



Fisheries
Transparency
Initiative

FiTI Implementing Country Application

Country: Liberia

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Submitted by: Austin Saye Wehye

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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>	National Fisheries and Aquaculture Authority of Liberia (NaFAA)
<i>Name of representative that signed the partnership agreement on behalf of the national authority:</i>	J. Cyrus Saygbe Sr, Director General, National Fisheries and Aquaculture Authority
<i>Date of partnership agreement:</i>	May 5, 2025

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

Liberia officially declared its commitment to join and implement the Fisheries Transparency Initiative (FiTI) during the last Oceans Conference in France. Following this declaration, the signed partnership agreement was published on the official website of the National Fisheries and Aquaculture Authority (NaFAA). A press release was also shared with fishing industry associations, civil society organizations, development partners, and media institutions. The announcement was further disseminated through official social media and communication platforms to promote transparency and stakeholder awareness. See link below for details.

[Liberia joins the Fisheries Transparency Initiative](#)

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.*

Liberia's legal framework provides a strong enabling environment for stakeholder participation in fisheries governance. The National Fisheries and Aquaculture Act of Liberia mandates inclusive stakeholder engagement in fisheries management. The Liberian Constitution guarantees freedom of expression, freedom of association, and the right to access information, enabling stakeholders to engage freely and without restraint. Liberia's Freedom of Information Act further supports the public's and civil society's right to access government-held information on fisheries governance.

NaFAA's institutional mandate includes broad stakeholder consultation in the development and review of fisheries policies, regulations, and management plans. NaFAA regularly conducts stakeholder workshops and consultations with fishing communities, industry associations, and civil society organisations, demonstrating an established practice of participatory fisheries governance.

Liberia has made measurable progress in governance reforms since the end of its civil conflicts, including improvements in rule of law and press freedom indicators. The country's membership in international governance frameworks further underscores the enabling environment for transparent, participatory, and accountable fisheries governance under the FiTI Standard.

Liberia actively participates in multi-stakeholder governance platforms, including those supported by international development partners active in the fisheries sector. The establishment of the FiTI National MSG itself represents a new multi-stakeholder platform dedicated to transparent, participatory, and accountable fisheries governance, consistent with the principles of global transparency initiatives.



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>	National Fisheries and Aquaculture Authority of Liberia (NaFAA)
<i>Website of the Coordinating Authority:</i>	www.nafaa.gov.lr

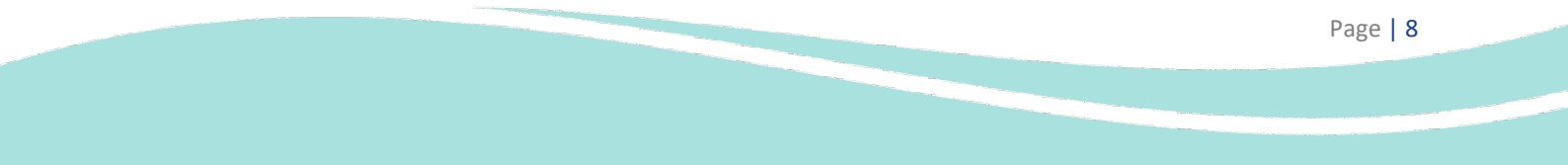
Please describe the rationales for designating the Coordinating Authority:

NaFAA (National Fisheries and Aquaculture Authority of Liberia) is designated as the Coordinating Authority for the FiTI implementation in Liberia because it is the principal government body mandated to regulate, manage, and develop the fisheries and aquaculture sector. NaFAA has the technical expertise, institutional mandate, stakeholder relationships, and operational capacity to ensure active and effective government engagement in the national FiTI implementation process. Its direct links to fishing communities, the private sector, and civil society organisations make it best positioned to facilitate multi-stakeholder participation in fisheries transparency.

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

The designation of NaFAA as the Coordinating Authority was publicly announced through publication on the NaFAA official government website and through an official press release distributed to national and international stakeholders. The announcement was also communicated through official social media channels. Please see the link below for details.

