



Fisheries
Transparency
Initiative

16th meeting of the FiTI International Board

17 February 2022, Conference Call

Meeting Minutes

ID: BM-16_2022_MM

Provided by: FiTI International Secretariat

Date: 02.03.2022

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Date	17 February 2022
Time	1.00 – 3.00 p.m. (Greenwich Mean Time)
Venue	Global Conference Call (Zoom)
Supporting document(s)	2022 draft workplan of the FiTI International Secretariat, 26 January 2022

Outcomes of meeting

1. Welcome and Administration

The Chair of the FiTI International Board, Valeria MERINO, opened the 16th International Board meeting by welcoming all participating members.

Apologies were noted prior to the meeting from Alexander BIRYUKOV (stakeholder group: Business sector) and Alfred SCHUMM (stakeholder group: Social sector). Alfred assigned Francisco MARI as his proxy.

After all eligible participants joined, it was determined that a quorum for this meeting was reached¹:

Pro-rated attendance of Board Members ² :	At least two Board Members per stakeholder group?	Attendance of Observers:
12.9 out of 18 votes	Yes	3 out of 4

2. Introduction of new Members and Observer to the International Board

The FiTI Chair emphasised that the initiative is extremely pleased to welcome four new members: Mr. Keith ANDRE, Ms. Mialy ANDRIAMAHEFAZAFY, Mr. Hugh GOVAN, and Mr. Ahmed SENHOURY. All new Members, as well as the new Observer to the Board – the Open Government Partnership, represented by Mr. Theophilous Chiviru – briefly introduced themselves and highlighted relevant experiences and expectations.

The FiTI Chair also welcomed, as a guest, Ms. Béatrice Gorez, the Coordinator of the Coalition for Fair Fisheries Arrangements.

¹ In accordance with article 14 (7) of the constitution of the association of the Fisheries Transparency Initiative (as of 13 May 2021): *'No binding decision shall be made in an FiTI International Board meeting unless a quorum is present at the time of making the decision. Half of the total number of members (including proxies), with at least two members from each stakeholder group, forms a quorum.'*

² In accordance with article 14 (13) of the constitution of the association of the Fisheries Transparency Initiative (as of 13 May 2021): *'Every member has one vote, unless the current total number of members is not equally distributed among the stakeholder groups stated in Article 8. In such a case, voting power shall be determined on a pro-rated system, ensuring that all stakeholder groups have equal voting power.'*

As not all 18 seats have been filled for this Board meeting, the pro-rated voting powers for the 16th FiTI International Board meeting were determined as follows:

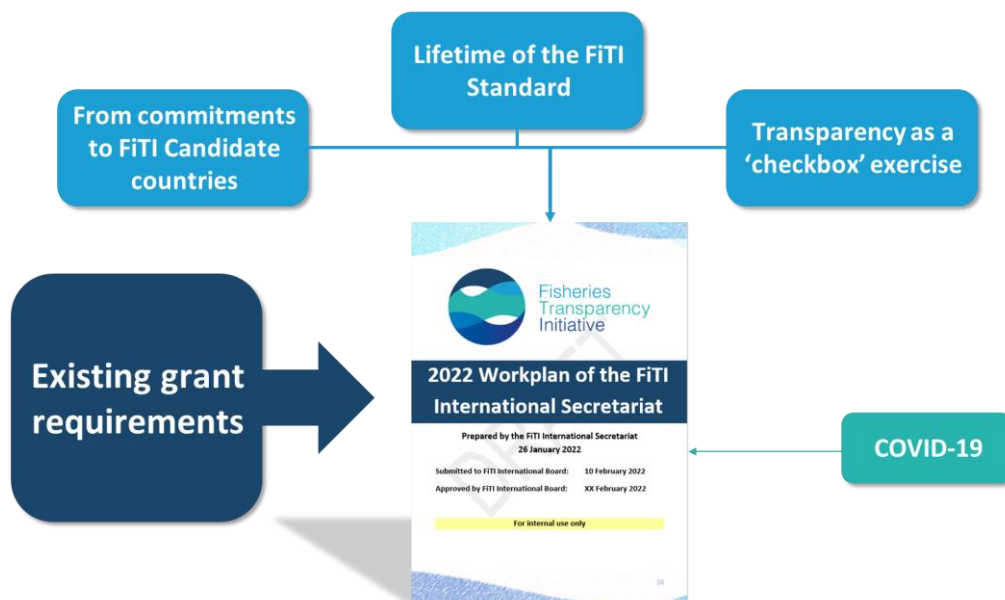
- *Government sector*: Currently four Board Members → each Board Member carries 1.5 votes
- *Business sector*: Currently five Board Members → each Board Member carries 1.2 votes
- *Social sector*: Currently five Board Members → each Board Member carries 1.2 votes

