment criteria

Judgment criteria are used to specify the KEQs. A judgment criterion describes where the merit of the intervention lies. It makes the implicit assumptions of the objectives explicit and helps to identify the required indicators.

Judgment criteria are identified for each KEQ. Table 6 includes examples of judgment criteria in the three types of evaluation.

Key points to consider

The judgment criteria are then broken down into a series of key points to consider. The toolbox provides key points to consider for each of the KEQs and judgment criteria. Table 6 gives examples.

8 European Commission 2015, final Commission staff working document Better Regulation Guidelines Strasbourg, 19.5.2015

Table 6: Examples of judgement criteria, key points to consider, and evaluation indicators

Type of evaluation	KEQ	Judgment criteria	Key points to consider	Evaluation indicator
Process evaluation	How effectively have the stakeholders/partners been involved in the implementation of the OP?	Involvement in: • preparing Progress Reports • preparing Annual Implementation Report • preparing and implementing the OP, including through participation in the Monitoring Committee	• composition of the MC • role of stakeholders/ partners in the decision-making process within the MC • input of stakeholders/ partners in the MC meetings and the decision-making process	• Number of meetings per year • Frequency of involvement of stakeholders/partners in MC meetings • Gender balance in MC meetings • Satisfaction of stakeholders/partners with the MC operation, the quality and effectiveness of the MC decisions etc., and their involvement in the decision-making process
Effectiveness evaluation	To what extent has the EMFF contributed to "reduction of the impact of fisheries on the marine environment, including the avoidance and reduction, as far as possible, of unwanted catches"?	Art. 38 EMFF contribution to: • reducing unwanted catches • reducing environmental impact • protecting birds and mammals	Investments in: • equipment to improve the selectivity (for size or species) of fishing gear • equipment that reduces discards by avoiding unwanted catches of commercial stocks, or that deals with unwanted catches to be landed in accordance with Article 15 of Regulation (EU) No 1380/2013 • equipment that limits and, where possible, eliminates the physical and biological impacts of fishing on the ecosystem or the sea bed • equipment that protects gear and catches from mammals and birds • shall not be granted more than once during the programming period	• Total investment • Absorption rate • Progress in reaching the target value of output indicators • Number of operations of each type • Number and type of vessels • Number of fishermen benefiting • Change (reduction) in unwanted catches • Type of environmental protection • Type of fishery
Impact evaluation	What has been the impact of the EMFF OP in promoting environmentally sustainable, resource-efficient, innovative, competitive and knowledge-based fisheries?	• Competitiveness has been enhanced	Economic performance of fishery businesses in terms of: • Increased labour productivity • Increased net profits (difference between revenue and overall costs) • Increased return on investment	• RI_1.3 Change in net profits (thousand EUR) • RI_1.1 Change in the value of production • RI_1.2 Change in the volume of production

Evaluation indicators

Evaluation indicators address the key points to consider in quantitative and qualitative form (see examples in Table 6). They should not create additional work, since they should be based largely on existing data. Most of the indicators we propose (Table 7) are based on data collected in Infosys. Nevertheless, we have also included some qualitative indicators that in some cases may be necessary to complement the quantitative data.

Table 7: Evaluation indicators

Type of indicator	Characteristic	Sources and type of data
Total investment	Quantitative	Infosys Annex I field 10
Absorption rate	Quantitative	• Ratio of • Infosys Annex I field 10 • to • AIR Table 4 (9) Total eligible expenditure of operations selected for support (EUR)
Progress of reaching output indicators	Quantitative	• Ratio of • AIR Table 2 Target value • to • AIR Table 2 Cumulative value
Type of operation	Quantitative	Infosys code of measure, project implementation data
Participants/beneficiaries/ population	Quantitative	Infosys code of measure, project implementation data
Quality of the operation	Qualitative	Interviews, surveys, focus groups
Utilisation (roll-out) of operations	Qualitative	Interviews, surveys, focus groups

Source: Fame SU 2017

Table 8 summarises the key evaluation questions, judgment criteria, key point to consider, and evaluation indicators for each of the three types of evaluation.

