

EN
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Answer given by Mr Vella
on behalf of the European Commission
(13.8.2019)

The European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF) is managed under shared management where the selection of projects is the competence of the Member States. The Commission is not involved in the selection process at the Member State level.

The Finnish authorities have consulted the Commission on the legality of the EMFF support for the removal of seal carcasses, in particular in relation to Article 38(1)(d) and Article 40(1)(h) of the EMFF Regulation (EU) 508/2014¹ of the European Parliament and of the Council, without particular reference to the projects mentioned in the question.

However, Article 38(1)(d) of the EMFF Regulation concerns investments and improvements to avoid damage by animals to catches and gear, while trying to avoid damage to the predators (in this case seals). Article 40(1)(h) of the EMFF Regulation is a compensation scheme for damage already caused by mammals, not a prevention scheme. The Commission therefore informed the Finnish authorities that the EMFF Regulation does not provide a legal basis for such support.

The Managing Authority² of the programme may be contacted to provide further information to the Honourable Member.

¹ Regulation (EU) No 508/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 15 May 2014 on the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund and repealing Council Regulations (EC) No 2328/2003, (EC) No 861/2006, (EC) No 1198/2006 and (EC) No 791/2007 and Regulation (EU) No 1255/2011 of the European Parliament and of the Council

² Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry of Finland (mmm.fi/en)