



Fisheries
Transparency
Initiative

31st meeting of the FiTI International Board

7 October 2025, Conference Call

Meeting Minutes

ID: BM-31_2025_MM

Provided by: FiTI International Secretariat

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Date	7 October 2025
Time	Noon – 2.00 p.m. Universal Time Coordinated (UTC)
Venue	Conference Call (Zoom)
Supporting document(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ None
Language	The language of the FiTI International Board is English. Simultaneous translation between English and Spanish has been provided for this meeting.

Outcomes of meeting

1. Welcome and administration

The Chair of the FiTI International Board, Valeria MERINO (herein referred to as ‘Chair’), opened the 31st International Board meeting by welcoming all participating Members and Observers individually and expressing appreciation for their presence and commitment.

After all eligible participants joined, Mr Sven BIERMANN, Executive Director (ED) of the FiTI International Secretariat (herein referred to as ‘Secretariat’), 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:
14.1 out of 18 votes	Yes	1 out of 3

The Chair noted that, prior to this meeting, Board Members had no concerns and did not anticipate contentious issues regarding any of the points on the agenda.

The Chair informed the participants that the main purpose of this meeting is informative in nature, aimed at providing updates from the Secretariat, as well as progress regarding Board-related work and extension requests from certain countries.

2. Update on the Work of the FiTI International Secretariat

The Chair requested the ED to provide an update on the ongoing work of the FiTI Secretariat. The ED noted that due to the high frequency of decision-making items during Board meetings, opportunities to share such broader updates had been limited. Therefore, this session aimed to cover several areas of work.

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, pro-rated voting powers for this FiTI International Board meeting were determined, as shown in Appendix I.

Status of country engagements

The ED reported that the Secretariat is currently supporting 13 FiTI implementing countries and targeting 19 countries.



He noted that despite strong momentum in 2024, the anticipated targets of securing eight new country commitments in 2025 as well as obtaining candidate applications from five countries will not be achieved. Among other factors, political transitions in several countries, economic uncertainties as well as a perceived global ‘mood’ that makes discussions on transparency and governance less of a political priority were briefly mentioned. Nevertheless, encouraging discussions in several countries, including Brazil, Portugal, and Fiji as well as the upcoming launch of the new FiTI Standard 2.0 and the Fisheries Information System (FIS) provide room for optimism for 2026.

Afterwards, a Board Member inquired whether the current slowdown was related to activities from the Coalition of Fisheries Transparency (CFT). The ED responded that the Secretariat is in regular productive exchanges with the CFT to align outreach and communication activities (e.g. in Fiji and Senegal). Nevertheless, it must be assumed that some national stakeholders may not understand the differences between the CFT and the FiTI’s objectives and their potential complementarity. The CFT so far has not hindered or contributed to FiTI’s work significantly. However, it was noted that several civil society organisations are increasingly framing transparency solely as a crime-fighting tool, which can create negative connotations among government partners. The FiTI’s approach aims to emphasise transparency as an enabler of effective management, and a cornerstone of efforts to advance democratic governance, civic engagement, and accountability in fisheries management. It is therefore important that messages about transparency as a tool for better management are continuously communicated.

Nevertheless, the FiTI’s focus on more effective, sustainable management includes sharing information that could improve monitoring and sanctioning and reduce human rights abuses.

Finally, Annie TOURETTE requested further information on the situation in Senegal, where national authorities recently released a list of fishing vessels that had not been previously

made public. She asked whether FiTI's engagement with Senegal was progressing. The ED stated that the FiTI had recently an encouraging meeting with the Secretary General of the Ministry, who expressed interest in the FiTI process and requested a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) through which Senegal could express its commitment and re-join the FiTI. The MoU has since then been drafted and is currently being reviewed by the Secretary General before it will be formally submitted to the Minister.

FiTI Standard 2.0

The ED continued by providing an update on the progress made regarding the revision of the FiTI Standard, highlighting it as one of the most significant achievements of the FiTI over the past two years.