[Nomination of NaFAA as the Focal Agency for FiTI in Liberia](#)



National Focal Point

FiTI Standard, Section C.2

Name of senior government official appointed to initiate and oversee the FiTI implementation process and act as the government's focal point:	Austin Saye Wehye
Title/Role of National Focal Point within Coordinating Authority:	Director for Research and Statistics, National Fisheries and Aquaculture Authority
Contact information:	awehye@nafaa.gov.lr

Please describe the rationales for appointing the National Focal Point:

Austin Saye Wehye, as Director for Research and Statistics at NaFAA, has the confidence of stakeholders across the fisheries sector and the institutional authority to coordinate FiTI implementation activities across relevant government ministries, authorities, and agencies. His technical expertise in fisheries data and statistics positions him well to lead the transparency agenda. He has the operational freedom and network to engage both government and non-government stakeholders, and to mobilise the administrative and financial resources necessary for effective FiTI implementation in Liberia.

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

The appointment of the National Focal Point was publicly announced through the NaFAA official government website and through an official press release circulated to national stakeholders. The announcement was also shared through NaFAA's official social media platforms to ensure wide dissemination to both national and international audiences. See link below for details. [Nomination of NaFAA as the Focal Agency for FiTI in Liberia](#)

National Secretariat

FiTI Standard, Section C.3

Hosting entity to provide administrative and operational support to the National Multi-Stakeholder Group:	☒	within the Coordinating Authority
	☐	within other governmental authority
	☐	by another organisation (e.g., industry association, chamber, or NGO)
	☐	by an external consultant
(Please select only one option)		
Name of internal department or external entity that hosts the National Secretariat:	Department of Marine Fisheries, NaFAA (within Coordinating Authority)	
Name and title/role of the Head of the National Secretariat:	Solomon Nyebaayou Daryoue, Director for Marine Fisheries, NaFAA	
Contact information of the Head of the National Secretariat:	sdaryoue@nafaa.gov.lr	
Total number of staff assigned to serve in the National Secretariat (part-time and full-time):	Five (5) staff.	

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

The Marine Fisheries Department of the National Fisheries and Aquaculture Authority (NaFAA) has been selected to host the FiTI National Secretariat because of its direct operational experience in marine fisheries management and its established working relationships with fishing communities, industry operators, civil society organizations, and development partners. Hosting the Secretariat within NaFAA ensures seamless coordination with the Coordinating Authority and provides an effective institutional framework for administrative, technical, and logistical support to the National Multi-Stakeholder Group (NMSG). The existing institutional infrastructure within NaFAA, including professional staff capacity, office facilities, communication systems, and nationwide stakeholder engagement mechanisms, offers a practical, cost-effective, and operationally efficient foundation for the Secretariat's functions.

In addition, the decision to host the Secretariat within NaFAA was informed by lessons and experiences drawn from the Liberia Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (LEITI), which has demonstrated the importance of strong institutional anchoring, stakeholder coordination, and government ownership in implementing multi-stakeholder transparency initiatives in Liberia. Engagements and observations from LEITI's operational model highlighted the value of maintaining close coordination between the Secretariat, government institutions, civil society, and the private sector while utilizing existing institutional systems to improve efficiency and reduce operational costs.

