



Fisheries
Transparency
Initiative

FiTI Implementing Country Application

Country: GHANA

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Table of Contents

IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR THE SUBMISSION OF THIS APPLICATION.....	3
ENGAGEMENT WITH THE FISHERIES TRANSPARENCY INITIATIVE	4
PUBLIC COMMITMENT	4
COLLABORATION WITH BUSINESS AND CIVIL SOCIETY	5
ENABLING ENVIRONMENT FOR STAKEHOLDER PARTICIPATION	6
COORDINATING AUTHORITY	6
NATIONAL FOCAL POINT.....	8
NATIONAL SECRETARIAT	9
NATIONAL MULTI-STAKEHOLDER GROUP (MSG).....	11
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION	15

Important information for the submission of this application

A public commitment to the Fisheries Transparency Initiative (FiTI) demonstrates a sincere intention of the country's government to enhance transparency and stakeholder participation in fisheries management. However, such a commitment should not be misinterpreted as official acceptance into the initiative. Only when such a commitment is followed by concrete preparatory activities and the subsequent approval of the country's application by the FiTI International Board will the country be formally recognised as a FiTI Implementing Country.

This document serves as the standardised application for countries to document their preparatory activities and to submit their intention of becoming a FiTI Implementing Country to the FiTI International Board.

In order to facilitate an efficient submission process, please consider the following aspects:

- The National Focal Point must submit the application – with the approval of the National MSG –to the Chair of the FiTI International Board, Dr. Audun Lem (alem@fiti.global).
- The application must be based on this standardised template, which is available in English, Spanish, French and Portuguese. The coloured areas of this template should not be altered.
- The application should be submitted as a PDF document.
- The application, including all corresponding documents (where necessary), must be provided at least two weeks prior to the next FiTI International Board meeting.

In case of questions regarding this application, please contact your country's Regional Coordinator of the FiTI International Secretariat.

Kindly note that in assessing this application, the FiTI International Board may contact stakeholders at the national level to ascertain their views on the fulfilment of the requirements outlined in the country's public commitment and the requirements related to the establishment of an enabling environment for stakeholder participation. This may also include comments from governments, international civil society organisations, business partners, and intergovernmental organisations.

The FiTI International Board will review the application and assess whether the necessary preparatory activities have been completed. Only when the country's application has been approved by the FiTI International Board will the country formally be recognised as a FiTI Implementing country. The Board's approval will be publicly communicated, and the country's application, including complementary documents, will be published on the FiTI's website.

Engagement with the Fisheries Transparency Initiative

Public Commitment

→ FiTI Standard, Section B.1

<i>Name of national authority that entered into a partnership agreement with the FiTI:</i>	Ministry of Fisheries and Aquaculture (MoFA)
<i>Name of representative that signed the partnership agreement on behalf of the national authority:</i>	Hon. Mavis Hawa Koomson Former Minister of Fisheries and Aquaculture
<i>Date of partnership agreement:</i>	5 th July 2024

Please indicate how the signed partnership agreement has been publicly announced and widely disseminated to national and international stakeholders:

Information on Ghana's commitment was disseminated through the Ministry's communication channels such as website (<https://www.mofaq.gov.gh/ghana-inaugurates-fisheries-transparency-initiative-multistakeholder-group-to-strengthen-accountability-in-the-sector/>) and Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/MofadGhana/posts/ghana-inaugurates-fisheries-transparency-initiative-fiti-multistakeholder-group-/1058367503153857/>), stakeholder meetings involving government, industry and civil society organizations, and through the FiTI International Secretariat. The commitment was further communicated during national fisheries governance discussions and transparency-related engagements involving key sector stakeholders.

Collaboration with business and civil society

→ FiTI Standard, Section B.1

Please describe how the government ensures that relevant stakeholders, including but not limited to members of the National Multi-Stakeholder Group (section C.4), are able to:

- *Engage actively and effectively in the design, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of the FiTI.*
- *Operate freely in relation to the FiTI.*
- *Express their reasoned opinions about the FiTI as well as broader fisheries governance issues without restraint, coercion or reprisal.*

