

Fish Fund Project Grant Application Form – Category II

Thank you for your interest in applying to the Fish Fund.

The Fish Fund was established at the WTO in cooperation with the Food and Agricultural Organisation of the United Nations (FAO), the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), and the World Bank, to assist developing and least-developed country (LDC) Members implement the WTO Agreement on Fisheries Subsidies (AFS).

The Fish Fund offers two categories of grants. This form is dedicated to applications for Category 2 grants.

Category 2 grants provide support of up to **USD 300,000**. Only WTO developing and LDC Members that have ratified the AFS are eligible for support. The primary objective of Fish Fund projects is to implement the AFS. To achieve this, project activities should be designed to enhance work in areas such as fisheries management systems, data collection, institutional support, and updates to domestic legislative frameworks.

Before preparing your application, we strongly recommend reviewing the Fish Fund Factsheet as well as relevant M&E Resources on the Fish Fund website, including the Fish Fund Theory of Change and Logical Framework: <https://www.wtofishfund.org/en/resources>

Please ensure that the information provided is complete, up to date, and accurate. Your application will undergo a thorough evaluation by the Fish Fund Secretariat. Shortlisted applications will be reviewed by FAO, IFAD, WTO and the World Bank, as well as the Fish Fund Steering Committee.

The deadline to submit applications is **24 April 2026**. For any questions, please contact the Fish Fund Secretariat: fishfund@wto.org.

1. Title of the grant application:

The title should clearly indicate the main objective of this application in a short and concise manner, for example:

- *Analysis, reports and sector studies for the implementation of Article X of the AFS in Member*
- *Update of legislative frameworks and institutional support for the implementation of Article X of the AFS in Member*
- *Capacity building and technical assistance for the implementation of Article X of the AFS in Member*
- *Data collection for the implementation of Article X of the AFS in Member*
- *Improvements or setup of fisheries management system for the implementation of Article X of the AFS in Member*

[Development of a National Fisheries Subsidies Compliance Tracker: Mapping Fiji's Fisheries Subsidies to the WTO Agreement on Fisheries Subsidies \(AFS\) Articles 3, 4, 5, and 8 and Supporting Ongoing Compliance.](#)

2. WTO Member or Members submitting this application:

Please enter the name of the Member submitting this application in the space below. If more than one Member is submitting this application, please list the names in alphabetical order and separated by commas.

Please note that only governments from developing and least-developed WTO Members that have deposited their instruments of acceptance of the Agreement on Fisheries Subsidies with the WTO Director-General

are eligible to apply for funding. A full list of WTO Members that have deposited their instruments can be found here:

https://www.wto.org/english/tratop_e/rulesneg_e/fish_e/fish_acceptances_e.htm

Republic of Fiji

3. Government agency or organization responsible for the implementation of this grant and its reporting to the Fish Fund:

Requests must be submitted by national governments (ministries, agencies or public entities) responsible for implementing the project grants.

*Please enter the name of the **organization responsible for the implementation of this grant and its reporting to the Fish Fund** in the space below. For multiple Members, please add the agency per Member.*

Ministry of Foreign Affairs and External Trade (External Trade Department)

4. Was this grant application developed through a Category I Fish Fund grant?

Please note that Category 2 projects should be based on prior assessments of national needs for implementing the AFS disciplines in order to address the identified gaps.

☐ Yes.

☐ No.

☒ No, another needs assessment was conducted.

If yes, provide further details on the needs assessment that was conducted.

Briefly explain the findings of the assessment including the main priorities and relevance for implementation of the AFS, national consultations held, engagement with Fish Fund core partners (FAO, IFAD, WBG, WTO) during the needs assessment/project preparation phase, engagement with other donors and technical agencies willing to collaborate on/co-finance the Category 2 project.

If No, please provide evidence of studies or analyses demonstrating that this application is based on a prior assessment of the Member's needs regarding the implementation of the AFS.

Background:

In 2023, the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS) secured funding from the Canadian Trade and Investment Facility to strengthen regional understanding of the disciplines under the Agreement on Fisheries Subsidies (AFS). Under the first phase of this initiative, a regional report was developed to support Pacific Island WTO Members, including Fiji, in assessing the implications of ratifying and implementing the Agreement.

Building on this work, a second phase of technical assistance was undertaken for Fiji, led by the International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD) and funded by the same facility. This phase focused on conducting an implementation gap analysis of the AFS. IISD applied its self-assessment tool to evaluate Fiji's readiness for implementation, identify institutional and policy gaps, and determine areas where technical assistance and capacity building are required to ensure effective compliance.