Table 8: Overview of the three types of evaluations

Type of evaluation	KEQs	Judgment criteria	Key points to consider	Evaluation indicators
Process evaluation	Partnership: 2 KEQs on effectiveness. Governance: 5 KEQs on effectiveness; 1 KEQ on efficiency of the delivery mechanism Communication: 2 KEQs on effectiveness; 1 KEQ on efficiency	Management framework outlined in the OPs and the CPR[9] Article 3 of Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) No 240/2014 on the code of conduct	List of programme management aspects that are part of the EMFF OP Sections 9, 11, 12	Monitoring data routinely reported by MA and implementing bodies during OP implementation Indicators related to the perception of the OP process, based on interviews with stakeholders and/or beneficiaries
Effectiveness evaluation at SO/measure	26 KEQs on effectiveness, and a general sample for efficiency which can be adapted to each measure	Relate to the SOs of the programme	List of the main points indicated in the regulatory text for each of the measures (EC 508/2014)	Common result indicators, specific result indicators defined by MS, Infosys data In some cases, ad-hoc indicators collected by case studies and surveys or indications from MA, beneficiaries, experts, etc.
Impact evaluation at UP level	6 KEQs on effectiveness: one per UP	Based on the content of the UP titles	Key points linked to the EMFF objectives as well as the CFP	Common result indicators Context indicators

Source: FAME SU 2017

9 European Commission 2013, Common provisions regulation (CPR), Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013

3.1 Process evaluation

The process evaluation stage focuses on the delivery mechanism of the OP. It does not simply check for the existence of management structures and implementation methods but instead goes on to evaluate the effectiveness and efficiency of the delivery system. This is the main distinction between an audit and an evaluation. A process evaluation should lead to the elimination of inefficiencies in delivery during the programme period.

The process evaluation addresses the effectiveness and efficiency of:

1. The **partnership** involvement: Partner and stakeholder involvement is also an important aspect of the AIR 2018 Part B to be submitted in 2019. Partnership should be evaluated in accordance with Article 3 of Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) No 240/2014 on the code of conduct.
1. The **OP implementation** which forms the main part of the delivery mechanism. This part of the evaluation is essential in understanding pitfalls and deviations between the planned and actual implementation outcomes.
1. **Communication** with the main target groups: have these been addressed, and if so, how? The evaluation should not simply examine the communication strategy but should systematically review the frequency of communications and the channels used, and capture the perceptions of target groups.

There are several key steps when preparing a process evaluation roadmap (Table 4).

1. First, the purpose of the evaluation needs to be defined. The MA should define how the evaluation result will serve the EMFF implementation and where the evaluation can help improve the process.
2. Second, KEQs need to be defined according to the needs and expected outcomes of the evaluation. In this context, the MA should choose judgment criteria, key points to consider and evaluation indicators according to the specific context of the EMFF OP.

The toolbox section on process evaluation provides a set of KEQs, key points to consider and judgment criteria from which MAs can choose the most relevant for their programmes.

3. Third, the MA should adjust the proposed evaluation approach to match the available resources.

The toolbox section on methodology shows the resources required by various methodologies. This will help in calculating the cost of the evaluation and matching expectations to the available budget.

4. Fourth, the data needed to answer the KEQs is collected. This stage should capitalise on existing Infosys, SFC and other statistical data. Additional qualitative data is collected through, for example, surveys, focus groups, and interviews with beneficiaries.

The toolbox section on methodology provides a list of evaluation techniques, both qualitative and quantitative. Choose methodologies to match the budget and the size of the OP.

5. The steps above illustrate the breadth of skills needed for the process evaluation. The evaluation team should have expertise in EMFF OP structures and processes, and also in EU programme management and monitoring. Expertise in fisheries is less important.

