

WEST AFRICA SUSTAINABLE OCEAN PROGRAMME

- Ocean governance
- Sustainable blue economy
- Ecosystem preservation

Terms of reference
International blue finance expert
12/16/2025

The West African Sustainable Ocean Program (**WASOP**), funded by the European Union to the tune of €59 million, aims to promote the integrated and sustainable management of marine and coastal resources in West Africa by supporting inclusive and competitive economic growth. Aligned with the African Union's Agenda 2063 and the European Union's Ocean Pact, the program promotes a sustainable blue economy as an engine for Africa's future. It adopts an integrated "Seascape Approach" centered on three complementary pillars: (i) ocean governance, (ii) the development of a sustainable blue economy, and (iii) the preservation of marine and coastal ecosystems.



Mis en œuvre par :

PILIER 1 : GOUVERNANCE DES OCÉANS



PILIER 2 : ÉCONOMIE BLEUE DURABLE



PILIER 3 : PRÉSERVATION DES ÉCOSYSTÈMES



Coordination WASOP :



En partenariat avec :



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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

Acronym	Definition
CFP	Call for Projects
TA	Technical assistance
AfDB	African Development Bank
BF	Blue Facility
SME	Small and medium-sized enterprise
PN	Practitioner Network
SBE	Sustainable Blue Economy (Pillar II of the WASOP program)
EU	European Union
WASOP	West African Sustainable Ocean Program

I. Background

A. WASOP

The WASOP program, funded by the European Union to the tune of €59 million, aims to support integrated and sustainable management of marine and coastal resources in West Africa, while promoting inclusive and competitive economic growth. It is in line with major international priorities, notably the African Union's Agenda 2063 and the European Union's Ocean Pact, which recognize the blue economy as a strategic lever for sustainable development.

Structured around three complementary pillars, based on an integrated "Seascape" approach, WASOP aims to:

1. Strengthen ocean governance, particularly for sustainable fisheries;
2. Promote a sustainable and inclusive blue economy;
3. Strengthen the preservation of marine and coastal ecosystems, in conjunction with local populations.

The program is being implemented in 13 coastal countries in West Africa: Benin, Cape Verde, Côte d'Ivoire, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Mauritania, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, and Togo, in partnership with ECOWAS and in collaboration with regional organizations. Its implementation is based on a strategic partnership between several actors:

- Expertise France, responsible for overall coordination via the Blue Hub and implementation of pillar 2;
- FAO, ICCAT, EFCA, and subregional fisheries commissions (CSRP and CPCO) for pillar 1;
- IUCN for pillar 3 related to ecosystem conservation.

WASOP is part of *the Global Gateway's* objective to support public-private partnerships for sustainable natural resource management and nature-based solutions. At the heart of the "Global Gateway 360°" approach—based on the priorities of connectivity, sustainability, and infrastructure development—WASOP mobilizes all sectors related to oceans, seas, and coastlines. This encompasses both offshore and onshore activities to ensure coherent and comprehensive action.

The WASOP program was launched in 2025 for a period of five years. At the launch workshop held in Mindelo, Cape Verde, from November 4 to 6, 2025, **two memoranda of understanding were signed with the region's two public investment and development banks, BOAD and BIDC, to strengthen financing for the sustainable blue economy. This major milestone was reinforced by the launch of the West African group of the Finance en Commun (FiCS) ocean coalition, led by BOAD, including BIDC as strategic members as well as national banks and with the support of WASOP.** The operational deployment of these partnerships will be carried out in particular through the **WASOP Blue Facility**.

B. THE BLUE FACILITY

The Blue Facility of the Sustainable Blue Economy pillar of WASOP (West Africa Sustainable Ocean Program) aims to support the development of a sustainable and inclusive blue economy in West Africa. The Blue Facility provides technical assistance to regional organizations and, in a complementary

manner, to WASOP beneficiary countries to help (i) establish a regional institutional, regulatory, and financial framework conducive to the growth of the sustainable blue economy and (ii) support sustainable blue economy operations in the region.

The Blue Facility provides technical assistance in a responsive and flexible manner to meet the needs of WASOP countries, taking into account their progress in developing a sustainable and inclusive blue economy and the challenges they face, particularly in terms of governance and financing.

This support can cover a variety of areas, such as the development of regulatory frameworks, public policy planning, financing tools, investment project preparation, and the integration of environmental and social standards into national strategies.

