



Fisheries  
Transparency  
Initiative

# TRAVEL POLICY

*VERSION: 1.3*

*DATE: 1 JULY 2024*



# C O N T E N T S

<b>PREAMBLE</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>APPLICABILITY</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>GENERAL PRINCIPLES</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>APPROVAL OF TRAVEL</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>ELIGIBLE TRAVEL EXPENSES</b>	<b>6</b>
Air travel	6
Ground travel (Train, Bus, Car)	7
Accommodation, meals and incidentals on a per diem basis	8
Transportation costs	10
Visa costs for international travel	11
Travel insurance for international travel	11
Other travel-related, eligible cost	12
<b>NON-ELIGIBLE TRAVEL EXPENSES</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>REDUCTION OF PER DIEMS</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>REIMBURSEMENT OF TRAVEL</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>CHANGE HISTORY</b>	<b>17</b>

**CONTACT:**

FiTI International Secretariat  
Email: [info@fiti.global](mailto:info@fiti.global)

# PREAMBLE

The Fisheries Transparency Initiative (FiTI) is a global multi-stakeholder partnership that strengthens transparency and collaboration 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.

As a global voluntary initiative which relies significantly on third-party funding, the FiTI has a responsibility to ensure that expenditures incurred in carrying out its mission are reasonable and justifiable, balancing the need to attend meetings/events with its commitment to a reasonable use of resources.

The purpose of this FiTI Travel Policy (further referred to as the 'Policy') is to describe the types of expenditures that are reimbursable by applicable *Travellers* and to outline adequate instructions and procedures for those seeking reimbursement of their costs for FiTI-related travels.

While this Policy is intended to be comprehensive, it is impossible to anticipate every situation encountered by a *Traveller*. The *Traveller* is expected to apply this Policy on a conservative basis, consistent with normal living standards. In case where the Policy does not provide the necessary information, the *Traveller* should exercise good judgment.

# APPLICABILITY

The *Policy* applies to the following persons, referred to as '*Travellers*', when engaging in FiTI-related travels:

- FiTI Chair;
- Members of the FiTI International Board representing Small-Scale Fisheries;
- Members of the FiTI International Board representing Civil Society from organisations with
  - a staff headcount<sup>1</sup> of fewer than 25, and
  - an annual income<sup>2</sup> not exceeding EUR 10 million.

In case funding support is available for all members of the FiTI International Board, this Policy applies to all other Members of the FiTI International Board as well.

- Employees, advisors and sub-contractors of the FiTI International Secretariat;
- Other individuals acting on behalf of the FiTI International Board or the FiTI International Secretariat.

For major FiTI events/meetings, such as FiTI International Conferences, separate travel policies may be provided.



[1] The staff headcount criterion covers full-time, part-time, temporary and seasonal staff (e.g. employees, secondments, owner-managers). Staff headcount does not include apprentices or students, employees on maternity or parental leave and pro-bono partners or advisors.

[2] The annual income (also referred to as budget) is used for funding projects, operations, salaries and other overhead costs and typically constitutes membership dues, the sale of goods and services, grants, donations etc.

# GENERAL PRINCIPLES

This *Policy* is applicable for *Travellers* requesting **domestic travel** as well as **international travel**. Domestic travel refers to travel within the *Traveller's* country of residence, whereas international travel refers to travel outside the *Traveller's* country of residence.

According to the FiTI Code of Conduct, the FiTI is dedicated to use its resources in a **cost-efficient and environmental-friendly way**, while **balancing the necessities to fulfil its mission**. Before requesting any travel, it is therefore essential that *Travellers*:

- consider the necessity of travel, e.g. utilising alternative methods, such as video/teleconferencing options as a means of reducing costs and carbon emissions;
- consider the benefit of travel for the FiTI.

Furthermore, and in addition to specific travel parameters, as outlined below, *Travellers* are required to observe the following **general principles**:

- Select the most cost effective, safe and convenient travel arrangements;
- Make use of public transportation, whenever possible;
- Seek to depart from and return to the same location.



# APPROVAL OF TRAVEL

All applicable *Travellers* seeking to conduct a FiTI-related travel must obtain an approval **prior** to their travel as follows:

- Travel by members of the FiTI International Board or other individuals acting on behalf of the FiTI International Board must be approved by the FiTI Chair, unless otherwise agreed upon (this may also be delegated to the Executive Director of the FiTI International Secretariat);
- Travel by employees, advisors and sub-contractors of the FiTI International Secretariat (except its Executive Director) or other individuals acting on behalf of the FiTI International Secretariat must be approved by the Executive Director of the FiTI International Secretariat;
- Travel by the Executive Director of the FiTI International Secretariat must be approved by the FiTI Chair.