He noted that the revision of the FiTI Standard was guided by a balanced approach, ensuring continuity for existing implementing countries while modernising the framework in light of global developments and lessons learned.



The image displays the cover of 'The FiTI Standard' document on the left, which includes the title, version (2.0), date (01 January 2026), and the subtitle 'Sustainable marine fisheries through transparency and multi-stakeholder collaboration'. To the right, a list of key features of the standard is provided:

- Full draft finalized by FiTI International Secretariat
- Principle of progressive improvement elevated
- Enhanced structure to outline national roles & responsibilities (National MSG)
- Draft currently under review by Board Working Group 'FiTI Standard 2.0'

Below the list, a flowchart illustrates the process: 'Improving the implementation process' leads to 'Enhancing the transparency requirements'. A central box contains two cautionary notes: 'Caution to avoid overburdening FiTI implementing countries' and 'Keep pace with international developments & address lessons learned'.

He emphasised that the Board's Working Group 'FiTI Standard 2.0' has been actively involved in this process, and that the first comprehensive version of the new Standard is currently under review by the Working Group.

Several aspects of the updated FiTI Standard were briefly noted:

- Given that the context for fisheries transparency has significantly evolved over the last ten years – as new international agreements have raised expectations regarding the information that governments should make public, the updated FiTI Standard covers now enhanced public reporting according to the World Trade Organisation (WTO) Agreement on Fisheries Subsidies, or transparency requirements stemming from the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES). Additional changes related to beneficial ownership transparency and on the labour rights and conditions of people working at sea
- The proposed FiTI Standard 2.0 continues to build on and further strengthen this strong foundation. For example, the *FiTI's principle of progressive improvement* (i.e. countries are not expected to have complete data for every transparency

requirement of the FiTI Standard from the beginning; instead, national authorities must disclose the information they have, and where important gaps exist, improvements over time must be demonstrated) is much more clearly emphasised and explained in the updated version through its own dedicated section (Part II, section E).

- Furthermore, the updated FiTI Standard 2.0 will give greater prominence to *National Multi-Stakeholder Groups (MSGs)* by addressing the shortcoming of the current Standard 1.1 regarding a clear separation between the role and responsibilities of the national authorities and the responsibilities of National MSGs. The proposed FiTI Standard 2.0 comprises now three main parts, which will help national stakeholders to identify their relevant sections more easily: Part I for national authorities, Part II for National MSGs, and Part III for the international governance.
- Under the current FiTI Standard, countries progress through the implementation process using the designations established at the time of adoption of the Standard, culminating in recognition as a FiTI Compliant Country following successful validation. The FiTI Standard 2.0 revises and clarifies these *designations by explicitly distinguishing between a FiTI Committed Country, a FiTI Implementing Country, and a FiTI Compliant Country*. Under Standard 2.0, a country is first referred to as a FiTI Committed Country upon making a public commitment to implement the FiTI, and subsequently becomes a FiTI Implementing Country once its application is approved by the FiTI International Board. The Standard further introduces validation eligibility as a defined procedural milestone that a FiTI Implementing Country must reach prior to undergoing an independent Validation. Following successful Validation, a country is declared a FiTI Compliant Country. These designations replace earlier terminology and provide clearer differentiation between commitment, implementation, validation eligibility, and compliance within the FiTI process.
- Under the current FiTI Standard, countries that made a public commitment to the FiTI were not subject to a fixed deadline to progress to the status of Candidate Country, allowing an open-ended transition from commitment to candidacy. Under FiTI Standard 2.0, this changes: the *Candidate Country designation is replaced by FiTI Implementing Country, and a clear deadline is introduced*. A country that has publicly committed to the FiTI must complete the required preparatory activities and submit its application for approval by the FiTI International Board within 18 months. Failure to meet this deadline constitutes non-adherence to deadlines and results in automatic suspension, unless an extension has been approved in advance by the FiTI International Board under the exceptional circumstances provisions, which must be documented by the country.