The Assessment:

Fiji's assessment involved two in-country missions by IISD's lead experts in October and November 2025, complemented by a desktop review of relevant documentation. During these missions, extensive consultations were held with key stakeholders, including the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and External Trade, the Ministry of Fisheries, the Fiji Revenue and Customs Service, the Fiji Bureau of Statistics, the Ministry of Finance, the Republic of Fiji Military Forces (Naval Division), the Office of the Attorney-General, the Ministry of Justice, and the Maritime Safety Authority of Fiji.

A Validation Workshop was convened in Suva on 18 November 2025 during the second mission to review and validate the findings of the gap analysis report.

Assessment Findings:

The assessment found that Fiji is currently aligned with its obligations under the AFS. No instances were identified where Fiji is in breach of its subsidy commitments or where immediate corrective action is required.

However, the assessment highlighted the need for proactive measures to establish systems and mechanisms that will ensure continued compliance over time. These measures, aligned with the relevant AFS disciplines, are detailed in the subsequent section of this Application Form.

Several information gaps were identified, including:

- Limited data on subsidized fisheries under the Seafaring Entrepreneurial Assistance (SEA) and Fish Aggregating Device (FAD) programmes, as the vessels involved are not part of the registered national fleet.
- Availability of catch data for offshore fisheries (as reported to the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission), but lack of precise data for inshore fisheries.
- Absence of stock status assessments for inshore fisheries.
- Incomplete information required to populate records on vessels and operators subject to Illegal, Unreported, and Unregulated (IUU) fishing determinations.

Summary of Required Actions:

To ensure Fiji remains compliant with the AFS over the long term, several actions are required to strengthen institutional systems and "future-proof" existing frameworks. These include:

- Initiating preparations for Fiji's AFS notification obligations commencing in 2026.
- Considering the introduction of legislative provisions and/or policy measures to ensure that subsidies are not granted or maintained in violation of obligations relating to IUU fishing, overfished stocks, or fishing beyond national jurisdiction and outside the competence of relevant regional fisheries management organizations (RFMOs).
- Ensuring that decisions regarding subsidies for non-Fijian flagged vessels, or those involving unassessed stocks, incorporate due consideration of AFS obligations, including the need to exercise restraint and avoid encouraging unsustainable fishing practices.
- Reviewing and strengthening internal procedures to ensure that:
 - i. Relevant data on subsidy programmes, fishing fleets, stock status, and IUU determinations is systematically collected and provided by responsible agencies in a format that facilitates timely compilation of AFS notification requirements by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and External Trade (Department of External Trade).
 - ii. Critical information—such as IUU determinations, recognition of overfished stocks, applicable fisheries management measures, and instances of unregulated fishing on the high seas—is effectively shared across relevant national authorities.
 - iii. Subsidies are consistently screened to ensure compliance with AFS obligations.

Given existing domestic resource constraints, Fiji will require targeted technical assistance to effectively implement these actions.

Main Priorities:

Fiji's key priorities moving forward include:

1. Strengthening data collection systems and developing a comprehensive national fisheries subsidies inventory.
2. Reviewing and enhancing internal procedures to establish an effective institutional coordination mechanism to ensure compliance with AFS, and meet AFS transparency and notification requirements.
3. Undertaking stock assessments for inshore fisheries (with funding proposals to be developed in a subsequent grant application cycle).

5. Briefly describe the national context including challenges for implementing the Agreement on Fisheries Subsidies in your country/territory or region.

Please make direct reference to the disciplines contained in the Agreement on Fisheries Subsidies, where possible.

A full text of the Agreement on Fisheries Subsidies can be accessed at:
https://www.wto.org/english/tratop_e/rulesneg_e/fish_e/fish_e.htm

National Context

In Fiji, commercial fishing in its EEZ is only undertaken by Fiji-flagged vessels. Fiji operates a 100% domestic longline industry and under this arrangement, only Fiji-flagged vessels fish within Fiji's EEZ. Approximately 90% of companies who own Fiji-flagged vessels are 100% Fijian owned. The remaining 10% still have some Fijian ownership. The 10 Fiji-licensed vessels that don't have a licence to fish in Fiji's EEZ have licences to fish either in other countries' EEZs or in the high seas. Where they fish in the high seas, it is within the area managed by the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Convention (WCPFC) - none are fishing in the unregulated high seas.

Fisheries management (offshore): Fiji's EEZ and the surrounding waters are managed by the WCPFC - an international fisheries agreement that seeks to ensure the long-term conservation and sustainable use of highly migratory fish stocks (i.e. tunas, billfish, marlin) in the western and central Pacific Ocean. Conservation and management measures that are developed under the terms of the Convention apply to these stocks throughout their range, or to specific areas within the Convention Areas. Fiji has a Total Allowable Catch (TAC) of 12,000 MT within its EEZ. Key legislation is the Offshore Fisheries Management Act 2012 and Regulations 2014.