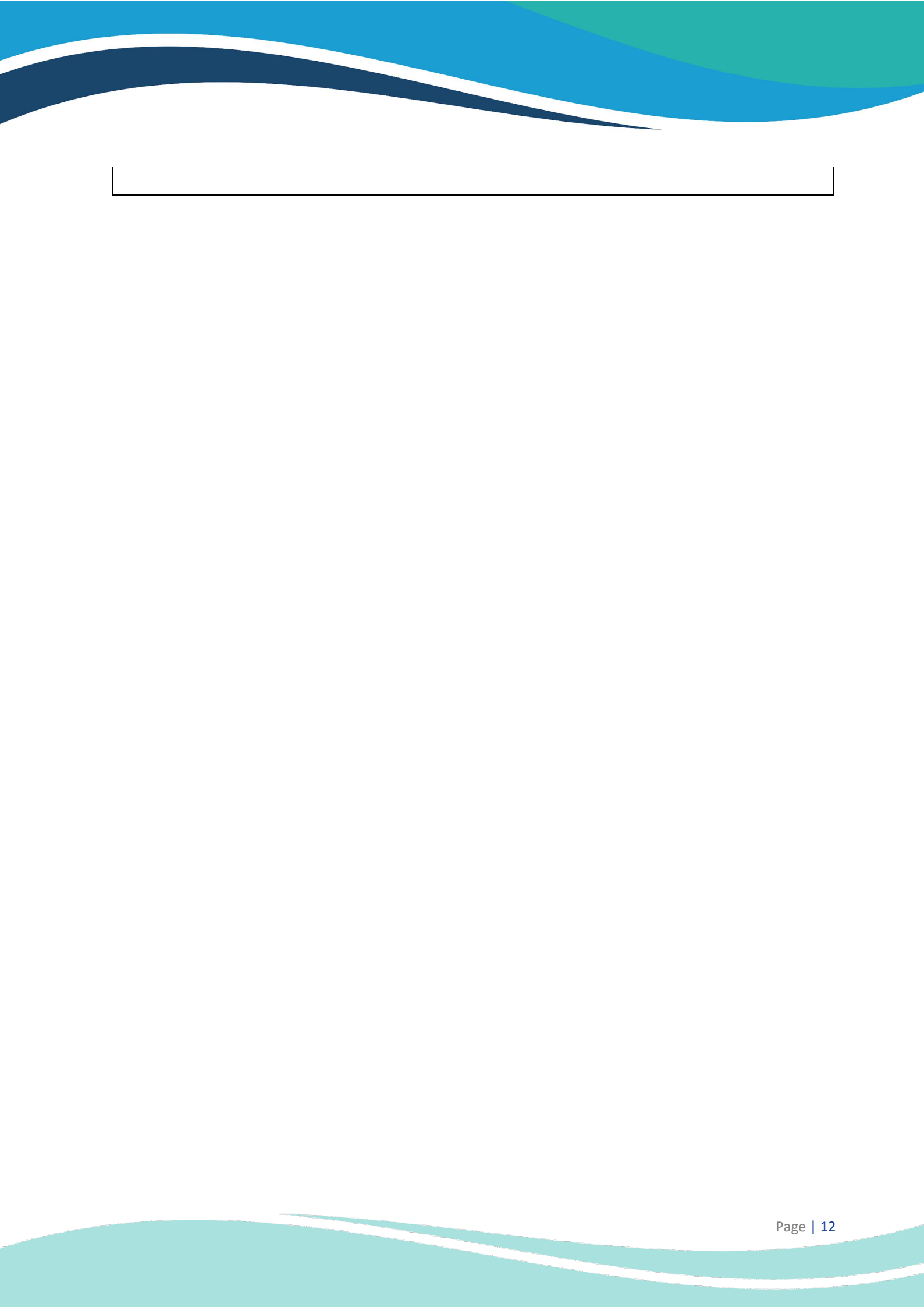
Operational synergy opportunities have therefore been explored through learning and experience-sharing with LEITI, particularly in areas relating to stakeholder coordination, reporting processes, public disclosure practices, institutional governance arrangements, and multi-stakeholder engagement. These experiences provide useful guidance for strengthening FiTI implementation in Liberia and support the establishment of a credible, transparent, and sustainable national fisheries transparency mechanism. Currently, no separate fisheries-focused multi-stakeholder secretariat exists in Liberia, and NaFAA remains the institution best positioned to fulfil this role given its legal mandate, technical expertise, institutional capacity, and broad stakeholder reach across the fisheries sector.

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:

The National Secretariat is allocated dedicated staff within NaFAA with clearly defined responsibilities and sufficient time to execute its FiTI-related duties. NaFAA has formally authorised the Secretariat's establishment through an internal directive. The Head of the National Secretariat reports directly to the National Focal Point, ensuring clear lines of accountability. Regular progress reviews are scheduled to ensure the Secretariat remains properly resourced and functional throughout the FiTI implementation process.

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

The appointment of the National Secretariat was publicly announced through the NaFAA official government website and through an official press release. The announcement was also disseminated through NaFAA's social media channels to ensure broad awareness among national and international stakeholders.



National Multi-Stakeholder Group (MSG)

FiTI Standard, Section C.4

Type of National MSG:

X	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:

Total number of members in the National MSG:

15

[List of NMSG Member Institutions](#)

State whether membership in the National MSG is individual or institutional:

Institutional

List of government members in the National MSG:¹

Government (5 members):

- National Fisheries and Aquaculture Authority (NaFAA)
- Liberia Maritime Authority (LiMA)
- Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)
- Ministry of Justice (MOJ)
- Department of Fisheries and Aquaculture Science, University of Liberia