- Under the FiTI Standard 2.0, FiTI countries are no longer required to engage in indefinite annual reporting cycles and *must achieve a compliant status within a maximum of five annual reporting periods after becoming a FiTI Implementing Country*. While a country holds the status of a FiTI Implementing Country, annual FiTI Reports are produced by the FiTI International Secretariat in collaboration with the country's National MSG. The country's National MSG is still responsible for verifying the findings of this assessment and for making recommendations on how to strengthen transparency and public participation. The annual reports are published for a maximum of 5 years to assess progress against the requirements of the FiTI Standard and to determine validation eligibility. The FiTI Standard does not require all transparency requirements to be met or all information to be published online from the outset; rather, national authorities are expected to publish the information they have available and to demonstrate progressive improvement over time.

However, it remains a requirement that national authorities publish all information assessed as available to them on their websites within the five-year timeframe. Otherwise, a country cannot reach *Validation Eligibility*. Under FiTI Standard 2.0, validation eligibility is assessed by the FiTI International Secretariat through the annual FiTI Report process and is achieved when, inter alia, all available information is published by national authorities on government websites, MSG recommendations are continuously addressed by national authorities, and the FiTI International Board approves the country's request to initiate a Validation Assessment.

- Following an independent *Validation Assessment* (which can occur at any time within a five-year period, in case a country reaches validation eligibility earlier), a country is declared a FiTI Compliant Country. Once a country has successfully been declared FiTI Compliant, the obligation to produce annual FiTI Reports ceases, and the country must continue to publish the information online.
- Ongoing adherence to the FiTI Standard is thereafter monitored through *Validation Reviews* conducted every three years by the FiTI International Secretariat. These changes are intended to reduce the long-term reporting burden on countries while safeguarding the credibility and integrity of the FiTI through periodic external verification of continued compliance with the Standard.
- Also, the FiTI Standard 2.0 clearly documents FiTI's efforts to *reduce the costs of implementing the FiTI Standard* by transferring the responsibility for producing annual FiTI Reports from countries to the International Secretariat. A country's National MSG is still responsible for verifying the findings of this assessment and for making recommendations on how to strengthen transparency and public participation.

- Countries unable to maintain or produce their own websites will be supported by the International Secretariat, either by assisting the country's National MSG in publishing an interim *Fisheries Information Report* or by offering the utilisation of the new online *Fisheries Information System (FIS)*.
- Also, the current FiTI Standard requires national authorities to publish separate information for *large-scale fisheries (LSF)* and *small-scale fisheries (SSF)*. This requirement has been modified and consolidated in the proposed Standard 2.0. One reason is that most countries do not compile fisheries statistics according to these two categories. Instead, they use other approaches that distinguish data by sector and/or gear type. The new Standard therefore affords countries greater flexibility in how they choose to publish information, while maintaining previous requirements for data disaggregation.

Furthermore, after extensive consultation with experts and representatives from small-scale fishing organisations, it was proposed that a dedicated thematic header be included to publish information on efforts and activities related to small-scale fisheries, including a clear definition of the groups in their countries that are included under this term, if available.

In summary, the FiTI Standard 2.0 revises and strengthens the technical requirements primarily through clarification, restructuring, and targeted expansion, rather than by changing the underlying transparency logic. **First**, the list of transparency requirements under Section A has been revised and reorganised into 12 updated, defined thematic areas, with refined and more precise descriptions of what national authorities must publish, improving consistency and the ability of the FiTI to assess compliance across countries. **Second**, several thematic areas have been expanded or elevated in technical detail, notably national objectives, small-scale fisheries, fiscal management, beneficial ownership, employment and labour standards, and development finance, reflecting developments in international norms and reporting expectations. **Third**, the Standard now places stronger emphasis on online publication by national authorities as the authoritative source of information, explicitly limiting the use of temporary reports (such as Fisheries Information Reports) to interim situations only. **Fourth**, the Standard strengthens the concept of progressive improvement, requiring that gaps in information be explicitly addressed through National MSG recommendations with monitoring over time. **Finally**, while the core transparency logic remains unchanged, the technical requirements are now more clearly linked to validation eligibility, ensuring that assessments focus on the availability, accuracy, reliability, and accessibility of information in the public domain rather than on narrative reporting.