Fisheries management (inshore): Fiji has a system of co-management of the waters by the Ministry of Fisheries and local communities who hold traditional fishing rights. Licences are granted under the Fisheries Act 1941 to fish in traditional fishing grounds (qoliqoli's). For someone not registered in the Native Customary Rights Register, a permit is required to obtain a licence to fish in the qoliqoli's and this requires consultation with the local community (Fisheries Act s 13). Licences require adherence to both domestic legislation and local management measures.

Fiji's challenges for implementing the AFS

The following table sets out what the AFS requires Fiji to do, the current situation, and actions required to ensure ongoing alignment.

Discipline	Current policies/practices	Required Actions
Subsidies Contributing to Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing		
(Article 3.1-3.4 & 3.8)		
An IUU determination by the MOF regarding vessels or operators subsidized by Fiji, along with information on any support vessels, must be promptly communicated to	The MOF's procedures are not formalized to ensure AFS compliance. There is no formal program of communication of IUU fishing determinations to other agencies, including those	Review and development of internal procedures as necessary to ensure that the MOF knows that if it makes IUU determinations, it must advise relevant agencies.

agencies responsible for subsidies.	responsible for the SEA and FAD programs. For Concession 246, the MOF reviews applications made to the FRCS, which means that FRCS will know if any of the vessels have been subject to a prosecution/IUU determination.	
Laws, regulations, or procedures must ensure that no subsidy can be granted or maintained to vessels or operators subject to such a determination (or their support vessels).	For Concession 246, the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the FRCS has discretion to disallow an exemption if the conditions of the exemption are not met. But this requires conditions relating to IUU fishing to be in place. There is no formal system in place under the SEA/FAD programs to ensure that subsidies cannot be granted.	Review and development of internal procedures and consideration of a legislative provision and/or policy statement to ensure that subsidies are not granted or maintained with respect to fishing where an IUU determination has been made. Procedures to include requirements (such as placing conditions on concessions and reminding subsidy recipients of their legal obligations under Fijian law) to ensure that any future subsidies are not granted or maintained in breach of the AFS
An IUU determination by an RFMO/A or another coastal member regarding vessels or operators subsidized by Fiji, along with information on any support vessel, must be promptly communicated to agencies responsible for subsidies.	The MOF's procedures are not formalized to ensure AFS compliance. There is no formal program of communication of IUU fishing determinations to other agencies. For Concession 246, the MOF reviews applications, which means the FRCS will know if any of the vessels have been subject to a prosecution/IUU determination. This obligation is not applicable to the SEA/FAD programs because inshore fishing is not covered by RFMO/A or managed by other coastal members.	Review and development of internal procedures as necessary to ensure that if the MOF receives IUU fishing determinations made by an RFMO/A or another coastal member, it advises relevant agencies.
Laws, regulations, or procedures must ensure that no subsidy can be granted or maintained to vessels or operators subject to such a determination (or their support vessels)	For Concession 246, the CEO of the FRCS has discretion to disallow an exemption if the conditions of the exemption are not met. But this requires conditions relating to IUU fishing to be in place. This obligation is not applicable to the SEA/FAD programs because they are only concerned with inshore fishing, and RFMO/As and other coastal members do not make IUU determinations with respect to Fiji's inshore waters.	Review and development of internal procedures and consideration of a legislative provision and/or policy statement making it clear that such subsidies are not to be granted or maintained with respect to fishing where an IUU determination has been made. Procedures to include requirements (such as placing conditions on concessions and reminding subsidy recipients of their legal obligations under Fijian law) to ensure that any future subsidies are not granted