Ghana has established a governance framework that promotes stakeholder participation, transparency, accountability and freedom of expression. The Constitution of the Republic of Ghana guarantees freedom of speech, association and access to information. Ghana's constitution, formalised in 1992, recognises the right of all citizens to have access to information. Additionally, the Right to Information Act, 2019 (Act 989) strengthens public access to information held by public institutions including the Ministry of Fisheries and Aquaculture. Within this act are obligations for the government to ensure transparency and the establishment of a Right To Information Commission, which was formally created in 2021. Ghana is a member of the Open Government Partnership (OGP), having signed on to this initiative in 2011. Ghana's OGP Action Plans cover multiple targets and activities, at national level and for specific sectors including fisheries. Efforts to improve transparency in the fisheries sector have also been implemented by programmes supported by international donors such as the West Africa Regional Fisheries Programme of the World Bank, the Fish for Development programme of NORAD, the Sustainable Fisheries Management Project and the Ghana Fisheries Recovery Activity of the USAID.

Within the fisheries sector, stakeholder participation is an established practice. The Ministry of Fisheries and Aquaculture and the Fisheries Commission routinely engage fishers, fish processors, industrial fishing operators, civil society organizations, academia, development partners and traditional authorities in policy formulation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation processes.

Stakeholders participating in the FiTI process are able to operate independently and express their views on fisheries governance issues without interference. Existing platforms such as fisheries management consultations, co-management initiatives, fisheries dialogue sessions and stakeholder workshops provide opportunities for open engagement and consensus building. The FiTI process builds upon these established participatory governance mechanisms to ensure effective multi-stakeholder collaboration and oversight.

Enabling environment for stakeholder participation

Coordinating Authority

→ FiTI Standard, Section C.1

<i>Name of designated national authority that acts as the principal contact to coordinate and facilitate the implementation of the FiTI in the country (i.e. Coordinating Authority):</i>	Ministry of Fisheries and Aquaculture (MoFA)
<i>Website of the Coordinating Authority:</i>	https://www.mofaq.gov.gh

Please describe the rationales for designating the Coordinating Authority:

The Ministry of Fisheries and Aquaculture (MoFA) is the lead government institution responsible for fisheries policy formulation, sector coordination and oversight of fisheries governance in Ghana. As the principal authority responsible for marine fisheries management, MoFA is well positioned to coordinate the implementation of the Fisheries Transparency Initiative (FiTI) and facilitate collaboration among government agencies, industry stakeholders, civil society organizations and development partners.

The Ministry possesses the institutional mandate, technical expertise and convening authority required to ensure effective implementation of FiTI requirements and the integration of transparency principles into fisheries governance processes.

Transparency is included in Ghana's fisheries legal and policy framework such as the Fisheries and Aquaculture Act 1146 of 2025 which the Ministry of Fisheries and Aquaculture (MoFA) has committed to enforce. The MoFA sees implementation of the FiTI through the establishment and operationalisation of the National Multi-Stakeholder Group (NMSG) and active stakeholder participation as the vehicle to improving transparency in fisheries management. Government is therefore actively and effectively engaged in the FiTI implementation process considering the role that MoFA plays in providing the enabling environment for multi-stakeholder participation.

Please describe how the designation of the Coordinating Authority has been publicly announced:

The designation of MoFA as the Coordinating Authority (<https://www.mofaq.gov.gh/ghana-inaugurates-fisheries-transparency-initiative-multistakeholder-group-to-strengthen-accountability-in-the-sector/>) was publicly announced through MoFA's online social media channels such as website and Facebook. A blog describing the commitment ceremony that took place between MoFA and FiTI Executives with pictures of the event having taken place was widely circulated on social media to inform the general public. This was also communicated through stakeholder engagements, fisheries dialogue processes, official correspondence and FiTI implementation discussions involving key fisheries stakeholders. The press took part in some of these events and widely circulated the news.

National Focal Point

→ FiTI Standard, Section C.2

<i>Name of senior government official appointed to initiate and oversee the FiTI implementation process and act as the government's focal point:</i>	Danny Mohammed
<i>Title/Role of National Focal Point within Coordinating Authority:</i>	Director, Research, Statistics and Information Management (RSIM) Directorate, MoFA
<i>Contact information:</i>	danny.mohammed@mofaq.gov.gh

Please describe the rationales for appointing the National Focal Point:

The National Focal Point is a senior official with sufficient authority, experience and institutional knowledge to coordinate Ghana's FiTI implementation process. The individual has established working relationships with relevant government institutions, fisheries stakeholders, development partners and civil society organizations. The position enables the effective mobilization of resources, coordination of activities and communication among relevant government ministries, agencies as well other participating stakeholders.