The main result of the process evaluation should be that the programme implementation process is adapted as necessary to improve its performance.

3.2 Effectiveness evaluation at SO/measure level

The effectiveness evaluation at SO/measure level takes place mid-term, and focuses on how well the OP is being implemented. The underlying KEQ is: How effective have EMFF operations or measures been in achieving the SO and the targets of the OP?

The effectiveness evaluation at SO/measure level sticks closely to the text of EMFF regulation 508/2014.

The toolbox section on effectiveness evaluation at SO/measure level contains:

1. An overview of the KEQs, judgment criteria and evaluation indicators for each SO; and
2. An evaluation fiche for each article; Table 9 shows an outline.

Table 9: Outline of the toolbox fiches for evaluation at SO/measure level

KEQ	*How effective were EMFF operations/measures in achieving the OP objectives?*
Judgment criteria	*Judgment criteria are used to specify the KEQs. A judgment criterion describes where the merit of the intervention lies. It makes the implicit assumptions of the objectives ezxplicit and helps to identify the required indicators.*
Key points to be considered	*Key points to consider are defined on the basis of the corresponding articles in Regulation 508/2014*

Evaluation indicators (EI)	Sources
The set of evaluation indicators should help to focus on the key points. We propose a range of different types of evaluation indicators (see Table 7 above). If specific indicators are available at national level, however, it is recommended to use these wherever possible.	*Sources of evaluation indicators include Infosys, AIR, result indicators, beneficiaries (beyond Infosys), stakeholders, experts, scientists, MAs, and national statistics. Keep in mind that Infosys and AIR do not provide real-time data. If more up-to-date data is available at national level this should be used instead.*

Source: FAME SU 2017

Section 2 of the toolbox contains evaluation fiches for every EMFF measure. It is up to the MA to choose which measures are relevant to each evaluation, and to use only the appropriate fiches.

3.3 Impact evaluation at UP level

The evaluation of impact at UP level should demonstrate how much the EMFF OP has contributed to change in the sector – or in society as a whole – in line with UP objectives. The evaluation provides conclusions that are relevant to policy development.

The impact evaluation at UP level takes into account the evolution of the sector during the course of the programme, including external factors (changes in sector policies and general economic developments), as well as effects attributable to the EMFF OP itself. Some external factors may have enough impact to influence the success of the programme significantly. Examples are trade sanctions, financial crises, and large numbers of refugees.

In MSs where the EMFF OP or parts of it make up only a small fraction of the maritime, aquaculture and fisheries sectors, the OP may have a marginal effect. The impact evaluation at UP level must take into account the size of the OP and the relationship between the EMFF and national budgets.

Regardless of the importance of this sector to any particular MS, the assessment of the EMFF contribution to the evolution of the sector is important in demonstrating the contribution towards European Union objectives.

Table 10 below explains how the impact evaluation fiche in Section 3 of the toolbox is structured.

Table 10: Architecture of the evaluation framework for impact assessment at UP level

Key evaluation question (KEQ) reflecting the UP objective(s)			
Judgment criteria (JC) related to the KEQ	Key points to be considered related to the JC	Impact assessment	
		Change in the context/policy field/sector	Contribution of operations funded under the EMFF OP to the observed change
UP objective formulated as a long-term impact	Specific aspect under a UP objective which can be assessed by common result indicators	Change in the sector/policy field is caused by external factors and EMFF contribution. It is assessed through a list of appropriate context indicators.	Achievements of the EMFF OP reported via common result indicators: the sum of indicators for each UP, and qualitative conclusions for the effectiveness evaluation

Source: FAME SU 2017

A comparison between context and result indicators is not always possible. The impact evaluation should therefore be mainly qualitative, and based on the results of the effectiveness evaluation. The evaluation should say how the programme contributes to the European objectives. Ideally, the results of the impact evaluation at UP level will feed into the *ex-post* evaluation.