		or maintained in breach of the AFS
IUU Fishing – Port State Notifications (Article 3.6)		
A notification received from a port state member regarding possible IUU fishing by a Fiji-subsidized vessel must be promptly communicated to relevant domestic authorities.	Information from port state members would be received by the MOF and shared internally.	Review of internal procedures to ensure that the MOF knows to communicate port state member notification to other relevant agencies.
Laws, regulations, or procedures must ensure that Fiji's authorities must take appropriate actions in respect of fisheries subsidies in response to information received from a port state member about possible IUU fishing.	All information received as part of the Ports State Agreement is investigated to ensure that Fiji takes responsibility as a flag state.	Review and development of internal procedures as necessary and consideration of a policy statement to ensure that appropriate action is taken in respect of subsidies in the event of a port state member notification.
Overfished Stocks – Subsidy Prohibition (Article 4)		
Procedures must operate so that information on stocks that Fiji's authorities recognize as overfished is communicated in a timely way to agencies responsible for granting or maintaining subsidies.	This only relates to inshore fishing areas as recognition of overfished stocks in offshore areas is done by the WCPFC. Information about overfished inshore stocks is currently shared within the MOF, but not with other agencies.	Development of procedures so that information on any inshore stocks recognized as overfished is communicated in a timely way to any agency responsible for granting or maintaining subsidies.
Procedures must operate so that information on fisheries management measures for stocks that Fiji's authorities recognize as overfished is communicated in a timely way to agencies responsible for granting or maintaining subsidies.	This only relates to inshore fishing areas as recognition of overfished stocks in offshore areas is done by the WCPFC. Information about management measures is currently shared within the MOF, but not with other agencies.	Development of procedures so that information on relevant fisheries management measures is communicated in a timely way to any agencies responsible for granting or maintaining subsidies.
Laws, regulations, or procedures must ensure that no subsidy can be granted or maintained to fishing or fishing-related activities regarding a stock that Fiji's authorities recognize as overfished, unless such subsidy or other measures are implemented to rebuild stocks	There is no formal system in place to ensure that subsidies cannot be granted in this situation. For Concession 246, the CEO of the FRCS has discretion to disallow an exemption if the conditions of the exemption are not met. But this requires conditions relating to fishing of overfished stocks to be in place.	Review and development of internal procedures and consideration of a legislative provision and/or policy statement making it clear that subsidies are not to be granted or maintained when rebuilding measures are not implemented. Procedures to include requirements (such as placing conditions on concessions and reminding subsidy recipients of their legal obligations under Fijian law) to ensure that any future subsidies are not granted or maintained in breach of the AFS
Laws, regulations, or procedures must ensure that information on stocks that an RFMO/A or another coastal member recognizes as overfished is communicated	This relates to offshore fishing. Information about overfished stocks is currently shared within the MOF, but not with other agencies.	Review and development of procedures so that any future recognition of overfished stocks is communicated to relevant agencies

in a timely way to agencies responsible for granting or maintaining subsidies.		
Laws, regulations, or procedures must ensure that information on fisheries management measures for stocks that an RFMO/A or another coastal member recognizes as overfished is communicated in a timely way to agencies responsible for granting or maintaining subsidies.	This relates to offshore fishing. Information about fisheries management measures for stocks recognized as overfished by RFMO/As or other coastal members is currently shared within the MOF, but not with other agencies.	Review and development of internal procedures so that information about management measures is communicated to relevant agencies
Laws, regulations, or procedures must ensure that no subsidy can be granted or maintained to fishing or fishing-related activities regarding a stock that an RFMO/A or another coastal member recognizes as overfished, unless such subsidy or other measures are implemented to rebuild stocks	There is no formal system in place to ensure that subsidies cannot be granted in this situation. For Concession 246, the CEO of the FRCS has discretion to disallow an exemption if the conditions of the exemption are not met. But this requires conditions relating to fishing of overfished stocks to be in place.	Review and development of internal procedures and consideration of a legislative provision and/or policy statement making it clear that subsidies are not to be granted or maintained when rebuilding measures are not implemented. Procedures to include requirements (such as placing conditions on concessions and reminding subsidy recipients of their legal obligations under Fijian law) to ensure that any future subsidies are not granted or maintained in breach of the AFS.
Unregulated High Seas – Subsidy Prohibition (Article 5.1)		
Laws, regulations, or procedures must ensure that no subsidy can be granted or maintained to fishing or fishing-related activities in the unregulated high seas.	This is not a practical problem given that it is only Fiji's fleet that receives subsidies, and this fleet only fishes in managed waters (something which is virtually guaranteed by Fiji's geography). For Concession 246, the CEO of the FRCS has discretion to disallow an exemption if the conditions of the exemption are not met. But this requires conditions relating to fishing in the unregulated high seas to be in place.	Review and development of internal procedures and consideration of a legislative provision and/or policy statement making it clear that subsidies are not to be granted or maintained in respect of fishing in the unregulated high seas. Procedures to include requirements (such as placing conditions on concessions) to ensure that any future subsidies are not granted or maintained in breach of the AFS.
Reflagged Vessels - Special Care and Due Restraint (Article 5.2)		
Laws, regulations, or procedures must ensure that if Fiji grants subsidies to vessels not flying its flag, special care is taken and due restraint is exercised when granting the subsidies.	Under current policy settings Fiji does not provide subsidies to vessels that are not flying its flag. There are mandatory checks on vessel acquisitions to ensure that vessels being reflagged are assessed for IUU fishing	Development of internal procedures and consideration of a legislative provision and/or policy statement to provide certainty that if the current situation changes, special care and due restraint would be exercised when granting subsidies to foreign flagged vessels.
Unassessed Stocks – Special Care and Due Restraint (Article 5.3)		