Please describe how the appointment of the National Focal Point has been publicly announced:

The appointment was communicated in writing to the FiTI Executive Director. The official letter announcing the appointment was also distributed widely using MoFA's communication channels such as the website and Facebook. The announcement was also communicated during fisheries stakeholder meetings and dialogue processes, FiTI planning meetings and official correspondence related to the implementation process.

National Secretariat

→ FiTI Standard, Section C.3

Hosting entity to provide administrative and operational support to the National Multi-Stakeholder Group:	☒	within Coordinating Authority
	☐	within other governmental authority
	☐	by other organisation (e.g. industry association, chamber, or NGO)
	☐	by external consultant
(Please select only one option)		
Name of internal department or external entity that hosts the National Secretariat:	Research, Statistics and Information Management (RSIM) Directorate, Ministry of Fisheries and Aquaculture	
Name and title/role of the Head of the National Secretariat:	Selorm Tsatsu Gbedemah Title:	
Contact information of the Head of the National Secretariat:	selorm.gbedemah@mofad.gov.gh	
Total number of staff assigned to serve in the National Secretariat (part-time and full-time):	4	

Please describe the rationales for selecting the hosting entity to act as the National Secretariat:

The Research, Statistics and Information Management Directorate serves as the Ministry's central unit for data management, information dissemination, monitoring and reporting. The Directorate possesses the technical expertise and institutional mandate required to support transparency initiatives and coordinate stakeholder engagement activities.

The Directorate routinely collaborates with the Fisheries Commission, Ghana Statistical Service, development partners and other sector institutions on fisheries data collection,

analysis and dissemination. These functions align closely with FiTI objectives and create operational synergies for effective implementation.

Please describe the measures taken for ensuring the ongoing provision of a properly authorised and resourced National Secretariat to provide administrative and operational support to the National Multi-Stakeholder Group:

MoFA has committed institutional support through additional staff allocation, administrative oversight and integration of FiTI-related activities within existing fisheries governance and data management functions. The Secretariat receives technical support from relevant directorates and partner institutions to ensure continuity and effective implementation. Activities of the National Secretariat are also closely monitored by the National Focal Point to ensure productivity, efficiency and accountability.

A donor roundtable is being organised in partnership with the FiTI International Secretariat to potentially secure financial support to host MSG meetings. In the interim, as part of the FiTI Starter Package provided to Ghana, FiTI will be financially supporting MSG meetings for the next 12 months.

Please describe how the appointment of the National Secretariat has been publicly announced

The appointment was announced and officially communicated to the FiTI International Secretariat. This is live on the Ghana page on the FiTI website as well. It was also announced internally at MoFA. The announcement was also communicated during fisheries stakeholder meetings and dialogue processes, FiTI planning meetings and official correspondence related to the implementation process.

National Multi-Stakeholder Group (MSG)

→ FiTI Standard, Section C.4

Type of National MSG:

✓	Newly established National MSG, solely for the purpose of implementing the FiTI
	Utilisation of an existing multi-stakeholder platform:

(Please select only one option)

In case an existing multi-stakeholder platform is used as the National MSG, please state whether the platform is similar and applicable to the requirements for National MSGs, as set forth in section C.4 of the FiTI Standard:

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Total number of members in the National MSG:	15
State whether membership in the National MSG is individual or institutional:	Institutional
List of government members in the National MSG:¹	- MoFA (2 members) - Fisheries Commission (2 members) - National Premix Fuel Secretariat (1 member)
List of business members in the National MSG:²	- National Fish Processors and Traders Association (1) - Ghana National Canoe Fishermen Council (1) - National Fisheries Association of Ghana (1)

¹ In case official Alternate members have been assigned to members of the government, business and/or civil society group, please indicate.

² Please also indicate the members' affiliation to either industrial fisheries or small-scale (artisanal) fisheries.