The ED concluded by stating that feedback from the Working Group on the draft version of FiTI Standard 2.0 is expected by mid-October. If the group endorses the document, it will

then be presented to the Board via a Board Circular for approval and to undergo a public consultation phase, currently scheduled for November 2025.

Afterwards, the Secretariat will consolidate the main comments and suggestions from the **public consultation** phase, and – if needed – consult with the Working Group to recommend to the International Board a final version of the FiTI Standard 2.0 for approval. This final approval of the FiTI Standard 2.0 is expected to happen during the next (32nd) Board meeting, scheduled for Thursday, 11 December 2025.

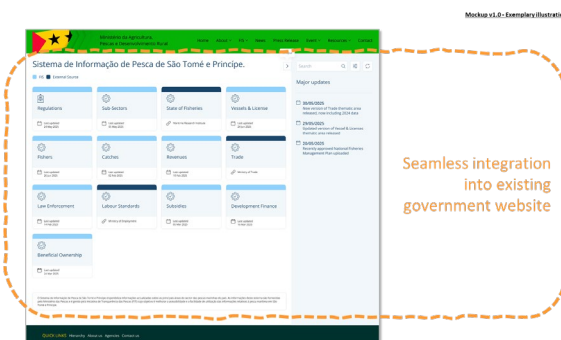
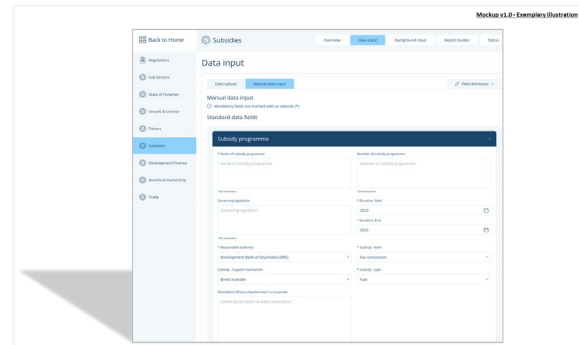
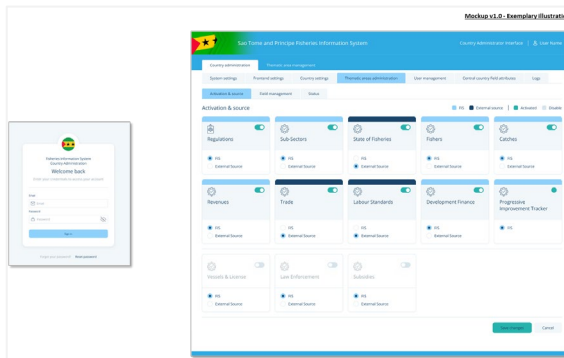
The Chair and several Board Members congratulated the Secretariat and the Working Group on the extensive work undertaken and voiced their expectations that the updated Standard will be highly beneficial for countries, ensuring that the FiTI's relevance and impact are further strengthened.

Tony LAZAZZARA voiced concerns about the limited consultation period of four weeks, given that many stakeholders would be occupied with international events, such as the upcoming ICCAT meeting, as well as end-of-year activities. The ED responded that the four-week period was considered sufficient, as prior consultations had already been held with key thematic organisations (e.g. on subsidies and beneficial ownership). He added that extending the process would risk delaying the launch into 2026, which could cause confusion among countries operating under both the current and forthcoming regimes.