Section 3 of the toolbox covers impact evaluation at UP level.
There is one evaluation question for each of the six UPs.

3.4 Efficiency evaluation at SO/measure level

The **efficiency evaluation** compares financial inputs (in EUR) to outputs or results achieved by the OP. In turn, the calculated efficiency figure can be compared to benchmarks obtained from EFF or other programmes. Comparison is only valid between similar interventions, so it requires a thorough analysis of the context.

We recommend that efficiency is evaluated at three levels:

- operational level: the efficiency evaluation for implementation and communication is described in Section 1 of the toolbox;
- measure level: this is done for each measure listed in Section 2 of the toolbox. The methodology is similar for each measure, and there are no individual fiches for each measure;
- Specific Objective level: this can be a summary of the efficiency evaluation of all the measures under one SO.

Table 11 below explains the process in more detail.

Table 11: Efficiency evaluation of outputs and results at different OP levels

Level addressed	Result indicators	Output indicators	Utilisation
Operation implementation level	NA	Costs to produce one output unit broken down by type of investment	Comparison between operations related to one measure
Measure level	Sum of costs to produce one unit of results in a specific measure	Sum of costs to produce one output unit in a specific measure	Comparison among measures of the current OP Comparison between EMFF and EFF Comparison between EMFF and national/regional programmes with comparable approaches
SO level	Sum of costs to produce one unit of results under one SO	NA	Comparison between different SOs and UPs, if possible Comparison between EMFF and EFF Comparison between EMFF and national/regional programmes with comparable approaches

Source: FAME SU 2017

4. METHODOLOGIES

The starting point for every evaluation is a review of the intervention logic. Such a review should be carried out for each measure to establish the logical path between objectives, activities, outputs, and results.

Any review of the intervention logic should include:

- overall objective(s)
- specific objectives
- target groups
- expected results
- conditions to achieve results
- outputs
- measures
- budgets
- delivery systems
- indicators by which achievements will be measured.

Each further step in the evaluation refers back to the intervention logic. The conceptual model behind the intervention logic is verified using a variety of evaluation methods. The validity and robustness of the evaluation results depends on the use of a combination of basic and in-depth methods[10].

Section 4 of the toolbox provides information on basic and in-depth methodologies. The methodology tables (Tables 1–3) suggest which kind of evaluation suits each specific methodology, and indicates the number of person-days required. Table 4 includes links for further information.

The methodologies fall into three types:

- basic evaluation methods based on information provided by Infosys and programme management;
- in-depth qualitative methods based on interviews, surveys, etc.;
- quantitative methods: counterfactual methods.

For EMFF evaluations, basic evaluation methods and in-depth qualitative methods are generally the most suitable.

For each type of evaluation, the evaluator should link the evaluation fiche with the most suitable methodologies. For this purpose, the methodology tables (Tables 1–3) contain appropriate information in the following columns:

- Specific evaluation methods: title of the methodology;
- Type of evaluation: indicates whether it is for process, effectiveness, or impact;
- Categories: this column indicates for which category the methodology is most suitable. For process and effectiveness evaluations, specific categories have been defined:
  - Process evaluation: partnership, implementation, communication;
  - Effectiveness evaluation: Business development, Environment, Human capital, Institutional capacity building, Innovation, CLLD (see Table 2 in the toolbox);
- Indicative number of person-days (min–max) needed for each methodology in an EMFF context:
- Approach: explains the type of methodology.

10 Typical in-depth methods to increase the robustness of evaluation results are cost-effectiveness analysis, strategic environmental assessment, input-output analysis, theory based evaluation, counterfactual evaluation (including propensity score matching, difference-in-difference, regression analysis). See Agriculture and rural development, Investment Support under Rural Development Policy, final report, 2014, https://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/evaluation/rural-development-reports/investment-support-rdp-2014_en

Methodologies for process evaluation

Section 1 of the toolbox provides process evaluation fiches indicating suitable methodologies for each evaluation question. The methodologies shown in Section 1 are repeated in Section 4 Tables 1–3. The choice of methodologies depends on the budget and time available for the evaluation.