	▪ Ghana Industrial Trawlers Association (1) ▪ Ghana Inshore Fisheries Association (1)
<i>List of civil society members in the National MSG:</i>	▪ Environmental Justice Foundation (1) ▪ Hen Mpoano (1) ▪ Friends of the Nation (1) ▪ Cerath Development Organization (1) ▪ Centre for Maritime Law and Security (1)
<i>List of observer organisations to the National MSG (if any):</i>	• Ministry of Justice • Ministry of Environment, Science and Technology • Ghana Maritime Authority • Ministry of Finance • Ghana Statistical Service • Open Government Partnership

Please describe the efforts and measures taken to ensure the openness and inclusiveness of the invitation process for business and civil society to participate in the National MSG:

Prior to the establishment of the National MSG and as part of the public announcement of the intention by the National Secretariat, potential business and civil society organisations were contacted directly to nominate candidates to the MSG. . The establishment of the National MSG followed a transparent and inclusive stakeholder engagement process coordinated by MoFA. Relevant stakeholder groups from government, industry and civil society were identified and encouraged to participate. The process sought to ensure balanced representation of stakeholders of the marine fisheries sector and provided opportunities for stakeholders to nominate their own representatives.

Please provide information that demonstrates that stakeholders from business and civil society were able to nominate their own representatives:

Prior to the establishment of the National MSG and as part of the public announcement of the intention by the National Secretariat, potential business and civil society organisations were directly informed through their leadership to express interest by completing membership nomination forms by themselves without any interference for consideration by the National Secretariat. Business and civil society constituencies independently selected and nominated their representatives through internal arrangements. Government representatives were nominated by their respective institutions as well.

Please document how the Terms of Reference of the National MSG were approved, and where they can be found in the public domain:

The Terms of Reference for the National MSG was drafted and initially shared with all members by email to review and provide comments and recommendations. It was also shared on the common MSG members WhatsApp platform created by the Group for the same purpose. Members were given time to read and comment on before an MSG meeting was organised to review and discuss the ToR together. Views brought forward from members were incorporated into the draft before final approval and adoption. The Terms of Reference outline the mandate, composition, roles, responsibilities and decision-making procedures of the group

<i>Name of senior representative that has been appointed as <u>Chair</u> of the National MSG to steer the work of the group and facilitate its decision-making:</i>	Papa Yaw Atobrah
<i>@Contact information of the Chair of the National MSG:</i>	papayawgh77@yahoo.com
<i>Voting or non-voting Chair?</i>	Non-voting Chair

Please state where information regarding the National MSG, including its members, Chair and Terms of Reference can be found online:

Information regarding the National MSG including its members, Chair and Terms of Reference is kept and managed by the National Secretariat at MoFA. Soft copies of the information can be found on their computers and hard copies in their flat files. Members can easily have access to the information upon request. Most of the information is also communicated on the Group WhatsApp platform. Unfortunately, this information is currently not online but the National Secretariat will make the effort to publish this somewhere on the website of MoFA soon.

Additional information

Please provide additional information deemed useful for the FiTI International Board to better understand the conducted preparatory activities for an efficient and beneficial national FiTI implementation process. While this section is non-mandatory, and will not be directly considered in the Board's assessment of this application, it is nevertheless encouraged to answer these questions, where possible.

<i>Has the National Focal Point received the onboarding training from the FiTI International Secretariat?</i>	Yes. The National Focal Point has participated in orientation and onboarding activities organized by the FiTI International Secretariat.
<i>Has the National Secretariat received the onboarding training from the FiTI International Secretariat?</i>	Yes
<i>Have the members and the Chair of the National Multi-Stakeholder Group received the onboarding training from the FiTI International Secretariat?</i>	Yes

Has the National Multi-Stakeholder Group determined its objectives and long-term impact that it wants to achieve through the implementation of the FiTI in the country?

Yes

- Enhance transparency and accountability in fisheries governance.
- Improve public access to fisheries information.
- Strengthen stakeholder participation in decision-making.
- Promote sustainable fisheries management.
- Improve trust among government, industry and civil society stakeholders.

Have the relevant stakeholders, including the National Focal Point, the National Secretariat, members and Chair of the National Multi-Stakeholder Group been informed about the FiTI Code of Conduct and the requirement to abide by it within the scope of their FiTI-related activities?

Yes

All relevant stakeholders have been informed of the FiTI Code of Conduct and their obligation to comply with it throughout the implementation process

Are there other national efforts that can be used to further strengthen the implementation of the FiTI in the country?

Ghana's FiTI implementation will benefit from existing national initiatives including:

- Right to Information Act, 2019 (Act 989)
- Open Government and transparency initiatives
- Fisheries Co-Management Framework
- Fisheries Monitoring, Control and Surveillance systems
- Fisheries sector data harmonization initiatives
- Collaboration between MoFA and the Ghana Statistical Service
- National efforts to combat Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) fishing