Afterwards, other participating Board Members and Observers, as well as the Executive Director of the FiTI International Secretariat, introduced themselves and welcome the new Board Members and Observer.

3. 2022 workplan of the FiTI International Secretariat

The FiTI Chair asked Sven BIERMANN, Executive Director of the FiTI International Secretariat to present briefly the *2022 Workplan of the FiTI International Secretariat*, which was circulated to all Board Members and Observers prior to the meeting.³

The workplan outlines the Secretariat's understanding of the International Board's expectations regarding strategic opportunities, priorities, objectives, and specific implementation targets for the period *01 January until 31 December 2022*.



Sven highlighted that the workplan, including the proposed objectives and target areas for 2022 (as shown below) are significantly determined by the availability of funding and existing grant obligations negotiated by the Secretariat.

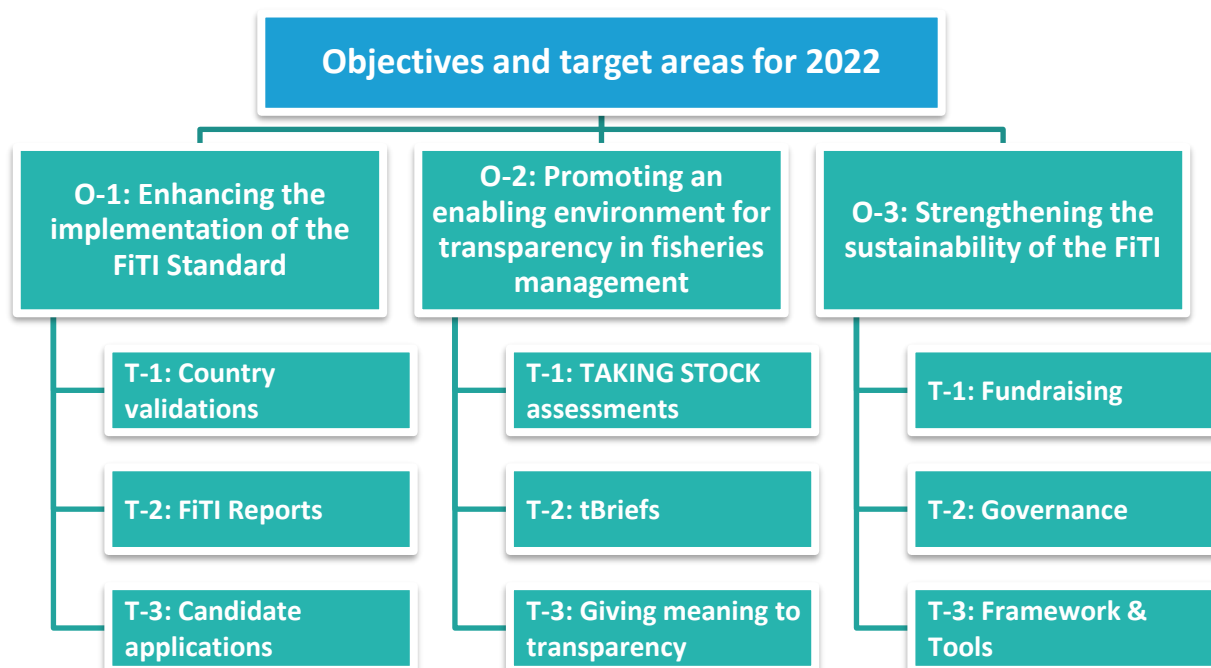
Nevertheless, several other factors have influenced the scope and direction of this workplan, such as:⁴

³ This 2022 workplan also includes an assessment of the level of progress in achieving the objectives set out in the 2021 Workplan for the FiTI International Secretariat.