Methodologies for effectiveness evaluation at SO/measure level

Section 2 of the toolbox, on effectiveness evaluation at SO/measure level, indicates one or two categories for each measure (see Table 2 of Section 2 of the toolbox). The categories are:

- business development,
- environment,
- human capital,
- knowledge,
- institutional capacity building,
- innovation,
- CLLD.

Tables 1–3 in Section 4 of the toolbox indicate which methodologies are suitable for which category. MAs can select appropriate evaluation methods from the tables.
In addition, the different types of evaluation indicators need different types of evaluation methodologies. Table 12 below links the different types of indicators used for effectiveness evaluation with suitable methodologies for these indicators.

Table 12: Types of evaluation indicators and related methodologies

Type of indicator	Characteristic	Related methodology codes *from the toolbox (Section 4, Tables 1–3)*
Total investment	Quantitative	SM2
Absorption rate	Quantitative	SM1, SM2
Progress in reaching output indicators	Quantitative	SM2, SM3
Type of operation	Quantitative	SM3
Participants/beneficiaries	Quantitative	SM3
Quality of the operation	Qualitative	SM3, SM6, SM7 ID Qual 1, ID Qual 2, ID Qual 5, ID Qual 6, ID Qual 7, ID Qual 8, ID Qual 9
Utilisation of operations (roll-out of operations)	Qualitative	SM6, SM7 ID Qual 1, ID Qual 2, ID Qual 5, ID Qual 6, ID Qual 7, ID Qual 8,

Source: FAME SU 2017

Methodologies for impact evaluation at UP level

Evaluation at UP level is more challenging, due to the lack of data. The standard approach is to compare aggregated result indicators at OP level with context indicators for the same year(s). Table 13 shows methodologies for specific topics within the impact evaluation.

Table 13: Methodologies for impact evaluation

Category	Methodologies	Codes
All	Analysis of statistical data in a policy field or sector (e.g. context indicators)	SM5
	Case studies (ideally based on stratified samples)	ID Qual 5
	Qualitative counterfactual evaluation (with adequate control group of non-beneficiaries) (qualitative and participatory method)	ID Qual 9
	Survey of non-beneficiaries / non-contracted land (to establish control groups)	ID Quant 2
Business development	Naïve comparison of achievements of programme beneficiaries at the micro level with a population's average at the macro level (e.g. development trend in a policy field/sector compared to the development trend at the business level)	ID Quant 1
	Quantitative counterfactual evaluation (e.g. with appropriate matching techniques such as propensity score matching, difference-in-differences method, or regression discontinuity)	ID Quant 3
	Econometric modelling (e.g. input-output model)	ID Quant 4
	Spatial analysis with geographic information systems and mapping	ID Quant 8
Environment	Naïve comparison of achievements of programme beneficiaries at the micro level with a population's average at the macro level (e.g. development trend in a policy field/sector compared to the development trend at the business level)	ID Quant 1
	Survey of biogeographical and/or fish biology data (in the framework of applied evaluation case studies, not for research)	ID Quant 5
	Survey of environmental indicators (e.g. water quality, emissions) (in the framework of applied evaluation case studies, not for research)	ID Quant 6
	Environmental modelling (simulation of complex environmental systems)	ID Quant 7
	Spatial analysis with geographic information systems and mapping	ID Quant 8
	Assessment of environmental impact (e.g. life cycle assessment)	ID Quant 10
Innovation	Naïve comparison of achievements of programme beneficiaries at the micro level with a population's average at the macro level (e.g. development trend in a policy field/sector compared to the development trend at the business level)	ID Quant 1
	Spatial analysis with geographic information systems and mapping	ID Quan 8
Capacity building	Quantitative counterfactual evaluation (e.g. with appropriate matching techniques such as propensity score matching, difference-in-differences method, or regression discontinuity)	ID Quan 3
CLLD	Spatial analysis with geographic information systems and mapping	ID Quan 8

Source: FAME SU 2017

5. TERMS OF REFERENCE

The terms of reference (ToR) for an evaluation is the document that details how the evaluation is assigned to an individual evaluator or team of evaluators.