In order to obtain approval, all *Travellers* must complete a standardised **'Travel Request'** template, as provided by the FiTI International Secretariat, unless otherwise agreed.



# ELIGIBLE TRAVEL EXPENSES

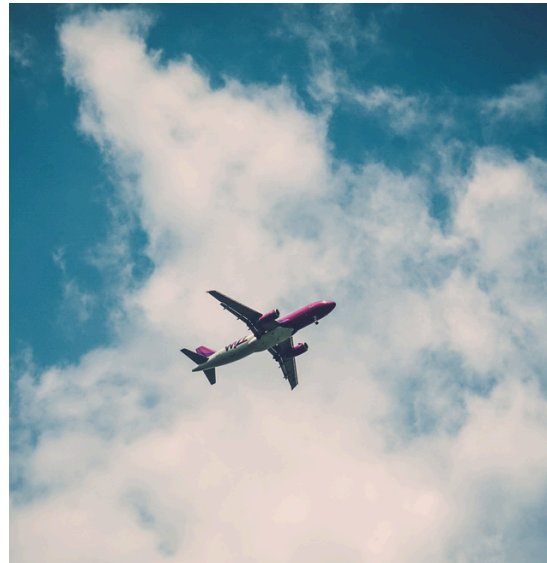
For approved travels, *Travellers* will only be reimbursed for the following expense categories, unless otherwise approved:

## AIR TRAVEL

Travel arrangements for air travel will be made and paid centrally by the FiTI International Secretariat, unless otherwise pre-approved. In case a *Traveller* obtained pre-approval to book her/his own air travel, only the incurred costs for airfare tickets will be reimbursed. The original receipts/tickets need to be presented for reimbursement.

Airfares must be in economy class or, if pre-approved, economy class plus. The FiTI Chair has the option of business class airfares for long-distance travel (exceeding 8 hours of travel time).

Last minute airline cancellations due to unforeseen natural or personal circumstances will be assessed on a case-by-case basis.



## GROUND TRAVEL (TRAIN, BUS, CAR)

In case both air and ground travel (either by train, bus or car) are equally cost effective, safe and convenient, priority should be given to ground transportation. In case train, bus or car travel are equally cost effective, safe and convenient, preference should be given to train travel.

Train and bus fares must be second/ coach class tickets. The FiTI Chair has the option of first-class train or bus tickets for long-distance travel (exceeding 8 hours of travel time).

*Travellers* who are using their personal vehicles for work-related travel will be reimbursed on a cents per km or miles basis. The km or miles basis is determined as a roundtrip between the *Traveller's* home or office location (whichever one is closest to the destination) and the travel's destination. In case the roundtrip is of a distance of less than 60 kms or 40 miles, no reimbursement will be provided. The rate of reimbursement is determined per country, based on the most recent 'Rates of reimbursement for travel by private motor vehicle' of the United Nations.





Travel by rental car must only be used in exceptional cases and requires prior approval.

Any fines, penalties or administration fees payable as a result of the contravention of any traffic rules and regulations must be paid by the *Traveller*.

### ACCOMMODATION, MEALS AND INCIDENTALS ON A PER DIEM BASIS

Per diems to cover accommodation, meals and incidentals expenses<sup>3</sup> depend on the meeting/event destination of the travel and will be reimbursed based on the official per diem rates (so-called Daily Subsistence Allowance) of the United Nations, as established by the International Civil Service Commission (ICSC)<sup>4</sup>. This is applicable for domestic as well as international travel.

No per diems are paid for domestic travel if the target destination is within 60 kms or 40 miles of the *Traveller's* home or office location (whichever one is closer to the destination). The overall travel time is determined by the difference between the hour the *Traveller* departs from her/his home or



[3] The accommodation amount is intended to substantially cover the cost of lodging (single room) at adequate, suitable and moderately-priced facilities. The meals and incidentals expenses portion is intended to substantially cover the cost of meals and incidental travel expenses, such as in-country transportation (e.g. public transportation, taxis, car services), laundry and dry cleaning.

[4] <https://icsc.un.org/>



office location (whichever one is the latest) and the hour the *Traveller* arrives back at the office or home (whichever one is the earliest).