⁴ It was noted that while the COVID-19 pandemic continues to impact economies at large as well as individual citizens, the Secretariat's operations have been adjusted over the last 18 months to adopt a new working and collaboration mode. It is therefore currently anticipated that the pandemic will not have major (new) implications on the way the Secretariat operates in 2022.

- an enhanced focus on the current five publicly committed countries to ensure that at least two of these countries have submitted their candidate application to the FiTI International Board by end of 2022;
- a FiTI Standard’s review regarding procedural and transparency-related improvement opportunities, as the entire framework of the FiTI Standard (including country validations) will have been applied for the first time by end of 2022;
- additional efforts to ensure that all stakeholders understand the true meaning and practical value of increasing public access to fisheries management information.

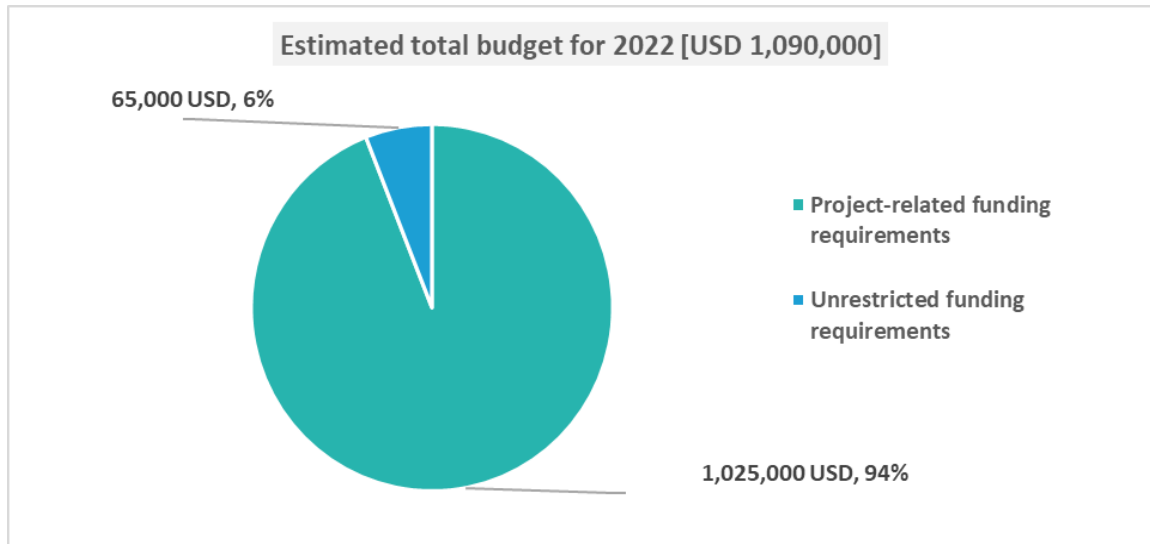
Therefore, the International Secretariat seeks to pursue *three objectives* [O] with a total number of *9 target areas* [T] in 2022, as shown below:



In pursuing these objectives, the International Secretariat strives to accomplish the following *highlights* within calendar year 2022:

- Conduct the first 2x validation processes of the FiTI (i.e. Seychelles and Mauritania);
- Support the release of up to 3x national FiTI Reports;
- Obtain candidate applications from 2x countries;
- Release at least 11x TAKING STOCK assessment reports;
- Launch a new programme that will give more practical meaning to transparency in fisheries management; and
- Raise up to USD 500k in additional project-related funding.

Sven highlighted that in order to pursue these objectives and targets, *an annual total budget of USD 1,090,000* is required for the Secretariat (project-related and unrestricted)⁵.



Sven highlighted that *the entire required budget for 2022 has already been secured*.

Additional information was provided to the International Board regarding the detailed breakdown of these objectives and target areas into concrete activities, deliverables and cost allocations.

Finally, several notable objectives and ideas were presented, which the International Secretariat wishes to pursue in the near future, but for which funding is currently not available. This includes, amongst others, a *regional expansion* of the FiTI (in particular in countries of the Northern Hemisphere, as well as with countries in the Asia/Pacific region); activities to raise awareness about the importance of information on and for small-scale fisheries as part of the *International Year of Artisanal Fishing and Aquaculture* (IYAFA 2022); and the engagement of a dedicated *partnership coordinator*.