Laws, regulations, or procedures must ensure that if Fiji grants subsidies to fishing and fishing-related activities regarding stocks, the status of which is unknown, special care is taken and due restraint is exercised when granting the subsidies	For subsidies to offshore fishing, the management system provided under the WCPFC provides assurance that all stocks are assessed. For subsidies to inshore fishing, Fiji relies on the totality of its regulatory system (including local measures in respect of the qoliqolis) to ensure that fishing of unassessed stocks does not take place. But this can be hard to manage once a subsidy (e.g., contribution to boat purchase) has been provided.	Development of procedures and consideration of a legislative provision and/or policy statement to ensure that special care is taken and due restraint exercised if subsidies are granted to recipients fishing unassessed stocks. These could also ensure that if someone receives a subsidy that will support their future fishing (e.g., contribution to boat purchase) they are reminded of relevant legislation and local requirements relating to unassessed stocks. Consideration to be given to prioritizing stock assessments if the MOF or communities become aware of any particular stocks that are being fished in respect of which the status is unknown.
Data management	Significant data gaps exist in subsidies information held by MoF, MOFF, FRCS and other agencies, preventing complete and accurate WTO notification.	Review and consolidation of subsidies data held across relevant agencies, and development of procedures to ensure complete and accessible data is maintained on an ongoing basis.
Systems and coordination	No centralised mechanism exists to review, track, and update subsidies information across relevant agencies in a coordinated and ongoing manner.	Development of a centralised digital system and inter-agency coordination procedures to enable systematic tracking, review and updating of subsidies information in support of ongoing AFS compliance and WTO notification obligations.

6. Category II grants provide resources to support the effective implementation of the disciplines set out in the articles of the Agreement on Fisheries Subsidies.

Select the article or articles of the Agreement on Fisheries Subsidies that this project grant will support.

Please review the WTO Agreement on Fisheries Subsidies before answering this question:
https://www.wto.org/english/news_e/news22_e/wtmin22w22.pdf

- ☒ Article 3 - Removal of Subsidies Contributing to IUU Fishing.
- ☒ Article 4 - Removal of Subsidies Regarding Overfished Stocks.
- ☒ Article 5 - Removal of Other Subsidies.
- ☒ Article 8 - Notification and Transparency.
- ☐ Other (please specify).

7. Select the option or options that best describe the main objective of the grant application and its alignment with the Fish Fund Category II window.

The Fish Fund's Theory of Change provides three possible outcomes for Category 2 applications. While the proposal may touch on or address other outcomes, please select the outcome that will be the main focus of this application.

Please review the Fish Fund Theory of Change before answering this question:

<https://www.wtofishfund.org/sites/default/files/2025-07/EN%20-%20Logical%20Framework.pdf>

- ☒ Revision of the national legislation, regulation, or procedures to align with the AFS disciplines.
- ☐ Stakeholders actively applying skills in activities contributing to the implementation of the AFS disciplines.
- ☒ Data collection and mgmt. systems are in place to help grant recipients monitor and report in alignment with the AFS disciplines.
- ☐ Other (please specify).

8. Select the option(s) that best describe the main outputs of the grant application and how they will contribute to the achievement of its objectives.

The Fish Fund's Theory of Change provides five main outputs for Category 2 applications.

Please review the Fish Fund Theory of Change before answering this question:

<https://www.wtofishfund.org/sites/default/files/2025-07/EN%20-%20Logical%20Framework.pdf>

- ☐ Development of analyses, reports and sector study to support the formulation of legislative documents in alignment with the AFS disciplines.
- ☐ Drafted revisions for national fisheries legislation, regulations and procedures to align with AFS disciplines.
- ☒ Training and workshops conducted on data collection, vessel monitoring systems, inspection, notification processes, and areas related to AFS disciplines.
- ☐ Research conducted, with templates and tools developed for data collection to assess marine stocks.
- ☒ Improvement in fisheries management systems, electronic reporting systems, or other monitoring tools.
- ☒ Other (please specify).

The central objective of this project is to develop a functional, government-operated National Fisheries Subsidies Compliance Tracker — a digital system that maps all of Fiji's existing fisheries subsidy programs to the relevant articles of the WTO Agreement on Fisheries Subsidies, and provides the institutional infrastructure, data governance frameworks, and legal procedures necessary to maintain ongoing compliance and fulfil Fiji's notification obligations under Article 8.

