



Fisheries
Transparency
Initiative

Call for 2024 membership election to the FiTI association

Date: 15.07.2024

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For questions or comments regarding this election procedure please contact Ms Tina Fondamiere at members@fiti.global.

Preamble

Over the past two decades, there has been an enormous growth in collective action for international development. This has been aided by the growing understanding that complex and interlinked global challenges, such as sustainable fisheries, cannot be tackled by unilateral actions alone but rather through collaborative partnerships involving multiple actors.

For this reason, the Fisheries Transparency Initiative (FiTI) has been established as a collaborative effort among different stakeholders from governments, business, and civil society. Their diverse interests, positions, experiences, and resources are fundamental to shaping the immediate and long-term agenda for marine fisheries sustainability.

The FiTI strengthens transparency and participation in marine fisheries management. By making fisheries management more transparent and inclusive, the FiTI promotes informed public debates on fisheries policies and supports the long-term contribution of the sector to national economies and the well-being of citizens and businesses that depend on a healthy marine environment.

The FiTI is pursuing its charitable objective by:

- (i) maintaining its internationally recognised standard (i.e. FiTI Standard) that defines what information on marine fisheries should be published online by public authorities;
- (ii) engaging with countries to implement this standard to achieve and maintain high levels of transparency on the management of the marine fisheries sector and the activities of fishers and fishing companies;
- (iii) promoting and institutionalising multi-stakeholder collaboration;
- (iv) stimulating public debates on how the fisheries sector is managed;
- (v) enabling relevant stakeholders to support reforms towards better governance of their marine fisheries; and
- (vi) fostering the implementation of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals and other international treaties and covenants related to fisheries worldwide.

For more information about the FiTI, please visit <https://fiti.global>.

1. Membership in the Fisheries Transparency Initiative

The FiTI is legally institutionalised as a non-profit, non-governmental *association* under Seychellois law and governed by the [constitution of the FiTI association](#).

Membership to the FiTI is open to any individual nominated by an entity from the government, business, or social sector (see below), interested in enhancing transparency and multi-stakeholder participation in fisheries, good ocean governance, or wider areas of open government and access to information.

The sole responsibility of members is to serve on the FiTI International Board ('Board'). The Board is the *global supervisory* body of the FiTI.

In accordance with the FiTI's constitution, the Board is comprised of *18 individual voting members*, equally distributed among the following *three stakeholder groups*:

- (i) *Government sector*, represented by individuals nominated by public sector institutions, including ministries, federal or national government agencies, and businesses owned or controlled by the government (i.e. State-Owned Enterprises).
- (ii) *Business sector*, represented by individuals nominated by private sector organisations, including for-profit companies and social enterprises along the fisheries value chain, organisations in supporting sectors (e.g. finance, investments, management, technology), as well as industry, professional, and trade associations.
- (iii) *Social Sector*, represented by individuals nominated by organisations that serve society at large, including not-for-profit civil society organisations, global action networks, as well as academic entities.

The Board is presided and represented by its *Chair*, which does not count towards the total number of seats.

The Board has the following *responsibilities*, as outlined in the constitution of the FiTI association:

- (i) assessing candidate applications of countries;
- (ii) evaluating the performance of countries against the FiTI Standard based on validations;
- (iii) establishing mechanisms to collect and address complaints, resolve disagreements, and act if countries are deemed non-compliant;

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- (iv) overseeing and guiding the work of the FiTI International Secretariat through annual work plans and bylaws;
- (v) appointing the Executive Director of the FiTI International Secretariat;
- (vi) supporting the FiTI International Secretariat in outreach and fundraising activities;
- (vii) agreeing on the arrangements for FiTI global conferences;
- (viii) approving the annual budget, financial statement, and audited reports of the FiTI association;
- (ix) electing new members of the FiTI, which serve as Board members;
- (x) electing the FiTI Chair of the Board;
- (xi) enhancing the FiTI Standard over time;
- (xii) promoting transparency and multi-stakeholder participation in marine fisheries governance; and
- (xiii) adhering to the FiTI Code of Conduct.