The daily per diem rate for FiTI-related travel of **less than 24 hours** is calculated as follows:

- If it involves a night away from the *Traveller's* residence, a full day's per diem will be paid;
- If it does not involve a night away from the *Traveller's* residence:
  - No per diem will be paid for FiTI-related travel of less than 4 hours;
  - Fifty percent of the value of the daily per diem allowance (DSA) minus the DSA allocation for room will be paid for FiTI-related travel between 4 and 8 hours;
  - The full value of the daily per diem allowance (DSA) minus the DSA allocation for room will be paid for FiTI-related travel of 10 hours or more.

The daily per diem rate for FiTI-related travel of **more than 24 hours** is calculated as follows:

- The full day's per diem rate is paid for the first day of travel.
- For each successive period of 24 hours from midnight to midnight (measured by local times, ignoring time-zone differences), a full day's per diem rate is paid for those days where FiTI-related activities are conducted.
- No daily per diem rate is paid for the day on which the FiTI-related travel is concluded.



- The daily per diem rate must be reduced by the DSA allocation for room for those days where no accommodation is needed due to overnight (plane) travel, or where the accommodation is already paid.
- The rate applicable for each 24-hour period shall be that for the location at which the *Traveller* spends the night.

In case of trips to multiple cities within one country, the values from the visited city with the lowest per diem rate (DSA) must be used (also regarding the percentage distribution for the accommodation).

In case of trips to multiple countries, a reimbursement request for each country needs to be provided.

*Travellers* are expected to arrange their own accommodation in line with the per diem allowance<sup>5</sup>. In case hotel reservations are arranged by the FiTI International Secretariat, *Travellers* will be informed prior to the meeting/event. In case the FiTI International Secretariat makes hotel arrangements, yet *Travellers* prefer to stay in a different hotel, the standard per diem rate will not be adjusted.

Dependent on the *Traveller's* travel schedule additional night stays may be reimbursed, subject to pre-approval.

Should *Travellers* wish to extend their stay, all hotel costs beyond the dates of the meeting will be at the expense of the *Traveller*.



[5] Please refer to room rates as a percentage of the subsistence allowance as promulgated by ICSC.

## TRANSPORTATION COSTS

Transportation costs to and from the *Traveller's* home or office location to the departing airport or train/bus station as well as transportation costs to and from the *Traveller's* FiTI-related destination and the arriving airport or train/bus station will be reimbursed. Only the actual expenses incurred will be reimbursed (e.g. public transportation or taxi receipts). Transportation costs at the *Traveller's* destination, for example between a hotel and a meeting venue, are already included in the daily per diem allowance and will therefore not be reimbursed.

## VISA COSTS FOR INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL

Visa processing fees and or other mandatory entry or exit fees will be reimbursed in cases where it is necessary to attend a meeting/event. Only the actual expenses incurred will be reimbursed.

## TRAVEL INSURANCE FOR INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL

Travel insurance for international travel will be arranged centrally by the FiTI International Secretariat and will be booked automatically after the approval of the *Traveller's* travel request. *Travellers* arranging their own travel insurance will not be allowed to reclaim such expenses unless otherwise approved.



## OTHER TRAVEL-RELATED, ELIGIBLE COSTS

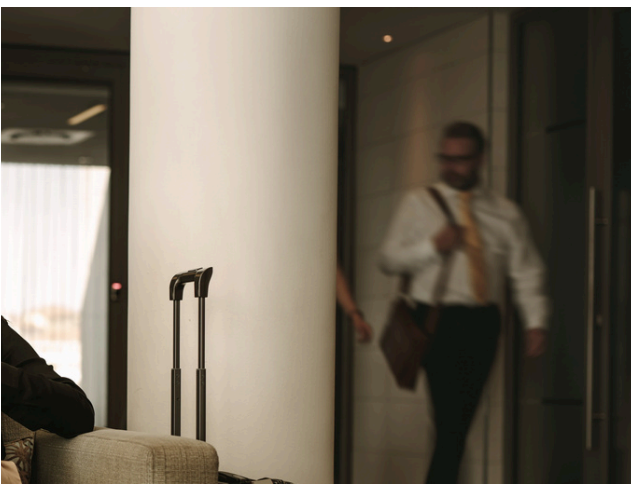
- Telecommunications expenses (long distance/local calls) as well as internet access fees), if approved prior to travel;
- COVID-19 related travel expenses (e.g. testing costs) if necessary to enter the country;
- Other requirements to enter a country, such as vaccines, other prerequisites, or documentation that requires a payment to be obtained, must be pre-approved to be reimbursed after the travel.