Component 1 - Inception, Governance, and Institutional Setup

The project will commence with a formal inception phase to establish governance structures and conduct a comprehensive review of Fiji's current fisheries subsidy landscape. An inter-agency Project Steering Committee will be established, drawing representatives from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and External Trade (MFAET), Ministry of Fisheries and Forestry (MFF), Ministry of Finance (MoF), Fiji Revenue and Customs Service (FRCS), Fiji Bureau of Statistics (FBOS), Ministry of Communications, Office of the Solicitor-General (OSG), and the Maritime Safety Authority of Fiji (MSAF) and any other relevant agencies.

A Cabinet Paper will be drafted to formalize the Steering Committee's mandate and Terms of Reference, ensuring political-level endorsement and empowerment of the steering committee's work. A complete review of all active and historical fisheries subsidy programs will be undertaken during this phase, generating a master list of all subsidy providers and schemes that will form the foundation of the Tracker's data architecture.

Component 2 - Legal and Policy Review

Building on the gap analysis completed in the Fiji Synthesis Report (February 2026), this component moves from diagnosis to remediation. A detailed policy review will map each identified subsidy program against the specific disciplines of AFS Articles 3, 4, 5, and 8. This will be undertaken by the External Trade Department at MFAET in collaboration with the Office of the Solicitor-General and an external expert Trade Lawyer (consultancy basis), and will produce a Legal Compliance Matrix identifying:

- (a) subsidies that are clearly compliant;
- (b) subsidies that present potential compliance risks; and
- (c) procedural or legislative gaps that require remediation.

Where legislative or policy reforms are recommended, draft provisions and/or Cabinet-level policy statements will be prepared for government consideration. This includes, in particular, the drafting of conditions on Concession 246 relating to IUU fishing, overfished stocks, unregulated high seas fishing and gaps specifically identified in the Synthesis Report (pp. 7–13) as requiring legislative or policy action

Component 3 - Data Collection and Baseline Development

This component constitutes the empirical foundation of the Tracker. Five interlocking activities will be undertaken:

- **Historical Subsidies Data Collection:** A 3–5-year retrospective dataset of all fisheries subsidies will be compiled, covering budgetary transfers, fuel concessions, tax exemptions, in-kind support, and program expenditures, sourced from MoF, MFF, MRMD, and FRCS.
- **Beneficiary and Vessel Linkage System:** A cross-referenced database linking every subsidy recipient to their vessel registration number, operator identity, licence status, and IUU fishing compliance record will be developed. This will involve integrating data from the national vessel registry (MFF), vessel monitoring systems (MSAF), and customs records (FRCS).
- **Subsidy Classification Against AFS Disciplines:** Applying the Legal Compliance Matrix developed under Component 2, each subsidy identified in the historical dataset will be formally categorized in the Tracker according to AFS obligations that is Article 3 (IUU risk), Article 4 (overfished stock risk), Article 5 (high seas/unregulated fishing risk), or Article 8 (notification obligation). Each subsidy record will be assigned a compliance status and risk rating, creating the operational data layer that drives the Tracker's automated flagging functions.
- **Stock Status Data Integration:** Stock status data for both inshore fisheries (sourced from MFF and Pacific Community/SPC) and offshore fisheries (from WCPFC records) will be integrated into the Tracker, enabling automated flagging where subsidized fishing activities intersect with overfished or unassessed stocks.

Component 4 - Digital Tracker Development

The core technological infrastructure of the project will be developed in this component, delivered in two phases:

- **Standard Operating Procedures and Data Collection Framework**

Standardized data collection templates, reporting protocols, and interoperability procedures will be developed and formally adopted by all participating agencies. These SOPs will specify what data each agency is responsible for providing, in what format, on what schedule, and to whom — establishing a durable institutional data governance regime.

- **Digital Data Management System (the Compliance Tracker)**

A secure, centralised digital platform will be designed, built, and deployed. The Tracker will integrate subsidy records, vessel and operator data, stock status alerts, IUU determination records, and RFMO/A notifications. The platform will include: a compliance dashboard for senior officials; automated AFS classification of new subsidy proposals; WTO notification report generation; and role-based access for each participating agency. Development will be led by the external technical developer under the guidance of the Project Steering Committee.

Component 5: WTO Notification and Reporting Capacity

Two activities will specifically address Fiji's obligations under Article 8 of the AFS:

- **WTO Notification System Design** - Standard notification templates, internal review workflows, and submission procedures aligned with WTO requirements will be developed and formally adopted by Fiji Government. These templates will be pre-configured within the digital Tracker to draw data automatically from the subsidy inventory.
- **Pilot Testing** - A full end-to-end pilot of the data collection, compliance classification, and notification preparation process will be conducted. The pilot will produce a complete set of draft WTO Article 8 notifications that is ready for formal submission, testing the system before the first official reporting cycle.

