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Nigerian Institute for Oceanography and Marine Research

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Nigeria

Project Information

1. Project Title

National Assessment and Capacity Building for the Implementation of the WTO Agreement on Fisheries Subsidies in Nigeria

2. Project Summary

This project seeks to strengthen Nigeria's readiness to implement the WTO Agreement on Fisheries Subsidies, which aims to protect fish stocks, marine ecosystems, and the livelihoods of those who depend on fisheries. Through this Category 1 Fish Fund grant, the Nigerian Institute for Oceanography and Marine Research (NIOMR) will lead a national assessment to evaluate existing fisheries subsidy practices, identify policy and capacity gaps, and align Nigeria's frameworks with the Agreement's provisions. The project will be implemented in collaboration with key stakeholders, including the Nigerian Navy, Federal Department of Fisheries, NIMASA, Trawler Owners Association, Nigerian Ports Authority, and local fisherfolk. Outputs will include a situational analysis report, stakeholder consultation outcomes, and a detailed proposal for Category 2 funding to support full implementation. This initiative will build a strong foundation for Nigeria's sustainable fisheries management and contribute to global efforts to combat illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing and overfishing.

3. Objectives

Overall Objective: The project aims to assess Nigeria's current fisheries subsidy landscape and strengthen national capacity for the effective implementation of the WTO Agreement on Fisheries Subsidies. This will help Nigeria align its policies and practices with global efforts to eliminate subsidies that contribute to IUU fishing, overfished stocks, and unregulated high seas fishing.

Specific Objectives: Conduct a comprehensive national assessment of existing fisheries subsidies, management systems, and regulatory frameworks to determine their alignment with the WTO Agreement. Identify capacity gaps and technical needs within key institutions responsible for fisheries management and enforcement. Facilitate stakeholder consultations and awareness sessions with relevant agencies and fishing communities to build shared understanding and cooperation. Develop a strategic proposal for Category 2 funding that outlines Nigeria's plan for full implementation of the WTO Fisheries Subsidies disciplines.

4. Context

Project Context and Linkage to the Implementation of the WTO Agreement on Fisheries Subsidies (AFS) Nigeria has one of the largest fisheries sectors in West Africa, supporting food security, livelihoods, and national revenue through artisanal, industrial, and aquaculture activities. However, the sector faces growing challenges from illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing, unsustainable exploitation of fish stocks, and limited enforcement capacity. These challenges undermine ecosystem health and threaten the livelihoods of coastal communities. The WTO Agreement on Fisheries Subsidies (AFS), which entered into force in September 2025, establishes binding global rules to prohibit subsidies that contribute to IUU fishing, overfished stocks, and unregulated high seas fishing. To comply effectively with these disciplines, WTO member countries, including Nigeria, need to align national policies, identify harmful subsidies, and strengthen institutional coordination. This project directly supports these goals by assessing Nigeria's existing subsidy frameworks, identifying policy and capacity gaps, and building institutional readiness for implementation. Through inclusive stakeholder engagement—bringing together NIOMR, the Nigerian Navy, Federal Department of Fisheries, NIMASA, Ports Authority, trawler owners, and fisherfolk—the project will generate the evidence and coordination mechanisms needed to fulfill Nigeria's commitments under the AFS. The findings and outputs from this Category 1 initiative will lay the foundation for a comprehensive Category 2 implementation project, advancing sustainable fisheries management and compliance with global subsidy reform disciplines.

5. Expected Results

A baseline report detailing Nigeria's current fisheries subsidy structures, gaps, and compliance needs. Strengthened institutional and technical capacity across NIOMR, the Navy, NIMASA, the Federal Department of Fisheries, and other partners. A coordinated national action framework for implementing the WTO Agreement. A validated Category 2 proposal ready for submission to the WTO Fish Fund.

