

Terms of Reference

Study 'National climate actions for the marine fisheries sector in African Small Island Developing States (SIDS)'

Date: 15 August 2024

Type of contract:	Short-term consultancy
Eligibility:	Individual consultant(s) or consulting firm
Estimated effort:	80-90 days
Duration:	7-8 months
Start/ Finish Dates:	October 2024 – May 2025

Background

The importance of marine fisheries for Small Island Developing States (SIDS) is both amplified and threatened by the climate crisis. For example, there is a greater understanding of how healthy marine biodiversity absorbs and stores carbon, which is diminished when fishing depletes fish and marine mammal populations, as well as destroys ocean habitats, such as coral reefs. As a consequence, more and more countries recognise the importance of sustaining or improving marine ecosystems for climate mitigation, as communicated in their national action plans and their blue economy strategies.

Nevertheless, the negative effects of climate change – already disrupting the physics, chemistry and ecology of the ocean – will present numerous dire consequences for the future of the fisheries sector, resulting in an urgent need for measures to adapt. This includes, inter alia, that warmer temperatures and acidification will influence the abundance, migratory patterns and mortality rates of wild fish stocks, with unpredictable consequences for fish catches, food security and government revenues and livelihoods. Also, climate disasters, such as hurricanes, storms, droughts, and extreme heat events, will cause major disruptions in local fishing industries (e.g. destruction of landing sites and fish processing facilities), with coastal fisheries being among the most vulnerable to these risks.

Unfortunately, large numbers of countries, including African SIDS, are ill-prepared to adapt to the challenges posed by the climate crisis on their fisheries.¹ Many developing coastal States and SIDS are not mainstreaming climate science into fisheries management decisions, and fisheries remains often insufficiently included in **national climate adaptation plans**.² This can mean that the fisheries sector fails to receive the urgent financial support it requires, including through both public and private **climate financing mechanisms**, such as through blue bonds, debt swaps, and bilateral aid. This is a problem exacerbated in SIDS, given their economic vulnerabilities and high levels of public debt, meaning funding for fisheries and marine conservation is below what is needed.³

While the effect of climate-related changes will differ among regions, what is evident is that these negative effects will further accelerate where fish stocks are already vulnerable due to overfishing. Climate-related changes may also amplify inequalities and conflicts in the fisheries sector. **At the same time, effective fisheries management has not only proven to successfully rebuild stocks and increase catches within ecosystem boundaries. An effective and adaptive fisheries management system is also the first foundation of climate-resilient fisheries.**

Fisheries management is an integrated system, collating scientific information to understand the status of stocks, setting limits for catching and fishing efforts, compiling social and economic information to understand how benefits are shared, as well as conducting monitoring, controlling and surveillance activities to ensure compliance with fisheries policies. While each of these functions has its own peculiarities and characteristics, they all have one foundation aspect, and that is **information transparency**. Fisheries management systems cannot be effective without the public availability of credible information. A lack of transparency in fisheries:

- diminishes the capacity of national authorities to make decisions based on the best available data;
- reduces the ability of non-governmental stakeholders to exercise effective oversight, demand accountability and engage in public dialogue;
- marginalises or undervalues certain fisheries groups or sub-sectors, in particular small-scale fishers and of women in fisheries supply chains;
- limits the visibility and attention that is given to the entire fisheries sector in a country's national sustainable development agenda.

¹ FAO, among others, are launching initiatives to help developing coastal states and SIDS to improve fisheries management in this respect. See for example [here](#).

² FAO has produced guidelines to remedy this: '[Addressing Fisheries and Aquaculture in National Adaption Plans](#)'

³ Organisations monitoring climate finance have found that the ocean and fisheries receive less than 1% of the total, and there is an increasing trend for finance to come in the form of loans as opposed to grants. See, for example, Deloitte (2021) '[A drop in the ocean: Closing the gap in ocean climate finance](#)'.