Each member of the Board needs to fulfil the following two *key responsibilities*:

- ➡ carry out all the responsibilities of a FiTI Board member, as outlined above, and
- ➡ represent the concerns and interests of their global stakeholder group in the Board.

For more information about the Board, please refer [here](#).

2. Key parameters for the 2024 election

A total of *7 membership seats* should be filled through this 2024 election process, distributed as follows:

Stakeholder group	Vacant membership seats
Government sector	3 membership seats
Business sector	1 membership seat for an individual from a large-scale/industrial organisation along the marine fisheries value chain
	2 membership seats for individuals from small-scale/artisanal organisations along the marine fisheries value chain
Social sector	1 membership seat

The term for the newly elected members will be *three years*, from 1 January 2025 until 31 December 2027.

Members retire at the end of their term but are eligible for re-nomination and *re-election once*. If a current Board member's first term is ending by 31 December 2024 and the Board member is interested in re-election, the member must submit a communication as described below.

The current members of the FiTI association will *elect the new or re-elected members* of the FiTI association. If voting becomes necessary, it will be administered electronically as a secret ballot or by other suitable means as determined by the Chair. Current Board members being considered for re-election will not participate in the voting process for this re-election and will not be counted on to establish a quorum.

The names of the nominees, short-listed candidates, and assessment results will *not be published*.

The *International Secretariat* will aid the process but will not make any decisions regarding the review of nominations and shortlisting of nominees or participate in the interviews and voting process.

3. Eligibility criteria for candidates

Candidates who seek to run for membership in the FiTI association must meet the following *criteria*:

- (1) Membership in the FiTI association is *personal* and not institutional. Therefore, only individuals are eligible to run for a membership seat in the FiTI association. Nevertheless, candidates must be officially *nominated by their organisation* or (in the case of self-employed individuals) *from an expert network¹* from the government, business, or social sector, as outlined above.²

If a candidate to the Board has already served one term on the Board and wishes to be elected for a second and final term, s/he must communicate such intention, in writing, via an email sent to the Chair, and also confirm that:

- i) the original professional affiliation has not changed, and that
 - ii) the original nominating organisation continuous to support the candidate to serve for another term.
- (2) Candidates must be at least *18 years old*.
 - (3) Candidates must demonstrate a *strong interest* in enhancing transparency and multi-stakeholder participation in fisheries, good ocean governance or broader areas of open government and access to information, and practicing high levels of openness, integrity, and accountability.
 - (4) The working language of the Board is *English*. If a candidate is not proficient in reading, writing, and speaking English this circumstance is not a deterrence or impediment to being nominated or elected to the Board. The guidelines for language usage in Board operations are described in Annex I.
 - (5) In addition, candidates must demonstrate *at least two of the following qualifications*:
 - i) Sound technical expertise and strong track record in influencing policy processes;

¹ The nominating organisation or network must **operate in several countries** and **be established for at least three years**.

² As Board members serve in their individual rather than organisational capacity, members that leave the FiTI association before their term ends should have no presumption that their replacement will come from the same entity.

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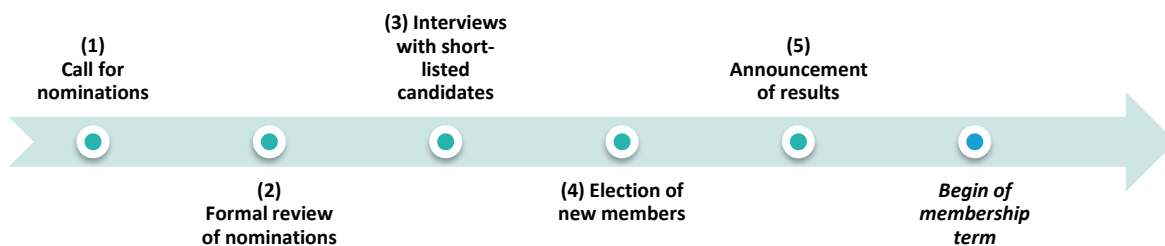
- ii) Experience in partnering with senior representatives from governments, business or civil society;
- iii) Proven ability in support of the sustainability of natural resources or transparency processes;
- iv) Informed international perspective on core issues of transparency in marine fisheries management to leverage global standards and/or partners;
- v) Ability to support outreach and fundraising activities of the FiTI.