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

	▪ ▪
<i>List of business members in the National MSG:²</i>	• Liberia Artisanal Fishermen Association (LAFA) • Aquaculture and Inland Fisheries Federation of Liberia (AIFFL) • Collaborative Management Association (CMA) • Dalian Halian Sea Product Company (DHSPC) • Liberia Industrial Fisheries Association (LIFA)
<i>List of civil society members in the National MSG:</i>	Civil Society (5 members): ▪ Environmental Justice Foundation (EJF) ▪ Conservation International (CI) ▪ Liberia Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (LEITI) ▪ Center for Transparency and Accountability in Liberia (CENTAL)CERATH Development Organization (CDO) ▪ Society for the Conservation of Nature of Liberia (SCNL)
<i>List of observer organisations to the National MSG (if any):</i>	▪ ▪ ▪

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:

NaFAA issued an open invitation to all relevant fisheries stakeholders in Liberia, including fishing industry operators, small-scale fishers' associations, civil society organisations, academic institutions, and media organisations. The invitation was circulated through written

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

letters to heads of institutions, official NaFAA communication channels, including direct outreach to registered stakeholder organisations. NaFAA ensured that the process was transparent, non-discriminatory, and open to all eligible parties, including representatives of both industrial and small-scale fisheries.

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

Business and civil society stakeholders were allowed to self-nominate or nominate representatives from their own organisations or networks. NaFAA provided a clear nomination procedure and timeline communicated through open invitation letters and public notices. Stakeholder organisations were encouraged to collectively agree on who best represents their interests. The nomination process was conducted without government interference, ensuring that business and civil society groups had full autonomy in selecting their MSG representatives.

Add MSG LINK

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 of the National Multi-Stakeholder Group (MSG) will be reviewed and approved during the second meeting of the National MSG, convened by the National Fisheries and Aquaculture Authority (NaFAA). The meeting will bring together representatives from government, business, and civil society organizations, who are expected to discuss and adopt the Terms of Reference through a consensus-based approach. Meeting minutes documenting the discussions and approval process, together with the final approved Terms of Reference, will subsequently be made publicly available on the official NaFAA website to promote transparency and stakeholder access to information. A link to the approved Terms of Reference and meeting minutes will be provided once publication is completed. See details below.

<https://acrobat.adobe.com/id/urn:aaid:sc:EU:743adfdc-a24b-4beb-8811-bfe651a6126d>

<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>	Mr. Augustine Fayiah, Program Officer, Environmental Justice Foundation, Liberia
<i>Contact information of the Chair of the National MSG:</i>	augustine.fayiah@ejfoundation.org
<i>Voting or non-voting Chair?</i>	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, will be published on the NaFAA official website (www.nafaa.gov.lr) and disseminated through official government press releases and NaFAA's social media platforms. See details below.

[List of NMSG Member Institutions](#)

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
<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?

The National MSG has identified enhanced transparency in fisheries licensing and access agreements as a primary objective, with the long-term goal of contributing to sustainable fisheries management and improved livelihoods for fishing communities in Liberia. The MSG aims to produce annual FiTI Reports that provide comprehensive public information on marine fisheries governance, and to use these reports to drive policy reforms that benefit both the industry and small-scale fishers. These objectives will be formally documented in the MSG's Terms of Reference and work plan.

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. The National Focal Point, the Head of the National Secretariat, and MSG members have been informed about the FiTI Code of Conduct and the obligation to abide by it in the conduct of all FiTI-related activities. The Code of Conduct has been shared with all relevant stakeholders, and they have been asked to formally acknowledge and commit to it as a prerequisite for participation in FiTI implementation activities.

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

Liberia is implementing several initiatives that complement and strengthen FiTI implementation. The National Fisheries and Aquaculture Authority (NaFAA), through the Liberia Sustainable Management of Fisheries Project (LSMFP) and the Integrated Fisheries Sector Strengthening Project (IFSSP), has strengthened fisheries governance, licensing, vessel registration, and fisheries data management systems. The introduction of the Fisheries Information Management System (FIMS) has improved transparency through digital processing and tracking of licenses and fisheries information. Liberia is also expanding Collaborative Management Associations (CMAs) to enhance stakeholder participation and co-management in coastal communities. Additional efforts include implementation of the FAO Port State Measures Agreement (PSMA), fisheries monitoring, control and surveillance (MCS) activities, and regional cooperation under the Fisheries Committee for the West Central Gulf of Guinea (FCWC). Lessons from Liberia Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (LEITI) also provide valuable experience in multi-stakeholder transparency and accountability mechanisms.