A specific ToR describes the requirements and expectations related to an evaluation, review, or similar study. The ToR is typically developed during the planning phase of an assignment. It serves as the basis for the contract between the commissioner of an evaluation and the external consultant(s) or functionally independent in-house staff carrying out the work.

The ToR sets out clearly:

1. why and for whom the evaluation is being done;
2. what it should accomplish;
3. how it will be accomplished (e.g. contact person, steering group);
4. who will be involved in the evaluation (from the contractor side);
5. when milestones will be reached and when the evaluation will be completed;
6. what resources are available to conduct the evaluation (the maximum price for the evaluation).

5.1 Selecting a winning proposal

Key points to consider during the tender process for an evaluation are:

- Make sure the objectives of the evaluation are clear and unambiguous;
- Ask around about who are the good evaluators; check who has done an evaluation before, and what the client thought of their work;
- Agree in advance who will choose the winning proposal. It could be the Evaluation Steering Group, but they could delegate the job to others. In any case, the group making the choice should include the people in charge of the evaluation, representatives of the (potential) users of the evaluation, and sometimes an independent expert. It is important that the decision-makers have experience in choosing evaluators, especially for the quality assessment;
- Agree in advance which procedure will be used. Will each person make their own judgment, after which the scores will be combined and the average taken as the result? Or will there be a discussion to decide jointly on the score? What if there are conflicting assessments?
- Agree in advance which criteria will be used to judge the quality and experience of the team, and the price. Qualifications and experience are always important, and especially so if the methods proposed are experimental or do not completely fulfil the specifications set forth in the ToR.

The price quoted for an assessment is important, but should not carry too much weight. For any evaluation that is not entirely routine, cost should generally reflect not more than 30% of the score for the purposes of choosing a supplier. The ToR section on selection criteria should be explicit about the relative weighting of cost and quality of applications.

Selection criteria other than price include:

1. experience of the evaluation team;
2. experience in fields relevant to the evaluation (EMFF programme management, fisheries, communication, gender, etc.);
3. quality and suitability of the methodology proposed;
4. understanding of the circumstances in which the evaluation has to be undertaken;
5. management qualities and soft skills for interviews and moderations;
6. evidence of quality management;
7. mechanisms for information exchange with the client and stakeholders;
8. risk management (how to avoid delays, data gaps, etc.); and
9. quality of the proposal structure.

A ToR that describes every task in detail makes the choice of contractor largely dependent on price and the experience of the evaluation team. The greater the extent to which the ToR allows for different methodologies to be proposed, the more the selection team will need to consider criteria other than price. Table 14 below shows two typical scenarios for selecting proposals.

Table 14: Sample of selection criteria and weighting

No.	Criterion	Criterion weighting	
		Scenario 1 Straightforward case	Scenario 2 Complex case
1	Organisation and methodology for undertaking the evaluation	70%	35%
2	Composition of the key experts: evaluation of their education/general and specific professional experience	–	35%
3	Price	30%	30%
	Total	**100%**	**100%**

Source: FAME SU 2017

5.2 ToR table of contents

Table 15 below sets out the sections that the ToR for an evaluation should include.