If the candidate has already served on the Board for one term, her/his contributions to the FiTI's success and services to the Board during this term will also be taken into consideration.

- (6) Elected Board members are expected to dedicate on average *one to two hours a week to the FiTI* – with intensity increasing around Board meetings. Members should also be available to travel internationally to represent the FiTI at high-level meetings and participate in at least one in-person Board meeting per year, as well as additional meetings held online.

4. Election process

The 2024 election process for new members of the FiTI association looks as follows:



<u>Process step</u>	<u>Date</u>
(1) Call for nominations	15 July – 31 August 2024
(2) Formal review of nominations	1 September – 30 September 2024
(3) Interviews with short-listed candidates	1 October – 31 October 2024
(4) Election of new members	1 November – 15 November 2024
(5) Announcement of results	16 November – 30 November 2024
<i>Begin of membership term</i>	<i>1 January 2025</i>

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The FiTI strives for a balanced and inclusive Board. Thus, diversity will be taken into account across a range of factors (including gender, geographical location, type of experience/organisation). As a global initiative, regional diversity is particularly valued by the FiTI. Therefore, the FiTI may opt to state a preference for short-listed candidates based on the above factors in any given selection round.

(1) Call for nominations

Eligible candidates must submit the following four applications documents:

- (1) *Cover letter* addressed by the candidate to the Chair, covering the following aspects:
 - ➔ Motivation to join the FiTI as a member or to be re-elected for a second term;
 - ➔ Summary of experiences that demonstrate the candidate's qualification to support the FiTI in advancing transparency in marine fisheries management; and³
 - ➔ Priorities given to advance the objectives of the FiTI.⁴
- (2) *Letter of nomination* from the candidate's organisation or a network⁵, addressed to the Chair,⁶ covering the following aspects:
 - ➔ Rationales for supporting the nomination;
 - ➔ Explanation about ways in which the candidate fulfils the set criteria;
 - ➔ A paragraph that states how the nominator believes the nominee can contribute to the mission of FiTI.
- (3) *Completed candidate profile form*⁷

³ This requirement does not apply to a current Board member seeking re-election.

⁴ Nominees should state their priorities as a Board member, e.g. getting countries in her/his region to join the FiTI, supporting fundraising, or enhancing the impact of transparency.

⁵ Candidates cannot nominate themselves.

⁶ This requirement does not apply to a current Board member seeking re-election. Instead, such Board members need to confirm in writing via email to the Chair that their original professional affiliation has not changed, and that the previous nominating organisation continues to support her/his nomination.

⁷ A standardised template is available for download here: <https://fiti.global/call-for-2024-membership-election-to-the-fiti-association>. If the candidate is a current Board member, this requirement does not apply unless her/his original professional affiliation has changed.

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(4) **CV** (max. 4 pages)⁸

Documents must be submitted to the International Secretariat by the **31st of August 2024** to the attention of Ms Tina Fondamiere to the following email address: members@fiti.global.

If a nomination has not been submitted with all the documents mentioned above, an email will be sent by the International Secretariat requesting the missing information within 48 hours. *Only nominations that provide all required documentation will move forward in the process.*

(2) Formal review of nominations

An Election Committee, comprising the Chair and up to four members of the current Board, will conduct a formal review of nominations that will culminate with the Chair sending a list of vetted short-listed candidates to the Board for approval.

In the case that not enough qualified candidates apply, a new round for nominations will be opened or the 'Call for nominations' will be extended.

(3) Interviews with short-listed candidates

Approved short-listed candidates will be invited to participate in an online interview with members of the Election Committee. Nominees who cannot be interviewed in English will be interviewed in the language requested using simultaneous translation services.