Improving access to financing for the sustainable blue economy in West Africa is a major objective of the Blue Facility. The Facility aims to act as an interface between project developers and investors, supporting the structuring of bankable projects, assisting stakeholders in mobilizing financial resources, and mobilizing innovative instruments, including blended finance, in conjunction with West African national and regional banks (BOAD, BDC). In particular, it will be able to help bring projects closer to international donors, Global Gateway partners, international funds (such as the Green Climate Fund and the Global Environment Facility), and multilateral development banks.

In this context, the development of a harmonized regional financial framework and a credible pipeline of bankable blue projects are two major challenges that will be addressed by the Blue Facility.

To meet these needs, the Blue Facility is **putting together a small team of leading international experts in sustainable blue finance**.

II. Objectives, expected results of the mission, and organization

A. OBJECTIVES

The overall objective of this mission is to structurally strengthen access to sustainable blue finance in the West African region.

Specifically, the international expertise has a twofold objective:

1. At the "macro" level: to develop frameworks and instruments with regional financial institutions and international partners.
2. At the "micro" level: supporting project structuring, developing and steering a common methodological framework. The expert will provide cross-functional and ongoing support to enhance the quality, consistency, and credibility of the pipeline of bankable blue projects in the 13 countries covered by WASOP.

B. MAIN ACTIVITIES

Regional activities

- Work with regional investment banks to develop their sustainable blue economy financing strategy/framework, integrating the private/public sector and associated tools, including safeguard measures.
- Develop a sustainable blue economy taxonomy for West Africa and conduct training sessions.
- Create a regional pipeline of bankable blue projects that meet international mechanism standards (FVC, GEF, etc.).
- Design and structure financial instruments dedicated to ocean sustainability (blue credit lines, regional guarantee mechanisms, blue carbon, blended finance) for the private and public sectors.
- Support BOAD's leadership in the FiCS Ocean Coalition and the IDFC (International Development Finance Club) network as a catalyst for blue finance in Africa.

Multi-country activities

- Develop a simple and harmonized reference framework for the analysis, structuring, and monitoring of blue projects, applicable in all 13 countries.
- Ensure quality control of diagnostics, support plans, and deliverables produced by national/thematic pipeline experts, and propose methodological adjustments if necessary.
- Contribute to defining and updating the blue project pipeline development strategy by identifying bottlenecks and support priorities.
- Identify capacity-building needs and support the development of tools, guides, and training formats for national/thematic experts and, where appropriate, for national teams.
- Support the definition and, if necessary, revision of national/thematic pipeline expert profiles, as well as the structuring of their work plans.
- Provide ad hoc support to EUD and national authorities when reviewing projects or preparing technical missions.

Cross-cutting activities

- Monitor existing approaches to blue finance (including, where applicable, BlueInvest Africa) and identify opportunities for complementarity where relevant to WASOP.
- Advocate for the challenges, opportunities, and financing needs of the sustainable blue economy in West Africa at regional and international events (such as COP, CBD, UNOC, etc.), and in particular strengthen advocacy for the ocean-climate nexus.
- Contribute to the technical framing and advocacy of events to strengthen blue finance, such as the FiCS West African Ocean Coalition Forum.
- Promote technical synergies between the various tools of WASOP Pillar 2 (Blue Facility, Practitioner's Network, and Call for Projects) to ensure consistency in the project pipeline.
- Functional coordination of the pool of national/thematic finance experts.

C. EXPECTED OUTPUTS

Below is a non-exhaustive list of deliverables. Deliverables will be specified in dedicated purchase orders.

Type of outputs at regional level

- **Diagnosis of the BOAD/BIDC portfolio** to identify projects with "ocean and climate" co-benefits.
- **Sustainable blue economy financing strategy documents** developed jointly with BOAD and BIDC, including a **regional investment framework for the sustainable blue economy (Blue Investment Framework)**, **action plans**, and **related tools, including safeguard measures**
- **Definition of a sustainable blue economy taxonomy** adapted to West Africa and aligned with EU, FICS, and ECOWAS standards.
- **Portfolio of bankable blue projects**
- **Training modules** on the various frameworks and tools developed
- **Strategic contributions to the framing and implementation of regional/multi-country project concept notes** (e.g., GCF, GEF)