Implementing entities

6. Implementing Entity

Lead Implementing Agency: Nigerian Institute for Oceanography and Marine Research (NIOMR) Collaborating Partners: Federal Department of Fisheries, Nigerian Navy, Nigerian Maritime Administration and Safety Agency (NIMASA), Nigerian Ports Authority, Trawler Owners Association, and fisherfolk associations

7. Contact Information

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8. Partnerships

Successful implementation of this project will rely on strong partnerships among national institutions, maritime authorities, and local fisheries stakeholders. The Nigerian Institute for Oceanography and Marine Research (NIOMR) will serve as the lead implementing agency, coordinating all technical, administrative, and reporting functions. Key collaborating partners will include: Federal Department of Fisheries (FDF): Policy oversight and provision of data on existing subsidy programs and fisheries management frameworks. Nigerian Navy: Support in monitoring, surveillance, and enforcement against illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing activities. Nigerian Maritime Administration and Safety Agency (NIMASA): Collaboration on maritime domain awareness, vessel registration, and data sharing to improve transparency. Nigerian Ports Authority (NPA): Facilitation of port access controls and data on vessel landings to enhance compliance tracking. Trawler Owners Association and Local Fisherfolk Associations: Participation in consultations to ensure inclusive and practical recommendations that reflect industry and community realities. These partnerships will foster a whole-of-sector approach, combining scientific research, enforcement, and policy coordination to achieve the project's objectives. The involvement of these organizations ensures that assessment findings are credible, widely accepted, and actionable, forming a solid foundation for developing the Category 2 implementation proposal. The project will also seek technical alignment with ongoing regional and global initiatives, including FAO-supported programs on IUU fishing and subsidy reform, ensuring coherence with broader efforts to promote sustainable fisheries management and compliance with the WTO Agreement on Fisheries Subsidies.

Budget Information

9. Total Amount of the Project Grant

USD 49,500

Key Elements of Implementation

10. Monitoring & Evaluation

Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) for this project will be integrated throughout the implementation period to ensure progress, transparency, and accountability in line with the WTO Fish Fund's reporting framework and logical results matrix (log frame). 1. Monitoring Framework: NIOMR will establish a Project Steering and Technical Working Group composed of representatives from NIOMR, the Federal Department of Fisheries, NIMASA, the Nigerian Navy, and other key stakeholders. This group will oversee

implementation, track deliverables, and review performance indicators in the log frame. Monthly internal progress reviews will assess activity completion, budget utilization, and emerging challenges. Quarterly monitoring reports will summarize progress against objectives, outputs, and performance indicators, using both quantitative and qualitative data. Mid-term review (Month 6) will evaluate implementation status, stakeholder participation, and any required adjustments to ensure delivery of expected results. 2. Evaluation Approach: At project completion, NIOMR will organize a final evaluation and dissemination workshop to review achievements against the project's log frame indicators, verify results, and document lessons learned. Findings will be incorporated into the final report submitted to the WTO Fish Fund Secretariat, in line with its reporting templates. 3. Data and Reporting: M&E data will be collected using standardized forms, field reports, attendance sheets, and stakeholder feedback tools. A Monitoring Officer within NIOMR will be assigned to consolidate information, ensure data quality, and prepare periodic reports. The final evaluation report will include a summary of outputs achieved, expenditure analysis, and recommendations for Category 2 proposal implementation. These M&E arrangements will ensure that the project remains results-oriented, transparent, and aligned with the WTO Fish Fund's performance and accountability standards.

11. Communication & Outreach

NIOMR will implement a clear communication and outreach plan to highlight the project's objectives, progress, and results, as well as the support provided by the WTO Fish Fund. Key activities will include press releases, stakeholder briefings, and social media updates to promote transparency and public awareness. Project outcomes such as assessment reports, policy briefs, and training materials will be shared through NIOMR's website, newsletters, stakeholder workshops, and national fisheries platforms. Results will also be presented to relevant ministries and partners, ensuring that findings contribute to national strategies and inform future implementation of the WTO Agreement on Fisheries Subsidies.