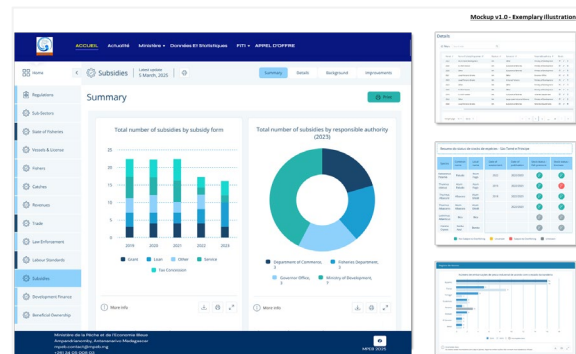
The Chair suggested accompanying the release of the draft with explanatory materials to help stakeholders quickly understand what had changed, and to hold interactive sessions where questions could be raised directly rather than relying solely on written feedback. The ED confirmed that the new Standard includes a dedicated summary section (‘Changes to the FiTI Standard’) as part of the introduction section, which describes the most notable changes compared to the current version. Furthermore, the Secretariat is currently preparing a more extensive note for all FiTI implementing countries, which will be sent at the beginning of the public consultation phase.

Fisheries Information System (FIS)

The ED continued by reporting that the development phase of the new Fisheries Information System (FIS) is nearing completion. Due to several enhancements of the FIS, in particular regarding data provisions and the custom-build reporting engine, the upcoming unit, integration and system testing phase has been extended by two additional weeks, moving the deployment of the FIS to the first pilot countries – Cabo Verde and São Tomé & Príncipe – into mid of January 2026. Afterwards, the FIS will be rolled out to Madagascar and Ghana. The aim is to initially upload 2-3 years of data into each country instance.



Seamless integration
into existing
government website



The ED stated that the Secretariat is starting to promote the FIS among donors and international fora (e.g. [WTO Public Forum](#)), with very positive feedback. Communication activities will intensify once the first governments have embedded the FIS into their own website.

Afterwards, several Board Members voiced their expectations that the FIS could indeed become a ‘game changer’ for the FiTI, not only offering a tangible benefit for countries being part of the FiTI, but also incentivising new countries to join the initiative. The ED noted in this regard that the national authorities of Fiji have expressed interest in the FIS and are therefore considering joining FiTI, indicating the system’s potential as a pull factor for new engagements

Board Member Dan SKERRITT asked for clarifications about the connection between a FiTI commitment and eligibility to utilise the FIS. The ED stated that the FIS is a voluntary tool for countries. Those countries that currently lack a suitable online infrastructure may opt to use this tool to organise and display FiTI-related fisheries information. But FiTI countries are not obliged to use the FIS to become compliant. For example, countries with a strong reporting infrastructure, such as Seychelles or Chile, might not opt to deploy the FIS.

Observer Marcio CASTRO DE SOUZA confirmed the very positive feedback regarding the FIS at the WTO Public Forum and follow-ups. The FAO is exploring a joint session (FiTI + IISD) on the WTO Agreement on Fisheries Subsidies and will help raise awareness via FAO country and regional offices.

Dan SKERRITT further noted that the FIS could help countries to implement the WTO Agreement on Subsidies and potentially even unlock additional financial support through the new WTO Fish Fund. The ED confirmed ongoing collaboration with IISD (who reviewed the FIS subsidies module to align it with their questionnaire) and active discussions with the WTO Fish Fund. A Seychelles proposal to update its own Fisheries Information Management System was initially supported by the Secretariat, and is currently in the Fund's pipeline.

Miscellaneous

After a brief overview of the FiTI's current funding situation, the ED informed the Board that the [FiTI Compliance Channel has been officially launched](#) and is now available online on the [FiTI website](#). The FiTI Compliance Channel is a secure, web-based form administered by the FiTI International Secretariat.

The FiTI Compliance Channel is designed to support the integrity of national FiTI implementation by providing relevant stakeholders with a safe and structured avenue to raise concerns about actual or perceived non-compliance with the Fisheries Transparency Initiative.