The FiTI Chair thanked the International Secretariat for this comprehensive workplan, and expressed her expectations that these objectives and target areas will indeed contribute to the overall growth and sustainability of the initiative. She also thanked the Secretariat for their ongoing fundraising efforts, ensuring the financial stability of the initiative for 2022.

Members and observers of the FiTI International Board provided their feedback on the workplan and possible engagement opportunities:

- Francisco MARI stated that the upcoming UN Ocean Conference in Lisbon/Portugal (27 June to 1 July 2022) could provide a good global platform to raise awareness

⁵ Unrestricted funding refers primarily to administrative costs, which are not covered by specific projects. This includes e.g. accounting and auditing, insurances, rent, office supplies.

about transparency for small-scale fisheries. It was agreed that the Secretariat will reach out to Francisco to discuss collaboration opportunities.

- Keith ANDRE mentioned that the Federation of Artisanal Fishermen of the Indian Ocean (FPAOI) is conducting a regional workshop in Seychelles in early March to launch activities in the context of the IYafa 2022. Given the presence of the International Secretariat in Seychelles, it was agreed that the Secretariat will participate in this regional workshop and present the highlights of its recent tBrief No. 6 (on transparency and small-scale fisheries) to the participants.
- Marcio CASTRO DE SOUZA observed possible opportunities of integrating the FiTI into existing training modules and awareness raising campaigns of the FAO, in order for the International Secretariat to utilise the global network of the FAO. Additional ideas were raised regarding the involvement of the FiTI in the IYafa 2022 (e.g. through an organisational statement). It was agreed that the Secretariat will reach out to Marcio to discuss such opportunities further.
- Nedwa NECH emphasised that the financial sustainability of the FiTI should not only focus on funding for the International Secretariat, but also for providing technical assistance and financial support to engaged countries. The Chair emphasised that this is indeed a challenging aspect, and that recent successes were partly made possible due to the financial support from external partners, such as the World Bank's SWIOFish3 project (e.g. financing Seychelles' FiTI Reports) and PRCM (e.g. financing Mauritania's FiTI Reports). Also, she pointed out that the upcoming validations are important examples for the need of funding by the International Secretariat to conduct activities in countries, as it would create a possible conflict of interest if countries were asked to pay an Independent Validator that is assessing then their own country's level of compliance with the FiTI Standard.

However, at the same time the FiTI Chair stated that a balance is needed in offering such support through the International Secretariat or its partner organisations, and encouraging countries to engage their own resources and/or obtaining financial support from external partners.

Julien MILLION mentioned that under the current PROBLUE financial support for the FiTI, the commission of a funding strategy is still available, and that such a strategy could look into the aspect of obtaining financial resources directly for countries.

- Theophilous CHIVIRU mentioned that the OGP is looking forward to collaborating with the FiTI in building political leadership for transparency in marine fisheries. He highlighted the upcoming Transitional Results Report for Seychelles' 2019-2021 OGP Action Plan as well as the new provision of an OGP National Action Plan in Cabo Verde as concrete collaboration opportunities. Furthermore, Theo mentioned that

upcoming Regional Summits of the OGP might provide interesting platforms to raise attention about the need for public access to information in fisheries. It was agreed that the Secretariat will reach out to Theo to follow-up on these promising developments. The Chair commented that the FiTI has already engaged the OGP in various countries and is looking forward to strengthening this work.

Afterwards, the participating Board Members reached the following decision by consensus:



Decision [BM-16_2022_D-01]:

The Board approved the 2022 Workplan of the FiTI International Secretariat, including the proposed budgets for project-related as well as for unrestricted (administrative) activities.

4. Updates on the validation process

The Chair recalled that with decision BM-14_2021_D-04 the FiTI International Board tasked the FiTI International Secretariat to launch the validation process in accordance with the FiTI Standard (section D.1) for *Seychelles* (validation timeframe: April 2020 until December 2021) and *Mauritania* (validation timeframe: December 2018 until December 2021).