The **Fisheries Transparency Initiative (FiTI)** was created as a global, voluntary multi-stakeholder partnership to *address the lack of government information in marine fisheries management*, thereby increasing the accessibility, credibility and usability of national fisheries management information.

It is evident from FiTI's previous work with African SIDS that despite their vulnerabilities to the climate crisis, little is known about **how their fisheries management systems are adapting to climate change**. This includes, for example, how projections on climate change are used to inform scientific assessments of fish stocks, how fisheries are integrated into national climate policies, and what support is required and being planned for the most vulnerable in the fisheries sector to protect and recover from climate disasters. There is a substantial risk that adaptations to climate change in the fisheries sector are not sufficiently identified, addressed and budgeted for. There are also considerable risks of policy incoherence, evident, for example, in the expansion of other maritime sectors, such as tourism and coastal and offshore mining.

Finally, countries with poor levels of transparency and accountability in their fisheries sector may also find *accessing climate finance and 'loss and damage' funds* increasingly difficult. International standards for climate finance increasingly demand that States have systems for monitoring key performance indicators, for example. Yet without credible and transparent information, SIDS may be at a distinct disadvantage.

Given the importance of fisheries management transparency in the context of the climate crisis, this study targets all six African SIDS (**Cabo Verde, Comoros, Guinea-Bissau, Mauritius, São Tomé and Príncipe, and Seychelles**) to support national efforts to identify and start implementing climate actions for their fisheries sector. Additionally, the experiences of these countries will help the FiTI to develop a proposal for global transparency requirements on climate actions for the fisheries sector.

Objective

The overall objective of this study is to enable national stakeholders in all six African SIDS in identifying tangible fisheries-related recommendations for climate adaptation and mitigation, including improved access to information.

This study is part of the FiTI's wider efforts in strengthening climate actions through transparent fisheries management in African Small Island Developing States (SIDS).⁴ Complementary research will be conducted over the next months to also elaborate the role of government transparency in accessing climate finance.

⁴ <https://fiti.global/ireland-and-fiti-extend-partnership-to-strengthen-climate-actions-through-transparent-fisheries-management-in-african-sids>

Scope of services

The selected consultant will be responsible for the execution of the following three work packages (WP):

WP_1 Analyse international experiences and recommendations in developing fisheries-related climate actions, including:

- Conducting a study on international experiences in developing climate actions of the fisheries sector, with a particular focus on information needs (e.g. regarding the real and perceived impacts of climate change on fisheries);
- Compiling the recommendations contained in relevant international guidelines;
- Reviewing outcomes of global review with FITI International Secretariat to tailor research activities for WP_2 (if needed).

WP_2 Review existing national climate actions and stakeholders' perspectives for the marine fisheries sector in each of the six African SIDS, including:

- Conducting desk research on:
 - which existing fisheries-specific policies and/or fisheries management activities already address climate resilience, and
 - how marine fisheries management is integrated into national strategies, policies and projects related to climate mitigation and adaptation (e.g. National Adaptation Plans, Blue Economy strategies);
- Assessing the current level of information availability, public accessibility as well as data gaps regarding climate change's threats and impacts (e.g. on aquatic systems, fisheries activities, social groups), mitigation and adaptation options, as well as budgetary support and access to climate finance (e.g. 'loss and damage');
- Conducting 5-7 virtual interviews per country to gather stakeholders' perspectives on the vulnerabilities to the current climate crises as well as climate actions needed for their fisheries sector, including stakeholder recommendations on transparency, participation and accountability mechanisms;
- Discussing the findings of the initial desk research as well as the gathered stakeholder feedback in each country to determine concrete, country-specific recommendations on how to mitigate and adapt to the threats of sustainable fisheries posed by climate change;
- Synthesising findings and recommendations in national summary sheets (not more than 10-15 pages per country, in the main language of the country).