He noted that any applicable concern arising from national FiTI implementations must first be addressed at the national level. Only those issues that could not be satisfactorily addressed at the national level, or where a stakeholder is not comfortable raising a concern at the national level at all, should be addressed to the FiTI Compliance Channel.

All incoming information is handled confidentially, and the FiTI International Board will be involved in responding to good-faith and legitimate concerns in accordance with the Channel's General Rules.

The ED highlighted that flyers and communication materials, available in four languages, have been developed. Furthermore, Guidance material has already been shared with all National MSGs. The Compliance Channel will also be presented and discussed at the upcoming Regional MSG workshop in Cabo Verde, to ensure that all stakeholders understand its purpose and scope.



Ke RAFITOSON commended the initiative and suggested considering accessible alternatives for remote or offline communities (e.g. coastal areas in Madagascar) who may lack internet access, possibly through printed forms or surveys facilitated by the MSG. The ED

acknowledged this, but emphasised that the channel should serve only ,as the last resort’ and that national stakeholders must seek to address the issue at the national level.

Next, the ED introduced briefly a new communication idea, aimed at increasing national awareness of FiTI data and engaging youth audiences. In collaboration with a local partner



- Inspired by IT hackathons
- Turn fisheries information into engaging digital content and public knowledge
- Pilot: 30 participants based in Seychelles, aged between 15 and 30
- Funding (~10k USD) currently being pursued
- Scaling to other FiTI countries

in Seychelles, the Secretariat is currently pursuing a project idea called ‘Hooked on Transparency’, a creative youth content hackathon designed to empower participants to turn fisheries information into engaging digital content and public knowledge. This project will frame transparency not as a tool to expose wrongdoing, but as a positive force that

enables better governance, stronger democratic participation, and sustainable resource management.

A pilot is planned to be conducted in the Seychelles within the next 3–6 months, with lessons to be replicated in other FiTI countries. For this, the FiTI is currently reaching out to potential donors to secure funding.

Ke RAFITOSON praised this idea as fantastic, emphasising the importance of investing in youth engagement and offered her support to help promote the initiative. The ED thanked her and reiterated that the concept is cost-effective and easily scalable, making it a promising complement to existing communication strategies.

Finally, the ED noted that over the past few years, the Secretariat has worked closely with

National MSGs and National Secretariats and has increasingly received requests from participating countries to facilitate peer learning and direct exchanges among MSG members and Secretariats. Furthermore, support needs for National MSGs (e.g. to identify funding needs and sources) are growing. He shared the exciting news that the Secretariat is now, in partnership with AU-IBAR, organising a Regional Workshop for National Multi-Stakeholder Groups (MSGs) in Africa next week in Praia, Cabo Verde (for approx. 30 participants). This is the first time that participants from the National MSGs in Madagascar, Seychelles, Mauritania, São Tomé & Príncipe, and Cabo Verde are coming together for a face-to-face meeting. The objectives of this 3-day meeting are, inter alia:



- 3-day workshop in Cabo Verde
 - Day 1: Strengthening the operational effectiveness of FiTI National MSGs
 - Day 2: Understanding upcoming global changes to the FiTI and their impact on national implementations
 - Day 3: Strengthening the impact and resilience of national FiTI implementations
- 5x African National MSGs; each with at least 5 representatives
Approx. 45 participants (total)
- In partnership with AU-IBAR

- Strengthening the *operational effectiveness* of National MSGs and National Secretariats;
- Facilitating the *sharing of progress, cross-country knowledge exchange, and lessons learned* among participating countries;
- Discussing opportunities on how National MSG can strengthen the *impact of transparency and fisheries governance*;
- Presenting the revised *FiTI Standard 2.0*, highlighting key updates and implications for implementation;
- Informing participants of exiting *new developments at the FiTI International Secretariat*, such as the FiTI Compliance Channel and the Fisheries Information System.