The Chair asked Sven to provide an overview of the current status of the validation process:⁶

	 Seychelles	 Mauritania
Approval of Guidance Note #3:	In progress, approval expected by 18 February 2022	
Baseline Assessment Report:	In progress, to be completed by mid of March 2022	In progress, to be completed by end of May 2022
Engagement of Independent Validator:	In progress, to be completed by beginning of March 2022	Open, to be completed by end of May 2022
Independent Validation:	Open, to be completed by July 2022	Open, to be completed by end of September 2022
Determination of compliance:	Open, to be completed by September 2022	Open, to be completed by end of October 2022

Sven stated that the current validation process already lags behind the validation timeframe of the FiTI Standard, which, in accordance with section D.4, requires that 'FiTI

⁶ It is note that since this meeting, Guidance Note # 3 on 'Validating countries' has been approved by the FiTI International Board through Board Circular No. 7.

Candidate countries may choose to undergo the first validation prior to publishing their first FiTI Report, but must undergo a validation prior to publishing their second FiTI Report. This is mainly due to COVID-19 related challenges and delays within the International Secretariat as well as implementing countries.

Sven emphasised that the National Multi-Stakeholder Group (MSG) of Seychelles already published their 2nd FiTI Report (2020) on 15 December 2021, and that it is expected that Mauritania's National MSG will publish their 2nd FiTI Report (2019 & 2020) in March 2022.

Sven, therefore, requested adjustments to the current FiTI Standard procedures as well as to previous Board decisions.

The participating Board Members reached the following decision by consensus:

Decision [BM-16_2022_D-02]:

The FiTI International Board approved that the country validations for Seychelles and Mauritania must be completed prior to the publications of both countries' third FiTI Report (instead of the second FiTI Report, as outlined in section D.4 of the FiTI Standard).

Decision [BM-16_2022_D-03]:

The FiTI International Board further approved that the validation timeframe for Mauritania is extended from December 2021 to end of March 2022 in order to include the country's 2nd FiTI Report.⁷

The FiTI Chair asked the International Secretariat to provide regular updates on the validation processes to the FiTI International Board over the upcoming months.

5. Closing

The Chair thanked the Members of the Board for their participation in the 16th meeting.

16th International Board Meeting ended

⁷ This decision therefore supersedes the FiTI International Board's decision ID BM-14_2021_D-04 regarding Mauritania's timeframe.

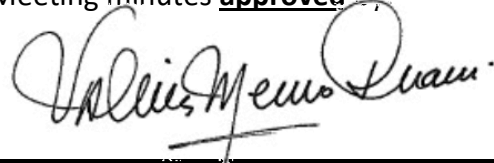
Meeting minutes **provided** by:



Mr Sven Biehlmann

Secretary of the meeting; Executive Director of the
FiTI International Secretariat

Meeting minutes **approved** by:



Dr Valeria Merino

Chair of the FiTI International Board.

APPENDIX I: List of Participants

Chair

Valeria MERINO

Stakeholder group: Government sector

Mialy ANDRIAMAHEFAZAFY [Voting power for this meeting: 1.5 votes]

Ylva MATTSSON [Voting power for this meeting: 1.5 votes]

Philippe MICHAUD [Voting power for this meeting: 1.5 votes]

Not excused:

Mohamed Salem NANY

Stakeholder group: Business sector

Keith ANDRE [Voting power for this meeting: 1.2 votes]

Hugh GOVAN [Voting power for this meeting: 1.2 votes]

Francisco LEOTTE [Voting power for this meeting: 1.2 votes]

Excused:

Alexander BIRYUKOV

Not excused:

Gaoussou GUEYE

Stakeholder group: Social sector

Francisco MARI [Voting power for this meeting: 2.4 votes]⁸

Nedwa NECH [Voting power for this meeting: 1.2 votes]

Ahmed SENHOURY [Voting power for this meeting: 1.2 votes]

Excused:

Alfred SCHUMM

⁸ Due to a proxy vote assigned by Alfred SCHUMM.

Not excused:

Eduardo ROLÓN

Observers

Marcio CASTRO DE SOUZA, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)

Theophilous CHIVIRU, Open Government Partnership (OGP)

Julien MILLION, The World Bank Group

Not excused:

Salimata SOUMARE, African Development Bank (AfDB)

FiTI International Secretariat

Sven BIERMANN

Guests

Béatrice GOREZ, Coalition for Fair Fisheries Arrangements (only partially)