

PRESS RELEASE

For immediate release

Government of Germany supports FiTI through 5-year grant to enhance transparency in global fisheries management

17 August 2023. The Government of the Federal Republic of Germany (represented by the [Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development, BMZ](#)) and the [Fisheries Transparency Initiative \(FiTI\)](#) will cooperate on the project "Sustainable marine fisheries through transparency and stakeholder participation". The project has a timeframe of 5 years (2024 – 2028) and a grant volume of up to 4 million Euros.

Along with climate change and pollution, overfishing is one of the main threats to our ocean. Within overfishing, several factors are accelerating the decline of our fishery resources, such as the overcapitalization of the fishing industry, harmful fisheries subsidies, the disregard of scientific advice on fishing limits or illegal activities. The need to manage our marine resources sustainably – balancing economic, social and environmental aspects – is urgent.

In recent years, the importance of public access to credible and comprehensive fisheries management information has seen growing levels of support. Without reliable information the capacity of national authorities to make decisions based on the best available data is diminished. So too is the ability of non-governmental stakeholders to exercise effective oversight, demand accountability and engage in public dialogue. Transparency is therefore paramount for sustainable fisheries management. By capitalising on this global momentum for transparency in fisheries, the objectives of this project are:

- » To increase the public availability and credibility of fisheries management information in ten countries that have not implemented the FiTI to date, with a focus on member countries of the [Organisation of African, Caribbean and Pacific States \(OACPS\)](#)¹;
- » To support existing FiTI implementing countries in Africa and Latin America with their national efforts to comply with the [FiTI Standard](#); and

¹ This project is focused on countries from the OACPS, given that the 'importance of transparency in fisheries governance and sustainable fisheries management as a concrete benefit and contribution to building resilience and sustainability at local, national, and regional levels' was acknowledged at the 7th Meeting of the OACPS Ministers in Charge of Fisheries and Aquaculture in Ghana (5 - 8 April 2022).

- » To strengthen the link between transparency and participation by enabling stakeholders to understand and scrutinise government information and by identifying participatory governance mechanisms and opportunities.

According to Mr Martin Hoppe, Head of Division for Food Security and Fisheries at the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) *“Two out of three of Germany’s partner countries in development cooperation are island or coastal nations, where fisheries contribute significantly to government revenues, food and nutrition security, as well as employment. These states often do not have sufficient levels of public access to information to contribute to sustainable fisheries. The FiTI provides a proven and internationally recognised framework to enhance transparency in marine fisheries. We are therefore very pleased to renew our partnership with the FiTI to ensure that fisheries continue supporting national economies and the well-being of citizens and businesses that depend on a healthy marine environment.”*

The project also emphasises the collective involvement of all those with a stake in achieving sustainable fisheries. Involving various stakeholders with different perspectives, expectations and, most importantly, an inherent interest in improvement is a prerequisite to enhance the credibility (and ultimately, the legitimacy) of information. Such a genuine collaboration between stakeholders from governments, businesses and civil society organisations has the potential to build trust, to foster ownership, and to initiate far-reaching systemic change.

As described by Mr Sven Biermann, Executive Director of the FiTI International Secretariat, *“Several years ago, transparency was still something of an aspirational concept. It is now becoming increasingly mainstream in marine fisheries. Our renewed partnership with the BMZ provides a tremendous opportunity to scale the proven transparency approach of the FiTI by involving additional countries in Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific region. Furthermore, we will be able to introduce several innovations into the FiTI implementation process, such as a ‘FiTI Starter package’ for newly committed countries as well as a participatory governance programme and a new fisheries analysis service. We are sincerely thankful for the continuous support of the Federal Government of Germany.”*

The Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) is responsible for German development policy within the Federal Government. The framework for its actions is the United Nations’ 2030 Agenda with its Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the Paris Climate Agreement. <https://www.bmz.de/en>

The Fisheries Transparency Initiative (FiTI) is a global multi-stakeholder partnership that strengthens transparency and collaboration in marine fisheries management. The FiTI supports coastal countries in implementing the FiTI Standard, thereby contributing to the sustainability of marine fisheries by increasing the accessibility, credibility and usability of national fisheries management information. <https://www.fiti.global>