The Chair thanked the ED for this comprehensive overview and the entire Secretariat for their ongoing dedication under difficult circumstances and agreed that more strategic reflections are required in the coming months. She encouraged continued collaboration between the Secretariat and Board Members to explore new pathways for country engagement.

3. Update/information from the Board related to FiTI's work

For the next agenda item, the Chair invited all participating Board Members and Observers to share information or updates they believe are relevant to the FiTI's work.

- Hugh GOVAN highlighted that transparency and anti-corruption remain low on political agendas in many regions, including in the Pacific. He proposed exploring ways for donors and development partners to incentivize or condition funding on progress toward achieving the FiTI Standard.
- Tony LAZAZZARA voiced his expectations for a rapid FIS adoption by countries, and emphasised the importance of framing transparency positively (e.g. decision-making support, long-term planning, service delivery) in order to reduce the perception that transparency is solely used for punitive purposes. Both the Chair and the ED agreed that communications should emphasise the FIS as a management tool (consolidated, authoritative fisheries information).
- Several Board Members highlighted the recent Ocean Pact from the European Union (launched in June), which is a comprehensive strategy to better protect the ocean, promote a thriving blue economy and support the well-being of people living in coastal areas. Potential relevance for the FiTI include the Commission's intention to propose a new generation of Sustainable Fisheries Partnership Agreements, with

opportunities to further embed transparency. The Chair noted that the FiTI's expansion into Europe is of paramount importance for the next years, but will require in-region capacity (language/political context). Portugal's interest in the FiTI underscores the value and importance of a country-based focal point (the Secretariat's Regional Coordinator for Lusophone countries is based in Portugal).

- The ED raised the questions whether participants are aware of any processes for developing a post-2030 global framework, given that the Sustainable Development Goals are expiring in 2030. Several participants stated that they are not aware of any concrete signals or processes. The Chair added the ongoing sensitivities around UN funding in the United States.
- Annika MACKENSEN reported from a SADC dissemination event (Profish Blue) and engagements with the SADC Secretariat. She encouraged the Secretariat to continue maintaining its regular presence in these fora and suggested a FIS presentation to the SADC Technical Working Body on Fisheries, once the system is live.
- Several Board Members inquired about a situation in Mauritania, where a local activist was detained for voicing concerns about illegal fishing practices, and recently released under communication restrictions. The Chair noted that she and the Secretariat are still seeking to gather further information, e.g. by engaging a trusted regional interlocutor, and to identify constructive dialog with the government. The Chair will update the Board if new developments materialises, but also mentioned that a Working Group should be formed in the next year to address such situations better.

4. Extension requests for 2024 FiTI Reports

The national authorities of **Cabo Verde** and **São Tomé and Príncipe** have both officially committed to using the new Fisheries Information System (FIS) to display their available fisheries data in accordance with the FiTI Standard. This will be the first time the FIS is officially used by FiTI countries. Therefore, the FiTI Report will focus primarily on assessing the transparency status and the recommendations of the National Multi-Stakeholder Groups (MSGs) and no longer include fisheries data. Such data will be displayed online in the FIS.

The development and testing phases of the FIS are scheduled to conclude at the beginning of November, after which the tool will be rolled out in both countries. It is currently

anticipated that the activation and customisation of the tool, as well as the data upload³ will take approximately 2 to 3 months for both countries. Given that reliable and publicly accessible government data is the foundation upon which the FiTI International Secretariat and the National MSGs can conduct their transparency assessments, the deadline stipulated in the FiTI Standard for publishing this assessment (i.e. 31 December 2025) will not be met.

The International Secretariat is therefore requesting a pro forma extension for both countries of three months, given their voluntary commitment to act as the first countries to pilot the new FIS.

After a brief discussion, the participating Board Members reached the following decisions by consensus:

Decision [BM-31_2025_D-01]:

The International Board approved pro forma extensions of Cabo Verde's and São Tomé and Príncipe's FiTI Report (covering calendar year 2024) from 31 December 2025 to 31 March 2026.