# NON-ELIGIBLE TRAVEL EXPENSES

The following expenses will not be reimbursed, unless otherwise agreed upon prior to the travel:

- Service agency fees and other related expenses (e.g. photo service, travel to a third country for visa applications);
- Airline Ancillary Fees<sup>6</sup>;
- Lounge access with costs;
- Excess luggage charges or lost luggage and contents<sup>7</sup>;
- Laundry service;
- Credit card or banking fees;
- Souvenirs and personal gifts;
- Tips.



[6] Any additional cost for booking a seat on board of a plane, upgrading to economy comfort, speedy boarding, in-flight entertainment, phone, or alcoholic beverages, will not be reimbursed.

[7] Travellers should work directly with the airline carrier to recover damages.

# REDUCTION OF PER DIEMS

In case accommodation, meals and/or incidentals are covered by the FiTI International Secretariat (e.g. central hotel booking, meals provided) or provided free of charge by other external sources (e.g. conference organiser), the daily the per diem allowance must be reduced.<sup>8</sup>

Example 1: the *Traveller* attends a conference where the hotel is fully paid by the conference organiser. In this case, the *Traveller* is still allowed to receive a daily per diem rate, but no allowance will be provided for the hotel portion. The same applies in cases where the *Traveller* stays with family or friends and therefore, no costs are incurred.

Example 2: the *Traveller* invites an external counterpart to a meal (e.g. dinner). In this case, the *Traveller* can reclaim the full amount of the meal but must reduce her/his daily per diem rate by one meal, e.g. a dinner.

In the event that *Travellers* decide not to join a group-lunch and/or a group-dinner or other meals provided free of charge, these meals will not be reimbursed and must nevertheless be reduced from the per diem allowance.



[8] For meals received during air or ground travel, which are already included in the fare, no reduction of per diem is needed.

# REIMBURSEMENT OF TRAVEL

A *Traveller* may request an **advancement** on the expected travel expenses, subject to the availability of funding, the relationship between the requested advancement and banking fees, or the time proximity of the travel.

Within 30 days of completion of a trip, the *Traveller* must submit her/his request by using the standardised **FiTI Travel Reimbursement Form**<sup>9</sup> in order to receive reimbursement of expenses. In case of travels covering multiple countries, one travel reimbursement form per country must be completed.

When submitting a reimbursement request, original expenses except per diem related must be provided as a digital copy, including but not limited to:

- Original itemised receipts/tickets for train or buses;<sup>10</sup>
- Original receipts of airline tickets issued by travel agents/airlines;
- Printouts of electronically issued receipts, including boarding passes;
- Transportation expenses to and from airports, train or bus stations;
- Other expense receipts, e.g. visa fees.



[9] The FiTI Travel Reimbursement Form can be requested from the FiTI International Secretariat.

[10] The documents must clearly indicate the travel class, the time of travel and the amount paid.



As accommodation, meals and incidentals are reimbursed on a per diem basis, they do not require a submission of receipts and/or other evidence.

The reimbursement request as well as all accompanying original documents must be sent as a PDF document to the FiTI International Secretariat either at [info@fiti.global](mailto:info@fiti.global) or to the designated Travel Coordinator. Original documents do not need to be sent via regular mail. However, all *Travellers* must retain the original documents for 2 years after the submission of their reimbursement request.

Reimbursement of costs will take place within 10 days after receipt of the reimbursement claim, subject to the complete provision of supporting receipts.

Reimbursement will be delivered either in cash (in particular to avoid high banking fees), through wire transfer to the *Traveller's* bank account<sup>11</sup>, or added to a *Traveller's* monthly payroll (if applicable) in US Dollars.



[11] All reimbursements of travel expenses will be made to one account only.

# CHANGE HISTORY

VERSION	DATE	DESCRIPTION
1.0	01 March 2018	Approval of FiTI Travel Policy by FiTI International Board during the 3rd FiTI International Board meeting (Decision ID: BM-03_2018_D-05).
1.1	01 February 2020	Separation of public transportation from per diem rate; change of per diem rates from EU system to UN system; clarifications on travels covering multiple countries and/or multiple cities.
1.2	31 October 2022	Clarification of transportation-related costs; deduction of 'accommodation costs' for overnight travels (e.g. via plane).
1.3	1 June 2024	Introduction of domestic travel requirements, including reimbursement for travel by private motor vehicle; clarification of central booking of travel insurance for international travel, approved by the FiTI Chair.



Fisheries  
Transparency  
Initiative

**Fisheries Transparency Initiative (FiTI)**

Highway Point Building, Providence  
Mahé, Seychelles

**Email:** [info@fiti.global](mailto:info@fiti.global)

**Website:** [fiti.global](http://fiti.global)