During this interview, candidates will have the opportunity to speak about their track record as effective, collegial, and proactive leaders; demonstrate strong interpersonal skills (e.g. communication ability, good judgment, thoughtfulness when working in multi-cultural and gender diverse settings, etc.), and their ethical fibre.⁹

⁸ If the candidate is a current Board member, this requirement does not apply unless key information has changed.

⁹ Interviews with current Board members considered for re-election will center on future contributions to the Board.

(4) Election of members

The final list of candidates will be submitted by the Election Committee to the Board for approval.

Any elected member of the FiTI association will be asked to provide up to three references, some of which will be contacted by members of the Election Committee. If the feedback from the referees does not dispute a candidate's suitability, the election process will be considered complete, and the results will be publicly announced.¹⁰

(5) Announcement of results

All interviewed candidates will be informed about the election's outcome before the public announcement and asked to keep that information confidential until after the public announcement.

Shortly after the Board's decision, the elected candidates will be announced on the FiTI website and through other communication channels.

¹⁰ Current Board members considered for re-election do not need to submit references again.

Annex I: FiTI's Guidelines for language usage in Board operations

The FiTI International Board ('Board') – the initiative's global supervisory body – has recognised that, in principle, limiting the participation of Board members to those fluent in English is restrictive and exclusionary for those who do not speak that language. Therefore, the Board has decided to accommodate whatever language a newly elected non-English speaking member speaks.

In order to implement this decision, the Board has approved the following guidelines.

1. Announcements of 'Calls for membership election to the FiTI association' and submissions of candidacy documents will be made in English, which has not been a problem for nominating organisations.
2. The selection process for candidates who seek to run for membership in the FiTI association includes simultaneous translation for candidates who are not capable of speaking English, but who comply with all the other requirements and who have been short-listed by the Board.
3. If a non-English speaking candidate is elected to the Board, the Chair will confirm with the new member the language the person needs translation to and from English. The FiTI International Secretariat ('Secretariat') will provide simultaneous translation in such language(s) to allow new members to fully engage, which will be limited to the onboarding session and all subsequent Board meetings. New non-English speaking Board member(s) will commit to confirming his/her/their attendance at Board meetings in advance to ensure that the translation expense does not go to waste. The obligation of the Secretariat to provide translation to and from English to the selected language will end when the member's term in the FiTI association ends.
4. If requested by a new Board member, the Preparatory Paper and its accompanying supporting documents (submitted prior to a Board meeting), the Meeting Minutes (submitted after the meeting) as well as Board Circulars and its accompanying supporting documents will be translated by the Secretariat using an online translation service (e.g. DeepL or Google Translate) but will not be validated by an official translator. Hence these documents should not be considered official documents. The official operating language of the Board remains English, and all references to formal decisions will follow the English version of documents published on the FiTI website.
5. Other relevant governance documents, such as the constitution of the FiTI association, the FiTI's Code of Conduct, the FiTI's Travel Policy or the FiTI's Membership Policy, are published online in English only; by request, unofficial translations can be provided to non-English speaking Board member(s), using the above mentioned online translation service.

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6. Documents under the responsibility of the Secretariat that are intended to regulate and guide the FiTI implementation process (e.g. FiTI Standard, Guidance Notes, etc.) will only be provided in the languages the FiTI is operating. Currently, those languages are English, French, Spanish and Portuguese.
7. Official and non-official email communications between the Chair and Board members or the Secretariat and Board members should continue primarily in English. Any sender or recipient of such emails, when one of the parties is a member who cannot write them in English, should utilise online translation services. This provision will be reviewed three months after its initial application.
8. Working Group sessions or Board Committee session will be translated from English to other languages and vice versa, utilising simultaneous translation to allow non-English speaking Board members to participate. The participation of non-English speaking members in such groups or committees will be decided based on the financial capability of the FiTI to provide such simultaneous translations or the feasibility of having trusting companions helping or other Board members volunteering to translate the meetings. The Chair will assess such feasibility before inviting a non-English-speaking Board member to join such groups or committees.
9. If a non-English speaking member is elected, the Secretariat and the Chair will monitor the impact on the length of Board meetings and propose adding additional meetings to the yearly calendar, if necessary.