Table 15: ToR table of contents

Section	Notes
Background and context	Description of the strategy and objectives of the EMFF programme being evaluated, along with the key development and implementation steps. The description explains the broader context of the programme in the MS and its link with national, regional and other EU interventions.
Programme description	Description of the EMFF OP structure including UPs, SOs, and the measures of interest for the evaluation
Objective of the evaluation	Description of the: • objective of the evaluation • reasons for the evaluation • use of the evaluation results, and the expected timing of this • specific aspects of the EMFF programme that need attention
Main users and target audience	The ToR should explain the target readership of the study
Scope of the evaluation	Definition of: • evaluation criteria focus (effectiveness, efficiency or impact) • type of evaluation: whether it should focus on process aspects (how to improve the programme now, modify implementation procedures, reallocate funds) or strategic ones (what needs to be changed in the future, what change of policy direction is needed) • particular measures that are the main focus of the evaluation • time period of the evaluation • context in which the evaluation results are incorporated
Governance and accountability arrangements	The ToR can be crafted for an individual consultant or for a team It should outline the roles and responsibilities envisioned to be necessary to carry out the assignment, and the management and coordination arrangements on the client and contractor side
Regulatory framework (including EU regulations, guidelines and working papers)	List of relevant regulations and other documents to be considered during the evaluation

Section	Notes
Methodologies	Definition of: • main requirements for methodologies in terms of their relation to the outcome of the evaluation • whether to prefer methodologies yielding qualitative or quantitative results • description of the methodologies to be used, where known • suggestions for different methodologies, where appropriate • main sources for data collection • time frame In general, based on the ToR and in consultation with the contractor, the evaluation team takes the final decision about the most appropriate evaluation methods. The ToR must clearly state that the evaluation team should present a detailed statement of evaluation methods, including a list of data collection methods and procedures, information sources, and procedures for analysing the data
Main users and stakeholders of the study, participation and communication	The ToR should list and describe the stakeholders in the evaluation process. It should show clearly how the MA and other stakeholders will review the evaluation process, and which kinds of participation will take place (e.g. MC meetings, steering group, special focus groups, etc.) The ToR needs to outline the main channels of communication and the frequency of meetings required with stakeholders and the contractor Finally, the ToR should make clear that all information generated during the evaluation process has to be openly communicated with the contractor. This includes information about obstacles and challenges that might influence the results of the evaluation
Available knowledge (list of available analyses)	A brief review of relevant available knowledge about the program and its effects, to serve as a basic briefing for evaluation consultants and teams. The review should include details of previous evaluation studies
Language	The ToR should specify the working language and the reporting language
Schedule	The ToR specifies the: deliverables, including their type, format, content, length, intended audience, and expected review process binding timeline any existing work plan, if available end date of the contract The ToR may also ask the evaluator to provide a detailed timeline and milestones within the specified time frame
Indicative budget	The ToR states the budget (and potentially other resources) available for the evaluation, and what that budget covers The ToR should specify the costs which have to be outlined by the proposal The ToR should indicate which costs are covered by the contract and which are not (e.g. travel costs, administrative costs). Larger contracts should include a budget plan structured by deliverable
Required qualifications of the team	The ToR should set out the expected profile of the evaluation team. This includes desired experience and credentials, and minimum professional requirements or competencies. As a whole, the evaluation team should include expertise in fisheries as well as in EU programme management and monitoring.
Structure of the proposal	The ToR may require proposals to be structured in a particular format. This could include different sections for the various parts of the technical offer, and another section covering the CVs of the team, the quality control arrangements, and the management plan We recommend that the ToR specifies a maximum number of pages for the proposal. This can make it easier to compare competing proposals, and avoids padding that does not necessarily improve the quality of the proposal
Submission rules and award criteria	The procedure for selecting the winning proposal should be transparent The ToR should clearly indicate the criteria for eligibility to tender, and for the award itself The selection process depends on national procurement rules
Guiding principles and values	The ToR should specify the ethical principles and procedures that the evaluators are expected to follow
Deliverables	Systematic timetable related to expected deliverables Timing and maximum length of the reports (inception, interim, final) Summary for non-professionals PPT and presentation of results in XXX meetings after completion

Source:, DG Empl 2006, International Trade Centre 2008 adapted by FAME SU 2017

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