Component 6: Capacity Building and Training

A comprehensive, multi-agency capacity building program will be delivered to ensure that government officials across all participating agencies can operate, maintain, and update the Tracker sustainably without ongoing external technical assistance. Training will cover: understanding AFS obligations; operating the digital platform; collecting and entering data; conducting compliance assessments; and preparing WTO notifications. Training materials, manuals, and e-learning resources will be developed and institutionalized within each agency's onboarding and professional development programs.

Component 7: First Notification Submission and Institutionalization

The project will culminate in the formal submission of Fiji's first set of official WTO Article 8 notification, representing the tangible demonstration of the project's success. A final Monitoring and Evaluation exercise will be conducted to assess system performance, identify any remaining gaps, and produce a System Improvement Plan to guide ongoing management of the Tracker beyond the project period. The M&E report will formally document the transition of the Tracker from a project-funded system to a core government compliance function institutionalized within MFAET and MFF.

For each output identified, please provide a list of activities relevant to each output, for example:

- *Collect data for assessing marine stocks (staff trained on research and data collection, data collected on fish stocks, subsidies contributing to the depletion of overfished stocks removed, notifications submitted to the WTO, etc)*
- *Build capacity (number of persons trained on monitoring and reporting, tools introduced to enhance monitoring and coordinate reporting, number of notifications submitted, etc.)*
- *Conduct sectoral studies (increase in the number of inspections, improvements to vessel monitoring systems, etc.)*

Please review the Fish Find Theory of Change before answering this question:

<https://www.wtofishfund.org/sites/default/files/2025-07/EN%20-%20Logical%20Framework.pdf>

9. Indicate the expected duration for implementation and completion of the grant:

- ☐ 12-18 months.
- ☒ 18-24 months.
- ☐ 24-36 months.
- ☐ Other (please specify).

10. Upload a workplan in Excel format indicating outputs, activities, milestone indicators, and risk mitigating measures, with the corresponding timeline for implementation. A workplan template can be downloaded via the link below:

https://www.wtofishfund.org/sites/default/files/2026-01/EN_Implementation%20Plan_Cat%20II.xlsx

11. Does this grant application support activities that have been directly linked to an approved national strategy or plan? If yes, please name the document and indicate whether there is an explicit reference to the implementation of the Agreement on Fisheries Subsidies.

- ☒ Yes.
- ☐ No.
- ☐ Maybe.

[Fiji National Development Plan 2025-2029 and Vision 2050:](#)

- [Section 4.6 Marine Resources](#), one of the strategies for Fiji under the policy to “Strengthen offshore, inshore and aquaculture fisheries with a sustainable market access environment supported by sound governance and innovative service delivery” is to “Develop and fortify institutional capacities for fisheries research and management to enhance data-driven decision-making and innovation”.
- [Section 5.1 Trade and Market Access](#), one of the strategies for Fiji under the policy of “Enhancing the nexus between trade and sustainable development” is to “Negotiate the second wave of the WTO Agreement on Fisheries Subsidies and the implementation of the agreement to prevent fisheries subsidies from harming global ocean health”.

12. Indicate whether your government is or has been a beneficiary of support from support from Fish Fund core partners or other specialized agencies with the objective of supporting the implementation of the Agreement on Fisheries Subsidies and/or issues relating to IUU fishing. If yes, please provide a description of the support measure and its implementing partner, with a brief explanation on how this grant application will avoid duplicating activities and/or resources.

- ☒ Yes.
- ☐ No.

[This application is grounded in a rigorous needs assessment conducted in 2025 by the International Institute for Sustainable Development \(IISD\), funded by the Canadian Trade and Investment Facility](#)

through the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat. The assessment involved two in-country expert missions in October and November 2025, extensive multi-stakeholder consultations across eight government agencies, and a Validation Workshop in Suva on 18 November 2025.

Key findings of the assessment include:

- Fiji is currently aligned with its AFS obligations — no instances of active breach of subsidy commitments were identified.
- Significant data gaps exist, including limited data on vessels under the SEA and FAD programs (which are outside the registered national fleet), absence of stock status assessments for inshore fisheries, and incomplete records on vessels/operators subject to IUU determinations.
- Internal coordination procedures for communicating IUU determinations, overfished stock recognitions, and subsidy eligibility decisions across agencies are not formalized.
- No structured system exists to screen subsidy applications against AFS obligations before approval.
- Fiji's first set of WTO notification obligation under Article 8 is imminent (2026), and the country lacks the technical infrastructure and institutional processes to fulfil it.

These findings provide the direct evidence base for this project proposal.

13. Indicate if this grant application will benefit from implementation support from any of the Fish Fund partners. If support will be provided by other international organizations or WTO Members, please specify under 'Other'.