5. Closing & Outlook for next Board meeting

The Chair updated the Board on the ongoing election process, stating that several promising candidates from the Social sector have been identified. The Election Committee will pursue the election process over the next few weeks in order to fill current vacant seats by the end of the year. Unfortunately, no application from the Business Sector (for industrial fisheries) was received. The Chair encouraged renewed efforts to identify qualified candidates, particularly from large fishing companies operating globally or across multiple countries.

Furthermore, the process of re-electing five current Board Members for a second and final term are also underway, involving extensive interviews and documentation review. The Chair expressed her appreciation to Board Members Carlos (Cadu) VILLAÇA and Daniel SKERRITT for their participation in the Election Committee.

The Chair also update all participants about the ongoing process to elect her successor as the 3rd FiTI Chair. She emphasised that the feedback period for short-listed candidates

³ For Cabo Verde, data from the FiTI reporting cycles covering calendar years 2022, 2023 and 2024 will be uploaded into the FIS. For São Tomé and Príncipe, data from the FiTI reporting cycles covering calendar years 2023 and 2024 will be uploaded into the FIS.



closed recently; and while not all short-listed candidates accepted to be included in the next phase, the final list includes several highly qualified, interested and promising candidates. She expressed confidence that the FiTI will be able to engage a suitable successor, capable of advancing the FiTI's next phase of growth and impact. The Chair thanked the members of the Selection Committee, comprising the FiTI Chair, Board Members Mr Tony LAZAZZARA and Dr Ketakandriana RAFITOSON, and World Bank Observer Ms Kristín Gunnarsdottir VON KISTOWSKI.

Finally, the FiTI Chair provided a brief overview of other topics to be addressed during the upcoming FiTI International Board meeting (scheduled for Thursday, 11th of December) or via Board Circulars within the next three months, such as:

- Election of FiTI Board Members
- Election of a new FiTI Chair
- Approval of the FiTI Standard 2.0
- FiTI Chair's last Board meeting

The Chair expressed sincere appreciation to the Secretariat for organizing and facilitating the meeting; to the translator for ensuring multilingual participation in English and Spanish; and to all Board Members and Observers for their continued commitment and active engagement.

The 31st International Board Meeting ended.

Meeting minutes **provided** by:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sven B.', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Mr Sven Biermann

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

Meeting minutes **approved** by:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Valeria Merino', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Dr Valeria Merino

Chair of the FiTI International Board

APPENDIX I: List of Participants

Chair

Valeria MERINO

Stakeholder group: Government sector

Roy CLARISSE [Voting power for this meeting: 1.2 votes]

Joacim JOHANNESON [Voting power for this meeting: 1.2 votes]

Estelle JONES [Voting power for this meeting: 1.2 votes]

Annika MACKENSEN [Voting power for this meeting: 1.2 votes]

Not excused:

Rocío Parra CORTÉS

Stakeholder group: Business sector

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

Tony LAZZARA [Voting power for this meeting: 1.2 vote]

Nestor ROCHE [Voting power for this meeting: 1.2 vote]

Carlos (Cadu) VILLAÇA [Voting power for this meeting: 1.2 vote]

Not excused:

Dawda Foday SAINÉ

Stakeholder group: Social sector

Ketakandriana RAFITOSON [Voting power for this meeting: 1.5 vote]

Daniel SKERRITT [Voting power for this meeting: 1.5 vote]

Annie TOURETTE [Voting power for this meeting: 1.5 vote]

Not excused:

Umair SHAHID

Observers

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

Excused:

World Bank Group, represented by Kristin Gunnarsdottir VON KISTOWSKI

Open Government Partnership, represented by Adna KARAMEHIC-OATES

FiTI International Secretariat

Sven BIERMANN

Stephanie VOLCERE

Karine YOUNG

Guests

Luz MONTALVAN, Interpreter