WP_3 Consolidate findings of the current state of fisheries-related climate actions, including:

- Providing a summary report (not more than 50 pages, in English) for the current state of fisheries-related climate actions across all six African SIDS;
- Participating in a regional webinar (including international stakeholders) to launch the report and communicate key findings;
- Recommending transparency requirements related to climate actions in the fisheries sector (to be discussed for inclusion in a future FiTI Standard).

Kindly note that for the execution of all three work packages country missions are not foreseen. Engagement with national stakeholders should be exclusively via digital means.

Deliverables

- ➔ Individual virtual interviews with stakeholders in all six African SIDS (5-7 interviews per country; total of around 40 interviews)⁵
- ➔ Summary virtual workshops with stakeholders to discuss outcomes of interviews and desk research (one virtual workshop per country (max. 2 hours))
- ➔ Final Report (no more than 50 pages, in English)⁶
- ➔ National summary sheets (no more than 10 pages per country, in the country's main language)⁷

Expected timeline and milestones

The scope of services should be finalised within 7-8 months after the signature of the contract, according to the following timeline:

	2024			2025				
	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May
WP_1								
WP_2								
WP_3								

⁵ The FiTI International Secretariat will support the Consultant in identifying relevant stakeholders, for example from a country's FiTI National MSG (where applicable) or from the recently established 'Community of Practice' (<https://fiti.global/non-governmental-actors-in-african-sids-join-forces-through-fitis-community-of-practice>)

⁶ The study's target audience is government and non-governmental stakeholders in marine fisheries, without extensive technical backgrounds in climate change. Therefore, the study should be understandable by laypersons

⁷ *Portuguese* for Cabo Verde, Guinea Bissau, São Tomé and Príncipe; *French* for Comoros; *English* for Mauritius and Seychelles.

A kick-off call with the FiTI International Secretariat should be conducted no later than one week after the contract signature. In addition, regular status calls (at least on a biweekly basis) between the FiTI and the Consultant must be conducted.

Qualifications

Interested consultants must demonstrate and provide examples of previous experience in the performance of similar services as follows:

- High expertise in sustainable fisheries governance, particularly relating to the impacts of climate change on marine fisheries ecosystems;
- Work experience in African countries, particular in African Small Island Developing States;
- Experience working on climate change adaptation projects is a plus;
- Ability to facilitate stakeholder dialogues, research, interviews, and institutional analysis across non-profit, public, and private sectors, and to ensure that stakeholders are able to freely express their views and that requests for confidentiality are respected;
- Excellent writing skills, with a history of policy-relevant research and publications;
- Willingness to communicate findings in a non-partisan, objective fashion;
- Very good level of spoken and written English, French and Portuguese.

In order to ensure the quality and independence of the exercise, candidates are required to disclose in their proposal any actual or potential conflicts of interest, together with commentary on how any such conflict can be avoided.

How to Apply

Please send the following two documents via email to Dr Karine Young (kyoung@fiti.global) no later than **13 September 2024**:

- A cover letter with a brief description of why the consultant considers him/herself as the most suitable for the assignment.

The cover letter must also include a financial proposal, stating the total estimated days to perform the above-mentioned services as well as an 'all-inclusive daily fee' in EUROS.
- Current CV indicating all past experiences from similar projects, as well as the contact details (email and telephone number) of at least three (3) professional references you have consulted for.

The selection will be carried out by senior management of the FiTI International Secretariat, based on thematic-related as well as financial-related criteria. Only shortlisted candidates will be contacted.

Supervision and reporting

The selected consultant will report to Dr Karine Young, Grant Manager at the Fisheries Transparency Initiative (FiTI).

Intellectual Property Rights

All information, results and products, whether tangible or intangible, resulting from the project will be considered as the property of the Fisheries Transparency Initiative (FiTI). Hence, the consultant assigns fully to the FiTI all deliverables and any copyrights, or its intellectual property rights relating thereto, without asserting any claim to partial or complete ownership thereof. The consultant will be duly acknowledged within the final report for her/his contribution.