☐ Yes.

- ☐ FAO
- ☐ IFAD
- ☐ World Bank
- ☐ WTO

☒ No.

☐ Other:

14. Indicate the total amount requested from the Fish Fund in United States Dollars (USD). Upload an indicative budget in Excel format. The budget should also include any additional financial or in-kind contributions from the government and other agencies. The budget template can be downloaded via the link below:

https://www.wtofishfund.org/sites/default/files/2026-01/EN_Budget%20Template_Cat%20II.xlsx

Please note that Category II grant applications can benefit from a maximum of USD 300'000. Applicants will be required to submit a detailed line-item budget in Excel format demonstrating how the Fish Fund grant would be used.

USD 300,000

15. Indicate any additional sources of funding or in-kind contributions from the beneficiary government and or other organizations.

Applicants must provide information on in-kind, administrative, or financial contributions to be made by the beneficiary of the project grant. In-kind contributions from the beneficiary government may include staff time, meeting rooms, and other administrative or logistical costs.

Additional contributions should be provided per entity, with an explanation of how these resources would be allocated and how they would complement the resources of the Fish Fund.

No other source of funding available.

16. Describe the benefits of the project beyond its duration and how the achievements will be secured and used after the implementation period.

The Tracker will serve as Fiji's primary compliance tool by:

- Creating a comprehensive and searchable inventory of all fisheries subsidies (direct budgetary transfers, tax concessions, in-kind support) cross-referenced against AFS Articles 3, 4, 5, and 8;
- Linking subsidy recipients (vessels and operators) to their compliance status vis-à-vis IUU fishing determinations and overfished stock alerts;
- Automating generation of WTO-compliant notification reports under Article 8;
- Providing real-time flagging of potential compliance risks as new subsidies are proposed or granted

Beyond the project period, the Compliance Tracker will serve as a permanent, self-sustaining government system that future-proofs Fiji's AFS compliance regardless of changes in subsidy programs, fishing practices, or international obligations. The project will establish Fiji as a model for small island developing states in the Pacific region in operationalizing WTO fisheries subsidies obligations, contributing to the regional and global objective of sustainable ocean governance.

17. Provide a brief description of the communication strategy that will be used to disseminate information about the grant and its intended audience.

The communication strategy will share information about the grant with government agencies, fishing industry stakeholders, and development partners. Updates will be provided through government websites, national media (radio, TV, and newspapers), and meetings or workshops with stakeholders. The project team will also use inter-agency groups to keep government departments informed.

18. Indicate communication channels that will be used to share information about the project and from the Fish Fund?

- ☒ Government website or social media
- ☒ Local media (TV, news, etc)
- ☐ Through partner organizations websites and social media
- ☐ Other

19. Upload a letter of endorsement from the government entity responsible for implementation.

20. Any additional comment or observation relevant to consideration of the application.

This project has been designed from the outset with long-term sustainability as a core principle. Sustainability is ensured through four interlocking mechanisms:

- Institutional Ownership

By embedding the Compliance Tracker within MFAET's External Trade Department as a core government function supported by Cabinet endorsement and a formal inter-agency Steering Committee the project avoids the common pitfall of donor-funded systems that collapse after project completion.

- Capacity Building

The comprehensive, multi-agency training program ensures that government officials at all levels can independently operate, update, and maintain the system. Training materials and SOPs will be institutionalized within agency onboarding processes.

- Legislative Anchoring

Where the legal review identifies gaps, draft legislative provisions and/or Cabinet policy statements may be prepared, providing a formal legal basis for the procedures established by the project.

- Digital Infrastructure

The digital Tracker, hosted within Fiji's government Digital Government Transformation infrastructure, will require only routine maintenance after the project period. Its modular design allows it to be updated as AFS obligations evolve, or Fiji's subsidy programs change.

21. Contact point for this application

Provide the full name, email address, and contact information of the focal point responsible for the project. For multiple Members, please enter a focal point per Member.

Please note that this person will be contacted by the Fish Fund Secretariat in case of questions or comments.

Ms. Deepika Singh
Director Trade, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and External Trade (Fiji)
Email: deepika.singh@trade.gov.fj

Ms. Madhu Monika Chand
Principal Trade Economist, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and External Trade (Fiji)
Email: madhu.chand@trade.gov.fj

Ms. Jese Tuibuca
Senior Trade Economist, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and External Trade (Fiji)
Email: jese.tuibuca@trade.gov.fj

22. Date of Submission

Only applications received by the deadline will be considered. Application deadlines are available on the Fish Fund website or by contacting the Secretariat at fishfund@wto.org.

8 May 2026