Multi-country product types

- A **common methodological framework** for project analysis and structuring, including easy-to-use tools, formats, and criteria for national experts.
- **Regular quality reviews** of diagnostics, support plans, and deliverables produced by national/thematic pipeline experts, with recommendations for adjustments.
- **Ad hoc technical notes** on macro (instruments, financial frameworks) and micro (project structuring) aspects of blue finance.
- A **consolidated analysis of the regional pipeline**, including support priorities, bottlenecks, and capacity-building needs.
- A **structured contribution** to coordination between the Blue Facility, the CFP, and the Practitioner Network to ensure consistency in the support provided to project leaders.
- **Targeted support** for EUD, public authorities, and EF/WASOP teams during project reviews or preparatory missions.
- **Note analyzing challenges/opportunities** for West Africa in terms of innovative instruments/meetings for blue financing, in line with current blue financing developments at the pan-African and international levels.
- **Advocacy document** on sustainable blue finance/ocean-climate nexus
- **Technical framework note for events** (such as the FICS ocean coalition summit forum in AFO)
- **Periodic updates** to support tools and procedures, based on feedback from the field and changing country needs.

D. ORGANIZATION

The Blue Facility is a small team of leading international experts (between 1 and 3 experts, depending on profiles and availability) who can work remotely and are available for assignments in West Africa (or other countries in the case of participation in international events).

The international finance expert(s) produce(s) live content in collaboration with a regional expert whom they supervise technically. More broadly, they may be called upon to provide technical supervision to experts and consulting firms for the deployment of activities. In addition, the

international expert will be responsible for the technical supervision of national experts for the creation of a pipeline, as well as a regional expert.

The international expert reports generally to the Blue Facility Manager and the regional support expert for the deployment of regional activities.

Estimated mobilization: approximately 20-30% over the period 2026-2027

III. Required profiles and practical information s

A. PROFILES SOUGHT

1. Key skills

The international expert(s) must have the following skills:

- **Master's degree or equivalent** in a relevant discipline (finance, economics, public policy, environment, or sustainable development).
- Very good understanding of **blue finance instruments, project financial structuring, and investment readiness** approaches.
- Ability to design, deploy, and pilot **methodological tools** and **reference frameworks** applicable in various national and regional contexts.
- Ability to **contribute to the development and structuring of blue project pipelines**, in line with the requirements of international donors and mechanisms.
- Ability to facilitate technical exchanges with a variety of stakeholders (administrations, donors, regional financial institutions, private sector, civil society) in order to co-develop operational solutions.
- Proven ability to **supervise and coordinate technical service providers**, in particular national and thematic experts mobilized in the countries.
- Excellent analytical, synthesis, and writing skills to produce technical notes, methodological guidelines, and strategic recommendations.
- Excellent command of **French and English**, both spoken and written; proficiency in **Portuguese** is an asset.
- Experience in **mobilizing financial partners**.

2. Professional experience

- Minimum **10 years of professional experience** in international cooperation in the fields of blue finance, development finance, sustainable economy, or project structuring.
- Proven experience in:
 - developing **financing strategies**, particularly in the field of sustainable blue economy;

- designing and structuring **dedicated financing instruments (blended finance, guarantees, credit lines, etc.)**;
- structuring and supporting **bankable project pipelines**, including financial analysis, economic models, and investment preparation.
- Proven experience in **regional or multi-country roles**, ideally in West Africa, with a good understanding of institutional and operational issues.
- Proven experience in **coordinating and supervising experts or consulting firms**, including quality control and consolidation of deliverables.
- Knowledge of **European Union instruments such as Global Gateway, EFSD+**, etc. is an asset.

B. PRACTICAL INFORMATION

To apply, please send the following documents **before January 15 at 9:00 a.m. UTC**.

- A **resume** demonstrating the relevance of your profile to the position;
- A **technical proposal** of no more than 4 pages, including
 - Understanding of blue finance issues in West Africa;
 - International instruments/approaches that may be useful/suitable for West Africa
 - Your approach and anticipated success factors for addressing the activities presented (including your areas of expertise if you wish to position yourself on some of the activities/themes)
- A **financial proposal**: presenting your daily rate;
- Three relevant professional references, including email addresses and telephone numbers
- Any relevant documents or technical reports produced;
- Subject of the application: "**WASOP International Blue Finance Expert**"
- Applications received will be reviewed as soon as they are received, and Expertise France may contact candidates before the deadline.